

Appearance

Gypsies appear as any typical Human.

Their attire is quite colorful, and the colors of their outfits are typically associated with the clan they hail from. Gypsies generally avoid wearing white, however, as it is associated with death and mourning.

A Gypsy's garb is often adorned with their belongings—Coins are attached to sashes, gems are turned into jewelry, and small trinkets are sewn into shirts, or kept in hidden pockets.

Bells have been a common addition to a Gypsy's outfit for decades, and are worn—more out of tradition than for fashion—as many communities once required Gypsies to wear a bell, following continued rumors of theft. Those affected responded by adorning belts, hats, bags, and any other articles with as many bells as possible, as a snide means of compliance.



Behavior

Gypsies are an outgoing people. They thrive in social situations and love to talk, dance, drink, and gamble. They are also very passionate, and their emotions often play a role in their decisions.

The most important thing to a Gypsy is their family. As such, Gypsies may be misleading, or cheat and steal for the sake of their kin. When dealing with outsiders, Gypsies will often be friendly but cautious, and may enhance—for better or worse—the validity of what information they share. Many will also view unattended possessions to be abandoned, and will claim such items as their own.

Given their traveling lifestyle, many Gypsies function as merchants, bards, or courtesans. Thick accents, strange cuisine, and outlandish clothing are the results of their way of life.

History

Several centuries ago, groups of Humans separated themselves from their nations as prohibitions on liquor and other intoxicating substances were put in place. These people traveled the lands in search of a new home where they could be free to participate in what activities they chose. Eventually, they settled in a location known today as the Free Lands.

Each family held its own views on politics, laws, and customs, and seldom bent to the will of others. As such, each family established its own regulations, and was led by its eldest couple.

Rather than designing intricate crests, each clan associated itself with a selection of two or three colors—each color representing a specific meaning or event in the clan's history.

Society

Gypsy clans are led by their eldest couple. The leading male is called “Papa,” while the leading female is known as “Mama.” Other members of the clan are called “Brother” or “Sister,” and members of other clans are often referred to as “Cousin.”

Gypsies traditionally function on simple principles. For example, the time outsiders must take to prove themselves, lasts for one year and one day. Common rules also insist that no Gypsy brings harm to their kin, and that under no circumstances should one betray their own.

Each clan prides itself on its own recipe for various forms of liquor and Phantasea, and takes great lengths to protect them.

Coming of Age

Gypsy youth are not considered Adults until they turn 20.

While there may not be any particular ritual or celebration for the occasion, the young men and women begin their instruction in their family's line of work at this time.

Religion

While many Gypsies respect the Divine Trinity of Prana, Gaia, and Endo, they regard them lightly—living life for the moment and focusing on a set of personal morals is more important than living by a strict code set forth by a temple.

Courtship

Activities and rituals of courtship are often adopted from other local cultures, which are prominent in the region, but they are usually performed under the supervision of the parents of the couple. While courting, a man must receive approval from a woman's father, in order to marry her. The woman is not forced into the marriage, and is allowed to voice her opinion before her father offers his blessing. In return for a father's approval, a potential husband may offer gold or livestock as payment for the arrangement.

Marriage

Wedding ceremonies are often officiated by the matriarch of the woman's clan, and generally consist of an exchange of rings and oaths of loyalty between the bride and groom, and blessings recited by the officiator.

Following the ceremony, the two clans join in a massive feast. Here, the bride and groom exchange gifts with each other, and are then offered gifts by everyone in attendance. After the feast, comes dance and song, which may last well into the night.

Funerals

Purity is of great importance to Gypsies, and fresh corpses are among the most impure.

As the matriarch washes the body with water and perfumed oils, a grave is dug. After the body is cleansed, it is dressed in white, and carried on a blanket, which belonged to the deceased, to the grave. The patriarch of the dead's family speaks of the dead's life, recounting happy memories, and reminding the rest of the family of the pleasant times they shared with the dead.



Those in mourning usually wear white clothes and very little jewelry.

Personal possessions that once belonged to the deceased—now viewed as sharing the impurity of the corpse—are often buried with the body, or given to the non-Gypsy poor.

Festivals

Gypsies do not celebrate a unique festival or holiday, but instead will often celebrate those of other local peoples.

Games

Gambling is popular among the Gypsies, so most games of chance involving cards and dice are common. Drinking competitions are also popular pastimes for some.

Gender and Family Roles

While men traditionally take care of physical tasks and tending to what livestock is available while women rear children and take on artistic and crafting responsibilities, most Gypsies view both sexes as equals in many regards.

Traditional Occupations

Many Gypsies make a living as merchants, bards, storytellers, and acrobats. Some also create and sell paintings, stained glass windows, jewelry, and other crafts.

Aging and Life Expectancy

As with all Humans, Gypsies tend to live for an average of 70 years.