

# Space for Cemetery Software in Unique Funeral Traditions Around the World

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Death and taxes, they say, are inevitable. But that tells us nothing of the innovative and curious ways in which death is “celebrated” across the world. Yes, death signifies the passing of a human being from this mortal world. Some believe that we just cease to exist as conscious beings, but many, many others around the world – across cultures and traditions – believe otherwise. For many, death is a milestone in our existence, where our souls transition from this world into the next. Those who work in the world of modern death care today would see funerals and interment connected to cemetery software and management. Death is conceived differently across traditions, cultures, religious communities, and even occupations.

A Glimpse into Lesser-Known Funeral Traditions For many of us in the West, death is a sombre affair, and the funeral process tends to be a colourless one. Yet, it's what we consider to be normal. In traditional Christian and Jewish funerals, the bereaved attend the church or synagogue wearing all (or mostly) black. The prayer ritual takes place and eulogies are given. Once at the cemetery or graveyard, flowers – often roses – are gently placed into the casket of the dead before the deceased is lowered into the ground. In a similar vein, wearing all (or mostly) white is customary when one attends a Hindu funeral. For Muslims, a process similar to that of the Jews and Christians takes place – to some degree – and while wearing black is not a custom, it's customary to wear clothes that don't attract much attention.

What's common across all these religious and cultural traditions is this: death is a momentous event! It's for this reason that other traditions from around the world have considered the rituals and rites surrounding death as something not to be seen entirely as a sad, dreary event, but something to be celebrated, where the dead receive a send-off or are interred in curious and fascinating ways. It also opens up various avenues for cemetery software and digital memorial requirements in the contemporary world. As we cement ourselves further and further into the digital age, we should perhaps take a leaf from their proverbial books and reshape our collective mindsets about how we perceive death and how we remember the dead. This is where cemetery management and digital memorial overlap.

Is death the end? For many, they're almost certain that it isn't! How do others send off their lost loved ones today with traditions that may possibly shake up our sensibilities?

Death as the Everyday – The Philippines In the Philippines, there are a host of contrasting practices revolving around death, interment, and funerals. Taking a look at the Tinguian people, those who passed in their community take their place on a chair, sat upright and dressed in their best clothes. To put the icing on the cake, as it were, a cigarette is placed between their lips, too. A lively death get-up or a severe smoking warning? You decide.

The Caviteño people, who live near Manila, opt for something a tad more romantic, burying their dead in a hollowed-out tree trunk. Just as some might ensure they've got a casket ready before they pass on, the Caviteño select their preferred tree while they're still alive.

Among the Benguet of northwestern Philippines, the dead are blindfolded and placed next to the house's main entrance. It's a stark reminder that death is something we're all going to taste, as well as a reminder that the bereaved have loved ones waiting for them on the other side. Similarly, the Apayo people of this nation bury their dead under the heart of the home – the kitchen.

Play for the Dead, Care for the Dead Jazz burials in New Orleans and skull burials in the Republic of Kiribati, in the Central Pacific, could not be more different, yet they're one of the more vivid ways of sending off the dead and – this may sound strange to some – caring for the dead.

In New Orleans, jazz and music is entwined with the city's culture. It comes as no surprise, then, that jazz accompanies many a funeral procession, with a big horn band at the helm! The music begins with more solemn tunes, gradually transitioning into more lively jazz and blues melodies as onlookers and the bereaved engage in furious dancing.

In Kiribati, the dead are exhumed from their graves. Their skulls are taken to be oiled, polished, and preserved by their families. The skull is then displayed in their homes, with offerings of food and tobacco made to it. To some degree, the funerary tradition of Famadihana in Madagascar sees people dig up their dead every half a decade or so. The dead partake in dances, they're perfumed and taken care of, and stories are shared about them and with them.

Transforming the deceased body While lack of burial space in South Korea has led to the phenomenon of burial beads – bodies are cremated and pressed into jewellery-like beads – Australia is working on the idea of the Earth Funerals. It's a proposal that tackles lack of burial space in urban areas by advocating for natural, environmentally-friendly burials in newly-planted vegetation belts around Australian cities. This builds on ecologically-friendly burial practices – something that most Muslims, many Jews, and others practice today – where plain, cloth shrouds are used instead of caskets or coffins for burials.

The Dead Tell Tales – Cemetery Software Allows for Richer Stories All these practices have one thing in common – there's a narrative around death. Those who passed live on through memory and through the stories we tell about them, their lives, and the impact they've had on us and the world. No matter the culture, funeral rites and cemetery managers serve the community. Throughout time, these rites have evolved and we've

continuously innovated the way we manage burials and cemeteries.

While each culture and tradition has (sometimes wildly) different death practices, cemetery software can lighten the load and make the management process simpler. This allows cemetery administrators and managers the time and resources to serve their community better and to help tell stories of those in the community who have left, enriching cultures and keeping traditions alive.

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