



DIWALI

THE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS



Diwali Wishes



What is Diwali?



Diwali, or Deepavali, is one of the biggest Indian festivals and also a major occasion in Nepal. The festival has great religious significance for Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and the Nepalese. In India, Diwali is now considered to be more of a national festival, and is enjoyed by most Indians regardless of faith. It is commonly celebrated by decorating homes with lamps and candles, bursting of firecrackers and sparklers, eating sweets and other mouthwatering dishes, praying to Gods and Goddesses, observing religious rituals, wearing new dresses and sending wishes and gifts to one

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Diwali in history



The history of Diwali is replete with legends and these legends are moored to the stories of Hindu religious scriptures, mostly the Puranas. Though the central theme of all legends point out to the classic truth of the victory of the good over the evils, the mode of their presentation and the characters differ. Diwali, being the festival of lights, lighting the lamp of knowledge within us means to understand and reflect upon the significant purpose of each of the five days of festivities and to bring those thoughts in to the day to day lives.

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What does Diwali mean?



The word "Divali/Diwali" is a variation of the Sanskrit word "Deepavali" which means "a continuous line of lamps" (The word 'Deep' means "light", and 'avali' means "a continuous line"). Thus, Diwali is the time to celebrate with lights.

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Hindus and Sikhs alike regard it as a celebration of life and use the occasion to strengthen family and social relationships. One of the most important Hindu festivals, Diwali marks the beginning of a new year in some Hindu calendars. For Hindus, the festival is not only the time to make merry but also the time to worship divine beings considered sacred in Hinduism like Lord Ganesha, Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Mahabali. It is also a significant festival for the Sikh faith. For Jains, it is an occasion to remember Lord Mahavira. In Nepal, Diwali is celebrated by many Buddhists as Tihar or Swanti.

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Why is Diwali called the "Festival of Lights"?

Diwali is known as the "Festival of Lights". This is probably because of the manner in which it is observed. The festival is traditionally celebrated with activities like bursting crackers, lighting rows of candles and diyas (earthen lamps) around individual homes, holding dazzling fireworks display and igniting colorful sparklers.

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What happened during Diwali?



Known as the "Festival of Lights," Diwali commemorates the time when the Lord Rama returned to his hometown Ayodhya after defeating the evil demon king of Lanka, Ravana. Lord Rama was the king of Ayodhya who had, by his father's orders, went away from his country to live in the forest for fourteen years. But the people of Ayodhya loved their king very much and waited for years to meet with him again. And so, when news of Lord Rama's return came to them again, the people of Ayodhya, in the honor of their king and to celebrate his victory, burst crackers, lit up their houses with earthen lamps (diyas), and decorated the entire city in the grandest manner. Year after year this homecoming of Lord Rama is commemorated on Diwali with lights, fire works, bursting of cracker and merriment. The festival gets its name Deepavali, or Diwali, from the rows (avail) of lamps (deepa) that the people of Ayodhya lit to welcome their King.

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Today Diwali is celebrated
across the world as the
"Festival of Light," where the
lights or lamps signify victory
of good over the evil within
every human being •



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Deepavali Celebrations

- The festival of Diwali reminds us of the festive season of joy, splendor, enthusiasm and happiness. It is the festival of lights and is celebrated with great excitement by all Indians all over the world. The uniqueness of the festival is that it is celebrated for five days and each of the days has a special significance and importance. Each of the five days is based on five varied philosophies, with each day to a special thought or ideal. The first day of Diwali is called the Dhanteras, Dhanwantari Triodasi or Dhantryaodashi, which falls on the thirteenth day of the month of Ashwin. On this day, Lord Dhanwantari came out of the ocean with Ayurveda for mankind. This day marks the beginning of Diwali celebrations. On this day at sunset offerings are made of sweets during worship time to Lord Yama (the Lord of Death) for the protection from untimely death. It is mainly done near a Tulsi tree (basil tree) or any other sacred tree.

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The second day is called the **Narak Chaturdasi**. It is the **Choti Diwali** celebration. On this day **Lord Krishna** killed the demon **Narakasur** and made the world free from evil power. It falls on the fourteenth lunar day of the dark fortnight of the month of **Kartik** and the eve of **Diwali**. The third and the most important day of **Diwali** is marked with **Lakshmi Puja**. It is the main day of celebration



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Diwali is also associated with the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana and returning back to Ayodhya his hometown. The people of Ayodhya decorated the entire city with the earthen lamps and illuminated it to welcome their loving prince his wife

and brother.



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The END



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