

Navratri



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What Is Navratri?

Navratri (meaning 'nine nights') is a Hindu festival celebrated every autumn. It is usually held at the end of September or the beginning of October, at harvest time.

Navratri lasts for nine days and celebrates good triumphing over evil. During the festival, three goddesses are worshipped: Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati.



Did You Know?

This festival is also called Durga Puja.

What Happens during Navratri?

This Hindu festival is celebrated differently depending on where you are in the world. For some, it is a time of religious reflection and fasting, which is believed to help prosperity and health.



For others, Navratri is a colourful time of celebration which includes lots of feasting and dancing. It is a time for Hindu families and communities to come together.

What Happens during Navratri?

People gather together to worship (puja). They worship the Hindu goddesses Lakshmi, Durga and Saraswati. These three goddesses are different manifestations of Shakti, which means 'energy' or 'empowerment'.

The first three nights are dedicated to Durga (the mother goddess representing power), the next three nights to the goddess Lakshmi (goddess of wealth and purity) and the final three days are dedicated to Saraswati (goddess of knowledge and the arts).



Navratri Celebrations

Garba and Dandiya Raas ('dandiya' means sticks) are both dances associated with the festival of Navratri. The sticks represent the swords used by the goddess Durga in her nine-day battle against the demon, Mahishasura.



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Other Traditions during Navratri

- Some Hindus do charity work.
- Colourful clothes are worn on each day of the festival.
- Oil lamps burn.
- It is believed to be a good time to begin new ventures.



Did You Know?

Navratri depends on the lunar calendar which means it is not always celebrated on the same date each year.

The Tenth Day

The tenth day of the festival is called Dasera. It marks the victory of good over evil. It can also represent the motherhood of God. Statues representing Durga are immersed in a river or ocean. At this time in some parts of India, people also celebrate Rama's victory over Ravana in a festival called Dussera.

Shortly after this, Diwali begins.
This is the Hindu festival of light.



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