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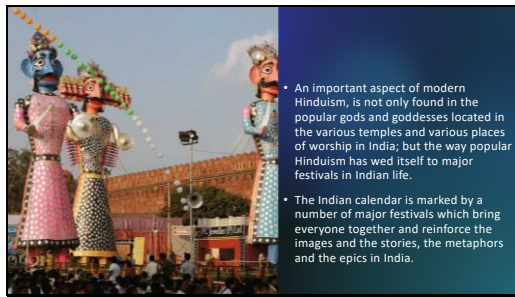
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Slide 2



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Slide 3



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Slide 4

Lohri

- This is a festival which symbolises the casting out of evil and invoking blessings for the New Year, so this is the beginning of the year.
- You will find people throwing popcorn and peanuts and sometimes candles into the fire. This becomes something they will identify that they do in Lohri, just the way people here shoot off fireworks or sing Auld Lang Syne or something like that.

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Slide 5

Holi  
(Feb-  
March)



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Slide 6

Holi

- The second major holiday that occurs in the springtime, February and March our time, is "Holi." Holi celebrates the death of winter and the return of spring.
- There are processions and people light bonfires and cover each other with coloured water and powders
- In North India, this is associated with Krishna, who in particularly one of their stories, even as an infant killed a demon who once served the king of winter. It is considered to be again, a great way to reinforce the death of winter.
- Across India it is often identified with new birth and therefore sexual love

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Slide 7



### Holi

- You will find that people will get plastic squirt guns and they will spray each other with coloured liquid. You will see someone with a blue face or paint type stuff all over their clothing. This is called, "the exchange of colours."
- Again, this reflects the death of winter and coming of the spring colours, new life, etc. You will see kids running around the street, squirting each other with these coloured liquids.

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Slide 8

### Religious significance

- Triumph of good over evil
- The Love of Radha and Krishna
- The joy of new love/life



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Slide 9

### Nag Panchami (July/Aug)



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Slide 10

Naga = Snake



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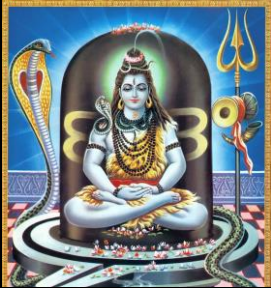
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Nag Panchami

- It is extremely strong in the villages. You will find snake handlers everywhere. You will find people wearing snakes on their necks like Shiva does.
- You will see people pouring milk into holes in the ground, they believe the snake will come and drink the milk. You cannot miss it if you are there during the naga festival.

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Slide 12



Janmashtami

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Slide 13

**Janmashtami**  
(Aug/Sept)

- It celebrates Krishna's birthday.
- You will find that, especially the Krishnavites will fast all day long, all of the way until midnight and they will put on plays celebrating Krishna's birth. They will tell stories about Krishna's life.
- You will see people with big pots of milk and curd and butter. Krishna, again, is part of the epic. It is a very, very popular festival in India.

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Slide 14

**Ganesh**  
**Chaturthi**  
(end of summer)



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Slide 15

**Ganesh Chaturthi**



- is the celebration of Ganesh's life, a 10-day event
- It happens at the end of summer, usually particularly in west and south India.
- They will sell thousands of images of the lovable Ganesh; the people love and carry around.
- You will see thousands of clay idols of Ganesh appearing in the marketplace, with the elephant head and all of that.

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Slide 16

### Ganesh Chaturthi

- At the start of the festival, idols of Ganesha are placed on raised platforms in homes or in elaborately decorated outdoor tents. The worship begins with the *pranapratishta*, a ritual to invoke life in the idols, followed by *shhodashopachara*, or the 16 ways of paying tribute. Amid the chanting of Vedic hymns from religious texts, the idols are anointed with red sandalwood paste and yellow and red flowers. Ganesha is also offered coconut, jaggery, and 21 *modaks* (sweet dumplings), considered to be Ganesha's favourite food.
- At the conclusion of the festival, the idols are carried to local rivers in huge processions accompanied by drumbeats, devotional singing, and dancing. There they are immersed, a ritual symbolizing Ganesha's homeward journey to Mount Kailas—the abode of his parents, Shiva and Parvati.

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Slide 17

### Durga Puja

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Slide 18

### Durga Puja (September)

- In September and October, you will find what is called "Durga Puja" which is the goddess worship. They will re-enact "Durga's" triumph over evil.
- They actually will build huge effigies of Ravana, the famous demon king. They will light it and burn it all the way to the ground; mass effigies, sometimes 20 or 30 feet high. It is quite a remarkable part of this festival.

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### Durga Puja

- **Durga Puja**, traditionally held for 10 days is particularly celebrated in Bengal, Assam and other eastern Indian states.
- Durga **Puja** celebrates the victory of the goddess Durga over the demon king Mahishasura. It begins on the same day as Navrati, a nine-night festival in many northern and western states that more broadly celebrates the divine feminine (*shakti*).

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Slide 20



### Diwali or Deepavali (Nov)

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Slide 21

### Diwali

- Another well-known festival is known as "Diwali," Diwali is known as the festival of lights. It occurs in November or the end of the monsoon season. It celebrates the return of Rama after his exile.
- You will find this also associated with Lakshmi goddess of wealth, as well as Kali. Generally, at this particular time is when people will get married.
- There will be hundreds of weddings that take place during the Diwali period.
- At the festival of lights people will light lamps in their homes. People will normally clean out their houses during Diwali. It is a tradition to get a fresh start in your home.

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Slide 22

## Diwali

- **Diwali:** Diwali is one of the most important festivals of Hindus.
- It is celebrated as a victory of light over darkness and spans 5-6 days. It is equivalent to Christmas for Christians and Eid for Muslims. Light represents knowledge
- This is the Hindu New Year.

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Slide 23

## Kumbh Mela



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Slide 24

## Kumbh Mela

- Every 12 years there is a "Kumbh Mela" which is a great festival where they will go and dip in the Ganges River. There are certain points on the river that are important. They actually will rotate every three years; so even though any one of the major sites is only every 12 years, there will be one site available every three years to go on pilgrimage to the Ganges River.
- These are very auspicious times.
- They believe that by dipping in the river you can achieve moksha, or salvation. You will see great masses of pilgrims traveling along the roads, often carrying small buckets to bring water back from the Ganges River, or colourful poles over their shoulders, on their way to festival.
- These are very regular sights in India. It is not unusual at all to see hundreds and thousands of pilgrims traveling down the road to these pilgrimage sites.

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