

WANN IST OSTERZEIT?

das Ostern: Easter
 die Osterzeit: Easter season
 das Osterfest: Easter celebration
 die Osterwoche: Easter week

Wann ist die Osterzeit? (When is the Easter season?)

- A. Osterwoche / Karwoche (Easter week)
 - 1. Palmsonntag (Palm Sunday)
 - 2. Gründonnerstag (Green Thursday, Maundy Thursday, Holy Thursday)
 - 3. Karfreitag (Good Friday)
 - 4. stiller Samstag / Osterabend (Quiet Saturday)
 - 5. Ostersonntag (Easter Sunday)
 - 6. Ostermontag (Easter Monday)
- B. Frühling, Frühjahr (spring)
- C. Osterzeichen in der Natur (Easter symbols in nature)

Spring flowers, eggs, chickens, hares and lambs are important Easter symbols. They symbolize the natural world's rebirth after the darkness of winter and Jesus' resurrection after his crucifixion. Lambs also symbolize the sacrifice of Jesus, God's only son.

Germany is in the northern hemisphere so Easter fires are a useful way of getting rid of dead plant material from garden and farms before the growing season begins again. In the pre-Christian Germanic tradition, they also symbolize the return of life and growth in the spring. For Christians, they may symbolize the destruction of Jesus on [Good Friday](#) and his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Easter is a *moveable feast* and is celebrated on the first Sunday after the first spring full moon. In *Western Christianity* (including Catholic and Protestant traditions) which uses Gregorian calendar the date of Easter varies between 22 March and 25 April. Eastern Christianity uses the Julian Calendar and for this reason it celebrates Easter about two weeks later, varying between 4 April and 8 May on the Gregorian calendar.

The Easter period starts in earnest on the Sunday before Easter, Palm Sunday ("Palmsonntag"), commemorating events in the last days of Christ's life. It begins on Palm Sunday and ends on Easter Monday.

Easter in Germany - Travel Tips

Germans enjoy a very long Easter weekend: Good Friday and Easter Monday are public holidays; shops, banks, and offices are closed. Trains and busses operate on a limited holiday schedule.

The Easter celebration (**das Osterfest**) takes on both religious and secular forms. The Christian religious celebration is the most important day in the church calendar, reflecting Christianity's very beginnings in the Resurrection of Jesus. In the western church, Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox (*die Tagundnachtgleiche*). (Eastern Orthodox Easter follows the same formula, but with the Julian calendar, so the date can fall one, four, or five weeks later.) Because this "movable feast" depends on phases of the moon (*Mondphasen, Mondwechsel*), Easter can be observed between March 22 and April 25. In 2008 Easter Sunday (*Ostersonntag*) falls on March 23. (2009: April 12)

The Apostles celebrated it at the same time when the Jews celebrated their Passover, since the resurrection of Jesus took place the day after the celebration of Passover. It was celebrated by the Israelites to commemorate their deliverance from the slavery in Egypt. At the same time fell Jesus' death and resurrection. The Jews celebrated the Passover on Nisan 14, because that Moses commanded them. The month of Nisan was called the period (30 days) from the new moon in March to the new moon in April. However, due to the fact that Jesus resurrected on Sunday, Christians (starting from the second century) began to celebrate Easter on the first Sunday after the first spring full moon. So it passed the council of Nice in 325 AD, stating that the first spring full moon is considered to be that which falls after the equinox, i.e. March 21.