

Holi



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What is Holi?

Also known as the Festival of Colors, Holi is a popular Hindu holiday celebrated most commonly in India.

Holi (pronounced Ho-lee) starts on the last full moon of the lunar month Purnima in the Hindu Calendar. It is seen as a celebration of good over evil, the end of winter and arrival of spring, and is a festive day for people to celebrate together regardless of their differences.

It is seen as a day to forgive and forget and move beyond conflicts or past errors. This year Holi begins on the night of March 17th and is celebrated during the day on March 18th 2022.

1

DID YOU KNOW?

Holi lasts for one night and one day. Starting with prayers and a bonfire. The celebration continues throughout the next day.

2

RANGWALI HOLI

This is the day time celebration; a free-for-all festival, when people smear and drench each other with bright colors.

3

TODAY

There are over 3 million Hindu Americans. Holi celebrations can be found worldwide, including Australia, Germany, the UK, Canada and the US



MEANING BEHIND COLORS OF HOLI

Blue- symbolizes Hindu God Lord Krishna, the sky and oceans

Red- symbolizes love and fertility. Red is worn frequently at weddings in India.

Yellow- represents health, happiness, learning and knowledge.

Green- relates to nature, life, Spring, and new beginnings.

Orange- Is the color of the sun and represents a new day

Pink- Means caring and compassion.

Purple- Is related to magic and mystery.

Mythology behind Holi

The history of Holi is rooted in Hindu mythology. Holi marks the triumph of good over evil which traces back to a tale of a demon king and his son.

In one legend, Hiranyakashyap believed that he was the most powerful king in the world and that he should be worshiped instead of the Gods. His son refused and continued to be loyal to the God known as Lord Vishnu.

This made the demon king very angry and he began trying to harm Prahlad. After being unsuccessful, the king reached out to his sister Holika for help. Holika had a magical power and was unable to be hurt by fire.

The two came up with a plan to have Prahlad sit on Holika's lap in a fire. They thought the fire would harm Prahlad but instead a miracle happened and Holika disappeared in the fire.

The Vishnu appeared in the form of half human, half lion and struck down Hiranyakashyap to restore people's faith in the Gods.

Holi is celebrated to remind that good (Prahlad) always triumphs over evil. This myth is the reason behind the ritual of lighting bonfires in the evening during Holi.



The Legend of Krishna and Radha

- Lord Krishna's skin was dark blue because a demoness tried to poison him when he was a baby. Because of this, he worried the girl he liked, Radha, would not like him. Krishna's mother jokingly suggested he smear some brightly colored powders on her face so she was as colorful as he was. Krishna, being a mischievous child, did just that.
- This lovable prank played by Krishna evolved into a tradition and full fledged festival. The use of colored powders and water guns filled with colored water to cover loved ones on Holi is widely celebrated today. It is seen as a playful way to express affection to each other.

DIG DEEPER



Attend: Penfield Library Virtual Holi Celebration- Limited space available



Read: Children's Books on Holi



Create: Your own colored powders to celebrate



Watch: How to and Why Celebrate Holi



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