

## The Top Three Favorite Easter Candies

The holidays sell candy and Easter, over the years, has become the second top-selling candy holiday of them all. Studies show that Americans alone spend an average \$1.9 billion on Easter candy every year. Halloween is number one, which consists of \$2 billion worth of candy spending and Christmas and Valentine's Day bring up the rear with \$1.4 billion and \$1 billion respectively. So what are the top four types of Easter candy people are buying? Cadbury Egg - Over 300 million Cadbury Eggs are produced each year for Easter. John Cadbury made his first 'French eating Chocolate' in 1842 but it was not until 1875 that the first Cadbury Easter Eggs were made. What sets Cadbury apart from other chocolate candies at this time of year is that these chocolate eggs contain Cadbury chocolate. Cadbury is rather milky tasting, and certainly very sweet. The egg is then cloaked in an amazingly odd slightly sanded, matte shell. The shell is crunchy and has a slightly cool feel in the mouth. You can dissolve it away to get to the chocolate centers, or you can crunch the whole thing together for a sweeter burst. Why did Cadbury choose the egg to make of chocolate? Easter became associated with the egg due to the fact Easter is based on a pagan fertility holiday. Later when the Christian Church adopted Easter and the theme of re-birth, the fertility theme stuck, as did the egg and that other fertile animal, the rabbit. Chocolate eggs themselves for Easter have been around for a long time. The first solid chocolate Easter eggs were created in Germany and France around 1800. Solid chocolate eggs were soon followed by hollow eggs. Although making hollow eggs at one time was no easy task as the easily worked chocolate we use today didn't exist then. Chocolate had made into a paste made from ground roasted Cacao beans. By the turn of the 19th Century, the discovery of the modern chocolate making process had improved mass manufacturing methods which meant that the chocolate Easter egg was fast becoming the Easter Gift of choice in the UK and parts of Europe, and by the 1960's it was well established worldwide. Chocolate Easter Bunnies - Believe it or not, the chocolate Easter bunny was only patented in 1960. Today, over 90 million chocolate Easter bunnies are made for Easter each year. Back to the pagan beginnings of Easter, the hare was associated with the celebration of the goddess Eostre, from whom the word Easter is derived. The hare is also symbolically associated with the moon and therefore may have indirectly become associated with Easter since the date of Easter is determined by the phases of the moon (the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring Equinox, March 21). The appearance of a rabbit as a creature that lays brightly colored eggs as gifts for children is documented in Germany in the 1500s, where kids eagerly awaited the arrival of the Oschter Haws. The tradition seems to have been brought to America in the 1700s by settlers, where the Easter Bunny became firmly established as a popular symbol of Easter. Germans are also credited with creating the first edible rabbits (pastry-based) in the 1800s. Jelly Beans - Over 16 billion of these colorful little candies are made each year for Easter. These candies may be the oldest Easter candy choice in the United States as they started becoming popular in 1930's. Jelly Beans are believed to be descendants of a Mid-eastern confection known as Turkish Delight, which were already a very popular candy in America and were featured in glass jars on store counters all over the country. Because of their egg-like shape, the Jelly Bean became associated with the Easter Bunny, who by this time had rapidly gained fame after the Civil War as the harbinger of Easter. The two seemed a perfect match and Jelly Beans stuck as one of the quintessential Easter candies. What colors are most preferred of the Jelly Bean? Children indicate their favorite Easter jellybean flavors are cherry (20%), strawberry (12%), grape (10%), lime (7%), and blueberry (6%). The Marshmallow Peep - Each Easter season, Americans buy more than 700 million Marshmallow Peeps making them the most popular non-chocolate Easter candy. These little marshmallow delights are shaped like chicks, as well as bunnies and eggs. Each day, five million marshmallow chicks and bunnies are produced in preparation for Easter with yellow Peeps being the most popular, followed by pink, lavender, blue, and white. In 1953, it took 27 hours to create a Marshmallow Peep. Today it takes six minutes. Peeps have also gone beyond their obvious appeal as a simple candy in that they have achieved somewhat of a "cult" status in many parts of the world. Everything from Peep based "science experiments" and Peep Erotica, to movie releases like "Lord of the Peeps" keeps peoples love for the sugary snack fresh. Easter has always had a relatively sweet appeal for many cultures for hundreds of years. Regardless of people's beliefs and reasons for celebrating Easter, this holiday has always been celebrated as a time where things are reborn, fresh, and new. Which candy will you choose for the celebration?

## About the Author

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