



Maslenitsa

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Name and dates

Maslenitsa is also known as the Butter Week.

It's an Eastern Slavic religious and folk holiday, celebrated during the last week before Great Lent.



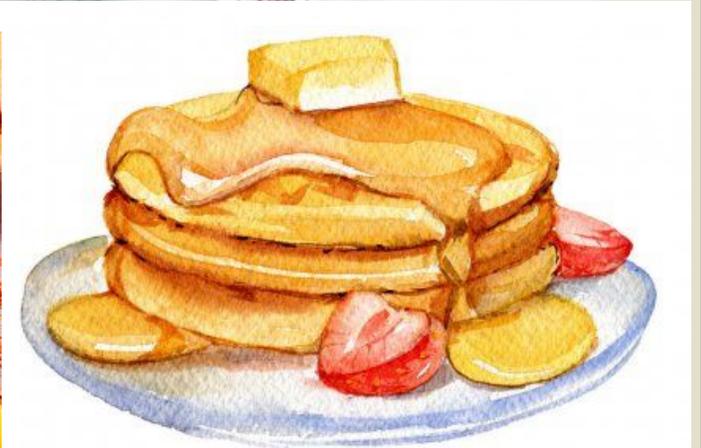
Maslenitsa may be the oldest surviving Slavic holiday and has its origins in the pagan tradition.

In Slavic mythology, Maslenitsa is the celebration of the end of the winter. While in the Christian tradition, Maslenitsa is the last week before the Great Lent.



It's the last chance to take part in social activities that aren't appropriate during the more prayerful, sober Lenten season.

It's the last week during which eggs, milk, cheese and other dairy products are allowed. Meat is already forbidden.



The whole week is divided into 2 periods:

*The Narrow Maslenitsa is the first 3 days.

Work is allowed only during this time.

*The Broad Maslenitsa is the last 4 days.



Monday – the meeting

- *The time and place of festivities are discussed
- *The guests are determined
- *Snow mountains, swings are being built
- *Pancakes are baked
- *The scarecrow of Maslenitsa is build
- *It's put on a stake and carried in a sleigh along the streets



Tuesday - the flirting

- *Bride selection ceremonies
- *Matchmaking
- *People are invited to ride from the mountains and eat pancakes

“Our mountains of snow are ready and the pancakes are baked - we ask you to favor!”



Wednesday – the gourmet

- *The mother-in-law shows an affection for her daughter's husband
- *The son-in-law comes to the mother-in-law for pancakes
- *Quests are invited



Thursday – the feast

- *The chores are stopped
- *Various competitions: horseback riding, fistfights
- *The assault and the further capture of the Snow Fortress
- *Bonfire and ritual jumping through the fire
- *Pancake songs



Friday - the evening party

- *The mother-in-law came to visit with her relatives and friends
- *Her son-in-law had to demonstrate his disposition to the relatives
- *Pancakes are baked by the daughter-in-law



Saturday - daughters'-in-law gatherings

- *Daughters-in-law invite relatives of her husband to visit
- *The bride and the groom have to give some gifts to the relatives



Sunday – the forgiving and the farewell

- *People ask each other for forgiveness
- *Going to the cemetery
- *Bathhouse day
- *The remains of the food is burned
- *The scarecrow is burned
- *Lenten services

