



DIWALI FEST 2024

Vancouver | Surrey | Coquitlam

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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 15 to November 10, 2024, 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-third day of August, two thousand twenty-four and in the second year of Our Reign.

BY COMMAND.



Attorney General



Lieutenant Governor

Share this Diwali joy with your old friend who is new to Canada

**You can make it more festive. Refer a friend,
or many. Each one can help you enter a
contest to win \$500!**



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Offer subject to change without notice. The contest runs from October 1, 2024 to November 3, 2024. Consumer accounts only. If you refer a friend to Koodo and they activate a postpaid line, you and your friend will get a \$5/month bill credit for five months (total savings of \$25). Starter rate plans are not eligible for the referral offer. Referee must remain a Koodo postpaid customer in order to continue to receive the monthly bill credit. Koodo reserves the right to change or modify the offer at any time. Referral credits will not be awarded for past activations; referee must activate with unique referral code. Maximum of \$300 in bill credits per year per customer for the Koodo referral program. Terms and Conditions are available on <https://koodo.com/refer>. Koodo team members, contractors, sales representatives acting on Koodo's behalf, and associates at retail locations who receive special pricing are excluded from this Program. Credit provided is discretionary and includes applicable taxes (based on the taxes levied in the province of supply) therefore the value displayed on your bill is the value before tax. For example, a \$5 discretionary credit offered in ON includes \$0.58 HST, meaning the credit value displayed will be \$4.42. The \$0.58 HST is captured as a reduction in the amount of tax charged on your balance owing. For more information, please visit koodomobile.com/billcredits. Bill credits are applied within 4 to 8 weeks of process completion.

MESSAGE FROM OUR CREATIVE DIRECTOR

We are thrilled to celebrate our 21st season of Diwali celebrations in the Lower Mainland. This year, we are excited to launch our two year theme: **An Ode to Nature.**

Diwali is a time to celebrate the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance. Many customs and rituals associated with the festival include plants, reinforcing the festival's synergy with the natural world. Our festival posters have been designed in collaboration with the talented **Keerat Kaur** to reflect this connection. Our artist partners have also curated delightful music and dance performances incorporating this theme.

We are excited to launch our 2024 festival season on **October 18** at Diwali in Coquitlam at **Town Center Park Community Center.** Join us for a joyful evening of art, music and dance. This event is in partnership with Coquitlam Heritage. The poster art for this event depicts elements of the skies: birds native to India and Canada as well as heavenly bodies - planets and stars that radiate and remind us of the universal nature of the Festival of Lights.

The festivities continue on **October 20** at Diwali Downtown Surrey at the **Surrey City Hall.** This event ft. live music & dance performances, Diwali market, Food Trucks and Arts & Crafts! We pay tribute to the flora, fauna and forest dwellers native to the Indian subcontinent in the poster art for this event. In India, the saffron colour of the marigold flower is considered to be auspicious and symbolic of success and new beginnings. During festivals, they can be seen adorning the doors and windows of homes paired with mango leaves as offerings to the gods. It is customary to bring gifts of sweets and fruits to friends and family as a part of Diwali celebrations. This event will also ft. a live reading of the book "Henna is..." by talented local artist and illustrator Anu Chouhan. This charming picture book celebrates henna, a traditional plant-based form of temporary tattoo popular in South Asian cultural celebrations.

Our grand finale of celebrations is on **October 27** at Diwali Downtown Vancouver at the **Roundhouse Community Center.** This flagship event ft. lively South Asian music & dance performances, a festive Diwali market, Food Trucks and our signature Rangoli and Diya painting workshops. Keerat's poster art portrays vibrant marine life native to the Indian Ocean as well as the majestic beings of the Pacific Ocean. Many ocean creatures display bright colors & patterns, fluorescence and bioluminescence evoking the universal light we all carry - a hallmark of Diwali.

We are grateful to support from Canada Council for the Arts | Conseil des arts du Canada , Government of British Columbia, the City of Vancouver, the City of Surrey and the City of Coquitlam. We would also like to thank our Festival Presenting Sponsor: Telus, Diwali Downtown Vancouver Platinum Sponsor: Odlum Brown and Diwali Downtown Surrey Gold Sponsor: Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

We hope you enjoy the carefully curated performances, art workshops and Diwali Markets at British Columbia's largest free, community Diwali festival. Wishing you and your loved ones a peaceful and prosperous Diwali season!

Regards,

Kriti Dewan
Creative Director
Diwali Fest

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CELEBRATING 21 YEARS
In partnership with Coquitlam Heritage

DIWALI IN COQUITLAM

OCT | **18** | 2024

6:00 - 8:00 pm
Town Centre Park
Community Centre
Coquitlam

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CELEBRATING 21 YEARS

DIWALI DOWNTOWN SURREY

OCT | **20** | 2024

2:00 - 5:00 pm
Surrey City Hall

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Henna Is...

Written by Marzieh Abbas
Illustrated by Anu Chouhan

STORY TIME
with illustrator Anu Chouhan

OCT | **20** | 2024

DIWALI DOWNTOWN SURREY
Surrey City Hall

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CELEBRATING 21 YEARS

DIWALI DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER

OCT | **27** | 2024

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

MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD

It is with immense gratitude and excitement that we welcome you to DiwaliFest 2024. As we step into another year of celebrating the Festival of Lights, we reflect on the remarkable journey of over two decades and the vibrant community that has grown around this cherished event. In 2024, DiwaliFest continues to evolve with a focus on sustainability and growth. We have developed a long-term strategy that ensures the continued success of our events, allowing us to offer high-quality programming for years to come. Our commitment to cultural celebration, inclusivity, and community engagement remains at the forefront of everything we do.

This year, we are pleased to announce the expansion of our team. The addition of new staff and interns has strengthened our ability to execute our events with greater efficiency and precision. This investment in capacity-building reflects our dedication to continuous improvement, enabling us to enhance the experience for all who attend and participate in DiwaliFest.

Partnerships have always been key to our success, and in 2024, we are proud to welcome new sponsors and collaborators. These partnerships, alongside the continued support of our long-standing sponsors and stakeholders, have provided crucial funding and opportunities to expand the reach and impact of DiwaliFest. We deeply appreciate their belief in our mission and their role in helping us deliver such meaningful celebrations.

We are also excited to further develop our robust volunteer program, a core pillar of DiwaliFest. By partnering with local institutions, including post-secondary organizations, we have been able to involve students and emerging professionals, providing them with valuable experience while enriching the festival. This collaboration has been mutually beneficial, strengthening our organization and offering participants an opportunity to contribute to the community in a meaningful way.

At its essence, DiwaliFest remains a celebration of unity, cultural exchange, and community. Our mission is to create a space that welcomes everyone, where the beauty of South Asian culture is shared with the broader community. Through diverse performances, workshops, and interactive events, DiwaliFest offers a platform for cultural expression and fosters a sense of togetherness that transcends boundaries.

As always, we extend our heartfelt thanks to our funders, sponsors, community partners, and volunteers. Your support is the backbone of DiwaliFest, and we remain committed to producing events that resonate with joy, inclusion, and cultural richness. A special acknowledgment goes to the dedicated members of our Board, whose leadership and vision make this all possible.

Finally, as we gather to celebrate, we respectfully acknowledge that DiwaliFest takes place on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, as well as the Semiahmoo, Katzie, Kwikwetlem, Kwantlen, Qayqayt, and Tsawwassen First Nations. We honor their stewardship of these lands and their enduring contributions to the community.

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of our Board and Staff: Sahil Bhrany, Chirag Vesuvala, Gurdeep Birdi, Kriti Dewan, Vishad Deeplaul, Nishant Sharma, Bilal Quereshi, Matt Oviatt, Kuntal Patel, Ankit Tuli, Luca Palladino, Simran Sekhon, Lovekumar Doshi, Alexey Kozlov & Aryan Doshi for their dedication to the society.

With warm wishes for a radiant and joyous Diwali,

Ashwani Narwani

Board Director

Diwali Fest

"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

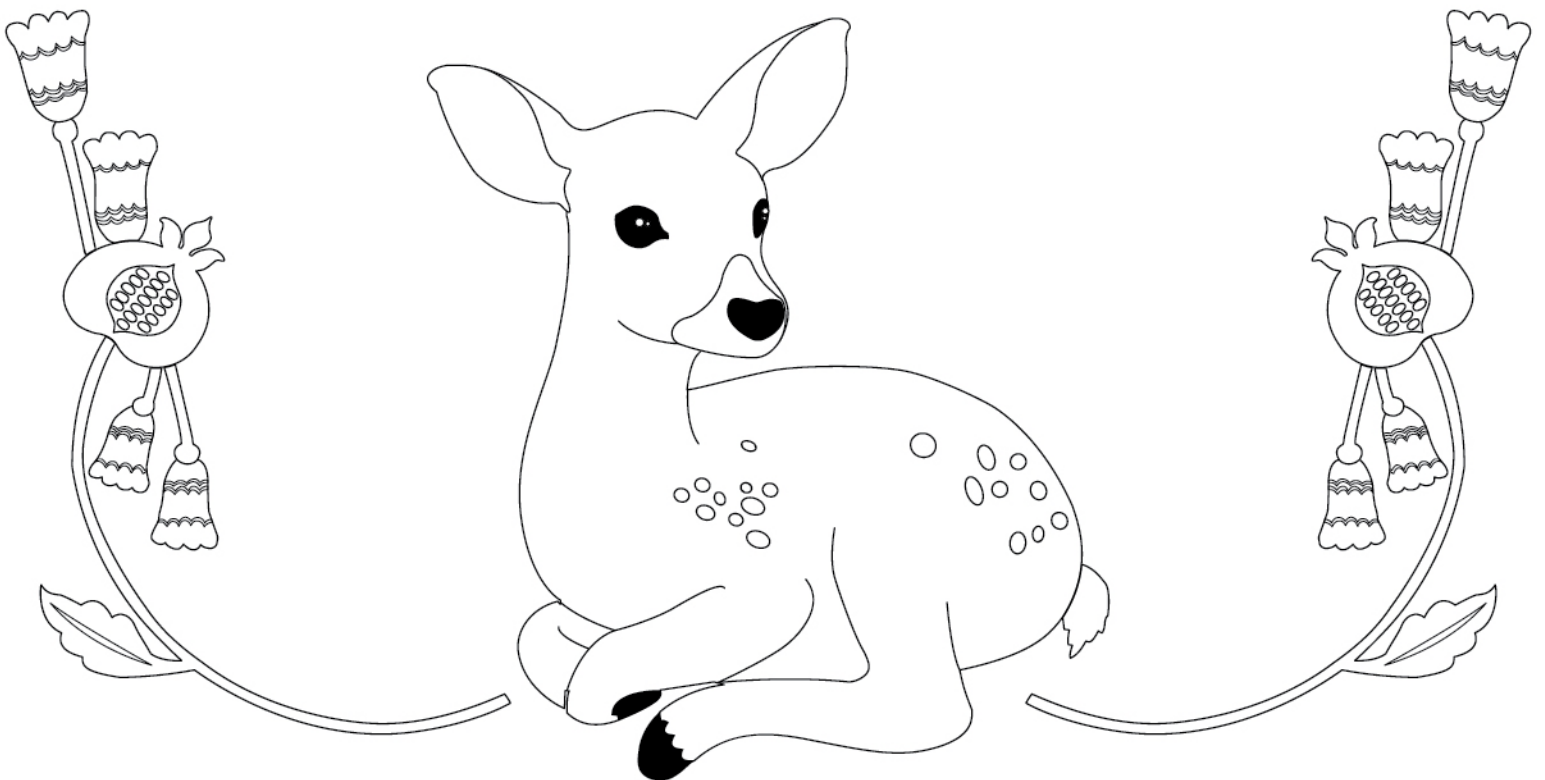
The fifth day of Diwali is called Bhai Dooj - a celebration of the special bond that exists between siblings. Traditionally, brothers visit their sisters' homes and bring them gifts. The sisters welcome their brothers with traditional sweets and pray for their well-being.




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CELEBRATING 21 YEARS

Happy
Diwali

ARTWORK BY MERAT KADR



DIWALI WORD SEARCH

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

FAMILY
LAKSHMI
NATURE
ODE

LIGHT
DIYA
BHAIDOOJ
FRIEND

SWEETS
DIWALI
RANGOLI
FESTIVAL

FIREWORKS
TREE
MANGO
FISH



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