



### **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.

15 March 2015  
6 March 2016  
26 March 2017  
11 March 2018  
31 March 2019

### **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.



## **The History behind Mothering Sunday**

Mothering Sunday was also known as '**Refreshment Sunday**', '**Pudding Pie Sunday**' (in Surrey, England) or '**Mid-Lent Sunday**'. It was a day in Lent when the fasting rules were relaxed, in honour of the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand', a story in the Christian Bible. As Christianity spread, this date was adopted by Christians.

## **Roman Spring Festival**

The more usual name was Mothering Sunday. No one is absolutely certain exactly how the name of Mothering Sunday began. However, one theory is that the celebration could have been adopted from a Roman Spring festival celebrating Cybele, their Mother Goddess.



## **Girls in Service**

Young British girls and boys 'in service' (maids and servants) at the local Manor House or in a Mansion, were only allowed one day to visit their family each year. This was usually on Mothering Sunday.

For some this could be a significant journey since their mother may have lived some distance away. Often the housekeeper or cook would allow the maids to bake a cake to take home for their mother. Sometimes a gift of eggs; or flowers from the garden (or hothouse) was allowed.

In recent times Mothering Sunday has in Britain taken on the name and character of the US Mother's Day. The original meaning of Mothering Sunday is often unknown, although people are aware that it always falls in the middle of the Christian festival of Lent.

