

NATURAL RED DYED EGGS

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Red eggs (in Greek: κόκκινα αυγά, and pronounced KOH-kee-nah ahv-GHAH) are perhaps the brightest symbol of Greek Easter, representing the blood of Christ and rebirth. We also dye eggs other colors, but rarely will a Greek Easter be celebrated without lots of red eggs. Commercial dyes are available, but this old-fashioned natural method creates red eggs with a deep rich color. The following is for one dozen red eggs.

Note: It may sound counterintuitive, but the skins of yellow¹ onions work wonderfully!

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 uncooked eggs at room temperature
- skins of 15 brown skinned (Spanish) onions
- 2 tablespoons of white vinegar
- 4 ½ cups of water
- Olive oil for polishing

OTHER EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Saucepan
- Strainer
- Glass bowl
- Stainless steel slotted spoon
- Paper towels
- Cooling racks

DIRECTIONS:

1. Start with 12 medium-to-small eggs.
2. Carefully remove any material clinging to the surface of the eggs.
3. Make the dye with the onion skins: In a stainless saucepan, place skins of 15 brown skinned (Spanish) onions and 2 tablespoons of white vinegar in 4 ½ cups of water and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes.
4. Strain dye into a glass bowl, and let cool to room temperature. (Don't be fooled by the orange color.)
5. In a stainless saucepan (around 8 1/4 inches in diameter), add the cooled strained dye and eggs at room temperature (up to 1 dozen). The eggs should be in one layer and covered by the dye.
6. Bring to a boil over medium heat. When boiling, reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer.
7. Dyeing time will be affected by the color of the eggs. Start checking for color at 12-15 minutes. Do not simmer longer than 20 minutes (see step 9 if they aren't red enough).
8. When eggs are the right color, proceed to step 10.
9. If eggs are not a red enough color after 20 minutes, leave in the pot and remove from heat. When the pot is cooled enough, place in refrigerator and let sit until desired color is reached.
10. Remove eggs with a slotted spoon and cool on racks.
11. When they can be handled, coat lightly with olive (or other edible) oil and polish with paper toweling.
12. Refrigerate until time to use.

TIPS:

- Save onion skins in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until ready to use.
- Do not use any porous (wood, ceramic, plastic, etc.) materials as they can be colored by the dye.
- If stainless cookware and utensils get colored by the dye, wash with regular detergent and a small amount of chlorine. Rinse very well.

¹ Do not use Vidalia, but the Spanish onions. They have brown skin and white flesh.