



## READING Easter Traditions in the Southern Hemisphere

Match the underlined words from the text to their definitions. Two words are extra.

Most people in Australia celebrate the Easter holiday. Some do this for religious reasons, however, just like Christmas, Easter has become less about religion for many people in Australia. Others simply enjoy the long weekend. People might head to Mass at their local church, gather for a meal with family, or catch up with friends.

In Western Christianity, Easter falls on the Sunday after the first full moon following the spring equinox. This means the date changes each year and could occur anywhere between mid-March and mid-April. Many Christians in Australia belong to the Western Christian tradition, which includes Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. However, Eastern Orthodox Christianity celebrates both Easter and Christmas at slightly different times of the year.

In Australia, the main way to celebrate Easter Sunday among practising Christians is typically by attending Mass and taking the opportunity for self-reflection and spiritual renewal. It's also not uncommon for people to host Easter parties, often consisting of large roast or BBQ dinners.

A common tradition for children involves embarking on hunts in the park or backyards to find chocolate eggs. Rather than by the Easter bunny, they are often delivered by the bilby, which Australia celebrates as their Easter icon. Bilbies have been hopping around mainland Australia for roughly 15 million years, but are now sadly a threatened species which is mainly due to the introduction of rabbits in 1859. This invasive species drastically altered the Australian ecosystem.

Another popular Easter activity in Australia is enjoying hot cross buns. These are sweet, spiced buns, usually filled with dried fruit, like raisins. Because Easter often coincides with the beginning of the Australian Rules Football season, games are spread out across the long weekend. This usually means two games on Good Friday, with a rare Monday game held on Easter Monday.

Both Good Friday and Easter Monday are national public holidays in Australia, which is good news for those who might not celebrate and wish to see more of the country. A couple of the most popular holiday options over the long weekend include road trips and camping, with the weather still warm before the winter season. Most businesses are closed, including major supermarkets. If you are looking to stock up on supplies for a trip away, make sure you do so a few days beforehand, and prepare for potentially long queues!

----- - transported, brought

----- - a stock of needed materials, eg. food

----- - endangered

----- - to point or proceed in a certain direction

----- - not ordinary, unusual