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**🧵 What is Kathina?**

**Kathina** is a **Buddhist festival of giving**, celebrated **at the end of the Vassa (Rainy Season Retreat)**. It involves **offering new robes and other essentials to monks**, marking the conclusion of three months of disciplined spiritual practice.

It’s one of the **most meritorious and joyful events** in the Buddhist year, often celebrated with large communal gatherings, ceremonies, and generosity.

**📅 When is Kathina Celebrated?**

* Occurs **after Vassa ends** (usually **October or November**)
* Celebrated during a **1-month period** starting from the **first day after the full moon in October**
* The exact date varies by country and temple, but it's **once a year per monastery**

**📜 Historical Background**

* During the Buddha’s time, a group of **30 monks** were on their way to meet him in Savatthi but were forced to **stay in one place** due to the **monsoon rains** (as monks are not allowed to travel during the rainy season to avoid harming crops and insects).
* After the Vassa, they finally reached the Buddha.
* He **praised their discipline** and allowed **lay followers to offer robes** and other items as a sign of gratitude and support.
* This became known as the **Kathina offering**.

**🎁 What is Offered During Kathina?**

**🎽 Robes (Kathina Civara):**

* Symbolize **purity, humility, and renunciation**
* Only one monk per monastery receives the **special Kathina robe**, which is **sewn, dyed, and offered on the same day**

**🧺 Other Offerings:**

* Toiletries (soap, razors)
* Alms bowls, sandals
* Umbrellas, medicine, food
* Financial donations for the monastery

The offerings are **voluntary**, and donors receive **great merit** (punya).

**🛕 Rituals & Celebrations**

* **Early morning alms-giving**
* Processions with **decorated Kathina robes**
* **Sermons and chanting** at temples
* Some communities hold **lantern festivals**, **cultural dances**, or **parades**
* **Communal meals** with the sangha and lay community

**🙏 Spiritual Significance**

* **Strengthens the bond** between monks and lay followers
* Encourages **generosity (dāna)** — one of the key foundations of Buddhism
* Celebrates the **discipline and spiritual effort** of monks during Vassa
* Promotes **community harmony** and spiritual unity

**🌍 How Different Countries Celebrate Kathina**

* **Thailand**: Lavish celebrations with **robes carried in long processions**, traditional music, and local temple fairs.
* **Sri Lanka**: Known as **Katina Pinkama**, involves temple stays and village-wide participation.
* **Myanmar**: Called **Kathina Robe Offering Ceremony**, often state-supported and media-covered.
* **Laos and Cambodia**: Similar to Thailand with **community merit-making**
* **Western Buddhist centers**: Hold **smaller, reflective ceremonies** focused on lay-monastic support.

**🧠 Lessons of Kathina**

* Teaches the value of **self-discipline**, especially through the **three-month Vassa**
* Highlights the importance of **mutual support** between monks and laypeople
* Shows how small acts of **generosity** can build **deep spiritual merit**

**💡 Summary Table**

| **Feature** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** | Kathina |
| **Meaning** | "Frame" or "sewing frame" (used for robes) |
| **Founded by** | The Buddha |
| **Occurs** | After Vassa (Oct–Nov) |
| **Key Activity** | Offering robes to monks |
| **Main Virtue** | Generosity (Dāna) |
| **Who Participates** | Monks and laypeople |

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