



## Importance of festivals across the world

By Rashmi Walimbe



Festivals are an expressive way to celebrate glorious heritage, culture and traditions. They are meant to rejoice special moments and emotions in our lives. Festivals play an important role to add structure to our social lives, and connect us with our families and roots. They give us a distraction from our day to day routine and give us inspiration to remember the important moments in life. Festivals were started to pass the legends, knowledge and traditions onto the next generation.

All festivals are cultural in one way or another. There are many types of cultural festivals such as National, Religious and Seasonal. They all serve the purpose of bringing happiness to our lives, and strengthen our sense of community.

**National Festivals:** They connect us as a people of a nation. National festivals connect citizens to important moments of a nation's history such as: the founding day

of a nation, our Independence Day or in Europe VE day (Victory of Europe during WWII) is celebrated throughout the continent, with many nations having a public holiday. Such festivals solidify patriotic spirits in the society.

**Religious Festivals:** religious festivals are important for families. To keep this simple we can all agree that religious festivals help us to teach principles and ethics to our next generations. All different religious festivals bring the same message of love, tolerance and understanding. On these occasions we express our gratitude to God, for the special thing or event that originated on this particular festival.

**Seasonal Festivals:** Seasonal festivals reflect attitude of people towards nature. These festivals are important because they are related to food supply. Human beings

should adore the nature and acknowledge its beneficence before partaking any of its gifts. To put it simply, universally all festivals are related to harmony, peace and happiness.

## Unusual Festivals of India

**Lathmar Holi, Uttar Pradesh:** a confrontation between men of Nandgaon and women of Barsana who enact the anecdote of Holi playing from the epic story of Lord Krishna and his beloved Radha. It is played 5 days before the actual Holi and women hurl sticks at the men as part of tradition

# La Tomatina – The holi like festival from Spain

By Aniruddha Iyer (Age 10 years)



La Tomatina is a festival that is held in the Valencian town of Buñol, in the east of Spain 30 kilometres from the Mediterranean, in which participants throw tomatoes and get involved in a tomato fight purely for entertainment purpose.

What is the La Tomatina Festival? La Tomatina a week-long celebration in honor of the town's patron saints. It takes place each year at the end of August in Buñol, Valencia. This popular festival began by accident on the last Wednesday in August in 1945 during a parade in People's Square. There was a parade taking place with musicians, giants, and large heads, and a few youngsters made one of the participants fall, hitting everything that got in his way. This unusual fiesta brings together crowds of people every year, ready to have a great time of laughter and fun, hurling tomatoes at each other. Participants at this joyful pitched battle have a wonderful time

throwing tomatoes at anything that moves.

How much is a ticket to La Tomatina?

The Tomatina ticket price is only 12,00€, however, it can vary depending on other services you want. For example, you could pay up to 42,00€ for a package including the Tomatina ticket bus from Valencia party entrance.

La Tomatina started in 1945 during a parade of Giants and Bigheads. Some local youth decided to take part in it, and some of the members of the party got angry. There was a small dispute near where there was a vegetable stand. The dispute became a tomato toss between both sides, until the police ended the conflict.

Like most festivals across the world, La Tomatina was cancelled in 2021 due to Covid-19. However, this year it was celebrated in full fervor

Even though it is a festival where people have fun, there are certain rules that need to be followed:

- One can not bring bottles or hard objects as they can cause accidents and hurt other participants.
- One can not rip other people's T-shirts.
- Participants must squash the tomatoes before throwing them as this reduces the impact.
- One must also ensure you keep a safe distance from the lorries

La Tomatina starts at 11.00 am and ends at 12.00 sharp. Participants aren't allowed to enter with bottles or hard objects. You are prohibited from breaking or throwing clothing. Tomatoes must be crushed before throwing.

# Chinese water festival

By Himani Bhaktani (Age 13 years)

Water Splashing Festival -- or pouring water at one another-- is called 泼水节 (pō shuǐ jié) in Chinese, and Songkran in Thai. The two festivals are related and very similar: both have their origins in Buddhist purification rituals to celebrate and welcome the coming of the new year, and they both take place in mid-April, when both the Thai and the Dai celebrate their new year

Traditionally people gently sprinkled water on one another as a sign of respect, but as the new year falls during the hottest month in South East Asia, many people end up dousing strangers and passers-by in vehicles in boisterous celebration.

The act of pouring water is also a show of blessings and good wishes. It is believed that at this Water Festival, everything old must be thrown away, or it will bring the owner bad luck.

The festival is observed by the Dai ethnic people of Xishuangbanna Prefecture, and, similar to its direct neighbor Laos' songkransongran festival, it involves three days of celebrations that include sincere, yet light-hearted religious rituals that invariably end in merrymaking, where everyone ends up getting splashed, sprayed or doused with water.



# Bull festivals across the world

By Shlok Ranawade (Age 12 years)

**Bail Pola:** Bail Pola is a festival celebrated by the farmers in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, to thank their cattle who play a crucial role in the agriculture.

On the day of Bail Pola, the farmers worship the bulls to thank them and they also decorate their cattle with colours and some cloth etc. People also race on their bulls on Bail



**Jalikkattu:** Jalikkattu is a festival celebrated in Tamil Nadu on the third day of the harvest festival Pongal. Jalikkattu is celebrated by releasing a bull in into a crowd of people and then the people try to grab the bulls hump with their hands and try to hang on.



**Pamplona Bull run:** Pamplona Bull run: Pamplona Bull run is a festival celebrated in Pamplona Spain in where six to ten bulls are released on the road who run behind the people who participate in the run. The bull run is celebrated because in the olden days the bulls used to be transported to the bullring using the bull run technique.



# Navaratri – Celebration of the Devi For Nine nights

By Aarohi Tatkare (Age 7 years)



Navaratri—also translated as Nine Nights, is the festival celebrated across India. This festival is about celebrating the conquest of good over evil. We celebrate the mother goddess these nine days. We fast and try to focus on building our inner strength.

In the eastern and northeastern states of India, the Durga Puja is synonymous with Navaratri, wherein goddess Durga battles

and emerges victorious over the buffalo demon Mahishasur ( an asura who is half man half buffalo) to help restore dharma. In southern states, the victory of Durga or Kali is celebrated. In all cases, the common theme is the battle and victory of good over evil based on a regionally famous epic or legend such as the Devi Mahatmya.

Celebrations include worshipping nine

goddesses during nine days, stage decorations, recital of the legend and stories about the goddess and her different forms, enacting them, and chanting of mantras and shlokas related to the devi. The nine days are also a major crop season cultural event, such as competitive design and staging of pandals, a family visit to these pandals, and the public celebration of classical and folk dances of Hindu culture. Hindu devotees often celebrate Navaratri by fasting. On the final day, called Vijayadashmi, the statues are either immersed in a water body such as a river or ocean. On the 10th day we celebrate VijayaDashmi, or the victory of good over evil and in many northern states like UP, MP, Delhi, people create effigies of Ravana and burn it down. Vijayadashmi or Dushhera is also the day when Lord Rama is supposed to have returned back to Ayodhya with his brother Lakshmana and wife Sita after the 14 years of exile and after having won a battle in Lanka against the evil king Ravana.

People celebrate durga pooja at home by having idols of the goddess placed in their homes. It is a time for celebration and thus people visit their friends and relatives to spread love and happiness and strength that signifies the devi.

## Grape Wine Festival

By Sagarika Iyer (Age 8 years)

Many traditions across the world celebrate 'Grape festivals'. Most of these necessarily double as harvest festivals and celebrate wine making and other foods and beverages made from grapes.

**Some of the famous grape or wine festivals across the world include:**

Galáteia, Cyprus is famous for its summer grape festival held the first week of August, for which people travel from all over the

Island of Cyprus and the world to attend. Khader Grape Festival held annually on September in the Palestinian town of al-Khader near Bethlehem. Festa Gheneb fis-Siggiewi held annually during grape harvest in August in the village of Siggiewi, Malta. Naples Grape Festival held annually in the Finger Lakes area of Naples, New York in the United States. Festa da Uva a biennial celebration of the

Italian heritage and culture with cheese, grapes and various Brazilian wines in the city of Caxias do Sul, state of Rio Grande do Sul, in southern Brazil.

Fiesta Nacional de la Vendimia (The Grape Harvest Festival) takes place annually in March in Mendoza Province, Argentina.

Texas Reds Steak and Grape Festival (Texas Reds Festival) is an annual outdoor event held in Bryan, Texas.

Lodi, California hosts a Grape Festival in September with rides, food, and wine tasting.

Mendrisio, Switzerland hosts a grape festival called Sagra dell uva in September.

Silver Creek, New York Grape Festival held annually in September since 1968.

Tontitown, Arkansas Grape Festival held annually in mid-August in celebration of the harvest and the town's Italian American heritage.

Yeongcheon, a city in North Gyeongsang Province, South Korea, hosts a Grape Festival in late summer with events such as the Miss Grape contest and a grape-eating competition.

# Halloween

By Archit Korke (Age 10 years)



carving pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns, lighting bonfires, apple bobbing, divination games, playing pranks, visiting haunted attractions, telling scary stories, and watching horror or Halloween-themed films. For some people, the Christian religious observances of All Hallows' Eve, including attending church services and lighting candles on the graves of the dead, remain popular, although it is a secular celebration for others. Some Christians historically abstained from meat on All Hallows' Eve, a tradition reflected in the eating of certain vegetarian foods on this vigil day, including apples, potato pancakes, and soul cakes.

## Halloween at home

1. Get all dressed up, even if there's nowhere to go.
2. Tell, watch, or read ghost stories.
3. Carve a pumpkin.
4. Pump up the ominous jams.
5. Mix up a potion of your own.
6. Have a scary movie night.
7. Do a (virtual) tarot card reading.
8. Watch a magic show from home.
9. Decorate.
10. Create your perfect Halloween grazing board.
11. Learn about autumn traditions around the world.

Halloween or Hallowe'en less commonly known as Allhalloween, All Hallows' Eve, or All Saints' Eve, is celebrated in many countries on 31 October, the eve of the Western Christian feast of All Hallows' Day. Remembering the dead, including saints (hallows), martyrs, and all the departed.

One theory holds that many Halloween traditions were influenced by Celtic harvest festivals, particularly the Gaelic festival Samhain, which are believed to have pagan roots. Some go further and suggest that Samhain may have been

Christianized as All Hallows' Day, along with its eve, by the early Church. Other academics believe Halloween began solely as a Christian holiday, being the vigil of All Hallows' Day. Celebrated in Ireland and Scotland for centuries, Irish and Scottish migrants brought many Halloween customs to North America in the 19th century, and then through American influence, Halloween spread to other countries by the late 20th and early 21st century.

Halloween activities include trick-or-treating (or the related guising and souling), attending Halloween costume parties,

# Hinamatsuri -- or the Japanese Festival of Dolls

By Advvika Auti (Age 8 years)

Hinamatsuri (雛祭り), also called Doll's Day or Girls' Day, is a religious (Shinto) holiday in Japan, celebrated on 3 March of each year. Platforms covered with a red carpet-material are used to display a set of ornamental dolls (雛人形, hina-ningyō) representing the Emperor, Empress, attendants, and musicians in traditional court dress of the Heian period.

The primary aspect of the festival is the display of seated male and female dolls (the obina (男雛, "male doll") and mebina (女雛, "female doll")), which represent a Heian period wedding, but are usually described as the Emperor and Empress of Japan. The dolls may be as simple as pictures or folded paper dolls, or as intricate as carved three-dimensional dolls. More elaborate displays will include a multi-tiered doll stand (雛壇, hinadan) of dolls that represent ladies of the court, musicians, and other attendants, with all sorts of accoutrements. The entire set of

dolls and accessories is called the hinakazari (雛飾り). The number of tiers and dolls a family may have depends on their budget.

Families normally ensure that girls have a set of the two main dolls before their first Hinamatsuri. The dolls are usually fairly expensive (\$1,500 to \$2,500 for a five-tier set, depending on quality) and may be handed down from older generations as heirlooms. These dolls are usually passed on from generation to generation, from a mother to a daughter. Japanese girls dress up in their traditional attire (known as kimono) for the festival.

Like the Japanese doll festival, in India in the southern states of the country, during Navaratri people arrange different sized and shaped dolls of goddesses and pray to them during the festival.



## KIDS CORNER *(A world of Puzzles, Jokes, Quizzes and much more..)*

### QUIZ

By Obaid Alizai (Age 10 years)

**1. The festival of colours known as Holi originated in which country?**

a. South Africa b. Turkey c. India d. USA

**2. In which country is La Tomatina celebrated?**

a. Spain b. Japan c. Mexico d. India

**3. Which country celebrates Hogmanay?**

a. Ireland b. Wales c. USA d. Scotland

**4. In which country is the day of the DEAD celebrated?**

a. Cuba b. Canada c. Brazil d. Mexico

5. In which country is the Mud Festival celebrated?

- a. USA b. Japan c. South Korea d. India

Answers: 1 c, 2 a, 3 d, 4 d, 5 c

### Word search

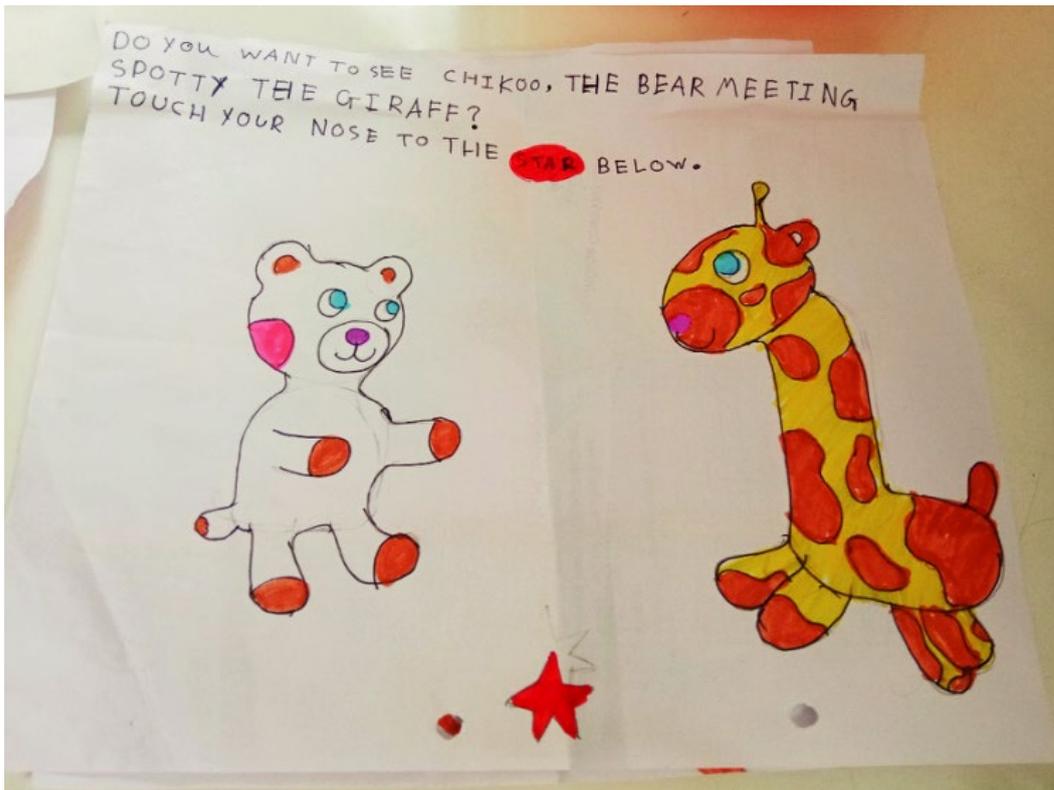
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- HINAMATSURI
- HALLOWEEN
- DASARA
- DIWALI
- HOLI
- TOMATINA
- MUD FESTIVAL
- CHRISTMAS
- PONGAL

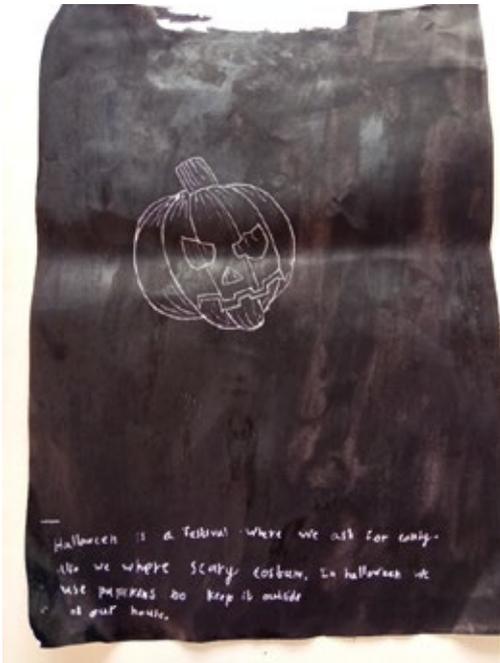


## Drawings by our little artists

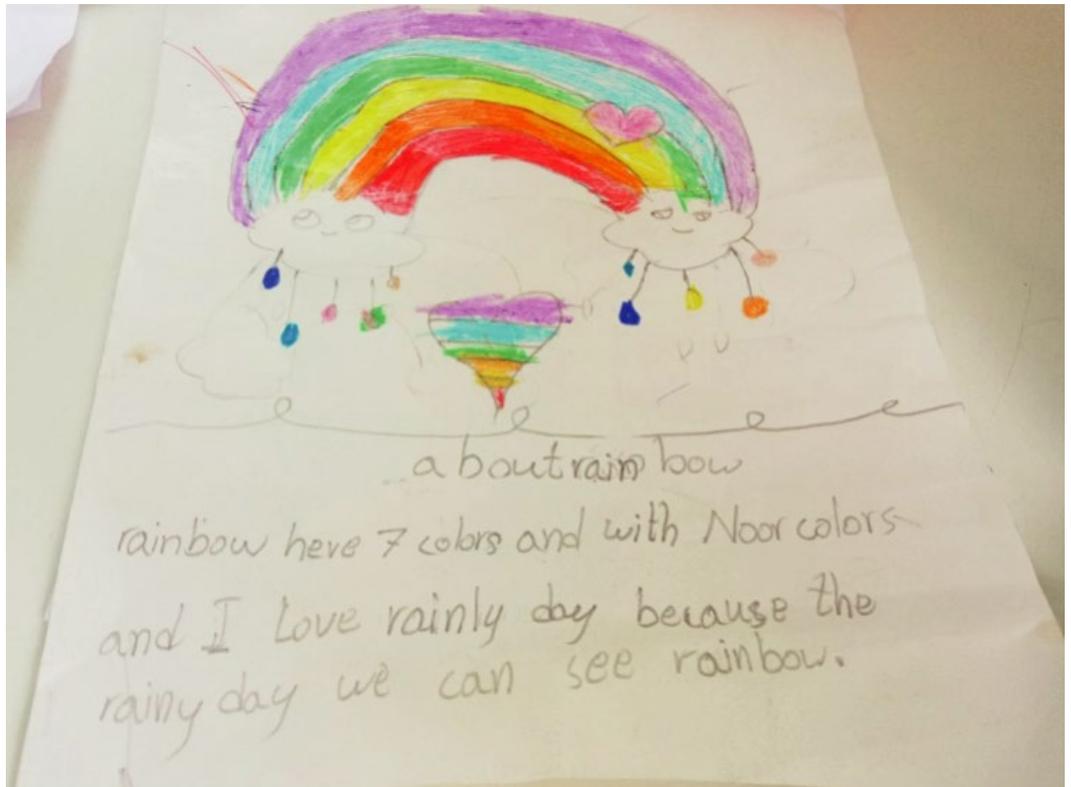
By Tanaya Jadhav ( Age 8 years)



By Arhant Saha (Age 8 years)



By Fatima Alizai (Age 8 years)



By Tanaya Jadhav (Age 8 years)



By Aarohi Tatkare (Age 8 years)

