

Pranaams, Namaste, Vanakkum, Hare Krsna, Jai Shree Krsna

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 & inspiring gurus.

All glories to the wonderful servants of the Supreme Lord.

On 15th December (Monday), Saphala Ekadashi, is observed.

Please have your last grain meal on Sunday night.

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

On 16th December

Parana Time (Break fast)

Durban

04:50 AM to 07:39 AM

Gauteng

05:10 AM to 07:56 AM

Cape Town

05:30 AM to 08:23 AM



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.

The katha of Saphalaa Ekadashi (from Bhavishya Uttara Purana)

Yudhishtira Maharaj said, "O my Dear Lord Shree Krishna, what is the name of that Ekadashi that occurs during the dark fortnight of the month of Pausha (December-January)? How is it observed, and which Deity is to be worshipped on that sacred day? Please narrate these details to me fully, so that I may understand Oh Janardana."

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Shree Krishna then replied, "O best of kings, because you desire to hear, I shall fully describe to you the glories of the Pausha-krishna Ekadashi. "I do not become as pleased by sacrifice or charity as I do by My devotees observance of a full fast on Ekadashi. To the best of one's ability, therefore, one should fast on Ekadashi, the day of Lord Hari.

"O Yudhishtira, I urge you to hear with undivided intelligence the glories of Pausha-krishna Ekadashi, which falls on a Dwadashi. As I explained previously, one should not differentiate among the many Ekadashis. O king, to benefit humanity at large I shall now describe to you the process of observing Pausha-krishna Ekadashi. "Pausha-krishna Ekadashi is also known as Saphala Ekadashi. On this sacred day one should worship Lord Narayana, for He is its ruling Deity. One should do so by follow the previously described method of fasting. Just as among snakes Sheshanaga is the best, and among birds Garuda is the best, among sacrifices the Ashvamedha-yajna is the best, among rivers Mother Ganges is the best, among Gods Lord Vishnu is best, and among two-legged beings the brahmins are the best, so among all fasting days Ekadashi is by far the best. O foremost of kings who took your birth in the Bharata dynasty, whoever strictly observes Ekadashi, becomes very dear to Me and indeed worshippable by Me in every way. Now please listen as I describe the process for observing Saphala Ekadashi.

"On Saphalaa Ekadashi My devotee should worship Me by offering Me fresh fruits according to time, place and circumstance, and by meditating on Me as the all-auspicious Supreme Personality. He should offer Me jaambira fruit, pomegranate, betel nuts and leaves, coconut, guava, varieties of nuts, cloves, mangoes, and different kinds of aromatic spices. He should also offer Me incense and bright ghee lamps, for such an offering of lamps on Saphalaa Ekadashi is especially glorious. The devotee should try to stay awake all the Ekadashi night (This is optional as this maybe difficult for most to observe).

"Now please hear with undivided attention as I tell you how much merit one gets if he fasts and remains awake throughout the entire night singing and chanting the glories of Narayana. O best of kings, there is no sacrifice or pilgrimage that yields merit that is equal to or better than the merit one gains by fasting on this Saphalaa Ekadashi. Such fasting - particularly if one can remain awake and alert the entire night long - bestows the same merit upon the faithful devotee as the performance

of austerity for five thousand earthly years. O lion among kings, please hear from Me the glorious history that made this Divine Ekadashi famous.

"Once there was a City called Champaavati, which was ruled by the saintly King Maahishmata. He had four sons, the eldest of whom, Lumpaka, always engaged in all manner of very sinful activities - illicit sexual encounters with the wives of others, gambling, and continual association with known prostitutes. His evil deeds gradually reduced the wealth of his father, King Maahishmata. Lumpaka also became very critical of the numerous devas, the empowered universal attendants of the Lord, as well as toward the brahmins, and every day he would go out of his way to blaspheme the Vaishnavas. At last King Maahishmata, seeing the unrepentant brazen fallen condition of his son, exiled him to the forest. Out of fear of the king, even compassionate relatives didn't come to Lumpaka's defense, so angry was the king toward his son, and so sinful was this Lumpaka. "Bewildered in his exile, the fallen and rejected Lumpaka thought to himself, 'My father has sent me away, and even my kinsmen do not raise but a finger in objection. What am I to do now?' He schemed sinfully and thought, 'I shall sneak back to the city under cover of darkness and plunder its wealth.

During the day I shall stay in the forest, and as night returns, so shall I to the city.' So thinking, the sinful Lumpaka entered the darkness of the forest. He killed many animals by day, and by night he stole all manner of valuable items from the city. The city-dwelling folk apprehended him several times, but out of fear of the king they left him alone. They thought to themselves that it must have been the accumulated sins of Lumpaka's previous births that had forced him to act in such a way that he lost his royal facilities and became to act so sinfully like a common selfish thief. "Though a meat-eater, Lumpaka would also eat fruits every day. He resided under an old banyan tree that unknown to him happened to be very dear to Lord Vaasudeva. Indeed, many worshipped as the devas (representative departmental head) of all the trees in the forest. In due course of time, while Lumpaka was doing so many sinful and condemnable activities, the Saphalaa Ekadashi arrived. On the eve of the Ekadashi (Dashami) Lumpaka had to pass the entire night without sleep because of severe cold that he felt due to his scanty bedclothes (bedding). The cold not only robbed him of all peace but almost of his very life. By the time the sun rose, near dead, his teeth chattering and near comatose. In fact all that Ekadashi morning, he remained in that stupor and could not awaken out of his near comatose condition.

"When midday of the Saphalaa Ekadashi arrived, the sinful Lumpaka finally came to and managed to rise up from his place under that banyan tree. But with every step he took, he stumbled and fell to the ground. Like a lame man, he walked slowly and hesitantly, suffering greatly from hunger and thirst in the midst of the jungle. So weak was Lumpaka that he couldn't even concentrate to nor muster strength to go and kill even a single animal that whole day. Instead, he was reduced to collecting

whatever fruits had fallen to the ground of their own accord. By the time he returned to his banyan tree home, the sun had set.

"Placing the fruits on the ground next to him (at the base of the sacred banyan tree), Lumpaka began to cry out, 'O, woe is me! What should I do? Dear father, what is to become of me? O Shree Hari, please be merciful to me and accept these fruits as an offering!' Again he was forced to lie awake the whole night without sleep, but in the meantime the all merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Madhusudana, had become pleased with Lumpaka's humble offering of forest fruits, and He accepted them. Lumpaka had unwittingly observed a full Ekadashi fast, and by the merit he reaped on that day he regained his kingdom with no further obstacles.

"Listen, O Yudhishthira, to what happened to the son of King Maahishmata when but a fragment of the merit spouted up within his heart. "As the Sun beautifully rose in the sky on the day following Ekadashi, a handsome horse approached Lumpaka as if seeking him out, and stood next to him. At the same time, a voice suddenly boomed out from the clear blue sky saying, 'This horse is for you, Lumpaka! Mount it and ride swiftly out of this forest to greet you family! O son of King Maahishmata, by the mercy of the Supreme lord Vaasudeva and the strength of the merit you acquired by observing Saphalaa Ekadashi, your kingdom will be returned to you without any further hindrances. Such is the benefit you have gained by fasting on this most auspicious of days. Go now, to you father and enjoy your rightful place in the dynasty.'

"Upon hearing these celestial words resounding from above, Lumpaka mounted the horse and rode back to the city of Champaavati. By the merit he had accrued by fasting on Saphalaa Ekadashi, he had become a handsome prince once more and was able to absorb his mind in the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Shree Hari. In other words, he had become My pure devotee.

"Lumpaka offered his father, King Maahishmata, his humble obeisance's and once more accepted his princely responsibilities. Seeing his son so decorated with Vaishnava ornaments and tilak (udhvara pundra) King Maahishmata gave him the kingdom, and Lumpaka ruled unopposed for many, many years. Whenever the Ekadashi came, he worshipped the Supreme Lord Narayana with great devotion. And by the mercy of Shree Krishna he obtained a beautiful wife and a fine son. In old age Lumpaka handed his kingdom over to his son - just as his own father, King Maahishmata, had handed it over to him. Lumpaka then went to the forest to dedicate his concentrate attention to gratefully serve the Supreme Lord with controlled mind and senses. Purified of all material desires, he left his old material body and returned back to home, back to Godhead, attaining a place near the lotus feet of his worshipful Lord, Shree Krishna.

"O Yudhishtira, one who approaches Me as Lumpaka did will become completely free of lamentation and anxiety. Indeed, anyone who properly observes this glorious Saphalaa Ekadashi - even unknowingly, like Lumpaka - will become famous in this world. He will become perfectly liberated at death and return to the spiritual abode of Vaikuntha. Of this there is no doubt. Moreover, one who simply hears the glories of Saphalaa Ekadashi obtains the same merit derived by one who performs a Rajasurya-yajna, and at the very least he goes to heaven in his next birth, so where is the loss?"

Thus ends the narration of the glories of Saphalaa Ekadashi,
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 Ekadashi's in each month. Thus there are twenty-four Ekadashi's in one full year, and in a leap year (like this year) there are two extra Ekadashi's. O great sages, please listen attentively as I declare to you the names of these auspicious Ekadashi's.

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
Nir jalaa	May-June
Yoginee	June-July
Padmaa	June-July
Kaamikaa	July-August
Putradaa	July-August
Ajaa	August-September
Parivartinee	August-September
Indiraa	September-October
Paapaan-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 Ekadashi's 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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