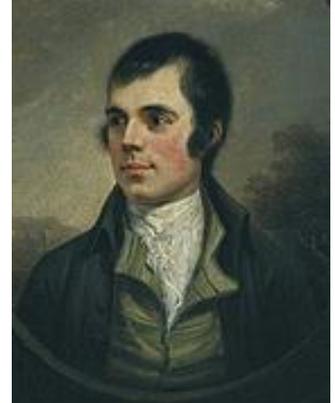




What is a Burns' Supper?

A Burns' Supper is a celebration of the life and work of the Scottish poet Robert Burns and is normally held on or near his birthday on 25 January. Although Burns' Suppers are naturally most common in Scotland, they are held worldwide wherever there are Scottish expatriates, descendants of Scots, or simply fans of Burns' poetry and songs.

Robert Burns was from Ayrshire in the west of Scotland and he lived from 1759 to 1796. The first Burns' Supper was held in 1802 and the tradition has continued to the present day. Burns' Suppers range from an informal dinner with friends to large formal dinners with 100s of guests. However, there are some typical 'ingredients'.



Piper

A bagpiper welcomes the guests and pipes them in to their seats.

Welcome and the Selkirk Grace

Guests are welcomed to the event and seated. The Selkirk Grace is recited as a thanksgiving for the meal and this is spoken in the Scots language, not in English:

*Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat, and we can eat
And sae the Lord be thankit*

Piping in the haggis

Everyone stands as the ceremonial haggis is brought in to the room. It is usually brought in by the chef, while the piper plays the pipes and leads the way to the host's table. As they approach the table, guests clap in time to the music. When the piper stops, the famous Burns poem **Address to the Haggis** is recited.

The meal of haggis, neeps and tatties is then served. Haggis is a traditional Scottish dish made from lamb and oatmeal, 'neeps' are turnips and 'tatties' are potatoes. This will be followed by dessert and tea and coffee.

Entertainment

Performers will give the traditional toasts and addresses:

- *The Immortal Memory* is an oration on the life of Robert Burns, traditionally drawing on his literary genius as well as his human frailty.
- *The Toast to the Lassies* is one of the highlights of a Burns' Night where the speaker praises the role of women in the world today in a humorous fashion.
- *Reply to the Toast to the Lassies* – a chance for the women to respond!

Ceilidh – guests will be invited onto the dance floor for some Scottish ceilidh dancing. The band will teach the dances and explain every move, so everyone can join the fun.

The evening ends with all guests singing *Auld Lang Syne*.