

Vedanshi

The part of the sacred knowledge

O Arjuna, when dutiful action is performed solely because it should be done, forsaking attachment to it and its fruit, that renunciation is considered sattvic.

Chapter 18, Verse 9; Bhagavad Gita

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue No 46: October 2017

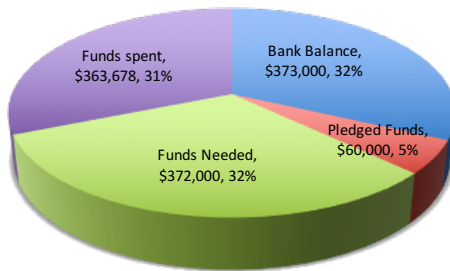
Sanatan Hindu Sanskar Kendra

PO Box 80362, Lafayette, Louisiana - 70598
 110, Hapsburg Lane, Lafayette, Louisiana - 70506
 Email: shskendra@gmail.com, Website: sanatanlft.org

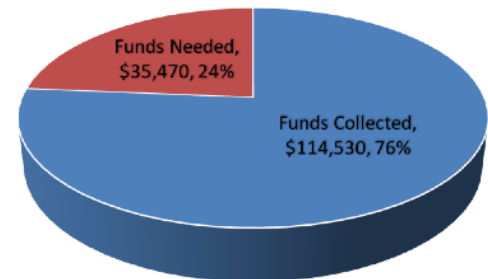


Temple - Fundraising Campaign

Total Estimated Cost: \$1,168,678



Fund Raising Challenge : \$150,000

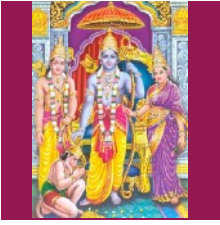


Land Cost	\$200,000
Land Preparation	\$26,745
Architectural and Civil Engineering Services	\$43,433
Temple and Annex Building Construction including Parking Lot	\$548,500
Deities Statues Cost	\$50,000
Shikars (Gopuram) Cost including installation	\$200,000
Lighting, Security and Fencing	\$75,000
Operating Costs (4th Quarter 2017)	\$25,000
Total Cost	\$1,168,678

Challenge Update

For the second year in a row, Mr Ajay Patel put forth another challenge similar to 2016. This challenge was initiated in a Trustee Meeting conducted on March 12th, 2017. For every \$3 that is donated towards SHSK Temple, there will be a \$1 match. The matching contribution will max upto \$50,000 therefore taking the challenge amount to \$150,000. SHSK request all the supporters to fulfill this challenge to obtain the funds needed for the temple to the amount of \$200,000, to get a step closer to the overall funds needed for the Temple project. Thanks to our generous supporters who came forward to contribute \$52,437 so far after initializing the challenge on March 12th, 2017. This challenge excludes already committed \$60,000 donation made prior to March 12th, 2017. This challenge will end on December 31st, 2017. SHSK Board sincerely thank Mr Ajay Patel for his continued support to SHSK Temple Project.

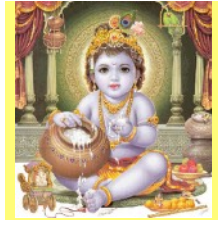
Sita Ram



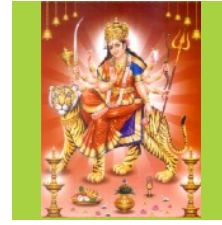
Ganesh



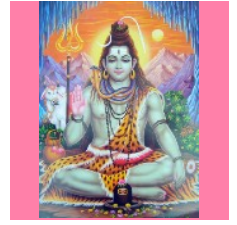
Krishna



Durga



Shiva



The Story of Tulsi Vivah

Tulsi or the basil plant is deemed highly sacred in Hinduism and is extensively used in the worship of Lord Vishnu. Tulsi Vivah or the marriage of Tulsi with Lord Vishnu is an interesting ceremony that is performed on Prabodhini Ekadashi the eleventh day of Shukla Paksha (waxing phase of the moon) or the twelfth day during the month of Karthika (November - December). Here is the interesting story of Tulsi Vivah and the procedure of Tulsi Vivah.



Once upon a time there was a demon called Jalandhar who was a terror to all the worlds. He had a chaste wife named Brindha. Due to her piousness, the demon had secured immortal powers and became invincible. Unless the chastity of Brindha was challenged, the demon could not be conquered.

Upon the behest of the gods, Lord Vishnu disguised himself in the form of Jalandhar and violated her. Thereupon, the powers of the demon vanished and Shiva killed him in the battle.

Brindha realized the shame that befell her and therefore cursed Lord Vishnu that he would turn black and would get separated from his wife. Her curse came true when Lord Vishnu incarnated as Ram and got separated from his wife Sita.

Brindha burnt herself in atoning for her sin and then became Tulsi plant attaining immortality. As per her prayers, she was married to Lord Vishnu in this form. Since then, worship of Tulsi, offering Tulsi for Lord Vishnu and Tulsi Vivah came to be practiced by the devotees.

Tulsi Vivah Procedure

On the day of Prabodhini Ekadashi or on the next day, the devotees wake up early in the morning and take holy bath and clean their homes. Usually most homes in the Hindu tradition have a Tulsi plant in their house growing in a pot.

This pot is placed in the center of the house and given a holy bath and decorated with auspicious objects like turmeric, vermilion, sacred thread, ornaments and flowers. The idol of Krishna or a salagram shila is decorated with male attire and placed adjacent to the Tulsi plant and preparations for the marriage ceremony happen.

Usually on the day of Tulsi Vivah, the performers observe a day long fasting and the Vivah takes place in the evening. If possible, there is a priest coordinating with the marriage ceremony and the ladies of the household with the attendees perform the marriage.

After invoking the presence of Tulsi and Krishna, the mantras are chanted and a cotton thread is tied around the statue and plant as a mark of wedding lock.

Tulsi Vivah is performed both in temples and homes. It is believed that performing Tulsi Vivah is a very auspicious thing for childless parents. They perform the role of the parent of Tulsi plant and give their daughter Tulsi in marriage to Lord Krishna.

After the marriage ceremony, the prasadam is distributed to all the attendees. On the night of the ceremony, devotees keep vigil and sing the glories of the Lord and Tulsi concluding the proceedings in the morning.

www.speakingtree.in

Things to do On Kartika Purnima

Kartik Purnima is also known as Dev Diwali (Diwali of the Gods) and Tripuri Purnima (as it marks the victory of Lord Shiva over the demon Tripurasura). Lord Vishnu appeared as Matsya (fish) avatar on this day.

This festival is awaited by many devotees who look forward to perform various rituals and please gods. Traditionally, people keep a fast on this day, take a holy dip in the river, light diyas for the entire night, and carry out charities. It is said that doing these things today give results equivalent to that of Ashwamedha yagya. Gifting gold is believed to fulfill all the desires.

1) Offer kheer (rice in sweetened milk) to Lord Shiva on the night of Kartik Purnima. Consume some of it yourself as prasad afterwards. This would bring mental peace and prosperity in life.

In Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, Shivaling Mahajala Abhishekam is organized on the day.

2) Stare at full moon for sometime (around 4-5 minutes). The rays emitting from moon on purnima have potential to calm nerves and relax your eyes.

3) On this day, light an earthen lamp which has 4 wicks lighting in all the four directions (North, South, East, West) in front of Lord Hanuman's idol or photo. This would bring blessings of the god.

4) Chant Mahamrityunjay mantra 108 times.



As per the name this holy month is dedicated to Lord Kartikeya. It is also the birthday of Vrinda (the epitome of the Tulsi plant) and the last day to perform 'Tulsi Vivah'.

Kartik Purnima is closely associated with Prabodhini Ekadashi, which marks the end of Chaturmas, a four-month period when Vishnu is believed to sleep. In Rajasthan, the famous annual Pushkar Mela is held to mark this.

www.allhinduinfo.com

November 2017 Dates

Based on Lafayette, Louisiana, US Time

01 Wednesday	Tulasi Vivah
03 Friday	Kartika Purnima
10 Friday	Kalabhairav Jayanti
13 Monday	Utpanna Ekadashi
23 Thursday	Vivah Panchami
29 Wednesday	Gita Jayanti, Mokshada Ekadashi

For more details please refer

DrikPanchang.com

Benefits of growing Tulasi (Holy Basil) plant at home

Holy Basil commonly known as Tulasi is considered as the Queen of Herbs. The plant is considered sacred by Hindus and is worshiped mainly by the married women for a prosperous and blissful married life. If you are planning to grow a Tulasi plant in your home and want to know the benefits of having the plant at home, go through the article to know about it.

About the Tulasi plant

The botanical name of Holy Basil or Tulasi plant is *Ocimum sanctum* which belongs to Lamiaceae family. It is a typical tropical shrub which is widespread as a cultivated plant. The plant is considered very sacred by the Hindus and it is compulsorily grown in the house of every Hindu family in India. Tulasi has a great significance in the Hindu tradition and the plant is worshiped by the Indian married women in particular for a happy and prosperous married life. In fact, the house in Hindu families remains incomplete without this sacred plant. Holy Basil plant occupies a great place in the Hindu families and is given a godly status and is considered as one of the forms of Lakshmi - the Hindu Goddess of Wealth. The plant which is known as 'Queen of Herbs' has extremely beneficial potential values which makes it an amazing herb.

There are 3 varieties of these plant which include:

1. Krishna Tulasi: this plant has dark purple stem with dark green leaves which are smaller in size.
2. Vishnu Tulasi: This is also known as Lakshmi Tulasi and this plant has light green stem with light green leaves.
3. Vana Tulasi: This is a wild variety of Holy Basil which grows wildly.

Spiritual significance of growing Holy Basil plant

As per the Hindu religion, the Holy Basil plant is considered as the incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi - the wife of Lord Vishnu. According to the belief, Lord Vishnu is highly pleased when worshiped with a garland made of Tulasi or with the Tulasi Dalam - a small twig of Tulasi. In fact, performing an Archana - a special kind of worship - with Tulasi is considered very effective. And due to its special requirement in most of the Vaishnavite temples, the plant is cultivated and grown in the temple yards / gardens in order to meet the requirement. The Holy Basil plants are not only a part of the Hindu temples but these are grown and found almost in every household of the Hindu family.

The plant is also known by the name 'Brinda' and is considered dear to Lord Krishna. Keeping aside the spiritual significance of the plant, undoubtedly the plant is 'The Incomparable One' with its numerous

health benefits like a potential adaptogen, antibacterial and anti viral agent, antioxidant, immuno modulator, anti depressant and lots more.

About the plant

Holy Basil is a perennial plant and is cultivated as a shrub which grows up to a height of 30-60 cm. It is an outdoor plant which needs ample of sunlight and water for its growth. The plant bears beautiful small violet flowers during spring. Due to its high holy and medicinal benefits, the plant is considered the 'Queen of Herbs'.



The botanical name of the plant is *Ocimum sanctum* and the plant belongs to the mint family. The leaves of Holy Basil look similar to those of mint. Mainly the plant is a native of tropical land.

Growing Tulasi plant in the courtyard / balcony

It is not an exaggeration to say that there is no Hindu who does not know about this plant. In fact, every Indian / Hindu is very much aware of the medicinal importance of Tulasi plant and the benefits of growing the plant in the courtyard of their house or in the balcony of their flats.

You can either sow the seeds of Tulasi in the pot which later sprouts into a plant or you can directly get the saplings from the nurseries which you can transplant into the pot. Like every other garden plant, Tulasi too needs to be cared for its healthy growth. From time to time you need to enrich the soil in the pot with nutrients or manure to ensure the supply of nutrients to the plant. Water the plant regularly during summer season to avoid dryness of the plant which might lead to the death of the plant. However, the onset of monsoon season, avoid too much of watering as the plant receives sufficient water from rains. Place the potted plant in a place where there is sufficient sunlight to ensure proper growth of the plant.

As the plant grows wild during monsoon, keep pruning the plant from time to time to avoid the bushy growth of the plant. At the same time protect your Tulasi plant from pests and other sluggy creatures for which you can sprinkle turmeric water. You can even use powdered camphor to prevent the spread of pests which destroy the plant.

Essential health benefits of Tulasi

The leaves of the plant formed a part of Ayurvedic medicines since age old days and in the recent past the importance and health benefits of the plant is understood by the West as well. Thus the plant gained its popularity due to its high levels of medicinal / herbal values. Not only the leaves of the plant but even the stems of Tulasi plant has high medicinal values. Following are some of the essential benefits of the plant:

- The leaves of Tulasi plant have been proven as a good tonic for the nerves.
 - The extract of boiled leaves acts as a preventive cure for common cold and fever. Gargling with the extract of boiled leaves helps in treating sore throat and cough.
 - So also a decoction made of Tulasi leaves, honey and ginger helps in relieving bronchitis, flu, common cold and seasonal cough. Even a decoction of Tulasi leaves, cloves and common salt makes good medicine for influenza.
 - Recent studies reveal that regular consumption of the juice made of Tulasi leaves and honey helps in removing stones from the kidneys.
 - Most important Tulasi is a very good medicine for reducing the cholesterol levels in the blood as it acts as a good purifier of blood.
 - Tulasi leaves are said to be one of the best anti-stress agents which help in fighting depression naturally.
 - Tulasi leaves when chewed raw helps in removing the bad breath and thus improves oral health by preventing many of the mouth infections and ulcers.
 - Crushed leaves of Tulasi are one of the effective remedies for all skin related diseases. When the crushed leaves are applied on the forehead, some times it helps in removing headache.
- Above all, applying the crushed Tulasi leaves in the site where there is insect sting / bite on the skin, it helps in relieving the person from pain by detoxifying.
- In addition to all these wonderful medicinal values of Tulasi plant, recent studies have revealed that Tulasi has a wonderful property of detoxifying the fluorides from the water.

Conclusion

The high levels of medicinal values of this wonderful sacred plant have placed the plant at higher order and have given a divine touch to the plant. It is a tested fact that married women who regularly worship Tulasi plant potted in their courtyard or balcony, enjoy a long, blissful and happy married life. Due to the high medicinal value of this sacred plant, it spreads positive vibes in the surroundings.

Author: Kalyani

www.indiastudychannel.com



Navratri Celebrations, Lafayette, LA - September 23rd, 2017

The Significance of the Kartik Month

Sadhguru: What is the point of lighting a lamp? What is the science behind it? This is a culture where we did not do anything that is not scientific and naturally for the enhancement of the human being, so that they can reach towards their ultimate wellbeing or liberation. In this process, the lighting of the lamp is significant because in our visual experience, it is light which makes us see. It plays a significant role in our perception of the world around us. If there is no light, there is no experience of anything around us. Light is important in this context. But the significance of this day is not just about light or about lighting a lamp.

This phase of the year, which is Dakshinayana, is referred to as the Sadhana pada. The Kartik Masam or Kartik month is very significant because this is when the year is starting to move into what is called Kaivalya pada. In terms of sadhana, Dakshinayana is for purification, Uttarayan is for enlightenment. The Sadhana pada was the time of plowing, seeding and cultivating. Now, the time for the inner harvest of whatever sadhana you have done has come. This is the time to take the cream of that sadhana and make it available to yourself. You would have heard many stories about this.

Everyone is definitely aware of how Pitamaha Bhisma waited on the bed of arrows because he did not want to die in the sadhana pada. He wanted to die or leave his body in the Kaivalya pada because that is the time you can harvest the

fruits of life. The inner nature can be harvested very easily in the Kaivalya pada. Right now, this is the transition from Sadhana to Kaivalya. The lamp is indicative of enlightenment, awareness, consciousness and ultimate liberation. All this is symbolized with the lamps that we light.

This is not just about lighting one lamp. Usually, the tradition said that as the Kartik month comes,



you must double the lamps that you light because one thing is, the day has become shorter so you need a little more light to do your daily activity. Another thing is to indicate that you are multiplying the light in your life.

We need 700 crore (7 billion) lamps for every human being on this planet. You cannot do all that by yourself, but I would say, every day in this

month, you must at least do this much – light one lamp for yourself, one for somebody who is dear to you and one for somebody whom you do not like.

www.isha.sadguru.org

Dear All,

As we are moving towards our temple construction process, we need your support to spread the word to your friends and family for temple fundraising. To facilitate the fundraising we have created a gofundme link <https://www.gofundme.com/shskfundme>, we request each one of you to be an active voice in raising funds for our dream temple project. You can share the gofundme link through your Facebook, WhatsApp and email to your friends and family.

We hope with your collective effort we would be able to reach our target before end of this year.

Thank you for your continued support and blessings.

Sincerely,
SHSK Board

Thank you for your support and blessings.

Srinivasan Ambatipati, Editor