

Easter during Corona-Virus

Yesterday was Easter Sunday and it was a well-spent holiday in our flat in Lisbon, Portugal. Our flat got together and we spent the day grilling meat and veggies and preparing the food while listening to funky Brazilian music. We got together and had a great feast while speaking about all of our cultures and where we were the year before celebrating this holiday. My two Vietnamese roommates explained their culture and the religion in their country being predominantly atheist. Both Phuc and Pho had never previously celebrated this holiday before, they were curious to hear how it was celebrated in Portugal. Shadri, from Barbados, mentioned celebrating this holiday on the beach, grilling fish and preparing rice and mashed potato and gravy a year ago. We all smiled and laughed while explaining the different customs and the way we generally celebrate this holiday. I mentioned, how my parents wanted my sisters and I to color eggs and hide them for each other. We said multiple times that we are too old for this, but my parents really wanted to see us as their little kids again. This is a typical way of spending Easter in the USA.

My Portuguese roommate Carlos explained that in Portugal, festivities start on Palm Sunday, the week before Easter Sunday. The entire week is celebrated with processions and religious rituals in many cities and villages. In his village,

they have a huge Jesus on a cross statue and it goes from house to house and the villagers kiss the mouth of this usually silver-plated statue. Along with kissing the statue on the mouth, they drink Port Wine and usually grill meat while celebrating.



The celebration at our apartment was important because we took a moment to pay our respects and show gratitude towards those who play a very special part in our safety and among these are our health workers – doctors, nurses and many others who put their life on the line to tend to sick. Gratitude is always a most pleasing and heart-warming thing. My roommates and I spoke about this issue for a while really appreciating each other's

company. We also took a minute to think about those working in the frontlines and those who have passed due to this virus.

The current coronavirus numbers in Portugal are still low, until now, 500 deaths and 17,000 infected. The quote is not as high compared to neighboring countries, but we all must be careful and make sure to wear gloves and masks and most importantly disinfect hands and all. We are all staying at home and hoping for this to pass, regardless it was a very nice Easter holiday.