

Candy Of The Season

By Craig W. Armstrong

Easter means many different things to many different people. But, let's be honest. The candy is pretty important. The treats that fill our Easter baskets are many and they are all delicious, but three top the list as Easter basket classics.

Let's begin with the treat you either love or hate...Peeps. Put simply, Peeps are marshmallows rolled in sugar. There is no middle ground with Peeps. You say the word, and people either squeal with delight or recoil in disgust. Either way, they are an Easter staple. Peeps were given birth by a man named Sam Born, who founded the Just Born Candy Company in 1953. The company acquired the Rodda Candy Company, which included a marshmallow chick line. Sam's brother-in-law Bob helped to mass-produce the treats, and Peeps began their marshmallow monopoly.


Peeps were named for the original chick shape, but have since branched out — way out. Today, you can get Peeps for almost any holiday. Christmas results in tree- and snowman-shaped Peeps. Halloween results in pumpkin- and bat-shaped Peeps. Plus, the flavors and colors have expanded over the years. In 1995, lavender was added to the existing color line of yellow, pink and white. You can even get chocolate-flavored Peeps. As mentioned above, there are Peep haters and Peep lovers, but a subgroup does exist. They are the Peep lovers who are split between eating the candy fresh out of the package or letting it sit out and get a little crunchy.

The next sweet Easter treat is arguably the most traditional, jelly beans. The origin of jelly beans is somewhat blurry, but it is believed they were born of a combination of Turkish Delight and Jordan Almonds. Turkish Delight is a jelly candy coated in powdered sugar. Jordan Almonds are almonds covered in a hard candy shell. The two concepts were merged and jelly beans were born.

Jelly beans hit their stride in the United States in the early 20th century, but it wasn't until the 1930s that they became associated with Easter. The bean stayed pretty standard until 1976. That's when the world was introduced to Jelly Belly jelly beans. These beans took the concept to a whole new level. They were flavored inside and out and came in a variety of flavors. Some of the wackier flavors include popcorn and cantaloupe.

The Easter candy completing the big three is, of course, the chocolate bunny. Tens of millions of these cocoa hares are produced each year. That's a big number considering they are not like jelly beans, which can be found year-round. Chocolate bunnies came to the United States in 1842 when Stephen Whitman founded Whitman's Chocolates. Since then, the bunnies have expanded. They can now be found in a variety of flavors. You can even get them hollow or solid. Some people wonder why these treats were ever made hollow when a solid bunny gives you more chocolate. The answer is simple. Hollow bunnies are easier to eat.

Having a sweet treat is great anytime, but Easter gives you an excuse to really sink your teeth into some candy classics. It doesn't matter if you're filling an Easter basket or raiding one, you'll probably see at least one of the big three.



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work is perfect: for all
his ways are judgment:
a God of truth and
without iniquity, just
and right is he.

Deuteronomy 32:4 (KJV)

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