

Deep Dive: Holi

Did You Know?

Holi is a Hindu festival in March that marks the start of spring. It is known as the "Festival of Colors," Holi always falls on Purnima, or the day of the full moon, and has been celebrated in India since at least the 4th Century!



Dive Deeper: Traditions

Holi lasts for two days. On the first evening, people burn bonfires to celebrate the victory of Prahlad (good) over evil (Holika). On the second day, people have fun with the color festival.

Holi celebrations occur in people's backyards, outside temples, at parks, and even just in the streets. People wear white clothes and splash powdered dyes in vivid colors on friends and family.

While Holi has some Hindu religious significance, the day is more about community fun, than about solemn puja, or prayer.

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Dive Deeper: Myths

The legend goes that Prahlad, the son of an evil demon king, refused to worship his father. The demon king asked his evil sister Holika to punish Prahlad. Holika, who had powers protecting her from fire, sat on a pyre with Prahlad in her lap. Prahlad escaped unharmed and Holika perished.

Holi also represents the playfulness of the gods and humans. Legend has it that the Hindu god Lord Krishna played Holi games with his companion Radha and the gopis, or local maidens.

Dive Deeper: Books & Resources

- *Holi Colors*, by Rina Singh
- *Amma, Tell me about Holi*, by Bhakti Mathur
- *Festival of Colors*, by Surishtha Sehgal, Kabir Sehgal