



Day of the Dead Facts

19 Interesting Day of the Dead Facts!

Day of the Dead is a time to remember and celebrate family and friends who have died.



It's celebrated on the 1st and 2nd of November, and is not a sad holiday



It's actually a joyful celebration.

The Day of the Dead is not Mexican Halloween!



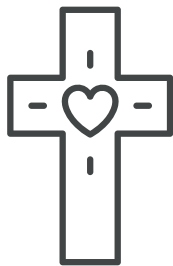
They are celebrated around the same time of year, but they are very different.

During the Spanish Conquest in the early 1500s,



catholic traditions were combined with ancient Aztec customs to create what we know today as Day of the Dead.

Day of the Dead is the only day when those who passed away can come back and visit their loved ones.



As a part of the celebration, families build altars in their homes for loved ones who have died.



These altars are called "la ofrenda" and they have the favorite foods and drinks of the one being honored.

"La ofrenda" also provide our loved ones what they need on their journey back to the Earth.





Day of the Dead Facts

Every "ofrenda" includes the four elements: water, wind, earth, and fire:

Earth is represented by food, especially bread.



Water is left in a glass so the spirits can quench their thirst.

Papel picado, or traditional paper banners, represents the wind.

Candles are often left in the form of a cross to represent the cardinal directions, so the spirits can find their way.

Flowers, butterflies, and skulls are also used as symbols.

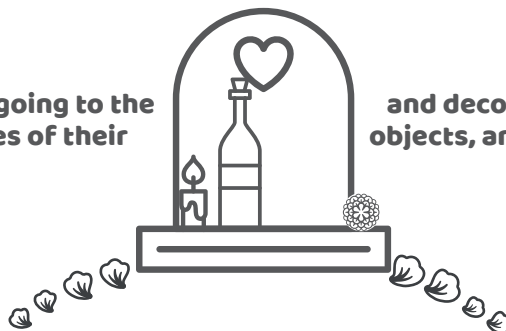


Often times, ceramic dogs or even plush do are placed on the altars. That's because it is believed that the Xoloitzcuintli (a dog like the one in Coco!) can guide the souls back to Earth during this celebration.



A big part of the holiday involves going to the cemetery. Families wash the graves of their loved ones

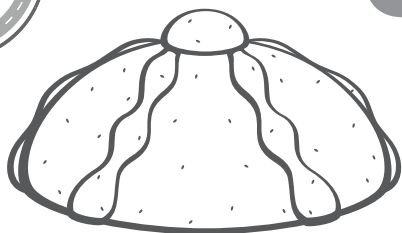
and decorate them with candles, meaningful objects, and flowers such as marigolds, called cempasúchil in Spanish.



The cempasúchil is often placed on ofrendas and around graves. Its petals are used to make a path that leads the spirits from the cemetery to their families' homes.



Day of the Dead Facts



Pan de Muerto, which means bread of the dead, is a sweet bread baked with anise and orange peel, that is only eaten during that time of the year and also used in ofrendas.

Monarch butterflies are very important because they are believed to hold the spirits of the departed.



These butterflies arrive in Mexico each fall during November 1st, Day of the Dead.

Sugar skulls can be both decorations and sweet treats that are made out of sugar. They are delicious!



"Calaveritas" are Day of the Dead poems which are short, satirical, and comical. They poke fun at people in a way that suggests how they died, even though they're still alive!



There are many contests to decide who can write the wittiest "calaverita" and everyone can participate.

La Catrina" is an iconic character that represents death, in a comical manner. !



La Catrina usually wears a hat and elegant clothes to represent that death affects everyone, rich and poor.