

Wise Notes for Consumers

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Creating the Perfect Deviled Egg

As the celebration of Easter draws near, many of you may be preparing hard –cooked eggs for Easter egg hunts or your favorite Deviled Egg dish. Hard cooking an egg is relatively simple but guidelines may prove helpful.

Place eggs in a saucepan large enough to hold them in single layer. Add cold water to cover eggs by 1 inch. Heat over high heat *just* to boiling. Remove from burner. Cover pan. Let eggs stand in hot water about 15 minutes for large eggs (12 minutes for medium eggs; 18 minutes for extra-large). Drain immediately and serve warm, or cool completely under cold running water or in bowl of ice water, then refrigerate.

Although the cooking water must come to a full boil in this method, the pan is immediately removed from the heat so that the eggs cook *gently* in the hot water. This produces tender, not rubbery, eggs and minimizes cracking.

If you want to banish the greenish ring, follow these guidelines. This harmless but unsightly discoloration that sometimes forms around hard-cooked yolks results from a reaction between sulfur in the egg white and iron in the yolk. It occurs when eggs have been cooked for too long or at too high a temperature. This method of cooking eggs in hot, not boiling, water, then cooling immediately - minimizes this.

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Piercing shells before cooking is not recommended. If not sterile, the piercer or needle can introduce bacteria into the egg. Also, piercing creates hairline cracks in the shell, through which bacteria can enter after cooking.

Have you ever had a hard cooked egg that is difficult to peel? Very fresh eggs can be a challenge to peel. To ensure easily peeled eggs, buy and refrigerate them a week to 10 days in advance of cooking. Hard-cooked eggs are easiest to peel right after cooling. Cooling causes the egg to contract slightly in the shell.

Storage time: In the shell, hard-cooked eggs can be refrigerated safely up to one week. Refrigerate in their original carton to prevent odor absorption. Once peeled, eggs should be eaten that day.

Following is a recipe for Classic Deviled Eggs.

6 hard cooked eggs

2 Tablespoons mayonnaise, sour cream or plain yogurt

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon prepared mustard

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon lemon juice, herb or seasoning blend

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt, optional

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper

Cut eggs in half lengthwise. Remove yolks and set whites aside. Mash yolks with fork. Stir in remaining ingredients until well blended. Refill whites, using about 1 Tablespoon yolk mixture for each egg half. Chill to blend flavors.

The source for this information came from the American Egg Board.

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