Hispanic/Latin Holidays
A brief overlook

Presented by:
Rosa Molina
Alfonso Cornejo
Juan Molina
Classification of Holidays

- Cultural
- Country Specific
- Historic
- Global
- Religious
- Adopted
- Social
- Cultural
Hispanic/Latin Holidays
Hispanic/Latin Holidays

• From the many traditional holidays celebrated by the Hispanic/Latin communities, for today’s presentation, we have selected three of them which have a significant influence in the USA:
  • Carnival presented by Alfonso Cornejo
  • Cinco de Mayo presented by Rosa Molina
  • Día de los Muertos presented by Juan Molina
What is a carnival?

A carnival involves a public celebration or parade combining some elements of a circus, masks and public street party.
What is a Carnival

- **Carnival** is a Western Christian festive season that occurs before the liturgical season of Lent.
- The main events typically occur during February or early March, during the Pre-Lent period.
- Carnival typically involves public celebrations, including events such as parades, public street parties and other entertainments, combining some elements of a circus.
- Elaborate costumes and masks allow people to set aside their everyday individuality and experience a heightened sense of social unity.
- Common features of Carnival include expressions of social satire; mockery of authorities; costumes of the grotesque body that display exaggerated features such as large noses, bellies, mouths.
- The Italian tradition of wearing masks dates back to the Venice Carnival in the 1400s, and has been an inspiration in Greek theater and “Commedia dell'arte” for centuries.
- Participants often indulge in excessive consumption of alcohol, meat, and other foods that will be forgone during upcoming Lent.
- This festival is known for being a time of great indulgence before Lent (which is a time stressing the opposite), with drinking, overeating, and various other activities of indulgence being performed.
- During Lent, animal products are eaten less, and individuals have the ability to make a Lenten sacrifice, thus giving up a certain object or activity of desire.
- Almost a Global celebration adopted primarily in many western Christian countries.
Origins of “Carnaval” - Europe, late 17th Century

Carnival in Venice, Italy

Carnival in Cadiz, Spain

Carnival in Marseille, France
Origins of “Carnaval”

• According to some, the carnival was originally a Greek spring festival in honor of the god of wine, Dionysus. The Romans adopted the same tradition with a feast in honor of Bacchus, the Roman god of wine.

• However, the festival using costumes originated with Italian Catholics in Europe, in the early 16th century.

• It later spread to the French and Spanish, who brought the pre-Lenten tradition with them.

• The derivation of the word is uncertain, though it possibly can be traced to the medieval Latin “carnem levare”, which means to take away or remove meat.

• This coincides with the fact that Carnival is the final festivity before the commencement of the 40 days of Lent, during which Roman Catholics in earlier times fasted, abstained from eating meat, and followed other ascetic practices.

• Then in the late 18th century a flood of French settlers brought the “Fat Tuesday” masquerade party tradition with them to Trinidad, Dominica, Haiti, Martinique, and other Caribbean islands.

• “Mardi Gras” is French for Fat Tuesday which is celebrated usually just before Lent, in February or March.

• Because traditionally many people go on a fast during Lent, giving up meat, sugar or other foods and drink, “Carnaval” is an opportunity to enjoy these treats for the last time.

• “Fiesta de Carnaval” is often the most popular celebration, usually held over three days prior to Ash Wednesday, but the festivities often extend to the full week.

• This festival "always includes music, dancing, costumes and parades"
Origins of “Carnaval”
Carnaval History in the Americas
Carnaval History in the Americas

• These traditional parties were brought to the Americas by the Spanish and Portuguese “conquistadores” (conquerors) around the 16th century.
• However, given the African and indigenous influence, which was infused from that starting point, carnival gained its own meaning in the Americas, and even a local identity in every place.
• That’s the case of the Tlaxcala Carnivals in Mexico, which are over 400 years old, or the unique Black and White Carnival in Colombia or the famous festivities of Brazil, which date back to 1723, as the Portuguese brought the tradition of celebrating and indulging on the day before Lent begins.
• The term Carnival is traditionally used in areas with a large Catholic presence, as well as in Greece.
• These festivities are observed in historically Evangelical Lutheran countries and in areas with a high concentration of Anglicans (Church of England/US Episcopal Church), Methodists, and other Protestants.
• “Mardi Gras” (or Fat Tuesday) is believed to have arrived in North America on March 3, 1699, when the French-Canadian explorer Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville camped about 60 miles downriver from the future site of New Orleans. Knowing it was Fat Tuesday back in France, Iberville named the spot Point du Mardi Gras and held a small gala.
“Sambódromo” in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

The largest display of Carnival dancers and floats in the world!
Importance of Carnival in Brazil

• The Carnaval in Rio de Janeiro - Brazil, is by far the largest and more important Carnaval on the world.
• It hosts more than one million participants & visitors in the 7 days – 24 hrs per day party!
• It is a wild celebration of food, alcohol, music and fun.
• In 2020, the revenue generated by the tourism and services sector during Carnival season in Brazil was forecasted to be the highest since 2015. Carnival contributed with around 7.91 billion Brazilian reals (about $1.5 Billion) to the Brazilian economy in 2019.
• This celebration is in anticipation to the “parade” of champions at the “Sambodromo” stadium.
• This is a specially designed stadium only used for one day each year to see the pre-selected champion Samba schools to compete annually for Carnaval prices and bragging rights.
• The Sambódromo consists of a stretch of 2,300 ft in length and 40 feet in width of a street converted into a permanent parade ground with bleachers and buildings built on either side for spectators. Its capacity is over 90,000 people.
• You can rent a seat in this stadium by the hour to see your favorite group pass in front of you!
“Sambódromo” in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
What is celebrated on “Cinco de Mayo”? 

- There appears to be a misconception on what is celebrated on “Cinco de Mayo”.
- The celebration started in Mexico and has since spread to parts of the United States.
- In the United States, the date has become synonymous with celebrating Mexican culture.
What is celebrated on Cinco de Mayo?

• Let’s start by clearing the biggest misconception: No, Cinco de Mayo is not the Mexican Independence Day which is celebrated on September 16th when in 1810 it was declared the war of independence from Spain.

• Cinco de Mayo is a celebration of Mexican heritage. It commemorates the date of the Mexican army’s victory over France at the Battle of Puebla in 1862.

• This celebration started in Mexico and has since spread to parts of the United States.

• In USA, these celebrations began in California, where they have been observed annually since 1863.

• The legendary date has grown beyond its history and has become a cultural bond between some Mexican immigrants and their roots.

• Cinco de Mayo wasn't widely celebrated in the U.S. until the 1960s when “Chicano” activists raised awareness of the holiday, in part because they identified with the victory of indigenous Mexicans over European invaders during the Battle of Puebla.

• The day gained nationwide popularity in the 1980s due to advertising campaigns by beer, wine, and tequila companies

• In the United States, the date has become synonymous with celebrating Mexican culture.
History of Cinco de Mayo

• In 1861, Benito Juárez was elected as the president of Mexico, inheriting a serious financial crisis.
• Mexico was in severe debt to multiple European governments after taking many loans from them.
• Because Mexico couldn’t pay back these loans, President Juárez had no choice but to default on the debt.
• In response, Spain, Britain, and France mobilized their naval units into Veracruz to demand repayment.
• Luckily, Mexico was able to negotiate with Britain and Spain, and they soon withdrew their forces.
• France decided to use the situation to try and rekindle their declining empire by usurping Mexican territory.

The French Navy sent several ships transporting an army of over 7,000 troops.
The French Navy arrived at Veracruz and successfully took the port, defeating the Mexican defenses.
After the swift victory at Veracruz, the French Army headed to Mexico City, via Puebla, with 6,000 troops.
History of Cinco de Mayo

• First, a little history lesson is necessary. In 1861, Benito Juárez was elected as the president of Mexico, inheriting the financial crisis the nation was facing at the time.
  • Mexico had been in financial ruin for years due to internal strife and was in severe debt to multiple European governments after taking many loans from them. Because Mexico couldn’t pay back these loans, President Benito Juárez had no choice but to default on the debt payments.

• In response, Spain, Britain, and France mobilized their naval units into Veracruz, Mexico to demand repayment.
  • Luckily, Mexico was able to negotiate with Britain and Spain, and they soon withdrew their forces before the situation elevated further.
  • France, on the other hand, saw this as an opportunity.

• Under the rule of Napoleon III, France decided to use the situation to try and rekindle their declining empire by usurping Mexican territory.
  • In late 1861, a French fleet invaded Veracruz and drove President Benito Juárez and his cabinet into a retreat from their seat of government.
Battle of Puebla

- Emboldened by the successful invasion of Veracruz, the French were confident their victory would be swift.
- With **6,000 troops**, the French set their sights on **Puebla** as the next objective before taking Mexico City.
- **On May 5, 1862**, the French army arrived with heavy artillery and began their assault on the town of Puebla.
- **The outnumbered Mexican Army**, with only **2,000 troops**, managed to successfully **win over the French army**.
- Four days later, on May 9, Benito Juárez declared **Cinco de Mayo a national holiday**.
The Battle of Puebla

- Emboldened by the successful invasion of Veracruz, the French were confident that their victory would be easy and fast.
- With 6,000 troops, the French set their sights on Puebla as their next objective, a small town located just 70 miles from Mexico City.
- President Juárez had relocated to Northern Mexico by that time, and in response to the invading army, he mustered a militia of 2,000 troops to meet the French at Puebla.
- Outnumbered, short on supplies, and lacking the same professional training the French troops received, the Mexican soldiers had a significant disadvantage.
- Still, General Ignacio Zaragoza led these soldiers to Puebla and fortified the town in anticipation of the French’s inevitable attack.
- Finally, on May 5, 1862, the French army arrived with heavy artillery and began their assault on the town.
- The Mexican army, led by general Ignacio Zaragoza, managed to successfully win over the French army at Puebla.
- Four days later, on May 9, Benito Juárez declared Cinco de Mayo a national holiday.
Yesterday was the Cinco de Mayo, a great day in the history of Mexico. It was observed by the Mexican population of Tucson in royal fashion. The day commemorates the final triumph over Maximilian, the French invader. The Mexican hall on lower Congress street was decorated with national colors and green branches formed a hedge around the wall. Patriotic speeches were made by prominent Mexicans of the city and a banquet was served to the guests. A dance was enjoyed later in the evening.
Traditions for Cinco de Mayo in Mexico

- In Mexico, celebrations are smaller than in the USA
- The majority of the Cinco de Mayo celebrations occur in Puebla.
- Tacos and margaritas are consumed the most on this holiday.
- Presently, Cinco de Mayo is not a federal holiday in Mexico.

Streets are dressed with colorful “Papel Picado” for the Celebration.

Puebla dancers move to the rhythm of traditional folk music.
Traditions for Cinco de Mayo in Mexico

• In Mexico, celebrations are smaller, the majority of the Cinco de Mayo celebrations occur in Puebla, where people observe this holiday to celebrate this important military victory.
  • People dress up either as French and Mexican soldiers or in colorful outfits to participate in large parades.
  • Patriotic clothing is sold by vendors for people to wear and stalls selling Mexican food are also found everywhere.
  • The battle is also sometimes reenacted, for locals and tourists to witness, the Mexicans’ grand victory against the French troops.

• Tacos and margaritas are consumed the most on this holiday, as well as “mole poblano”, which is the official dish of Cinco de Mayo.

• Cinco de Mayo is not a federal holiday in Mexico.
  • For some parts of Mexico, May 5th is simply a normal day like any other
  • Banks and other establishments are not closed.
  • However, students in Puebla get the day off from school.
Traditional Puebla Parades on Cinco de Mayo

Traditional Battle of Puebla Re-enactment on Cinco de Mayo
International Mole Festival

• Alongside Cinco de Mayo celebrations, the city of Puebla has also held the International Mole Festival in late April and early May for several years.

• The festival celebrates mole poblano — a dark, red-brown sauce served over meat which is typical in Mexican cuisine — with culinary discussions; exhibitions; and tastings from international, national, and regional chefs.

• The dish has become a culinary symbol of Mexico's mestizaje, or mixed indigenous and European heritage, both for the types of ingredients it contains and because of the legends surrounding its origin.

• This dish features spicy, smoky, and earthy-sweet notes contributed by ingredients such as chiles, nuts, warm spices, chocolate, raisins, and tomato.
Cinco de Mayo in the US

- More popular in USA than in Mexico, Cinco de Mayo has become a celebration of Mexican-American culture.
- The festivities primarily take place in parts of the US with large Mexican-American populations.

Tacos, salsa and other traditional dishes are always present on Cinco de Mayo.

Guacamole and chips, a traditional dish on Cinco de Mayo.
Cinco de Mayo in the US

• More popular in the United States than in Mexico, Cinco de Mayo has become associated with the celebration of Mexican-American culture.
  • Americans have been celebrating Cinco de Mayo for decades.
  • The first US celebration of Cinco de Mayo occurred in Columbia, California, a small town in Tuolumne County where Mexican workers got word of the victory in Puebla on 1862 and celebrated.

• As Cinco de Mayo has spread into the United States, the actual battle for Puebla has faded into the background, and the holiday has come to focus on simply celebrating Mexican culture and heritage.

• While there are no recreations of the battle, common festivities in Latino communities are taken to the streets including, parties, mariachi music, Mexican folk dancing, and of course, sharing traditional foods and eating millions of avocados from the traditional guacamole.
  • The festivities primarily take place in parts of the US with large Mexican-American populations,
  • Costume parties are hosted for friends and family, with the colors of the Mexican flag (red, white, and green) used in decorations.
  • Lively Mexican folk music is played. The celebrations are with large parades with colorfully dressed dancers and special promotions on Mexican food and beverages.
Top 7 Ways Americans Celebrate Cinco de Mayo

• 59% of Americans eat Mexican food
• 32% of Americans drink Margaritas
• 20% of Americans celebrate Mexican culture
• 17% of Americans drink Mexican beer
• 14% of Americans have a house party
• 8% of Americans read up on Mexican history
• 8% of Americans go clubbing or bar hopping
Where Cinco de Mayo is celebrated in Cincinnati

• **Fountain Square** - 520 Vine St., Downtown.
  • The Hispanic Chamber Cincinnati USA organizes the annual Cincy-Cinco Latino festival to share the food and traditions of our countries to the local residents. In the two day festival, it attracts 8 – 10 thousand visitors. Net profits are distributed among local organizations supporting Latino initiatives in the Health Care & Education areas.

• **The Purple People Bridge aka Newport Southbank Bridge** - 425 York St., Newport.
  • This year celebrated with margaritas, live music and plenty of tacos, perched above the breezy Ohio River.

• **The Hi-Mark** - 3229 Riverside Drive, East End.
  • A portion of the East End’s Riverside Drive was devoured by a sinkhole in January this year, and in honor of the road’s reopening, The Hi-Mark dubbed its celebration, “Sinkhole de Mayo.” This party included drinks and games.

• **Covington Yard** - 401 Greenup St., Covington.
  • Northern Kentucky entertainment hub Covington Yard celebrated Cinco de Mayo with drink specials, live music and food.
Facts from 5 de Mayo

• Cinco de Mayo has roots in Mexico, but it's become more widely celebrated in the US.
  • In the US, Mexican-Americans started observing Cinco de Mayo during the Civil War as a way to celebrate their heritage.

• It’s a hit with beer companies
  • Up to $600 million worth of beer can be sold on this day and can outsell the Superbowl and St. Patrick’s.

• Tequila reaches peak sales
  • The USA can consume about 127 million liters of tequila and mezcal on May 5.

• Avocado?
  • Americans can consume up to 87.3 million pounds of avocados on Cinco de Mayo.

• New York’s first
  • Corona became the first brand to gain permission to use the Times Square New Year's Eve ball, turning it into a lime and having it dropped on May 5, 2017.
Facts from 5 de Mayo

• With nearly 18 percent of the US population being Hispanic, it is no wonder Cinco de Mayo is celebrated with such passion and enthusiasm.
  • The largest Cinco de Mayo party in the world is held in Los Angeles where over 600,000 people attend every year.
  • Significant celebrations in the US are also held in Chicago, Denver, Houston, San Antonio, Sacramento, and San Francisco.

• Throughout the early- and mid-1900s in the US, the holiday was largely community-based and centered on celebrating Mexican heritage.
  • But by the 1980s, the day of festivities started to become commercialized.

• With an increasing Hispanic population and the growing popularity of Cinco de Mayo, beer companies realized there were huge profits to be made.
  • In the 1980s, Corona began huge advertising campaigns in the run-up to May 5.
  • They encouraged Mexican-Americans to celebrate their heritage by purchasing Mexican beer.
  • The effect was that Corona turned May 5 into an all-day happy hour.
  • Today, Cinco de Mayo generates beer sales on par with the Super Bowl.
Facts from 5 de Mayo

• President Franklin Roosevelt was responsible for bringing the party to the United States.
  • In 1933, he created the 'Good Neighbor Policy' as a way of improving relationships with Latin American countries.
  • By introducing Cinco de Mayo to the American people, they were now able to celebrate hand in hand with Mexicans, bringing the two cultures closer together.

• Washington, D.C., even holds the Running of the Chihuahuas, where Chihuahuas (a breed that originated in Mexico) race each other for fun.

• Both Presidents Bush and Obama took up the tradition of holding an annual Cinco de Mayo reception at the White House.
  • Cabinet members along with Latino celebrities and dignitaries would gather to embrace Mexican culture.

• It may surprise you to learn that Cinco de Mayo is no longer a national holiday in Mexico.
  • Although school children are given the day off, government offices and banks may or may not open depending on which state they are in.
  • Nevertheless, Puebla comes alive with colorful parades and reenactments of the famous battle.
A Day to celebrate in US the Mexican heritage
How to Celebrate Cinco de Mayo

• Learn about Mexico
  • Discover the beginnings of Cinco de Mayo and expand your appreciation of our southern neighbors.
  • Take the time to learn more about how their history has helped shape our own and the ways in which they have contributed to U.S. culture.

• Dance to Mexican music
  • Try learning traditional Mexican dances such as “Jarabe Tapatío” or The Hat Dance.
  • You can take a class or simply give it a go in your own home.
  • Not only is it fun, but the exercise will help you feel less guilty when you chow down on traditional food later!
  • The bigger the group, the bigger the fun, so invite your friends and have a little dance party!

• Cook an authentic traditional meal
  • One of the best ways to get to know a culture is through food.
  • So why not try creating a traditional Mexican meal at home, either alone or with friends?
  • Skip the standards, you can have those anytime.
  • Instead of guacamole or tacos, try making pozole or tamales.
  • You’ll love making it as much as eating it.

• As long as you have a reverence for the culture, an understanding of the battle of Puebla, and some good company, you’ll have everything you need to know about celebrating Cinco de Mayo.
Cinco de Mayo Overview
Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)

- On the Day of the Dead, it’s believed that the border between the spirit world and the real world dissolve.
- The Day of the Dead is a holiday where families welcome back the souls of their deceased relatives for a brief reunion that includes food, drink and celebration.
- A blend of Mesoamerican ritual, European religion and Spanish culture, the holiday is celebrated each year from October 31- November 2.
- Between Oct. 31 and Nov. 2, streets, homes and public spaces of towns and cities are lined with colorful, intricate garlands (or banners) made of paper and flowers.
Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)

• On the Day of the Dead, it’s believed that the border between the spirit world and the real world dissolve.
  • During this brief period, the souls of the dead awaken and return to the living world to feast, drink, dance and play music with their loved ones.

• The Day of the Dead is a holiday where families welcome back the souls of their deceased relatives for a brief reunion that includes food, drink and celebration.

• A blend of Mesoamerican ritual, European religion and Spanish culture, the holiday is celebrated each year from October 31-November 2.

• The holiday, with origins from pre-Columbian Mesoamerica rituals in Mexico, brings observers together to celebrate and honor the lives of dead family members and friends.

• Between Oct. 31 and Nov. 2, streets, homes and public spaces of towns and cities are lined with colorful, intricate garlands (or banners) made of paper and flowers.

• During parades and festivals, observers dress up in macabre, yet colorful, skeleton-like face paint and costumes.

• Observers believe during this part of the year, loved ones can return from the Chicunamictlán -- the land of the dead -- because the border between the real and spiritual world melts away.
  • According to tradition, the gates of heaven are opened at midnight on October 31st and the spirits of children can rejoin their families for 24 hours. The spirits of adults can do the same on November 2.

• On the lead-up to the day, observers build “ofrendas” --or altars -- as collective memorials filled with portraits of those who’ve passed on, sweet bread rolls, candles and dishes they enjoyed in life
  • The preparations leading up to the event are important and deeply rooted in Mexican culture. For observers, this is a deeply spiritual and family-bonding experience.
Origins of Day of the Dead

• The roots of the Day of the Dead, go back some 3,000 years, to the rituals honoring the deaths of ancestors in pre-Columbian Mesoamerica by Aztec and Nahua cultures.
• Upon dying, a person was believed to travel to “Mictlán”, the Land of the Dead.
• Family members provided food, water and tools to aid the deceased in this difficult journey.
• This festival celebrated the Aztec goddess of the underworld, “Mictecacihuatl”
• What began as ceremonies practiced by the ancient Aztecs evolved into a holiday recognized far beyond the borders of Mexico.
Origins of Day of the Dead

• The roots of the Day of the Dead, go back some 3,000 years
  • The Aztecs and other Nahua people held a cyclical view of the universe, and saw death as an integral, ever-present part of life.

• Upon dying, a person was believed to travel to Chicunamictlán, the Land of the Dead. Only after getting through nine challenging levels, a journey of several years for the person’s soul finally reach Mictlán, the final resting place.
  • Family members provided food, water and tools to aid the deceased in this difficult journey.
  • This inspired the contemporary Day of the Dead practice in which people leave food or other offerings on their loved ones’ graves, or set them out on makeshift altars called “ofrendas” in their homes.

• This festival celebrated the Aztec goddess of the underworld, Mictecacíhuatl.
  • It originally occurred in the ninth month of the Aztec calendar, which would correspond today to August, and lasted for the entire month.

• When Spanish colonizers came to the region, they carried the Catholic holidays of All Saints Day and All Souls Day, celebrated on the first two days of November.
  • Then the Day of the Dead was moved to correspond closer to these days

• What began as ceremonies practiced by the ancient Aztecs evolved into a holiday recognized far beyond the borders of Mexico.
## Difference between Halloween and Day of the Dead

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Day of the Dead</th>
<th>Halloween</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dates Celebrated</strong></td>
<td>From <strong>October 31 to November 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>October 31 only</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Origins</strong></td>
<td>Originated in Mexico and celebrated throughout Latin America</td>
<td>Originated with the <strong>ancient Celtic festival of Samhain</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose</strong></td>
<td>To celebrate, honor and <strong>remember deceased loved ones</strong></td>
<td>It began as a festival to <strong>ward off ghosts</strong> and has evolved into a night of costumes, parties and <strong>trick-or-treating</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbols</strong></td>
<td>Sugar Skulls, la Catrina, the “<strong>Ofrenda</strong>” (the altar that contains food, photographs of the deceased), the “<strong>Sempasúchil</strong>” (Marigold flower), Monarch butterflies</td>
<td>Pumpkins (<strong>Jack O’ Lanterns</strong>), Witches, Spiders, Black Cats, Skeletons, Ghosts, Candy, <strong>Orange and Black</strong> colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foods</strong></td>
<td><strong>“Pan de Muerto”</strong> (Bread of the Dead), Sugar Skulls, Tamales, Mole Sauce, stack of Tortillas, Fruits, Nuts, Milk, Water, Mezcal</td>
<td>All sorts of Candy (traditionally Candy Corn), <strong>Pumpkin Pie</strong>, Caramel and Candy Apples, <strong>Apple Cider</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Difference between Halloween and Day of the Dead

- The Day of the Dead is not, as is commonly thought, a Mexican version of Halloween, though the two holidays do share some traditions, including costumes and parades.

- While Halloween and Day of the Dead are celebrated on dates close to each other, they are totally different holidays.
  - The biggest key difference between Día de los Muertos and Halloween is the fact that Halloween originates from the Celtic belief that on the first night of Samhain, October 31st, the beginning of the Celtic year, the souls of the dead would return to cause trouble and damage crops.
    - Samhain, a Celtic festival celebrating the beginning of Winter, was the moment when the spiritual world became visible to humans, and the gods enjoyed playing tricks on mortals. It was also a time when the spirits of the dead mingled with the living.
    - The Celts believed in gathering all their harvests by Samhain, “so that it would not be damaged by the evil or mischievous spirits who could return on that evening, therefore token offerings of the harvested food should be offered to the spirits to placate them.
  - Another major distinction is that Halloween is only one night, whereas the Day of the Dead is actually a three-day event that is just getting starting on Oct. 31.

- However, one major similarity between Halloween and Day of the Dead is that both include elaborate decorations, visuals, and costumes.
  - For Day of the Dead, families set up “ofrendas” or altars in their homes, with bright flowers (often marigolds), “papel picado” (colorful banners), candles, personal objects, and incense.
  - For Halloween, homes and commercial establishments are decorated and people wear costumes
Day of the Dead Parade

Day of the dead parades became very popular in Mexico after the 2015’s Bond movie: “Spectre”
How Is the Day of the Dead Celebrated?

• In these ceremonies, people build altars in their homes or at the cemeteries with "ofrendas", which are offerings to their loved ones’ souls.
  • Candles light photos of the deceased and items left behind.
  • Families read letters and poems and tell anecdotes and jokes about the dead.
  • Offerings of tamales, mole sauce, water, tequila and "pan de muerto" (bread of the dead), a sweet egg bread.
  • All these offerings are lined up by bright orange or yellow cempasúchil flowers (marigold flowers), whose strong scent helps guide the souls home.
  • Incense from the Copal tree, used for ceremonies back in ancient times, is lit to draw in the spirits.
  • Clay molded sugar skulls are painted and decorated with feathers, foil and icing, with the name of the deceased written across the foreheads.
  • Altars include all four elements of life: water, the food for earth, the candle for fire, and for wind, "papel picado" (perforated paper), colorful tissue paper folk art with cut out designs to stream across the altar or the wall. They represent the wind helping souls make their way home.
  • On November 1, the day honoring the children spirits, altars are filled with everything in miniature: toys, chocolate, little glasses of milk and candies.
  • On November 2, the day honoring the adult spirits: cigarettes, mezcal, tequila, tamales, stacks of hand made tortillas, mole sauce, “pan de muerto” (a rich egg bread which is either decorated or braided), nuts and fruits.
  • As part of these ceremonies, families clean the graves at cemeteries, preparing for the spirit to come.
    • On the night of November 2, they take food to the cemetery to attract the spirits and to share in a community celebration.
    • Bands perform and people dance to please the visiting souls.
• It is believed that People are really dead when you forget about them, and if you think about them, they are alive in your mind, they are alive in your heart.
Day of the Dead Parade
Altar ("Ofrenda"), at a House and at a Cemetery
Building an Altar

• The altar (or “Ofrenda”) is typically set up in people’s homes or at graves. It contains items to “welcome them back to the earth,”

• Altars create a space for communication between the living and the dead. These altars have become a resource and connection to that world and that’s part of their popularity and their fascination.

• Building the altar is a wonderful activity. Everyone can participate and put something, either traditional or symbolic, on the altar. The altar is where the people can express their feelings for those loved ones being honored. The traditional altar explodes with color during Day of the dead when many special items are set out as offerings to the returning spirits. The entire family will work together in the decoration.

• When people are creating an altar, they are thinking about that person who is gone and thinking about their own mortality, to be strong, to accept it with dignity.

• The altar provides a feast for the visiting spirits. The most common ones have three levels, which represent heaven, earth, and the underworld

• An altar may honor more than one person and a cross made of marigold petals recognizes each person.

• These are the items typically seen on a Dia de los Muertos altar:
  • Photo and any special personal item of the deceased
  • Candles or “veladoras” - Candles are lit to welcome the spirits back to their altars.
  • Colorful Perforated Paper Banners or “Papel Picado”
  • Marigolds These yellow-orange flowers, also called cempasúchitl, which symbolize death and their strong fragrance also help lead the dead back to their altars.
  • Sugar Skulls with the name of the deceased
  • Big loaves of Bread of the Dead or “pan de muerto” symbolizing a fraternal offering to the souls.
  • Fruit, typically Oranges, Apples, Bananas, and Watermelon
  • Tamales, Mole Sauce, Stacks of hand made tortillas
  • Water, bottles of mezcal or tequila and “Atole” (a traditional corn-based drink) are offered as a way to guide the loved ones to the land of the dead.
  • Little skeleton figurines “alfoniquès” are used to decorate the altar and poke fun at death.
  • Some families also include a Christian crucifix or an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, Mexico’s patron saint

• Members of the family never eats off the altar until the food has been enjoyed by the spirits and they have safely returned to heaven. But on November 3, the family enjoys a feast they have been waiting for all year!
Building an Altar ("Ofrenda")
Countries that Celebrate Day of the Dead

• **Mexico** is not the only country that celebrates Day of the Dead.
• Many other Latin countries like **Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Peru Sand United States**.
• Traditions and customs vary per country, but the base beliefs remain the same.
Countries That Celebrate Day of the Dead

• **Mexico** is not the only country that celebrates Day of the Dead. Many other Latin countries like **Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Peru**, all have their distinct ways of welcoming back their passed loved ones.

• This tradition expanded throughout much of the **United States** where Mesoamerican immigrants have brought and conserved this festivity.

• Traditions and customs vary per country, but the base beliefs remain the same.

• All Souls Day is celebrated in parts of Europe but is nowhere near the equivalent of the festive celebrations of Day of the Dead in Mexico.
Día de Muertos in Cincinnati

• Give thanks and honor the dead
  • **Where:** 11381 Hanover Road, Forest Park, Ohio 45240
  • **What:** A new church in Forest Park has been hosting a celebration to honor the dead.
    • Usually, the night will begin with a church service and will be followed by a dinner.
    • Guests are encouraged to bring photos and food for the altar.
  • **When:** 6 to 9 p.m. Nov. 2

• Practice your Spanish and make crafts: Paintings and Pastries
  • **Where:** 9430 Main Ave., Cincinnati 45242
  • **What:** This kid-friendly event is hosted by Spanish Playdates and The Art Spark: A Creative Classroom.
    • There will opportunities to paint pumpkins and to do other Día de Muertos crafts.
    • Representatives from Spanish Playdates will be sharing music and activities to learn a little Spanish.
    • Donuts, juice and coffee will be offered. You can buy tickets at www.theartspark.com
  • **When:** 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Oct. 26
**Places in Cincinnati celebrating Day of the Dead**

- Spring Grove Cemetery (4521 Spring Grove Avenue)
  - Explore Spring Grove with its Public Tram Tour and honor the deceased by taking part in this unique tour.

- Heritage Village Museum (11500 Lebanon Road)

- Blue Manatee Bookstore (3094 Madison Road)
  - Head to Blue Manatee for Día de Muertos Story Time, which features special stories, “pan de muerto” and a themed craft.
Movies Featuring Day of the Dead

2014 20th Century Fox: “The Book of Life”

2015 James Bond’s “Spectre”

2015 Disney-Pixar “Coco”
Movies Featuring Day of the Dead

• On 2014, 20th Century Fox’s “The Book of Life” portrays this tradition with a magical twist, where Manolo embarks on an adventure that spans three fantastic worlds where he must face his greatest fears.

• Inspired on the 2015 James Bond movie “Spectre”, which featured a large Day of the Dead parade in Mexico City, in 2017, a number of major U.S. cities, including Chicago, Los Angeles, San Antonio and Fort Lauderdale, held Day of the Dead parades.

• That November, Disney and Pixar released the blockbuster animated hit ”Coco”, a homage to this tradition in which a young boy is transported to the Land of the Dead and meets up with his long-lost ancestors.
  • The film draws heavily from the Mayan tradition of the three deaths including the physical death, the soul unlinking from the body and living loved ones forgetting about the dead.

• But what’s loved about these movies is how well they show the culture
Skulls and Skeletons in Mexican Culture

• Perhaps the most popular part of the holiday is people turning themselves into skeletons using elaborate makeup and masks.

• Sugar skulls represent a departed soul, have the name written on the forehead and is placed on the home “ofrenda” or gravestone to honor the return of a particular spirit.

• The skull represents death and rebirth, the entire reason for Day of the Dead celebrations.

• The theme of the 3 days might be death, but the point is to demonstrate love and respect for deceased family members and a celebration of life.
Catrinas
Raise of the Catrina Skeleton

• On 1910, lithographer Jose Guadalupe Posada created, ”La Calavera Catrina”, or Elegant Skull, which represents an upper class female skeleton.

• Posada's intent with the image was to ridicule the others that would claim the culture of the Europeans over the culture of the indigenous people.

• The famous depiction of La Catrina was a skeleton with a big floppy hat decorated with two big feathers and multiple flowers on the top of it.

• The name 'Catrina' comes from the slang 'catrin' which referred to a well-dressed man or woman.

• According to urban legend, La Catrina's roots come from Aztec death goddess Mictecacihuatl.  
  • In the legend, the goddess served the same purpose as La Catrina does today: to honor and protect those who have passed and to symbolize the relationship Mexicans have with death.

• La Catrina Skeleton has become one of the biggest symbols of Day of the Dead with people painting their faces with skulls and flowers.
Skull Makeup
“Alfeñiques” or Sugar Art (small sculptures made of sugar)
Sugar Skulls and Alfeñiques

• Sugar skulls are sometimes eaten, but their main function is to adorn the altars and tombs with a sugary delight for the visiting spirits! Miniature candy skulls are made for the souls of the departed children, or baby little angels, and are displayed on the home “ofrendas” on November 1... then replaced with full size skulls on November 2 for the returning adult spirits!

• Sculptures made of sugar are an important part of Day of the Dead celebrations. Called sugar art, or alfeñique, these creations often take the form of colorfully decorated skulls (calaveras de azúcar), but skeletons, coffins, crosses and animals are also popular.

• Their role is to link the spirits and the real world and guide a person through their lives. Spiritual guides for your soul, reminders of your place in the world, and society, holders of the torch.
“Papel Picado” or Perforated Paper Banner”
“Papel Picado” or Perforated Paper Banner

• Mexican folk art, “Papel Picado”, is a decorative craft made by cutting elaborate designs into sheets of tissue paper
  • This art comes from the Aztec tradition of chiseling spirit figures on wood.
• It is used during Day of the Dead celebrations by stringing them on the altars and in the streets.
  • This delicately decorated tissue paper represents wind and the fragility of life.
• It is an integral part of Mexican culture.
  • No festival or celebration is complete without the colorful “Papel Picado” banners.
• “Papel Picado” is often incorporated into the altars during the Day of the Dead.
  • In the streets, “Papel Picado’s” are strung together to create a banner that can either be hung across alleyways or displayed at home.
Monarch Butterflies and Day of the Dead

• Monarch butterflies are believed to represent the souls of their loved ones that are coming back to visit on Day of the Dead, which coincides with the arrival of the monarch butterfly to their wintering site in Mexico.
**Mexican cempasúchil (marigold)**

- Marigolds are the most recognizable flower used to honor the dead on “Día de Muertos”.
- The flower is placed on graves during the holiday.
- It is believed to lure souls back from the dead to the land of the living with its vibrant colors and powerful scents.
Pan de Muerto (Bread of the Dead)

• “Pan de muerto”, or Bread of the Dead, is a sweet egg bread made in various shapes from plain rounds to skulls,
  • Often decorated with white frosting to look like twisted bones.
  • This bread is an integral offering on the altars, or “Ofrendas”
Meaning of Candles and Dogs on “Día de los Muertos”

• Candles represent fire and are a light guiding the spirits back to visit the land of the living.

• Dogs are revered as spirit guides to the kingdom of the dead
  • They are believed to guide the ancestral spirits to their final resting place in the afterlife.
  • Alebrijes are also often made to resemble our furry friends.
Alebrijes

- Alebrijes are spirit guides being strongly connected with nature.
  - The Aztec people created these symbolic creatures mixing two living animals with anthropomorphic characteristics.
  - Their role was to link the spirits and the real world and guide a person through their lives.
  - They are fantastical creatures made out of paper *maché* or carved from wood.
A wonderful way to celebrate the memories of our loved ones, who have passed on.
Conclusion

• Though the particular customs and scale of Day of the Dead celebrations continue to evolve, the heart of the holiday has remained the same over thousands of years.

• It’s an occasion for remembering and celebrating those who have passed on from this world, while at the same time portraying death in a more positive light, as a natural part of the human experience.

• It is more of a cultural holiday than a religious one.

• It is a wonderful way to celebrate the memories of our loved ones who are now gone.

• Through art, cooking, music, building “ofrendas”, we can recount family stories, fun times and lessons learned.

• It is not about how the person died, but how they lived.
WOO HOO! PRESENTATION OVER
ANY QUESTIONS