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EASTER GAMES AROUND EUROPE

SOME FASCINATING FUN FACTS

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Germany

- **The Easter Bunny legend began in Germany** - Every year, children are hunting for chocolate eggs carefully hidden by the Easter Bunny. It has no real connection to this holy day. In the late 16th century, the Protestant reformer Martin Luther is said to have organized egg hunts for his congregation, where men would hide eggs for women and children to find. It is also believed that the Easter Bunny would lay brightly colored eggs for well-behaved children to find on the morning of Easter Sunday. The term “Easter egg” has even become the phrase used to describe an intentionally hidden clue or joke in a film or video game.
- In Germany, it is the rabbit, the stork or the fox that bring the Easter eggs.



Germany



- According to scholars, this Christian holiday **Easter** was named after the Anglo-Saxon goddess, **Ēostre (Ostara, Ēastre)**, who was depicted as a Fertility Goddess and a Goddess of Dawn and Light (picture - *Ostara* (1884) by Johannes Gehrts).
- **Pretzels are also an Easter snack** because the twists resemble arms crossing in prayer. From the 1950s, it was tradition for Germans to eat a pretzel and a hard-boiled egg for dinner on Good Friday.





Decoration tree – Germany, Austria, Finland



Ukraine

The act of painting eggs originates from a Ukrainian tradition

- For countless generations, Ukrainians have been decorating eggs as a calling out to the Gods and Goddesses of health and fertility.
- This traditional act of pysanka (“pih-sahn-kah”) is made by using wax and dyes.



Romania

- Romanians put a red egg and silver coins in the water and wash their faces for health and beauty.





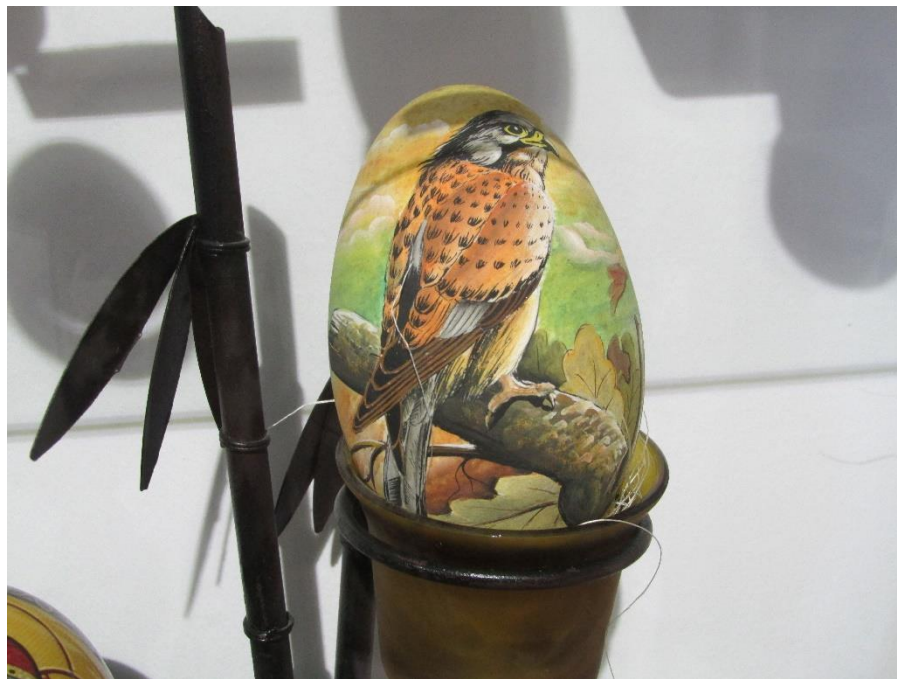
Romania



Hungary



- On Easter Sunday, young boys and men sprinkle perfume or toilet water the young girls and women dressed in national costumes and demand a kiss. The purpose of this popular but strange ritual is to invoke health, fertility, happiness, and beauty.







Czech Republic and Slovakia



- On Easter Sunday, young boys and men seemingly beat with rods decorated with ribbons the young girls and women dressed in national costumes and demand a kiss. The purpose of this popular but strange ritual is to invoke health, fertility, happiness, and beauty.

France



- In France, it's not the Easter Bunny who hides eggs for children. They're brought by flying bells.
- Throughout the year, church bells are pretty busy in France. Up and down the country they'll ring several times a day, and are especially raucous on a day of celebration. But on the Thursday before Easter (Maundy Thursday), the bells fall silent. Why? Because according to French Catholic tradition, they've sprouted wings and flown to Italy.







MOROCCO

GREECE

FRANCE

MALAYSIA

Serbia

- The symbol of Easter is a little chick.



Italy



- The Italians observe Easter Monday with a picnic. They prepare the traditional cheese biscuits, whereas in Lombardia people bake “la colomba”, which is dove-shaped Easter bread.
- It is also common to make a cheese pastry with 33 layers of filo dough symbolizing Christ’s age.
- Every region has a different Easter symbol.



Bulgaria



- Usually, several generations get together to celebrate Velikden (Great Day, Easter) and have fun, eat roast lamb, kozunak (sweet Easter bread), and also fight with colorful eggs.
- Egg fighting is one of the most famous Easter traditions in Bulgaria. This ritual symbolizes new life, people's hopes for health, luck, prosperity and happiness.

- On Sunday morning the official egg fight begins. Now don't imagine people will be throwing eggs at you. Egg fighting is what you see on the picture above: one holds an egg and the other person knocks it with his own. The ultimate goal is to have the "winner" egg, but of course it is all about the fun! And if you lose and your egg cracks – you get to eat it. Basically, everyone is a winner!
- Egg tapping happens in two steps – small end tapping against small end, and large end tapping against large end.
- There is the same tradition in:
 - ✓ Greece but it is red egg fighting
 - ✓ Romania - the guests must fight the host's egg
 - ✓ The Netherlands – the children have baskets full of colored eggs. Two teams stand in a straight line against each other and the children try to hit their opponents' eggs. Contestants can only aim at eggs of the same color.
 - ✓ Russia, North Macedonia.
 - ✓ USA, Louisiana has held an official egg fight since 1956 .
 - ✓ India– the game is known as *Koni-juj*: Koni means egg, and Juj – fighting.



- One very important rule for all men: ***Your wives or girl friends always have to be winners in the egg fight!!!***











- One of the traditions is to prepare the special Easter bread – kolak, parmak, kravaj. In the period 1915 –1920, people started to prepare a different type of bread, more commonly referred to as kozunak. This word was borrowed in the Bulgarian language from the Romanian word kozonac (bread and grapes) which in turn was borrowed from the Greek word kuzunaki. It is a sweet bread made from yeast dough which symbolizes the body of Christ. Nowadays, this kind of bread is not only a religious symbol but it is also a regular food.



United Kingdom

- In the 19th century, the Fry family of Bristol ran the largest chocolate factory in the world and produced the first chocolate egg, in 1873.
- It was two years later in 1875, that Cadbury's made their first Easter egg.
- Possibly the world's most expensive egg was sold at Christie's in London for £9 million in 2007. The enamelled egg contains a multi-coloured cockerel which at every hour pops out of the egg and flaps its wings, before nodding its head three times. The egg was made by Karl Fabergé in St Petersburg in 1902 and is the second largest egg ever made by Fabergé.



Poland

- In Poland, on the Saturday before Easter, people take baskets of food for the church to be blessed.
- *Pisanki* are eggs for Easter.





Europe



- All over Europe families decorate the tables, rooms, and the houses with painted eggs, flowers, and other decorations made of natural materials, paper, fabric and so on.
- Popular Easter flowers even hold varying meanings. White Easter lilies are considered a very traditional Easter flower as they are an ancient symbol of the resurrection, representing purity and hope. The Daffodils are common first sign of spring across the world and in Germany they are known as the “Easter bells”. Other popular symbols include the tulip, the daisy, and the azalea.

