

## The incredible, edible egg

Written by By CINDY WELCH, News-Telegram Food Columnist  
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A recent trend on Facebook is to participate in a series of quizzes to find out which musician, movie star or Bible character you would be. I thought a foodie version of that might be interesting. If you were a food, what food would you be? I think I would like to be an egg.

Eggs are versatile and can be complex or simple. They are nutritious, yet add richness to many dishes. Eggs can be the binder in many recipes, but when separated, can take on several tasks at once.

Eggs are so versatile there are 17 to 20 different pieces of equipment made for cooking eggs. You can find pans to poach, fry, scramble, boil or make an omlet. And don't forget the crepe pans, soufflé dishes, custard cups, timers, slicers and separators made just for eggs.

The egg is considered a model for the protein required by the human body. Egg whites are transparent when raw because the protein strands are gathered in bundles. As the egg cooks, the strands separate to form a web and become white. If overcooked, the web will break and release moisture. That is what causes eggs to curdle in a custard and scrambled eggs to become dry and rubbery.

During this time of year boiled eggs are at the forefront of menus and activities. Next week is actually National Egg Salad Week. I guess somebody had to find something to do with all of the leftover Easter Eggs. How did eggs come to have such spring-time prominence?

Some sources have placed the celebrations of the egg with pagan rituals. Others disclaim that theory and place its beginnings with the Passover Seder and Lent. In Persia, eggs were painted to celebrate the New Year falling on the Spring Equinox. In the Passover Seder a hard-boiled egg is dipped in salt water and symbolizes both new life and the Passover sacrifice offered at the Temple in Jerusalem.

In Medieval Europe, eggs were forbidden during Lent and on other traditional fast days. On

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Easter, the consumption of eggs could resume and in their abundance, became a mainstay of most Easter celebrations. They were often painted and dyed during Lent and given as gifts to children and servants.

The coloring of eggs is an established art in many countries. In the Slavic countries, intricately decorated eggs are a symbol of new life and are widely popular. They are prized as art pieces and led to the creation of the jeweled Fabrege eggs for the Russian Imperial Court.

What is the best method for cooking the perfect hard-boiled egg? First, begin with eggs that are older. The white of these eggs has released enzymes that attach it to the shell. They will be easier to peel than a fresh egg.

Second, to have the yolk perfectly in the center of your egg, set the carton on its side with the raw eggs nestled inside 24 hours before you cook them. The yolk should appear in the center of the egg.

Finally, place the eggs in a pot of cold water. Bring the water to a rolling boil. Cover the pan and remove the pan from the heat and wait 12-15 minutes. Peel immediately under cold running water.

Here are a few favorite recipes using boiled eggs. Because they contain both eggs and mayonnaise, be sure to keep refrigerated until serving time for food safety.

### **Egg Salad**

8 hard-cooked eggs, diced

1 cup mayonnaise

1/4 cup dried onion flakes

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon mustard powder

1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1 teaspoon dill weed

In a bowl, gently mix the eggs, mayonnaise, onion flakes, salt, mustard powder, garlic powder, pepper and dill.

Cover, and chill.

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### Deluxe Deviled Eggs



6 hard- cooked eggs

1/2 stalk celery, finely chopped

1/4 onion, finely chopped

1/4 cup mayonnaise

Salt to taste

1 dash hot pepper sauce

Paprika, to garnish

Cut eggs in half. Remove yolks and place in a medium bowl. Mash together with celery, onion, mayonnaise, salt and hot pepper sauce.

Stuff the egg white halves with the yolk mixture. Sprinkle with paprika.

Chill, covered, in the refrigerator.

### Curried Deviled Eggs

8 large hard-cooked eggs

1/3 cup mayonnaise

2 tablespoons minced scallions

1 teaspoon curry powder

Salt

Black Pepper

Peel the eggs and cut them in half. Remove the yolks and set aside.

Mash the yolks until smooth and add the mayonnaise. Mix to a smooth paste. Mix in the scallions, curry powder, salt and pepper to taste. Spoon the mixture into the egg whites. Cover and chill.

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*For the past 20 years, Cindy Welch has been involved with all aspects of cooking, including formal culinary training, experience as food service director for First Baptist Church of Euless, a personal chef and owner of Cindy's Casa Cuisine. Cindy's favorite hobby is "providing delicious food for the people of Sulphur Springs." Her columns cover all aspects of the cooking experience.*