

The Day of the Dead is also known in the Mexican culture as El Dia de los Muertos. It is a holiday celebrated mainly in Mexico and the Mexican community living around the United States and Canada.

November – the Death of Days

Ancient farmers were advised to sow the fall wheat and barley and to trench around the trees.

November has arrived. There is a chill in the air, and the hours of sunlight are noticeably shorter. Those colder gray days of winter are on their way. Perhaps the first frost has appeared or even a light dusting of snow. The green growing season is definitely over and gone for one more year. The grains have been threshed, the apples and crops picked, the grapes pressed into new wine and stored, and the seeds placed in underground bins to keep over the winter. We have journeyed through the sensual months of spring, those months of creative energy fueled by youthful hormonal exuberance. We have passed the months of fullness and ripeness, and continued on through the harvest period of endings.

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In November, Roman farmers prepared for the long, hard winter rapidly approaching, stocking up plenty of fodder and wood to keep the home warm for the cold months. On a spiritual level in the Roman calendar, with the intensity of September's and October's rituals over, everything seems to wind down in November. There is calm in November, and we are midway through the autumn season, a good month away from the solstice and the crisis invoked by seasonal change.



The traditional mood for this holiday is bright with emphasis on celebrating and honoring the lives of the dead. This is because they think of The Day of the Dead as the continuation of life. They believe that death is not the end, but the beginning of a new stage in life.

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The year, in many ways is a metaphor for our lives, and this is apparent as we reach these last few months. Death awaits each of us-a fact of the life cycle that we cannot change and that becomes more apparent as we age. As the dark noticeably predominates over daylight, November marks the time of acceptance and acknowledgment of the final time, the dying time. The all-encompassing bond with nature and the intimate association with the span of human life and the natural yearly cycle are evident and form a core Roman belief in this passage by Ovid, in which the tone is acceptance:

What? Don't you see that the year follows in four phases, imitating our own lifetime?



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In early spring, it is youthful and full of new life just like a little baby; in spring all things green and growing are also young and fragile, bursting with life yet without strength, to fill the fanners with hopes of an abundant crop.

Then, everything is in bloom and the fertile fields burst with brightly colored flowers; still the foliage lacks strength and endurance. After spring has passed, the year has grown sturdier, and passes into summer: It becomes like a strong young man, full of life. There is no hardier time than this, none fuller of rich warm life. Then autumn comes with its first flush of youth gone; ripe and mellow midway between youth and age, with a sprinkling of gray hair at the temples. And then comes aged winter, with faltering step and shivering, the hair all gone or frosted white.

The finality and inevitability of death is eloquently expressed in this deeply moving myth of Orpheus and his most beloved Eurydice.