

TAPESCRIPT

Pancake Day is a favorite of children in the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. It is on this day they get to eat as many pancakes as they want – all smothered with syrup, or lemon and sugar, or strawberry sauce. It is also called Shrove Tuesday. This is a religious holiday on the day before Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent. During the 40 days of Lent, people used to fast and eat only the simplest of food. Things like eggs, milk and sugar had to be thrown away. Instead of wasting food, people traditionally used these ingredients to make pancakes. It became a mini celebration and people topped their pancakes with delicious things they could not eat for another 40 days. Few people nowadays fast for 40 days.

Shrove Tuesday and Pancake Day are not so well known in the United States. Americans are more familiar with Mardi Gras, which is also on the day before Ash Wednesday and is a very similar celebration. Different countries hold different events for Pancake Day. In England, some towns have pancake races. People must run a race with a frying pan and toss the pancakes as they run. The winner is the first person to cross the finishing line with a pancake that is still intact. Children like to have a go at tossing the hot pancakes out of the frying pan in their kitchens. In Newfoundland, Canada, the cook puts a ring or a coin in the pancakes. The person who finds the coin will be rich and the person who finds the ring will be the next to get married.