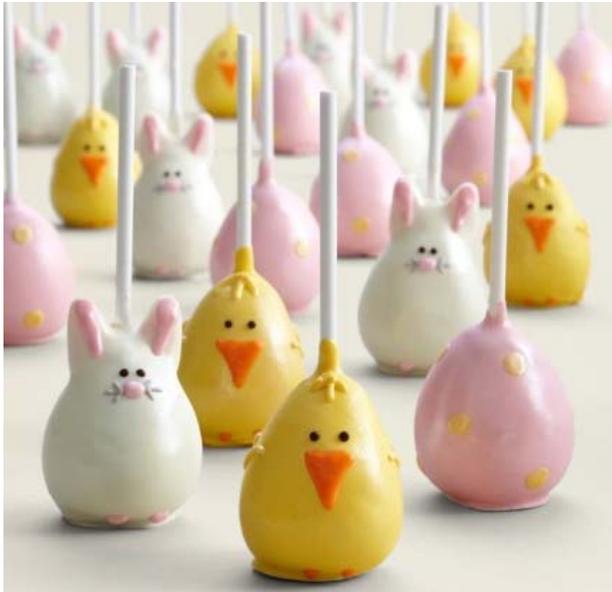


16 Reasons To Blow Your Diet This Easter: Cake Pops, Chocolate Truffles, Malt Balls, And More

by Lauren Salkeld

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With so many Easter chocolates and candies on the market, there's no excuse for filling your basket with mediocre sweets. Plus, we've done the hard work of narrowing down your choices. Our dentists and nutritionists might not be happy with us, but we taste tested our way through a bounty of Easter basket treats in order to present only the very best options. Read on for our favorite truffles, chewy candies, cookies, cake pops, petit fours, and more.

Handmade Easter Cake Pops from Shari's Berries

Cake pops have been, well, popping up just about everywhere in the last few years, but it took the handmade Easter cake pops from Shari's Berries to convince us this was a worthwhile trend. Their adorable cake pop collection includes hand-decorated pink eggs, white bunnies, and yellow chicks. And in place of the bland and dry cake fillings we've had before, these pops feature a rich and luscious chocolate filling that's akin to brownies or fudge (\$29.99 for 6 cake pops).

Easter from Norman Love Confections

With such strikingly beautiful exteriors, Norman Love chocolates could be filled with just about anything and still easily win over even the pickiest of Easter gift recipients. But inside each of Love's vividly colored, hand-painted chocolate shells, is a rich and creamy chocolate ganache infused with classic flavors like lemon, coconut, coffee, and peanut butter. Plus, Love's signature box is a pale mint green that's just right for Spring (\$23 for one 10-piece box).



Gummy Bears and Worms from the Organic Candy Factory

Piper Cochrane and her daughter Ginger are the team behind this **organic and all-natural candy company**, and they donate a portion of their revenue to **Hope North**, a school and community in Uganda. While the pleasantly pastel gummy candies are free of pesticides, preservatives, corn syrup, GMOs, and artificial colors, flavor, and sweeteners, they are not short on flavor and as a bonus, deliver 100% of the recommended daily value of Vitamin C. Not as chewy as conventional gummy candies, these **bears and worms** remind us of classic French **pate de fruit** (\$10.95 for one 5-ounce bag).



Wandering Rabbits and Golden Eggs from Vosges Haut-Chocolat

Beautifully packaged in Vosges' signature style and featuring flavors from Katrina Markoff's legendarily sophisticated palate, this year's Easter collection includes a charming assortment of Wandering Rabbits and Golden Eggs. In the rabbit category, choose between **white chocolate with soft butter caramel, lemon zest, and dehydrated strawberries** (\$12.50 for 1.9 ounces), or a **deep milk chocolate assortment that includes Sicilian pistachio cream and a Piemonte hazelnut and feuilletine combination** (\$24 for 3.43 ounces). Vosges' gorgeous chocolate eggs come in three intriguing flavors: **bacon and eggs, caramel, and peanut butter** (\$22 for five 1-ounce half eggs).



The Chalk-late Box from Askinosie

With its chalkboard top, Askinosie's Chalk-late Box makes it easy to add a personal message to your Easter gift. Better yet, inside each wooden box, you'll find four of Askinosie's single-origin dark chocolate bars: 77% Davao Dark Chocolate, 70% San Jose Del Tambo Dark Chocolate, 70% Honduras Dark Chocolate, and 72% Tanzania Dark Chocolate. Each elegant bar is wrapped in colorful paper featuring a photo of one of Askinosie's cocoa farmers, and bears the **"A Stake in the Outcome"** label to signify their open-book commitment to their employees and partners (\$38 for each box).



Decorated Cookies and Petit Fours from William Greenberg Desserts

New York baking institution William Greenberg Desserts has created beautifully decorated petit fours and cookies for the holiday season. Each perfectly sweet **petit four** features delicate sponge cake that's layered with fresh jam, covered in vanilla or chocolate frosting, and decorated with flowers, carrots, and jelly beans to celebrate the season (\$42 for one dozen petit fours). The bakery's rich and buttery **cookies are cut into lamb, duck, bunny, and egg shapes** and then iced and decorated in Easter pastels (\$30 for one dozen cookies).

The Hop Hop Indie Easter Basket from Mouth

There are two problems with Mouth's Hop Hop Indie Easter Basket: Deciding which delectable treat to eat first and then getting yourself to actually stop eating. Mouth focuses on handmade and small-batch items and within this holiday collection you'll find a bevy of artisan sweets, including Three Tarts' raspberry marshmallows, Buenos Angie's dulce de leche alfajores, Alma's chocolate bunnies, Quin's chew candies, and Double Dutch Sweets' Beatrice Bar, all packaged in Mouth's signature cotton tote (\$70 per set).



The Kitchen Sink Candy Bar from Mayana Chocolate

What goes into Mayana Chocolate's Kitchen Sink Candy Bar? Oh, just all your favorite indulgences--peanut butter, pretzels, milk chocolate, crispy rice, slow-cooked fleur de sel caramel, and 66% dark chocolate. This all adds up to one crispy and crunchy yet lusciously smooth salty-sweet treat. Slipped inside a sleek, colorful box, Mayana's Kitchen Sink Candy Bar will be the surprise hit of any Easter basket (\$7 per bar).



Artisan Truffles from Posh Chocolat

"Chocolate is an amazing vessel to carry the finest seasonings and products that represent world cuisine," says Posh Chocolat's Jason Willenbrock, who launched the Montana-based company with his wife, Ana, in 2005. Just in time for Easter, Posh has updated their internationally inspired truffle collection. Their 20-piece box features single-origin chocolates infused with flavors like matcha green tea, lavender honey comb, mojito, and passion fruit agave, all nestled in a strikingly simple orange box that's perfect for gifting (\$42 for one 20-piece box).

Easter Malt Ball Eggs from Koppers Chocolate

Exclusively available at Williams-Sonoma, these speckled pastel eggs from family-owned Koppers Chocolate, feature crisp malt centers, premium milk chocolate, and delicate candy shells that are hand panned in copper kettles to create just the right texture and taste. These are definitely on the sweet side, but sure to please any **malt ball obsessive** (\$12.95 for 10 ounces).

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