

# Easter Family Fun



# Family-Friendly Easter Festivities

It's springtime and the family is together for Easter. Get outside and enjoy some fresh air with these family-friendly activities.

## EGG YOUR NEIGHBORS

No, not that egg! Fill up an Easter basket with candies and treats, then leave it for your neighbors to find. Add a note that explains they've been egged and encourage them to pass it on.

## EGG-AND-SPOON RACES

The first recorded spoon race happened in 1894. The game is just like it sounds: Participants balance an egg on a spoon. First one to cross the finish line with an intact egg on their spoon wins. For less mess, you can find wooden egg-and-spoon sets. For more mess, use water balloon eggs.

## EGG TOSS

Divide into teams. Each team gets a raw egg. Start at a set distance and toss the egg back and forth, taking a step back for every successful catch. Keep going until the egg drops and breaks. You could also use plastic eggs filled with candy or water balloons.

## CHOCOLATE BUNNY BOWLING

Store-bought bunnies stand in for traditional bowling pins.



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Set them up in the yard and use a tennis ball or baseball to knock them down.

## PLASTIC EGG STACKS

Stack halves of plastic eggs to the sky and see who gets the tallest tower without it falling over.

## DECORATE AN EASTER TREE

Make ornaments out of construction paper and cardstock, and decorate a tree in

the yard. You also can put a branch in a flower pot stuffed with florist's foam and covered in Easter grass and put it out for the kids to decorate. Top it off with clear Christmas lights.

## EASTER EGG SCAVENGER HUNTS

Instead of a traditional Easter egg hunt, assign each person a certain color or pattern to find. Another fun twist is to put letters or numbers on

plastic egg halves and have people match them up.

## BUNNY HOP

Line kids up, pass out pillowcases and hold an old-fashioned sack race. First bunny over the line wins.

## GUESS THE JELLY BEANS

Fill a jar with jelly beans and have friends and family guess how many beans are in the jar. The person who gets closest to the actual number

gets a chocolate bunny.

## EGG ROLL

Have the kids — big or small — roll eggs across the yard using only their nose. Last one to finish is a rotten egg.

## ART CONTEST

Hold an art contest for the kids and let the adults judge. Hang up the art as decor for the day's fun, or let the kids hold up their art and have a parade.

# Easter Traditions

When it comes to old-fashioned fun, Easter has some very old (and some surprisingly new) traditions. Keep reading to find out the roots of some of our most beloved Easter traditions.

## EGGS

Eggs were originally forbidden during Lent (and still are in some Christian traditions). Their association with Easter may have begun with the end of Lenten abstinence and the resulting glut of eggs. Some Christians also associate the cracking open of the Easter egg with the empty tomb of Jesus and as a symbol of the resurrection.

## BUNNIES

The Easter bunny came to American with German immigrants in the 1700s, according to The History Channel. Those immigrants brought the Osterhase, an egg-laying hare that laid colorful eggs in nests made by children. The custom spread across the U.S., and the Osterhase's gifts included chocolate, candy and gifts.

## BASKETS

And what better place to put all those goodies than in a basket? Baskets, according to Scientific American, are symbolic nests that, when filled



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with eggs and candy, are great symbols of fertility. More recent trends have gone away from candy and toward gifts that focus on learning or experiences rather than sugar.

## FLOWERS

There are lots of flowers associated with Easter. There's the crisp white lilies that represent the Resurrection, ProFlowers says, and spring-

fresh tulips in a spectrum of colors. Daisies, the floral experts say, represent purity and gentleness. Visit your local florist for lots of spring blooms to brighten your celebration.

## LAMBS

The American Bible Society says the lamb is a symbol of Jesus, who is often referred to in the Bible as the lamb of God. Also, most sheep have

their lambs in spring, making the fuzzy critters a symbol of the season.

## JELLY BEANS

Jelly Belly, who would know about these things, says the jelly bean is a descendant of Turkish Delight, a gel-like confection sometimes filled with nuts and traditionally flavored with rosewater, Bergamot orange or lemon.

For the jelly bean, the gel is coated with candy. Candymakers made the candy into a bean shape as a lark. That same shape made them popular in Easter baskets because they look like eggs.



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# Shake an Egg at these Recipes

Eggs are packed with protein, vitamins, minerals and healthy fats. They're also versatile. They can be boiled, baked, fried, scrambled, poached and even microwaved. Here are some quick recipes from the American Egg Board to help you enjoy those Easter eggs.

## DEVILED EGGS WITH A FLAIR

12 large hard-boiled eggs, peeled  
4 ounces soft goat cheese, room temperature

1/3 cup mayonnaise  
3 tablespoons minced gherkins or cornichons  
1 tablespoon Sriracha sauce  
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
1/2 teaspoon garlic salt  
1/4 teaspoon onion powder  
2 ounces prosciutto, chopped into small pieces  
2 teaspoons chopped fresh chives

1. Slice eggs lengthwise in half. Remove the yolks into a bowl.
2. Add the goat cheese, mayonnaise, pickles, Sriracha, mustard, garlic salt and onion powder. Mash until well blended.
3. Add filling back into egg whites and sprinkle the top with prosciutto and chives.

## BREAKFAST EGG SPREAD

2 hard-boiled eggs, peeled



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1/4 cup refrigerated Ranch dip  
2 tablespoons minced green onion  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1/4 teaspoon pepper  
2 tablespoons chopped, fully-cooked bacon  
Whole grain baguette slices or bagels, toasted

1. Place eggs, ranch dip, green onion, salt and pepper in a food processor. Pulse until finely chopped and spoon into serving bowl. Top with bacon.
2. Serve with baguette slices or toasted bagels.

## BAKED EGG CIABATTA BOATS

5 large eggs  
4 rectangular ciabatta buns

1 tablespoons olive oil  
1/4 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese  
3 tablespoons milk  
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley  
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh chives  
1/4 teaspoon each salt, pepper, dried thyme and garlic powder

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut out a long rectangle from top of each bun. Remove some of the bread to create a boat. Place on a parchment-paper lined baking sheet. Brush each with olive oil.
2. Whisk together eggs, Parmesan cheese, milk, parsley, chives, salt, pepper, dried thyme and garlic powder.

3. Pour the mixture evenly into each boat. Bake for about 20 minutes or until golden brown, puffed and set in the center.

## BROCCOLI CHEESE FRITTATA

8 eggs  
3 cups chopped broccoli  
1/4 cup water  
1/4 cup milk  
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard  
1 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon pepper  
3/4 cup shredded cheddar  
1 tablespoon chopped green onion

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine broccoli and water in a 10-inch, oven-proof nonstick skillet.

Cook over medium heat until tender, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Drain well.

2. Beat eggs, milk, mustard, salt and pepper in large bowl until blended. Add broccoli mixture, cheese and green onion. Mix well.

3. Coat the same skillet with cooking spray and heat over medium heat until hot. Pour egg mixture into skillet and cook over low to medium heat until the edges are set, about 5 minutes.

4. Remove from the burner and transfer to oven. Bake until eggs are completely set and no visible egg liquid remains, about 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and let sit for 5 minutes. Cut into wedges and serve.

# Family Easter Photographs

Like Christmas, Easter is a great holiday to get the family together for a portrait. Spring has sprung, the grass is green and flowers are blooming. Here are some tips for getting the best portraits you can.

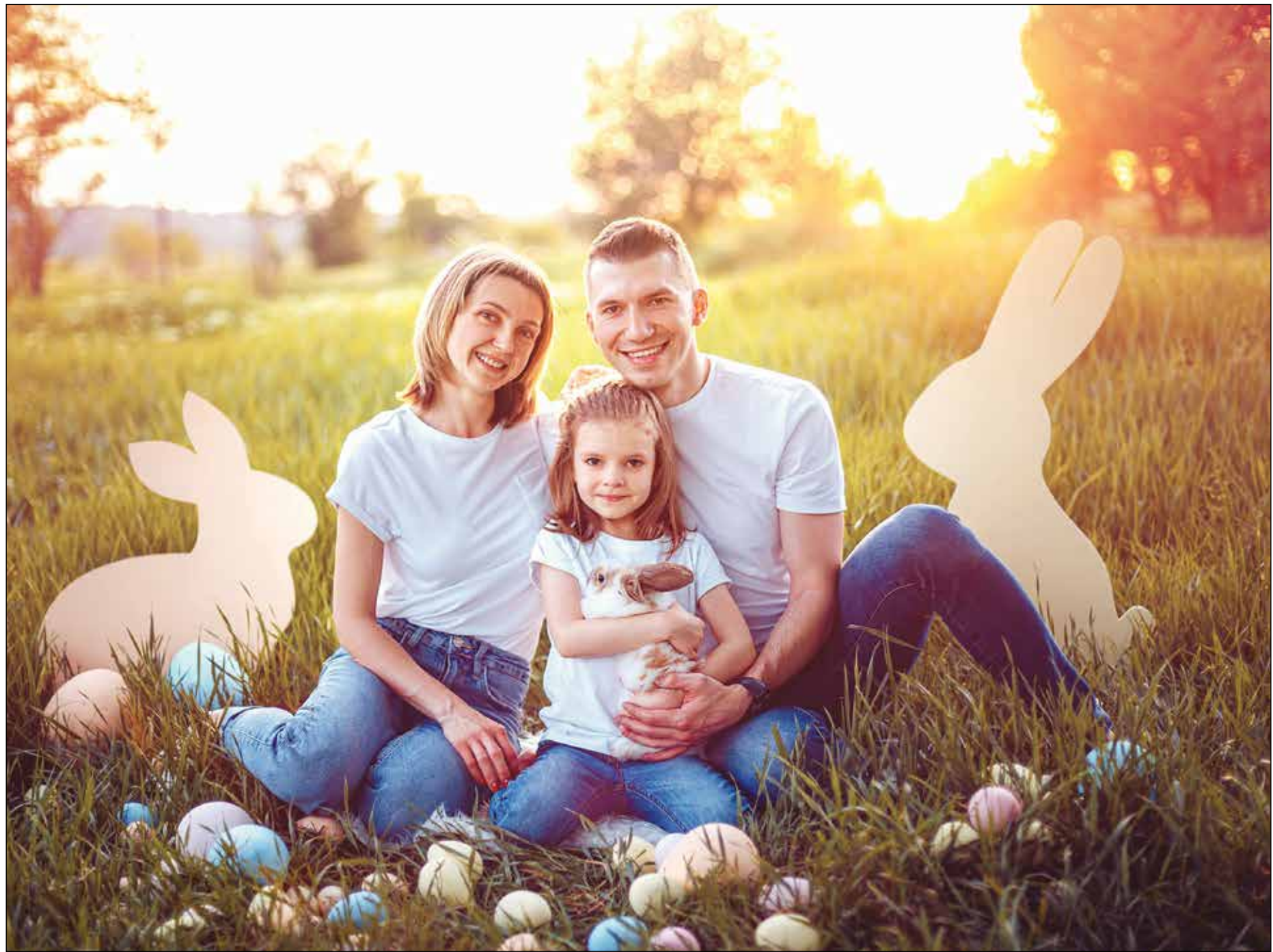
## HOW TO CHOOSE A PHOTOGRAPHER

Just about anyone can become a photographer these days. Angie's List offers these tips for finding the right photographer for your family.

- Review the photographer's family portrait portfolio.
- Think about the setting you like and look for a photographer that works well in that setting.
- Sign a contract.
- Ask your photographer if they offer in-person ordering, design assistance, retouching and printed artwork.

## SEASONAL SETTINGS

Look for local parks full of fresh spring blooms. If your area has an arboretum or other gardens, call to see if they have specific times or shooting fees for using their grounds. Your photographer will also have some great ideas for places to shoot. Deck your family out in their finest and consider bringing



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props, like Easter baskets, stuffed bunnies or eggs.

If you're shooting outside, you might also want to consider times of day for the best light. This is when a professional can really help take advantage of conditions and their higher-caliber gear to put your family in the best light.

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT CLOTHES

Keep it simple, say the professional photographers at Lifetouch. Try solid-colored, coordinated clothing in the same family of colors. Ditch the exactly matching outfits, especially for larger groups. Don't forget the shoes and, if you normally wear glasses,

wear them. Keep your hair and makeup styles simple, as well. You want your portraits to capture the truest image of your family.

## PLANNING

Think about poses you want to try ahead of time. If you have kids, talk to them about expectations for the

photo shoot ahead of time. Eat before you leave, especially if you have kids, to prevent meltdowns. Bring neat snacks in case the hangries strike during your session. Also leave plenty of time in your schedule for the session. Your photographer can give you a good idea of how long your session will be.

# Carrot Dishes

Carrots were originally associated with the Osterhase, when children left the German hare carrots to help give him energy for his journey.

Now, the vibrant orange root veggie is a staple of Easter celebrations. Try these recipes at your holiday bash.

## FRESH GINGER CARROT SALAD

Recipe is from Taste of Home.

2 8-ounce cans unsweetened crushed pineapple, undrained  
 3 1/2 cups shredded carrots  
 1 cup raisins  
 3/4 cup sweetened shredded coconut

1/2 cup chopped walnuts  
 1 1/2 cups fat-free plain yogurt  
 2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger

1. Drain crushed pineapple, reserving 3 tablespoons of juice. Combine the pineapple, carrots, raisins, coconut and walnuts. Combine the yogurt, ginger and reserved pineapple juice. Pour the dressing over the carrot mixture and toss gently to coat. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

## CAFETERIA CARROT SOUFFLE

Recipe is from Allrecipes.

2 pounds carrots, chopped  
 1/2 cup melted butter  
 1 cup sugar  
 3 tablespoons flour  
 1 teaspoon baking powder  
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
 3 eggs, beaten  
 1 teaspoon confectioners sugar, for

dusting

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.  
 2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add carrots and cook until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain and mash.  
 3. Add melted butter, white sugar, flour, baking powder, vanilla and eggs. Mix well and transfer to a 2-quart casserole dish. Sprinkle with confectioners sugar.

4. Bake for 30 minutes.

## CHOCOLATE CARROT CAKE

Recipe is from Betty Crocker.  
 1 box of chocolate fudge cake mix, prepared as directed  
 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
 3 cups shredded peeled carrots  
**Frosting:**

1 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened

1/4 cup butter, softened  
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

1 1/2 cups powdered sugar  
 1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Spray the bottom only of a 13x9 pan with cooking spray.

2. Stir the carrots and cinnamon into the prepared cake mix. Pour into the

pan and bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for an hour.

3. In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese and butter together with an electric mixer until smooth. Add vanilla and reduce speed to low. Beat in powdered sugar until the frosting is smooth and creamy. Spread on top of the cooled cake.



# Celebrating Good Friday

Good Friday is the Friday before Easter, when Christians commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus. It's traditionally a day of mourning. So why is it called good?

## THE HISTORY

Until the 4th century, the last supper, Jesus' death and the resurrection were observed in a single commemoration, says Encyclopedia Britannica. Some sources say the day is good in that it is holy. One Catholic school text says that Good Friday is good because Christ showed his love for man by dying on the cross. Others say it's a corruption of God's Friday, like the German term gute freitag.

## TRADITIONS

It's traditionally a holiday in majority Christian countries. Many Christian denominations commemorate the holiday with fasting, abstaining from meat and special religious services. There are also processions like the Way of the Cross, in which people visit each of the 14 stations of the cross symbolizing a part of Jesus' passion and death. The procession in Rome, one of the world's largest, is led by the Pope and takes place by candlelight.

Many central American countries celebrate with art, lining the streets with alfom-



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bras made of layers of colorful sawdust. As Good Friday processions start, the alfombras will be whisked away by marchers' feet. The images are often religious or focused on nature.

In Bermuda, Good Friday is celebrated with a kite festival on Horseshoe Bay Beach. Legend has it, according to

Time magazine, that a teacher used the kite to symbolize Jesus' ascension. The kite fest has been going on for more than 40 years. There's also an annual codfish cake competition and a hot cross bun competition.

## EASTER BILBY

In Australia, the rabbit is

considered a pest. So there, they celebrate the greater bilby, *Macrotis lagotis*. The bilby, also called the rabbit-eared bandicoot, is a desert creature that once occupied more than 80% of the continent. But now they're only found in remote regions of the continent and the Australian government considers the ani-

mal vulnerable to extinction.

There were once two species of bilby but, sadly, the lesser bilby is now gone. The greater bilby's spiraling burrows provide shelter for other animals and also, once they're done being a home, fills up with compost and regenerates native plants and restores the desert soil.

# Hot Cross Buns

One ha'penny, two ha'penny ... you know the song. Hot cross buns are an important part of the celebration of Easter.

The sweetened, yeast-based roll are marked with a cross and eaten in Christian parts of the west. Keep reading to learn how to make your own.

## HOT CROSS BUNS

Recipe from King Arthur Flour.

1/4 cup apple juice or rum  
 1/2 cup mixed dried fruit  
 1/2 cup raisins or dried currants  
 1 1/4 cup milk, room temperature  
 2 large eggs, 1 separated  
 6 tablespoons butter, room temperature  
 2 teaspoons instant yeast  
 1/4 cup light brown sugar, firmly packed  
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves or all-spice  
 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
 1 3/4 teaspoon salt  
 1 tablespoon baking powder  
 4 1/2 cups flour

### Topping:

1 egg white, from above  
 1 tablespoon milk

### Icing:

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons confectioners sugar  
 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract  
 Pinch of salt  
 4 teaspoons milk

or a 9x13-inch pan.

2. Mix the rum or apple juice with the dried fruit and raisins, cover with plastic wrap and microwave briefly, just until the fruit and liquid are warm. Set aside to cool to room temperature.

3. When the fruit is cool, mix together dough ingredients except for the fruit. Knead the mixture, using an electric mixer or bread machine until the dough is soft and elastic. It'll be slack, sticking to the bottom of the bowl and your hands. Greasing your hands will help. Mix in the fruit and liquid.

4. Let the dough rise for 1 hour, covered. It should become puffy, but may not double.

5. Divide the dough into billiard ball-sized pieces. A heaped muffin scoop or about a third of a cup is about right. You should get 12-14 buns. Use your greased hands to round them into balls and arrange them in a prepared pan.

6. Cover the pan at let the buns rise for an hour until they're puffy and are touching. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

7. Whisk together the reserved egg white and milk and brush it over the buns.

8. Bake the buns for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the oven and turn the buns out of the pan, then transfer them to a rack to cool.

9. Mix the icing ingredients. When the buns are completely cool, pipe icing in a cross shape atop each bun.

