

India, often referred to as the land of festivals is a country brimming with diverse traditions, cultures, and religions . The significance and diversity of festivals in India are a testament to the nation's rich cultural mosaic, where each festival is a celebration of life, heritage and unity . From North to South and East to West, every state and community has its unique festivals name that are an integral part of people's lives . These festivals are celebrated with immense zeal, fervor and joy reflecting the cultural richness of the nation .

List of Festivals in India

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India is a land of diverse cultures and religions, which leads to a multitude of festivals celebrated throughout the year. Some prominent festivals name include Diwali (Festival of Lights), Holi (Festival of Colors), Eid, Christmas, Navratri, Durga Puja and Makar Sankranti . These festivals reflect India's rich heritage and vibrant traditions, celebrated with music, dance, food and religious rituals .

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In this article, readers can expect a comprehensive insight into the vibrant world of Indian festivals . We will explore a detailed list of festivals name including their names, cultural importance, the states they are predominantly celebrated in, the seasons they fall in and information regarding public holidays . From the colorful celebration of Holi to the divine observance of Diwali, the article will serve as a window to the soul of India, where every day is a celebration of diversity, faith, and humanity .

Name	Cultural Importance	State(s)	Season	Public Holiday
Diwali	Festival of Lights; celebrates the victory of good over evil	Pan India	Autumn	Yes

Holi	Festival of Colors; celebrates the victory of good over evil	Pan India	Spring	Yes
Pongal	Harvest festival; thanks to nature and the Sun God	Tamil Nadu	Winter	Yes
Onam	Harvest festival; welcome of King Mahabali	Kerala	Monsoon	Yes
Baisakhi	Harvest festival; Punjabi New Year	Punjab	Spring	Yes
Durga Puja	Worship of Goddess Durga	West Bengal	Autumn	Yes
Navratri	Worship of Goddess Durga	Gujarat, Maharashtra	Autumn	Yes
Ganesh Chaturthi	Celebration of Lord Ganesha's birth	Maharashtra, Karnataka	Monsoon	Yes
Makar Sankranti	Festival marking the Sun's transition into Capricorn	Pan India	Winter	Yes
Maha Shivaratri	Worship of Lord Shiva	Pan India	Winter	Yes
Eid al-Fitr	End of Ramadan; Islamic festival	Pan India	Variable	Yes
Christmas	Celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ	Pan India	Winter	Yes

Lohri	Punjabi festival marking the end of winter	Punjab	Winter	No
Raksha Bandhan	Celebrates the bond between siblings	Pan India	Monsoon	No
Janmashtami	Celebration of Lord Krishna's birth	Pan India	Monsoon	No
Ugadi	New Year's Day in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh	Spring	Yes
Vishu	New Year's Day in Kerala	Kerala	Spring	No
Muharram	Islamic New Year; mourning of Imam Hussain's martyrdom	Pan India	Variable	No
Bihu	Assamese New Year; celebrated thrice a year	Assam	Variable	Yes

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National Festivals of India

These National Festivals are celebrated across the country with great enthusiasm and are considered public holidays . They hold significant importance as they reflect the country's democratic principles, its struggle for freedom and honor one of its most important leaders .

Name	Date	Importance
Republic Day	January 26	Celebrates the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1950, marking the transition to a republic.
Independence Day	August 15	Commemorates India's independence from British rule in 1947.
Gandhi Jayanti	October 2	Celebrates the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of India's non-violent independence movement.

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Republic Day (26th January)

Republic Day, celebrated annually on January 26th, marks the day when the Constitution of India, drafted by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, came into effect in 1950. It signified India's transition into a sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic republic. The main event is a grand parade showcasing India's defense capability and cultural diversity, held at Rajpath, New Delhi.



Independence Day (15th August)

Independence Day, observed annually on August 15th, commemorates India's independence from British rule achieved in 1947. This day is a national holiday marked by flag-hoisting ceremonies, cultural presentations, and patriotic speeches across the country. The Prime Minister's speech from the Red Fort in New Delhi is the major highlight.

Gandhi Jayanti (2nd October)

Gandhi Jayanti, observed on October 2nd each year, celebrates the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the "Father of the Nation". Gandhi played a pivotal role in India's struggle for independence. His principles of truth and non-violence are remembered and respected on this day. Nationwide, prayers, commemorative ceremonies, and events are held, promoting peace and non-violence.

These three national festivals are gazetted holidays in India, reflecting the country's patriotic fervor and its democratic and secular ethos.

Religious Festivals of India

India, being a secular country, is home to people of various religious beliefs, resulting in a myriad of vibrant and awe-inspiring religious festivals celebrated with immense devotion and fervor. Each of these Indian festivals is celebrated differently based on cultural norms and local customs but all offer a sense of unity, respecting the tapestry of diversity that forms the very core of India. Let's delve into some of the country's major religious festivals.

Hindu Festivals

- **Diwali:** One of the most popular Hindu festivals, Diwali or Deepavali, marks the victory of light over darkness and good over evil, commemorating Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya after 14 years of exile. During this 'festival of lights', homes are decorated with oil lamps or 'diyas', and colorful rangoli artworks. Firework displays are a common sight.



- **Holi:** Known as the 'festival of colors', Holi is a jubilant celebration of spring's arrival. People smear each other with vibrant colors, dance, and enjoy traditional foods. The night before Holi, bonfires are lit to symbolize the destruction of the demon Holika, harking back to the legend of Prahlad and Hiranyakashipu.



- **Navaratri/Dussehra:** This nine-night festival celebrates the divine feminine and ends in Dussehra, marking the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana or Goddess Durga's victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura.

B. Muslim Festivals

- **Eid-ul-Fitr:** Celebrated at the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting, Eid-ul-Fitr is a time of joyous celebrations, feasting, giving, and expressing gratitude.



- **Eid-ul-Adha (Bakr-Id):** Commemorating Ibrahim's (Abraham's) willingness to sacrifice his son to God, this 'Festival of Sacrifice' involves Muslims slaughtering a lamb or another animal and distributing the meat to relatives, friends, and the underprivileged.

C. Christian Festivals

- **Christmas:** This festival celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ on December 25th each year. It's a time of family gatherings, sharing gifts, and acts of goodwill.

- **Easter:** Celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox, Easter marks the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It involves church services, festive family meals, and, in Western Christianity, the sharing of Easter eggs.

D. Sikh Festivals

- **Guru Nanak Jayanti:** This is a celebration of the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism. It involves prayers, hymns, and community meals at Gurudwaras (Sikh temples).
- **Baisakhi:** Also known as Vaisakhi, this harvest festival is significant for Sikhs as it marks the formation of the Khalsa in 1699 by the 10th Guru, Guru Gobind Singh.

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Regional Festivals of India

In addition to national festivals, India nurtures a myriad of regional festivals celebrating local cultures, showcasing the regional diversity that makes India an epitome of 'Unity in Diversity'.

Name	Typical Dates	Importance	Region(s)
Pongal	January	Harvest festival; thanks to nature and Sun God.	Tamil Nadu
Onam	August/September	Harvest festival; welcome of King Mahabali.	Kerala
Baisakhi	April	Harvest festival; Punjabi New Year.	Punjab
Lohri	January	Celebrates the end of winter.	Punjab
Ugadi	March/April	Telugu and Kannada New Year.	Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka

Vishu	April	Malayalam New Year.	Kerala
Bihu	January, April, October	Assamese New Year; celebrated thrice a year.	Assam
Makar Sankranti	January	Harvest festival; Sun's transition into Capricorn.	Maharashtra, Karnataka
Chhath Puja	November	Thanks to Sun God for sustaining life on earth.	Bihar, Uttar Pradesh
Gangaur	March/April	Celebrates marital happiness, well-being of spouse.	Rajasthan
Nuakhai	August/September	Harvest festival.	Odisha
Mysuru Dasara	September/October	Celebrates the victory of good over evil.	Karnataka
Hornbill Festival	December	Celebrates the cultural heritage of Nagaland.	Nagaland
Torgya	January	Monastic festival to ward off evil spirits.	Arunachal Pradesh
Poush Mela	December	Celebrates Bengali heritage and culture.	West Bengal
Losar	February/March	Tibetan New Year.	Ladakh, Sikkim

Thrissur Pooram	April/May	Temple festival known for elephant processions.	Kerala
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Onam (Kerala)

Onam is the most significant festival of the south Indian state of Kerala. Celebrated over ten days in the Malayalam month of Chingam (August-September), it honors the homecoming of the mythical King Mahabali. Key attractions include captivating snake boat races, elaborate flower decorations (Pookalam), and the grand feast known as Onasadya.

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Pongal (Tamil Nadu)

Pongal is a four-day harvest festival widely celebrated in Tamil Nadu in mid-January. It honors the Sun God for a bountiful harvest. Houses are adorned with rangoli/kolam, while newly harvested grains are cooked in earthen pots until they spill over - a tradition symbolic of abundance and prosperity.

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Bihu (Assam)

Bihu is the collective name for three crucial Indian festivals in Assam – Rongali or Bohag Bihu, Kongali or Kati Bihu, and Bhogali or Magh Bihu. Rongali Bihu, the most important, marks the Assamese New Year at the start of the sowing season, filled with dances, music, and traditional Assamese feasts.



Navaratri/Durga Puja/Dussehra (West Bengal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka)

While Durga Puja in West Bengal pays homage to Goddess Durga's victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura, the dancing fervor of Navaratri in Gujarat, Dussehra's victory processions in Mysore, and the idols' immersion ceremony in Maharashtra demonstrate the same festival's various pan-Indian representations.



Ganesh Chaturthi (Maharashtra)

Ganesh Chaturthi is an eleven-day festival celebrated in Maharashtra, honoring the birth of Lord Ganesha. It ends with the immersion of Ganesha idols in water bodies, invoking his blessings for prosperity and the removal of all obstacles.



These regional festivals, amongst numerous others, illustrate India's cultural spectrum, making each state's cultural heritage unique while collectively contributing to India's vibrant and diverse identity.

Cultural Festivals of India

Alongside religious and regional festivals, cultural festivals play a critical role in the multicolored fabric of Indian traditions, providing inspiring glimpses into the country's artistic, culinary, and musical diversity.

Name	Typical Dates	Importance	Region(s)
Jaipur Literature Festival	January	Celebrates literature, featuring authors and thinkers globally.	Jaipur, Rajasthan
Goa Carnival	February	Celebrates the culture and cuisine of Goa with parades and dances.	Goa
Puri Beach Festival	November	Showcases the art, craft, culture, and cuisine of Odisha.	Puri, Odisha
Konark Dance Festival	December	Promotes classical Indian dance; held at the Sun Temple.	Konark, Odisha
Hornbill Festival	December	Celebrates the cultural heritage of Nagaland.	Nagaland
Kala Ghoda Arts Festival	February	Celebrates arts and crafts; includes music, dance, theater.	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Pushkar Camel Fair	November	Celebrates the trading of camels with various cultural events.	Pushkar, Rajasthan
Thrissur Pooram	April/May	Temple festival with colorful elephant processions and fireworks.	Thrissur, Kerala
Mysuru Dasara	September/October	Celebrates the victory of good over evil; includes parades.	Mysuru, Karnataka

Sufi Music Festival	March	Celebrates Sufi music and spirituality.	Delhi
Rann Utsav	November to February	Showcases the culture of the Kutch region with dance and music.	Kutch, Gujarat
Toshali National Crafts Mela	December	Highlights Indian handicrafts and handlooms.	Bhubaneswar, Odisha
International Film Festival of India	November	Promotes world cinema; includes screenings, masterclasses.	Goa
Teej Festival	July/August	Celebrates the arrival of monsoon; women's festival.	Rajasthan
Khajuraho Dance Festival	February	Showcases classical Indian dances; held at the Khajuraho temples.	Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh
Hampi Utsav	November	Celebrates the heritage of the Vijayanagara Empire with music, dance.	Hampi, Karnataka

Goa Carnival (Goa)

Goa Carnival, a colonial Portuguese tradition sustained even post-colonial era, is one of the most anticipated events in Goa and is unique to this state. Held in February before Lent's austere period begins, the festival showcases vibrant parades, colorful floats, lively music, grand feasts, and a general atmosphere of convivial merrymaking.



Pushkar Camel Fair (Rajasthan)

The Pushkar Camel Fair is an annual five-day camel and livestock fair held in the town of Pushkar in Rajasthan. It's one of the world's largest camel fairs, attracting thousands of tourists, photographers, and traders. Customs such as camel races, "the best decorated camel" competition, and the trading of livestock make it a vibrant cultural spectacle.



Jaipur Literature Festival (Rajasthan)

The Jaipur Literature Festival, the largest free literary festival in the world, brings together some of the greatest thinkers and writers from across South Asia and the world. It is a celebration of literature and fosters dialogue and exchange of ideas.



Konark Dance Festival (Odisha)

The week-long Konark Dance Festival, held in December, is a magnet for classical dance enthusiasts. Set against the stunning backdrop of the Sun Temple in Konark, this cultural festival showcases India's classical dance forms, like Odissi, Bharatanatyam, Kathak, and many more.



Hornbill Festival (Nagaland)

Known as the 'Festival of Festivals', the Hornbill Festival celebrates the rich cultural heritage of Naga tribes. It features traditional arts, dances, folk songs, and games, making it a vibrant spectacle of indigenous culture.

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These culturally famous festival of India and many more infuse life into India's cultural landscape, providing fascinating insights into the country's artistic, musical, and literary spheres, and, in turn, contributing to India's diverse cultural identity.

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