

THE HOLI FESTIVAL

What is the Holi Festival?

The Holi Festival is one of the oldest and most colourful festivals in India. It is also known as the Festival of colours. It is a festivity to celebrate the end of winter and the beginning of spring.

When is it celebrated?

The date of Holi varies from year to year. It is typically celebrated in March but sometimes it is celebrated at the end of February. This year the festival was celebrated on 6th March and next year it will start on 23rd March.

How is it celebrated?

The Holi Festival has two parts. The night before the festival, people meet in parks and open spaces to sing and dance around the Holika Bonfire to welcome the spring.



The next morning, people meet in the street and throw coloured powder and water at each other. They use their hands and also water guns and balloons to cover* their friends and family with colours.

After the “colour battle”, people eat traditional food and dance to the rhythm of musical instruments in the street, especially drums. In the evening people get dressed to visit their families.

This festivity is associated with the legends of some Hindu gods**. In India all shops, offices and schools are closed during the Holi Festival.

Holi colours

In the past, Indians prepared Holi colours at home with plants and flower pigments. Today, Holi colours are artificially made with chemical products.

Holi Festival around the world

Nowadays***, the Holi festival is popular around the world. You can participate in this celebration in cities like New York, Sao Paulo, Hong Kong or Barcelona.

Adapted from: <http://www.holifestival.org/tradition-of-holi.html>

VOCABULARY:

** to cover: cobrir.

** gods: déus.

*** nowadays: avui dia.