



Homemade chocolate Easter eggs will delight the children Easter morning.

### Surprise the children with homemade Easter eggs

Here comes Peter Cottontail — and in his trail leaves behind beautifully colored Easter eggs to surprise and delight the children.

Easter is, of course, a religious occasion. For early Christians, eggs symbolized the resurrection of Christ, and were an important part of the Easter meal since they were forbidden during Lent.

Today they're a charming part of Easter celebrations and the Easter Bunny has acquired a cherished role to children all over the world. This year, surprise them Easter morning with homemade chocolate Easter eggs. They're fun to make and the time spent is well worth the effort. Or make it a family project and get the kids involved too.

The secret ingredient in these beautiful eggs is sweetened condensed milk. Combined with butter, icing sugar, and a few other ingredients, it makes a deliciously creamy centre which is later dipped in chocolate.

Sweetened condensed milk is a rich creamy blend of pure milk and sugar that's condensed by a special process. Don't confuse it with evaporated milk; they are not the same product and cannot be interchanged in recipes. It's concentrated and very thick. To pour sweetened condensed milk, remove the entire lid from the can and use a rubber spatula to clean the sides.

Set aside a day to make these homemade Easter eggs. They keep well for up to three months, so you can make them early and store in a cool, dry place until Easter morning. Or you can make them in stages — the fondant filling can be made one day; the dipping and decorating done on another.

#### Chocolate Cream-Filled Easter Eggs

- 1 can (300 mL) Eagle Brand™ Sweetened Condensed Milk
- 250 mL (1 cup) softened butter
- 15 mL (1 tbsp) corn syrup
- 10 mL (2 tsp) salt
- 10 mL (2 tsp) vanilla

- 2.75 to 3 L (11 to 12 cups) icing sugar
- Yellow food coloring
- Dipping Chocolate (recipe follows)

In a large bowl mix together sweetened condensed milk, softened butter, corn syrup, salt and vanilla. Add icing sugar in 3 or 4 batches, stirring well after each addition. Mix well, then knead with hands until mixture holds shape and is smooth and pliable.

Divide mixture into four. Color one-quarter yellow for yolks; form into 20 small balls (approximately 25 g/3/4 oz each). Set aside. Form the remaining mixture into 20 larger balls (approximately 75 g/2-1/2 oz each).

Flatten a large ball in palm of hands, place a small yellow ball in centre, then shape white mixture around yellow ball to form an egg

hape. Repeat with remaining balls. (Total weight of each egg should be about 90 to 100 g/3-1/2 oz.)

Place eggs on tray or pan; cover well with plastic wrap so they do not dry out. Chill in refrigerator at least 4 hours until firm.

Prepare Dipping Chocolate: Use a fondue fork to dip eggs; coat well then gently tap fork to remove excess chocolate. Place eggs on waxed paper-lined tray. Place in a cool place for a few minutes until chocolate is firm. Decorate as desired with Ornamental Icing (recipe follows), being sure to cover mark made by fondue fork. Wrap eggs in plastic wrap or place in plastic bags and tie with colored ribbon. Makes 20 Easter Eggs (approximately 100 g/3-1/2 oz).

Variations: Add 250 mL

(1 cup) desiccated coconut, finely chopped mixed fruit or nuts to the white mixture.

#### Dipping Chocolate

- 1 kg (2 lbs) semi-sweet chocolate (in squares or pieces)

Place chocolate and paraffin in a bowl over hot, not boiling water. Stir constantly, scraping down sides so chocolate melts evenly. Remove bowl from hot water when melted chocolate reaches 42°C (108°F). Stir

frequently until chocolate cools to 30°C (86°F), then stir a few minutes longer. (If temperature drops too low, rewarm chocolate by sitting pan in a bowl of warm water to try to maintain the 30°C (86°F) dipping temperature.)

#### Ornamental Icing

- 500 g (1 lb) icing sugar
  - 2 mL (1/2 tsp) cream of tartar
  - 3 egg whites
  - 2 mL (1/2 tsp) vanilla
- Combine ingredients in mixer bowl and beat until

very stiff. Tint as desired with food coloring. Keep container covered with a damp cloth while working with icing as it dries quickly. Makes 500 mL (2 cups).

#### PEST CONTROL

Systematic house cleaning cuts down on pest problems. Wipe and sweep up food from corners and cracks, behind drawers, along baseboards and around water pipes (especially under the kitchen sink). Scrub surfaces before treating with pesticides. Newly-treated surfaces should not be scrubbed.

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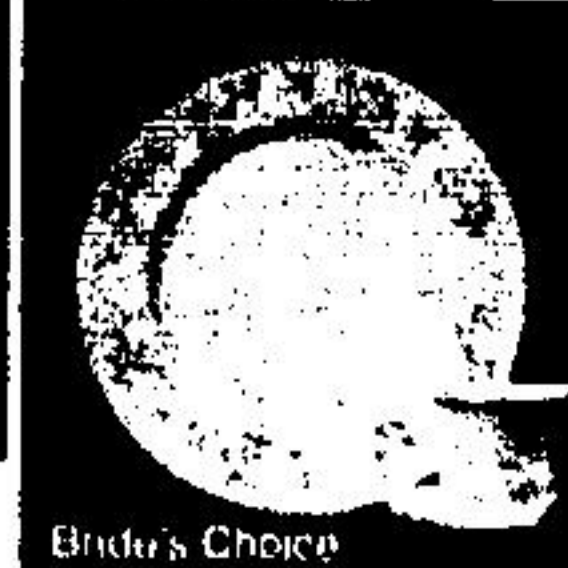
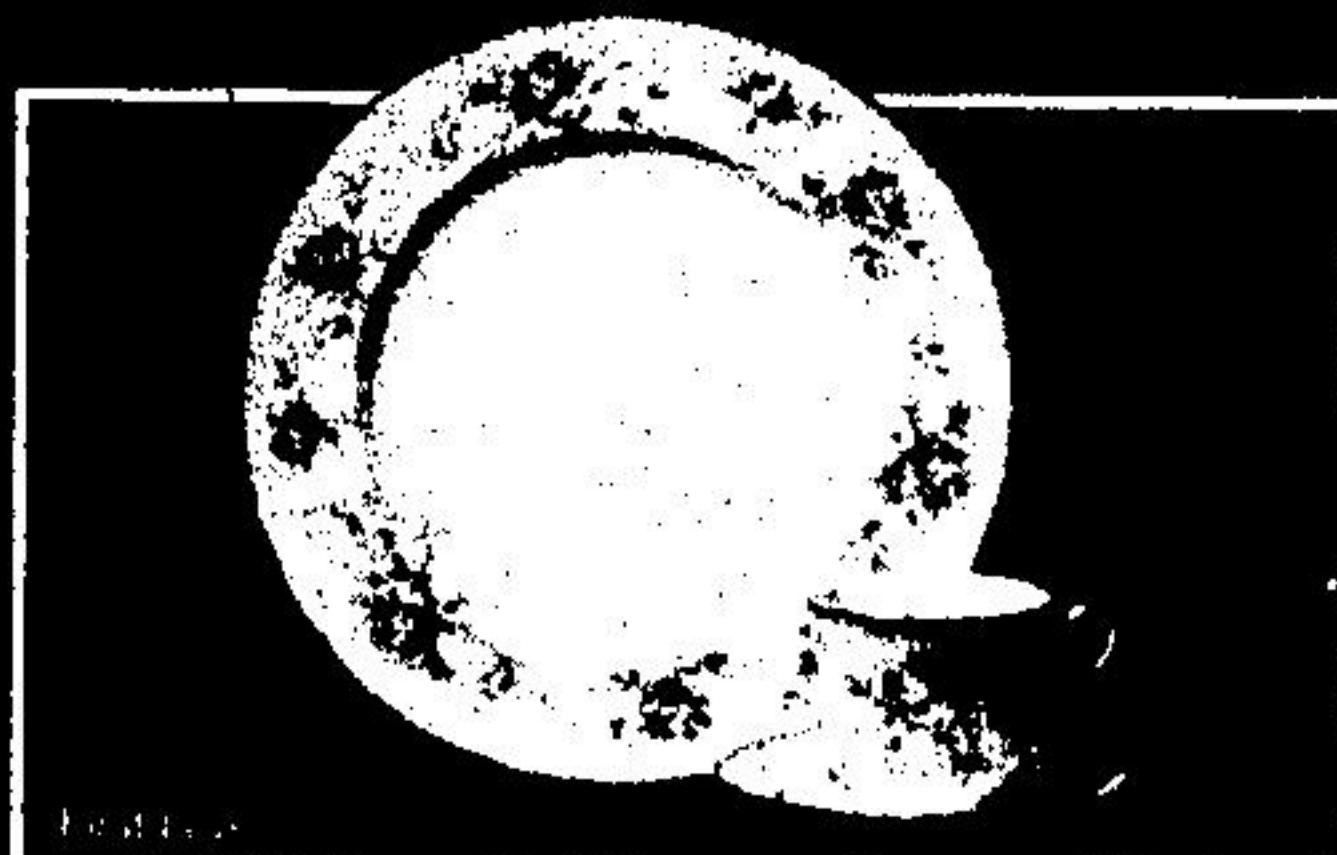
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