

The History of Easter

According to the orthodox Christian Church, the most significant religious festival is the celebration of Easter or *Pascha* (Passover). It is believed that Jesus was resurrected on the third day after his death by crucifixion between 27 AD and 33 AD. Easter is the celebration of the resurrection of Christ.



Easter is known as the "Feast of Resurrection". Many countries celebrate mass at midnight on Saturday, and others on Sunday morning.

The word 'Easter' comes from the Latin *Eosturmonath* when *Pascha* is celebrated. Speakers of Germanic languages use the word "Easter" while other languages use different forms of *Pascha*.

There isn't a fixed date for Easter. Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the March Equinox (March 21st).

Nowadays the celebration of Easter goes beyond religion and includes parties and fun. People send cards, eat chocolate eggs and other sweets, and often share a meal with the whole family. For many people in North America, Easter is a secular event - people decorate Easter eggs and hide them for children to hunt on Easter Sunday. Children believe that the Easter bunny delivers eggs in a basket for them in the morning.



The days of Easter:

Ash Wednesday

Maundy Thursday

Good Friday

Holy Saturday

Easter Sunday

A HISTORY OF EASTER and the EASTER EGG

Easter eggs did not originate in Christianity, and originally, the festival of Easter had nothing to do with Christianity. In fact, both Easter and the Easter Egg are associated with pagan rituals, because the egg is a symbol of fertility and re-birth.

The Christian Festival Of Easter

Easter is an example of the Christian church adapting an existing pagan ritual to suit their own purposes. The Saxon spring festival of "Eostre" celebrated re-birth and fertility and involved eggs, chicks and rabbits. The date that Easter falls on every year is governed by a complex calculation related to the Spring Equinox. It is the first Sunday after the first full moon following the Spring Equinox. This formula was also used by Egyptian astronomers in Alexandria in 235 AD, and the Jews have traditionally used it to calculate the feast of "Passover".

Easter Eggs

The Egg, which represented fertility and re-birth in pagan times, was adopted as part of the Christian Easter festival and it came to represent the resurrection (or re-birth) of Christ after the crucifixion. In the 17th century, manufactured eggs were given as presents at Easter. This tradition continued through the 18th and 19th Centuries, always getting more elaborate, culminating with the fabulous "Fabergé Eggs". Carl Fabergé, a French jeweller made these special eggs for the Czars of Russia.

The Chocolate Easter Egg

In the 1800s, the first chocolate Easter egg appeared, in Germany and in France, and the idea soon spread to the rest of Europe and to other countries. The first chocolate eggs were solid, and later they became hollow. In the 20th century, chocolate eggs became the standard present for Easter. In the 1960s, it was already a well-established tradition worldwide.

Some Easter idioms

As sure as eggs is eggs With total certainty; there is no doubt.

Example: As sure as eggs is eggs, Peter will be late again.

Don't put all your eggs in one basket Don't put all your resources in one area,
as you can lose everything.

Example: If I were you, I'd spread your investments. Don't put all your eggs in one basket.

Get cracking! Act with speed and energy. Hurry up!

Example: You need to get cracking, otherwise you'll miss your flight.

No spring chicken Someone who is getting old.

Example: I need to sit down for 5 minutes – I'm no spring chicken.

Pull a rabbit out of the hat Do something surprising or unexpected.

Example: Last night, John pulled a rabbit out of the hat – he paid the bar bill!

Like a rabbit caught in the headlights Someone who is so scared or nervous they
don't know what to do.

In the USA they use 'deer'.

Example: Make a decision! You're like a rabbit caught in the headlights.

Hopping mad Extremely angry.

Example: My dad was hopping mad when I crashed his car.

Hop on the bandwagon Get involved with or support an activity that has
recently gained popularity.

Example: I am going to hop on the bandwagon and upgrade my phone to a smart phone.

Happy bunny Someone who is satisfied with a situation.

In the USA they use 'happy camper'.

Example: Sheila has just gotten a promotion at work. She's a happy bunny!