

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 7th May (Friday) is Varuthini Ekadashi

Please have your last grain meal on Thursday night.

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

*** Break fast @ 06h29 to 10h05 (Durban),

@ 06h35 to 10h15 (Jhb)



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.

Varuthini Ekadashi: From the Bhavishya-Uttara Purana

Shree Yudhishtira Maharaj said, “Oh Vasudeva, I offer my most humble obeisances unto You. Please now describe to me the Ekadashi of the dark fortnight of the month of Vaisakha (April-May), including its specific merits and influence.”

Lord Shree Krishna replied, “Oh King, in this world and the next, the most auspicious and magnanimous Ekadashi is Varuthini Ekadashi, which occurs during the dark fortnight of the month of Vaisakha. Whosoever observes a complete fast on this sacred day has his sins completely removed, obtains continuous happiness, and achieves all good fortune. Fasting on Varuthini Ekadashi makes even an unfortunate woman fortunate. Upon anyone who observes it, this Ekadashi bestows material enjoyment in this life and liberation after the death of this present body. It destroys the sins of all and saves people from the miseries of repeated rebirth.

“By observing this Ekadashi properly, King Mandhata was liberated. Many other kings also benefited from observing it – kings such as Maharaja Dhundhumara, in the Ikshvaku dynasty, who became free from leprosy resulting from the curse that Lord Shiva had imposed upon him as a punishment. A person who observes Varuthini Ekadashi achieves whatever merit one obtains by performing austerities and penances for ten thousand years. The merit one achieves by donating a great amount of gold during a solar eclipse at Kurukshetra is gained by one who observes this one Ekadashi with love and devotion, and certainly attains his goals in this life and the next. In short, this Ekadashi is pure and very enlivening and the destroyer of all sins.

“Better than giving horses in charity is giving elephants, and better than giving elephants is giving land. But better still than giving land is the giving of sesame seeds, and better than that is giving of gold. Still better than giving gold is giving food grains - for all the forefathers, devas, and human beings become satisfied by eating grains. Thus there is no better gift of charity than this in the past, present or future.”

“Yet learned scholars have declared that giving away a young maiden in marriage to a worthy person is equal to giving away food grains in charity. Moreover, Lord Shree Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, has said that giving cows in charity is equal to giving food grains. Still better than all these charities is teaching spiritual knowledge to the ignorant. Yet all the merits one can attain by performing all these acts of charity are attained by one who fasts on the Varuthini Ekadashi.”

“One who lives off the wealth of his daughters suffers a hellish condition until the inundation of the entire universe, O Bharata. Therefore one should be especially careful not to use the wealth of his daughter. Oh best of kings, any householder who takes his daughter’s wealth out of greed, who tries to sell his daughter, or who takes money from the man to whom he has given his daughter in marriage – such a householder becomes a lowly cat in his next life. Therefore it is said that whoever, as a sacred act of charity, gives away in marriage a maiden decorated with various ornaments, and who also gives a dowry with

her, obtains merit that cannot be described even by Chitrugupta, the chief secretary of Yamaraja in the heavenly planets. One who fasts on the Varuthini Ekadashi, however, can easily achieve that very same merit.

“The following things should be given up on the Dashami (the tenth phase of the Moon), the day before the Ekadashi: eating on bell-metal plates, eating any kind of urad-dhal, eating red-lentils, eating chick-peas, eating spinach, eating honey, eating in another person’s house/home, and participating in sex of any kind.

“On the Ekadashi itself one should give up the following: gambling, sports, sleeping during the daytime, betel nuts and its leaf, brushing one’s teeth, spreading rumours, faultfinding, talking to the spiritually fallen, anger, and lying.

“On Dwadashi the day after Ekadashi, one should give up the following: eating on bell-metal plates, eating urad-dhal, red-lentils, or honey, lying, strenuous exercise or labour, eating more than once, any sexual activity, shaving the body, face or head, smearing oils on one’s body, and eating in another’s home.”

Lord Shree Krishna continued, “Whoever observes the Varuthini Ekadashi in this way becomes free from all sinful reactions and returns to the eternal, spiritual abode. One who worships Lord Janardana (another name for Lord Krishna) on this Ekadashi by staying awake throughout the entire night (*but if this is possible because in these days it is very difficult due to the times we live in to follow strictly*) also becomes free from all his previous sins and attains to the spiritual abode. Therefore, O king, he who is frightened of his accumulated sins and their attendant reactions, and thus of death itself, must observe Varuthini Ekadashi by fasting very strictly.

“Finally, Oh noble Yudhisthira, he who hears or reads this glorification of the sacred Varuthini Ekadashi obtains the merit earned by donating one thousand cows in charity, and at last he returns home, to the Supreme abode of Lord Vishnu in the Vaikunthas.”

Thus ends the narration of the glories of Varuthini Ekadashi,
taken from the 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
Varoothinee	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
Paapaa-kushaa	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, organum 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.

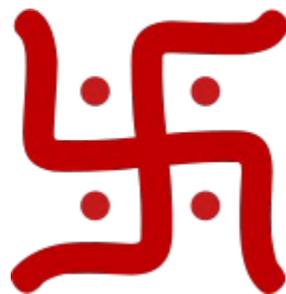
16) Saigo patties.

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.

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Thank you so much for taking the time to read this article. We pray that this article will assist you in some way and we also pray that it helps you to appreciate the beauty and remarkable foresight of our ancient Hindu culture. We wish to educate all readers and demystify the path of Hinduism (Sanatan Dharma). Please feel free to share these articles with friends and family who do not have direct access to our website or articles. If you use the articles in any form including blogs and/or as part of other articles kindly credit our website as a source. We hope that the articles serve as a reference to you and your family when you need clarification of certain topics. Jai Shree Radha Krsna.

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



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Compiled for the upliftment of Sanatan Dharma

Narottam das & Arjun Nandlal

Email info@dipika.org.za

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