

# Pretzels

Here is a story of the origin of the Pretzel.

In 610 AD an Italian monk invents pretzels as a reward to children who learn their prayers. He calls the strips of baked dough, folded to resemble arms crossing the chest, 'pretiola' ("little rewards")

Pretzels were regarded as having religious significance for both ingredients and shape. Pretzels made with a simple recipe using only flour and water could be eaten during Lent, when Christians were forbidden to eat eggs, lard, or dairy products such as milk and butter. As time passed, pretzels became associated with both Lent and Easter. Pretzels were hidden on Easter morning just as eggs are hidden today, and are particularly associated with Lent, fasting, and prayers before Easter.

Some countries in Europe make the "Palm pretzel" made for Palm Sunday celebrations. Sizes can range from 30 cm up to 1 metre and they can weigh up to 2.5 kg.

So today we make and eat Pretzels as a reminder

- that Lent is a time of putting aside some luxuries and focusing on God
  - to pray to God, with our thanks and our concerns
  - that people across the world in many countries, of many cultures, are celebrating Easter
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