

While there could be more, it seems to me that there are two kinds of Easters. The first is the Madison Avenue Easter. To see this one, all you need do is open a glossy magazine. Almost any one will do. If you don't subscribe or have a dentist appointment in the next week, go to the glossy magazines' websites. A bevy of beautiful photographs awaits you.

A veritable rainbow of pastels adorns every page. Cherry blossoms and forsythia, tulips and daffodils remind us that Easter is synonymous with spring. Adorable children dressed in pink and yellow, white and pale blue hold hands and search for eggs on smooth green lawns. Turn the page and these same cherubs are petting sweet baby lambs, pink-nosed bunnies and fluffy yellow chicks. There are no tears and not a single grass stain. We can only ask, "Who are these children?"



Turn the page again for the Easter feast. A mile long table is set to welcome a crowd of all ages in a beautiful garden. Grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins by the dozens admire the gorgeous spread. Overflowing platters are strategically placed up and down the table. Beautifully coifed women in sleeveless dresses, pastel of course, make last minute adjustments. Men in bright polo shirts stand around looking handsome. The children never cry and never spill juice on their sparkling outfits.

The second, the one I know very well, is the New Hampshire Easter. It is just as nice but nowhere near as gracious. The forsythia buds are closed up tight. Daffodils and tulips are buried under a foot or more of snow. The calendar may have proclaimed spring but a glance outside confirms that it's winter in transition to mud season. The skiing has never been better.

Beautifully manicured or not, lawns are still covered with snow. Unless you don't mind wallowing waist deep in it, you'll need a pair of snowshoes to hide or find eggs. As for those pretty, pastel dresses and polo shirts, they'll stay well hidden under parkas and snow pants. There will be no grass stains, but I don't know about tears. There's nothing like getting stuck in a snowbank to open the floodgates.

As for a petting zoo, wildlife abounds. There have been several bear sightings in the last few weeks. I saw a fisher-cat the other day. At least, I think it was a fisher-cat and not my neighbor's barn cat. Raccoons are around but they only come out at night. On the other hand, squirrels are everywhere all the time. However, petting is not advised with any of these animals.

Now, what about a sumptuous picnic brunch or lunch in the garden? A long leisurely midday meal on the deck of a slope side café is a spring skiing classic and wonderful treat. That said; I'm not altogether convinced that lunch in a snowy backyard is a good idea. What with all that stamping down snow and dragging out the tables and chairs ... hmmm. Maybe we should leave that photo opportunity to Madison Avenue.

Instead, how about we have dinner inside ... after skiing, of course. If it's not too cold, I have a well-weathered green fleece I can wear on the slopes. It's faded enough to qualify as pastel.



Happy Easter and bon appétit!



Roasted Moroccan Carrots

Whether you serve your Easter dinner in the backyard or inside, these carrots are a great side dish for grilled or roast lamb. Enjoy!

Serves 8

- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon cloves
- 3 pounds carrots, peeled and sliced on the diagonal
- 1/2-1 sweet onion, cut in half and then in thin wedges
- Olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh mint leaves
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro leaves



Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Put the spices in a small bowl and whisk to combine.

Put the carrots and onion in a large bowl, drizzle with enough olive oil to lightly coat and toss to coat. Sprinkle with the spice mix and toss again. Arrange the vegetables in a single layer on baking sheets and roast uncovered at 400 degrees for 15 minutes.

Remove from the oven, sprinkle with garlic and toss to combine. Return to the oven for another 3-5 minutes.

While the vegetables roast, combine the lemon zest and fresh herbs.

Transfer the vegetables to a serving bowl, drizzle with lemon juice and toss to coat. Sprinkle with the herbs and lemon zest and serve.

