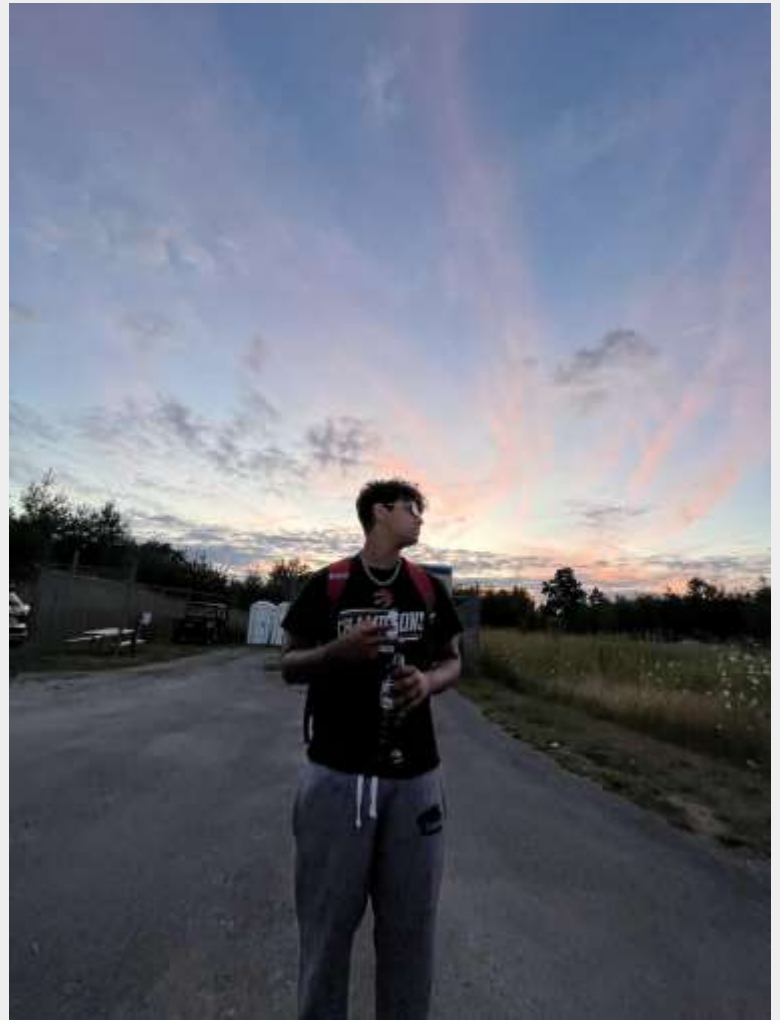




HINDUISM

FESTIVALS

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Board
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DIWALI



What is Diwali?

Diwali, also known as the festival of lights is considered to be one of the most important festivals celebrated in India, as

- It brings men and women, regardless of religion together
 - Jains, Sikh's, and Buddhists who reside in India celebrate Diwali
- It revolves around triumph of good over evil such as,
 - King Rama's return to Ayodhya following his victory against Ravana (10 Headed Demon) after 14 years of war.
 - Lord Krishna's (Lord Vishnu's Avatar) victory against Narakasura
 - The day Lord Vishnu banished the demon King Bali to the nether world
- It celebrates and praises both Lord Ganesh and the Goddess Lakshmi
- The clay lamps that are lit symbolize a person's inner light that protects them from evil

When is Diwali 2022?

October 24

Definitions

Lord Vishnu: Known as the preserve out of the three other gods apart of the trimurti

Diya: An oil lamp made by clay or mud with a cotton wick dipped in ghee



Figure 1: Hindu women lighting diyas on a large stand surrounded by other clay based lamps

FIVE DAYS OF DIWALI

2022

Narak Chaturdashi

- The second day celebrates Lord Krishna's victory against Narakasur
- Hindus will clean their houses and place diyas, as well as using fragrant oils and will make rangolis (artistic patterns)

October 23

Govardhan Puja

- Celebrates the day Lord Krishna saved the people of Gojuk from Lord Indra
- Hindu's will wear new clothes and jewellery on this day
- They will also hand out treats and gifts among friends

October 25

October 22

Dhanteras

- The thirteenth lunar day of the Hindu calendar
- Hindus will traditionally take a holy bath at sunset
- Hindus will also pray to Lord Yama for their well being

October 24

Diwali

- Celebrates the story that Lord Rama returned home to rows of lights from every household following his exile
- The word Diwali comes from the origin word "Deepawali" meaning rows of bright lamps and candles
- Fireworks are lit everywhere, lighting up the sky
- A pandit will perform a puja ceremoniously while the family members offer sweets and other offerings

October 26

Bhai Dooj

- Commemorates the story of Lord Yama and Yami, his sister, who greeted him with hospitality and love after decades of being separated
- On this day, a Hindu will apply a teeka of rice and vermilion on the brother's head
- Dishes and meals consisting of unique dishes and sweets are eaten
- The brothers will typically promise to protect their sister, and the sister will pray for the brother's longevity

HOLI





The picture can't be displayed.

Figure 2: Hundreds of people celebrating the Holi Festival at the Taj Mahal in India, Agra.

What's Special?

- No matter what, Holi always falls on Purnima
 - The night of a full moon, which Hindus find favorable
- Provides an opportunity to start and commemorate new beginnings and to rid those of their pain from the winter season
- Spiritually, a puja or bonfire will be performed to clear and cast away all evils, pain and anything that is bad, away.

Why is Holi Celebrated?

Holi, also known as “the festival of love” or “the festival of colors”, celebrates the eternal love between Lord Krishna and his beloved Radha.

- It was said that Radha cared for their love so much that because Lord Krishna’s skin was blue, Radha painted/applied a blue colour to herself.
- The most famous part of the festival, happens after the puja and the full moon, where people will throw colorful powders at each other and share laughs and dances.

JANMASHTAMI



The image to the left displays children forming a pyramid at a school Janmashtami celebration

What Does The Holiday Celebrate?

Typically during the months of September and August (changes year to year), Hindus celebrate the birth of Lord Krishna through the Janmashtami holiday.

- Since Lord Krishna is the eighth child of his mother Devaki, his birthday is celebrated in the eighth month
- Hindu devotees will fast the entire day after performing or participating in a puja and a prayer to Lord Krishna
 - Specifically, Hindus will soak the figure of the deity figure into water and milk, and then proceed to change his clothing and offer food

How is it Celebrated

- Competitions will usually be held where groups of devotees must create a pyramid out of themselves, in order to break a clay pot.
 - The specific name of this competition is called "Dahi-Handi"
- At the end of the holiday, Hindus will sing Kirtan about Lord Krishna
 - This is performed, as it is seen as a recreation of the birth of Lord Krishna and the happiness that proceeds



Figure 3: A group of Hindu's attempt to try to form a human pyramid to break a clay pot. This specific competition is called "dahi-handi"

DUSSEHRA



History

The Dussehra holiday celebrates Lord Rama's victory against the demon King Ravana, which is symbolic to the triumph of good over evil.

Lord Rama was said to have won Sita's love, however the demon king of Lanka had kidnapped her. The demon king of Lanka (Ravana) had kidnapped Sita, as Ravana had a sister who was in love Lord Rama who refused to marry her as he was interested in Sita. Ravana's sister threatened to kill Sita, and therefore had her ears and nose cut off. As an act of revenge, Ravana then kidnapped Sita, to which Lord Rama defeated and rescued Sita

How is it Celebrated

Hindu Devotees will gather cow feces and wood in order to burn a statue of Ravana (Ravana) and celebrate Lord Rama's victory against the demon.

- Hindus that live outside of India will typically only perform a puja and sing songs of devotion to Lord Rama
- Blessings are also typically asked for
- Hindus will also spread food around their community, temple, and home to all the Gods present.
- In the past, Hindu communities would gather effigies of Ravana and then at dawn, burn them with arrows.



Figure 4: Effigies of Demon King Ravana being burnt in celebration of Lord Rama's victorious rescue and the defeat of Ravana.

MAHA SHIVRATRI



Why is it Important



Figure 5: Hindus worshipping a statue of Lord Shiva

Lord Shiva

Part of the trinitri, Lord Shiva is the god of Destruction

- He destroys the universe every 2,160,000,000 years in order to allow for a new cycle of life and creation
- Lord Shiva represents goodness, benevolence as well as sacrifice

Every year Hindus celebrate Lord Shiva's sacrifice, as it was written that

- Lord Shiva sacrificed his body by drinking a poison created in a pot by other gods and demons. The poison was said to have had the ability to destroy the universe, as it began to fume
 - The gods and demons attempted to make Ambrosia (Drink of the gods), with all of earth's oceans
 - As a result, this turned Lord Shiva blue
 - It is also believed that Lord Shiva gives us the energy to live, breath, and walk

To pay respects to Lord Shiva's sacrifice, Devotees perform a puja on Maha Shivratri, as well as fast.

- A series of meditations and chants are also prayed towards a statue of Lord Shiva
- Following the fast, group celebrations are also help in honor of Lord Shiva with feasts and big parties in order to celebrate with the energy that we were given.

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