

HALLOWEEN TRADITIONS: LOVE EDITION

From its Celtic roots to its modern-day iteration, Halloween has taken on many shapes and forms over the years. Surprisingly, many of these now obsolete rituals focused on the future instead of the past and the living instead of the dead. In particular, many of these traditions focused on finding one's true love:



Scottish traditions

Following a tradition that originated with the ancient Celts, single women in Scotland would designate a hazelnut for each of their love interests, then toss the nuts into a fire on Halloween. The nut that burned to ashes, instead of popping, supposedly represented the woman's future betrothed. In some versions of this take, the opposite was true, and the nut that burned away symbolized a love that would not last.

Another tradition stated that if a young woman ate a sugary concoction made out of walnuts, hazelnuts and nutmeg before bed on Halloween night she would dream about her future husband.

Irish traditions:

As Halloween can trace its roots back to the ancient Celtic Festival of Samhain, it's only makes sense that Ireland is steeped in traditions related to this holiday. In 18th Century Ireland, a matchmaking cook might bury a ring in her mashed potatoes on Halloween night, hoping to bring true love to the diner who found it.

Another tradition, saw local girls blindfolded and taken out into the fields where they'd pull up the first cabbage they could find. If this cabbage had a substantial amount of earth attached to the roots than their future loved on would have money. Eating the cabbage would also reveal the nature of their future husband – bitter or sweet!



Apple traditions and folklore

Early settlers to North America brought with them European customs that stemmed from the age-old belief that apples were symbols of fertility. One such Halloween tradition that springs from this idea is apple bobbing. Young women would covertly mark their apple before dropping them into a tub of water. Men would then “bob” for the apples and future “matches” were foretold depending on whose apple a man snagged.

During Victorian times, if a girl could peel an apple in one long strip, it was believed she would have luck in the New Year. Likewise, if she threw the peel into a bowl of water, the initial of a potential love could be seen. Another activity involved cutting an apple into nine pieces and eating them in front of a mirror in a candlelit room. When a girl got to the last piece, she would hold it over her left shoulder as an offering to the spirit world. It is believed, that in return, the spirits would summon up the apparition of her soul mate in the mirror's reflection.