

GRÜNDONNERSTAG / GREEN THURSDAY

Green Thursday

Green Thursday (Gründonnerstag), known to many in America as Maundy Thursday, is believed to be the day on which the Last Supper was held. It used to be traditional to clean the house thoroughly on this day, a custom which is possibly linked to the preparation for the Passover Feast. Another custom attached to Green Thursday was that of taking a bath, either simply out of a desire to be clean at Easter or possibly as a reminder of Jesus Christ's washing the disciples' feet at the Last Supper.

Green food, such as spinach, kale, cress, leek, chives and other herbs are traditionally eaten on Green Thursday.

Maundy Thursday

The Thursday during Holy Week is often called Maundy Thursday. This day is a symbolic anniversary of the Last Supper. In Germany, this day is called Gründonnerstag, with a literal translation of "Green Thursday." Traditionally German families serve green dishes in celebration of this feast day. A common dish is soup made from a variety of green vegetables or herbs. Kerbelsuppe, a chervil soup, includes chervil, leeks and spices in a chicken broth. Krautlsuppe, a seven-herb soup, is another common dish, containing spinach, parsley, sorrel, leeks, chives and dandelion greens. Eier in grüner sosse, or eggs in green sauce, is another green-colored dish common on Gründonnerstag. Cut hard-boiled eggs in half and top them with an herb sauce.

The next event is Holy Thursday ("Gründonnerstag"). Though the name means "Green Thursday," it actually derives from "greinen", an old German word which means "to groan, to weep, to mourn" and this is where the name for the day of the Last Supper and the betrayal by Judas originates. Falsely interpreted, it soon became tradition to bring out green ornaments in Church as well as eat something green – herbs, salad, but more traditionally spinach.

In Germany the Easter celebration starts on Thursday and ends on Sunday, with traditional dishes for each day. The first day is *Gründonnerstag*, or Maundy Thursday. The name *Gründonnerstag* derives from *greinen*, an old German word for mourning or crying. However, since *Gründonnerstag* sounds like "green Thursday" in German, many people celebrate by eating green dishes like Seven Herb Soup, made with spinach, parsley, leek, chive, dandelion and sorrel.