

ACVA Newsletter 2025-10 – Holy Days



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Diwali, the Festival of Lights - Celebrating the Victory of Dharma, Knowledge, and Goodness

This year, the Diwali spiritual and cultural festival will begin on October 17 and continue through October 22—six luminous nights of joyous celebration and devotion. Key observances include Dhanteras (October 18) and Diwali/Lakshmi Puja (October 20-21). Note: The dates of specific rites can vary by region and panchanga (the Vedic Astrology almanac). Please consult your local calendar for exact puja windows.



Diwali—also written Deepavali, “a row of lights”—is celebrated across Hindu/Vedic, Jain, and Sikh traditions. In essence, Diwali proclaims the victory of dharma (righteous order) over adharma, knowledge over ignorance, and goodness over evil. Lamps (diyas) glow in windows and thresholds, decorative rangoli patterns bloom at doorways, and families gather to worship, feast, and offer charity.

In several regions (especially in Western India), the festival also marks a New Year, when households and businesses inaugurate fresh ledgers with prayers for prosperity rooted in integrity and service. However one approaches it—devotionally, culturally, and philosophically—Diwali invites us to kindle outer lamps while awakening the inner Light.

Falling on the thirteenth lunar day of Krishna Paksha (the Moon’s dark fortnight), Dhanteras honors Lakshmi, Ganesha, and Kubera for prosperity rightly earned and rightly used. Equally central is Lord Dhanvantari, the Vishnu incarnation who brought Ayurveda, the Science of Life, to alleviate disease and suffering. Many households purchase a small implement (a spoon, lamp, or tool) symbolizing honest livelihood; others offer medical donations or pledge wellness practices—balanced diet, mindful rest, and compassion for the body.

The most significant period of the Diwali Festival will take place on October 20-21 this year. This is the New Moon night which is at the spiritual heart of the festival. Texts and traditions recount the appearance of Lakshmi Devi who comes to dispel the darkness and bring lasting abundance, grace, and remembrance of the true Self (Atman). Families perform Lakshmi Puja, light long rows of lamps, exchange sweets, and offer forgiveness and friendship. Many begin a new bahi-khata (ledger), invoking wealth that benefits all beings.

Diwali is the lighting up of all darkness, socially and personally, allowing the Supreme Light to enter the heart. — Swami Krishnananda Saraswati

At Diwali, let each lamp we kindle remind us of the ever-present radiance within.

We at ACVA wish all our friends and supporters a blessed Diwali. As the festival of lights illuminates the world, may it bring peace, joy, clarity, and serenity to all beings everywhere. May our learning deepen, our service expand, and our hearts grow luminous together.

