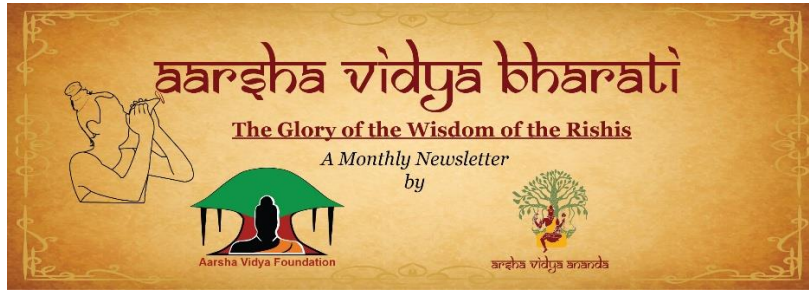


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# Aarsha Vidya Bharati - Oct 2021

A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



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This is one of many articles from our monthly newsletter. Access the [Oct 2021 issue](#) or read any of the [articles](#).

## Living Our Traditions

### Celebrating Navaratri

By Sonali Ambasankar



We celebrate the *Śaradīya Navarātri* in many different ways. All ways are ways to **connect** with the Devi through her different forms.

We worship the entire manifestation with its different levels of experience and forms, depicted through the '**steps of the golu**', as celebrated in Southern India.

Some of us worship the power of manifestation and creation, by worshipping the process of sprouting of grains.

Some worship a holed pot with light inside, depicting

the **atma in the form of the light** through



the holed pot body.



Particularly in Gujarat, we celebrate the enthralling glory of the manifestation by **dancing** throughout the night and being a witness to our physical body and thus the entire physical creation. Through dance, we experience a state of absorption and connection with the divine.

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We worship little girls (**kanya puja**) and women (**suvāsini puja**) as forms of Devi and give them gifts as offerings. We worship the Devi by invoking her in **homa-s** and offering her different *āhuti-s*. She is worshipped by **singing and chanting** mantras, stotrams and bhajans. We take sankalpas to chant and do mantra japa for a specific count through the 9 days.

Worshipful reading i.e. **Pārāyaṇam** of the Durga *Saptaśati* is done. Through the prayers, bhakti is invoked in our hearts and we experience shanti and absorption of the mind.

In some parts of Maharashtra, we pray to the Devi by doing '**jagar**' and '**gondhal**' i.e. keeping awake the whole night singing her glories.

Similarly in some parts of Karnataka, '**Yakshagāna**', night-long dances in the form of epic dramas from the puranas are enacted.

In Bengal, she is worshipped by married women through hurling of vermillion i.e. '**sindoor khela**' on each other. Different forms of Durga Devi are worshipped.



She is worshipped as **Aṣṭhalakṣmi** - 8 forms of wealth, viz. *Ādi, Dhana, Dhānya, Santāna, Gaja, Vīra, Vijaya, Vidyā* by giving *dānam* in whichever possible way. Clothes in the form of saris, chunaris, stolls, ornaments like bangles, kajal, venis (garlands), perfumes, etc are donated. *Annadānam* is done. Books are donated and sponsorships for education are given.

Along with *dānam*, **tapas** is an integral part of Navaratri celebration. We fast or give up eating certain foods like salt or grains, sweets or a meal. Some of us also observe *mauna vrata*, silence for the 9 days. Some of us prepare different kinds of **naivedya** to offer to the Devi for the 9 days. Some of us take sankalpas of not getting angry or using harsh words.



We worship her in the form of **Saraswati Devi** standing for all knowledge. On the 7th day all our books, instruments, equipment and tools are kept at the altar and prayed to. On these days, we pray to our vehicles, agricultural tools and equipment, professional instruments, weapons, books, pens,

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mobile phones, computers, musical instruments, sports equipment and more. No studies or activities are undertaken on *Saptamī* (7th day) and *Aṣṭamī* (8th day) and post puja on the *Navamī* (9th day), studies and activities begin.

Vijayadashami, the 10th day is celebrated as the day of “**Vidyārambham**” when young children are initiated into learning. It is also the day when the Ravana was killed by Bhagavan Rama.

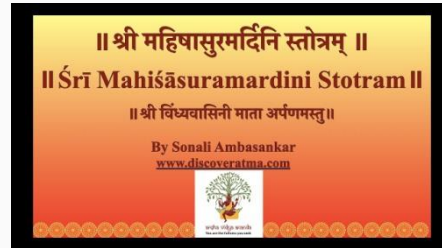
Om Tat Sat.

[Drikpanchang](#) - Get details on the dates and days of celebration

To listen to and chant Devi stotrams:



[Ya devi sarvabhuteshu](#)



[Mahishasuramardini stotram](#)