



El Día de los Muertos y Calaveras

The roots of **Día de los Muertos** go back some 3,000 years. This Mexican holiday, observed Nov. 1-2, is a joyful celebration of the lives of family and friends who have passed away. Traditions like traveling to burial grounds, cooking food such as **pan de muerto**, decorating graves, participating in a town-wide parade and hosting gatherings are among the many ways people celebrate **Día de los Muertos**.

Over the years, the rituals have been adopted and adapted by cultures around the world. Sugar Skulls, known as **calaveras**, are an important symbol representing El **Día de los Muertos**. They are used as symbols to remember a person who has passed away. **Calaveras** are made of a granulated white sugar mixture that's pressed into skull-shaped molds and then elaborately decorated. Not everything on a sugar skull is edible. **Calaveras** are commonly decorated with sequins, colored foils, feathers, beads and glitter. The calaveras are also often decorated with the name of the person who has passed away. Oftentimes you will also see **calaveras** painted on faces or found in gift shops colorfully decorated and made of wood, ceramic, glass and even paper-maché.

Each sugar skull represents a departed loved one and is usually placed on **altares** (altars) as an **ofrenda**, which is an offering. You can also find them on gravestones as a dedication to the **espíritu** (spirit) of the departed.

T

