



# THE ECHO

## HALLOWEEN EDITION

R

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THE ECHO'S GUIDE TO

# Halloween <sup>in</sup> Quarantine

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The Halloween season is here, and with quarantine still intact, there are many changes to the traditional celebration. As one of the more popular holidays, Halloween remains a day that kids all over are excited for. With the current state of the global pandemic, the question now is how to make everything safe. There are many different types of festive activities that are options for keeping things lively this season.

The first activity is baking and cooking themed dishes. Halloween is the time to get creative in different ways, while friends and family knock at the door. There are innumerable combinations and patterns for themed cookies and a limitless opportunity for unique recipes. Later in this magazine, there is even an article on how to make some delicious pumpkin cookies. Cooking is a beloved pastime and is always a choice during these unusual times.

One of the other known parts of Halloween is candy. Because of social distancing guidelines, trick-or-treating is out of the question - at least for some. Many alternative events are still going on, however, as well as new ones being created. Halloween parades, events and neighborhood trunk-or-treating are in place to keep the Halloween spirit. In case the latter is unfamil-

iar, trunk-or-treating is trick-or-treating, but it is done out of the back of cars. It is still the trick-or-treating experience, but it is more safe and socially distanced. For younger children, these events where they can dress-up, get candy and see their friends is a staple of their youth. The specific activities within a community can vary upon the area, so researching events is key in the process.

If visiting friends and family during the Halloween season is the real treat, there is still a way to enjoy the spooky get-togethers with virtual meetings online. Families have altered their past traditions of indoor parties to meet the conditions of Zoom calls. Possible ideas for activities include bake-offs and costume competitions that are both harmless and family-friendly. The remote setting leaves a great opportunity for individuals to really bond and connect with each other. Along with these virtual parties, there are still in-person activities available as well. The pumpkin patch visits and pumpkin carving are two popular activities attended during the Halloween and fall season. Some local pumpkin patches are Johansen Farms in Bolingbrook, Puckerville Farms in Lemont, Bengston's Pumpkin Farm in Homer Glen and Bronkberry Farms in Plainfield. A seasonal treat offered by most patches is Apple Cider Donuts, which remain trendy during this time of year. Some people even visit the patch just



for the donuts and not to buy a pumpkin from the farm's assortment. Alongside the donuts though, many patches offer hot apple cider to warm their customers throughout the changing season.

With all of the uncertainty and negativity regarding the current state of the country, Halloween stands as a day that people can still enjoy - whether remote or in-person. Though sometimes it takes just a bit of creativity to find ways to celebrate, people are continually discovering new and innovative ways to make it through this global pandemic. Happy Halloween, everyone!



**ZOMBIE SK8R DREAM GURL PRINCESS**

**PHOTO: ZARA SARWAR**



**PARK AFTER DARK**

**PHOTO: EMMIE OPYD**



**PUMPKINS!**

**PHOTO: EMMIE OPYD**



# The History of Halloween

Abby Apeland

Staff Writer

How did Halloween go from worshipping and paying dues to the Celtic spirits to handing out candy to tackily-costumed children?

The origin of Halloween, Alls Hallow Eve, comes from an ancient tradition of the Celtic people dating around 2,000 years ago. The Celts had a festival called Samhain (pronounced sow-win), celebrating the day where the lines between the spirit world and the living world are blurred- allowing spirits to cross over. They had many traditions to follow during this tricky time as they needed to ward off evil-doing spirits by making sacrifices to satisfy them and keep them at bay. They would light huge bonfires to commemorate the event, and the people would burn crops and animals as sacrifices to the Celtic gods. From this, many of the well-known Halloween traditions of today were derived from a strict religious background.

A traditional aspect of Halloween has always been the perfect costume. Whether a great effort was put in to be scary, funny or just a simple impersonation, costumes are elemental in today's Halloween culture. However, the original intent of costumes was to dress up as animals or ghosts, so the actual spirits would either avoid them or be too scared to commit any wrongdoings.

During the Middle Ages, they would carve turnips then insert coals inside to keep them burning throughout the night to ward off witches or fairies that could cause harm. These turnips would later become the classic jack-o-lanterns, brought on by the traditions of the Irish immigrants in the second half of the 19th century. These jack-o-lanterns became a must-have decorative piece in front of every American home, as the custom continually evolved past the 20th century.

The influence of Christianity by the Romans in the 9th century was intrinsic to the shifting of festivities and practices. Christianity started to blend and supplement the old Celtic rituals, adopting certain views and assimilating. This was where the famous name of Halloween came from, as the church dedicated the Samhain festival to commemorate more of their religion. They named it All Saints Day or All-hallows. This ultimately prompted the night Oct. 31, the night of Samhain, to be All-hallows eve.

Another relevant part of present-day Halloween is trick-or-treating. Kids have grown up with the competitive mindset to collect as much candy as possible while not having a care in the world, except having fun with friends from door-to-door. Similar to many other traditions, the history behind trick-or-treating still resonates with the mischievous intent of its origin. Leading up to the big night, children would dress up in costumes, go door-to-door and sing songs to the dead. Their treats, at the time, were the cakes that people gave them. Their tricks, on the other hand, were pranks- significant parts of the original Samhain traditions; however, the tricks were typically said to be done by fairies or mischievous spirits.

The evolution of a sacred and ancient pagan tradition to a yearly \$9 billion industry is a development that has been occurring for ages. From holy rituals with proper intentions to ward off evil spirits and to survive long winter seasons, to dressing up in fun costumes and binging on candy, Halloween has shelved some of its historic aspects. How the holiday will continue to develop remains uncertain and for the future to tell.



FALLING BACKWARDS

PHOTO: SKYLAR SERRANO

# KEEP WARM WITH ~FOOD NETWORK'S~ PUMPKIN COOKIES

Aarti Gupta  
Staff Writer

The weather has been cooling down, and my motivation to leave the comfort of my bed seems to be simultaneously decreasing. All I want to do is stay wrapped in a blanket, hold a warm mug of coffee in my hands and eat some freshly baked goods. Unfortunately, it has been difficult for me to do any of those things, but the cold weather we have had recently inspired me to at least attempt to recreate the calming atmosphere of a bakery in my home kitchen. I am definitely not a professional baker, but I put myself to the test and set off to make some pumpkin-shaped sugar cookies using Food Network's "Sugar Cookies Recipe" courtesy of Alton Brown. The results warmed me, both physically and emotionally.

A large reason why I think I felt cold was because I had been sitting and avoiding my work. Finding the will to get up and bake was likely the most difficult part of the whole process, and I almost called off the whole event. I really needed a mood boost, though, so I played some light music through the kitchen speaker and found myself feeling more comfortable by the minute. The recipe called for all-purpose flour, baking powder, salt, unsalted butter, sugar, eggs, milk and powdered sugar, which were luckily all ingredients I had normally stocked in my kitchen. I gathered them together on a table along with other standard kitchen appliances such as a mixer, whisk and a large bowl—and with the final step of tying back my hair, I got to work.

The first step of this recipe was definitely the most calming. I combined flour, salt and baking powder then whisked them together. I generally do not care too much about measurements, but I actually put in the effort this time and discovered my love for leveling off dry ingredients and feeling the smoothness of them being stirred together.

The second step proved to be the complete opposite of number one: mixing softened butter and sugar is simply a recipe for disaster.

Although I was using a stand mixer, the butter was continuously sticking to the whisk, and it was difficult to combine with the sugar. I had to clean the handle multiple times and increase the speed of the mixer before the mixture came to a consistent, light color. I would recommend adding the milk and egg a bit earlier, or ensuring that your butter is extra soft (not melted though) to combine the butter and sugar easily. As a personal preference, I added a teaspoon of vanilla extract at this point—I did not think the sugar did justice to the cookies.







With the liquid and dry ingredients having been individually combined, it was time to mix them and form the dough.

I took a few moments to thoroughly clean the whisk and

replace it with a dough

hook before I gradually added the flour mixture to the butter. It was not the smoothest to have both combined evenly in the mixer, so I ended up placing them in a bowl and kneading it with my hands. The dough seemed very tough and tight to me, so I tried adding a bit more milk to work it together. This definitely helped, and I was able to create a manageable cookie dough. At this point, I separated the dough into two pieces and placed it in the fridge for about two hours.

The dough that I had deemed manageable found its way to become a pain once again, so rolling



out the dough definitely required a lot of manpower that I did not seem to have. As I previously mentioned, it could be that my butter was not soft enough, meaning that it was harder to combine. I would recommend ensuring that your butter is completely softened prior to making the dough, but because I could not go back and restart, I simply pushed through the dough and was able to flatten it. It was easy then to take my pumpkin cookie cutters and make a bunch of cute little pumpkin cookies.

I had already been in love with the cookies from the moment I organized them on a cookie sheet. As I

placed them in the oven, I was impatient to see the results. Luckily, the recipe called for them being baked for seven to nine minutes at 375 degrees F, so I did not have to wait too long for the final results. The expected cook time was true to the recipe, and I let the cookies cool momentarily before biting into them.

The end result was a warm, soft cookie that definitely exceeded my expectations for an amateur baker. The warmth of the cookies was inviting, and I felt that it was righteous to sit down and enjoy them. I wanted to share the joy I got from them, so I made some care packages for my friends with a few cookies and some hot chocolate. Then, I delivered the packages to their homes. The cookies are supposed to stay soft for multiple days, as I saw with my results, so I definitely think that larger amounts can be devoured over the span of a few days. This recipe is definitely one I would recommend using. It can easily be made into a fun competition with icing the cookies or just a nice way to get together and work with each other. Even if you are not a regular baker, I think it would be enjoyable to try it out because the recipe does its best to yield to beginners. I definitely think that I am going to make these cookies again over the holidays, and I am already very excited to see how they turn out.

Check out the recipe here: <https://www.foodnet-work.com/recipes/alton-brown/sugar-cookies-recipe-1914697>

If you happen to make these cookies, feel free to share your results with us on Instagram @nvhs\_echo. Happy baking, and happy Halloween!



HAPPY HALLOWEEN! :p

# BREWING THE PERFECT HALLOWEEN FILM

Bhoomi Sharma

Staff Writer

I never went trick or treating when I was younger. It wasn't something that people did very often in India. But I loved Halloween anyway because it felt like something magical. I don't know if it was the candies, the ghost stories or the permission be anything you wanted for one night. But I loved it. I loved being able to believe in magic for one chilly night.

A lot of social media is very centered around the United States, so I was aware of how people celebrated it across the world. But I had never heard of the classic Halloween movies until my first Halloween here. So I chose three of the most famous Halloween movies that I had never heard of until I came to the United States and decided to break down why I think they're as timeless as they are, and why they're different from most horror movies: "Hocus Pocus", "Coraline", and "The Addams Family".

Now of course, there are more than these three movies that have become a part of American pop culture. But these, I find, are the ones that people think of most in fondness and laughter.

One of the details that makes these movies echo through time is the villains. The Other Mother from Coraline haunts my dreams, and the witches' laughs echoes through my brains whenever someone even mentions Salem. The Other Mother and the Sanderson sisters must've been terrifying to a child, whose entire worlds revolved around imaginary trips down a magic door, and All Hallows Eve when you could finally eat all the chocolates you wanted without parental supervision. I'll admit, maybe Addams family doesn't have the most unforgettable villain, but shouldn't the Addamses count? Where else have you seen a family so peculiar?

And I cannot forget to talk about their iconic songs. These movies aren't necessarily musicals, but that

doesn't stop them from having some beautiful tunes. "I Put A Spell On You" is still on every Halloween playlist, and I can never stop myself from snapping along the beat to the Addams Family Theme. A song is something that sticks with you and draws you back to the story it belongs to, so of course these movies all have that one special song that takes you back to fifth grade movie binges.

Lastly, the ingredient I'd say is the most important of all to have an iconic childhood Halloween movie - a happy ending. Who doesn't love a happy ending? There's something peaceful about a character that we have all come to root for that ends up beating the odds. All of these movies have a win at the end that leads to a hopeful future. This detail separates these movies from most other movies usually watched during Halloween. They're scary to their target demographic of course, but it refuses to let their audience go with the feeling of impending doom. It lets the viewers know that anything that knocks you over can be overcome, and that in the end good can prevail. Watching these movies as a kid makes you feel safe and strong, so of course you would remember this movie fondly years down the line, when every piece of Halloween media targeted towards you is full of gore and violence and death. It's something that feels hopeful on a day that's commercialized to be scary, and it's where the heroes win in the end. Horror has its own charm, but there's something to be said about a Halloween movie that tells it's audience that the world isn't really all as bad as it seems.

So this Halloween, watch one of these movies. Something that might be softer than you usually go for, something that leaves you more hopeful than frightened. Don't sit in your house and lock the doors in fear of a little doll that may or may not exist. Pretend you're a child that's just won Halloween, and go get some candy. You're never too old for it.

The real world will come knocking tomorrow. But not tonight. For now, trick or treat?