



Dia de los Muertos

day of the dead unraveled

KAURIANA KENDALL
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Halloween comes with monsters, costumes, candy and more. At the same time the ghost and witch welcome signs appear, sugar skulls start to pop up in the decor aisle, as well as in apparel, where they have become popular t-shirt designs, and even on things like phone cases and cups. What not everyone understands is that these sugar skulls are a part of

an important religious Mexican holiday called Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead.

Dia de los Muertos is recognized and celebrated in communities in small ways worldwide; however, it is most sacredly

observed in southern and central Mexico on November 1 and 2.

"It's a day to celebrate the life of the people

that have passed away," Spanish teacher Sonia Tolkov said. "[You] make a little altar of what [those who have

died] used to like. There is a bread that they call Pan de los Muertos, the bread of the dead, and they put it there just [as a] representation."

In many cases, in areas where the holiday is less celebrated, people will dress up in traditional skirts and dresses and paint their faces as extravagant skulls, or calaveras, to go to the cemeteries where those loved ones are buried. Those celebrating will often clean and decorate the graves.

"That day, the people go to the cemeteries and take flowers and just remember them," Tolkov said. "Going to the cemeteries is a big part of the celebration."

Though it may sound like a depressing day that should not claim the title "holiday," the attitude is one of fun and enjoyment. It is a day to honor those who have passed by participating in activities they enjoyed and thinking of all the good times, rather than being upset by it. ☐



Example of a traditional sugar skull decoration.
Illustration by: Laura Barbé