

## Halloween... auf Deutsch?

Halloween may not be a traditional German celebration, but almost every German youngster knows all about it. For adults as well, over the last decade or so Halloween has become increasingly popular in Europe, and particularly in Germany. It is now common to see pumpkin (Kürbis) and jack-o-lantern decorations in Austria and Germany by mid-October.



Halloween comes to Germany via Yahoo Deutschland and other German online services. The German reads: "The most hair-raising and gruesome gifts for Halloween..." ~Graphic: Yahoo.de

Probably as a result of the long post-war presence of Americans in Germany, and Halloween depictions in Hollywood movies and on television, Halloween has become a popular celebration in German-speaking Europe. It's an American holiday imported from Ireland and now exported back to Europe. The Mardi Gras / Fasching / Karneval aspects of Halloween also have a special appeal to Europeans.

Only in certain regions or neighborhoods do German youngsters actually go trick-or-treating. But while trick-or-treating may be rare, Halloween has become a very "cool" party theme for young and old. A web search in German turns up many German-language Halloween sites — many of them for party outfitters. More and more German department stores carry Halloween-related items in October. Hamburg's House of Horror speciality store, which opened for business in 1996, does a brisk business around Halloween.

### The Pumpkin Festival in Retz

Around Halloween, the Austrian town of Retz, not far from Vienna, holds an annual *Kürbisfest* (pumpkin festival), complete with pumpkins, parties, and a *Halloween-Umzug* (Halloween parade). The region around Retz has also become known for its annual pumpkin harvest. Known as *Blüza* in the regional dialect, the pumpkin becomes the centerpiece of *ein Fest für die ganze Familie*, a festival for the entire family.

### Halloween Activities and Events in Berlin

In Berlin and other big German cities, Halloween has become an excuse for all sorts of parties and even marketing events. In 2008 Berlin's Legoland Discovery Centre decided to stretch out the Halloween celebration for six weeks! From Oct. 1 to Nov. 14 most of the store sports a Halloween theme and decorations. In the two weeks before Halloween, Berlin school children get out for "fall vacation" and there are all sorts of parties and excursions built around and leading up to Halloween. Then there's the usual spate of horror films on TV and in cinemas. A live production of the cult classic *Rocky Horror Picture Show* opens at a

Berlin theater on October 31 (in English with German narration) before going on to other German-speaking cities.

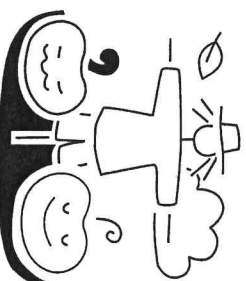
### Martinstag - November 11

There is an old traditional German custom that has much in common with Halloween: *Martinstag* (St. Martin's Day, Martinmas). The Catholic *Martinstag* observance on November 11 includes costumes and a lantern procession for children. Also known as *Martin* in Austria and Bavaria, the feast day of Martin of Tours is celebrated in many parts of Europe, including even some Protestant regions. According to legend, Martin cut his red cloak in half to share with a beggar during a snowstorm. The traditional baked goose (*Martinsgans*) meal on Martinstag is based on another part of the legend. Feeling unworthy of becoming a bishop, Martin hid in a stable filled with geese. The noise made by the geese betrayed his location, and the people of Tours had him consecrated as a bishop.

In parts of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland the Martinstag observance is a children's affair. Carrying paper lanterns they have made in school, the young children take part in an evening procession, sometimes led by a rider on a white horse, emulating St. Martin and his red cloak. Sometimes the lantern procession ends with a *Martinsfeuer* (bonfire).

### The Candy Corn Connection

There is at least one direct German-American Halloween connection. Following the American Civil War, Gustav and Albert Goelitz traveled to Illinois to join an uncle who had emigrated in 1834. After Gustav's death, his two eldest sons revived the candy business that he and Albert had founded. The story goes that the Goelitz Confectionery Co. invented the popular Halloween confection known as Candy Corn in the 1880s. Records indicate that Goelitz was making candy corn by 1900. That firm's successor, today's Herman Goelitz, Inc. of Fairfield, California, is best known as the maker of Jelly Belly jelly bean candy. (For more about Goelitz, see the company's website: [GoelitzCompany](http://GoelitzCompany.com))



## Some Halloween Vocabulary

### A

**der Apfel (Äpfel)** apple(s)  
**Allerheiligen** All Saints Day  
 (in Catholic regions)  
 (Nov. 1, short for **Tag der Allerheiligen**)  
**Allerseelen** All Souls Day (in Catholic regions)  
 (Nov. 2, short for **Tag der Allerseelen**)  
**ausgehöhlter Kürbis** jack-o'-lantern, hollowed-out pumpkin

### B

**das/der Bonbon (-s)** candy, sweets  
**der Brauch (Bräuche)** custom(s), tradition(s)

### D

**der Dämon** demon  
**dekoriieren** to decorate  
**dekoriert** decorated

### E

**erleuchten** to light up (a pumpkin)  
**erschrecken** to scare, frighten

### O

**das Obst** fruit  
**der Oktober** October  
**das Omen** omen

### S

**schaurig** spooky, hair-raising  
**die Seele (-n)** soul(s)  
**das Skelett (-e)** skeleton(s)  
**die Spinne (-n)** spider  
**das Spinnewebe** or **Spinne** spider/spider's web  
**der Spuk** spook, spectre, apparition, ghost, phantom  
**spuken** to haunt  
**Es spukt (im Haus).** The place (house) is haunted.  
**der Spukgeist** hobgoblin  
**die Spukgeschichte (-n)** ghost story (also **Geistgeschichte**)  
**das Spukhaus** haunted house  
**spukhaft** spooky  
**der Streich** prank, trick  
**Streich oder Süßigkeit!** Trick or treat!  
**jdm einen (bösen) Streich spielen** to play a (nasty) trick/prank on someone  
**die Süßigkeit (-en)** candy, sweets  
**die Süßwaren (pl.)** candy, sweets

### F

**die Fratze (-n)** face, mask; ugly face, pose  
**das Fratzen-Fest lit.,** "mask/face festival"  
**der Fratzenmacher** someone who makes faces  
**Fratzen schneiden/ziehen** to make faces, cut faces (in pumpkin)  
**der Friedhof (-höfe)** cemetery, graveyard

### G

**der Geist (-er)** ghost(s), spirit(s)  
**die Geistgeschichte (-n)** ghost story  
**das Gespenst (Gespenster)** ghost(s), spectre(s), phantom(s)  
**die Gespenstgeschichte** ghost story  
**die Gespenststunde** the witching hour  
**gespenstisch/spukhaft** spooky  
**das Grab (Gräber)** grave(s), tomb(s)  
**der Grabstein** gravestone, tombstone  
**Grusel-** (in compounds) horror-  
**das Gruselmärchen (-)**

### T

**der Teufel** devil  
**der Tod** death  
**tot (adj.)** dead  
**der Tote** the dead one (*m.*)  
**die Tote** the dead one (*f.*)  
**die Toten** the dead (*pl.*)  
**der Totensonntag** Remembrance Sunday (for the dead)  
 (Protestant observance on the last Sunday before Advent, in November)

### V

**der Vampir (Vampire)** vampire(s)  
**die Vampirin (-nen)** female vampire(s)  
**sich verkleiden** to dress up (in costume)

### W

**die Walpurgisnacht** Walpurgis Night  
 (A Halloween-like observance on the last night of April, on the eve of May Day, popular in Germany and northern Europe.)  
**der Werwolf (Werwölfe)** werewolf (-wolves)

### horror tale(s)

**der Gruselfilm** horror movie  
**gruselig** horror-like, monstrous

### H

**Halloween feiern** to celebrate Halloween  
**heidnisch** heathen, non-Christian  
**die Hexe (-n)** witch(es)  
**der Horror** horror  
**der Horrorfilm** horror movie  
**die Horrorszene** horror scene

### K

**die Kerze (-n)** - candle(s)  
**das Kostüm (-e)** costume(s)  
**das Kostümfest, die Kostümparty** costume party  
**der Kürbis (Kürbisse)** pumpkin(s), gourd(s)  
**der Kürbis-Kopf** pumpkin head

### L

**der Laternenzug** lantern procession (on St. Martin's Day, Nov. 11)

**MORE > German Hangman: Halloween**  
**MORE > Halloween in Germany** plus *Martinstag* (German Way)

### M

**die Martinsgans** the Martin's Goose (eaten on St. Martin's Day, Nov. 11)  
**die Martinlampe, die Martinlaterne** Martin's lamp, lantern (carried in the *Martinszug*)  
**der Martinstag** the Feast of St. Martin, St. Martin's Day (Nov. 11)  
**der Martinszug** St. Martin's Day procession (on Nov. 11) in which children and/or adults carry candle-lit lamps  
**die Maske (-n)** mask(s)  
**das Monster (-)** monster  
**das Monsterkostüm** monster costume

### N

**die Nacht (Nächte)** night(s)  
**das Nachtgespenst (-e)** night spirit/ghost  
**das/der Nugat** nougat (candy)

### Z

**die Zucchini** squash, zucchini, courgette (*Brit.*)  
**der Zucker** sugar, candy (in compounds)  
**die Zuckerwatte** cotton candy, candy floss (*Brit.*)

