

# Mothering Sunday

The UK's version of Mother's Day

## What is Mothering Sunday?

Mothering Sunday in the UK is the equivalent of **Mothers' Day in other countries.**



## What happens on Mothering Sunday in the UK?

Mothering Sunday is a time when children pay respect to their Mothers. Children often give their Mothers a gift and a card.

### **Mothering Sunday church service**

Many churches give the children in the congregation a little bunch of spring flowers to give to their Mothers as a thank you for all their care and love throughout the year.

## When is Mothering Sunday (Mother's Day)?

Mothering Sunday (Mother's Day) is always the fourth Sunday of **Lent.**

**2011** Mothering Sunday in UK in 2011 - **3 April**  
(Mother's Day in US in 2011 - 8 May)

## What is Lent?

The forty days (not counting Sundays) before Easter is known as Lent. This is the time of year in England when the days begin to lengthen with the coming of Spring. It begins on Ash Wednesday, the day after Pancake Day.

# Why is Mothering Sunday on different dates each year?

Mothering Sunday is not a fixed day because it is always the middle Sunday in Lent (which lasts from Ash Wednesday to the day before Easter Sunday). This means that Mother's Day in the UK will fall on different dates each year and sometimes even fall in different months.

Mothering Sunday has been celebrated in the UK on the fourth Sunday in Lent since at least the 16th century.

## Did you know?

Mothering Sunday is also sometimes known as **Simnel Sunday** because of the tradition of baking **Simnel cakes**.



## Simnel Cake

The most favoured cake was - as it still is in some families - the 'Simnel cake'.

The Simnel cake is a fruit cake. A flat layer of marzipan (sugar almond paste) is placed on top of and decorated with 11 marzipan balls representing the 12 apostles minus Judas, who betrayed Christ.

It was not eaten on Mothering Sunday because of the rules of Lent, instead it was saved until Easter.

**A Simnel is still made in many parts of England today, although it is now more commonly made for and eaten on Easter Day.**