



Tuesday, October 21st, 2014



HAPPY HALLOWEEN !

On October 31st, the night before All Saints' Day, Americans, Scots and Irish people celebrate Halloween : they dress up as witches and ghosts, have parties, tell ghost stories and play games.

Hallowe'en is the second biggest celebration in America after Christmas. Every year Americans spend more than \$2.5 billion on sweets, cards, costumes and decorations. More than 66 per cent of houses are decorated.



Hallowe'en was originally a Celtic festival called Samhain celebrating the New Year. Celts believed that the dead could come back to the world on that day. So people wore costumes like witches and ghosts. Today, Irish and Scottish kids dress up for Hallowe'en, and they visit houses and sing a song or tell a joke. If they don't get sweets, they play a trick.

Irish and Scottish immigrants took Halloween to America. American kids started celebrating Halloween in the 1950s.

Trick or treat = Des bonbons ou un sort !



VOCABULAIRE

- ~ All Saints' Day = la Toussaint
- ~ to dress up = se déguiser
- ~ a witch (pl. witches) = une sorcière
- ~ a ghost = un fantôme
- ~ Christmas = Xmas = Noël
- ~ sweets = des bonbons
- ~ the dead = les morts
- ~ to wear, wore, worn = porter un vêtement
- ~ a song = une chanson
- ~ to play a trick = jouer un (mauvais) tour



Halloween

Halloween, the time of pumpkins, candies, ghosts, witches and much more, is annually celebrated on October 31st.

That's the night before All Saints Day. Its origins date back thousands of years to the Celtic festival of Samhain or The Feast of the Sun, a most significant holiday of the Celtic year. This day marked the end of summer but also the season of darkness as well as the beginning of the New Year on 1 November.

Druids in Britain and Ireland would light bonfires, dance around them and offer sacrifices of animal and crops. The fires were also intended to give warmth to the households and to keep free from evil spirits. Through the ages these practices changed.



The Irish hollowed out turnips, placed a light inside to keep away the bad and stingy Jack. As the legend says, Jack was a man who tricked the devil and after Jack had died he was allowed neither in heaven nor in hell. With a lantern in his hand he began to search for a resting place on Earth. This was the original Jack-o-Lantern. Since Halloween came to America from Ireland (Scotland and Wales) people used pumpkins because they were bigger and easier to hollow out than turnips.



During the centuries the cultures have added their own elements to the way Halloween is celebrated.

Children love the custom of dressing-up in fancy costumes and going from door-to-door yelling "Trick-or-Treat". Adults instead join spooky parties which are nearly held all over the cities and villages on that special evening. A spooky decoration, games and "frightening food" are nuts and bolts for a Halloween party your friends won't soon forget.

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