

# St. Patrick's Day

You probably know that St. Patrick's Day (also known as St. Patty's Day or St. Paddy's Day) is not traditionally an American holiday. It is an Irish holiday, but Americans simply love it! St. Patrick's Day was brought to the United States by Irish immigrants in the XIX century. It eventually became so popular in the United States that it evolved into a special day when many Americans across the country celebrate the Irish-American culture and heritage.

Many Americans attend special parades on St. Patrick's Day. St. Patrick's Day parades in the United States are typically big events with hundreds, even thousands, of marchers, Irish dance groups, and bagpipers (a bagpiper is a person playing a bagpipe, a traditional wind instrument with reed pipes). Most cities and bigger towns organize St. Patrick's Day parades. But if you can't go to a parade, you can always don a green outfit or a T-shirt that says, "Kiss me! I'm Irish!" And, no, you don't have to be Irish to wear a T-shirt like that! Many Americans love to say that everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day.

Just like with most holidays, food plays an important role in the celebrations. Many Americans enjoy eating corned beef and cabbage, as well as soda bread on St. Patrick's Day. But did you know that corned beef isn't a traditional Irish dish? You most certainly wouldn't eat corned beef on St. Patrick's Day in Dublin! Corned beef actually originated in the United States. Nonetheless, it's a delicious dish that consists of beef, potatoes, carrots, and cabbage, all boiled together in one big pot.



There are a number of symbols associated with St. Patrick's Day as well. One of them is the leprechaun, a tiny red-headed, bearded man dressed in green that loves to play tricks and pranks on people. If you ever find that

the milk in your fridge has turned green, or the furniture in your living room has been turned upside down, a leprechaun has probably visited your house. So waste no time, and set up some leprechaun traps in your home because you never know what kind of joke that mischievous creature may choose to play on you next time! And if you are lucky enough to catch a leprechaun, he will have to grant you three wishes. A pot of gold is also a symbol associated with St. Patrick's Day. Leprechauns hide pots of gold at the end of rainbows, and only the luckiest are able to find them. Yet another St. Patrick's Day symbol is the shamrock, or a four-leaf clover. It is believed that if you ever find a shamrock, you will have the luck and blessings of the Irish. So start looking for these tiny plants right away. You never know, you may find a pot of gold, too! But if you don't, a pot of delicious corned beef and cabbage should make you just as happy!

**Now let's try this short comprehension activity. Choose the correct word to complete each sentence. Good luck!**

1. A leprechaun is \_\_\_\_\_.

1. an ingredient soda bread
2. a type of plant only found in Ireland
3. a tiny man with red hair and a beard

2. A shamrock is \_\_\_\_\_.

1. a green milkshake typically consumed on St. Patrick's Day
2. a four-leaf clover
3. a lucky rock hidden at the end of a rainbow

3. A dish many Americans eat on St. Patrick's Day is called \_\_\_\_\_.

1. corned beef
2. a pot of gold
3. green beans

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