

What do Italians eat for Easter?

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Discover the traditional dishes from antipasti to dolci!

Easter in Italy is a joyous time of year, filled with jovial festivities that can last for days. And as with most Italian holidays, the celebration almost always culminates in a feast: friends and family gather around the table to enjoy a multi-course lunch taking place over the course of several hours.

So what do Italians eat for Easter? Although traditional cuisine varies from region to region, there are a few dishes that have become widely popular for the [pasqua](#) [2] celebration. Learn more with our guide below, then check out our recommended recipes to create your own Italian Easter feast at home!

ANTIPASTI

One of the most famous Italian easter foods is [torta pasqualina](#) [3], a savory pie filled with greens,



cheese, and hard-boiled eggs. In central and southern Italy, another popular dish pizza rustica, a rich pie filled with eggs, small bits of cured meats, and cheeses. Although often served as a snack or lunch throughout the weekend, these Easter pies also work as an appetizer to a meal.

Other typical Easter starters include arancini, Sicilian fried rice balls, cured meats and cheeses, and carciofi fritti, or fried artichokes.

Italian Easter Appetizers: Torta Pasqualina, Arancini, or a simple antipasto board

PRIMI

No celebratory Italian meal is complete without a little pasta or risotto. For Easter, primi vary from region to region. In the north, fresh, stuffed pasta such as agnolotti del plin is a popular choice. In many other areas, pasta served with broth and sometimes even polpette, or "meatballs," is traditional for Easter lunch. Baked pasta is also common for large celebrations since it can be made ahead of time. Nowadays many Italian families enjoy pasta and risotto flavored with fresh spring vegetables like artichokes, peas, and more.

Italian Easter First Courses: Try this baked Ziti alla Norma by Lidia Bastianich, the veal-stuffed Agnolotti del Plin, Vegetable Lasagne, Spring Pea Ravioli, or Risotto alla Parmigiana.

SECONDI

As the main course, agnello, or "lamb," to be the star of the Easter table in Italy. Depending on the region, it can be served in various ways. For example, in central Italy, lamb is usually a leg of lamb is roasted and served simply with rosemary and potatoes. In southern Italy, a lamb stew is made with spring vegetables such as asparagus and peas.

Italian Easter Main Courses: Arrosto di Agnello or Pesce al Forno (baked fish)

DOLCI

Ah, yes. The moment we have all been waiting for: dessert! In Italy, there are many traditional Easter sweets, including cakes, chocolates, and cookies. A cousin to the Christmas panettone, colomba is a fluffy dove-shaped bread studded with candied orange peel and topped with pearl sugar and almonds. Although it originated in Milano, the sweet cake is enjoyed throughout many regions in Italy.

Another sweet Easter tradition is chocolate eggs. As is true in many other cultures, eggs are a symbol of fertility and new life. During Easter, artisanal Italian confectioners carefully craft elaborate hollow chocolate eggs, filling them with small toys and surprises. To learn more, check out our guide to Chocolate Easter Eggs in Italy.

Finally, there is pastiera Napoletana, a rich, sweet pie filled with ricotta, eggs, and whole, cooked grain. The dessert originated in Napoli, but is widely enjoyed throughout Italy during Easter today.

Italian Easter Desserts: Colomba, Chocolate Eggs, Olive Oil Cakes

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