

Gai Jatra: Gai Jatra, celebrated mainly in Kathmandu Valley, commemorates deceased loved ones. Families parade cows through the streets to help departed souls find their way to heaven. The festival includes satirical performances and jokes.

Gai Jatra is a festival of dancing, singing, mirth and laughter. The festival of cow is celebrated in the Kathmandu Valley to commemorate the death of loved ones. As part of the festival family members of the deceased of the past year send people mostly children, dressed as cows to parade on the streets. The festival usually falls in July or August.

Gai Jatra is a time to remember lost ones and also to ease the pain. The word "Gai" means cow in English. Cow is regarded as the goddess of wealth in the Hindu religion. Sharing of sorrow and taking the comfort in knowing that their lost ones are safe is the true reason of celebrating this festival.

The day is also marked with a gay parade along with many people dressed in weird clothes. In Bhaktapur the festival lasts for eight days. The origin of this celebration goes back to the reign of the Malla rulers. It is said that the Malla Queen was in mourning for a long time after the untimely death of her son. The king in an attempt to console her asked every family that lost a loved one to come out in a procession to show the queen that she was not alone with her suffering. That is why there is much joy and joking during the procession that goes through the streets.