

## Festival of the Souls 2024



Mexico has a unique culture centered around the concept of death. It is both respected and feared, but at the same time, people coexist with it and even laugh with it.

For visitors and new residents of our city, it is interesting to learn a bit about our local traditions, particularly our celebration of the Day of the Dead, which is similar to other traditional festivals in the country but somewhat distinct from the famous Halloween.



The Festival of the Souls is a tradition that began in 2008, when it was first held in Mérida. This parade is based on the belief that the souls of the deceased leave the cemetery to spend a few days back in the world of the living. Over time, the celebration has evolved and become a series of events aimed at preserving and promoting the rich heritage of Maya culture.



This year, 2024, the Mérida City Council has planned more activities around this celebration, called the Festival of the Souls. The event, organized by the Mérida City Council (led by Mayor Cecilia Patrón Laviada), will last for nine days, from October 26th to November 3rd. The Festival of the Souls 2024 will feature a variety of cultural events aimed at promoting the participation of all sectors of society.



The celebrations will begin on Saturday, October 26th at 8 p.m. with a Catrina festival, featuring a presentation of various Mexican scenes performed by artists dressed as Catrinas, in order to commemorate the traditions from other states of our country. The already famous Paseo de las Ánimas will take place on Thursday, October 31st at 6 p.m., starting from the General Cemetery and heading towards San Juan Park.

There will be photography exhibitions, altar displays, a dance festival, conferences on legends, and even a Pib festival, showcasing our traditional food! You can check the activities, schedules, and venues for each event at this link.

<https://www.merida.gob.mx/animas/>



Despite being a celebration of Maya origin, the customs surrounding it underwent changes with the arrival of the Spanish and the missionaries, who adapted the ancient traditions to religious beliefs. And these customs continue to evolve, such as the recent trend of painting one's face as a Catrina, for example.

These traditions strive to remain relevant in this era of rapid technological advancements, especially with the influence of other celebrations and customs, such as Halloween. It is important to remember that this is a religious celebration, which is why masses are also held in various churches and cemeteries. The main purpose of Hanal Pixán and Day of the Dead in general is to remember with love those who have passed before us.



Definitely, the Maya culture remains one of the most important in Mexico and for the rest of the world due to its contributions in various fields. But undoubtedly, the traditions that the Maya populations still preserve are truly incredible, as they speak to a culture that respects not only the land but also their loved ones and, above all, life. The Day of the Dead in Yucatán is something very special.

We invite you to learn about and experience our traditions. Enjoy the Festival of the Souls!



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