



*You are invited to a celebration
of light and new beginnings*

DIWALI FEST 2023

*October - November 2023
British Columbia*

WWW.DIWALIFEST.CA



Canada
Province of British Columbia
A Proclamation

CHARLES THE THIRD, by the Grace of God, King of Canada
and His other Realms and Territories, Head of the Commonwealth

To all to whom these presents shall come – Greeting

WHEREAS Diwali, the festival of lights, is celebrated across South Asia and the world as the triumph of light over darkness, hope over despair, and joy over sadness and is considered an auspicious time to mark new beginnings, and

WHEREAS the diverse cultural and religious heritage of British Columbians is a fundamental characteristic of British Columbian society, and Diwali and the diversity it promotes bring unique advantages to the province, and

WHEREAS since 2004, Diwali Fest, organized by the Diwali Celebration Society, has helped provide community and connection to old and new residents of British Columbia and is a unique platform for artists from different regions in South Asia to display their talent and break cultural barriers, and

WHEREAS Diwali Fest promotes the diverse arts, culture, heritage and contributions of the South Asian community in British Columbia by hosting Diwali celebrations across Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley through engagement with multi-ethnic communities and promotion of cross-cultural understanding, and

WHEREAS the government of British Columbia acknowledges the historic and current contributions of the South Asian community and supports Diwali Fest and other Diwali celebrations in their promotion of arts, culture, community participation, inclusiveness, and social and cultural connectedness;

NOW KNOW YE THAT We do by these presents proclaim and declare that October 20 to November 15, 2023, shall be known as

“Diwali Fest Days”

in the Province of British Columbia.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Our Province of British Columbia to be hereunto affixed.

WITNESS, The Honourable Janet Austin, Lieutenant Governor of Our Province of British Columbia, in Our City of Victoria, in Our Province, this twenty-eighth day of September, two thousand twenty-three and in the second year of Our Reign.

BY COMMAND.



Attorney General



Lieutenant Governor

MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

It is with immense joy and gratitude that we welcome you to the 20th anniversary of Diwali Fest – a celebration that has become a cherished tradition in our community. As we gather once again to revel in the Festival of Lights, we are reminded of the incredible journey we have undertaken together.

In celebration of our 20th year, we are embracing the enchantment of an Indian Wedding theme. Each event will embody the essence of a traditional Indian pre-wedding or wedding ceremony, allowing us to share the rich cultural tapestry that defines these joyful occasions. Our stage will come alive with Classical Indian performances, exuberant Bollywood Fusion, the rhythmic vigor of Bhangra, the grace of Gujarati Folk, contemporary expressions of artistry, and a spectrum of diverse dance forms. The melodies of Qawalis and Sitar maestros, alongside soul-soothing meditative compositions and lively Bollywood covers, will resonate through our festivities.

Our youngest participants are invited to engage with our culture through interactive experiences such as Rangoli creation, Diya painting, and captivating Storytelling sessions. These activities provide a tangible connection to our heritage, fostering a deeper understanding of our traditions.

Year after year, the radiance of DiwaliFest shines brighter, thanks to the partnerships that continue to flourish. We have expanded our circle of light, extending the Diwali spirit to embrace a diverse range of individuals and communities. We extend our sincere gratitude to our funders, sponsors, and community partners whose unwavering support enables us to bring this celebration to fruition. With your invaluable assistance, we are committed to crafting enduring celebrations that resonate with meaning and joy.

A special acknowledgement goes to the dedicated members of our Board and team Ashwani Narwani, Gurdeep Birdi, Kriti Dewan, Vishad Deeplaul, Nishant Sharma, Bilal Quereshi, Matt Oviatt, Ankit Tuli & Luca Palladino.

We are thankful to our student interns - Lovekumar Doshi, Simranjot Sekhon, Maryam Rahman and Vicki Gogo for their efforts.

As we gather to celebrate, let us also pause to recognize that our festivities take place on the ancestral lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Semiahmoo, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Qayqayt, and Tsawwassen First Nations. We honour and appreciate their enduring stewardship of these lands.

Diwali is a luminous tapestry of new beginnings, hope, and the embrace of loved ones. We invite you to immerse yourself in the inspiration and joy that our events hold this year. With hearts full of gratitude, we wish you and your dear ones a radiant and jubilant Diwali!

Chirag Vesuvala and Sahil Bhrany

Co-Chairs - Board of Directors

Diwali Fest

MESSAGE FROM OUR CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to our annual celebration of the Festival of Lights; we are delighted to have you join us for our milestone **20th Anniversary!** Our organization was founded in 2003 with a shared dream of creating unique memories with our loved ones. Our mandate is to do so by supporting Canadian South Asian artists by providing them with a platform to share their remarkable talent. Over the last two decades, we have been amazed by the dedication of musicians, dancers, writers and visual artists we have worked with.

We kick off the South Asian wedding themed festivities with a **Mehendi & Sangeet** celebration on **October 29th** with vibrant music and dance performances by the Dulhe-waale (groom's family and friends) and Dulhan-waale (bride's family and friends)! Wear hues of red & pink to support the groom and blue & green to support the bride in the festivities! This family-friendly event at the **Roundhouse Community Center** also offers an Arts & Crafts zone, room sized community Rangoli activations, an art workshop led by the wonderful **Jag Nagra** and mouth watering South Asian treats from our Food Truck & Chai partners.

On **November 3rd**, join us for a **Haldi** celebration at the **Evergreen Cultural Centre** curated in partnership with Coquitlam Heritage. Dress in yellow or orange (the bright colors of turmeric) to participate in this pre-wedding musical and dance showcase. This event also ft. an artist talk with the talented **Sandeep Johal** and **Sara Khan** - audiences will be able to walk through the gallery and enjoy their latest exhibit: RISE at the **Art Gallery at Evergreen**.

November 5th is the big day - experience the excitement of a **Baraat** (jubilant wedding day procession) and Shaadi (wedding ceremony) at the **Surrey City Hall**! Immerse yourself in lively Music & Dance performance - wear your favorite gold or silver sparkling attire and dance along with us! Our creativity zone will showcase artwork created by the amazing **Keerat Kaur**.

Our festival has two additional special showcases this year: **Chai House** in partnership with **Burnaby Public Library** with a focus on Classical South Asian Music & Dance and **Diwali Stories with Vancouver Public Library** ft. children's author **Rina Singh**.

We look forward to celebrating with you and wish you and your loved ones a joyful and safe festival season!

Regards,

Kriti Dewan
Creative Director
Diwali Fest



We are delighted to invite you to our South Asian wedding inspired Diwali celebrations. Join us for a fun filled Mehendi & Sangeet event, a colorful Haldi ceremony and vibrant Baraat & Shaadi festivities. Wear your favorite evening wear in the theme colors for each event to be a part of the fun! And most importantly, don't forget to sing and dance along!



You are invited to a celebration of light and new beginnings

MEHENDI & SANGEET

OCT | 29 | 2023

2:00 - 5:00 pm
Roundhouse Community Centre
Vancouver



In partnership with Coquitlam Heritage

You are invited to a celebration of light and new beginnings

HALDI

NOV | 03 | 2023

6:00 - 9:00 pm
Evergreen Cultural Centre
Coquitlam



You are invited to a celebration of light and new beginnings

BARAAT & SHAADI

NOV | 05 | 2023

2:00 - 5:00 pm
Surrey City Hall

*You are invited to a celebration of
Classical South Asian Performing Arts*

CHAI HOUSE

OCT | 21 | 2023

4:00 - 5:30 pm
Burnaby Public Library
Bob Prittie Metrotown



DIWALI IN BURNABY

*We are excited to present an evening ft.
performances by Classical South Asian
musicians and dancers in partnership with
Burnaby Public Library (Bob Prittie
Metrotown). Join us on October 21 and enjoy
mouthwatering Chai as you are amazed by
Kathak, Bharatanatayam and other classical
dance forms.*

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VIRTUAL LIVE AUTHOR READING

*Join us for a live virtual reading of Diwali
Lights with author Rina Singh. This event is in
partnership with Vancouver Public Library.*

*Diwali is the biggest and the brightest of all
Hindu festivals. The stories woven into the
festival of Diwali celebrate the victory of good
over evil and light over darkness, and people
celebrate this festival of lights by lighting clay
lamps and candles, sharing sweets, exchanging
gifts, offering prayers to gods and goddesses,
and watching fireworks. Introduce your little
one to the awe of this brilliant festival through
dazzling photographs and Singh's lyrical prose.*

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DIWALI STORIES WITH VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY *ft. author Rina Singh*

NOV | 07 | 2023

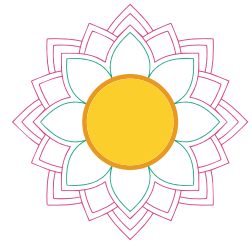
9:30 - 10:15 am



Mehendi & Sangeet

October 29 2023
Roundhouse Community Centre

**HENNA
RANGOLI & DIYA PAINTING
2:00 - 5:00 PM**



**MUSIC & DANCE PERFORMANCES
2:30 - 5:00 PM**



**ART WORKSHOP WITH JAG NAGRA
4:00 PM**



**DIWALI MARKET
SOUTH ASIAN TREATS
2:00 - 5:00 PM**



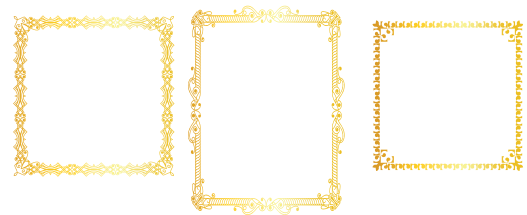
Haldi

November 03 2023
Evergreen Cultural Centre

ARTS AND CRAFTS
RISE: ART EXHIBIT
6:00 - 9:00 PM



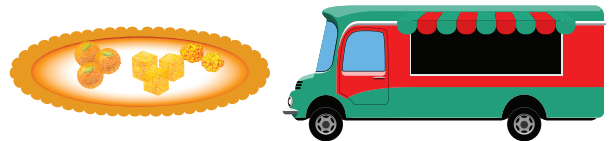
ARTIST CHAT WITH
SANDEEP JOHAL & SARA KHAN
6:30 PM



HALDI CEREMONY
MUSIC AND DANCE PERFORMANCES
7:15 PM



SOUTH ASIAN TREATS
6:00 - 9:00 PM



DIWALI MARKET
6:00 - 9:00 PM



Baraat & Shaadi

November 05 2023
Surrey City Hall

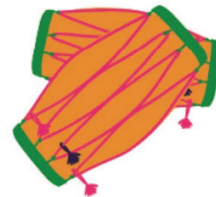
ARTS AND CRAFTS
2:00 - 5:00 PM



MUSIC AND DANCE
PERFORMANCES
2:30 - 5:00 PM



BARAAT
3:00 PM



SHAADI
3:30 PM



DIWALI MARKET
SOUTH ASIAN TREATS
2:00 - 5:00 PM



"Diwali" or **"Deepavali"** translates to **"row of lights"** in Sanskrit. This refers to the clay lamps (diyas) displayed in a row outside homes. These symbolize the inner light we all carry.



Diwali is celebrated between **October - November** each year. The dates are determined by the lunar calendar.

THE FIVE DAYS OF DIWALI

DAY 1

The first day of Diwali is known as Dhanteras. It is considered an auspicious time for families to clean their homes and purchase gold in honour of Lakshmi (goddess of wealth and prosperity).



DAY 2

On the second day of the festival families decorate their homes with Diyas, candles or lights. They may also create a Rangoli at the entrance of their homes.



DAY 3

The third day is the primary celebration marked by donning new clothes. In the evening, families gather for Lakshmi puja (prayers), which is followed by a traditional feast and firework displays.



DAY 4

The fourth day is for Govardhan Puja (prayers) and families visit each other, often bringing gifts and traditional sweets to share.



DAY 5

The fifth day of Diwali is called Bhai Dooj - a celebration of the special bond that exists between siblings. Traditionally, brothers visit their sisters' homes and bring them gifts. The sisters welcome their brothers with traditional sweets and pray for their well-being.



DIWALI WORD SEARCH

F	L	D	C	O	F	E	S	T	I	V	A	L	S
A	P	L	A	Y	C	A	R	D	S	C	O	T	Y
Y	F	B	D	W	F	U	D	S	F	C	W	T	F
I	I	E	I	I	O	F	E	T	E	W	A	A	S
D	R	A	W	N	O	R	C	I	L	W	M	K	W
C	E	U	A	D	R	I	O	I	E	I	S	E	E
O	W	T	L	O	H	E	R	R	L	P	P	L	E
L	O	I	I	W	D	N	A	Y	C	C	M	I	T
O	R	F	T	F	L	D	T	H	D	L	A	T	S
U	K	U	C	I	W	S	E	I	D	O	L	D	C
R	S	L	G	O	S	B	D	A	L	T	Y	E	I
F	S	H	C	A	N	D	L	E	S	H	A	D	L
U	T	C	T	U	N	O	C	O	C	E	L	S	L
L	E	O	C	T	O	B	E	R	O	S	C	R	O

CANDLES

FAMILY

DIYA

DECORATED

LIGHT

PLAY CARDS

FESTIVAL

CLAY LAMPS

OCTOBER

SWEETS

COCONUT

FIREWORKS

CLOTHES

COLOURFUL

CAKE

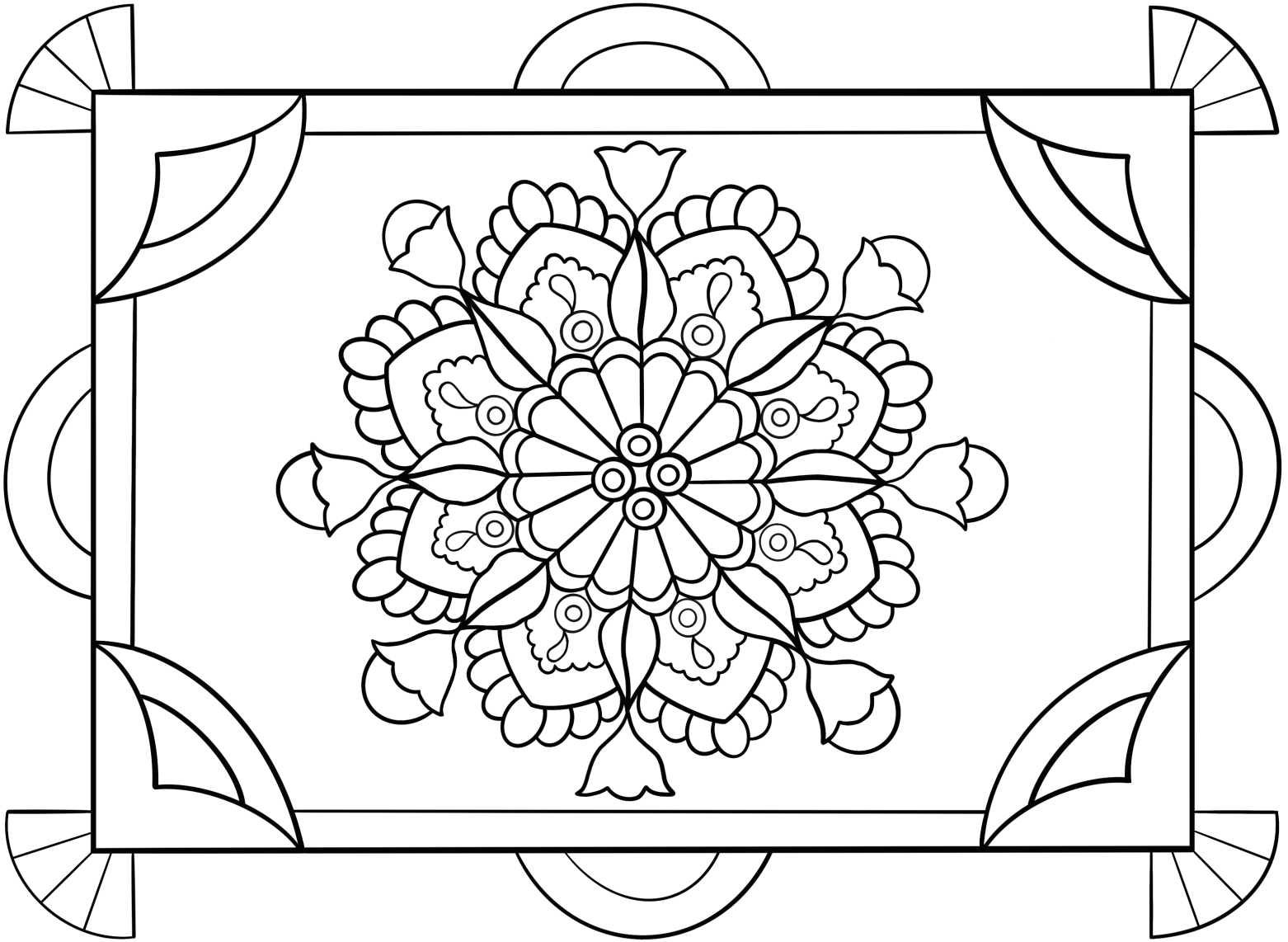
FRIENDS

DIWALI

Diwali Colouring page



Share your event photos with us on social media by tagging our accounts (@Diwalifest) for a chance to win special prizes!





Roshan Victor

PERSONAL REAL ESTATE CORPORATION



*On this auspicious occasion of Diwali,
may you find new reasons to smile and
new opportunities to prosper.*

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दीपावली



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