

Easter time in Austria

At Easter time Austria is colourful in culture, cuisine, customs and traditions. Each federal state is characterised by regional characteristics. The various Easter markets in Austria invite you to experience a piece of Austrian culture.

On Holy Saturday, before the Easter food is consecrated, Eastern Styrian children are up early. As "bearers of holy fire", they meet at the church with so-called embers to light their tinder and the self-collected tree sponges with the consecrated fire. Then you have to be quickly, because you have to be the first to bring the fire from house to house. The custom of delivering the incense goes back to a time when there were no matches or lighters. People could not let the hearth fire go out, so they used their own embers so that the fire lasted the whole night. Only once a year, on Good Friday, the fire was deliberately let go out. On Holy Saturday the people of Eastern Styria lit the hearth fire with the "consecrated fire" from the parish. But only the boys who were the first to arrive at the houses received special gifts.

Easter markets

You get spring feelings at the Easter markets in Styria. You cannot only find lovely handicrafts and gifts, but also self-made delicacies of the region.

Easter

Bunny

The Easter Bunny is the symbol for Easter. Parents tell their children that the Easter bunny comes on Easter Sunday and hides Easter nests. These are usually filled with coloured, hard-boiled Easter eggs and sweets such as chocolate eggs or chocolate bunnies. The children are allowed to look for the Easter nests which are hidden in the whole house or in the garden.

Easter eggs

Easter eggs are another very popular symbol of Easter. For Christians it is also a symbol that Jesus Christ has risen from the grave. Many different traditions have emerged around the Easter egg. The most important one is that on the days before Easter eggs are dyed and painted. Besides searching for Easter eggs on Easter Sunday, so called Easter egg hunts, "egg pecking" is a popular tradition: it is a game at which two people compete against each other with a hard-boiled egg. A player starts and hits the egg of his opponent with the tip of his egg. The winner is the player with whose egg the shell is intact. Easter eggs are also often used to decorate trees or bushes in the garden or twigs in the house. Blown eggs are used for this or plastic eggs that can be bought in various shops.

PalmSunday

According to the Bible, Jesus was greeted with palm leaves by the cheering crowd on the Sunday before Easter (Palm Sunday) as he entered Jerusalem. Instead of palm branches, so-called "pussy willows" are consecrated in Austria and placed in the apartment. They are often decorated with Easter eggs.

Ratchets

From Holy Thursday to Holy Saturday the church bells do not ring in many regions of Austria. In some areas, especially in the countryside, children go through the village several times a day instead. They make noise with special wooden instruments, so-called "ratchets", and hold speeches.