

Halwa-Puri puja for Mother Durga

Firstly is Halwa Puri is mentioned in our shastras? Well yes it is in the Devi Bhagavatam.

Devi Bhagavatam chapter 11 verses 38-40 says this:-

“The devotee should offer food consisting of the six Rasas, the plates and dishes for chewing, sucking, licking and drinking, that is, all kinds of food solid, and liquid, mountain-like high. Always offer food on flat plates and cups and various delicious sweet juicy nice heavenly fruits, nicely arranged on trays, cups and saucers.”

*** Camphor and cloves are mentioned in the 11th chapter of the Devi Bhagavatam, hence we use it.

It's very important that utmost cleanliness is observed. In this period no meat is consumed. When cooking one should not wear shoes etc and not chat as saliva can go into the food thus contaminating the food.

This puja can be performed in or outside your home. It doesn't matter.

In the morning of your puja, after having a bath, you should wear fresh clothes. Then at your prayer place, sprinkle water to purify the place. Then sprinkle ata (flour) on a clean board/tile (or see what you can use – use your discretion). This is called a mandala/bedi (a place where the prayer is going to be performed.). Fill a clay/brass/copper pot with white or basmati rice, place five fresh washed mango leaves in the pot and place a coconut (you should have already cleaned the coconut) in the pot. Thereafter drape a red-ish cloth or a sari (optional) on the coconut. Then place this pot at the centre of the mandala. Fresh grains are used in the worship as they convey the idea of growth and prosperity.

*** Please note if you don't want to use a coconut and sari and so forth then please print the picture of Mother Durga and worship this picture or any picture you have of Mother Durga. ***

On the mandala place a Lord Ganesh murti and the lota/chumbhu/clay pot where Mother Durga resides or if you just have a picture of Mother Durga. In a clean bucket add warm water, Dhaar mixture, grounded syringaberry leaves (if you don't have syringaberry leaves, it's ok), milk and flower petals. Make sure you have 9 lotas/Chumbu of the Dhaar mixture in the bucket. On a banana leaf (which should be on a tray) place 9 sets of Purees, on top of the Puree's place a betel leaf, Halwa, Sindhoor dot, flat (black)

betel nut, some soaked channa dhal, red bangles and then cut fruits. On a brick place 9 pieces of camphor and place cloves on it.

Wash your hands and then place some water in your right hand and sip water from the palm of the right hand, chant Om Vishnu, wash your hands again and do this two more times...

Say in English "O Lord, on this day (state the day and month), I (your name,) am performing my Durga Puja and Havan.

Take a betel leaf, betel nut, rice and flower petals and pray to Shree Ganeshji "Om ganapataye aavaahayaamee sthapayamee" (praying to Lord Ganesh to remove all obstacles in the path of your prayer) and keep on the bedi. Offer Lord Ganesh incense, lamp, flower petals and some sweet rice and then betel leaf and then finally lamp. Then offer Lord Ganesh his favourite food viz. kheer (sweet rice), sugar candy and laddus.

On the bedi have two sets of Halwa Puri (on a saucer) for Dee Baba. Pray to Dee Baba and then light the two Dee camphors first (which has cloves on it), pray and then drop a little Dhaar in front of the camphors. After the havan drop one lota of Dhaar on the outside of your front gate and the other lota at the entrance of your front door, in a pot place.

Mother Durga is now invoked and worshipped in the lota/chumbhu/clay pot. Take another betel leaf, betel nut, rice and flower petals and pray to Mother Durga "Om Durga-devi aavaahayaamee sthapayamee" and place in front of the lota/chumbhu/clay pot. Pray to Mother Durga asking Ma to please enter in the lota/chumbhu/clay pot and accept your prayers.

Now chant the following: -

1) Om swagatam su swagatam - Om Durga-yai namah
(Swagatam means O Mother Durga I welcome you.)

Now garland the coconut/picture.

Then offer flower or flower petals. (Pushpam = flowers)

2) Om idam pushpam – Om Durga-yai namah

Then offer incense (Dhoopam = incense)

3) Om tato dhoopam aghraa-payaami – Om Durga-yai namah

Then offer lamp (Deepam = lamp)

4) Om prat-yaksha deepam darshayaami – Om Durga-yai namah

You offer the above items by turning the items seven times around the coconut.

5) Om naivedyam samar-payaami – Om Durga-yai namah
(Offer cut fruit - Naivedyam = food)

Now place a lota of Dhaar next to the coconut.

Now place the brick in front of you that has the camphor and cloves and light the camphor and pray to the Mata. Now many will ask “What if I don't get a beera, is my puja answered or not”? Please understand this is not a bargaining prayer, whether you get a beera or not is inconsequential... Ask Mata and leave it to her. After that take the lota of dhaar and turn 9 times in a clockwise direction around the camphor and then drop 9 little drops of Dhaar in front of the brick. The rest you offer in your Thaan (an already specified place where you offer your Dhaar) later on after the havan is completed.

6) Offer prayers for forgiveness

Om yaani kaani cha paapaani janmaantara kritaanee cha, taani sarvaani
vinashyanti pradakshinaa pade pade //

Then offer your personal prayers to Mother Durga. Ask Ma for whatever you want and Ma being so merciful will grant what you desire. But be careful what you desire for... After the puja proper it's time for the Ma Durga's havan

How to perform your own Durga Devi Havan

The Durga Havan is performed in your home. Have all the requirements for the havan arranged on a tray beforehand. Make sure in the havan kund you have about two handfuls of sand (Why you may ask it's because when ghee is offered into the kund the ghee won't leak out of the kund and mess the floor, the sand absorbs the ghee), then place wood in the kund. Place kusha/darbha grass on the four sides of the kund. Then place a few tablets of camphor in the kund. Now light the few tablets of camphor in the havan kund.... You can add more camphor in the kund as the havan continues... Sit facing East or North.

Chant the mantra to invoke Agni-dev:- Om Agni Devtaa bhyo namah
aavaahayaamee sthapayamee. Now offer Incense, Lamp and a flower clockwise around the kund.

Offer a Tulsi Twig into the fire. (this is optional).

The Samaghree consists of (Black Til, white rice, jaw {jau}, Nava-dhan, and lobhan).

Now we start the havan... every time “swaahaa” is chanted, offer samaghree into the fire.

Om Ganapataye namah swaahaa

Om sooryaaya namah swaahaa

Om somaaya namah swaahaa

Om angaarkaaya namah swaahaa

Om budhaaya namah swaahaa

Om brihaspataye namah swaahaa

Om shukraaya namah swaahaa

Om shanaish-charaaya namah swaahaa

Om raahave namah swaahaa

Om ketave namah swaahaa

Om Prajaapataye namah swaahaa

Om Indraaya namah swaahaa

Om Agnaye namah swaahaa

Om Somaaya namah swaahaa

Om Bhooh swaahaa

Om Bhuvah Swaahaa

Om Swah Swaahaa

Om Hanumate namah swaahaa

Om aim hreem kleem chaamun daayai vich chai namah swaahaa X (3 or 9 or 11 or 108 times)

“Om trayam bakkam yajaa-mahe sugan-dhim pushti-varadhanam urvaarooka-miva bandha-naam mrityor mooksheeya maamritaat” Om swaahaa X 21 times

om shareeng hareeng kaleeng hareeng shree maha lakshmiyai namah

Om Namō Naaraaya-naaya swaahaa

Om Namō Bhagavate Vaasudevaayaa swaahaa

Om Shree Vishnave namah swaahaa

Om shreeng hreeng sarasvat-yai namah swaahaa

Om Brahmeye namah Swaahaa

Om Sarva Devee Devebhyo namah swaahaa.

Offer samaghree 9 times with the Maha Mantra “ Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare “ to atone for any mistakes committed during the havan.

Offer water three times around the havan kund.

Finally place two purees on top of each other, on top of this place a betel leaf, then place the balance of the samaghree on top of the betel leaf, then

place a betel nut, a few drops of ghee and then chant the Maha Mantra above and then place whole into the fire.

Now you can chant (or play on a CD/cassette player) Ma Durga's Aarti. We do have all the Chalisas and Aartis on our website www.dipika.org.za with sing along mantras as well. Below is the direct link to the Chalisas and Aarti's on DIPIKA.

http://www.dipika.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=95:mother-durgabandis-chalisa-and-aarti-with-videos&catid=17:chalisas-and-aartis-with-mantras-and-videos&Itemid=21

After the Aarti you should bow down before the fire and then stand up and your final prayer is to chant the Maha-mantra three times which is as follows (“Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare”) to nullify any mistakes you made while performing this prayer to Mother Durga.

After the worship is over, various auspicious articles (like rice, sari, and so forth) are given in charity to some deserving lady or if you like you can keep the sari for yourself.

After the Puja proper and Havan you must distribute the Prasad to the members of your family. Do note that this prashad (as with any prashad) anybody can eat and that includes unmarried girls, widows and men.

Famous Question is what to do with the coconut after the Puja. During the Durga Puja, Ma Durga was invited into the coconut but now once the Puja is completed Ma Durga returns to Mount Kailash to be with Lord Shiva and thus the coconut becomes Prashad, which should be broken and eaten as Mata Prashad (Mercy food from Mother Durga). Do not dispose of the coconut into the river...

If you don't know how to prepare [Suji Ka Halwa \(Semolina Pudding\)](#) below is the recipe...

Ingredients:-1 cup suji (semolina), $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar, 1.5 cup whole milk, 1.5 cup water, 3 tablespoon ghee, butter or margarine, 1/ teaspoon cardamom.

Garnish (optional):-2 tablespoon raisin, 2 tablespoon cashew nuts

Preparation:- Heat ghee, butter or margarine in a wok. Add Cardamom and heat few seconds in medium heat. 3) Add Semolina and heat for few minutes with constant stirring in low-medium heat. Add sugar and half of both raisin, and cashew. Heat few more minutes in low-medium heat. Add water and milk. Mix well and heat until you get desired consistency.

(Usually somewhat like watery dough or thick pudding). Garnish with remaining raisin and cashew nuts. Serve either hot (preferred) or cold.

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