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Easter foods

Today, eggs are nearly synonymous with Easter in many countries, including Germany, Austria and Switzerland. At the end of Lent, hard-boiled eggs are coloured, and Easter trees or bouquets are decorated with little wooden figurines and hollowed-out painted eggs. .

In Spain, people celebrating Easter enjoy beautiful chocolate sculptures that can come in the form of a princess castle or pirate boat.

But Easter isn't just about sweet treats. In Brazil, many follow the tradition of not eating meat on Good Friday, even those who aren't very religious. Instead, having some kind of dish made of cod fish, salted and cured, is very popular.

Baked Easter goods are popular all over the globe. In the United Kingdom and Australia, hot cross buns filled with dried fruits and spices with a cross on top, symbolizing the crucifixion, are eaten on Good Friday. In Ireland and the United Kingdom, the Simnel cake is the traditional Easter pastry; it's been around since the Middle Ages. It is a rich fruit cake with 11 marzipan balls on the top. These balls represent the 12 apostles - minus Judas.

Easter traditions

Easter in Sweden sounds a lot like Halloween. Children dress up as witches with a broom, kettle, long old-fashioned skirt, scarf tied under the chin, two big circles of blush on the cheeks, and drawn-on freckles! They want sweets and occasionally go around local houses and ask for them. In the Philippines, Easter involves little girls dressed as angels and a procession that usually starts very early in the morning, before dawn. The men make up one procession, led by an image of the resurrected Christ, and the women form another, following a black-veiled Virgin Mary. When the two groups finally meet at the church, it symbolizes Christ meeting and consoling his mother after his resurrection. This is when the little angels remove Mary's veil of mourning and the procession changes into one of light and festivity.

Zwänzgerle

Have your child challenge you to break his painted Easter eggs with a coin. Throw the coin at an egg from a "fair" distance. If you miss and the egg stays intact, your child gets to keep the coin. If you succeed, the coin and egg are yours. This is an old Swiss tradition meant as a way for children to make a little bit of pocket money.

Easter is over... but try telling the hens



Lay, lady, lay - and now they won't lay off!

Around two million Swiss laying-hens were busy up to and during Easter 2011 as consumers bought eggs to celebrate the holidays in the traditional way.

With Easter over, the appetite for eggs returned to normal and demand dwindled - resulting in a surplus.

The problem was to some extent solved with the slaughtering of more hens than normal. The government also lent a hand by contributing SFr2 million to help bring the market back on track. A quarter of the money was used for the lowering of prices within a limited time and the other three-quarters were used for eggs that go into the food production process.

RECIPE

Curried egg and cress sandwiches

(or how to use up left-over Easter eggs)

- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled
- ¼ cup good-quality mayonnaise
- 2 t curry powder
- 2 Tbs chopped parsley
- 40g butter, softened
- 12 slices wholemeal bread
- mustard cress, rocket or lettuce

En guete!

Mash eggs with mayonnaise and curry powder, stir in parsley and season to taste.

Butter bread and divide filling between 6 slices. Add cress, top with remaining slices and serve cut into quarters.