

TOP TIPS FOR EASTER

1. Lamb is the traditional roast for Easter but to give it extra flavour when cooking, take a sharp knife, make deep incisions all over the lamb and then insert slithers of garlic and rosemary leaves, brush all over with olive oil and roast. Simply gorgeous
2. Don't forget to use all the juices left in the pan- simply drain off excess fat and place the roasting pan on your hob on a low to medium heat. Stir in a tablespoon of flour until dissolved, add 2 glasses of red wine and 2 teaspoons of redcurrant jelly and a chicken stock cube and bring to the boil. Reduce to a simmer and cook until the sauce thickens. Hey presto! - delicious gravy to go with your lamb.
3. Why not do something different for Easter breakfast? When we were kids, Dad used to boil some eggs and then when they were cool to the touch, we would get out the felt tip pens and crayons and draw pretty patterns all over them. Each member of the family got to have one for their breakfast, each to their own design!
4. To make some homemade Easter gifts for all the family, simply break a bar of chocolate into chunks and into a microwaveable bowl, place in the microwave for 1-2 minutes, depending on how much chocolate you are melting and when nice and smooth, pour the chocolate into Easter shaped silicone moulds, such as eggs, rabbits, chicks etc. Allow to cool in the fridge until they are fully set, then pop out of the moulds. Get the children to decorate with sugared flowers, coloured icing pens etc, using the icing as a "glue" to stick the flowers on. When done, wrap 3 or 4 into a piece of pretty fabric or voile, tie with a ribbon and you have a lovely gift.
5. If you are making some Easter cup cakes, why not top each one with a teaspoon of Nutella. It gives a rich flavour to any sponge cake
6. When making Easter cakes make sure that all the ingredients are at room temperature before starting to make your cake. Cold ingredients make for poor quality cakes that haven't risen for the occasion!
7. After the event if you have any left-over or stale Hot Cross buns, why not use them instead of bread to make a splendid bread and butter pudding!
8. Here's a great way of making a traditional sponge cake into an Easter Lemon Drizzle Cake. As soon as you bring out your sponge cake from the oven, prick the surface of the cake with a skewer, drizzle with the juice of two lemons and then sprinkle with granulated sugar. It is important that you do this within 5

minutes of the cake coming out of the oven, as the sugar will melt and the juice will sink into the sponge cake. Once it has cooled, cut a slice and enjoy the zingy taste!

9. Simnel Cake is the traditional Easter cake and remember that tradition dictates that there should be eleven marzipan balls placed around the circumference of the cake to represent the eleven apostles. The twelfth apostle, Judas, is not represented for obvious reasons
10. When making Easter cookies, try to include traditional flavours such as cinnamon, nutmeg, ground cloves and allspice and of course, lemon zest or candied lemon peel.