



idea incentives

CANADIAN GIFTS MADE EASY

INUKSUIT **Silent communicators of the Arctic**

One third of Canada's landmass is in the Arctic, a vast region that is continually shaped by natural forces into endless tundra, mountains and islands. Annual temperatures in the Arctic can range from +30 degrees centigrade (approximately 86 degrees fahrenheit) to -60 degrees centigrade (approximately -70 degrees fahrenheit). These intense temperature fluctuations create an environment that forces all living things to either adapt, flee or perish. For over 4,000 years **Inuit** and before them their ancestors the **Tunniit** people have adapted and made their home in this land, which is known today as **Nunavut**.

Traditional Inuit society was nomadic, oral based and used only what the land and sea provided. In **Inuktitut** one of the languages of the Inuit, the word **Inuksuk** or **Inukshuk** (singular of **Inuksuit**) means "likeness of a person". Inuksuk and Inuksuit have been used over thousands of years as a method of communication to others.

Inukshuk as we commonly refer to them vary in size, shape, location and communication function. Built from whatever natural stone was at hand, by people of varying talents, each one is as different as a fingerprint. Placement and arrangement was as carefully thought out as construction. Some were placed to be visible from a great distance, others to be seen against a snowy backdrop, some frame a distant point. Reaching out across the landscape they guide hunters travelling on land, sea or ice, they indicate a dangerous place, such as deep or snow or strong currents or the quickest route to the next settlement. Sometimes a group of Inukshuk are used to indicate a place to drive herds of game to where they could be killed in numbers.

Not all **Inukshuks** are built for practical purposes, some have spiritual meaning.

They may mark the edge of a traditional spiritual landscape, or a source of good fortune, cures and protection and so are venerated, touched and given offerings. Nowadays although most Inuit live in settlements for at least part of the year, their powerful attachment and respect for the land remains as well as their admiration for their ancestors and the traditional way of life. **Inukshuks** continue to be built and have become much more than a stone marker. They have become a symbol of the North and of leadership, communication and the human spirit.

Idea Incentives ~ Inukshuk Enclosure Card

These Life-like figures, originally created by the Inuit people, have acted as guides for travelers in Canada's far north for centuries. They are called Inukshuk, an Inuktitut word meaning "in the image of man".

This hand-crafted Inukshuk stands as a milestone on the road that has been traveled and as a symbol of the warm relationships that have been established. It is hereby given as a symbol of the importance of friendship and communication between people, companies and countries.

Idea Incentives Inc.
Canadian Gifts Made Easy

1090 West 8th Ave, Vancouver B.C., V6H 1C4 Canada Tel: 604-687-5755
Fax: 604-687-4608

"Great things are not done by impulse, but by a series of small things brought together." Vincent Van Gogh