

Prem Namaste, Vanakkum, Hare Krsna, Jai Shree Krsna, Jai Shree Raam

All glories to our eternal Parents Shree Shree Radha Krsna
All glories to the most merciful Shree Shree Lakshmi Nrsimhadeva
All glories to Srila Prabhupada, and the other wonderful and inspiring gurus.
All glories to the wonderful servants of the Supreme Lord.

On 12th January (Friday) is Sat-tila Ekadashi

Please have your last grain meal on Thursday night.

The times to break your fast with grains is on Saturday morning

13th January Break fast @ 05:07 to 09:45 (Durban)

@ 05:27 to 10:00 (Jhb)

@ 05:48 to 10:32 (Cape Town)



Please refrain from eating grains and meat on this most auspicious day.

(N.B I have included what to eat and what not to eat and 16 different meals to have on Ekadashi at the end of this email)

The benefits of fasting on this day are endless. This Ekadashi bestows upon that devotee eradication of the greatest sins that he has committed and is awarded passage to the spiritual abode. One is granted freedom from obstacles in his spiritual progress and grants him the perfection of life. This day of fasting removes all sins eternally. This is the most meritorious day for destroying all kinds of sins.

Please note that this auspicious day is not only for Hindus to observe. This fast can be observed by anyone. There's no catch here. One who is truly universal does not discriminate; rather he/she respects and embraces all cultures.

One very important point of note. Many perform different prayers like for example nullifying the negative effects of the planets and wonder why the prayer did not work – “What happened, I did the prayer as the priest said and yet I feel the same”. Well what you are not told that is that if you don't follow the Ekadashi fast and perform the planetary fast then its like bathing and then rubbing mud all over yourself again. So by fasting for a particular planet on a specific day you are removing the negative effects of that planet but when Ekadashi come and you have grains then the obstacles comes back since by eating grains on Ekadashi you are creating obstacles on your path and life. **BUT by observing the Ekadashi fast you are removing all obstacles in your life.**

Sat-tila Ekadashi from the Bhavishya-Uttara Purana

Shree Dalbhya Rishi said to Palastya Muni, "When the spirit soul comes in contact with the material energy, he immediately begins to perform sinful activities, such as stealing, killing, and illicit sex. He may even perform many other terrible deeds, such as killing a Brahmin. Oh purest of personalities, please tell me how these unfortunate souls may escape the punishment of being sent to hellish regions of creation. Kindly inform me how, by giving even a little in charity, one may be easily released from the reactions of his sins."

Pulastya Muni replied, "Oh fortunate one, you have asked me an important and confidential question, which not even Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva or Lord Indra has ever asked. Please listen very carefully to my answer. "With the arrival of the month of Magh (January - February), one should bathe, carefully control his senses by giving up lust, anger, pride, jealousy, faultfinding, and greed, and meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Shree Krishna. One should follow the rules and regulations of Ekadashi, which I shall now explain to you.

"After bathing, the person who intends to observe Ekadashi should worship the Supreme Lord. While praying to Lord Shree Krishna by chanting His holy name, he should promise to observe the Ekadashi fast. He should (try to if it is possible. If you can't then don't. We as Hindus are not forced to do anything. What Shree Krsna is looking for is your faith) remain awake overnight and perform a homa (fire sacrifice – again if possible). Then the devotee should perform an Arati ceremony for the pleasure of the Lord - Who holds a conch, disk, club, and so on in His hands - offering Him sandalwood paste to his feet, incense, camphor, a bright ghee lamp, and delicious food preparations. Next the devotee should offer the 108 balls of cow dung, sesame seeds, and cotton wool into the sacred fire whilst chanting such holy names of the Lord as Purusha sukta, and other names. (Again this can be skipped if it is not possible). Throughout the whole day and night he should also observe the Ekadashi vrata (fast, which is a fast from all kinds of grains and beans). On this occasion one should offer the Lord pumpkin, coconut, and guava. If these items are unavailable, betel nut may be substituted.

"The devotee should pray to Lord Janardana, the benefactor of all living beings, in this way; 'Oh Lord Krishna, You are the most merciful Personality of Godhead and the giver of liberation to all fallen souls. Oh Lord, we have fallen into the ocean of material existence. Please be kind to us. Oh lotus-eyed divinity, please accept our most humble, affectionate and respectful obeisance's. Oh protector of the entire world, we offer You our humble respects again and again. Oh Supreme Spirit, Oh Supreme One, Oh source of all our forefathers, may You and Your eternal consort, Srimati Lakshmi-devi, please accept these humble offerings.'

"The devotee should then try to please a qualified Brahmin with a warm welcome, a pot full of water, an umbrella, a pair of shoes, and clothes (cloth - dhoti), (if it is

possible to find a Brahmin) requesting him at the same time to bestow his blessings, by which one may develop unalloyed love for Lord Krishna. According to one's ability, one may also donate him a pot full of sesame seeds to such a Brahmin, particularly to one who is very well versed in all the injunctions of the Vedic scriptures.

"Oh exalted Dalbhya Muni, black sesame seeds are especially suitable for formal worship and fire sacrifices while white or brown ones are meant to be eaten by a qualified Brahmin. One who can arrange to give both kinds of sesame seeds (black and white or brown) especially on this Sat-tila Ekadashi day will be promoted to at least the heavenly planets after leaving this present body, for as many thousands of years as the number of seeds that would be produced if the seeds he donated were sown in the ground and grew into mature, seed bearing plants.

"On this Ekadashi a faithful person should (1) bathe in the water mixed with sesame seeds, (2) rub sesame seed paste on his body, (3) offer sesame seeds into the fire in sacrifice, (4) eat sesame seeds, (5) give sesame seeds away in charity, (6) accept charitable gifts of sesame seeds. These are the six (sat) ways in which sesame seeds (tila) are utilised for spiritual purification on this Ekadashi. Therefore it is called Sat-tila Ekadashi.

"The great Deva Rishi Narada Muni once asked the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Shree Krishna, 'Oh mighty armed Lord, Oh You who are so affectionate to Your loving devotees, please accept my most humble obeisance's. Oh Yaadava, kindly tell me the result one obtains by observing Sat-tila Ekadashi.' "Lord Shree Krishna replied, 'Oh best of the twice born Brahmins, I shall narrate to you an account of an incident I personally witnessed. Long ago on earth there lived an old female brahmini who worshipped Me every day with controlled senses. She very faithfully observed many a fast, especially on special days honouring Me and served Me with full devotion, devoid of any personal motive. Her rigorous fasting made her quite weak and thin. She gave charity to brahmanas and to young maidens (kanyas), and even planned to give away her house in charity. Oh best of the brahmanas although this spiritually minded woman gave charitable donations to worthy people, the odd feature of her austerity was that she never gave food to brahmanas or the devas.

"I began to reflect on this curious omission: "This fine woman has purified herself by fasting on all the auspicious occasions and by offering Me strict devotional worship. Therefore she certainly has become eligible to enter My personal abode, which is unattainable by ordinary persons." So I came down to this planet to examine her, disguising Myself as a follower of Lord Shiva's, complete with a garland of skulls draped around My neck and a begging pot (kumandalu) in My hand. "As I approached her, she said to Me, "Oh respectful one, tell me truthfully why You have come before me." "I replied, "Oh beautiful one, I have come to get some sacred alms from you" - whereupon she angrily threw a dense lump of mud into My begging pot! Oh Narada Muni I simply turned around and went back to My personal abode, astonished at this fine Brahmani's peculiar mixture of great magnanimity and stinginess.

"At last this austere lady reached the spiritual world in her self-same body, so great were her efforts at fasting and charity. And because she had indeed offered Me a lump of mud, I transformed that mud into a beautiful home. However, Oh Naradaji, this particular house was just like that mud completely devoid of any edible grains, as well as any furniture or ornamentation, and when she entered it she found only an empty structure. She therefore approached Me and said with great anger, "I have fasted repeatedly on so many auspicious occasions, making my body weak and thin. I have worshipped You and prayed to You in so many different ways for You are truly the master and protector of all the universes. Yet despite all this there is no food or wealth to be seen in my new home, Oh Janardana, please tell me. Why is this?"

"I replied, "Please return to your house. Sometime later the wives of the devas will pay you a visit out of curiosity to see the new arrival, but do not open your door until they have described to you the glories and importance of Sat-tila Ekadashi."

"Hearing this, she returned to her house. Eventually the devas' wives arrived there and in unison said, "Oh beautiful one, we have come to have your darshan. Oh auspicious one, please open the door to your house and let us see you. "The lady replied, "Oh most dear ones, if you want me to open this door, you will have to describe to me the merit one obtains by observing the sacred fast of Sat-tila Ekadashi." But to this request, not even one of the wives responded. "Later, however, they returned to the house, and one of the wives nicely explained the sublime nature of this sacred Ekadashi. And when the lady at last opened her door, they saw that she was neither a Devi, a Gandharvi, a she-demon, nor even a Nagapatni. She was simply an ordinary human lady.

"From then on the lady observed Sat-tila Ekadashi, which awards ALL material enjoyment and liberation at the same time, as it has been described to her. And she finally received the beautiful furnishings and grains she had expected for her home. Moreover, her once ordinary material body was transformed into a beautiful spiritual form made of sac-cid-ananda (eternality, knowledge, and bliss), with a fine complexion. So, by the mercy and grace of Sat-tila Ekadashi, both the lady and her new home in the spiritual world were at last radiantly splendid and lustrous with gold, silver, jewels, and diamonds.

"Oh Naradaji, a person should not ostentatiously observe Ekadashi out of greed, with the hope of attaining wealth dishonestly. Selflessly, he should simply donate sesame seed, clothes, and food according to his capacity, for by doing so he will achieve good health and exalted spiritual consciousness, birth after birth. Ultimately, he will be given release from the bonds of this world (liberation) and admittance into the Lord's supreme abode will be his to enjoy. That is my opinion, Oh best of the devas deva-rishis).'

"Oh Dalbhya Muni," Pulastya Rishi concluded, "one who properly observes this wonderful Sat-tila Ekadashi with great faith become free from all kinds of poverty - spiritual, mental, physical, social, and intellectual - as well as all kinds of ill luck

and evil omens (sakuna). Indeed, following this Ekadashi fast by donating, sacrificing, or eating sesame seeds free one of all past sin, without a doubt. One need not wonder how this happens. The rare soul who properly performs these acts of charity in the right devotional mood, following the Vedic injunctions, will become utterly free of all sinful reactions and go back to Godhead, back home to the spiritual world."

Thus ends the narration of the glories of Sat-tila Ekadashi,
from the sacred Bhavishya-Uttara Purana

Sometimes if you cannot fast due to circumstances then you can chant the names of all the Ekadashi and read the above true story and you will receive the same benefits.

Suta Goswami said: - There are twelve months in a year, and two Ekadashis in each month. Thus there are twenty-four Ekadashis in one full year, and in a leap year (like this year) there are two extra Ekadashis. O great sages, please listen attentively as I declare to you the names of these auspicious Ekadashis.

Occurs in (Western month)

Utpan-naa	November-December
Moksha-daa	November-December
Saphalaa	December-January
Putra-daa	December-January
Shat-tilaa	January-February
Jayaa	January-February
Vijayaa	February-March
Aamalakee	February-March
Paapamo-chanee	March-April
Kaamadaa	March-April
Varootherinee	April-May
Mohinee	April-May
Aparaa	May-June
Nirjalaa	May-June
Yoginee	June-July
Padmaa	June-July
Kaamikaa	July-August
Putradaa	July-August
Ajaa	August-September
Parivartinee	August-September
Indiraa	September-October
Paapaankushaa	September-October
Ramaa	October-November
Haribodhinee	October-November

The two extra Ekadashis, which occur during leap year, are called,

Padminee
Paramaa

***Please note the **t** is pronounced as follows, place the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth and say **t**.

***Please note the **n** is pronounced as follows, place the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth and say **n**.

“O sages, one who hears about these Ekadashis will learn how to observe them properly. Each Ekadashi bestows particular benefits on the faithful observer.

One who is physically unable to fast on Ekadashi may read the glories of each Ekadashi when it occurs and recite all the names of the Ekadashis; thus he will achieve the same goal as the person who observes the full Ekadashi vow.”

Ekadashi preparations.

For a detailed what to eat or not and over 100 Ekadashi recipes please visit our website www.dipika.org.za. And look under the sub-menu called **EKADASHI - THE DAY OF LORD HARI**.

Abstain from: - grains (cereals, breads, wheat, flour, beans, rice, dhals, green beans, roti, coffee, etc) meat.

Do not cook with: - Powdered hing, shop turmeric (you can use whole turmeric), shop masala and shop chilli powder.

You can cook with the following: - Whole turmeric, clean salt, cinnamon sticks, clean oil, butter, ghee, ginger, chilli, curry leaves, maas (yogurt), cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, clean sugar, rooibos tea, spinach, dhania, thyme, peppers, ground pepper, mint, green bananas, fresh cream, sour cream, bay leaves.

Potatoes, tomatoes, peanuts, cabbage, pumpkin, butternut, gem squash, carrots, lettuce, all kinds of fruits, paneer.

- 1) Make tomato chutney and then add scrambled paneer and dhania. You can also add a little maas (yogurt) or fresh cream to it.
- 2) Cut eggplant into thin slices and deep fry. Keep aside. Prepare potato mash and keep aside. Now in a casserole dish and lay the eggplant on the bottom and then cover the eggplant with mash, thereafter sprinkle cheese on the mash, then place thin slices of tomato on the cheese. Place strips of peppers on tomato slices. Bake for a few minutes and serve.
- 3) Potato soup (add salt, thyme and black or white pepper)
- 4) Mixed vegetable stew example: (cabbage, carrots, peppers, zucchini, and potatoes). Add black pepper, thyme and little butter and fresh cream. Use liquid from the baked vegetables below.
- 5) Bake the following: Cut potato in large pieces, cut butternut in big pieces, carrots in thin strips, cauliflower into florets, cut sweet potato in rounds. Boil veg. for 15 minutes then drain the vegetables and save the liquid. Mix butter, black pepper, salt, origanum and lots of thyme – rub well into boiled vegetables, bake in oven till crispy on outside.
- 6) Vaikuntha curry: (use curry leaves and ginger). Cabbage sliced finely, green peppers in strips, carrots in strips; add fried paneer cubes, thyme and dhania.
- 7) Cut potato into rounds, deep fry and then drain to remove excess oil/ghee/butter.

Now place flat in baking tray and grate cheese and bake till cheese melts.

8) Cut potato into rounds and deep fry and then drain excess oil. Place in baking tray (spaces between each) mix scramble curds, tiny cubed tomatoes, green peppers, salt, grated cheese, black pepper, thyme and then place on the potato – add more cheese on top and bake till cheese melts.

9) Bake whole potato with jacket in microwave till soft and make a cross in the top press open, dot butter and add tablespoon of sour cream, top with cheese and bake till cheese melts.

10) Cook cabbage and potato with tomatoes.

11) Cook mixed vegetables. For example, potato, cauliflower and zucchini in butter ghee or oil. When cooked add sour cream or fresh cream. Cook till it thickens.

12) Fry peanuts, fry green bananas

13) Make salads and fruit salads.

14) Chevda: Fry nuts, fry grated potatoes (coloured with red/green/yellow food colour). Also you can fry thin slices of green bananas.

15) Saigo milk:

Add 4 cups of water in a pot. Then add one cup of saigo and then bring to boil stirring continuously. Add sugar to taste (approx. 1 cup) and then add a few drops of vanilla essence. Cook on med heat for about 20 minutes until the saigo becomes clear. Add 2 cups of milk, and then boil until slightly thick.

16) Saigo patties.

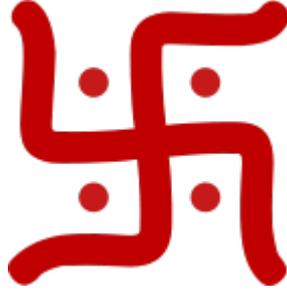
Soak 1 cup of saigo in cold water for 20 minutes and then remove the excess water. Boil three medium size potatoes, and thereafter mash while mash is hot and add saigo. Cut 2 chillies finely, chop up some dhania and add salt to taste. You can add grated cheese.

Make into patties, deep fry until golden brown, serve with tomato chutney.

Reference:- "Ekadashi: The Day of Lord Hari" 1986. HH Krishna Balaram Swami. Bhaktivedanta Institute Press

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