

## Easter in the USA

Many churches hold special services on **Easter Sunday**. Many people also decorate eggs. These can be hard boiled eggs that can be eaten later, but may also be model eggs made of plastic, chocolate, candy or other materials. It is also common to organize Easter egg hunts. Eggs of some form are hidden, supposedly by a rabbit or hare. People, especially children, then search for them. In some areas, Easter egg hunts are a popular way for local businesses to promote themselves or may even be organized by churches.



**Easter Monday** is the day after Easter Sunday. It is not a federal holiday in the United States of America. Some Easter traditions continue on the Easter Monday, such as the egg rolling race at the White House. Sometimes even the President takes part in the “White House Easter Egg Roll”, which was hosted by the First Lady in 2007. Eggs are rolled down a hill or slope and there is a variety of activities, as well as food and entertainment, for families.

Hot cross buns are one of the most traditional holiday dishes. These sweet buns are filled with currants or raisins and topped with icing in the shape of a cross. As a main dish, ham or lamb is the traditional meat. As time passed and migration continued in the United States, eating lamb became less common. At the present most people eat ham for Easter dinner.



*Hot cross buns*

### True or False?

1. Easter Monday is a federal holiday in the USA. T/F
2. Hot cross buns are filled with fruit. T/F
3. Eating lamb for Easter dinner is very popular. T/F

### Answers:

1 F, 2 T, 3 F

## The Origin of the Easter Bunny

What does a rabbit who hides eggs and candy have to do with the Christian holiday of Easter?

Long ago, even before Christianity, the people in northern Europe celebrated a springtime holiday when they honored the goddess of spring. They called this goddess "Eastre." It was believed that Eastre's symbol on earth was a rabbit.



Later, when the people became Christian, their springtime celebration was combined with the religious one and given the English name of Easter.

There are many myths about the goddess Eastre and her rabbits. One story says that Eastre magically turned a bird into a rabbit. The rabbit began to lay colored eggs and Eastre gave away the eggs to children. Later, children believed that the Easter Bunny would leave them colored eggs if they were good, and they left out their Easter bonnets and caps for the gifts.

The Easter bunny was introduced to America by German settlers who arrived during the 1700s. Germans were also the ones who made the first candy Easter bunnies. They were made of pastry and sugar. It wasn't until later in the 1800s that chocolate was used.

### Answer the following questions:

1. When were chocolate easter bunnies invented?  
a) before Christianity b) late 1700s c) late 1800s
2. What did the goddess of spring do with all the colored eggs?  
a) She gave them away to children b) She left them on doorsteps. c) She made scrambled eggs.
3. What was the goddess of spring called?  
a) Easter b) Eastender c) Eastre
4. Northern Europeans started celebrating spring  
a) since the 1700s b) even before Christianity c) when they immigrated to America

### Answers:

1.c, 2.a, 3.c, 4.b