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By **Erik R. Trinidad** | July 3, 2012

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Deep in the African bush lies a group of tribes known for their vitality, style, and above all, their ability to jump really high. I'm of course talking about the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania, with their tall, striking African tribesmen who have lived an interesting lifestyle for decades.

Kill them with confidence

"Maasai culture is a culture that is very unique in the world," says Noonyuet Kirrokor, a Maasai warrior from Nkoilale village in Kenya. "They strongly believe in themselves."

To be like a Maasai Man, you have to be self-assured and exude an air of confidence in everything you do. For the Maasai, a lot of this cultural assertiveness comes from the ownership of cattle.

Earn respect

The more cows you have, the more respect you have in the community. "Cows are very important to the Maasai, and we believe we are the only people who have right to own cows in the world,"

Kirrokor boasts. "I own twenty-eight cows."



Over two dozen cows may seem excessive, but where he's from, cattle has bartering value, like money. Twenty-eight cows may seem like a small fortune, but it's pale in comparison to the over 1,000 cows owned by one charismatic Maasai elder chief I met, who not only had a millenary amount of cattle, but also plenty of women — he had many wives.

Bust a move

Having more than one wife in Maasai culture doesn't come without impressing the single ladies first. In Maasailand, wooing is mainly done on the dance floor, particularly during ritualistic events, e.g., circumcision ceremonies, weddings, and warrior graduations. And the move that really makes Maasai women swoon is jumping straight up, as high as you can. "The higher you jump, the better you perform," Kirrokor tells me. "And the higher chances of winning girlfriends."

Know when to fight (or not)

Obviously, the pursuit of women is a lot less dangerous than the pursuit of a lion, although these days, Maasai warriors opt to let lions live for conservation reasons. However, that's not to say that a warrior isn't prepared to take one down if needed.

"We hunt by circling a big male lion with a well-developed mane and slowly approach him [from] all corners," Kirrokor tells me. The key is stand your ground and not to lose face when encountering the king of the jungle. "Normally the lion will tell if someone shows any sign of cowardliness."

Strut your style

While courage and skill are qualities one must possess when being like a Maasai Man, you should look the part too. Maasai men have a distinct visual style, with their signature crimson attire, multicolored accessories, and occasional warrior headdresses. Most notably, they also have elongated earlobes—something they've had a hundred years before hipsters embraced it as the latest counter-culture fad. Maasai Man culture has truly endured over the decades, and it will continue for many more as long as their core beliefs are something to aspire for.

Be magical

"A warrior must be strong, clever, courageous, confident, wise, and gentle," says Kirrokor. "To become a Maasai warrior is the dream of every Maasai youth. The word itself seems to convey magical powers."

You don't have to live in Maasailand to attain this same sort of magic. To be like a Maasai Man wherever you are, just remember: be confident in everything you do, have a respectable amount of money, and be strong and courageous to fight — but only if you must. You should also have a strong sense of style so that everyone knows what you stand for—and that style that should endure beyond the fads of hipsters.

(I suppose you could also do the elongated ear thing too. Just make sure you fasten them down before a night out on the town, so they're not flapping around when you're busting a move for the ladies on the dance floor.)

Erik Trinidad is an author, writer, designer, food critic, world traveler, and all-around "Freelance Renaissance Man," whose work can be seen on The Huffington Post, Food Network/Cooking Channel, and Discovery.com, as well as on his own travel and food sites, [The Global Trip](#) and [Fancy Fast Food](#). Follow him on Twitter [@theglobaltrip](#) and [@fancyfastfood](#); on [facebook.com/theglobaltrip](#) and [facebook.com/fancyfastfood](#); [youtube.com/theglobaltrip](#) and [youtube.com/fancyfastfood](#) and at "[theglobaltrip](#)" on Instagram.

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