

## Easter celebrations



## Spain - Semana Santa

Semana Santa, or Holy Week, is a special time in Spain. During this week, people in many cities celebrate with religious processions. These are parades that remember the events of Easter. They are filled with music, beautiful costumes and amazing floats.



People traditionally wear long colourful robes and sometimes wear hats that are pointed or that cover their faces; this is so no one knows who they are and the focus is on God. Many people also carry candles or small statues of saints during the parades.

The floats, or "pasos," are one of the most exciting parts of Semana Santa. They are large and decorated with flowers and pictures. Each float tells a story from the Bible. The floats can be heavy, but they move slowly through the streets so everyone can see them.

Music is also an important part of the processions. Marching bands play as the floats pass by. Sometimes, people sing traditional songs that tell stories about the events of Easter.

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Spain  
Semana Santa

Semana Santa is not just about the processions; it is also a time for families to come together. Many families enjoy special meals and sweets during this week. They might eat "torrijas," a sweet bread soaked in milk and spices.

In Spain, each city has its own way of celebrating Semana Santa. In Seville, the processions are famous for being very grand and beautiful. In Málaga, they have a special tradition of carrying the floats on the shoulders of people, called "costaleros."



Semana Santa is a time of reflection and joy for many people in Spain. It brings together friends and families to celebrate. The colourful processions with music, costumes and floats are something everyone can enjoy.

Have a go at saying the words:

Semana Santa - seh-mA-nah sAhn-tah

torrijas - toh-rEE-hass

costaleros - kohs-ta-lEh-rohs

## Easter celebrations


 United States of America  
 Egg decorating and rolling

Easter is celebrated by many people in the United States every spring. One Easter tradition is decorating eggs. Families often start with hard-boiled eggs and decorate them to be unique and colourful. Some people dye their eggs using special dyes that come in bright colours. Others may use stickers, markers, or even glitter to



add special designs.



Kristoffer Tripplaar / Alamy Stock Photo

As well as decorating eggs, another popular Easter activity is egg rolling. This fun game usually takes place on Easter Sunday. Children and families gather at parks or gardens to see whose decorated egg can roll the farthest without breaking. The tradition of egg rolling dates back many years. One of the most famous egg rolls happens on the White House lawn in Washington, D.C. This event attracts many children and families who come to join the fun and even meet the President!

Easter egg decorating and rolling brings people together to have fun and be creative. For some people, the eggs remind them of new life linked to Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday and for others, it is about new life at spring time as the seasons change.

## Easter celebrations



France  
Pâques



One of the most exciting parts of Pâques (Easter) in France is the arrival of the Easter bells. In many areas, people believe that during the week before Easter, the church bells fly to Rome to see the Pope (the head of the Catholic Church). While they are away, the bells do not ring. Children are told that the bells are gathering chocolate eggs to bring back for Easter Sunday. On Easter morning, when the bells return, they ring joyfully and children search for the chocolate eggs that have been hidden in gardens and parks.

Another popular tradition in France is the delicious food that families prepare during Easter. Many people enjoy a special meal that includes lamb, which symbolises new life.

In some areas, families also bake a sweet bread called "pain de Pâques," which is shaped like a lamb or a cross. This bread is often enjoyed with chocolate eggs.

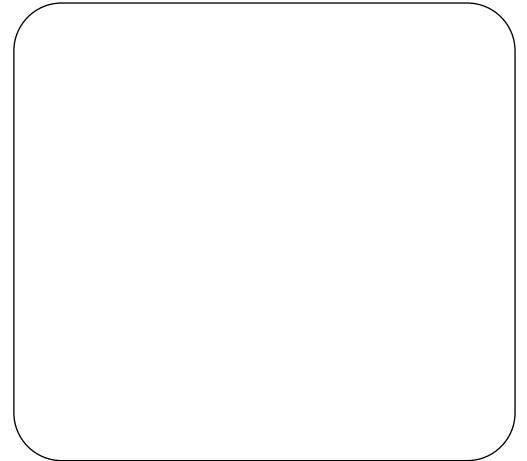


## Easter celebrations



France  
Pâques

In some parts of France, there is a tradition called 'La fête de Pâques'. During this time, large parades take place, featuring floats and performers dressed in Easter-themed costumes. In other areas, people decorate their houses before Easter. Branches are set up with painted eggs and spring flowers and children create nests with leaves, moss or grass. They then place these in the garden, hoping that the Easter bells will fill them with chocolate eggs during the night.



In France, Easter Sunday and Monday are public holidays so shops are closed for the day. Many Christian families attend church services to celebrate Easter, when the bells ring again to celebrate Jesus coming back to life.

**Pâques** - a French word for Easter.

Have a go at saying the words:

Pâques - pak

pain de Pâques - pan duh pak

La fête de Pâques - La fett duh pak

## Easter celebrations

Greece  
Orthodox Easter

For many members of the Orthodox Church in Greece, Easter is a very important time of year. One special tradition is the midnight service, which happens on Easter Eve, marking the beginning of Easter Sunday.



Just before midnight, people gather in churches filled with beautiful decorations and candles. The church bells ring, calling everyone to come and celebrate. When the clock strikes midnight, the priest holds a candle and announces, "Christ is risen!" The congregation responds with joy, saying, "Indeed, He is risen!"

During the service, everyone lights their candles from the priest's candle. This represents Jesus as the light of the world. When the candles are lit, the church becomes bright as people hold their candles high. The light from the candles reminds them that Jesus brings love and hope into their lives.



## Easter celebrations

Greece  
Orthodox Easter

After the midnight service, families often go home to share a special meal. They might eat traditional foods like lamb, eggs and sweet bread called 'tsoureki', which often has red eggs in it symbolising Jesus' blood. This meal is a time for families to enjoy each other's company and celebrate the joy of Easter.

**Orthodox Church** - Churches that follow traditional beliefs, practices, rules and customs.