

# St. Patrick's Day

Check out surprising fact about this holiday (Why DO we wear green, anyway?)

BY ROSE DAVIDSON

Bring out your green! St. Patrick's Day—observed every March 17—is packed with parades, good luck charms, and all things green. The event started as a religious holiday, but over time it's become a celebration of Irish culture.

## CELEBRATED SAINT

St. Patrick might be the patron saint of Ireland—but he didn't always *live* in Ireland. Patrick was born in Britain in the fourth century and didn't arrive in Ireland until he was 16 years old, when he was sent to work in the country.

After he arrived, Patrick became interested in Christianity and started teaching others about the religion. He is said to have converted many of the country's residents to Christians, and now St. Patrick's Day is celebrated on the day Patrick supposedly died.

## MYTHS BUSTED

St. Patrick was a real person, but some of the traditions associated with him and the holiday are actually myths. For instance, you'll often see the four-leaf clover on St. Patrick's Day. However, according to legend, Patrick used a *three-leaf* clover, or shamrock, as part of his teachings. Even though it's possible for a shamrock to grow a fourth leaf, a four-leaf clover is just considered a symbol of good luck.

Another legend says that Patrick chased all the snakes out of Ireland. The problem? These creatures never actually lived in the country. In fact many animals found throughout Europe and North America don't live on the island of Ireland—the ocean keeps the critters away.

## GOING GREEN

The fact that Ireland is an island—as well as green with leafy trees and grassy hills—means that the nation is sometimes called the Emerald Isle. But the color that people originally associated with St. Patrick was blue! (Some ancient Irish flags even sport this color.) Green was finally introduced to St. Patrick's Day festivities in the 18th century, when the shamrock (which is, of course, green) became a national symbol. Because of the shamrock's popularity and Ireland's landscape, the color stuck to the holiday.

Green is also the color that mythical fairies called leprechauns like to dress in—today, at least. But tales about leprechauns date back to *before* green was in: The fairies were first described as wearing red.

## TODAY'S TRADITIONS

Leprechauns are actually one reason you're supposed to wear green on St. Patrick's Day—or risk getting pinched! The tradition is tied to folklore that says wearing green makes you invisible to leprechauns, which like to pinch anyone they can see. Some people also think sporting the color will bring good luck, and others wear it to honor their Irish ancestry. No wonder green decorations can be seen all over—the Chicago River in Illinois is even dyed green each year to celebrate the holiday.

Another tradition includes many Irish-American people in the United States eating corned beef and cabbage on St. Patrick's Day. People also gather to watch parades of traditional Irish dancers and musicians as they march through city streets. However you celebrate, here's hoping it's a lucky day!

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/celebrations/article/st-patricks-day>

## READING COMPREHENSION



**Circle the correct answers** (*entoure les bonnes réponses*) and **underline** the part in the text that justifies your answer (*et souligne la partie du texte qui justifie ta réponse*)

1. The document is:  
a. a video    b. a commercial    c. an extract from a book    d. an article from a website
2. Saint Patrick's day is:  
a. a holiday    b. a legend    c. a traditional meal    d. a parade
3. Leprechauns are:  
a. food    b. fairies    c. decorations    d. city streets
4. Saint Patrick was born in:  
a. Ireland    b. Britain    c. the USA    d. India
5. Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated on March 16<sup>th</sup>.  
a. True    b. False
6. Saint Patrick chased all the snakes out of Ireland.  
a. True    b. False
7. Celebrating Saint Patrick is associated with the colour:  
a. green    b. red    c. blue    d. yellow
8. Saint Patrick's Day is a celebration of:  
a. Irish culture    b. American culture    c. British culture    d. French culture
9. Write 4 words from the text that you can associate with St Patrick's day:  
(*Écris 4 mots du texte que tu peux associer avec la Saint Patrick*)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

