

# Patch Program

## Día de los Muertos – A Day of the Dead Celebration

Discover the vibrant Mexican cultural celebration that honors deceased loved ones, transforming grief into a colorful fiesta of life, love, and connection across generations.

Be entered into our featured patch sweepstakes! Patch purchasers will be automatically entered into our sweepstakes, with the chance to win a beautifully embroidered, backpack purse for your future travel adventures! Read the [sweepstakes rules](#) for details.

### Grade level requirements:

**Daisies (grades K-1).** Choose 1 activity from each category.

**Brownies (grades 2-3).** Choose 2 activities from each category.

**Juniors (grades 4-5).** Choose 2 activities from each category.

**Cadettes (grades 6-8).** Choose 3 activities from each category.

**Seniors (grades 9-10).** Choose 4 activities from each category.

**Ambassadors (grades 11-12).** Choose 4 activities from each category.

When you're done, [submit photos](#) and a story to inspire other Girl Scouts to earn this patch, too. [Purchase patch](#) by October 30.

**Sources:** Acosta, T., Kaur D. What is Day of the Dead? Ultimate guide to Día de los Muertos Traditions.azcentral.com.

Bethy B. When is Day of the Dead 2025: Celebrations & Traditions.  
[trip.com/hot/articles/day-of-the-dead](https://trip.com/hot/articles/day-of-the-dead).

# Discover

- **Kindred Holidays** - Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a Mexican and Mexican American holiday whose intricate history is intertwined with the history of Mexico. This holiday celebrates and honors ancestors, family members, and loved ones who have died. The graves of loved ones are decorated, special foods are made, shrines are built to honor the dead and special festivals and processions are held. Día de los Muertos is often celebrated on November 1 or 2, lining up with the Catholic celebration of All Saint's Day. While separate from Halloween, Día de los Muertos is starting to become associated with the Halloween season in America. Are there similarities between Halloween and Día de Los Muertos? Differences? Brainstorm and discuss with others how you would compare the two holidays.
- **Habla Español** - Uncover how the Spanish language ties into the celebration by looking up these words relating to Día de los Muertos and find out their use during the holiday: papel picado, ofrenda, angelitos, calaveras, calaca, cascarnes and pan de muerto. Use the [mix and match sheet](#) to help define these terms.
- **Música de Fiesta** - Listen to three styles of Latin music (mariachi, salsa, cumbia, etc.) and identify the music's country of origin. How does each type of music make you feel? What types of dances are associated with each type of music? Make a party playlist of your favorite songs!
- **Remember Me** - Watch the 2017 animated film, "Coco," to better understand the traditions of Día de los Muertos and Mexican culture. What are things you can relate to from this movie? How does your family keep the memory of your loved one(s) alive?
- **Storytime** - Read the book "Rosita y Conchita" by Eric Gonzales and Erich Haeger or [listen to the book](#). How does Conchita feel about the memory of Rosita? What lessons can we learn from Conchita's actions and how she honors her sister? What emotions does this story evoke?
- **What is an Altar?** - Some believe that the dead are allowed to return to Earth once a year, on the Day of the Dead. Many build altars with offerings or "ofrendas", on display. The altar welcomes the deceased and demonstrates love toward the dearly departed. The altar often includes

photos of the deceased, religious icons, favorite food items of the deceased, and **four main elements of nature**:

- **Earth** is represented by crops. Placing fruit or favorite family dishes on the altar provides nourishment for the beloved souls.
- **Wind** is represented by a moving object. Papel picado (tissue paper banners) is commonly used to represent the echoes of the wind.
- **Water** is placed in a container for the soul to quench its thirst after the long-awaited journey to the altar.
- **Fire** is represented by a candle. Each lit candle represents a loving soul, and an extra one is placed for the forgotten soul (for safety, use battery operated candles only).

Find five different images of Día de los Muertos altars and see if you can spot the four elements in each one.

## Connect

- **Make a Calavera Mask** - Most calavera masks are decorated with floral drawings and other organic patterns. What colors would you use? Are there any special symbols/motifs that you want to include? It could be something that reminds you of your family or friends, or even your pet. Keeping these ideas in mind, color and decorate a [skull pattern](#). Cut out the skull and the eyes. Then, punch holes on either side of the skull and tie a string or yarn through each hole to make your mask's headband.
- **Calavera/La Catrina Makeup** - "Calavera" is the Spanish word for skull, and "La Catrina" refers to the iconic image of an elegantly dressed female skeleton created by Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada. While "La Catrina" is a specific character, the makeup style inspired by her is also commonly referred to as La Catrina makeup. Learn and practice calavera face painting techniques on a buddy with a [Day of the Dead makeup tutorial](#). Take a selfie of your finished faces!
- **Photo Memories** - During Día de los Muertos, pictures are widely used to honor the deceased individual. Find some of your favorite photos of loved ones that have passed. Celebrate their life by writing down three things they did that made the world a better place.

- **Make Papel Picado** – The process of making papel picado is similar to cutting out paper snowflakes. Cut different colored tissue paper into same sized, square sheets. Fold one sheet in half, and in half again. Cut out whatever patterns and shapes you'd like on the folded edges only. Open it up, then fold the top side over a section of a long string, securing it with tape. Repeat with alternate colored tissue sheets creating a long banner. Hang and enjoy your homemade decoration!
- **Flower Creations** -Cempasuchitles or marigolds, are known as the “flower of the dead.” The flowers bloom in the valleys of Mexico during the months of October and November with a bright orange color. This flower is said to aid the spirits in wandering back home. [Make your own marigold flowers](#) out of tissue paper and pipe cleaners!
- **Prepare Traditional Foods** - No Day of the Dead celebration is complete without yummy treats! Many families prepare enchiladas, tamales, and other favorite dishes of their loved ones as offerings, as it's believed that spirits consume the essence of the food left for them. Try whipping up some of these traditional recipes:
  - Mexican Hot Chocolate - With an adult's help, heat 4 cups of milk and a chocolate bar using the stove or a microwave until it starts to boil. Be careful, it will be hot! Pour the milk and chocolate in a blender and add cinnamon and sugar to taste. Pulse for 30 seconds or until fully mixed. Serve and enjoy!
  - Pan de Muertos - [Day of the Dead bread](#) is a sweet, enriched dough flavored with fragrant orange zest, warm cinnamon and is decorated with bone shaped pieces of dough that are dusted with sugar. Goes perfect with hot chocolate!
  - Calaveras de Azúcar - [Calaveras de Azúcar](#) are traditional Día de los Muertos craft-like, homemade sugar skulls. Besides being cute and colorful, sugar skulls are a beloved icon because they represent the soul of a departed loved one.

# Take Action

- **Build a Shoebox Altar** - Honor a loved one or someone you admire and would like to celebrate and remember by building a mini altar. Include a picture(s), marigolds, and the four elements of nature found in most [Oferendas](#).
- **Fiesta Time** - Throw a Día de los Muertos party with your troop! Celebrate and remember those who've passed together. Decorate with some of the crafts made above, set up ofrendas and of course, include plenty of traditional Mexican food and music!
- **Immerse Yourself** - Attend a Día de los Muertos celebration in your community. Check your city's community calendar, local art museums and/or Catholic churches for these events.
- **Join a Parade** - In many cities all over the country, parades have become an essential part of the Day of the Dead celebrations. Mexico City's annual parade for example, features dancers, floats, and costumes, drawing thousands of visitors each year. Parades showcase Mexican cultural symbols, such as skull masks and alebrijes (fantastical creatures). Investigate what parades are taking place near you and make a plan to attend or even march in the parade!
- **Send a Postcard** - Our Cabaña is one of the five World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS) World Centers. It is located in Cuernavaca, Mexico. It opened in 1957 and has had over 70,000 Girl Guides and Girl Scouts visit its location. It is the biggest of the WAGGGS World Centers and is operated by Guías de México (Girl Guides of Mexico). Some of the biggest special events held at Our Cabaña include a visit to the Monarch Butterfly Sanctuary, a preservation program for sea turtles and an annual [Día de los Muertos celebration](#). Write a postcard wishing our sisters at Our Cabaña a happy Día de los Muertos! Make sure to include your Girl Scout level and council so they know where in the world they are receiving the postcard from!
  - **Our Cabaña's Address** - Av Río Mayo Sn, Vista Hermosa, 62290 Cuernavaca, Mor., Mexico