

Navratri



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Navratri is one of the most significant and awaited Hindu festival. The zeal and excitement of the festival is evident all over India way before the actual festival starts. Navratri celebrations in India are grand and everyone wants to be a part of them.

Meaning of Navratri

Navratri literally means ‘ Nine Nights’ in the Sanskrit language. There are various myths associated with the festival and different religions and communities in India have a different way to celebrate the festival but the festival is primarily dedicated to goddess Durga (symbol of power) who is worshipped in nine forms during the nine days of Navratri. The festivities last for nine long days and people indulge in prayers & dancing and singing among other things to appease the goddess Durga.

Navratri in India

The Navratri celebrations in India also vary from state to state. Each state has something unique of its own to add to the celebrations of the festival. The Navratri celebrations in the state of Gujarat, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Kerala and Kashmir are popular all across India for being reflective of true Indian culture through traditional dances and pujas (prayers) among numerous other activities.

If you wish to travel to any place in India to enjoy the fun and frolic of an Indian festival, then the best option would be the time of Navratri. The interesting rituals associated with the festival contribute to making the celebration a fascinating one.

Why is Navratri celebrated?

Navratri is celebrated in the honor of goddess Durga who is an impersonation of Shakti (power). The festival celebrates femininity in all its forms. There are several myths associated with the festival including the killing of a demon named Mahishasura at the hands of goddess Durga.

Which places in India are famous for Navratri celebration?

Indian states like Gujarat, West Bengal, Kerala, Kashmir, Mysore and Tamil Nadu are popular for their Navratri celebrations. The Garba of Gujarat and Durga Puja of West Bengal are highlights of Navratri festival in India.

What should one eat during the Navratri fast?

There are specific food items that one should eat during the Navratri fast. Fasting during Navratri was never as good as it is nowadays. Sabudana, kuttu, Singhade, Aloo (potato) are some of the foods which are consumed in different forms by those who are fasting.

What are the main events of Navratri?

Goddess Durga is worshipped on all the nine days of the festival in different forms. Different states in India have their own way of celebrating the festival. In West Bengal Durga Puja is held in the last four days of Navratri where larger than life pandals of Durga are decorated and people wear new clothes on each day. Similarly in Gujarat people have dandiya and garba nights where they dance and celebrate.

What are the colours of Navratri?

There is a custom of wearing a different colour on each of the days of Navratri especially in Gujarat and Maharashtra. The idol of Goddess Durga is also decorated in different colour of clothes on all days.

How is the Navratripooja performed?

After taking an early morning bath, a kalash (pitcher) is filled with water and a moli is tied around it. Then the deity is worshipped with vermilion (sindoor), Kumkum, rice, flowers, beetle leaves, beetle nuts, Gulal among other things. The ghee is added to the burning clay pot of fire and people sing Aarti or praises of goddess along.