

Medieval custom eggshilarating holiday

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Easter eggs. An ancient fertility rite, a Christian symbol or enough egg salad to last until the Fourth of July — through the centuries, Easter eggs have meant different things to different people.

The Easter egg is a small oval of colored joy, but its origins are shrouded behind the curtains of time.

Easter itself is a pagan celebration assimilated by the Christians.

It started as part of the worship of Eostre or Ostara, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring. The egg seems to have been a worldwide symbol of fertility and new life.

Christians in medieval times interpreted the egg and egg-rolling game as symbols of Jesus Christ's resurrection. Rolling the egg was a re-enactment of rolling the stone away from Christ's tomb.

According to legend, many people in Preston, England, turned out to watch others roll colorful eggs down a hill on Easter Monday.

Children in Yorkshire, England,

also practice egg-rolling at Easter, except they roll the eggs down a lane near Barton-on-Humber until the shells are broken.

Making Easter eggs is relatively easy; currently there are three schools of thought on the issue: traditional hard-boiled, middle-of-the-road

conservatives, but certain members of the New Right are not entirely adverse to experimentation.

Place a single layer of old eggs in a tall pan and cover liberally with water. Add a dash of salt, bring to boiling and let the eggs cook about 10 more minutes. Immediately submerge in cold tap water. If the cook does not follow these directions, the eggs will be harder to peel and possibly slightly resentful.

The rest of the directions are on the back of any commercial Easter egg dye.

Homemade Easter egg dyes can be made out of beets, lettuce, saffron or periwinkles, but require weeks of experimentation to perfect the hues.

In addition, some chickens lay eggs in pale shades of green, pink and blue. For today's busy career people, this is probably the easiest alternative to having the eggs catered.

Tie-dyed eggs can be created by wrapping the cooked egg in a square of cheesecloth. Food coloring is applied directly to the cloth in layers. Tighten the cloth to swirl and mix the colors.

Blown-out eggs are practical for many reasons. They can be kept for years if cleaned properly, the techniques used produce enchanting designs, and raw egg can be used for cakes, omelets and beauty aids — none of which can be said for a boiled egg.

Blowing out eggs is a talent; not everyone is given the ability. Carefully poke a small hole into the small end of the egg and a big hole into the big end. Blow gently into the small hole. Gently is the key word; ignoring this instruction may end with someone having egg on his face. Rinse the eggshell well.

Pour a cup of water in a disposable bowl and add a few drops of oil-based paint. Float the egg in the water, then add a few drops of a different color. The result is a delicately psychedelic egg if the effect is not overdone.

See EGGS on 11




John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan

In America, children search for their eggs and large baskets full of sugar-coated goodies, which they proceed to eat until they turn a springy shade of green, making Easter a pastel antithesis of Halloween.

blow-outs and liberal, avant-garde eggs made of any available material.


The foundation of the boiled Easter egg is a perfectly cooked chicken ovum. Turkey, geese or ostrich eggs are frowned upon by Easter

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