



HAPPY Diwali

The Festival Of Lights

Diwali, or Dipawali, is India's biggest and most important holiday of the year. The festival gets its name from the row (awali) of clay lamps (deepa) that Indians light outside their homes to symbolize the inner light that protects from spiritual darkness. This festival is as important to Hindus as the Christmas holiday is to Christians.

Over the centuries, Diwali has become a national festival that's also enjoyed by non-Hindu communities. For instance, in Jainism, Diwali marks the nirvana, or spiritual awakening, of Lord Mahavira on October 15, 527 B.C.; in Sikhism, it honors the day that Guru Hargobind Ji, the Sixth Sikh Guru, was freed from imprisonment. Buddhists in India celebrate Diwali as well.



DIWALI IS CELEBRATED OVER FIVE DAYS.

DAY ONE: People clean their homes and shop for gold or kitchen utensils to help bring good fortune.

DAY TWO: People decorate their homes with clay lamps and create design patterns called rangoli on the floor using colored powders or sand.

DAY THREE: On the main day of the festival, families gather together for Lakshmi puja, a prayer to Goddess Lakshmi, followed by mouth-watering feasts and firework festivities.

DAY FOUR: This is the first day of the new year, when friends and relatives visit with gifts and best wishes for the season.

DAY FIVE: Brothers visit their married sisters, who welcome them with love and a lavish meal.



What are Diya Lamps?

Diya Lamps are oil lamps lit during the festival of Diwali to symbolize prosperity in the new year. They are small pots made from clay and could be described as 'thumb pots' as they are made by pressing the thumb into a ball of clay and shaping it. They are then baked in a kiln until they become, firm and ready for painting. They are then painted bright colors, filled with oil, and lit for Diwali in October or November. The light is intended to cancel out the darkness as we enter the darker months.

Diya Lamps are painted using fingers rather than paintbrushes. This is because our fingers represent the Panchatatva, which are the five elements.

- The thumb is angushchya which represents the sky.
- The first finger is called tharjani which is the air or wind.
- The middle finger is madhyama which represents fire.
- The ring finger is thanishkar which belongs to water.
- The little finger is called kanishcha which is the soil.

Making your own diya lamp

Step 1: Make the dough

Take the flour in a bowl. Add water little by little and knead it. Knead the dough till it forms a ball. It shouldn't be too sticky or too flaky so add more flour or water as needed



Step 2: Shape

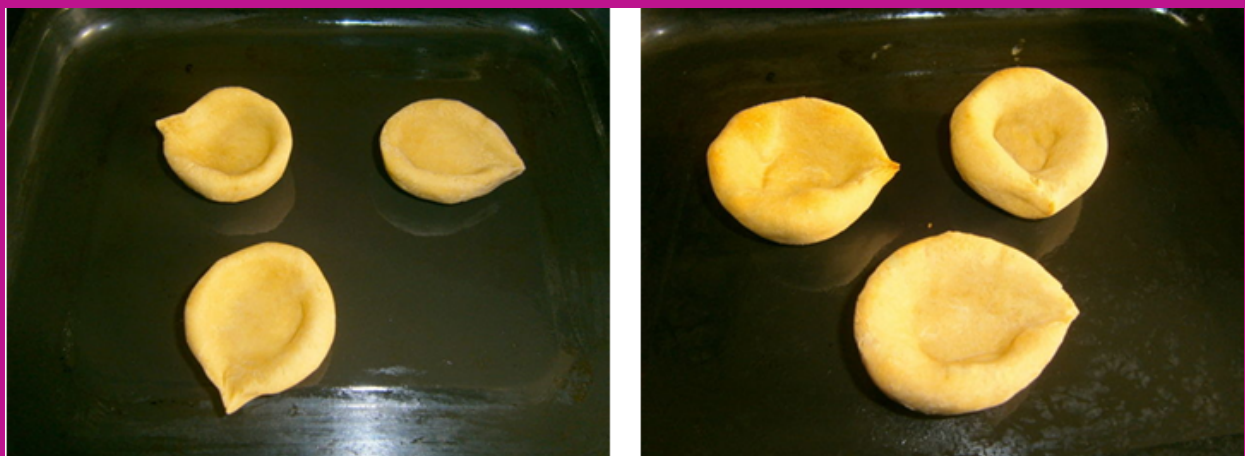
Shape it into the traditional Diya shape. The tip should be pinched. Place your candle in the middle and shape around it to insure that it will fit after its baked.



Making your own diya lamp

Step 3: Bake

Give your project to the helper at the station and they will put it in the oven for you. It takes about 15 minutes to bake so you can go do another station and come back to paint



Step 4: Paint

After your Diya lamp has baked and cooled you can paint it! Decorate it however you want then put the candle in for your own little piece of Dawali!

