
Día de los muertos Day of the Dead

A Mexican tradition that honor our ancestors.



UNESCO inscribed Día de los Muertos in 2008 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (originally proclaimed in 2003)

The Day of the Dead celebration holds great significance in the life of Mexico's indigenous communities. The fusion of pre-Hispanic religious rites and Catholic feast brings together two universes, one marked by indigenous belief systems, the other by worldviews introduced by the Europeans in the sixteenth century.*

*<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/indigenous-festivity-dedicated-to-the-dead-00054>

A Mexican Tradition

The Day of the Dead is a holiday celebrated on the 1st and 2nd of November.

It originated and is mostly observed in Mexico but also in other places in Latin America. And by people of Mexican heritage elsewhere.



Origin

Is the first Mexican tradition that combine the catholicism from Spain with the prehispanic rituals honoring the dead.

Syncretism: The amalgamation of different religions, cultures.

→ Spanish heritage celebration

November 1 is the day of All the Saints
November 2 the day of the Holly dead

→ Prehispanic rituals

Started with the corn harvest, the celebration used to started at the end of October by different groups Mexicas, Maya, Mixtecos, Totonacas, Zapotecas, Tlaxcaltecas, Purpechas..

All Saints Day November 1 is the day of the year to celebrate the Saints.

The festival is actually centuries old, beginning around the 4th century when the Syrian Church dedicated a day to the celebration of martyr saints.

Observance: Church services, praying for the dead, visiting cemeteries.
All Hallows Day.

November 1

The children that died came to visit their families the night of October 31 and come back at 3:00 pm of November 1 .

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In the prehispanic tradition
the festivities take place each year at the
end of October to the beginning of
November. This period also marks the
completion of the annual cycle
of cultivation of maize.

November 2

As practised by the indigenous communities of Mexico, commemorates the transitory return to Earth of deceased relatives and loved ones.

October 28

Start to set up the altar. Light a first candle for the lonely souls.

October 30

The families pick up some food from friends (Calaverita)

November 1

All the saint day and the day that the children still visiting, use of copal to say goodbye

November 3

Take away the ofrenda and wait for the next year.

October 29

Light a second candle for the people who died by accidents or in a violent way.

October 31

Put the food and the children (Angelitos) start to come

November 2

The day that all the adult dead relatives came. Some people went to the cemetery to spend the night.

* The timeline is from a town in Oaxaca, it can be different depending the region.



Pomuch, Campeche

The Maya community of Pomuch go to the cemeteries and clean the bones of the love ones. That is known as dressing the dead, for prepare them to the festivity.

This is done on November 1 or 2 but 3 years after the person pass away.

If this is not done every year the spirit will go into fury.





Pátzcuaro- Michoacán

The main celebration take place in Janitzio an island in the middle of the Pátzcuato lake at the cemetery.

Also the houses of the town are open with altars inside ready to receive and honor their love ones, too.



San Andres Mixquic

Located in the borough of Tlahuac, Mexico City. The celebration starts on the 31 at night with the sound of the bells of the church, is when the souls of the children arrive from the *Mictlan* on November 1 until noon. The young people ask for food. On November 2 the people clean and decorated the adults tombs. At 8pm they make the *Alumbrada* when the lights go out only the candles illuminated the cemetery, the celebration include music and prayers. Also in the town there are cultural events, performances and dances.

Besides going to the cemetery the celebrations also consist in the creation of *altars* at home to welcome the dead with flowers, candles, beverages and food.

Is the day of the year that our love ones can come back and be with us.



The Day of the Dead

Is a celebration with joy, is the day that we reconnect with our ancestors.

The dead is a cycle is not sad or tragic.

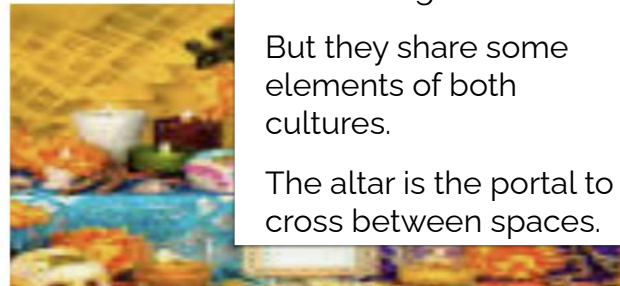


The altar - ofrenda

There is no incorrect way to build and altar, it depends of the family and the region.

But they share some elements of both cultures.

The altar is the portal to cross between spaces.



Prehispanic elements Flowers (Cempasúchitl), copal, dog, salt, water, skulls.

Spanish elements Images of Saints, the candles, bread, cross.



Elements of life represented

Water- A glass of water for the souls that came tired for the trip.

Wind -Represented with the cut paper that moves with the air.

Earth- Represented by the fruits, the bread, the flowers

Fire- Represented by the candles



Altars in NYC.



MEXICO WEEK
DÍA DE MUERTOS
celebration

Program
October 22
13 hrs

- Alebríjes Guardianes
Atelier Jacobo & Maria Angeles (Oaxaca, Mexico)
- Calaveras y Catrinas
Merchúca Studios (Mexico)
October 29
11 hrs
- Ofrenda dedicated to those who passed away due to the COVID-19 pandemic in NYC
Tónico Visual (Mexico)
- Floral installation for the iconic Rockefeller Center bronze statue Atlas
Ovando (NY)

-Tiangüis, October 29 -31. 11 am - 6pm

1. La Contenta
2. La Newyorkina
3. South Philly Barbacoa
4. Don Paco López
5. Pediceros de Patria
6. La Providencia

October 22 - November 2
2021



DÍA DE MUERTOS
celebration

Day of the Dead

Oct 30 - 31, 2021 • 12 - 6 pm
Rsvp: www.mexofamiano.us

St. Mark's Church in-the-Bowery
135 E 10th St, New York, NY 10003

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