



# The History of Mother's Day

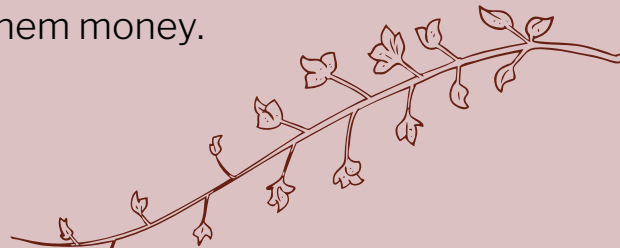


## It has a long history

Mothering Sunday is the proper name, and has been celebrated since the Middle Ages. It was a day when Christians visited their mother church. This was the church where they had been baptised. Servants were given the day off to do this. It also became linked with mothers as families had a rare chance to get together on this day. With no cars and poor roads, travelling was very difficult.

## It almost disappeared

During the 18th Century it became less popular. The Industrial Revolution led to people moving away to work and their employers did not want to give them holidays. It cost them money.



## The Americans helped bring it back

At the start of the 20th Century, Anna Jarvis set up a Mother's Day in the USA and this became a national celebration from 1914 but was celebrated in May. In this country Constance Penswick Smith read about the Americans' Mother's Day and tried to persuade people to follow Mothering Sunday again. She organised a Society, wrote a play and books during the 1910s and 1920s. Constance wanted people to celebrate 4 things:

- Their mother church
- Their own mums
- Mary, the mother of Jesus
- All the gifts of Mother Nature

## Modern day

It took until the 1950s for the day to become really popular. Today we often make cards and give small gifts such as flowers not just for our mums, but also other ladies who are important in our lives and have looked after us.

# The Food of Mother's Day



## No Fasting

Our Mother's Day is always the 4th Sunday in Lent. This Sunday also coincides with Refreshment Sunday when people could have a break from their Lent fasting. So if you have given up chocolate for Lent, you could have some but just on this day.



## Mothering Buns

This was another tradition especially around Bristol. They were buns covered in icing and then sprinkled with caraway or aniseed but later replaced with hundreds and thousands.



## Simnel Cake

Simnel cake is an Easter classic that is also associated with Mother's Day. It is a fruit cake with 2 layers of marzipan. On the top layer you put 11 marzipan balls to represent the 11 disciples or followers of Jesus. Judas is missed off as he betrayed Jesus.

One myth about its strange name is it was named after Simon and Nell – a couple who argued about whether the cake should be boiled or baked so they did both.

