



The Compulsory Fun Guide to Easter



HELLO, my name is Montgomery and welcome to this handy guide to a stress free Easter. Traditionally, it's a long weekend full of gorgeous chocolate eggs, spring-like weather, warm family gatherings and lazy

lunches. But with the children on holiday, you can never rule out a spot of customary Easter bickering followed by a little light squabbling...

Don't panic! Help is at hand and together we'll be discovering how to squeeze every last drop of excitement from Easter, neatly avoiding any unsightly tears and tantrums.

Just who is Montgomery the mongoose?

Montgomery is no ordinary mongoose. In fact, together with his animal friends he's causing quite a stir because, deep in St Lucia's lush rainforest, there's a small revolution happening. Meet the Cocoa Nibblings – champions of children's chocolate. Together they asked the searching question, 'Why is good chocolate always reserved for adults?' And together they failed to come up with a good reason!

And that's exactly what the Cocoa Nibblings aim to put right by throwing open the door to real chocolate so that children can discover and experience the authentic flavours for themselves. Using more cocoa and less sugar is just one of their secrets and now they're ready to share them all...

Visit <http://www.hotelchocolat.co.uk/The-Cocoa-Nibblings-CHCNibblings/> to find out more!

Stock up on eggs!

Who knew you could have so much fun with the humble egg? And I'm not talking about the chocolate kind here, just plain old eggs. One of the first things you need to do is hard-boil them and then, having done that, the world is quite literally your lobster!

1. Dyeing Eggs

Armed with a hard-boiled egg, a cup (or other suitable container) and a few drops of food colouring, you can create all sorts of beautifully dyed eggs. Just add a few drops of colour to a cup of water, pop the egg in until it's the shade you want, then remove and allow to dry on a paper towel.

Create your own designs by drawing on the egg with a wax crayon before you dye it.

And why not try experimenting with natural colours? Just add any of the following when you're boiling the egg – beetroot, orange/lemon peel, onion skin, coffee... or have a good rummage in your cupboards for alternatives!

Use an old toothbrush to speckle your eggs with paint – but be warned, this can get very messy indeed!

Use round stickers to create spotty patterns and don't forget you can double dye the eggs in different colours before and after you remove the stickers.

2. Egg Heads

Using hard-boiled eggs, gather whatever you have to hand – cotton wool, wiggly eyes, pipe cleaners, colouring pens, ribbon, tissue paper, glue – and then get creative! Eggs are the perfect shape to make into family members' faces, cute bunnies and Easter chicks...

3. The Egg Jarping Championship

Jarping is a little known egg-based sport originally from the North of England. Think of it as a bit like conkers, but with hard-boiled eggs... One contestant holds a hard-boiled egg cupped in the hand (like a fist) so that only the top is peeping out. The other contestant, using the pointy end of his hard-boiled egg, then taps his opponent's egg.

The idea is to crack the egg without breaking your own. The winner goes on to face the next challenger and the loser, well, at least they can console themselves by eating their egg!

Wear them out!

Fresh air and exercise – a tactic employed by many parents keen for a bit of peace and quiet! And Easter presents so many possibilities...

1. The Great Egg Hunt

The traditional hunt for hidden Easter eggs is always a cracking way to keep children of all ages busy. And if you fancy spicing things up a bit, we've come up with a couple of options to keep them even busier!

Try using rhyming clues to guide them to the ultimate Easter treasure.

Using pairs of eggs, paint each pair a different colour and then hide them separately. When the children find one of the pair, they must leave it where they found it until they find the matching egg – if they can remember where they found the first one that is!

2. A Cracking Game of Catch

A throwing game with high stakes that's probably best played outside! Two players face each other 2 metres apart. Then, using an uncooked egg, they (gently!) throw the egg from one to the other. After each round of catching the players then take a step backwards and throw again. The winner is easy to spot...

Rain, rain, go away!

Given the slightly eccentric British weather, it's always wise to have a few indoor activities up your sleeve, so to speak.

1. Indoor Egg Bowling

Using coloured, hard-boiled eggs and one plain egg. Roll the plain egg into the middle of the room and then take turns seeing who can roll their coloured egg closest to the plain one. And if you've ever tried rolling an egg, you'll know how tricky this will be!

2. Egg Shell Collages

If you've already dyed some eggs and have some glue handy, then you're all set up to make some natty collages. Using the crushed eggshells, you can let the children's imaginations

run riot and have them glue the shells onto a sheet or paper, or alternatively have them sketch out a picture first.

3. Blind Tasting

And finally, if you've managed to save any chocolate Easter eggs, why not set up a blind tasting to see if they can identify different types of chocolate. Of course, you'll need some good quality chocolate with a respectable cocoa content... and I might just know someone who could help you there!

Or better still, you could always try my Brilliant Tasting Adventure, which is tailor-made to help children learn about real chocolate

<http://www.hotelchocolat.co.uk/montgomery>