

EASTER



Step back in time and celebrate Easter in Medieval Scotland!

The 40 days before Easter are known as Lent. It is a time of fasting for Christians where foods such as Meat, Eggs, Milk and Fats were forbidden to be eaten.

In Medieval Scotland people were very religious and would try to follow the rules of Lent.

Sometimes they would cook food to look like other foods. A favourite of the royal courts was Almond Eggs. Using Almonds, the Palace cooks would make a mixture with the ground almonds and water. They would then take a real Egg and blow out the contents. The Almond mixture would then be put into the Egg. Some of the almond mixture would even be coloured yellow with Saffron to look like Egg yolk.

At the End of Lent, Eggs were once again allowed and in celebration the Eggs could be decorated. Edward I of England (The king who went to battle against William Wallace and Robert the Bruce) once covered 450 boiled Eggs in gold leaf and gave them to his household!

Most eggs that were decorated were not covered in gold leaf though.

Most would be coloured with food or painted with symbols of Jesus and the church.

Since Eggs were not to be eaten during Lent, quite a few were boiled to try to keep them for after Lent, so there were plenty of Eggs to decorate.



Food was of course a big part of Easter. After 40 days, people were allowed to eat what they wanted again. Simnel cakes, spiced eggs, Hot Cross Buns and Lamb could be found on the medieval table.

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Decorate an Easter Egg 1

You will need:

- Boiled egg
- Hot Water
- Vinegar
- A bowl

Choose a natural dye from the following list. All these items could be found in a medieval kitchen

Onion Skin

Turmeric powder

Chamomile flowers

Beetroot

Red cabbage leaves

Method

In your bowl put in about a pint of hot water (ask an adult to help with this)

Add 3 tablespoons of vinegar.

Add your chosen dye.

Let the dye sit for about 10 mins then add your egg.

Leave your egg in the water for at least 30 mins - if you leave the egg for longer then it will have a deeper colour.

Decorate an Easter Egg 2

Download the worksheet **Painting, Printing, Writing** and look at how to create your own medieval paint. (continued on next page)

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Using a pencil, draw a pattern or an Easter scene onto your Egg

Using your medieval paint, decorate the egg. Remember that Medieval Paint may need a few layers to make it nice and bright.



Medieval Poached Easter Eggs

This recipe is for a breakfast meal that would have been eaten by Royalty or someone very rich. We know this because of some of the ingredients. Saffron and some of the other spices were expensive and not everyone could afford them.

As you can see there are no measurements for this recipe. Can you make it without the measurements?

- Break eggs into boiling water and 'seethe' them. (seethe just means cook)
- Take them out whole and lay them in a dish.
- Then take flour, mix it with milk, honey, a little powdered ginger.
- Stir over a low flame until you have a thick sauce.
- Colour the sauce with strands of saffron.
- Then pour the sauce over the eggs and serve the dish sprinkled with 'blanche powder' (a mixture of ground ginger, cinnamon and nutmeg).

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Hot Cross Buns

Visit our "Did You Know" pages on to find out a little bit of history about the Hot Cross Bun.