

EASTER IN THE UK

In the UK Easter is (1) _____ of the major Christian festivals of the year. It is full (2) _____ customs, folklore and traditional food. However, Easter in Britain has (3) _____ beginnings long (4) _____ the arrival of Christianity. Many theologians believe Easter (5) _____ is named after the Anglo-Saxon goddess of the dawn and spring, *Eostre*. In Britain Easter occurs (6) _____ a different time each year. It is observed (7) _____ the first Sunday after the first full moon following the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere. This means that the festival can occur on (8) _____ Sunday between March 22 and April 25. Not only is Easter the end of the winter but (9) _____ it is the end of Lent, traditionally a time of fasting in the Christian calendar. It is therefore often a time of fun and celebration. The Friday before Easter Sunday and the Monday after are a bank holiday in the UK. Over Easter, schools in the UK close for two weeks, just enough time to digest (10) _____ the chocolate.



Easter Eggs

Easter eggs are a (11) _____ old tradition going to a time before Christianity. Eggs (12) _____ all are a symbol of spring and a new life. Exchanging and eating Easter eggs (13) _____ a popular custom in many countries. In the UK before they were replaced (14) _____ chocolate Easter eggs, real eggs were used, (15) _____ most cases, hen eggs. The eggs were hard-boiled and dyed in various colours and patterns. The traditionally bright colours represented spring and light. Nowadays, people give each (16) _____ Easter eggs made of chocolate, usually hollow and filled (17) _____ sweets. (18) _____ TV you will see adverts for Cadbury's Crème Eggs, a very sweet confectionery. The catchphrase for the adverts is "How do you eat yours?" And British children hunt (19) _____ chocolate Easter eggs hidden around the home or garden (20) _____ the Easter bunny.



The Easter Bunny

Rabbits have always been a symbol (21) _____ fertility. The Easter bunny, however, may actually (22) _____ an Easter hare. The hare was allegedly a companion of the ancient Moon goddess and of *Eostre*. Strangely the bunny as an Easter symbol seems (23) _____ have its origins in Germany, (24) _____ it was first mentioned in German writings in the 16th century. The first edible Easter bunnies appeared in Germany (25) _____ the early 1800s, they were made of pastry and sugar. In the UK children believe that if they are good the "Easter Bunny" will leave chocolate eggs for them.



Easter Sunday

(26) _____ Christians, Easter Sunday is the high point of the year. They celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter eggs (27) _____ important in Britain, too. They are a symbol of rebirth in most cultures. People decorate (28) _____ with different colours using special techniques. Children believe that the Easter Bunny hides the eggs in the garden. Even King Edward I of England made the practice of coloured eggs more famous. He ordered 450 eggs to (29) _____ coloured for Easter gifts in 1290. People like to bring home a container of Easter water to be used at home for family blessings on people, house, etc. A traditional food is roast lamb for dinner (30) _____ Easter Day.