

SAINT PATRICK' S DAY

by Jakub Jasnós

Saint Patrick 's day, which is also known as Feast of Saint Patrick or *Lá 'le Pádraig* is celebrated on the 17th of March. It is both a cultural and a religious celebration as a remembrance day of the death of Saint Patrick, however the biggest celebrations happen in Ireland, as he is te patron of the country. On this day everyone dresses in green, and the adults drink a lot of alcohol.

This is a tradition comes from the 17th century, when the Christians, who belonged to the church services had their eating and drinking restrictions lifted for the day.



History of Saint Patrick

Saint Patrick was born in the year 385 ad. in Great Britain. He was a missionary in the 5th century and the Bishop of Ireland. Eventhough, he was never formally canonised, since there were different laws at the time, the Catholic and Orthodox church consider him has a Saint, due to his actions such as being the main spreader of christianity in Ireland. When he was sixteen years old, he was captured by pirates, and taken as a slave to Ireland. After six years of looking after animals he managed to escape and return to his family. After he became a cleric, he returned to Northern and Western Ireland. In his later life he became a bishop. Since the 17th century he is concidered the patron saint of Ireland.



Green is the national colour of Ireland. It symbolises the landscape of the country, which is basically covered in grass. The other symbolization is the green clover, which is memorised with Saint Patrick, as during his life he used it as an example for the pagans to show an example of how the trinity is at the same time three and one. The tradition of "Saint Patrick's mug" which is a mandatory cup of Whiskey, which everyone has to drink comes from a legend, which says that Saint Patrick once visited a bar and told the bar keeper, that if she doesn't start filling up the mugs to the brim, a monster will come to the place. From that moment on, the lady filled every cup to the very brim.



Saint Patrick' s Day in Other Countries

Ireland is not the only country that celebrates this day. For example in Poland in Gdańsk they turn the Anchors to be green. In the US it is celebrated since 1737, when the Irish charitable organization from Boston organised the first parade. In other countries on this day many people drink green Beer. This tradition however does not come from Ireland, but from the descendants of Irishman, that emigrated to America in the XIX and XX century. This tradition came to Ireland thanks to the tourists, who came there expecting a cup of Green Beer. Another way that many countries celebrate this day, is by colouring many famous buildings green such as; the London eye, Table mountain, the Nigara falls, Opera ins Sydeny and the leaning tower of Pisa.

- It is believed that Saint Patrick got rid of all the snakes in Ireland
- The three leaves of the clover symbolize faith, hope and love (and the rare fourth one symbolizes luck)
- On Saint Patrick's day one of the most common characters to dress up as is the Leprechaun, which is believed to have a hidden pot of gold and if you catch him, he must tell you where it is
- The Chicago River is turned green every year on The 17th of March as a method of celebrating the death of the Saint
- If you don't wear green clothes on Saint Patrick's day, then a Leprechaun will come and pinch you
- On this day, many traditional Irish foods are eaten such as; Shepherd's pie, corned beef and cabbage and Irish Soda.

Saint Patrick's Day parades consist of up to 200,000 people



The Legend of the Leprechaun

The Leprechaun is a mythical creature from Ireland, which (as mentioned earlier) has a hidden pot of gold in a hidden location, which he will expose only if caught. It is believed that you will be invisible to him if you wear green on Saint Patrick's day. This saves you from getting pinched and makes it easier to catch him and collect the prize.

