

Easter in Slovakia

The most important Christian holiday of the year is Easter. The Easter holiday is celebrated differently in individual regions. Easter in Slovakia is a combination of the Christian and pagan traditions. The Easter season beginning with Ash Wednesday and building up with the holiest day in the year: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christians begin Easter celebration on Holy Thursday. On Good Friday, people were discouraged from working in the garden and during Lent, Christians were forbidden from eating meat or meat products. On Easter Saturday, no masses are celebrated until midnight, and on Easter Sunday food is consecrated in churches and can be consumed again after the long period of fasting. Young girls decorate Easter eggs for young boys on Monday. Easter Monday is traditionally connected with "šibačka" (whipping) and "oblievačka" (water pouring) – young boys go from door to door, pour girls with water, and gently whip them with a birch rod. In return, they receive painted Easter eggs and coloured ribbons on their rods from the young girls.

Secular traditions

Eggs and bunnies have become a universal symbol of Easter around the world. Customs and traditions, from country to country, vary. In Bermuda on the Good Friday there is a tradition to desert kites. On Easter Sunday the Greeks ate for breakfast pastries in the shape of a cross and have for lunch soup of lamb stomach. Finally lunch followed by the tradition- housekeeper must throw a crock out of the window that it brought good luck to the house. In Cyprus young boys create groups that are looking for old wood. From the accumulation of wood, they create a large bonfire in the evening. A group which has the largest fire, the following year obtained special rights and position in the town or village. Easter detective story comes from Norway, where this interesting tradition was established in 1923. At that time one of the writers introduced his new book, which had just come out during the Easter holidays. From nice advertisements it eventually became an established habit, when locals on Easter Monday read books on this topic.

What Easter means to me

As I am a Christian for me the Easter is by far the most religious holiday of the year. In my family we respect and observe religious traditions but not that much strictly. On the Good Friday we do not eat meat or any sweets and we commemorate the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in the church. On Easter Saturday we decorated the Easter eggs and in the evening food is consecrated in church. On Easter Sunday we celebrate Jesus' resurrection in the church and after mass we go to my grandparents' house where the whole family meets and we have a lunch together. On the Easter Monday we do not support that typical Slovak tradition named as a oblievačka we avoid this custom and have our own habit which means go to Zoo or to the forest together. Easter holiday means for me a lot of time spending with family and great rest from school.