

Indian Festival Diwali and the Hindu New Year

Diwali is a celebration of good winning over evil. Diwali takes place annually and lasts for five days, marking the start of the Hindu New Year. The dates change each year but usually fall between October and November.

The word Diwali means “row of lights” in an Ancient language of India, called Sanskrit. During this festival, people decorate their homes with lights and oil lamps, called diyas.

In northern India, Hindus celebrate the return of the deities (gods) Rama and Sita to the city of Ayodhya, after defeating the evil king Ravana!



For many people in India, Diwali honors the Hindu goddess of Prosperity and wealth, **Lakshmi**. The lights and lamps are said to help Lakshmi find her way into peoples’ homes, bringing prosperity in the year to come!



Rangoli is a popular Diwali tradition — beautiful patterns made using colorful powders and flowers. People draw rangoli on the floor by the entrance of their homes to welcome the gods and bring good luck!

During Diwali, people wear their finest clothes, illuminate the interior and exterior of their homes with earthen lamps, and rangoli, and partake in family feasts, where mithai (sweets) and gifts are shared.

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