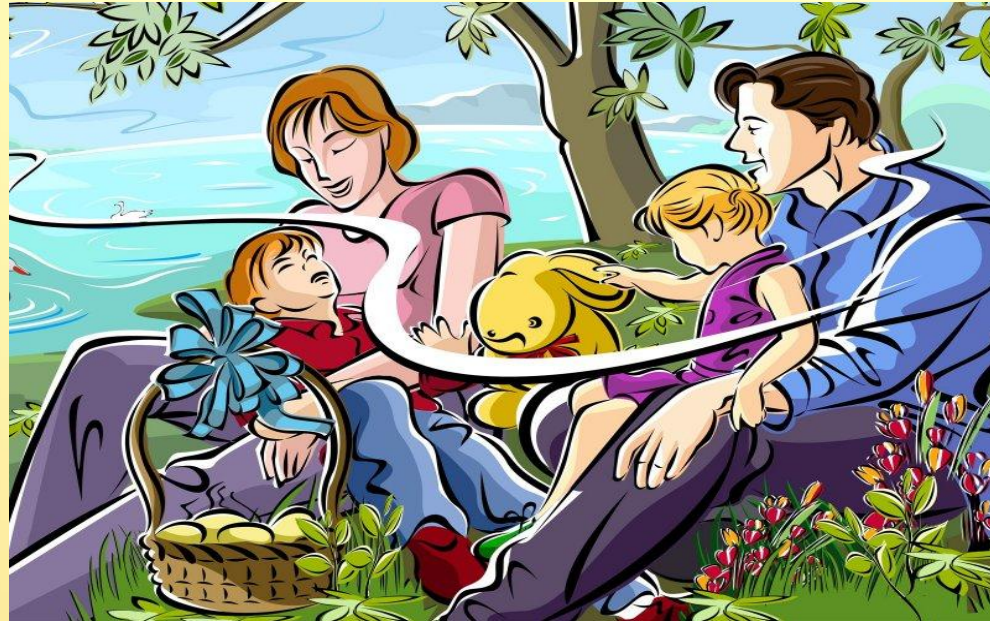


# Easter in different countries



# Easter around the world

Easter is celebrated around the world. And though the celebration should follow the customs of the Christian Church, in different countries Easter is celebrated in different ways. In most countries, the symbol is the Easter Bunny, while in France the main characters are the Easter fish and bells. In many countries of Eastern Europe, Easter egg decoration is an integral part of the celebration.



This holiday is perfect occasion to spend time with family and close friends.

# Easter in Greece

Easter is the one of the most sacred holidays for people in Greece. Greeks celebrate the festival with religious fervor, by attending special church services. Most of the events are concentrated in and around the church, but people in the country make it a point that they enjoy the holidays with their family, friends and close relatives as well.



The custom of exchanging Easter candles is one of the highlights of Easter in Greece.

# Traditional festival

The Greece Carnival season Apokreas, precedes the 40 days of fasting before the Easter day. The carnival is important to Orthodox. In Athens, during the last two weekends of Apokreas, people dress up in costume and go to the Plaka, throwing confetti. In Thrace and Macedonia, young women in traditional clothing called the 'Lazarins', go around the villages, singing traditional Easter songs.



# Easter In

Germany is regarded the birthplace of modern day Easter icons such as Easter bunny and Easter tree. German kids were told of an "Easter bunny" (Osterhase) that hid eggs and chocolates for children to find on Easter Sunday. German immigrants to America brought the tradition with them. Today, Easter eggs are exchanged as presents in Germany.



# Easter tree

Easter tree, another symbol associated with the celebration of the festival in Germany, is embellished beautifully with eggs. This tradition is followed by the natives of the country, since ages.



In Germany, the Lent season is preceded by a carnival called 'Fasching'. In Fasching parades in the city of Cologne, people wear masks and giant-sized papier-mache heads, sometimes twice the size of their bodies.



Another unique custom associated with the celebration of Easter in Germany is the "Easter fire". For the fire, all Christmas trees are collected and burned in a special place, making a huge bonfire, clearing away the last signs of the winter and preparing for the spring.





# Easter In

Starting with Palm Sunday the holy week leads up to the Great Day. In the country, the festival is popularly known as "Velikden". Easter traditions in Bulgaria are a derivative of the Eastern Orthodox Church rituals. Bright red colored eggs and Easter breads known as "kozunak" are symbols of Easter in Bulgaria.



# Good Luck

The Bulgarian 'good luck crack' is a unique Easter tradition in Bulgaria. Eggs are cracked after the midnight service and over the next few days. The egg that is cracked on the wall of the church is the first egg that people eat after the long fast of Lent. People take turns in tapping their eggs against the eggs of others, and the person who ends up with the last unbroken egg is believed to have a year of good luck.



*Happy Easter!*



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