

Easter Family Fun



Queue Up a Movie Marathon

Easter is a time for family to gather around and a great family activity is to queue up an Easter movie marathon.

Here are some movies to put on to celebrate the season.

"The Prince of Egypt," an animated feature that tells the story of Moses. Starring the voices of Val Kilmer, Ralph Fiennes and Michelle Pfeiffer. Rated PG, runs 1 hour, 39 minutes.

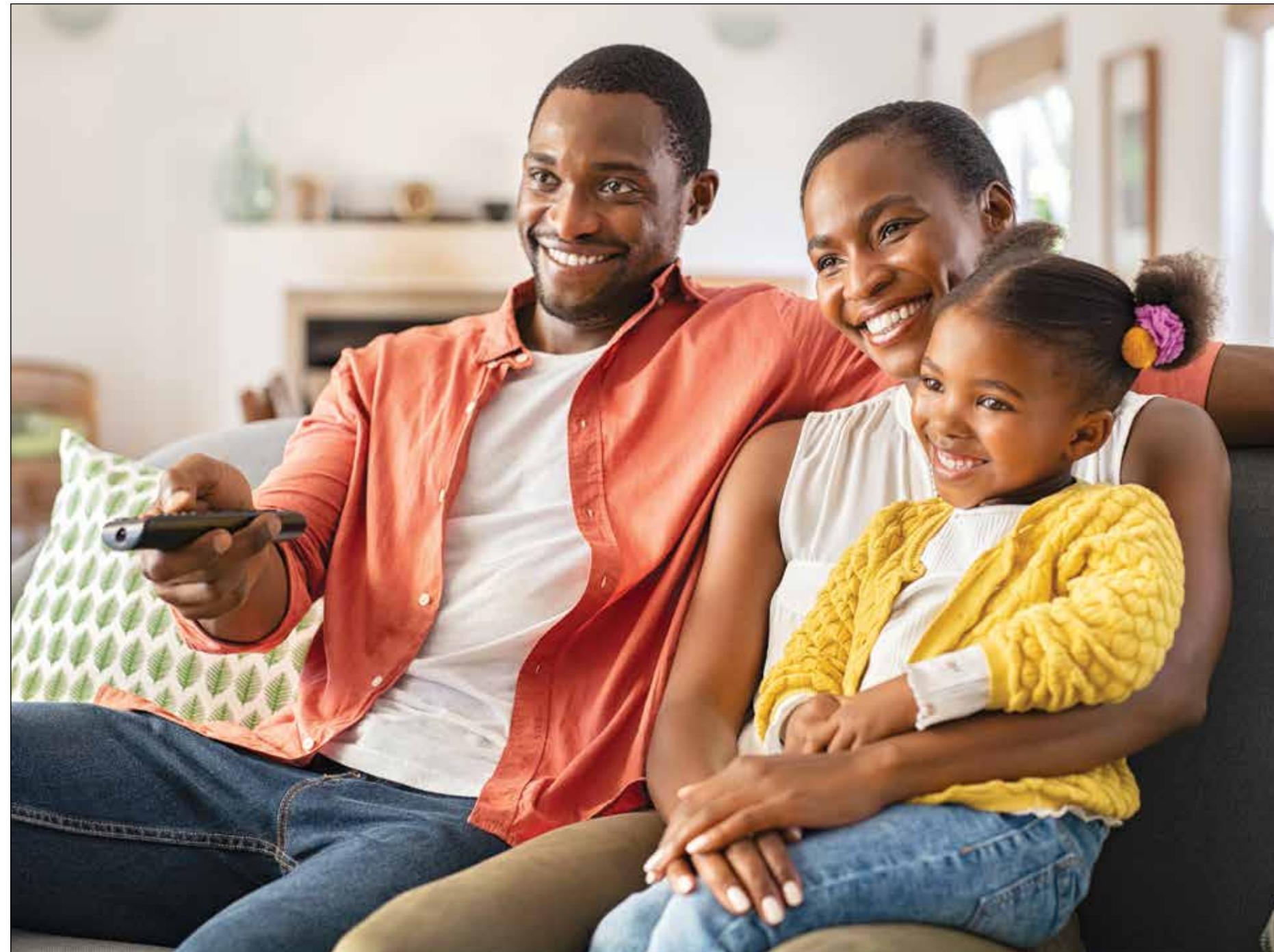
"The Ten Commandments" is an epic 1956 film starring Charlton Heston and Yul Brynner. It also tells the story of Moses. Rated G, runs 3 hours, 40 minutes.

"Easter Sunday," starring Jo Koy, Lydia Gaston and Brandon Wardell. This is a comedy based on Koy's life experiences and stand-up comedy. Rated PG-13, runs 1 hour, 36 minutes.

"Hop," a 2011 animated film about E.B., the Easter Bunny's son, and his drive to become a drummer in a rock band. Rated PG, runs 1 hour, 35 minutes.

"Risen," starring Joseph Fiennes, Tom Felton and Peter Firth, tells the story of a Roman tribune sent to find the missing body of Jesus. Rated PG-13, runs 1 hour, 47 minutes.

"The Dog Who Saved Easter" with Mario Lopez and Dean



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Cain, about a dog who works to thwart criminals trying to sabotage a doggie day care. Rated PG, runs 1 hour, 27 minutes.

"Peter Rabbit," a 2018 adaptation of the classic children's book starring James Corden. Rated PG, runs 1 hour, 35 minutes.

"Rise of the Guardians" has the Immortal Guardians,

including a certain buff bunny, teaming up to help protect children. Starring Hugh Jackman, Alec Baldwin and Isla Fisher, the movie is rated PG and runs 1 hour, 37 minutes.

"Ben-Hur," the 1959 Charlton Heston version, tells the story of a Jewish prince sent into slavery. Rated G, runs 3

hours, 32 minutes. The 2016 version tells the same story with modern computer graphics. Rated PG-13, runs 2 hours, 3 minutes.

"The Greatest Story Ever Told," another Charlton Heston classic, tells the story of the life of Jesus. Rated G, runs 4 hours, 20 minutes.

"The Gospel of John" tells

the story of Jesus as told by the apostle John. Narrated by Christopher Plummer, it's rated PG-13 and runs 3 hours.

"Easter Parade" is the story of a nightclub performer that hires a naive chorus girl to show he can make any partner a star. It stars Judy Garland and Fred Astaire and runs 1 hour, 43 minutes.

Set Up a Scavenger Hunt

You can hunt more than eggs on Easter. Pick a friendly backyard, park or other public, open space and make a list of items to find, clues or challenges.

For collection-based hunts, remind participants to only grab things off the ground and leave the habitat as you found it.

IDEAS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

Keep clues and items simple for younger children. Think about including:

- A smooth rock.
- A specific color of flower.
- A leaf.
- A type of stick.

IDEAS FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Older kids can handle more complex items or even riddles or clues.

• Items that combine complex ideas: A leaf with three holes, a rock with two colors.

• You can also write riddles or puzzles to help kids find items. For instance, "I have a spine with no bones" is a book.

• For older children with phones, have them take pictures of objects, which means you can include things such as wildlife and other objects



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that mustn't be disturbed.

COMBINE IT WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES

Like a hike. If you're going through a state park or other area, consider adding facts about the area to your scavenger hunt. Instead of just finding a rock, you can look

for a sedimentary rock smoothed by a nearby river. Or you can gear it to historical sites or other notable spots along the trail. If it's safe and allowed in your area, consider making it a nighttime scavenger hunt with glow sticks and flashlights. You can even add in plastic Easter eggs with glow

sticks inside to add to the fun.

WHAT TO BRING

Bring Easter baskets or bags for people to collect their treasures in. Bring enough copies of the scavenger hunt list and pencils so participants can mark it off. Designate a center meeting

point and a time for everyone to meet back up. Have adequate supervision for each participating kid and place an adult in charge of the hunt to adjudicate any disputes. Also decide on a final prize and rules for winning. You can have an overall winner, best find, first back and more.

Make an Easter Tree

Ostereierbaum, or Easter egg trees, are a German tradition that's taking hold in the U.S. In this colorful pastime, dyed Easter eggs are hung from branches of trees and bushes in a joyful display of spring cheer.

HISTORY

Eggs have been hung from trees for centuries in Germany and German-speaking areas of Europe. Easter egg trees can be made on living trees and bushes outside and on cut branches inside. A great example of the German tradition is the Sallfelder Ostereierbaum, an apple tree in Volker Kraft's garden in Thuringia. The tree is the realization of a childhood dream that started when Kraft spotted an Easter tree in 1945. The Kraft family hung about 10,000 eggs on the apple tree until 2015 and still, that's not the largest one ever. That belongs to the Rostock Zoo, which decorated a red oak tree with more than 79,000 eggs in 2007.

MAKING YOUR OWN EASTER EGG TREE

Replicating this tradition in your own home is easy. First, decide what you're going to use. For cut branches inside, pick a receptacle that's tall enough to hold both the cut



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branches and the weight of the ornaments. You may wish to weigh it down with vase fillers or rocks and secure the branches with florist's foam. You can cut branches from your garden or choose springy favorites such as pussy willow, magnolia or cherry blossoms.

Traditional ostereierbaum are made with hand-blown and decorated eggs, but you

can use whatever your family prefers. Try hand painting plastic eggs or hanging shimmering, iridescent plastic eggs. If they're the kind made for filling, glue the sides or securely snap them for easier hanging. You can choose Easter ornaments, fluffy stuffies or whatever other Easter symbols your family loves. Just make sure they're not so

heavy they send the whole tree tumbling.

For hanging the ornaments, you may need to make a hole with a ribbon or fishing line to make a hanger. Use a large-eyed needle (you can get blunted ones if little hands are helping) and slip lengths of ribbon or fishing line through the eye. Find a good place on the egg or other ornament, tie

a slipknot in the center of your line, and thread the needle with the loop end. Some eggs may have holes already cut in either end; in this case, just run the needle through both holes, keeping in mind that the hole from which the ribbon exits will be the top of the egg. Double knot the ribbon to secure the ornament and hang it on your tree.

DIY Peanut Butter Eggs

Chocolate-dipped peanut butter eggs are an Easter favorite.

Try your hand at making your own at home with this recipe from Sally's Baking. It makes about 18 candies and takes around two hours.

Ingredients

6 tablespoons unsalted butter at room temperature

1 cup creamy peanut butter. Don't use the natural style.

2 1/2 cups confectioners' sugar

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/8 teaspoon salt

12 ounces semi-sweet chocolate bars, coarsely chopped

1 teaspoon neutral oil, such as vegetable oil

Directions

1. Line a large baking sheet with either parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. Set aside.

2. Using a mixer, beat the butter on medium-high speed until creamy and smooth. This should take about two minutes. Add the peanut butter and beat until combined, about one minute. Don't worry if you notice small chunks of butter. It'll smooth out.

3. Add the confectioners' sugar, vanilla and salt and beat on low for two minutes until soft and crumbly.

4. Measure out about 1 1/2 tablespoons of the peanut butter mixture and roll it into a ball. Flatten the ball and make one end more narrow — an egg shape. Place it on the baking sheet and repeat until all the peanut butter is gone. Use the warmth of your hands to



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help shape the mixture. If it gets too soft, chill in the refrigerator for 15 minutes. Powdering your hands with confectioners' sugar can also help keep it from sticking.

5. Chill the shaped eggs for at least an hour or up to a day.

6. Melt the chocolate and oil together in a double boiler or in the microwave. For the microwave method, place the chocolate and

oil in a medium, heat-proof bowl or liquid measuring cup. Heat in 20-second increments, stirring in between, until melted and smooth. In the double boiler, place the chocolate and oil in the top pan and heat over medium heat, stirring constantly, until melted and smooth. Cool the chocolate slightly before dipping so the peanut butter eggs don't melt.

7. Working one at a time, submerge each egg into the melted chocolate. Lift them out carefully with a fork, tapping it on the side of the bowl to remove excess chocolate. Use a toothpick or a second fork to slide the chocolate-covered egg onto the baking sheet. If the eggs get too soft or start to lose their shape, put them back in the fridge for 10-15 minutes before continuing to dip.

8. Drizzle any leftover chocolate over the candies. Sprinkle with coarse sea salt or sprinkles while it's still wet. Refrigerate coated candies for 30 minutes or until the chocolate has completely set before serving.

9. Store between sheets of parchment or wax paper in an airtight container for up to two weeks.

All About Jelly Beans

Jelly beans are ubiquitous this time of year. But what do they have to do with Easter? Keep reading to learn more about one of the season's favorite candies.

HISTORY

Jelly Belly (and they would know) says the origins of jelly beans can be found in Turkish delight, an ancient Middle Eastern confection that dates back centuries. The soft center of the bean is coated in a candy shell by the process of panning, first used in 17th-century France to make Jordan almonds. The centers are rocked in a pan filled with sugar and syrup until they're coated. Today, rotating drums do the panning, but the process is the same.

The first advertisements for jelly beans appeared during the Civil War, when William Schrafft of Boston asked people to send jelly beans to Union Army soldiers. The candies were shaped into beans because candymakers made their wares into shapes that were familiar to their customers. In the 19th century, the family that started Jelly Belly made candied chestnuts, carrots and turnips. The candy shell meant the soft centers wouldn't stick together, and jelly beans quickly became a fan favorite.

Jelly Belly isn't sure how or why they became so popular at Easter. The company's theory is that jelly beans are a great (and delicious) stand-in for colored eggs in a nest.

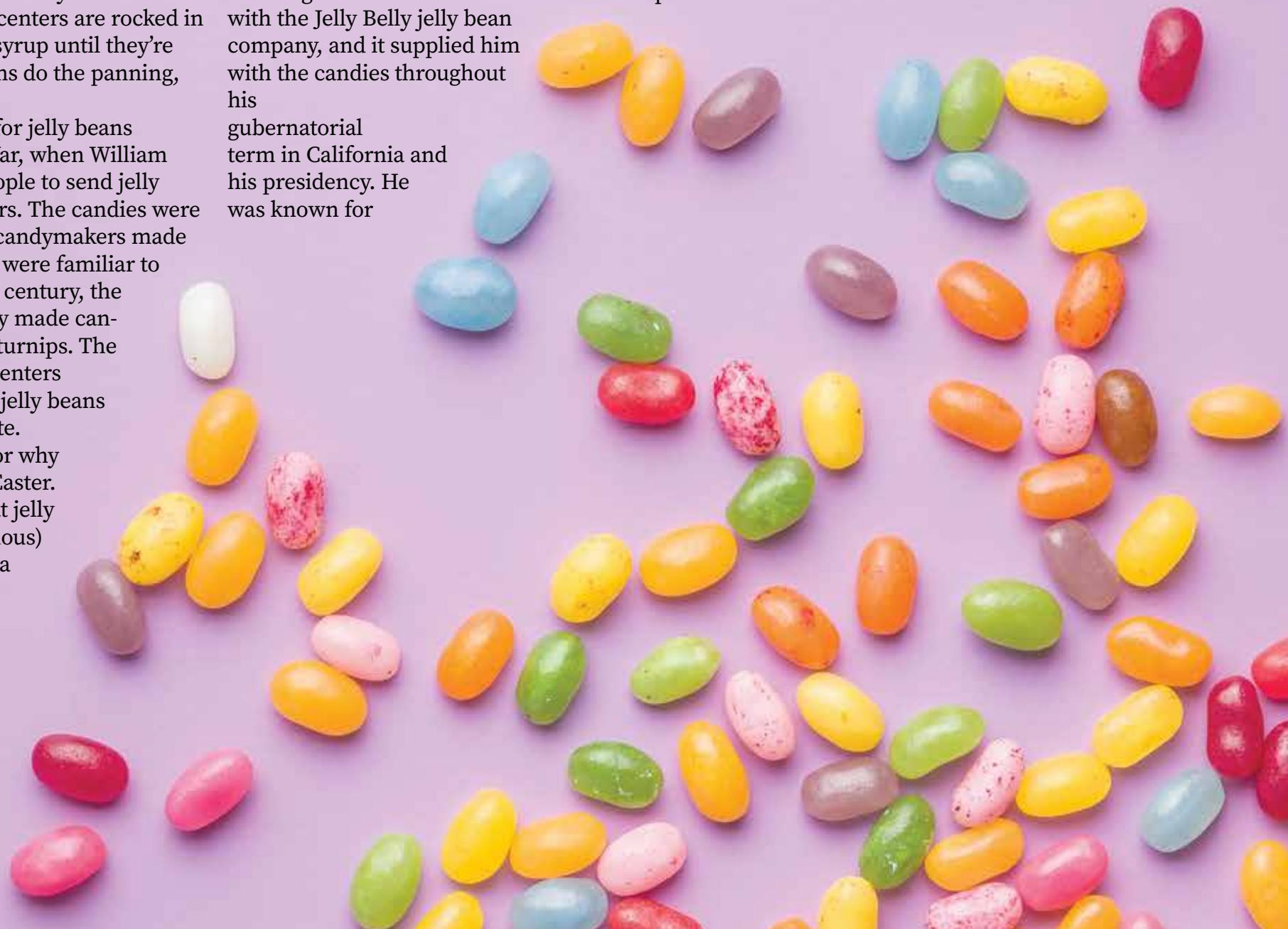
FAMOUS FLAVORS

Jelly beans can come in just about any flavor a candymaker can come up with. There are, however, some traditional favorites, like cherry and licorice. Jelly Belly is known for its unique flavors of jelly

bean, including bubble gum, buttered popcorn, cantaloupe, margarita, toasted marshmallow, chocolate pudding, strawberry milk tea, tutti-frutti, pink grapefruit, kiwi and more.

President Ronald Reagan famously loved jelly beans, a habit that started when he quit smoking in 1966. He had a close relationship with the Jelly Belly jelly bean company, and it supplied him with the candies throughout his gubernatorial term in California and his presidency. He was known for

keeping jars of Jelly Belly jelly beans on his desk for meetings and his patronage boosted the company's popularity. Three and a half tons of red, white and blue Jelly Bellies were supplied for his 1981 inauguration.





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Kids Can Help Cook These Recipes

Make this Easter dinner special by including kids in the cooking and prep work. Here are some recipes they can put together themselves.

FOR YOUNG KIDS: MARSHMALLOW FRUIT DIP

Recipe is from Taste of Home.

Ingredients

1 8-ounce package of cream cheese, softened
3/4 cup cherry yogurt
1 8-ounce carton frozen whipped topping, thawed
1 7-ounce jar of marshmallow crème
Fresh fruit for serving

Directions

Beat the cream cheese and yogurt until

blended. Fold in the whipped topping and marshmallow cream. Serve on a platter arranged with colorful piles of fruit.

FOR YOUNG KIDS: RANCH SNACK MIX

Recipe is from Taste of Home.

Ingredients

1 12-ounce package of mini pretzels
16 cups, about 12 ounces, of Bugles
1 10-ounce can salted cashews
1 6-ounce package cheese snack crackers, such as Goldfish
1 envelope ranch dressing mix
3/4 cup canola oil

Directions

In two large bowls, combine the pretzels, Bugles, cashews and crackers. Sprinkle with the dressing mix and toss to combine. Drizzle with oil and toss until well-coated. Serve or store in airtight containers.

FOR OLDER KIDS: KEY LIME PIE BALLS

Recipe is from Taste of Home.

Ingredients

1 8-ounce package of cream cheese, softened
1 cup crushed vanilla wafers, about 30
1 cup graham cracker crumbs
2/3 cup plus 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar, divided
2 tablespoons lime juice
2 teaspoons grated lime zest
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Directions

1. In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese, crushed wafers, cracker crumbs, 2/3 cup of confectioners' sugar, lime juice and zest, salt and cinnamon until blended. Shape into 1-inch balls and place on parchment lined baking sheets. Refrigerate until firm, about an hour.

2. Roll cookie balls in remaining 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar. Store the cookies between two pieces of parchment in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

FOR OLDER KIDS: CHICKEN SALAD

Recipe is from Taste of Home and is inspired by Chick-Fil-A chicken salad.

Ingredients

1/2 cup reduced-fat mayonnaise
1/3 cup sweet pickle relish
1/3 cup finely chopped celery
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 hard-boiled egg, cooled and minced
2 cups cooked, chopped chicken breast

Directions

Mix the first seven ingredients, then stir in the chicken. Refrigerate to let the flavors meld. Serve with toast points or crackers.

Set Up a Bunny Hop Race

After eating all those sweets and treats, it's time to work off some calories. Set up a backyard obstacle course to get all your bunnies hopping.

STARTING LINE

Use sticks, cones or flags to mark the start. Racers must travel the first 10-15 feet by hopping like a bunny, using both feet.

THE FIRST OBSTACLE

The bunnies come to the first obstacle, a carrot crawl patch. Drape blankets or sheets over chairs to create a series of low tunnels. Racers must crawl on their hands and knees through the tunnels without knocking them down.

Difficult: Have them collect plastic eggs or carrots as they crawl and hold onto them until the end.

More difficult: Everyone has to wear a bunny suit they have to first put on and take off.

THE SECOND OBSTACLE

Next up is an egg-and-spoon race with an Easter egg balanced on a spoon. Easy, right?

Difficult: Have racers weave around cones or other obstacles.

More difficult: Or walk heel-to-toe along a rope laid on the grass.

THE THIRD OBSTACLE

Place a laundry basket or



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hula hoop 10-15 feet away from a designated line. Racers must throw three Easter eggs, stuffies or other small items into the basket. They can't move on until they get at least two in.

Difficult: Use water balloons.

More difficult: Fill the basket with regular balloons so the items bounce out if they're not

thrown just right.

The Fourth Obstacle

Racers pair up for this one. They must travel 10-15 feet using the wheelbarrow race technique where one person holds the other's ankles while they walk on their hands. If you don't have enough people to pair up, substitute a bear crawl.

THE FIFTH OBSTACLE

Mark out steps using sidewalk chalk or use markers such as paper plates to create stepping stones. Racers must jump from stone to stone, not touching the grass, for 10-15 feet. If they touch the grass, start over.

Difficult: Have someone chuck things at them. Maybe

those water balloons.

FINISH LINE

Have the racers sprint the last 10 feet or so for all the glory and a few extra Easter treats. Make sure to pick up any sharp rocks or sticks in the yard and keep a look out for things that are unintended trip hazards.