



Planning a Tree Urn Ceremony in Switzerland

Practical Checklist for Families & Funeral Partners



Legal & Administrative

- ☐ **Identify your canton and commune** — funeral law in Switzerland is local.
 - ☐ **Check local by-laws** for ash scattering or urn burial.
 - ☐ **Confirm the land status:** private (with owner consent) or public (needs written authorisation).
 - ☐ **Keep records** of where ashes or urns are buried for future reference or property transfer.
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Scattering Ashes

- ☐ Allowed **in nature** if discreet, non-commercial, and respectful.
 - ☐ **Do not** sink or discard any urn or container into water.
 - ☐ **Lake Constance (Bodensee)** — strictly **no scattering** (Thurgau & St. Gallen).
 - ☐ Use only **ashes**, not the urn itself, for water ceremonies.
 - ☐ Avoid busy public spaces; choose quiet, natural locations.
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Burying a Biodegradable Urn

- ☐ **Private garden** burial is allowed with landowner permission.
 - ☐ Bury deep enough so the urn/ashes are **not visible** and will become **imperceptible** over time.
 - ☐ **Public land** (parks, forests) — always obtain written permission.
 - ☐ **Inside cemeteries** — follow local rules on materials, depth (≈ 60 cm), and any time limits.
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Planting a Tree Urn

- ☐ Select a **native tree** adapted to the site and canton climate.
 - ☐ Follow local rules on tree planting and distance from buildings/utilities.
 - ☐ Place the Tree Urn at appropriate depth, backfill with native soil, and water thoroughly.
 - ☐ Mark or document the spot privately (GPS or map).
 - ☐ Water and protect the sapling during its first two growing seasons.
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What Not to Do

- ✗ No commercial scattering outside cemeteries in **Canton Zurich**.
 - ✗ No urns or containers into **lakes or rivers**.
 - ✗ No non-native trees in protected forests or nature reserves.
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Final Reminder

In Switzerland, the key is **discretion, respect, and local compliance**.
A Tree Urn ceremony is a beautiful, legal, and ecological way to honour life —
as long as the act is private, environmentally conscious, and locally authorised.
