

Holi Hai!!!



Come March and we look forward to Holi, the festival everyone celebrates, at home and on the streets. Although a North India festival, Holi celebrated in South India as well. Holi derives its name from Holika, who represented evil. She was killed by *Agni*, the fire goddess. This is why holi is celebrated. It represents the presiding of good over evil. The day before Holi, a bonfire is lit to burn away all that's evil.

If you live in an apartment building, beware! As early as 7 AM, people throw water balloons onto unwary people from their balconies. At times, buckets of water are emptied onto people walking below. Holi is definitely not a day to wear new clothes. *Pichkaris* or water syringes are used to spray water onto unsuspecting strangers. No point in displaying irritation or anger when your clothes are ruined with colour or drenched with water. People just laugh and scream "Holi Hai!!!", (today's Holi!).



Everyone, young and old, gather together and throw *Gulal* or coloured powder onto one another. Usually the colours are bright red, pink, yellow and blue. Usually, people form groups called *Tolis*, and go visiting or walk on the streets to add colour everywhere they go. *Bhaang*, a drink that get's people high, is consumed on Holi day. It is fun to watch people intoxicated with *Bhaang* clown around. And of course, there is no Indian festival without sweets. A different variety of sweets are relished on Holi day.