

Tuesday 26th January 2021

L1: To appreciate how Easter is affected by different cultural traditions

Each image is followed by a slide which gives you information about that image.



Palm Sunday in Poland



Palm Sunday

The first sign of approaching Easter in Poland is a large number of branches and dried flowers being brought to church. One week before Easter, Palm Sunday (in Polish *niedziela palmowa*) takes place.

According to Catholic tradition, the day marks the entrance of Jesus in Jerusalem. Since palm trees are rare in Poland – [although there is one known specimen](#) – churchgoers often bring pussy willows or 'palms' made of colourful woven dried branches.

The Holy Week preceding Easter involves spring cleaning. In the countryside, people would use the occasion to repaint their barns. Religious fasts are sometimes observed in varying degrees of strictness. Families visit representations of the tomb of Christ, often decorated in a spectacular fashion for the occasion.



Spain Semana Santa (Holy Week)

- Semana Santa is a week-long celebration that takes place in cities all over Spain – particularly in Andalucia. During the festival, thousands of people take part in processions as massive floats carrying religious statues are brought to the church. They are also accompanied by marching bands playing religious music with crowds lining the streets to witness it all.
- Of all Spain's many and varied festivals, Semana Santa is the most sombre but also one of the most captivating. The festival pays homage to Jesus Christ's last days before he was crucified. Many floats feature an effigy of him either carrying a crucifix or already on it. The Virgin Mary is also a prominent effigy.
- The mood of the processions changes over the week. The most colourful and joyous processions take place on Easter Sunday.



Easter Sunday

Over 80 percent of the population of [Greece](#) belongs to the Eastern Orthodox Church. Accordingly, Easter holidays are sacred and celebrated with great devotion and fanfare, but differ in scope and tradition all over the country.

On the island of Spetses, for example, fireworks are set off from churches all over the island to mark the turn of midnight on the night of the resurrection, as Easter Saturday turns to Easter Sunday. (Fireworks are a common way for Orthodox Christians to celebrate, especially in Greece, but they're usually set off on Easter Sunday.) Then, in the afternoon, the people conduct the "Burning of Judas" in the main square in Kounoupitsa. On the island of Folegandros, the emphasis is on the Virgin Mary, and people clean and wash their homes in preparation for the passing of an icon of the Virgin Mary.



Ecuador

In Quito, **Ecuador**, the week preceding **Easter Sunday** is full of events. Goods and small **bouquets** are designed especially for **Palm Sunday**.

People carry branches of rosemary and native grasses in bouquets which are meant to replace traditional palm branches, now an endangered species.



Guatemala

The Easter Festival in Antigua, [Guatemala](#), is the largest Easter celebration in the world. It's a week-long celebration during which the community commemorates the passion and crucifixion of Jesus by conducting somber processional marches, carrying floats with large sculptures of Jesus and Mary. Sand and coloured sawdust are painstakingly designed and laid in the streets in intricate patterns for the march to proceed over. On Easter Sunday, the city joyously celebrates the resurrection of Jesus with fireworks and the solemnity of the Lenten season is over.

Your task

Choose one of the images. Describe how Easter is celebrated in your chosen image. How does it differ from St Peter's?



Rome, Italy

Each year, the Pope gives his blessing at a service on Easter Sunday . The Pope gives his message at midday from a window of the Vatican papal quarters out to a throng of Roman citizens and pilgrims in St. Peter's Square, numbering up to 300,000.