

Arranging and Purchasing a Cremation and Memorials

Cremation fell out of favor with the Christian population in the early Middle Ages, but was later recommended on grounds of health and sanitation during the reign of Queen Victoria. A milestone was reached in 1963 when the Pope lifted the ban on cremation. In 1966, Catholic priests were allowed to officiate at Cremation ceremonies. Even today, religious practices like Islam, Orthodox Judaism, Zoroastrianism, Parsees and Greek Orthodox Christianity forbid the practice of cremation. It has been the usual method of disposal of the dead among Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Calvinists, Liberal Jews, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Mormons and Methodists, to name a few.

Arranging a cremation:

You have to inform the funeral director and instruct him that you will be following a cremation service. The funeral director will be fully conversant with all the formalities and will obtain the necessary forms, which will also contain a letter of authorization from a near relative stating the desire to cremate the deceased. The funeral director will notify the crematorium of the date and time. You will also have to inform the crematorium how you wish to dispose of the cremation ashes.

Cost:

Normally, cremation costs up to a third less than a burial as there is no headstone or grave to be purchased. The funeral director's charges are usually the same for both services. A typical funeral can cost \$6,000 compared to \$1200 for a cremation and service. Caskets typically start at about \$2,000 for an economy model and quickly rise from there. Be sure and shop around online. If you purchase a casket from the funeral home you will most likely pay twice or more for the same coffin online. Cremation urns vary dramatically in price from a low of \$100 to thousands of dollars. But a typical purchase would be \$100 to \$500 online.

The ceremony:

The service is the same as burial and it may take place in one's own church or in a crematorium chapel. The form of the service can be adapted to suit one's own desires and the charges will depend on the services rendered and the time needed. The body is brought in a coffin and the coffin usually remains in view for mourners to pay their respects. After the service, the coffin is withdrawn into a room where it is labeled with all the relevant information. This label stays with the coffin until the final disposal of the remains. After the service, the body is taken in the coffin to be cremated. Almost without exception, the body is cremated along with the coffin. Once the cremation is over, the ashes are removed and cooled in a tray. This is then placed in an urn and permitted to be strewn. The remains that are in the urn are cindered to a fine white ash.

Memorials:

Christian churches have a separate section, usually referred to as Gardens of Remembrances, which is set aside for the disposal of cremated remains. Ashes are strewn or buried here, but no area can be reserved by any one person. Some crematoriums have secured niches that hold the urns containing the ashes. These are available on a rental basis. If the rent is not paid on time, the ashes will be buried or strewn. Some families also dispose of the ashes in a family grave or strew them at a favorite spot. Sometimes, areas of religious significance are picked up to hold the ashes. However it is important to obtain permission before one can dispose of the ashes in other places. If you so desire, you may also keep the ashes with you.

Cremation Urns:

The increase in the number of people choosing cremation is also reflected in the sales of cremation urns. Traditional urns are wood cremation urns and cast bronze urns or spun metal urns. But, increasingly people are opting for customized cremation urns that better reflect the life of the person or pet they memorialize.

As with any memorial, people are beginning to place sculpted cremation urns and other artistic funeral urns at home, either in the garden or as art in the home.

If you wish, some crematoriums will allow you to dedicate a garden item or a small plaque for a limited period on payment. Some also accept donations in the form of physical objects like stained glass, seats and other items. Such items will hold a small inscription of the deceased. Enquire with the funeral director regarding memorial facilities available at your crematorium. The staff at the crematorium will also be happy to assist with any information you may need.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Memorial Urns offers a wide selection of funeral urns and keepsakes, and memorial jewelry for humans and their pets. Find out more about memorializing your loved one at <http://www.memorial-urns.com>.