

# HALLOWEEN

Halloween is celebrated on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The word Halloween comes from 'All Hallows' Eve', which means the day before 'All Hallows', an Old English word for All Saints. All Saints Day is a Christian celebration to honour the people who have passed away, and in Spain we call it '*Día de todos los Santos*'. This is the reason why next Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup> is a bank holiday.

Apparently, Halloween originated in Samhain or Samain, an ancient Celtic tradition that marked the harvest and the start of the darker part of the year. It was believed that during Samhain the barriers between the physical world and the spirits broke down, allowing more interaction between humans and creatures from other dimensions. Did you know that in Galicia there is also a celebration called *Samaín*?

People from Europe who migrated to the United States of America took their traditions with them and Halloween became popular in the U.S. Now it has become one of the main holidays in the U.S as well as a popular celebration in many parts of the world. In Mexico, and to lesser extent in other areas of Latin America and the United States, they celebrate '*Día de los Muertos*', which has its roots in the rituals of the pre-Hispanic peoples of Mexico.

Halloween is celebrated especially by children and young adults by carving pumpkins into 'jack-o'-lanterns', dressing up in scary characters or just fancy dress, and playing 'trick or treat'. Some of these practices come from ancient times. The jack o' lantern originated in the British Isles, with a large turnip or other vegetable. Trick or treat perhaps comes from beggars who asked for 'soul cakes' at peoples' doors in return for prayers for the family's departed.

In Halloween some people are happy because they meet up with friends, dress up, and play trick or treat to get candy. Others may feel scared because they think that the spirits of the dead come to life. Some people might not like the holiday or feel it is just a U.S import. Others may prefer to stick to their own traditions and celebrate *Samaín* instead or decide to focus on 'All Saints Day'. Whichever way **you** feel, we would like to wish you a pleasant holiday.

Sources:

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