Mexico's Day of the Dead is a popular holiday in U.S.



Day of the Dead is a holiday in Mexico. In Spanish, it is called Dia de los Muertos. To celebrate, people remember friends and family members who have died. They honor the lives of these loved ones.

Now, this holiday is growing popular in the United States, too. More people have started to celebrate it there. Businesses are noticing. They are selling more Day of the Dead items.

In the United States, Day of the Dead starts on October 31. It ends on November 2. Just like in Mexico, people follow holiday traditions. One is to create an altar for loved ones who have passed away. The altars are decorated with photos of the person. Another tradition involves flower petals. People lay out petals of bright yellow-orange flowers. Tradition says the petals will guide the souls of lost loved ones.

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Nielsen is a data company. It collects information about people. It also tracks what they do, buy and watch. According to Nielsen, there are 57 million Hispanic people living in the United States today. That means people who come from a Spanish-speaking country.

Almost One in Five

Hispanics are a big part of the U.S. population. Almost one in every five people in the United States is Hispanic, Nielsen says. And this group has money to spend. Nielsen says the group's buying power will be almost $2 trillion by 2021. Buying power is how much money the group will spend in a year. Two trillion dollars is a lot of buying power.

Companies have noticed. They want to offer goods that this group wants to buy. Day of the Dead items are one example. These items are available at many shops. Target sells them. So does Walgreens. Some candy brands do, too. One called Treat Street sells sugar-skull candy dispensers. It also sells a sugar skull lollipop. Sugar skulls are part of the Day of the Dead celebration. They are usually decorated with pretty flowers.



Holiday Keeps Artists Busy

Some Hispanic artists are happy that Day of the Dead is so popular. Caesar Perez is one of them. The holiday keeps him busy. Companies hire him to make Day of the Dead artworks. This year, Mr. Perez is making two. One is a giant skull. The other is a set of furniture. It is painted in Day of the Dead themes. Mr. Perez has done eight projects like this in the past four years.

Mr. Perez likes that companies want to appreciate Mexican culture. He thinks they are trying to honor it in a respectful way. It lets him make art that is "very old and unique," he said.

Yet other artists are worried. They do not like how the holiday is being celebrated in the United States. They don't want it to become like Cinco de Mayo. This holiday celebrates a Mexican military victory. In the United States, though, it is seen by many as a party holiday.



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"It happens with everything in this country," said Cesareo Moreno. He works at the National Museum of Mexican Art. The museum is located in Chicago, Illinois. Holidays from other cultures get popular, Mr. Moreno said. Then, he said, they "become an excuse to sell mattresses and furniture and cars."



1. Which question is answered in the introduction [paragraphs 1-4]?

(A) Which businesses sell Day of the Dead items?
(B) When did Day of the Dead become a holiday?
(C) How do people celebrate the Day of the Dead?
(D) Who is an important Day of the Dead artist?

2. Which sentence from the section "Almost One in Five" explains why businesses are paying attention to Hispanic buyers?

(A) Nielsen says the group's buying power will be almost $2 trillion by 2021.
(B) Buying power is how much money the group will spend in a year.
(C) Sugar skulls are part of the Day of the Dead celebration.
(D) Day of the Dead may be even more popular this year.

3. Why does Cesareo Moreno feel concerned about how Day of the Dead is being celebrated in the U.S.?

(A) because he thinks people are just using Day of the Dead as a way to make money
(B) because he thinks Day of the Dead will become more popular than Cinco de Mayo
(C) because he thinks companies are not selling enough items for Day of the Dead
(D) because he thinks people will no longer be able to celebrate Day of the Dead

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