

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

Saint Patrick's Day is a national holiday in Ireland that is celebrated each year on March 17. The holiday originally began as a celebration of the life and work of Saint Patrick, the man who brought the Christian faith to Ireland a very long time ago. Today, the holiday mainly celebrates all aspects of Ireland's rich culture and heritage. It is celebrated not only in Ireland; but all around the world.

To celebrate Saint Patrick's Day, everyone goes green! Green is the national colour of Ireland, symbolising the lush, emerald pastures of the country. Irish people wear green clothes, hats, jewellery, face paint... some people even dye their hair green! It is tradition to pinch an Irish person who is not wearing green on Saint Patrick's Day.

Another popular symbol displayed on Saint Patrick's Day clothing is the shamrock. This three-leaved clover is thought to have been used by Saint Patrick when he was teaching about Christianity. Nowadays, it is more commonly recognised as a symbol of good luck.

Other people may dress up as leprechauns. Leprechauns usually have white stockings, a red beard and a green top hat. Irish children are told the story of these tiny fairy shoemakers who can be found at the end of a rainbow with a pot of gold. Today, the leprechaun is seen as a symbol of good fortune.

Saint Patrick's Day is a public holiday in Ireland, which means that families and friends can spend the day celebrating together. Parades are a very important part of the celebration. Communities gather together all over Ireland to dress in traditional costumes, play Irish music or perform traditional Irish dances performances. Fireworks are a common feature of the celebrations.

Traditional Irish food is cooked and shared on Saint Patrick's Day. Some common foods on the menu include Irish stews with potatoes

and cabbage, Shepherd's pie, boiled ham and soda bread. Cakes and biscuits covered in green icing are also a common treat on Saint Patrick's Day.

Today, Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated in countries all over the world. It is especially important in countries with a high number of Irish migrants, such as the United States of America, Canada and Australia.



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