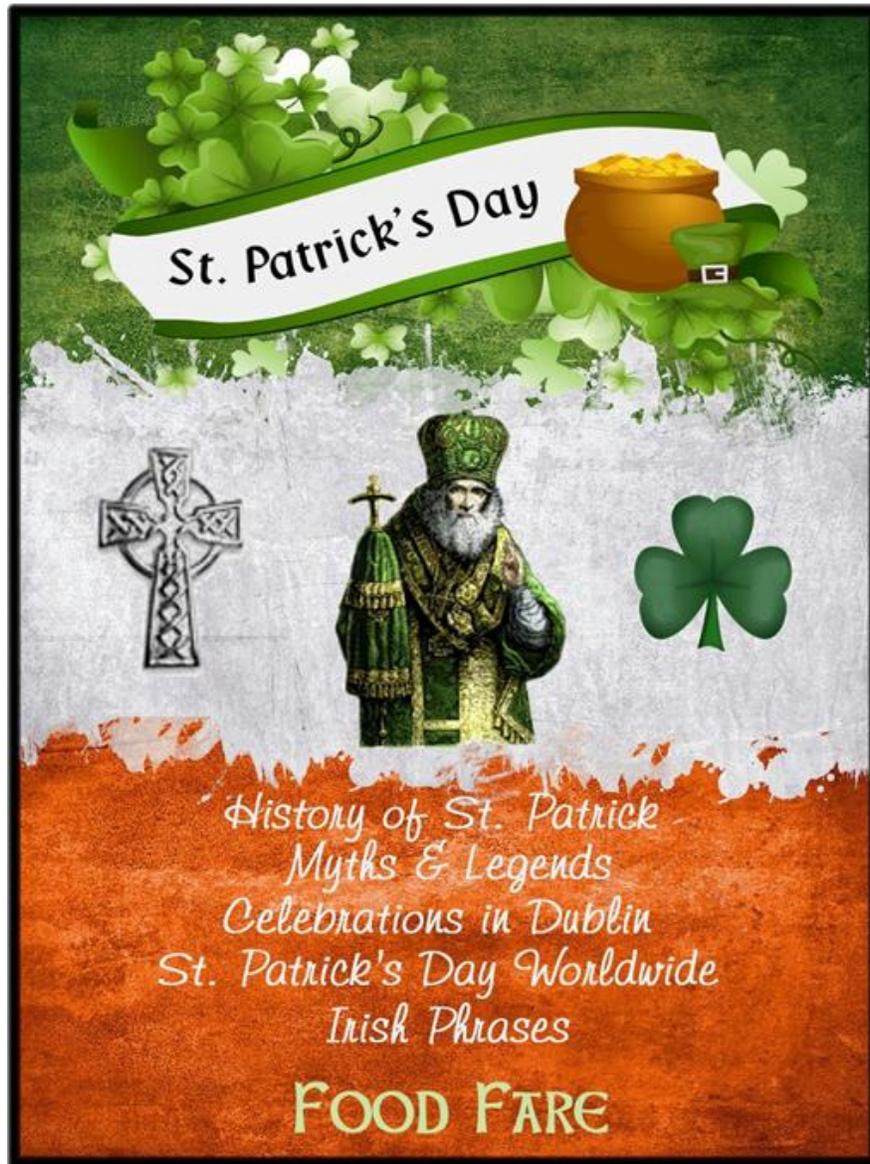


# ST. PATRICK'S DAY



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## INTRODUCTION

The month of March brings a much-needed break from winter weather. More important, it also brings about March 17th, which is St. Patrick's Day.

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated all over the world every year, by Irish and non-Irish alike. Who hasn't heard of the great St. Patrick's Day parades in New York City and Boston? Truth be told, there are more people of Irish descent living abroad than Celtic souls occupying Ireland itself.

Descended from Glendalough Irish on my father's side, I'm thrilled to be part of any Irish celebrations.

But where did it all begin? And who was the *real* St. Patrick?

**Shenanchie O'Toole**

Chief-Editor, Food Fare

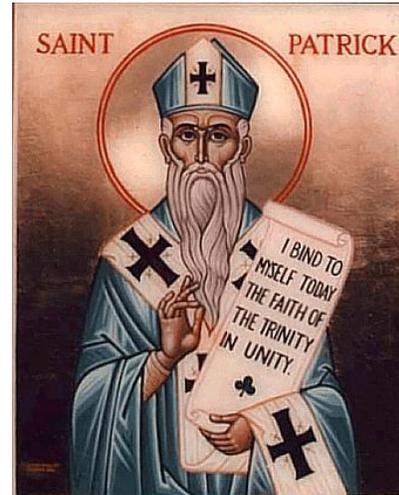
*Lá Fhéile Pádraig Sona Duit!*



## HISTORY OF ST. PATRICK

Saint Patrick (385-461 A.D.) is the patron saint of Ireland, and was chiefly responsible for converting the Irish people to Christianity.

Saint Patrick was born as Maewyn Succat in Bannavan Taburniae, near the Firth of Clyde in Britain. His father was Calpornius, a wealthy alderman. Calpornius was also a deacon and the son of Patitus, who was a priest.



When Patrick was sixteen years old, he was abducted by pirates during a raid and sold into slavery in Ireland. He became a shepherd to an Irish chief in Ulster. During his captivity, Patrick devoted himself to religion. He escaped imprisonment after six years of slavery, and managed to return to his home in Britain.

Patrick studied in the monastery of Lerins, located on an island off the southeast coast of France. He also studied religion under St. Germanus in Auxerre. Because Patrick's education was minimal, his peers were reluctant to let him return to Ireland as a missionary. However, Pope Celestine I finally sent Patrick to Ireland in 431 A.D.

Patrick began his work in northern and western Ireland, where Christianity had never been preached. He gained the friendship and trust of many tribal chieftains, and soon had many converts. It is said Patrick founded more than 300 churches and baptized more than 125,000 people during his time. He also brought clergymen from England and France to work in his churches.

As a missionary in Ireland, Patrick also suffered hardship. He was imprisoned by the Druids for a short time. In the twenty-eight years he spread the word of God,

he traveled far and wide, and not just in Ireland. There are countless places named after him in Brittany, Cornwall, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

Patrick preached Christianity in Ireland for the remainder of his life. In his writings, a piece called Confession was discovered, which was an account of his spiritual development. In the writing, he expressed his humility and thankfulness to God for calling on him to serve the Irish. He criticized a raid on Ireland led by British chieftain Coroticus, during which many of Patrick's converts were killed. The letter also makes obvious his resentment of the derisive attitude of British clergymen and nobility toward the Irish.



One legend has it that Saint Patrick died in A.D. 493, and was buried in the graves of St. Columba and St. Bridget at Downpatrick, County Down, Ireland. His jawbone was preserved in a silver shrine and was often requested in times of childbirth, epileptic fits and as protection from the evil eye. Yet another legend claims Saint Patrick died in Glastonbury and was buried there. The Chapel of St. Patrick still exists as part of Glastonbury Abbey.



After his death, more than four hundred Irish monasteries flourished as centers of learning. Patrick also introduced the Roman alphabet and Latin literature into Ireland before his death.

The Irish regard Saint Patrick as their patron and guardian saint. Therefore, his feast day (*March 17th*) is celebrated as a national holiday.



## ST. PATRICK MYTHS & LEGENDS

Two of the most popular legends about St. Patrick - truth or fiction? You decide!

### THE SNAKES:

One of the most well-known legends about St. Patrick is how he drove all the snakes from Ireland. In reality, there are no snakes in Ireland to the present day.

Legend claims St. Patrick stood upon a hill and used a wooden staff to drive all serpents into the sea, banishing them forever from the shores of Ireland. However, one old serpent resisted the saint's efforts. Patrick overcame him by sheer cunning, inviting the serpent into a box. The snake thought the box too small, so an argument ensued between Patrick and the reptile. At last, the serpent entered the box to prove he was right, whereupon Patrick shut the lid to the box and cast it into the sea. There have not been any snake sightings in Ireland since the island was separated from the rest of the continent at the end of the ice age. Serpent symbols were common in old pagan religions, and often worshipped. Driving the snakes from Ireland was a symbol of ending pagan practices.



### THE SHAMROCK & THE TRINITY:

Another legend has Saint Patrick using the shamrock to demonstrate the idea of the Holy Trinity. In essence, the Trinity is the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Spirit*. Many believe the shamrock came to be the national symbol of Ireland as a result of the legend. Even though Saint Patrick is celebrated each year on March 17th, it must be remembered that Patrick spent his life sharing his belief in God and his message: the Father (God); The Son and the Holy Spirit.



St. Patrick was never officially canonized by a Pope. However, the Catholic Church has declared he is "a saint in heaven."

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATIONS IN DUBLIN

As one can well imagine, celebrating St. Patrick in Ireland is a national event. It is now a four-day festival, with Dublin hosting the biggest celebrations in the country. It takes the city of Dublin five months to prepare for the events each year.

The St. Patrick's Festival was actually established by the Government of Ireland in 1995. The main goal of the celebrations was to allow the Irish people to celebrate their heritage, as well as express their own achievements and talents.

The four-day calendar of celebrations includes some of the following:

- **Festival Parade**

The St. Patrick's Day Parade takes place on March 17th, and normally starts at noon. The progress winds its way through St. Patrick's Street, along Christchurch Place, Dame Street, Westmoreland Street, O'Connell Street, and finishes on Parnell Square West. There are marching bands and floats, as well as pre-parade street entertainment. It is estimated that over a half-million people attend the event, and millions others tune in via satellite television.

- **Skyfest**

On March 16th, there is a fireworks display on the North and South Quays in Dublin, from O'Connell Bridge to Cardiff Lane and Guild Street.

- **Opening Night**

On March 16th, Dublin hosts opening night celebrations. Starting from the River Liffey, thousands of performers walk through the streets, hopefully gathering a crowd as they go.

- **Ceili Mor**

This is a much-loved part of the St. Patrick's Festival and is typically held on the evening of March 16th. The *Ceili Mor* celebrates Irish dance and traditional Irish music.

- **Literary Treasure Hunt**

On March 19th, the Literary Treasure Hunt takes place. The family event highlights Dublin's literary landmarks and invites participants to discover and solve the clues that lie within while finding out about many of Dublin's poets and scribes.

- **Big Day Out**

On March 16th, the heart of Dublin closes to street traffic, and a carnival atmosphere seems to take hold of the people. There are displays of "street theatre," music and mini-parades.

- **Bandfest**

Late in the morning of March 16th, marching bands perform as a warm-up for the parade, and people are allowed to have a sneak-peek.

- **Music Stage**

In Dublin's Merrion Square, many musical groups perform from noon to six p.m. on March 16th. The music ranges from traditional, to rock and roll, pop and hip-hop.

## ST. PATRICK'S DAY WORLDWIDE

St. Patrick's Day is celebrated all over the world, by almost every culture. The list below provides a brief description of some of the worldwide events, and the cities and countries who celebrate them:

- **Australia**

Sydney hosts a two-day St. Patrick's Festival in the "Rocks" area of the city, which includes street markets, live music and an Irish film festival. Close to 150 floats appear in the parade. Other major cities in Australia that put on big parades are Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Fremantle.

- **Boston, Massachusetts, USA**

Boston is known as the "Irish Capitol" of America (it is only five hours to Dublin by plane, after all). The parade is large and highly attended. There are about forty Irish pubs in Boston, which is also home to the "Famine Memorial."

- **Chicago, Illinois, USA**

The parade in Chicago starts at Balbo and heads north to Columbus. Usually, the mayor walks in the parade and there are over 100 floats.

- **Dubai, United Arab Emirates**

The Dubai Irish Society hosts the annual St. Patrick's Day Ball. Festivities are also held at Irish Village in Dubai, with music, dance shows and activities for the children.

- **Montreal, Canada**

Public parade and tributes to Irish films. The St. Patrick's Society hosts an annual lunch. The parade normally follows St. Catherine's Street, and ends up at Place des Arts.

- **New York City, New York, USA**

In 2014, New York City will host its 253rd annual St. Patrick's Day Parade, which usually takes place in Manhattan.

- **New Zealand**

The greater Auckland community presents a festival that highlights Irish culture and traditions. The 19th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade will take place in 2014.

- **Portland, Maine, USA**

The Irish American Club sponsors the St. Patrick's Parade, where participants assemble at Fish Pier on Commercial Street. The parade concludes at Maine State Pier with a Closing Ceremony featuring music and dance.

- **St. Patrick, Missouri, USA**

Since 1936, this community has held a St. Patrick's Day Parade through the town named after the Irish saint.

- **San Francisco, California, USA**

A special mass is held prior to the parade at St. Patrick's Church on Mission Street in San Francisco. The year 2014 will mark the 162nd annual St. Patrick's Day Parade.

- **Savannah, Georgia, USA**

Over 500,000 visitors pass through Savannah for the St. Patrick's Day Parade and other related events. The "festival zone" is on River Street from MLK Boulevard, to Savannah Electric.

- **Tokyo, Japan**

The St. Patrick's Day Parade in Tokyo (*Harajuku*) is the biggest Irish event in Japan. It began in 1992 to introduce Irish culture to the Japanese people.

For more about St. Patrick's Day around the world, visit the website St. Patrick's Day Events:

<http://www.stpatricksday.com/>

**PLEASE NOTE:** Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many cultural events celebrating St. Patrick's Day have gone virtual. The Irish government announced in 2021 that a "virtual St Patrick's Day initiative will be celebrated across the world in a series of online events hosted by Ireland's embassies and consulates." In addition, the Irish Consulate in New York City tweeted the following on March 9, 2021: "*Delighted to announce SHADES OF GREEN: CELEBRATING IRISH-AMERICA, a special virtual event this #StPatricksDay at 7:30pm ET. Alongside outstanding music, dance & poetry, we'll hear remarkable stories of Irish-America & the ties that bind our nations.*"

#### DID YOU KNOW?

*Corned beef and cabbage is not a typical meal in an Irish household. The dish is more of an "Americanism" for the occasion of St. Patrick's Day. In Ireland, St. Patrick's Day dinner usually includes boiled bacon or ham served with cabbage and jacket potatoes. Warm soda bread is often served on the side.*

For authentic Irish recipes, visit the Food Fare website:



<https://deborahotoole.com/FoodFare/irish.htm>

## IRISH PHRASES

The Irish have always been very eloquent with words, thus the term "Gift of the Gab." What other country in the world so reveres their writers as Ireland? There have been many poems and literary masterpieces written by the Irish, but none so charming and amusing as their blessings and phrases.

- *May you be in heaven a half-hour before the devil knows your dead.*
- *May the grass grow long on the road to hell for want of use.*
- *May you live to be a hundred years, with one extra year to repent.*
- *May the wind at your back always be your own.*
- *May the dust of your carriage blind the eyes of your foe!*
- *An Irishman is never drunk as long as he can hold on to one blade of grass, and not fall off the face of the earth.*
- *May you never forget what is worth remembering, or remember what is best forgotten.*
- *May your blessings outnumber the shamrocks that grow, and may trouble avoid you wherever you go.*
- *Never reach out your hand further than you can withdraw it.*
- *I drink to your health when I'm with you, I drink to your health when I'm alone, I drink to your health so often, I'm starting to worry about my own.*
- *May the good Saint Patrick protect ye, and the Devil neglect ye!*
- *May the enemies of Ireland never eat bread nor drink whiskey, but be afflicted with itching without the benefit of scratching.*
- *May the horns of your cattle always touch heather.*
- *I have known many; liked not a few; loved only one; so this toast's for you.*
- *Here's to fire: Not the fast and furious kind that burns down shacks and shanties. But the slow, seductive kind that takes down pants and panties.*
- *For the great Gaels of Ireland; are the men that made God mad. For all their wars are merry; and all their songs sad.*
- *Here's to Eve, the mother of us all; and here's to Adam, who was "Johnny on the Spot" when the leaf began to fall.*
- *Here's to your coffin: May it be built of 100 year-old oaks, which I will plant tomorrow.*
- *May God bring good health to your enemy's enemies.*

- *May the best day of your past be the worst day of your future.*
- *Death leaves a heartache no one can heal; Love leaves a memory no one can steal.*

## ST. PATRICK'S BLESSING

*As he brought new faith to Ireland  
So may he bring out in you  
A touch of Irish kindness  
in everything you do.  
And through the good St. Patrick  
May your home and life be blessed  
with all the special favors  
That make you happiest.*



**Lá Fhéile Pádraig Sona Duit!**  
*(Happy St. Patrick's Day!)*

## RESOURCES & CREDITS

### BOOKS

• "The Emerald Isle" by Shenanchie O'Toole (*Food Fare Culinary Collection*, #6); ©2013. Kindle Edition; ASIN: B005DCCGAW. *"The Emerald Isle" contains a brief history of Ireland as well as the history of Irish food, common Irish dishes, Irish tea, cheese, stout and whiskey, potatoes, Irish traditions, legends, folklore and myths; Irish words and phrases, common slang, Irish recipes, and resources for further study.*

[https://deborahotoole.com/culinary/ebooks\\_eire.htm](https://deborahotoole.com/culinary/ebooks_eire.htm)

• "Foofer, the Pooka & St. Patrick" by Deborah O'Toole (*Short Tales Collection*, #4); ©2011. Kindle Edition; ASIN: B00347AIDU. *Read how Foofer learns the true history of St. Patrick, Ireland's patron saint. The history lesson is related to Foofer by an Irish Pooka, who also leads Foofer down a misty path to meet and discover other Irish characters: the Leprechaun, Dullahan, Changelings, Grogoch and the Banshee.*

[https://deborahotoole.com/shorts\\_pooka.htm](https://deborahotoole.com/shorts_pooka.htm)

### WEBSITES

- Blarney Village
- Catholic.Org
- Field Guide to Irish Fairies
- Food Fare: Irish Recipes
- Irish Central
- Irish Culture & Customs
- Mythical Ireland
- RTÉ (*Radio Telefís Éireann*)
- St. Patrick Centre
- St. Patrick's Day Events
- St. Patrick's Festival
- Smaointe (*Irish greeting cards*)

### IMAGES

• St. Patrick in stained glass at the Church of Our Lady, Star of the Sea, and St. Patrick, Goleen, County Cork, Ireland (page 3): Andreas F. Borchert (2009). Used under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 License. Permission granted to copy, distribute and/or modify image under terms of the GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2 or any later version published by the Free Software Foundation.

- St. Patrick's grave marker in County Down, Ireland (page 4): Michael Kooiman (2011). Used under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 License. Permission granted to copy, distribute and/or modify image under terms of the GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2 or any later version published by the Free Software Foundation.

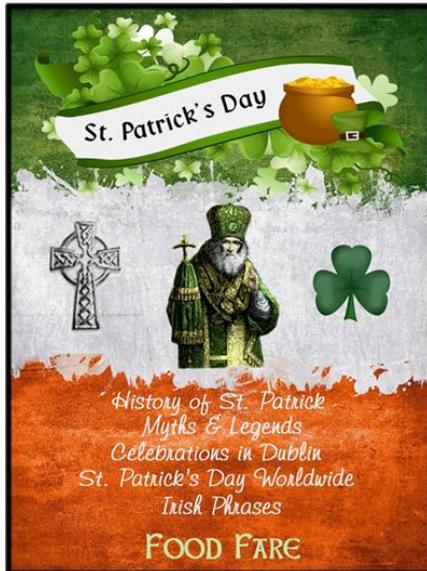
- "St. Patrick's Day" book cover design:

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"St. Patrick's Day" is freely available in Kindle, Kobo, Nook and PDF editions. It also appears in article format on the Food Fare website.

[https://deborahotoole.com/FoodFare/foodarts\\_stpats.htm](https://deborahotoole.com/FoodFare/foodarts_stpats.htm)

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Visit the Culinary Collection website:

<https://deborahotoole.com/culinary/>

Titles in the collection are available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Kobo Books.



## ABOUT FOOD FARE

Food Fare offers recipes from a variety of countries and cultures around the world. Their official website also contains a collection of personal recipes, many of them "comfort foods" inherited through the generations.

Food Fare is also home to the *Ambrosia Cookbook*, *Breakfast Cookbook*, *Community Garden Cookbook*, *Food Fare Cookbook*, *Furry Friends Cookbook*, *Glinhaven Cookery*, *Global Seafood Cookbook*, *Larkin Community Cookbook*, *Luscious Leftovers Cookbook*, *Quirky Snacks Cookbook*, *Recipes-on-a-Budget Cookbook*, and the *Soups & Stews Cookbook*.



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Food Fare's exclusive Culinary Collection features more than forty books in Kindle, Kobo, Nook and Adobe Digital Editions. The titles include information about the food and culture of different countries across the globe, holidays and food-specific topics. They also contain history, food traditions, lifestyle and dishes native to various countries, as well as authentic recipes, words and phrases in the native tongue of the subject, along with food and cooking terms.

Shenanchie O'Toole is chief-editor of Food Fare and sole writer of all articles, newsletters and content. She also writes fiction under the literary pseudonyms Deborah O'Toole and Deidre Dalton. She is the author of *Celtic Remnants*, *Glinhaven*, *Mind Sweeper*, *The Crypt Artist*, the eight-part *Collective Obsessions Saga* and *The Bloodline Trilogy*.