

# Día de Muertos

El Día de Muertos is a celebration of life's cycle with emphasis on honoring and remembering those who have passed away. Día de los Muertos is primarily celebrated in Mexico on November 2nd with variations in other Latin-American countries such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and Guatemala. Historically, Día de Muertos has prehispanic origins; peoples from the Mexica and Aztec civilizations developed a rich ritualistic tradition of honoring their ancestors and the afterlife. For example, the Aztecs buried their dead with various offerings and objects to aid their transition to the afterlife, the *Mictlán*. After the Spanish conquest, the syncretic fusion of the Spaniard's Catholic *Día de Todos los Santos y Toda las Almas* (Day of the Saints and the Souls) and the Native peoples' celebrations of the death created the current Día de Muertos.



Modern celebrations of Día de Muertos takes a rather colorful and humoristic approach. People make artful decorations from colored paper, often including elaborate designs of *calacas* or skeletons. A particularly important component of Día de Muertos is the traditional altars. Altars are uniquely crafted for individuals: family members or, in the case of communal altars, important figures in the larger society. Altars are a symbol of remembrance, featuring pictures and the deceased's favorite foods as well as flowers, candles, water, and *pan dulce* (sweet-bread). Cemeteries become places of celebration with music, food, and the tradition *flor de cempasúchil*, whose vibrant orange and yellow colors contrast with the coldness of the tombstones. El Día de Muertos has also had an important influence on Mexican literary culture with short poems called *Calaveras*. Calaveras are satirical poems that mock death and often make fun of important figures such as politicians in the context of death.

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## Mexican Hot Chocolate Starter Pack

- Chocolate Abuelita (click [here](#) for Amazon link)
  - *Recipe instructions are in back of Abuelita packaging*
- Milk (*whole milk recommended*)
- Pan Dulce (can be purchased through uber eats at [La Fiesta Bakery](#))
  - Pan de Muerto (*traditional*)
  - Marranitos (*Julian's favorite*)
  - Concha (*Edgar's favorite*)