

A Brief Guide to Recognizing Authentic, Respectful, Celtic Traditions

When people claim that they are offering genuine, authentic ceremonies or teaching based in any of the Celtic traditions, it's important to make sure that they really are who they say they are. Frauds who attempt to lead "Celtic" or "Gaelic" ceremonies in non-traditional ways are an increasing problem, and they are not just cashing in on the vulnerable or unwary, they are leading rituals that are offensive to our sacred ways, and are potentially dangerous.

If you are interested in finding a group, or are interested in taking part in a ceremony with someone who claims to be a part of a traditional Celtic spiritual way, it helps to know what you should look for. People who advocate and do the following are likely to be honest and genuine in their claims, but it always pays to look into their background and make sure they will not take advantage in other ways:

- They work to preserve the Celtic languages and cultures.
- They honour the Land, Sea and Sky.
- They honour the Ancestors, Deities & Spirits of the Land.
- Prayers and ceremonies are led in a Celtic language.
- Offerings are always made to the spirits.
- And consist of traditional foods found in the lore, or offerings of artwork, poetry and song.
- They don't participate in pay to pray or the commodification of the sacred.
- If they live on Turtle Island (North America), they do not pour alcohol on the Earth.
- They have trained in, and are supported by, an established, well-respected cultural community.
- The group has a system of checks and balances; everyone is accountable.
- These things apply to those putting themselves forward as ceremonial leaders and cultural representatives. Anyone can pray, whether alone or in a group. If your group has no one with training, or people with different strengths and weaknesses (like most groups) you can work collectively. Then you can use your social networks to get feedback from those who are more experienced.