

Easter, also called Pascha, is the most important religious feast in the Christian liturgical year. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which Christians believe occurred on the third day after his crucifixion some time in the period AD 27 to 33.



As with many other Christian dates, the celebration of Easter extends beyond the church. Since its origin, Easter has been a time of celebration and feasting. While lamb has become a popular main course, a good old-fashioned Easter ham is hard to beat! My recipe for Baked Ham with Honey-Apricot Glaze takes a store-bought spiral-sliced ham and makes it an easy and elegant entree. Pair your ham with Country Vegetable Salad and Dixie Spoon Bread. Spoon bread is a souffle-like custard cornbread that's served as a bread or a side dish. Spooned directly from the dish it was baked in, this tasty treat is a true southern classic. Dilly Stuffed Eggs are a must on Easter Sunday and Peach and Blueberry Cobbler is the perfect dessert to end a perfect feast. Happy Easter!

Baked Ham with Honey-Apricot Glaze

1 (10-14 pound) spiral-sliced, fully-cooked ham
1 cup honey
1 (6-ounce) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
1/3 cup soy sauce
1/3 cup apricot jam
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Place ham on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Combine remaining ingredients and set aside. Bake ham for 30 minutes; pour glaze over ham and continue to bake until ham is heated through (about 15-18 minutes per pound). Serves 15-20.

Country Vegetable Salad

1/2 cup vinegar
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 (8-ounce) can small green peas, drained
1 (12-ounce) can white corn, drained
1 (16-ounce) can French style green beans, drained
1/2 cup chopped red onion
1/2 cup chopped sweet onion
1/2 small green pepper, chopped
1/2 small red pepper, chopped
1 cup chopped celery

1 (2-ounce) jar pimentos

Combine vinegar, sugar, vegetable oil, and salt in a small container. Set aside. Combine and mix all vegetables in a bowl. Pour marinade over vegetables. Toss vegetables in marinade. Cover and refrigerate at least 6 hours before serving. Serves 10.

Dixie Spoon Bread

2 cups milk
1-1/2 cups cornmeal
1-1/2 teaspoons sugar
1-1/4 teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
5 eggs
1 tablespoon baking powder

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and butter a 2-quart baking dish. In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine 1 1/2 cups water and the milk. Bring to a simmer and add the cornmeal, sugar, salt, and butter. Stir until the mixture is thickened, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. In a medium bowl, beat the eggs with the baking powder until light and fluffy. Stir into the cornmeal mixture. Pour the batter into the baking dish and bake for 45 to 50 minutes, or until puffy and lightly browned on top. Serve hot. Serves 8.

Dilly Stuffed Eggs

12 hard-cooked eggs
1/2 cup salad dressing
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
Salt
Pepper
Dash dill weed

Slice eggs in half lengthwise and carefully remove yolks. Mash yolks with salad dressing. Add mustard, salt, pepper, and dill weed. Stir well. Spoon yolk mixture into egg whites. Sprinkle with additional dill weed to garnish. Serves 6.

Peach and Blueberry Cobbler

1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/4 cup light brown sugar
1/2 cup cold water
2 cups sliced fresh peaches, sprinkled lightly with sugar

1 cup fresh blueberries
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 cup sifted all-purpose flour (sift before measuring)
1/2 cup sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup milk
4 tablespoons butter, softened
2 tablespoons sugar
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine cornstarch, brown sugar, and water in a medium-sized saucepan. Add the peaches and the blueberries and cook, stirring, over medium heat until the mixture thickens. Stir in 1 tablespoon of the butter and lemon juice. Pour mixture into a lightly greased 8-inch round baking dish. Sift the flour, 1/2 cup sugar, baking powder, and salt into a mixing bowl. Add the milk and 4 tablespoons of softened butter and beat with an electric mixer until smooth. Pour flour mixture over fruit. Sprinkle top with 2 tablespoons sugar and nutmeg. Bake for 30 minutes. Serves 6.

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