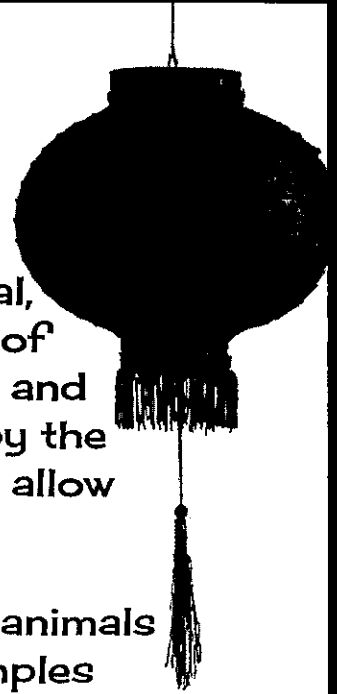


Halloween in China

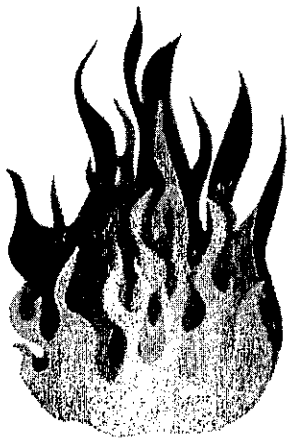
In China the Halloween festival is known as Teng Chie or the Lantern Festival. This celebration happens on the night of the full moon and marks the end of the Chinese New Year. During this festival, food and water are placed in front of photographs of relatives who have passed on. You will see bonfires and many lanterns during this time. The light given off by the lanterns is said both to attract heavenly spirits and allow the living to observe them.



Lanterns in the shapes of dragons, birds or other animals are hung in streets, placed in parks and outside temples and around homes. Short phrases are often written on them to ward off evil spirits. Some decorate their lantern with a riddle, offering a prize to the first person who solves it

Celebrations that are commonly observed include fireworks, folk dancing, and performances such as the dragon parade and lion dance. The special food associated with the festival is yuanxiao, a round, stuffed dumpling made with sticky rice flour that symbolizes family unity, completeness and happiness.

Another Hallowe'en festival is called The Hungry Ghosts Festival. In China the souls of the dead, particularly during the seventh lunar month, wander the earth in search of affection. They are known as the hungry ghosts because of their hunger for recognition and care.



The purpose of the Festival of the Hungry Ghosts, is to make spirits feel welcome and to satisfy their spiritual hunger. This will stop any possible anger they might have and gain their gratitude. You might see people tending roadside fires and burning faux money and other offerings for ghosts and ancestors to use in the afterlife. Food is also left out to curb the physical appetite of the hungry ghosts.

Halloween in Ireland

Ireland is believed to be the birthplace of Halloween! The traditions started in Ireland are celebrated in the United States and Canada today.

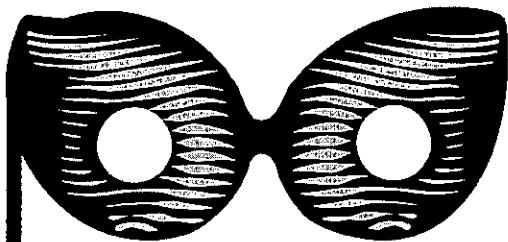
In rural areas in Ireland, bonfires are lit as they were in the days of the Celts, and children dress up in costumes to spend the evening "trick-or-treating" in their neighborhoods.

After the visiting, most people attend parties with neighbors and friends. At these parties, many games are played, including "snap-apple," in which an apple on a string is tied to a doorframe or tree, and players attempt to take a bite out of the suspended apple. In addition to bobbing for apples, parents often

arrange treasure hunts with sweets or pastries as the "treasure." The Irish also play a card game where cards are laid face-down on a table with sweets or coins beneath them. When a child selects a card, he or she receives whatever prize might be found there.



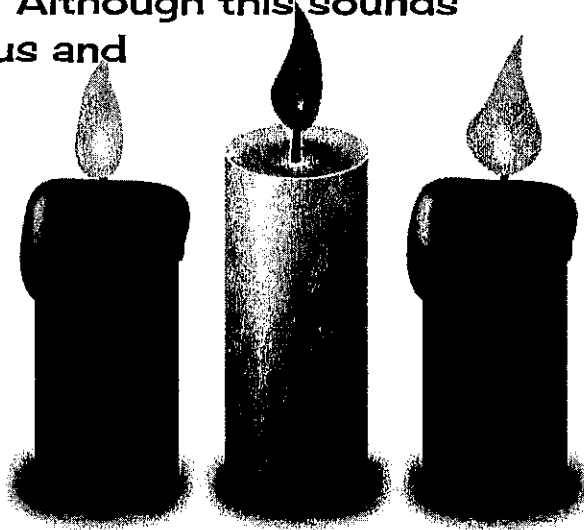
A traditional food is eaten on Halloween called "barnbrack." This is a type of fruitcake which can be baked at home or store-bought. A muslin-wrapped treat is baked inside the cake which, so it is said, can foretell the future of the one who finds it. If the prize is a ring, then that person will soon be married and a piece of straw means a prosperous year is ahead.



Children are also known to play tricks upon their neighbors on Halloween night. One of which is known as "knock-a-dolly," where children knock on the doors of their neighbors but then run away before the door is opened.

Halloween in Mexico

Among Spanish-speaking nations, Halloween is known as "El Dia de los Muertos." or Day Of The Dead. Although this sounds rather depressing, it is actually a joyous and happy holiday because it is a time to remember friends and family who are no longer alive. The three-day celebration begins on the evening of October 31. Designed to honor the dead who are believed to return to their homes on Halloween, many families construct an altar in their home and decorate it with candy, flowers, photographs, fresh water and samples of the deceased's favorite foods and drinks. This little altar is called ofrendas. Frequently, a basin and towel are also left out in order that the spirit can wash prior to indulging in the feast. Candles and incense are burned to help the departed find his or her way home.



Another celebration around this time is called Feast of the Holy Souls or Fiesta de las Santas Animas. For this celebration, families begin the fiesta by cleaning their relatives' graves and adorning them with pine needles and flowers. The families assemble a temporary altar near the gravesite, stocking the altars with candles and all kinds of foods such as meat, beans, chilies, salt, tortillas, and fruit. Each person in the family then takes turns in talking to the departed spirit, offering it the food and assuring it that it is loved. The ceremonies go

on for several days, as every family has more than one grave to attend to. On November 2, relatives gather at the gravesite to picnic and reminisce. Some of these gatherings may even include a mariachi band!