



# All About Ireland

Information, traditions and St. Patrick's day



# Ireland

The Republic of Ireland is in the Atlantic Ocean, northwest of continental Europe. The country has a population of around 4.2 million and its capital city is Dublin. There are two official languages in Ireland, Irish and English. It has a mild climate with mild winters and cool summers. People call Ireland 'The Emerald Isle' because of its green vegetation and landscapes.





Landscapes of Ireland

## Symbols of Ireland

The flag of the Republic of Ireland is tricolour of green, white and orange. The harp is the official emblem of Ireland and it is unique to have a musical instrument used as a symbol to represent a country. The official currency of Republic of Ireland is the euro. Shamrock is a national symbol of Ireland. The patron saint of Ireland is St. Patrick.



IRISH TRICOLOUR  
NATIONAL FLAG



COAT OF ARMS OF IRELAND  
COAT OF ARMS



EURO  
NATIONAL CURRENCY



ST. PATRICK  
PATRON SAINT



IRISH WOLFHOUND  
NATIONAL ANIMAL



SHAMROCK  
NATIONAL FLORAL EMBLEM



STOUT  
NATIONAL DRINK



IRISH STEW  
NATIONAL DISH



## St. Patrick's Day

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in Ireland and around the world by people from Ireland

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on march 17 th each year. It is the feast day of Ireland's patron saint, Patricks.



# St. Patrick

St. Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland, was born in Wales around 385 AD. His real name was not Patrick but Maewyn Succat. He had wealthy parents and they had a good life in the country. When he was 16 years old he was captured by pirates who took him to Ireland and sold him to a farmer. He worked as a shepherd, tending sheep and pigs. He was very lonely and prayed all the time. One night, after more than six years as a prisoner, Patrick heard a voice - which he believed to be God's - telling him to escape. He walked for more than 200 miles until he reached the coast. He boarded a ship that took him to France where he became a priest.

He went back to Wales but, several years later, another vision told him that he had to return to Ireland to convert the Druid Irish people to Christianity. St. Patrick lived and preached in Ireland for many years. Instead of disregarding native Irish beliefs, he incorporated traditional customs and rituals into his lessons. He used the shamrock, a three-leaf clover, to explain the Christian concept of God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit).



# Shamrock

The story goes that St Patrick used the shamrock to teach the Celts about the Holy Trinity. The Celts held the number three in special regard and St Patrick cleverly tapped into this. Merging Celtic symbolism with Christian meaning, the three leaves of the shamrock represented the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.



## Green

On the feast of St. Patrick's Day is wearing green clothes. Green is the national color of Ireland, referring to the grassy landscape of the island and symbolizing the clover traditionally attributed to Saint Patrick. In many cities, the Irish organize fairs, dominated by greenery.

# Other traditions with green

Saint Patrick's scholars thought that wearing green makes one invisible to leprechauns, fairies who will pinch everyone they see (anyone who doesn't wear green). People have started to pinch those who haven't dressed in green to remind them that leprechauns sneak up and pinch those who don't have green clothes or things. Adults on this day drink green alcohol.





## Green Food

In Ireland, the next tradition is eating green food. It is one of the most popular traditions on this day. These are most often green vegetable food and sweet cookies



# Parades

In Ireland and around the world, parades are celebrated on this day. Currently, one of the largest parades is held in Chicago, with hundreds of thousands of people crowding the banks of the Chicago River to celebrate how green they are in the celebration. Even the fountain in the White House in Washington turns green for the whole day.





Fountain in front of the White House

# Leprechauns

According to Irish legend, leprechauns were cranky tricksters who you wouldn't want to mess with. They live alone and pass the time by mending the shoes of Irish fairies. The Americanized, good-natured leprechaun soon became a symbol of St. Patrick's Day and in Ireland. Leprechauns were believed to know where great treasures are hidden.



