

EASTER CUSTOMS IN ENGLAND

In the U.K. , Easter is one of the major Christian festivals of the year. It is full of customs , folklore and traditional food.

Exchanging and eating Easter eggs is a popular custom in many countries. In the United Kingdom , before they were replaced by chocolate Easter eggs ,real eggs were used, in most cases chicken eggs. The eggs were hard-boiled and dyed in various colours and patterns. The traditionally bright colours represented spring and light.

EGG ROLLING

An older more traditional game is one in which real eggs are rolled against one another or down a hill. The owner of the egg that stayed uncracked the longest won. Even today in the north of England , for example as at Preston in Lancashire, they still carry out the custom of egg rolling. Hard- boiled eggs are rolled down slopes to see whose egg goes furthest.



EGG BANGING

In other places another game is played. You hold an egg in the palm of the hand and bang against your opponent's egg. The loser is the one whose egg breaks first.

EASTER EGG HUNTING

Nowadays people give each other Easter eggs made of chocolate, usually hollow and filled with sweets. In Britain children hunt for (chocolate) Easter eggs hidden around the home or garden by the Easter bunny.

THE EASTER BUNNY

In the U.K children believe that if they are good the 'Easter Bunny' will leave (chocolate) eggs for them.

HOT CROSS BUNS

Hot Cross buns, now eaten throughout the Easter season, were first baked in England to be served on Good Friday. These small lightly sweet yeast buns contain raisins and sometimes chopped candied fruit. Before baking, a cross is slashed in the top of the bun. After baking, a confectioner's sugar icing is used to fill the cross.

An old rhyme was often sung by children awaiting their sugary treat:

*“ Hot cross buns,
hot cross buns,
one a penny, two a penny,
hot cross buns.
If you do not like them,
give them to your sons,
one a penny, two a penny,
hot cross buns.”*

Nick Banakis