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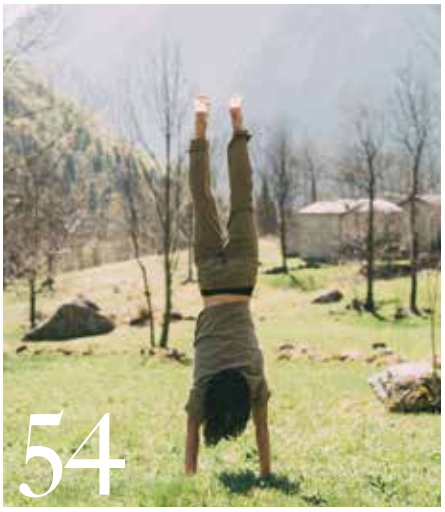
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EDITORIAL.

There is a particular feeling that arrives before Dashain does.

You notice it in the skies, in the first hint of autumn in the air, in the sun that feels bit warmer, in the kites that start to get hung up in store, in conversations that slowly turn towards travel plans, family gatherings and everything that needs to be done before the festivities begin. The festival may still be weeks away, but somehow, its presence has already entered our homes.

Perhaps that is where the festive spirit truly begins: in anticipation.

Before we actually welcome festival, before the kitchen becomes wonderfully chaotic and families begin making their way home, there is this beautiful in-between season. A time to prepare, plan, look forward and, most importantly, reconnect with the feeling of what is to come.

We wanted this issue to capture that very feeling. "Anchoring to the Festive Spirit" is an invitation to pause before the celebrations take over and think about how we want to experience them. Because preparation is not merely about shopping lists, cleaning homes and planning menus. It can also be about preparing our minds, our bodies, our relationships and our spaces for the season ahead.

The stories in this issue offer glimpses of what awaits us, while helping us prepare for it with greater intention. We explore the traditions and stories surrounding Dashain, the significance of its nine days, the role food plays in bringing families together, and ways to care for our health while still enjoying everything the festive table has to offer. We also turn towards our homes, our children, our rituals and the quieter moments of reflection that can easily get lost amid celebration.

After all, anticipation has its own kind of joy.

There is something wonderful about knowing that a special time is approaching and allowing that knowledge to brighten ordinary days. It gives us something to look forward to, something to prepare for, and perhaps even something to bring us closer together.

The festival has not arrived yet. But the feeling already has. And perhaps, that is where the celebration begins.

Happy Reading!!



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ON THE COVER
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Learning Beyond the Classroom

PYP UNIT END EXHIBITION AT SWOSTISHREE GURUKUL IB CONTINUUM SCHOOL

By Pramila Magar, PYP Coordinator



True learning begins when learners move beyond simply receiving information and begin to question, explore, connect, and make meaning of the world around them.

At Swostishree Gurukul, learning is not limited to textbooks, classrooms, or assessments. We believe children learn best when they have opportunities to ask questions, explore ideas, make connections, and share what they have learned with others. The **PYP Unit End Exhibition for PYP 2 to PYP 5** was a wonderful reflection of this belief and a celebration of our learners' journey through inquiry-based learning.

The exhibition provided learners with an opportunity to demonstrate their **conceptual understanding** of their Units of Inquiry. Throughout the learning process, learners were encouraged to brainstorm ideas, ask meaningful questions, research different sources, sort and organize information, and develop their understanding through inquiry. Their learning did not stop inside the classroom. Field visits gave them opportunities to observe, experience, and inquire further into the topics they were exploring.

The learners also presented their formative and summative tasks, showing how their understanding developed throughout the unit. Their projects reflected not only what they had learned but also how they had learned. From collecting information and making connections to creating models, displays, presentations, and other projects, learners demonstrated creativity and ownership of their learning.

One of the most meaningful parts of the exhibition was seeing learners confidently present their work and engage their parents in meaningful activities based on what they had explored and understood. Rather than simply displaying their work, learners became active participants in sharing their learning journey. They explained their ideas, demonstrated their understanding, answered questions, and invited their parents to take part in different activities. This reflected **student agency**, as learners made choices, took responsibility for their learning, and confidently communicated their understanding. Their enthusiasm, confidence, and sense of ownership were greatly appreciated by the parents, who enjoyed seeing their children actively engaged in and proud of their learning.

The exhibition also strongly reflected the **IB philosophy**, particularly through the development of the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. Through their inquiry, learners demonstrated **research skills** as they gathered and organized information. They developed **communication skills** while presenting and explaining their ideas. They strengthened their **social skills** by working collaboratively with classmates and respecting different perspectives. Their self-management skills were also visible as they planned their work, managed their time, organized materials, and took responsibility for completing their projects.

Most importantly, the exhibition helped learners understand that learning is connected to the world around them. They were not simply learning about a topic; they were learning to **think, question, communicate, collaborate, and take action.**

Throughout this journey, teachers played the role of facilitators, creating opportunities for learners to explore, question, think critically, and take ownership of their learning. Rather than simply providing answers, teachers guided learners with meaningful questions, supported their inquiries, and encouraged them to make their own choices and connections. Parents also played an important role by providing guidance and encouragement at home, supporting their children as they researched, prepared their projects, and reflected on their learning. This partnership between learners, teachers, and parents made the learning journey more meaningful and engaging.

This connects closely with the mission of **Swostishree Gurukul IB Continuum School**, which focuses on nurturing confident, responsible, and lifelong learners who are prepared to contribute positively to society. By giving learners opportunities to express their ideas, appreciate different perspectives, and understand the world through inquiry, we are helping them become more **open-minded and globally minded individuals.**

The PYP Unit End Exhibition was therefore much more than a display of projects. It was a celebration of **curiosity, confidence, collaboration, creativity, and growth**. It reminded us that when children are trusted to inquire, explore, and share their learning, they develop the confidence and skills to become active learners today and responsible global citizens tomorrow.



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STARTER.

Beyond Good & Evil

The deeper philosophy behind Navaratri and Dussehra, moving beyond rituals and the familiar story of good versus evil. Through the symbolism of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati, and the many dimensions of Ravana, the article reflects on human nature, the importance of recognising both our flaws and our inherent possibilities, and the deeper invitation of the festive season: to live with total involvement, greater awareness and the openness to transcend ourselves.

By Sadhguru



NAVARATRI OR DASHAIN is a celebration of the feminine dimensions of existence. Across these nine days, the traditions of Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati offer us a profound way of understanding life itself: its roots, its activity and its possibility of transcendence. These three dimensions are also reflected in the three fundamental qualities of existence: tamas, rajas and sattva.

Tamas is inertia, stillness and the quality of the Earth from which life arises. Rajas is movement, activity and passion, represented by the dynamism of the Sun. Sattva is the possibility of dissolving limitations, represented by the Moon and its association with awareness, knowledge and transcendence.

The first three days of Navaratri are traditionally dedicated to Durga or Kali, the next three to Lakshmi, and the final three to Saraswati. This sequence has a certain intelligence. First, there is the Earth. From stillness, life takes form. Then comes activity. Once life has taken form, it begins to move, desire, create and engage with the world. But beyond activity lies another possibility: to go beyond the limitations of the physical and experience something deeper. The first two are fundamental to survival. The third is an aspiration. Yet Navaratri is not only about what we worship. It is also about how we approach life.

There is a tendency among human beings to become serious about everything they consider important. If something does not appear important, they become careless about it. Neither extreme allows us to experience life fully. The stronger possibility is to be absolutely involved without being burdened by seriousness. This is why so many profound aspects of Indian culture are expressed through celebration. Music, dance, ritual, colour and community are not merely entertainment. They can become ways of participating in life with total involvement. A flower does not need to announce that it is blooming. It simply blooms. Yet we often do not have the attention to watch it happen. We can spend an hour looking at a screen, but sitting quietly and watching a flower open can seem like a waste of time. This tells us something about the way we live.

If we cannot pay attention to the smallest details of existence, how can we expect to experience its deepest dimensions?

Spirituality is not necessarily somewhere far away. It is in the breath, the body, the earth beneath us, the people around us and the ordinary moments we are too distracted to notice. The earth itself is a remarkable reminder. What we casually call soil or dirt can become a magnificent flower. That same earth has become our body. We are not separate from it. We arise from the Earth, live through its resources, and eventually return to it. What begins as stillness becomes a living, dynamic human being. Navaratri asks us to recognise this movement within ourselves. But Dussehra brings another dimension to this understanding.

If we cannot pay attention to the smallest details of existence, how can we expect to experience its deepest dimensions?

The story of Rama and Ravana is often reduced to a simple opposition between good and evil. Rama represents righteousness; Ravana represents wrongdoing. The destruction of Ravana becomes the symbolic victory of good over evil. But there is a subtle wisdom within the story. Ravana is traditionally depicted with ten heads. These can be understood as representing the many tendencies that can exist within a human being: greed, jealousy, lust, anger, pride and other destructive qualities. Yet Ravana was not devoid of wisdom. He was also a great scholar, a powerful being and a devoted worshipper of Shiva. His terrible actions did not erase every other dimension of his existence.

The profound lesson is not that we should overlook wrongdoing. It is that we should learn to distinguish between a person's actions and the entirety of the person.

When someone behaves badly, we are quick to condemn the whole

individual. We take one quality, one action or one moment and turn it into an identity. But every human being contains contradictions. There may be anger in one moment and compassion in another. There may be jealousy, but there may also be generosity. There may be ignorance, but there may also be tremendous intelligence. There may be cruelty alongside tenderness.

The question is: What do we choose to see?

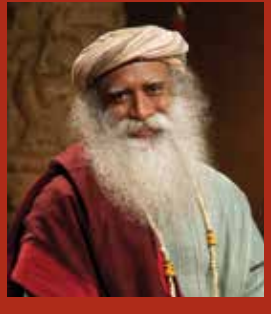
This does not mean becoming blind to wrongdoing. We must recognise the thorn if there is a thorn. We must act when something is harmful. But recognising the thorn does not require us to deny the flower. This distinction is essential. When we condemn a quality, there remains a possibility for change. When we condemn the entire person, we leave no room for transformation. And there is another reason this matters. What we repeatedly see in others begins to shape our own inner world. If you spend your life looking only for greed, dishonesty, ugliness and cruelty in people, those are the qualities you will become increasingly familiar with within yourself. If you learn to recognise beauty, generosity and compassion even in imperfect people, those qualities become more available within you. The same principle can be applied to ourselves. We often reduce ourselves to our failures, our mistakes and our limitations. But human beings are not finished products. There is always the possibility of another dimension.

If you learn to recognise beauty, generosity and compassion even in imperfect people, those qualities become more available within you.

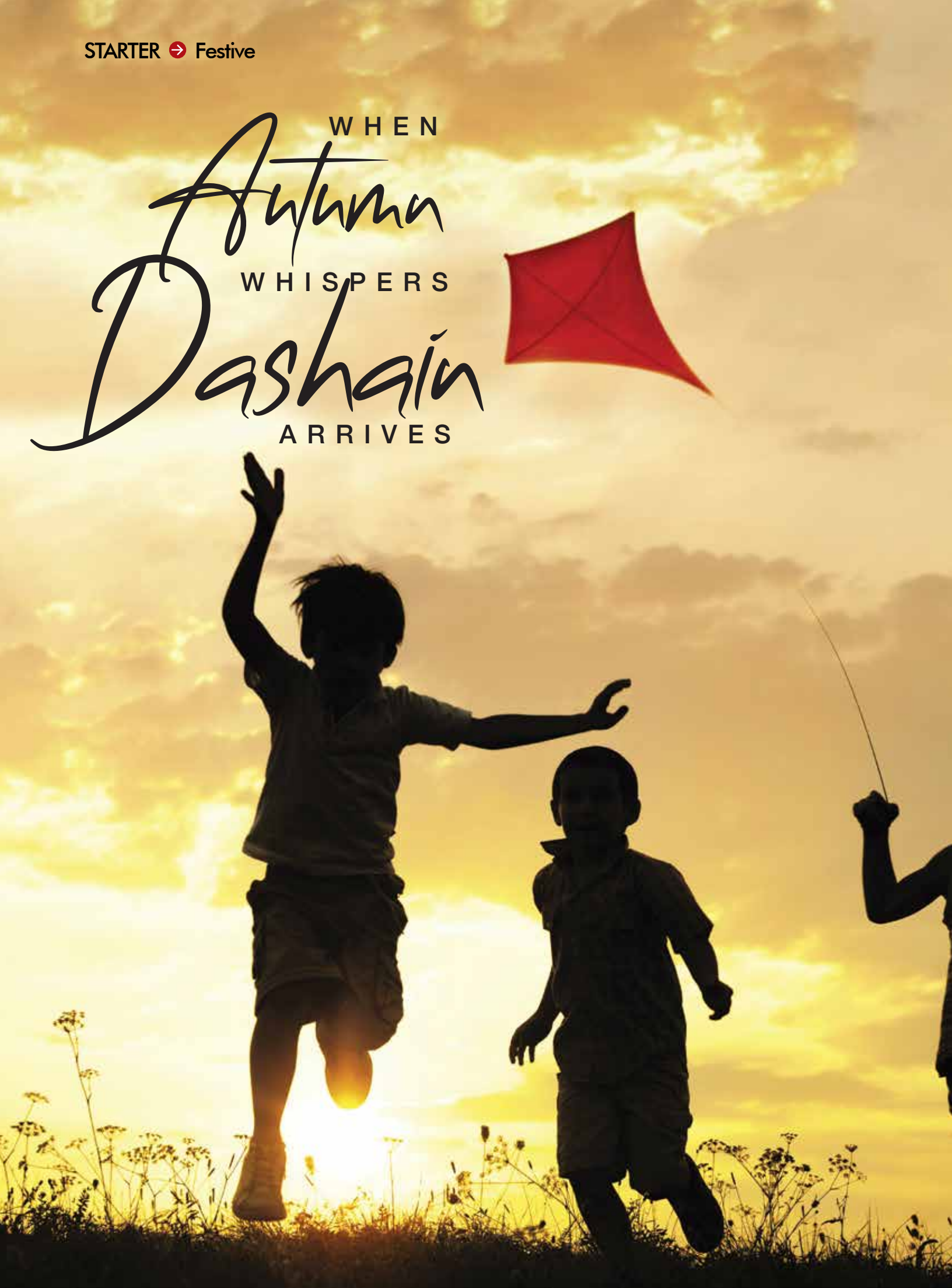
This is where the symbolism of Navaratri becomes especially powerful. From tamas comes rajas. From activity comes the possibility of sattva. From identification with the physical comes the possibility of transcendence. Life is constantly moving between states of stillness and activity. This happens within an individual and, on a much larger scale, throughout nature and the cosmos. But human beings have the capacity to become conscious of this movement. Perhaps this is why celebration has always been so central to these festivals. Celebration allows us to participate in life without trying to control every moment of it. It allows us to be involved without becoming psychologically trapped in what happens. So, as Navaratri begins and Dussehra approaches, perhaps the most meaningful celebration is not simply the burning of an effigy or the completion of a ritual. It is to look at our own ten heads. To recognise the greed, jealousy, anger and fear that may arise within us, without concluding that these are all that we are. And then to look at another human being in the same way. See the mistake. See the limitation. See the thorn. But also look for the one beautiful head. The head of love. The head of wisdom. The head of generosity. The head of compassion. The head that still holds the possibility of becoming something more. This is not weakness. It is a more complete way of seeing.

Navaratri reminds us of the possibility of moving from inertia to activity and from activity towards transcendence. Dussehra reminds us that even when darkness is present, we must not become incapable of recognising what is luminous.

The two festivals, together, offer a powerful invitation: be fully involved in life, but do not become imprisoned by it. See clearly, but do not become cynical. Recognise what is wrong, but do not lose your ability to see what is beautiful. Perhaps that is the real victory over Ravana, not merely destroying what is outside us, but refusing to allow the destructive qualities within us to become our identity.



Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a Yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru has been conferred the Padma Vibhushan by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service.


WHEN
Autumn
WHISPERS
Dashain
ARRIVES

A reflective celebration of Dashain and the beauty of Nepal's autumn season, this piece explores how the festival can reconnect families with tradition, nature, well-being, and one another. It encourages a more mindful Dashain, where shared responsibilities, outdoor moments, healthy habits, and screen-free togetherness become part of the celebration.

By Kiran Karki Silwal

THERE IS something truly magical about the arrival of Dashain. Long before the festival officially begins, nature quietly announces its presence. The fragrance of blooming marigolds fills the air, the skies turn a brilliant shade of blue, and the warm autumn sun replaces the lingering monsoon clouds. The crisp breeze, the scent of festive spices, the bustling markets, and the joyful energy on every street seem to whisper the same message; "Dashain has arrived."

Dashain is more than Nepal's biggest festival; it is a celebration of hope, victory, gratitude, and togetherness. Rooted in the triumph of good over evil, it reminds us that we can overcome every challenge with patience, courage, and resilience. Beyond its religious significance, Dashain celebrates our personal victories, the dreams we achieved, the obstacles we overcame, and the people who stood beside us through every season of life.

Autumn itself adds a unique charm to the season. With crystal-clear skies, breathtaking mountain views, blooming marigolds, ripening harvests, and pleasant weather, it invites us outdoors to reconnect with nature, with family, and with ourselves. It is a season of abundance, homecoming, and gratitude. The favourable weather encourages children to play outside, families to travel, and communities to gather, making it one of Nepal's most beautiful times of the year.

Let children experience the traditions that once filled our own childhoods - flying kites, playing outdoor games, helping decorate the house, listening to grandparents' stories, and creating memories that no screen can ever replace.

Yet, as our lives become increasingly digital, the essence of Dashain can sometimes lose its sparkle. Family conversations are replaced by mobile phones, children's laughter by endless screen time, and meaningful moments by hurried routines. Perhaps this Dashain offers us an opportunity to rediscover the joy of celebrating together. Let children experience the traditions that once filled our own childhoods - flying kites, playing outdoor games, helping decorate the house, listening to grandparents' stories, and creating memories that no screen can ever replace.

While festivals invite us to celebrate wholeheartedly, they also remind us to care for our wellbeing. During Dashain, it is easy to stay up late, overindulge in festive treats, skip exercise, or lose the healthy routines that keep us energised. Children, too, may become less active, miss regular meals, or spend long hours indoors with digital devices. Celebration should never come at the expense of our health.

Enjoy every festive meal with gratitude and mindfulness. Relish traditional flavours while listening to your body's needs. Make movement part of the celebration, go for family walks, fly kites, dance, or play games that bring generations together. Encourage children to spend more time creating memories than collecting screen time. Sometimes, the simplest moments become the ones they treasure forever.

Dashain is also a gentle reminder to care for those who make the festival possible. For many women, the season often brings long days of cooking, cleaning, shopping, and hosting guests. A truly joyful festival is one where responsibilities are shared. When every family member lends a helping hand, the celebration becomes lighter, warmer, and more meaningful. Festivals should bring happiness to everyone, not become a burden for someone.

As the marigolds bloom and the autumn breeze fills our hearts with anticipation, let this Dashain be more than a festival on the calendar. Let it become a celebration of gratitude, balance, and meaningful living.

May this beautiful autumn season remind us that life's richest celebrations are not measured by what we own, but by the love we share, the memories we create, and the legacy we leave behind.

Wishing you and your family a joyful, healthy, and meaningful Dashain!



Kiran Karki Silwal
Kiran Karki is a certified parenting and NLP coach guiding individuals toward purposeful living and conscious parenting through her signature program "Find Your Ikigai with Kiran."
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Celebrating Creativity, Excellence and New Beginnings

IEC College of Art and Fashion Graduation Ceremony









IEC COLLEGE OF ART AND FASHION proudly celebrated the graduation of approximately 350 learners at a memorable graduation ceremony held at Hotel Yak & Yeti, Kathmandu. The ceremony marked an important milestone in the academic and professional journeys of graduates from the college's two distinguished bachelor's programs - *Bachelor in Fashion and Bachelor in Interior Design.*

The event brought together graduating learners, faculty members, distinguished guests, industry representatives, and proud families to celebrate the achievements of a new generation of creative professionals.

The ceremony was graced by Honourable Mrs. Sabina Kafle as the Chief Guest, whose presence added significance to the occasion. The college was also honoured to welcome Ms. Noor Haslinda Hassan, Registrar of Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, as the Guest of Honour. Adding further distinction to the event, Mr. Mohamed Firdoz Azman, Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of Malaysia, attended as the Special Guest.

The graduation ceremony reflected IEC College of Art and Fashion's commitment to nurturing creativity, innovation, technical excellence, and professional confidence among young talents. Through its *Bachelor in Fashion and Bachelor in Interior Design* programs, the college continues to provide learners with opportunities to transform their creative ideas into meaningful professional careers.

For the graduating class, the ceremony represented more than the completion of an academic program. It was a celebration of years of dedication, perseverance, creativity, and personal growth. Each graduate crossed the stage carrying not only an academic achievement but also the skills, experiences, and confidence needed to contribute to the rapidly evolving creative industries.

As the graduates begin the next chapter of their lives, *IEC College of Art and Fashion* celebrates their achievements and looks forward to seeing their creativity, talent, and ideas make an impact in the worlds of fashion, interior design, and the wider creative industry.

The ceremony concluded as a proud and inspiring celebration of achievement honouring the graduates' journey while welcoming them into a future filled with creativity, opportunity, and possibility.

Congratulations to the graduating class of 2026. May your creativity shape the future.





THE 9 DAYS OF DASHAIN

A Journey Through the Nine Forms of Shakti

Beyond tika, jamara and family gatherings, the first nine days of Dashain invite us into a deeper journey through the nine forms of Shakti. From Shailaputri's grounding strength to Siddhidatri's wisdom, each form of Durga represents a quality we can cultivate within ourselves, making Navaratri a powerful passage of courage, discipline, compassion and inner transformation.

By Medina Joshi

DASHAIN IS NEPAL'S most celebrated festival, a time when families gather for tika, jamara and blessings. Beyond the rituals, the festival's first nine days-Navaratri-invite a deeper, inward journey. Navaratri is dedicated to Shakti, the divine feminine energy that animates creation, protection and transformation. The nine forms of Durga: Shailaputri, Brahmacharini, Chandraghanta, Kushmanda, Skandamata, Katyayani, Kalaratri, Mahagauri and Siddhidatri, symbolizes different dimensions of this powerful energy.

The mythic battle between Durga and Mahishasura becomes an inner allegory: the struggle to overcome anger, ego, fear, greed and attachment with steadiness, courage and compassion. Navaratri is therefore both worship and a practical invitation to cultivate the qualities needed to navigate life's challenges.

Day One - Shailaputri: Find Your Foundation

Shailaputri, the "Daughter of the Mountain," is the first form of Goddess Durga worshipped during Navaratri. Identified with Parvati and seen as the rebirth of Sati, she symbolizes strength, steadiness and grounding. Shailaputri, riding Nandi the bull and holding a trident and lotus, symbolizes strength, stability, determination, grounding, and purity at the beginning of the Navaratri journey. Her mountain imagery reflects stability amid life's changes. As the opening step of the spiritual journey, Shailaputri teaches that before seeking higher knowledge or transformation, we must cultivate inner stability and resilience.

Day Two - Brahmacharini: The Strength of Discipline

Brahmacharini, the second form of Durga, symbolizes devotion, simplicity and spiritual discipline. She is Parvati in her phase of intense penance to attain Shiva, depicted walking barefoot with a rosary and water pot. Her austere form highlights patience, perseverance and unwavering faith. Brahmacharini teaches that transformation requires consistent effort. Enthusiasm may start the journey, but perseverance sustains it. Her message is clear: whether in spiritual, personal or professional life, discipline and commitment are the keys to meaningful growth.

Day Three - Chandraghanta: Courage with A Calm Mind

Chandraghanta, worshipped on the third day of Navaratri, represents the union of courage and serenity. Her name combines Chandra (moon) and Ghanta (bell), symbolizing a calm, steady mind that resonates with strength. Depicted with a crescent moon on her forehead, riding a lion and armed with weapons, she appears fierce but embodies protective energy. After her marriage to Shiva, she takes on this warrior form to safeguard righteousness and dispel fear. Chandraghanta teaches that while external circumstances may be beyond our control, we can master our responses. Her weapons symbolize inner tools-awareness, resilience, and emotional steadiness that help us face criticism, conflict, and anxiety without losing balance. She reminds us that true courage is not reckless aggression but the ability to act decisively while maintaining inner peace.

Day Four - Kushmanda: The Power To Create Light

Kushmanda, worshipped on the fourth day of Navaratri, is revered as the radiant creator of the universe. Her name, derived from Ku (small), Ushma (warmth/energy), and Anda (cosmic egg), symbolizes her role as the source of cosmic energy and light. Depicted with eight arms (hence called Ashtabhuja Devi), she rides a lion and carries objects such as a bow, arrow, lotus, discus, mace, nectar jar, rosary, and water pot-each representing qualities like courage, wisdom, compassion, and spiritual awareness. Kushmanda embodies abundant divine energy, creativity, and protection, reminding us that we too are creators through our thoughts, words, and actions. Her eight arms symbolize the many responsibilities and virtues we must balance in life. She teaches that positive energy builds confidence and harmony, while negativity creates tension, making her a guide for conscious, life-affirming creation.

Day Five - Skandamata: Strength Through Compassion

Skandamata, worshipped on the fifth day of Navaratri, embodies the nurturing and protective power of motherhood. As the mother of Skanda (Kartikeya), she is depicted seated on a lion, holding her child in her lap, with two hands carrying lotuses and one raised in blessing. This imagery unites courage and tenderness-the lion symbolizes strength and fearlessness, while the child represents love, care and vulnerability. Skandamata teaches that true strength is not only the ability to fight or overcome obstacles, but also the capacity to love, nurture and protect. Her Shakti extends beyond motherhood, reminding us that compassion is expressed whenever we support relationships, encourage growth, or protect those who depend on us. She highlights that gentleness and care are not weaknesses but powerful forms of inner resilience.

Day Six - Katyayani: Stand For What Is Right

➔ Katyayani inspires us to stand firm for what is right, even when it is difficult, and to restore balance in our lives through moral courage and righteous action.

As the opening step of the spiritual journey, Shailaputri teaches that before seeking higher knowledge or transformation, we must cultivate inner stability and resilience.

Katyayani, worshipped on the sixth day of Navaratri, is one of the most powerful warrior forms of Goddess Durga. Born from the devotion of sage Katyayana, she emerged to defeat Mahishasura, symbolizing the triumph of Dharma over Adharma. Depicted riding a lion and armed with weapons, she embodies courage, strength, determination, righteousness and justice. Yet her message is not about aggression, it is about strength guided by wisdom. The lion represents raw power and instinct, while Katyayani herself represents the awareness and discipline needed to channel those forces constructively. She teaches that the greatest battles are often internal-against anger, ego, jealousy, greed and fear-and that true victory lies in overcoming these tendencies. Katyayani inspires us to stand firm for what is right, even when it is difficult, and to restore balance in our lives through moral courage and righteous action.

Day Seven - Kalaratri: Face The Inner Darkness

Kalaratri, worshipped on the seventh day of Navaratri, is the fiercest and most misunderstood form of Durga. Her name means "the dark night," symbolizing the inner darkness we must confront before light can emerge. Though depicted with a terrifying appearance-dark complexion, dishevelled hair, riding a donkey, armed with a sword, she is revered as a protective mother who destroys fear, ignorance and negativity. Kalaratri's energy teaches that spiritual growth is not always gentle; sometimes it requires facing the parts of ourselves we would rather avoid, such as anger, jealousy, insecurity or attachment. By acknowledging these tendencies, transformation becomes possible. Her fierce form is a reminder that fearlessness and courage are essential to remove obstacles and restore balance.

Day Eight - Mahagauri: Purification And Peace

Mahagauri, worshipped on the eighth day of Navaratri, represents serenity, renewal and the cleansing of both body and spirit. Her name means "Great Radiant One," symbolizing the luminous purity that emerges after penance and purification. According to tradition, Parvati's long austerities left her covered in dust until Shiva blessed her, restoring her radiant form as Mahagauri. She is depicted in white garments, riding a bull, carrying a trident and damaru, with hands offering blessings and protection. Mahagauri's energy follows the fierce confrontation of Kalaratri, reminding us that once we face our inner darkness, we must release the past and make space for peace. She teaches forgiveness of others and ourselves as a way to free the emotional burdens of anger, guilt, resentment and regret. Her white form symbolizes clarity of thought, intention and action, encouraging harmony between what we think, say and do. Like cleansing our homes for Dashain, she inspires us to cleanse our inner space, making room for renewal and serenity.

Day Nine - Siddhidatri: Fulfilment And Wisdom

Siddhidatri, worshipped on the ninth day of Navaratri (Navami), marks the completion of the spiritual journey through the nine forms of Durga. Her name combines Siddhi (spiritual accomplishment) and Datri (giver), signifying her role as the bestower of wisdom, fulfilment and extraordinary attainments. Depicted seated on a lotus, with four arms holding a mace, discus, conch and lotus, she embodies the culmination of discipline, courage, compassion and purification. Traditional accounts describe her granting siddhis to gods, sages and devotees, and even Lord Shiva receiving spiritual powers through her grace-symbolizing the union of Shakti and Shiva as the completeness of energy and consciousness. Siddhidatri reminds us that true fulfilment is not simply achieving desires, but attaining peace, contentment and self-mastery. Her presence teaches that the nine days of Navaratri are a gradual inner journey-beginning with grounding and discipline, moving through courage, creativity, compassion and purification, and ending with wisdom and inner freedom.

Navaratri's nine forms are more than mythic figures; they are living archetypes that guide inner transformation. Each form of Durga offers a lesson in grounding, discipline, courage, creativity, compassion, righteousness, fearlessness, purification and wisdom, guiding us toward balance and strength. The victory celebrated on Vijaya Dashami is therefore not merely triumph over external forces, but the overcoming of our own anger, fear, ego and negativity. In this way, Dashain becomes more than ritual; it is a profound journey of self-discovery and a living reminder that the divine Shakti we worship also resides within us, empowering us to live with clarity, resilience and compassion.



MEDINA JOSHI
Astrology & Vaastu Consultant. With four years of experience and expertise in Vaastu, she blends traditional wisdom with a practical modern approach to guide families and individuals through clarity and balance.



From the Courtroom to the Finish Line

ADVOCATE CHAHANA SHAH'S SECOND ASIAN GAMES JOURNEY



When Nepal's flag rises over the triathlon venue at the 20th Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan this September, one Nepali official on the course will be making history simply by being there. Advocate Chahana Shah a practicing lawyer specializing in Bankruptcy and Insolvency and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) will be officiating as a Technical Official (referee) for triathlon at her second Asian Games, and in doing so, she holds a distinction unmatched anywhere else in the region: she is the only female Technical Official for triathlon in the whole of South Asia.

It is a rare kind of double life. By profession, Shah spends her days in the world of contracts, insolvency law, and intellectual property disputes. But for nearly a decade now, she has quietly built a parallel career on the sidelines of one of the most physically demanding sports in the Olympic movement swim, cycle, run ensuring that the athletes competing in it do so on a level and fairly judged field.

A Journey That Started as a Volunteer

Shah's path into triathlon officiating began in 2017, not with any grand ambition, but as a volunteer. Triathlon was still a developing sport in Nepal at the time, and the Nepal Triathlon Association needed hands and eyes on the ground people willing to learn the rules, stand for hours at transition zones, and help athletes and organizers alike make sense of a demanding, technical sport. Shah put hers up.

That early willingness to show up turned into an actual vocation. Over the following years, she trained and rose through the ranks of technical officiating, eventually becoming a certified Technical Official under World Triathlon and Asian Triathlon's structures one of the very few in Nepal, and now the only woman in South Asia to hold this role at the international level.

A Résumé Built Meet by Meet

Since 2017, Shah's officiating record has steadily expanded across some of the region's and continent's biggest multi-sport stages:

- National Games in Nepal, where she helped build the domestic officiating pipeline for triathlon
- The South Asian Games (SAG), competing among the region's best athletes
- The Asian Games in China, her first appearance on the continental stage
- The Youth Asian Games in Bahrain, extending her experience to the next generation of athletes

Each assignment added not just to her technical expertise, but to her credibility as one of Nepal's most trusted sports officials a reputation built race by race, transition zone by transition zone.

To keep pace with the sport's evolving standards, Shah recently traveled to Seoul, South Korea, for her Level Two officiating seminar, sharpening her knowledge of World Triathlon's rules and technical protocols alongside officials from across Asia.

The Stage: 20th Asian Games, Aichi-Nagoya 2026

This September, Shah heads to Japan for the 20th Asian Games, being held across Aichi Prefecture and the city of Nagoya from 19 September to 4 October 2026. The Games will bring together athletes and officials from 46 National Olympic Committees, competing across 43 sports one of the largest sporting gatherings Asia has ever hosted, with organizers expecting well over 10,000 athletes in the Games village.

Triathlon's events Individual Men, Individual Women, and the Mixed Relay will be contested on 20 and 21 September at the Gamagori City Triathlon Venue. It is on this course that Shah will take up her post as Technical Official, applying the same discipline she brings to her legal practice: attention to detail, fairness, and an unwavering commitment to the rules that keep the competition honest.

Why Her Presence Matters

Triathlon officiating, particularly at the international technical official level, remains a heavily male-dominated space across South Asia. Shah's presence at Aichi-Nagoya is not simply about one more official doing her job it is a marker of how far women's participation in the technical, administrative, and rules-based side of sport still has to go, and proof that it can be done.

That she does this work alongside a full-time legal career one focused on Bankruptcy and Insolvency and IPR, fields that are themselves still finding more women at senior levels only underscores the point. Advocate Chahana Shah is not choosing between two demanding disciplines. She is quietly excelling at both.

As the countdown to Aichi-Nagoya 2026 continues, Nepal's small but growing contingent of sports officials will be watching one of their own take her place on the world stage not as an athlete, but as the person entrusted with making sure the race is run right.

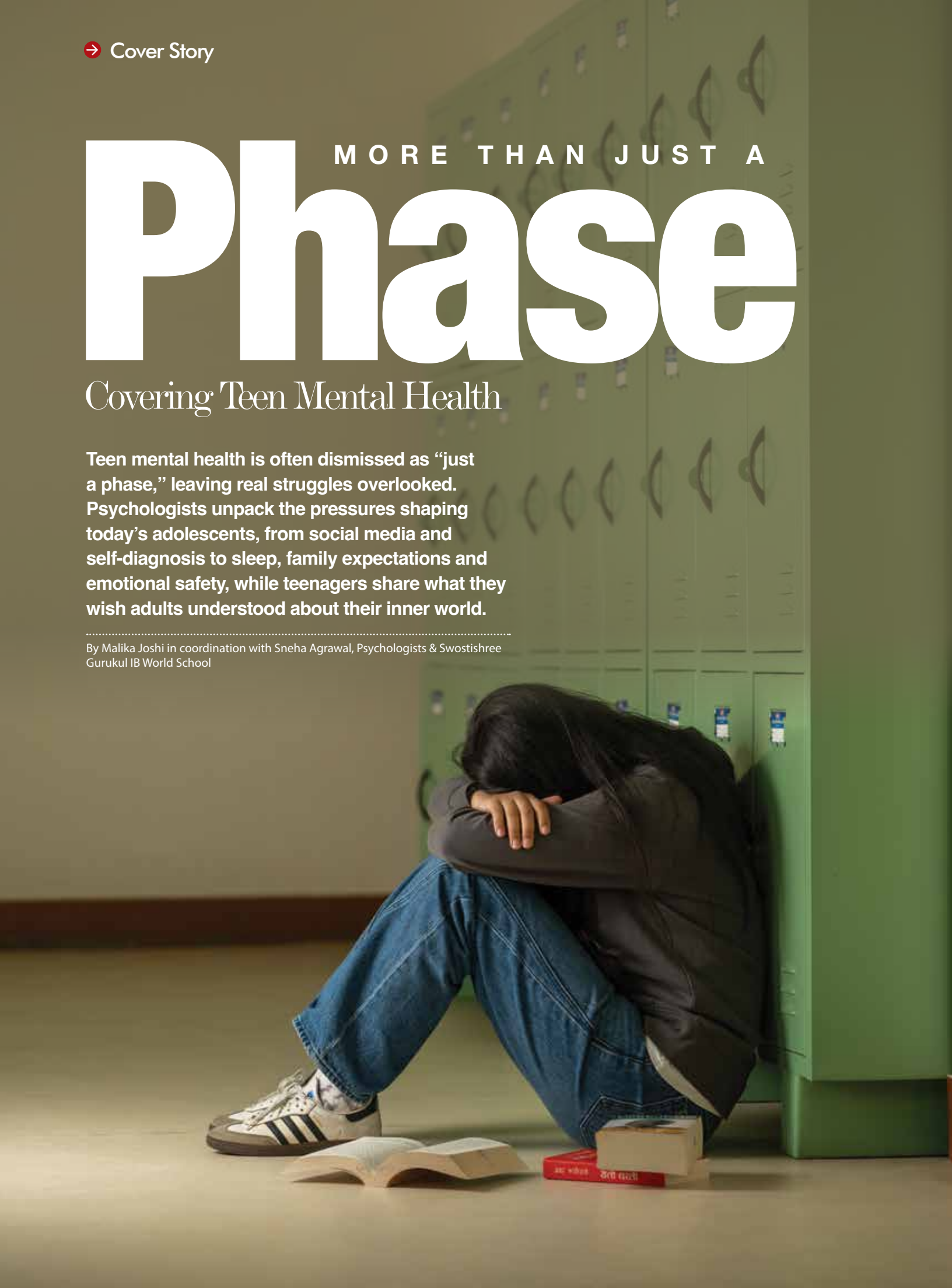
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MORE THAN JUST A Phase

Covering Teen Mental Health

Teen mental health is often dismissed as "just a phase," leaving real struggles overlooked. Psychologists unpack the pressures shaping today's adolescents, from social media and self-diagnosis to sleep, family expectations and emotional safety, while teenagers share what they wish adults understood about their inner world.

By Malika Joshi in coordination with Sneha Agrawal, Psychologists & Swostishree Gurukul IB World School



ADOLESCENCE HAS never been simple, but the world teenagers are growing up in has become increasingly complex. Between academic expectations, friendships, family pressures, social media and the constant pressure to keep up, emotional struggles can easily be mistaken for ordinary teenage behaviour. A change in mood may be called a phase. Withdrawal may be seen as attitude. Anxiety may go unnoticed until it begins affecting everyday life. So, what are teenagers really experiencing, and how can the adults around them learn to recognize when something is more than growing pains? We spoke with psychologists to understand the changing landscape of teen mental health, and with teenagers themselves to hear what they wish the adults in their lives understood.

In Conversation with Psychologists: Understanding Teen Mental Health

Why is tee n mental health so often dismissed as "just a phase"?

Teen mental health is often brushed off as just a phase for a few reasons that come together. First, there's a tendency to see symptoms as just part of growing up, rather than looking into them. Things like mood swings, withdrawal, or irritability are often labeled as "typical teen stuff" before anyone questions if there's something more serious. This is also made worse by a lack of understanding: many adults, especially older ones, weren't taught to tell the difference between regular teenage changes and real signs of anxiety or depression. Plus, there's still a stigma that makes it easier to avoid talking about it. Many parents also think, "I made it through my teen years okay," without anyone checking in, never realizing they might not have been okay at all, just unexamined. And when something seems off, parents often jump to external reasons like peer pressure or social media, instead of thinking it might be something more serious.

How has the way teenagers talk about mental health changed over the last 10–15 years?

There's less fear and shame about admitting you're struggling, and a lot of that comes from peers. Teens who are more aware are often the ones who notice something's off in a friend and actually say something. Social media has also played a big part, normalizing therapy talk and giving people the vocabulary to describe what they're feeling, though it's a double-edged sword, since the same platforms also fuel comparison and new kinds of stress

Is social media helping teenagers understand mental health, or making self-diagnosis more confusing?

Social media can give teenagers language for what they are experiencing and encourage them to seek help. However, it can also turn complex conditions into simplified checklists. Complex diagnoses can be simplified into checklists, and common traits might be mistaken for disorders.

In clinical settings, the key difference lies in what social media can't fully understand: how long the issue has been present, whether it's significantly impacting daily life, whether it's consistent across different situations, and whether there are other possible explanations for the same symptoms. In essence, social media is great at prompting the question "is something wrong?" but it still requires a thorough clinical evaluation to provide a definitive answer.

When a teen comes to you having already "diagnosed" themselves online, how do you handle that conversation?

When a teen comes in with a self-diagnosis, the first step is to be open and understand how they arrived at that point, what they're observing in themselves that led them to seek that label. I aim to validate their instinct, even if the label isn't entirely accurate. The fact that they're seeking an answer shows they've noticed something amiss, and that's something we should acknowledge. I don't automatically agree or disagree with their conclusion, but I'm genuinely curious about it. Often, asking what about that label felt like it fit reveals more than the label itself. Occasionally, I'll be direct and say this isn't quite the right name for what they're experiencing, but I'm careful not to dismiss it outright. That can make a teen feel dismissed again, which is often exactly what they feared when they hesitated to talk to an adult in the first place.

How do sleep and screen habits influence a teenager's emotional regulation?

Sleep and screen habits are closely linked when it comes to how teens feel. Teens need about 8–10 hours of sleep, but their bodies naturally want to sleep later, and screens can make it even harder. Blue light from screens can mess with melatonin production, and the constant buzz from scrolling and notifications keeps the brain active when it should be relaxing. The impact goes beyond just feeling tired. Lack of sleep can dull the prefrontal cortex (which helps with impulse control and judgment) and make the amygdala more sensitive, so not getting enough sleep doesn't just make teens feel groggy; it makes their emotional

Things like mood swings, withdrawal, or irritability are often labeled as "typical teen stuff" before anyone questions if there's something more serious. And when something seems off, parents often jump to external reasons like peer pressure or social media, instead of thinking it might be something more serious.

- **As stated by Government of Nepal, UNICEF & WHO and as highlighted in 2025 National Mental Health Campaign, 5.2% of adolescents aged 13–19 in Nepal have a diagnosable mental health condition.**
- **18.3% (nearly 1 in 5) of children aged 6–18 in Nepal report emotional or behavioural difficulties. This is also cited by WHO and UNICEF from national data**
- **1 in 7 adolescents aged 10–19 globally experiences a mental disorder.**
- **WHO identifies healthy sleep patterns as one of the important protective factors for adolescent mental health.**
- **Among adolescents, anxiety disorders are more common than depression, with both becoming more prevalent among older teenagers**
- **The WHO fact sheet also notes that suicide is the third leading cause of death among people aged 15–29 globally**
- **In Nepal's 2015 school health survey, 6.6% of adolescent students reported feeling lonely most of the time or always**

responses stronger and harder to manage. Plus, the dopamine-driven rewards in most apps create a cycle where screens steal sleep, sleep loss messes with mood, and teens turn to screens to cope, making it tough to see sleep and screens as separate issues, but rather as a feedback loop.

What signs suggest a teenager may need professional support rather than simply more time or space?

The clearest warning signs are sudden, noticeable changes lasting more than a couple of weeks: major shifts in appetite or sleep, unusual changes in talkativeness, withdrawing from friends and family, or any mention of self-harm or suicide. Losing touch with reality, such as confusion, paranoia, or hearing or seeing things others don't, also requires immediate attention.

Things Parents Do with Good Intentions That Can Backfire

- Feeling stuck on acceptance—it's easy to get caught up in "how did this happen?" and "how can this happen," which can really hold up the conversation.
- Hasty fixes—jumping straight into fixing things without first just being there for the teen.
- Overloading with questions—it's a natural instinct, but it can feel like pressure and make the teen shut down instead of opening up.
- Focusing on a "big" trigger—assuming it has to be something obvious like a breakup or peer pressure, when often it's not that straightforward.
- Going into monitor mode—once they sense distress, parents can start controlling or checking in more, which can end up feeling like a loss of trust instead of support.

FROM THEIR SIDE OF THE CONVERSATION

Teenagers on friendship, family, privacy and being understood

How can you tell the difference between a friendship that supports your well-being and one that drains it?

Yes, I think having the right group of friends deeply affects my mental health. Supportive friends give me a safe space, boost my confidence, and reduce stress during tough times. Hanging out with positive, encouraging people builds my resilience, personal growth, and a genuine sense of belonging and happiness that keeps me balanced.
Tuviah Gadia, 14

A friendship that supports your well-being makes you feel happy, respected, and comfortable. You can trust each other and share your feelings. A draining friendship often leaves you feeling stressed, sad, or unappreciated. Good friends support you, while unhealthy friendships may bring unnecessary pressure and negativity.
Prasiddha Shah, 13

Do you think the family environment can sometimes create mental pressure for a teenager?

Yes, even without realizing it, family can sometimes add to a teenager's stress. When everything is about marks,







"One thing I wish my parents understood is that I need both space and privacy. Wanting privacy doesn't mean I'm hiding things or keeping secrets from them. I just want to spend time by myself."

career, and comparing you with others, it can feel like you're never good enough. Constant arguments, little privacy, or being told you're always on your phone can make you feel misunderstood, pressured, and emotionally tired.
Arhana Saakha, 14

Do you think the adults around you have proper mental health knowledge, or mostly a superficial understanding of common issues?

I think most adults have a superficial understanding of mental health problems, especially in Nepal. They might know basic terms like "stress" or "anxiety," but real struggles usually get dismissed as "overreacting" or "just a phase." There's a big difference between hearing these words everywhere and actually getting the pressure teens deal with today, so sharing how you feel usually ends in getting advised instead of getting understood.
Arjun Sapkota, 14

Many teenagers feel adults have only a superficial understanding of mental health, leading youth to filter what they share out of fear of judgment. While peers offer relatable, stigma-free support, safe adults listen without lecturing. Additionally, casual social media use of terms like "trauma" helps normalize mental health conversations but risks creating confusion through inaccurate self-diagnosis.
Mihir Agrawal, 14

What's something you wish your parents understood about what's going on in your head, but you don't know how to say?

One thing I wish my parents understood is that I need both space and privacy. Wanting privacy doesn't mean I'm hiding things or keeping secrets from them. I just want to spend time by myself, or deal with something on my own without feeling like I'm being judged or questioned about things. I still want to be able to come to them when I need help, but I think having some space would help me feel more trusted.
Saanvi R. Shrestha, 14

What's the difference between an adult who makes you feel safe enough to open up and one who makes you shut down?

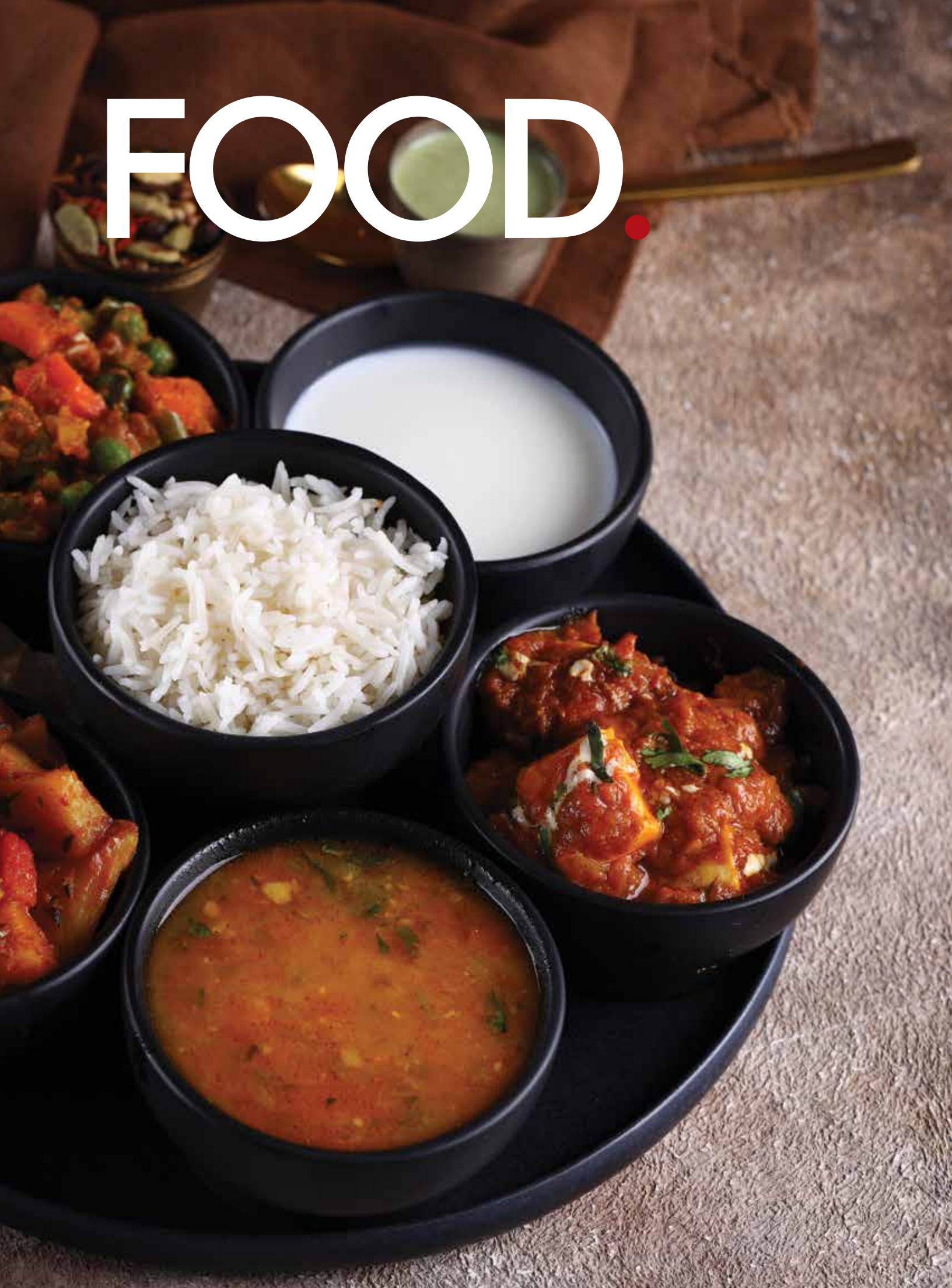
I think the biggest difference is how they react. If an adult listens to you properly, doesn't interrupt and doesn't immediately judge you and lecture you, you will feel more comfortable. But if they get angry make fun of what you are saying and starts lecturing you , you're probably going to shut down and not want to share anything else. Even if they don't agree with you, knowing that they'll listen calmly makes a big difference.
Aashriti Shrestha, 14

Do you think words such as "trauma," "anxiety" or "ADHD" are sometimes used too casually by teenagers?

Yes, I do think they can be used to casually by teenagers especially on social media. people may see a few ADHD or anxiety symptoms in a TikTok video or an Instagram reel and immediately think "I have that" without really knowing what else could be causing those feelings. it can create confusion because trauma, ADHD and anxiety are real conditions that can affect people's everyday lives in ways that aren't always shown online. I think awareness is important, but there's a difference between relating to something online whereas self-diagnosing from a few videos which can create confusion and misunderstandings
Arza shrestha,14

Do you feel you can tell your parents when something is really wrong, or do you filter what you share?

Why I think most of us filter some things or the other even if we're close with our parents. Personally, I'm pretty comfortable telling my parents when something's wrong. But sometimes I do keep things to myself. Not necessarily because I don't trust them, but sometimes I just don't know how they'll react, or I don't know how to explain what I'm feeling.
Nora Shrestha ,14


FOOD.

Food, Family & Festivities

FINDING BALANCE THIS DASHAIN

This Dashain, healthy eating doesn't have to mean saying no to sel roti, khasi ko masu or kheer. In conversation with an expert nutritionist, we explore how mindful eating, food flexibility and everyday movement can help families enjoy festive traditions without guilt, restriction or the dreaded "I need to work this off tomorrow" mentality.

By Sonal Talegaonkar

Every festival brings more than food to the table; it brings memories. The aroma of sel roti, slow-cooked curries, homemade sweets passed down through generations, family members gathering after months apart, and recipes that remind us of childhood.

Yet for many people today, these moments of joy are interrupted by an internal dialogue: Should I eat this? Will I gain weight? I will have to work it off tomorrow.

Somewhere along the way, celebration has become tangled with guilt. But perhaps this festive season, it's time to nourish not just the body, but our relationship with food itself.

How can we shift our mindset from "avoiding festive foods" to building a healthier relationship with them?

Instead of simply saying "don't avoid festive foods," introduce food flexibility. Festivals are meant to be experienced, not calculated. Rather than asking "What should I avoid?, ask "How can I enjoy this meal mindfully?" Slow down, savour traditional dishes, eat until comfortably satisfied, and let the celebration, not calorie counting, be the focus. One festive meal doesn't define your health, just as one workout doesn't define your fitness.

Why do so many people experience guilt after enjoying traditional festive foods?

Food has no moral value. A piece of sel roti isn't "bad," just as a salad isn't "good." They are simply different foods that serve different purposes; one may nourish tradition and joy, another may nourish everyday health. Both can have a place in a balanced lifestyle.

Research consistently shows women report higher levels of food-related guilt than men. Reasons include:

- Body image pressures
- Diet culture
- Social expectations
  Thinness ideals

Women, in particular, are often encouraged to "earn" their food or compensate for indulgence. time, this can turn celebrations into a mental negotiation rather than a joyful experience. Health should never require guilt to be effective.

Which festive foods deserve more appreciation, and how can families enjoy them in a balanced way?

Many of the Dashain dishes are built around whole grains, pulses, vegetables, fermented foods, dairy, nuts and locally sourced meats. The issue is rarely that a traditional food is inherently unhealthy; it is more often the quantity, cooking method, frequency and overall combination of the meal that determine how it fits into a balanced diet.

- Kwati: A mix of sprouted beans and legumes,

providing plant protein, fibre, iron and folate. Enjoy: as a nourishing soup or alongside a balanced meal.

- Dal-Bhat: A combination of rice and lentils provides carbohydrates, plant protein and fibre. Enjoy: add plenty of vegetables, greens and a moderate portion of rice.
- Khasi ko Masu (Goat Meat): A good source of high-quality protein, iron, zinc and vitamin B12. Enjoy: choose a moderate portion and go easy on excess oil and gravy.
- Dahi (Curd): Provides protein, calcium and, when containing live cultures, beneficial bacteria. Enjoy: choose plain curd rather than heavily sweetened versions.
- Chiura (Beaten Rice): An easily digestible carbohydrate and traditional staple. Enjoy: pair it with protein such as curd, eggs, legumes, meat or nuts rather than eating it alone.
- Achar: Tomato, radish, sesame, timur and other traditional ingredients add flavour and phytonutrients. Enjoy: use it as a flavourful accompaniment, keeping very salty or oily varieties moderate.
- Sel Roti: Traditionally made from rice flour and fried, making it energy-dense, but that doesn't make it "bad." Enjoy: have a portion mindfully as a festive food rather than treating it as an everyday staple.
- Kheer & Festive Sweets: Rich in energy and sugar, but also part of the cultural celebration. Enjoy: choose your favourites, savour them slowly, and don't feel the need to sample everything.

The Dashain Rule I Give My Clients:

I would rather see someone enjoy their favourite festive food mindfully and without guilt than spend the entire celebration trying to be "perfect," become excessively hungry, overeat later and then compensate with another restrictive diet.

A festive meal should leave you with a full stomach and a full heart.

Dashain is ultimately about family, gratitude, tradition and togetherness. The food is part of that story. We don't need to remove the food to make the celebration healthy; we simply need to bring awareness, balance and enjoyment back to the table.

→ Tomato, radish, sesame, timur and other traditional ingredients add flavour and phytonutrients. Enjoy: use it as a flavourful accompaniment, keeping very salty or oily varieties moderate.

Festival Rituals

- Don't arrive at the feast starving. Eat your regular meals through the day so you can enjoy the feast without feeling ravenously hungry.
- Build your plate before reaching for seconds. Start with protein, vegetables and traditional staples, then add the festive foods you genuinely want to enjoy.
- Choose your favourites. You don't need to eat every dish just because it's available. Pick the foods that make the celebration special for you.
- Slow down and savour. Eat mindfully, enjoy the flavours and conversation, and give your body time to register fullness.
- Keep portions comfortable, not perfect. A smaller serving of several favourites can be more satisfying than one huge plate.
- Stay hydrated. Keep water nearby throughout the day, particularly between meals and during family gatherings.
- Balance richer meals with lighter ones. If lunch is indulgent, let dinner be simpler; there is no need to fast or skip meals.
- Take a family walk after meals. A gentle 10-20 minute walk can support digestion and post-meal blood-sugar regulation while creating family time.
- Don't "burn off" what you ate. Movement should be about feeling good, not punishment for enjoying festive food.
- Return to your normal routine the next day. No detox, fasting or extreme restriction is required. Simply go back to your usual balanced meals, movement and sleep.

Many people try to "save calories" before a feast or compensate with extreme dieting afterwards. Is this approach helpful, or can it do more harm than good? What would you recommend instead?

Skipping meals to "save calories" often sets you up to arrive at the feast extremely hungry, making it much harder to eat slowly and recognise when you are comfortably full. You may end up eating faster, choosing more calorie-dense foods and eating beyond satisfaction.

The same applies to the next-day "punishment" skipping breakfast, fasting excessively, doing hours of cardio, or surviving on juices and salads. This can reinforce a restrict → overeat → guilt → restrict cycle rather than creating a healthy relationship with food.

Have a balanced breakfast and lunch with protein, fibre and healthy fats. Don't try to create a calorie deficit before a single meal.

Dashain Myths vs Facts

MYTH 1: "I should skip breakfast and lunch if I have a big feast at night."

FACT: Arriving extremely hungry can make it harder to eat mindfully and may encourage overeating. Eat normally through the day and arrive comfortably hungry, not starving.

MYTH 2: "One festive meal will make me gain fat."



FACT: Body weight can fluctuate temporarily after a salty or carbohydrate-rich meal because of water and glycogen changes. Meaningful fat gain comes from a sustained energy surplus over time, not one celebration.

MYTH 3: "I need to detox or fast the next day."

FACT: Your liver and kidneys already handle detoxification. After a heavy meal, simply return to regular balanced meals, hydrate well, sleep and resume normal activity. Walks help.

MYTH 4: "Sweets and sel roti are completely unhealthy."

FACT: They are energy-dense festive foods, but that doesn't make them forbidden. Portion, frequency and your overall dietary pattern matter far more than one occasional serving.

MYTH 5: "I have to burn off what I ate."

FACT: Exercise shouldn't be punishment for eating. A gentle post-meal walk can support digestion and blood-sugar management, but you don't need to "earn" or "erase" your food create a calorie deficit before a single meal.



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JAPANESE RESTAURANT

Kotetsu





A5 Steak with Garlic Rice

A must-try for meat lovers. The A5-grade beef, with its fine marbling, practically melts in your mouth rich, buttery, and deeply satisfying. The garlic rice, cooked on the same iron plate, soaks up all the beef juices, butter, and garlic, making it almost impossible to resist. (Kobe beef is also available for those who want to go all out.)

Jyo Nigiri

Kotetsu's Jyo Nigiri Sushi is a sublime experience for any sushi enthusiast. This platter features 10 pieces of expertly crafted nigiri, including salmon, tuna, sea bream, yellowtail, and salmon roe. Each piece showcases fresh, melt-in-your-mouth fish atop perfectly seasoned rice, creating a balance of flavor and texture. The salmon, in particular, stands out with its rich, buttery taste. The selection varies, ensuring a unique experience every time. Simple yet elegant, this nigiri platter captures the essence of authentic Japanese sushi in every bite



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FESTIVE HEALTH

FAMILY WEALTH

Balancing Nutrition and Fitness During Dashain

A practical guide to enjoying festive season's beloved foods without compromising family health. From balancing meat-heavy meals and festive treats to staying hydrated, moving regularly and practising food safety, the article offers simple, realistic ways to celebrate generously while making smarter choices.

By Rubina Karki

The aura of Dashain is undeniably distinctive. The morning fragrance of goat curry, the tunes of dhaki from the floor above, the tika in the forehead from the grandparents, the thriving noise of the numerous cousins arriving home from either end of the country. Celebrating Dashain isn't possible without its central aspect "Food". Sharing a generous plate with family is one of the deepest expressions of love and blessing in our culture.

The silver lining in all of this is that there is no inherent conflict in indulging in Dashain and being health-conscious; you will not have to avoid mutton curry and say a firm "no" to sel roti in order to be healthy. A few smart decisions will help you to enjoy the decadence of this season and have consistent energy through the weeks of celebrations, all the while feeling like your normal self when Tihar rolls around. Think of it less as a diet and more as a little wisdom stirred into tradition.

The Meat-Eater's Dilemma

If you belong to a family that consumes non-vegetarian food, Dashain will seem incomplete without meat - goat curry, sukuti, pakku and mutton made in a dozen different ways in a dozen different homes. Well, there's no need to feel guilty about it. You don't need to cut down on red meat completely, but consume it more wisely.

Balance the plate, not just portion control: A good rule of thumb is to fill at least half your plate with saag, seasonal vegetables or fresh achar along with the curry and rice. Greens and vegetables are high in fibre, which slows down digestion, keeps you feeling fuller for longer, and balances the 'heaviness' of the meat. When cooking for guests, just add in double the saag or whip up an extra vegetable dish. This helps everyone within reach to naturally create a more balanced plate without even realising it!

Most "traditional" curries start with a pool of oil, but as long you develop and build up flavours, you can do just as much with it using far less oil then the exact curry. For the base (onions, garlic and ginger), allow them to simmer longer to get mellow and caramalized, add oil in stages where possible and often, you will find you need far less than the actual recipe. For pakku or



fried items, try air-frying or baking. Even air-frying one meal item or one dish makes a huge difference when you apply this over two weeks of celebrating!

Marinate smart: A marinate made from yogurt, garlic, ginger, cumin and a hint of mustard oil perfectly tenderises the meat and reduces the need for excess oil while cooking. It's a small switch that keeps sukuti and roasted meats flavourful without heaviness.

Food safety matters most during Dashain. Simple steps such as refrigerating raw meat separately, packing raw meat separately from other food items, not letting any curry for more than two hours in room temperature, heating leftover meals thoroughly (should be steaming hot and not just warm) can ensure the safety of your family from food poisoning. If you opt to make sukuti at home, ensure that it is prepared by completely dehydrating the meat in a clean and well-ventilated place. Once it is done, keep it in an airtight container. When in doubt of any food that you think has been lying around for too long, it is always better to waste the food than risk the health of your family.

> Your chiura should ideally be had with dahi, boiled egg, or mutton curry on the side, and sel-roti with achaar or curry, instead of eating it plain. The protein and fat work together for slow-release energy.

Chiura, Sel Roti, and Sweets

Beaten rice, sel roti, and festive sweets are incredibly quick carbohydrates. Our body processes them quickly causing blood sugar spike and subsequent crash if they are consumed in isolation which can cause fatigue and another hunger pang to hit in a few hours. The simple way to fix this is to pair them , not avoid. Your chiura should ideally be had with dahi, boiled egg, or mutton curry on the side, instead of eating it plain. The protein and fat work together for slow-release energy. This same logic goes for your sel roti: eat it with achar and your protein-rich curry, instead of finishing three or four pieces by itself. However, if you go for sweets, try to take them after your 'main course' instead of before, or even on empty stomachs. This helps because blood sugar levels are more stable at this point.

Hydration and Alcohol

Celebration, travel, parties and afternoon fun; it's definitely easy to lose track of how much water we are taking in especially if there is a ready flow of alcohol, beer and soda in many of our gatherings. One easy tip? Always drink a full glass of water first between any drink you choose -be it an alcoholic beverage or a carbonated soft drink. This will not only help you beat that dehydration headache and body fatigue during and after a long day of partying. This will also help you cut down on how many more drinks you take as water naturally fills you up. Other than that, if available, every now and then switch a regular soda with zero sugar or diet version of it. Little adjustments here and there can make a big impact over a multiple of days in celebration.

Mindful Celebration

And the final but probably the most important thing to remember is that Dashain is not about how full your plate is but how much tika you wear on your forehead, how much blessings you receive from the elders and how much noise you make while sharing the delicious food with your loved ones. This festive season, try to eat a little slower than usual, enjoy every bite of it and be mindful to your body and its feelings instead of mindlessly filling out your plate just because it is usual or out of politeness.

Wishing You a Joyful, Healthy Dashain



Rubina Karki
Dietitian, lecturer, and PhD scholar in Nutrition. She holds a Master of Science degree in Nutrition and Dietetics and currently pursuing PhD in Nutrition. Founder: NutriFyNinja.

The Culinary Craftsmanship of the MALLA HOTEL

The Malla Hotel

THE ORIENT: A Refined Pan - Asian Taste

TUCKED AWAY on the third floor of Malla Hotel, The Orient offers a refined Pan-Asian dining experience where elegant surroundings meet thoughtfully crafted flavours. While the city outside moves at its usual pace, the restaurant offers a more peaceful setting, with warm lighting, rich wood interiors, deep red table settings, and views of the hotel's lush green garden, creating an atmosphere that feels sophisticated, intimate, and distinctly regal.



The restaurant's menu celebrates the diverse flavours of Asia, bringing together local, seasonal and international ingredients through dishes that are as carefully presented as they are prepared. From delicate dim sum and sushi to flavourful mains, The Orient offers something for diners looking to explore Asian cuisine while enjoying the comfort and polish of fine dining.

Prawn Tempura Sushi

The Prawn Tempura Sushi brings together two things that are difficult to resist: delicate sushi and the satisfying crunch of tempura. Crisp tempura-style prawns are paired with soft rice and a creamy sauce, while microgreens and edible flowers lend freshness and colour to the plate. Soy sauce and pickled ginger complete the dish, balancing its richer elements with familiar Japanese flavours. A tempting option for diners who like their sushi with an indulgent, crispy twist.





Teriyaki Chicken with Garlic Rice

Rich, savoury and comforting, the Teriyaki Chicken with Garlic Rice is a dish that brings familiar Asian flavours to the table with a more refined presentation. Tender pieces of chicken are coated in a glossy teriyaki glaze and served over fragrant garlic rice, creating a satisfying combination of sweet, savoury and aromatic notes.

Colourful Vegetable Dim Sum

Bringing colour and variety to the dim sum selection, the Colourful Vegetable Dim Sum offers a vegetarian option for diners looking for something lighter. The colourful exterior makes the selection visually appealing even before the first bite, while the filling brings a fresh contrast to the richer selections on the menu. The dish reflects The Orient's emphasis on turning traditional Asian favourites into carefully presented dining experiences.





Assorted Dim Sum

The Orient's Bestseller

The Assorted Dim Sum platter features four steamed dim sums, each bringing a different colour and filling to the table. The red and translucent varieties are filled with chicken, while the vibrant orange dim sum contains a prawn filling. Another translucent piece is filled with vegetables, creating a colourful assortment that offers something different in every bite. Served over a bowl of soy sauce and finished with delicate microgreens and edible flowers, the presentation adds an elegant touch to these traditionally comforting bites.



The Artisans of The Cuisine:
Chef De Partie - Chef Neeraj, on the lead with his kitchen team; Chef Sarban & Chef Chiran.



Avocado Caterpillar Sushi

A delicate combination of creamy avocado, soft sushi rice, and fresh herbs. The generous avocado topping gives the roll a smooth, creamy character, while the accompanying soy sauce and pickled ginger provide the familiar savoury and refreshing contrasts expected from a sushi experience. It is a particularly appealing choice for diners who enjoy lighter flavours and beautifully presented dishes.

AN INVITATION TO DINE

Scan to discover The Orient at The Malla Hotel.

The Orient, 3rd Floor, Malla Hotel
Opening Hours: 2:00 PM–10:00 PM | Closed Mondays
Private Hosting: Up to 50 guests

ARTISTIC DESSERT DELIGHTS

The dining experience at the Malla Hotel extends beyond its savoury offerings into an impressive selection of cakes and plated desserts, where pastry becomes almost theatrical.

Raspberry Delight

Playful yet sophisticated, the Raspberry Delight comes with a glossy red, mushroom-shaped raspberry cake that sits against dark chocolate “soil,” accompanied by macarons, dark ganache and ruby caviar. Its creamy texture balances the natural tartness of raspberry, leaving behind a bright, refreshing berry finish.



Berry & Cherry Variant

Served in a tall stemmed glass, this dessert creates a striking layered composition of smooth pannacotta and berry mousse, crowned with glossy cherry domes. Chocolate stems and blueberry caviar add both visual detail and bursts of flavour.



High-Tea Collection

Presented as an elaborate little edible landscape, the VIP High-Tea Collection is an artisanal assortment of pastries arranged on a wooden board beneath a sprawling chocolate bonsai tree decorated with white blossoms. Individual fruit tarts, white-chocolate-wrapped bites and glossy glazed spheres offering a variety of textures and flavours, making it particularly suited to high tea.





American Red Velvet Cake

A soft, velvety crumb layered with smooth and silky cream-cheese filling. French frosting cream and a flawless mirror-glaze coating give it a polished finish, while a sculpted royal-maroon flower crowns the cake, adding a dramatic yet elegant touch.



Velvet Strawberry Entremets

Vibrant and polished, these individual strawberry entremets pair a creamy texture with a bright strawberry fruit filling, resting on crisp sablé bases. Their vivid red mirror-glazed rings are finished with a subtle dusting of gold, creating a luxurious presentation that complements the fresh, fruity character within.

WHEN THE DAY CALLS FOR SOMETHING SWEET
Discover the bakery selection at The Malla Hotel.

Enjoy 50% Off on all the displayed items at Malla's lobby after 5 PM.

For Reservation
01-4518385
+977 9802880070



Mini Cubed Entremet

A precisely crafted cube filled with varieties of fruits and finished off with chocolate glaze and chocolate art. Its neat geometry gives it an elegant presentation, while the contrasting textures make each bite more interesting.



Chocolate Garden Amenities

Inspired by an enchanted garden, this whimsical chocolate arrangement features miniature dark-chocolate cauldrons suspended from rustic chocolate tripod stands, decorated with edible white blossoms and delicate blue butterflies. It turns a simple amenity into a memorable little discovery.



The Craftsmen Behind The Curation:
Pastry Sous Chef Niraj Pujari with his team Chef Pralhad & Chef Suresh

Dashain Home Coming

From Tika to Table

This Dashain, healthy eating doesn't have to mean saying no to sel roti, khasi ko masu or kheer. Let's explore how mindful eating, food flexibility and everyday movement can help families enjoy festive traditions without guilt, restriction or the dreaded "I need to work this off tomorrow" mentality.

By Chef Sandeep KC

Dashain is the time when the whole country comes home. Houses fill with people, the smell of meat cooking fills the air, and plates are never empty. From the day we plant jamara to the day we receive tika, food becomes the centre of everything – love, blessing, and celebration.

But our body also needs care during these heavy feast days. Ayurveda, our own traditional knowledge of health, simply says: eat in a way that keeps the digestive fire strong. When digestion is good, the food we eat turns into strength and energy. When digestion becomes weak, the same rich food can make us feel heavy, tired, or uncomfortable.

This year Dashain comes in the middle of October. The rain has stopped, the air is clear and a little dry, and the weather is slowly becoming cooler. According to Ayurveda, this is the time when Vata (the air element in our body) starts increasing. Vata makes the body dry and light, so we need warm, soft, and slightly oily food to stay balanced.

Across Nepal the same Dashain is celebrated, but the body needs slightly different food in different places. In the cold Himalayas, people need more warmth and strength. In the hills, the weather is mild and digestion is usually good. In the Terai, the air is still warmer, so lighter food works better.

In this special issue, we will look at simple ways to enjoy Dashain food – mutton, buffalo, fish, and also tasty vegetarian and vegan dishes without burdening the body. We will share easy tips using common spices like ginger, cumin, turmeric and garlic that our grandmothers already knew.

Because true celebration is not only about eating a lot. It is about eating well, feeling light, and carrying the bless

Food Tips

According to Altitude & Region

During Dashain we all eat more meat, oil, and rich food. But our body needs different care in different parts of Nepal. Here are simple, practical food tips based on where you live.

Himalayas (High Altitude – Cold & Dry)

What the body needs: Warmth, strength, and soft food that is easy to digest.

FOOD TIPS:

- Prefer slow-cooked mutton or goat with bone. Bone soup gives strength in cold weather.
- Always cook meat with ginger, garlic, cumin and a little ghee. This helps digestion.
- Eat warm food only. Avoid cold rice or leftover meat straight from the fridge.
- Add a spoon of ghee in dal or rice – it keeps the body warm and joints comfortable.







- Drink warm ginger or cumin water after heavy meals.
- If you feel heavy, eat light buckwheat or potato soup the next day.

Avoid: Too much fried sukuti or very dry meat without enough spices and liquid.

Hills (Mid-Hills – Mild Weather)

What the body needs: Balanced food (not too heavy, not too light).

FOOD TIPS:

- Goat meat (khasi) is best. It is easier to digest than buffalo.
- Cook meat with hing, cumin and ginger to reduce gas.
- Eat meat with plain rice or dhido and some green vegetables or achar.
- Do not eat very heavy meat late at night. Try to finish dinner by 8–8:30 pm.
- After 2–3 days of meat, take one light day with dal, green vegetables and less oil.
- Warm jeera water or thin buttermilk with roasted cumin helps if you feel bloated.

Good habit: Keep a small piece of ginger with salt before the big feast – it wakes up

Terai (Lowlands – Still Warm)

What the body needs: Lighter food and better digestion because the weather is warmer.

FOOD TIPS:

- Prefer fish or lean goat instead of too much buffalo meat.
- Use less oil and more spices like turmeric, cumin and coriander.
- Eat more green leafy vegetables and simple achar with meat.
- Avoid very rich and oily gravies for many days continuously.
- Drink plenty of warm water or light jeera-ajwain water.
- If you eat heavy meat at lunch, keep dinner very light (dal and rice or khichadi).

Special tip for Terai: After heavy feast days, eat moong dal and bottle gourd (lauka) – both are light and cooling.

Common Tips for Everyone (All Regions)

- Start the meal with a little ginger or warm water.
- Do not drink very cold water immediately after meat.
- Chew food well – this is the simplest way to help digestion.
- After big feast days, take one light meal of khichadi or plain dal-bhat.
- Sleep on time. Late nights + heavy food = weak digestion.

Dashain Special: Ayurvedic Kebabs

Three different styles – healthy, tasty, and easier to digest.

1. Soft & Warming Mutton Kebab (Best for Hills & Mountains)

Why Ayurveda likes it: Goat meat is lighter. Ginger, cumin and ghee help digestion and give warmth.

INGREDIENTS:

- 500g mutton (minced)







- 1 tbsp grated ginger
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp turmeric
- Pinch of hing
- 1 tbsp ghee
- Salt
- Fresh coriander

METHOD:

- Mix everything well. Make medium-sized kebabs. Cook on tawa with little ghee on low-medium heat until done.
- Tip: Do not make them too dry. Serve hot with mint-coriander chutney.

Light Buffalo or Chicken Kebab (Good for Kathmandu & Hills)

WHY AYURVEDA LIKES IT
Buffalo is heavy, so we use more digestive spices and less oil. Chicken is lighter and easier.

INGREDIENTS:

- 500g minced buffalo or chicken
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp black pepper
- Pinch of hing
- 1 tbsp ghee
- Salt

Method:

- Mix all ingredients. Shape into kebabs. Cook slowly on tawa with little ghee.
- Tip: For buffalo, cook a bit longer on low heat. For chicken, do not overcook. Eat with thin beaten rice or salad.

Soft Fish or Vegetable Kebab (Best for Terai & Light Eating)

FISH VERSION:

- 500g boneless fish (mashed)
- 1 tbsp ginger
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp turmeric
- Pinch of hing
- 1 tbsp rice flour or besan (for binding)
- Salt
- Little ghee for cooking

VEGETABLE VERSION (VEGAN)

- 2 boiled potatoes + 1 cup mixed boiled vegetables (carrot, beans, peas)
- 1 tbsp ginger
- 1 tsp cumin
- ½ tsp turmeric
- Pinch of hing
- 2 tbsp besan
- Salt
- Fresh coriander

Method:

- Mix everything, make small kebabs, and cook on tawa with little ghee until golden. Tip: These are light and good when you want a break from heavy meat.

Simple Ayurveda Serving Tips for Kebabs

- Always eat kebabs hot.
- Serve with fresh ginger-mint chutney or simple tomato achar.
- Avoid heavy mayonnaise or creamy sauces.
- Best eaten at lunch.
- After eating, drink warm cumin or ginger water.

Ayurvedic Mutton Offal Recipe

(Bhutan style – lighter & easier to digest)

In many Nepali homes, mutton offal (liver, heart, intestine, kidney, etc.) is a special Dashain delicacy. Offal is nutritious but heavy and can cause heaviness or smell if not cooked properly. This version uses Ayurvedic principles to make it lighter and better for digestion.

Soft & Digestive Mutton Bhutun

INGREDIENTS (FOR 4 PEOPLE):

- 500g mixed mutton offal (liver, heart, intestine, kidney – cleaned well)
- 2 tbsp ghee
- 1 big onion (finely sliced)
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger (grated)
- 1 tbsp garlic (chopped)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp black pepper
- Pinch of hing (asafoetida)
- 2 green chillies (optional)
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander leaves

Method:

- Clean the offal very well. Boil it in water with a little turmeric and salt for 10–12 minutes. Drain the water completely (this removes excess smell and heaviness).
- Cut the boiled offal into small pieces.
- Heat ghee in a pan. Add cumin seeds and hing.
- Add onion and cook until soft and light golden.
- Add ginger, garlic and green chilli. Cook for 1 minute.
- Add all the dry spices (cumin powder, coriander, turmeric, black pepper) and salt.
- Add the offal pieces and mix well. Cook on medium heat for 8–10 minutes until the spices coat the meat and the water dries up.
- Finish with fresh coriander leaves.

Ayurveda Tips:

- Always boil offal first and throw the water – this makes it lighter.
- Ghee + ginger + hing is important to support digestion.
- Eat this dish at lunch, not late at night.
- Serve with plain rice or a little beaten rice (chiura).
- After eating, drink warm cumin or ginger water.

Dashain Special: Nepali-Style Rayo & Mixed Vegetable Kimchi (Our own tangy, probiotic side dish)

Korean flavours with Nepali fusion, made with local rayo (mustard greens), radish, cucumber and simple spices that every Nepali kitchen already has. It is fresh, slightly sour, crunchy, and full of natural goodness for the gut.

During Dashain we eat a lot of meat and rich food. This kimchi works like a smart friend on the plate. It helps digestion, adds freshness, and balances the heaviness of meat and oil.

NEPALI RAYO-RADISH-CUCUMBER KIMCHI

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 bunches fresh rayo (mustard greens)
- 1 medium radish (mulo) – cut into thin strips
- 1 cucumber – cut into thin half-moons
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp grated ginger
- 4–5 garlic cloves (crushed)
- 1–2 green chillies (optional)
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp cumin seeds (lightly crushed)
- Juice of 1 lemon or 2 tbsp local vinegar
- Fresh coriander leaves

METHOD:

- Wash rayo well and chop roughly.
- Mix rayo, radish and cucumber with salt. Keep for 20–30 minutes so they release water.
- Squeeze out extra water.
- Add ginger, garlic, green chilli, turmeric, cumin, lemon juice and coriander.
- Mix everything well with clean hands.
- Keep in a clean glass or steel container. Ready to eat after 2–3 hours. Tastes even better the next day.

Why Families Will Love It

- It is fresh and crunchy — children and elders both enjoy it.
- It cuts the richness of mutton, bhutun and oily food.
- Looks beautiful on the Dashain thali with its green and white colours.

Why Serve It with Rice or Beaten Rice (Chiura)?

- With plain rice: The mild sourness and crunch make every bite of rice more interesting.
- With beaten rice (chiura): Perfect combination. The lightness of chiura + the tang of kimchi feels refreshing, especially after heavy meat dishes.
- Many people say this combination feels lighter on the stomach and they can enjoy the feast longer.

Good for Gut

The natural fermentation and the fibre from rayo, radish and cucumber support good bacteria in the stomach. It helps reduce heaviness, bloating and that "too full" feeling that often comes during Dashain.

Serve a small bowl of this Nepali kimchi with every meat thali. Your family will ask for it again and again.



Chef Sandeep Khatri
A Glion-educated culinary expert, integrates psychology and food technology, champions Raithane Food, minimizing post-harvest losses, and advocates zero waste.

During Dashain we eat a lot of meat and rich food. This kimchi works like a smart friend on the plate. It helps digestion, adds freshness, and balances the heaviness of meat and oil.





Bring a Taste of Korea to Your Table







KOREAN FOOD has made its way from screens and restaurants into everyday cravings. From ramen and crunchy snacks to savoury sauces, refreshing drinks and pantry essentials, more Nepali consumers are discovering that enjoying Korean flavours at home can be surprisingly simple.

Seoul Korean Pasal (K-Food Antenna Shop) brings that experience closer with a wide range of authentic Korean food and beverage products, all under one roof. Located in Thamel and Pokhara, the mart is a sister company of the renowned Thamel Picnic Korean restaurant, making it a convenient destination for both Korean food enthusiasts and first-time explorers.

At Seoul Korean Pasal, discovering Korean food is easier, more affordable and closer to home.

So, why not make this festive season a time to bring a Korean twist to your celebrations?

Whether Korean food is already part of your routine or you are simply curious to try something new, Seoul Korean Pasal makes the experience easy. Its selection is designed for everyone from students and K-drama enthusiasts to families, home cooks and restaurant owners. And with comparatively affordable prices and regular offers, exploring Korean flavours does not have to feel like an occasional splurge.

This festive season, Seoul Korean Pasal is bringing special offers for those looking to stock up or try something new.

Ssamjang Korean BBQ Sauce, 170g

1+1 at just NPR 600

Perfect for adding a rich, savoury Korean flavour to BBQs, grilled foods and festive meals.

Makgeolli Banana

1+1 at just NPR 850

A fun Korean favourite for those looking to discover something beyond the usual festive drinks.

As families gather for festivals, the dining table becomes a place for tradition, conversation and indulgence. Adding a few new flavours can make those familiar moments even more exciting.

And this is only the beginning. With plans to expand its selection of Korean food products and eventually introduce K-beauty and Korean utensils, Seoul Korean Pasal is growing into a broader Korean lifestyle destination.

Seoul Korean Pasal is where you can discover Korean flavours without travelling far.

Location

Thamel (In the alley of Thamel Picnic Korean) & Pokhara

Contact Details:
Kathmandu:
+977 9818656760
Pokhara:
9715065111

PARENTING.



A FESTIVE REFLECTION

The True Meaning of Home



Festivals has a way of bringing us back to what truly anchors us: family, familiar rituals, childhood memories and the feeling of belonging. This reflective piece explores how, amid modern life and physical distance, festivals remind us that home is less about a place and more about the people, traditions and quiet moments that continue to connect us across generations.

By Rachana Giri Sherpa

AN AUTUMN THING

settles over Nepal that is just something different. After the much-awaited monsoon rains are over, skies clear up, air becomes fresh and the rolling hills appear to be washed in golden sunlight. The neighborhoods are a buzz, markets have turned brighter and every other person is asking the same question again, "When are you returning home for Dashain?"

Dashain is much more than just a festival, it is a deeply rooted sense of home and family. For most of us, "home" isn't just a physical place. It is the emotion and sound of a mother calling us in for dinner, the shared laughter of siblings when eating together, the quiet warmth of grandparents telling old stories along with the blanket surrounding each child, and the comfort of being together after a long day. Dashain has a gentle way of pulling us back to these quiet, essential relationships that hold our lives together.

As children, we associated Dashain with simple joys which include the brand-new clothes, flying kites and having those competition with cousin and siblings, swinging on tall bamboo ping which is so mandatory as even adult swing on the very day to make sure they leave the ground just for the time being, delicious food, and receiving tika, jamara, and blessings from our elders. Over time, however, we realize that the true heart of the festival lies beyond those traditions. It lives in the people we return to, the memories we recreate, and the heritage we quietly inherit.

Culture in Small Moments

Our culture thrives in these small, intentional acts of sprouting jamara, putting tika, sharing a home cooked meal, or passing down a custom that needs no explanation because its meaning is instantly felt. Each ritual bridge generation, giving the younger ones a grounding sense of where they come from.

In the middle of our busy modern lives schedule filled with studies, careers, and endless responsibilities, it is easy to get lost in the noise. Many of us live away in different cities or foreign countries. Yet when Dashain arrives, we brave crowded roads and long travel hours just to head back toward our ancestral homes. The journey may be exhausting, but it is worth every mile because we aren't just traveling to a location; we are traveling back to familiar faces, childhood memories, and a true sense of belonging.

"Physical distance cannot decline the love and belongingness that we carry in our heart. The craving to return to that old memories is always within us"

For those who cannot make the trip back, the season can feel bittersweet. A phone call replaces a family dinner, and a video screen stands in for a physical hug. But distance does not break what truly anchors us.

Staying Anchored in a Fast World

In a world moving faster by the day, holding onto our cultural roots matters more than ever. This doesn't mean resisting progress; it means understanding the deep meaning behind our traditions and carrying that forward, even as the world shifts around us. We can live modern, forward thinking lives while remaining deeply connected to the stories and relationships that shaped us.

To truly hold onto the festive spirit means celebrating with gratitude, kindness, and togetherness: making room for those who are lonely, honoring those who cannot be with us, and treasuring the people who make our lives feel complete.

As the cool autumn breeze rolls in and Dashain draws near, remember that the goal isn't just to travel home, but to remember what home truly means. It lives in the laughter around the dinner table, an elder's blessing, and the enduring connections that remind us who we are.

I wish this season our family comes closure and we create all new happiness, memories, and never let our inner child die that craves for this moment.



Rachana Giri Sherpa
Rachana Giri Sherpa is a psychology professional, counselor, and trainer with experience in working with children, adolescents and communities. Passionate about mental health, counselling and personal development. She is also a valuable member of Smart Parenting Nepal .



FESTIVALS THROUGH A

Child's Eyes

Festivals are often planned around rituals, food and family gatherings, but children experience them through emotion, sensory stimulation and small moments of connection. This piece explores how parents can make festive celebrations more inclusive and meaningful by respecting children's boundaries, involving them in traditions and creating memories rooted in belonging rather than perfect behaviour.

By Priyanka Chaguthi

Creating Connection, Not Just Celebrations

The house was unusually busy that morning. The kitchen was filled with the familiar smell of festive food, someone was looking for a missing piece of clothing, grandparents were expected to arrive soon, and the living room was slowly filling with laughter and conversations. In the middle of all this, a little child stood quietly beside their mother, holding onto her hand.

"Go, say Namaste."

The child looked at the relative standing in front of them and hid a little further behind their mother.

"Don't be shy. Go greet them."

The child still didn't move.

To the adults, it may have looked like shyness, stubbornness or even bad manners. But what if, through the child's eyes, the scene looked completely different? There were unfamiliar faces, many voices, new smells, people asking questions, expecting greetings, and a routine that felt very different from an ordinary day.

For the adults, it was a celebration. For the child, it was a completely new emotional and sensory experience.

When Celebration Looks Different to a Child

This is something we often forget when we celebrate festivals with children. We experience festivals through years of memories, cultural understanding and familiarity. We know who is coming, why we are gathering, why certain rituals are important and what is expected of us. Children are experiencing many of these things for the very first time.

For a child, a festival may be the smell of food coming from the kitchen, the excitement of wearing new clothes, the sound of grandparents arriving, cousins running through the house, colourful decorations, stories told by elders and the anticipation of something special happening. These small experiences slowly become part of a child's emotional memory.

But festivals can also be overwhelming. Crowded homes, loud music, unfamiliar relatives, travelling, changes in sleep and eating routines, constant social interaction and expectations to "behave properly" can be a lot for a young child.

A child who becomes irritable after several hours of visiting relatives may not be trying to spoil the celebration. A child who refuses to hug someone may not be disrespectful. A child who suddenly wants to go home may simply be saying, in the only way they know how, "I have had enough."

Beyond "Good Behaviour"

When we understand behaviour as communication, our response begins to change.

Instead of immediately saying, "Why are you behaving like this?" we can pause and wonder, "What might my child be experiencing right now?"

Instead of immediately saying, "Why are you behaving like this?" we can pause and wonder, "What might my child be experiencing right now?"

That small shift can make festivals much more meaningful.

Imagine a child who does not want to hug a relative. Instead of insisting, "Go hug them, don't be rude," we could say, "You can say Namaste when you're ready." We can teach respect without ignoring the child's comfort.

This doesn't mean that children should never be encouraged to greet people or participate in family traditions. It means we can guide them without turning every interaction into a test of obedience.

Festivals can already bring a lot of stimulation. When we add pressure "Smile," "Sit properly," "Say hello," "Don't make a scene," "Be a good child", the child may begin to associate family gatherings with performance rather than connection.

Perhaps our role is not to make children perfectly well-behaved during celebrations, but to help them navigate these experiences while feeling safe and connected.

Let Them Belong to the Celebration

Festivals are full of opportunities for children to feel that they belong.

But often, we involve children only after everything is prepared. The food is already cooked.

The house is already decorated. The rituals are already planned. Then we tell children what to wear, where to sit, whom to greet and how to behave.

What if we invited them into the process instead?

Let them help arrange flowers. Let them assist with simple cooking. Let them choose a decoration. Let them help prepare the space. Let them listen to grandparents explain why a particular tradition is followed. Let them ask questions even when the questions seem obvious to us.

They may not do everything perfectly. They may make a mess. Their decoration may not look like ours. But through participation, something much more important is happening.

They are developing a sense of belonging.

A child helping to prepare food is learning more than a recipe. They are experiencing, "I have a place in this family."

A child listening to a grandparent's story is learning more than family history. They are discovering, "My family has a story, and I am part of it."

A child participating in a tradition is not simply learning to follow instructions. They are slowly developing a connection with their culture and family identity.

Traditions become meaningful when children understand the feeling and purpose behind them not simply when they learn to perform them correctly.

And perhaps we don't need to preserve every tradition exactly as it was. We can preserve the values while allowing children to experience them in ways that are developmentally appropriate.

What Will They Remember?

Then there is food, the centre of so many family celebrations.

For adults, preparing festive food can sometimes feel like another responsibility on a long list. But for a child, the kitchen can become a place filled with memories.

The smell of a particular dish. The way a grandmother prepares it. Sneaking a tiny taste. Sitting around the table with family. Listening to adults talk. Laughing together.

Years later, the child may not remember every dish that was served. But they may remember sitting beside Aama while she prepared something special.

They may remember the sound of everyone laughing at the dining table. They may remember being allowed to help.

This is how ordinary moments become extraordinary memories.

We often think about what we are giving children during festivals: new clothes, gifts, food, outings and experiences. But perhaps one of the greatest gifts is something that costs nothing: our presence.

Putting the phone aside for a while. Listening to their endless stories. Sitting beside them while they eat. Letting them show us what they made. Taking a break when they are overwhelmed. Laughing with them. Telling them stories about our own childhood.

These are the moments children carry forward.

Years from now, they may not remember exactly what they wore or how much was spent on the celebration. They may not remember whether the house was perfectly decorated or whether every ritual happened exactly as planned.

But they may remember how it felt to be surrounded by family.

Did they feel included?
Did they feel safe?
Did someone notice when they were tired?
Were their questions welcomed?
Were they allowed to participate?
Did home feel warm?

Perhaps this is the deeper purpose of celebrating festivals with children. Not simply to teach them rituals, but to give them a sense of connection, identity and belonging.

Festivals come and go. Decorations are eventually taken down. Food is finished. New clothes become ordinary clothes.

But the feeling of belonging can stay.

So, this festive season, perhaps we can slow down and look at the celebration from a different perspective. Not only through the eyes of the adult who is preparing everything, but through the eyes of the child who is experiencing it all.

Because the most beautiful celebration may not be the one where everything goes perfectly.

It may be the one where, somewhere between the food, laughter, traditions and beautiful chaos, a child quietly learns:

"This is my family. This is my culture. This is my home. And I belong here."



Priyanka Chaguthi
Priyanka Chaguthi is the Founder and Consultant of Vygotsky Child Parent Consulting and Learning Center, where she specializes in child psychology, emotional regulation, and brain-based parenting approaches. Her signature course, Know Your Child's Brain, has emerged as one of the most impactful learning platforms for parents and educators, with multiple successful batches conducted both online and offline. For consultations, trainings, or collaborations, she can be reached at:
pchaguthi6@gmail.com

We don't need to preserve every tradition exactly as it was. We can preserve the values while allowing children to experience them in ways that are developmentally appropriate.

A Morning at Dhulikhel Lodge Resort

WHERE THE HIMALAYAS EXHALE









There is a particular silence that exists only above 1,500 metres, thin, clean, unhurried. At Dhulikhel Lodge Resort, perched on a forested ridge in Kavrepalanchowk, this silence arrives with the first blue light over the Himalayan range and settles into the pine-scented air, staying with guests long after they've left.

Rooms open onto sweeping mountain views, from Deluxe Couple Rooms to Signature Suites, each designed to let the peaks do the talking. Mornings often begin with guided yoga overlooking the ridgeline, followed by an unhurried breakfast while forest trails invite guests to walk their thoughts into order, or simply sit still as the hills change colour for hours.

What sets the resort apart is its rootedness in Kavre itself: local produce, local craft, and the easy warmth of a region that has welcomed travellers to its ridgelines for generations. Close enough to Kathmandu for a weekend, far enough to feel like a genuine departure, Dhulikhel Lodge Resort offers travellers something rare, permission to simply be still.

Dhulikhel Lodge Resort

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BODY.



Finding Stillness in a Season of Change

As Dashain and autumn invite us to pause, reflect and reconnect, Vijay Vaidya explores the timeless wisdom of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and its relevance to modern life. Through the four padas, he reflects on practice, presence, leWtting go and finding inner stillness amid life's constant changes.

By Vijay Vaidya

When thinking about what to write about this month, my mind kept coming back to the changing of the seasons.

There is something so special about this time of year. The skies seem a little clearer, the mornings a little cooler, and the first hints of autumn begin to appear. For us Nepalese, it also marks the arrival of Dashain, a season of homecomings, blessings, family gatherings and gratitude. It is a time when life, even for a little while, seems to slow down.

As I reflected on what autumn and Dashain represent, I found myself thinking about the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

The first time I picked up the book, I have to admit, I found it quite difficult to understand. The sutras are incredibly short, sometimes just a single sentence but somehow contain layers of meaning. I would read them over and over, wondering if I was missing something.

It wasn't until I completed my yoga teacher training in Mysore, India, that those teachings began to come alive. Through guided discussions with my teachers, daily practice, meditation and self-reflection, I realized the Yoga Sutras are not simply an ancient philosophical text. They are a guide to understanding ourselves and how we move through life.

The Yoga Sutras are divided into four chapters, or padas, each representing a different stage of the journey.

SAMADHI PATA

The first, Samadhi Pada, introduces the purpose of yoga: calming the fluctuations of the mind so we can see life more clearly. One of its most famous teachings is, "Yoga is the calming of the fluctuations of the mind." In today's fast-paced world, where our attention is constantly pulled in different directions, this feels more relevant than ever. As autumn encourages nature to slow down, perhaps it gently reminds us to do the same.

SADHANA PADA

The second chapter, Sadhana Pada, is about practice. Patanjali explains that lasting change doesn't come from reading books or attending the occasional yoga class, it comes through consistent practice, self-discipline and self-reflection. I always think this mirrors the spirit of Dashain. The festival isn't meaningful because of a single day; it's the traditions we return to year after year, the rituals we continue, and the moments we share with loved ones that give it such significance.

VIBHUTI PADA

The third chapter, Vibhuti Pada, explores the deeper effects of meditation and concentration. It speaks about the abilities and insights that can arise through dedicated practice, but it also reminds us not to become attached to them. This feels like a beautiful lesson during the festive season. While we celebrate with new clothes, delicious food and gatherings, the true richness of Dashain has never been found in material things, it is found in the connections we nurture and the gratitude we carry.

KAIVALYA PADA

Finally, Kaivalya Pada speaks about liberation; finding lasting inner peace and freedom from the worries, fears and attachments that often consume us. While this may sound like a lofty goal, I like to think Patanjali was simply reminding us that happiness isn't something we chase; it's something we uncover when the mind becomes quieter and more present.

The older I get, the more I realize yoga extends far beyond the physical postures we practice on the mat. It influences how we respond to difficult moments, how we treat others, and how we move through the changing seasons of life.

Perhaps that is why these teachings came to mind as Dashain approaches. Just as we clean our homes before welcoming the festival, maybe this is also an opportunity to clear a little space within ourselves to let go of old worries, soften expectations, forgive where we can, and make room for gratitude. Nature does this every autumn. The trees don't cling to their leaves; they let them go, trusting that new growth will come in its own time.

This Dashain, amidst the celebrations, family reunions and the excitement of the season, I hope you also find a few quiet moments for yourself. Whether it's through yoga, meditation, a morning walk, or simply taking a few slow breaths, perhaps that's the greatest blessing we can give ourselves.

Sometimes, the most profound teachings aren't found in complicated words. They're found in learning to pause, to be present, and to appreciate the season we're in, both around us and within us.



VIJAY VAIDYA, is a yoga teacher with over a decade of experience. Originally from Nepal, he moved to Bali in 2019, where he continues to live and host immersive yoga retreats. Vijay completed his yoga teacher training and certification in Mysore, India, the birthplace of Ashtanga Yoga, and is certified in Ashtanga Yoga (Level 1) as well as Postnatal and Prenatal Yoga.

Celebrating Mindfully



This conversation explores the psychological side of Dashain, from family tensions and social-media comparison to perfectionism, grief, emotional dissonance and nostalgia. Rather than presenting mindfulness as simply "staying positive," it examines how we can make space for both joy and discomfort while celebrating in ways that feel authentic, grounded and emotionally healthy.

By Sneha Agrawal

Does the structure of festivals and traditions actually support wellbeing, or can it also become a source of anxiety?
Honestly, it can be both. Festivals bring us together; they give us that warm, belonging-kind of joy and a reason to pause and feel grateful. That's the good part. But then there's the other side: the pressure to get everything "right," the budget stress, the family drama, and the effort to make it all look perfect. It's a lot. The trick is not taking traditions too literally.

How does comparison during a festival like Dashain affect our sense of belonging or self-worth?
Social media has kind of changed the whole game for Dashain. It's nice seeing everyone's photos, but scrolling through a highlight reel can quietly mess with your head; you start wondering if your celebration measures up, especially if money's tight, family's complicated, or you're dealing with a loss this year. Here's the thing to remember: nobody's posting their arguments or their empty bank account. It's all edited. So try to stay grounded in what Dashain is actually about: being with people you love, feeling grateful, that kind of thing. Put the phone down for a bit and just be there.

From a psychological the pressure to appear perfect actually come from in festive season?
A lot of it we put on ourselves; honestly, nobody hands you a checklist, but somehow you feel like there is one. Part of it comes from growing up watching how our families "always" did things. Part of it comes from social norms. And a big chunk these days comes from social media, where everyone's home looks spotless, and every gift looks perfect. Deep down, we all just want to feel accepted, so we chase whatever we think "good enough" looks like. That's how perfectionism sneaks in; suddenly, your worth feels tied to how good the celebration turned out.

Mindfulness encourages us to be present, but what if being fully present during family gatherings means facing unresolved conflict, grief, or loneliness?
Yeah, it can. Being fully present isn't always comfortable; sometimes it means old arguments or sad feelings show up right when you least expect them, at the dinner table or wherever. A lot of people think mindfulness means forcing yourself to feel happy or just ignoring the hard stuff. It's actually the opposite: it's noticing what you're feeling, being kind to yourself about it, and not letting it completely take over either. Pushing feelings away might feel easier in the moment, but sitting with them (even the uncomfortable ones) is usually what actually helps you heal.

What are the long-term psychological effects of "performing happiness" during culturally expected joyful occasions?
Putting on a smile once in a while is normal; we all do it. But if you're constantly faking "I'm fine!" every single festival, year after year, it wears you down. That gap between how you actually feel and what you're showing people has a name: 'emotional dissonance', and over time it leads to exhaustion, stress, and honestly, feeling more alone, not less. It also teaches you that it's not okay to struggle, which makes it even harder to ask for help later. But real wellbeing was never about being happy 24/7.

Dashain is often associated with nostalgia. When does nostalgia become psychologically unhealthy?
Nostalgia feels nice; it connects you to who you are and where you came from. But it can turn into a trap when you're so busy trying to recreate your childhood Dashain that you can't actually enjoy the one happening right now. It becomes unhealthy when you're constantly comparing today to some perfect memory, feeling disappointed no matter what, or refusing to let things change. Life moves, families change, and celebrations change with them, and that's okay. You don't have to let go of the past to enjoy the present. Just hold onto the good memories while staying open to whatever this year's Dashain actually looks like.

Deep down, we all just want to feel accepted, so we chase whatever we think "good enough" looks like. That's how perfectionism sneaks in; suddenly, your worth feels tied to how good the celebration turned out.



SNEHA AGRAWAL CHAUDHARY is an Experienced licensed psychologist Holding a Master's Degree in Applied Psychology from the esteemed University of Delhi, Sneha specializes in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Currently practicing at Norvic International Hospital.

HOME.

The Festive Reset

Prepare Your Home Before You Decorate It

By Malika Joshi

Festive preparation often begins with a shopping list: new cushions, flowers, diyos, tableware, perhaps something shiny that looked irresistible in a store. But before bringing anything new home, there is one less glamorous ritual worth doing first: making space for it.

As we welcome our big festivals, a festive reset can transform your home without requiring a complete makeover. The idea is simple: remove, repair, reorganise, then decorate.

Start With What No Longer Belongs

Walk through your home with fresh eyes. Look at the things that have quietly accumulated over the year: clothes nobody wears, expired pantry items, broken electronics, unused containers, children's toys they have outgrown and décor that has lost its place.



Instead of attempting the entire house in one exhausting weekend, work room by room. Create three categories: keep, donate/sell as a thrifted item, and discard. For family items with sentimental value, pause before throwing them away. The goal isn't minimalism for its own sake; it is creating a home where useful and meaningful things have room to breathe.

Repair Before You Replace

Festivals are an excellent deadline for finally fixing the things you've been ignoring. Tighten loose handles, repair dripping taps, replace burnt-out bulbs, touch up chipped paint and fix

Reorganise for Real Life

Festive season often means more cooking, entertaining and relatives moving through the house. Reorganise accordingly. Clear kitchen counters, make frequently used utensils accessible and create space for serving dishes. In the living room, arrange seating so conversations feel natural rather than forcing everyone into a furniture obstacle course.

If guests are staying, prepare bedding, towels and storage space in advance. A small amount of planning can make a crowded home feel surprisingly comfortable.

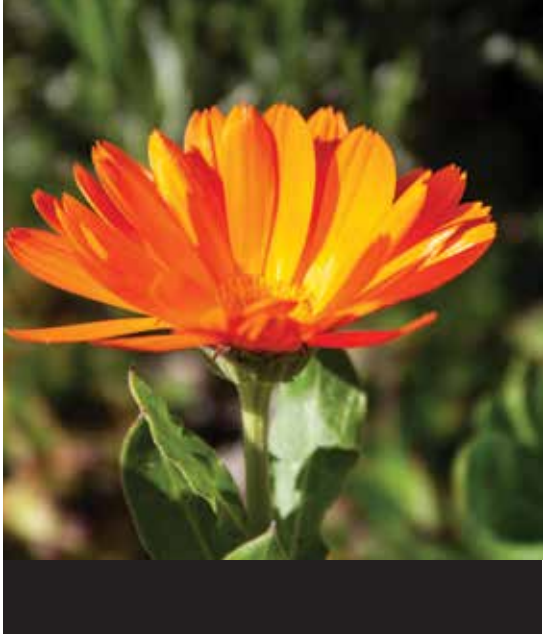
Now, Decorate

Only after the reset should the festive details arrive. Fresh flowers stand out more against uncluttered surfaces.

This Dashain, let decorating be the final layer, not the starting point. First make space for the festival. Then make space for the people who make it meaningful.


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The Monsoon Hangover

As the monsoon retreats, September becomes a crucial reset point for the garden. This piece guides gardeners through restoring rain-depleted soil, preparing festive blooms like marigolds and chrysanthemums, and sowing winter flowers, while reflecting on gardening as a practice of patience, renewal and resilience.

By Mamta Khatri

It is that time of the year when we clean up the messy aftermath of the big rains and prepare the garden for the festive season ahead.

Season's greetings from The Green Owl family.

As we transition into the last quarter of the year, we welcome Sharad Ritu, the season of renewal, family reunions and preparations for our biggest festivals, Dashain and Tihar.

For gardeners, September comes with a bundle of promises and excitement. We have the responsibility of growing ingredients vital for the festivities, and we have to grow them on time to match the calendar.

So yes, September is a month gardeners look forward to with renewed enthusiasm, eagerness and plans.

It means working on wet soil, nourishing it and, most importantly, getting the timing right.

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Gardeners have to look beyond the immediate and prepare the garden to sow seeds for winter blooms like Pansies, Snap Dragons, Petunias, Calendula and Dianthus.

If you want a floral winter garden, tick tock, tick tock, the clock is ticking and there is a lot of work to be done.

To start the transition, we need to work on depleted soils. The soil gets waterlogged and compact, making it difficult for seeds and roots to flourish. Something has to be done if you want to be surrounded by beautiful blooms.

How do we do that?

Let me briefly explain the process as simply as I can.

The first thing we do once the rains have stopped is manually loosen the soil. Start by gently breaking up the hard, crusty layer on your pots and garden beds to let air reach the lower layers. Resist the urge to water the soil right away. Let it breathe for at least 24–48 hours, allowing it to dry naturally and reducing fungal growth.

Then comes the feeding part, with generous helpings of well-decayed vermicompost. Feeding plants with organic material will not only replenish the soil but also reintroduce a beneficial ecosystem. The basic logic is to gently neutralise the acidity that builds up due to constant rain. Along with vermicompost, many gardeners use wood ash (Kharani). Wood ash is alkaline and helps neutralise acidity while slowly releasing potassium, nourishing the soil and preparing it to produce beautiful blooms.

Let us now turn our attention back to Marigolds and Chrysanthemums, the main headliners of Dashain and Tihar. This is the time to shift the plant's energy from growing leaves to producing flowerheads.

Stop 'pinching' back your Chrysanthemums now that we are into September, as you do not want to delay the growth of your blooms.

Instead, switch to 'debudding'. Identify the healthiest crown bud sitting at the centre and remove the smaller buds surrounding it.

This allows the plant's nutrients to feed the remaining healthy blooms, giving them an extra boost of growth.

The next step is to upgrade the soil with phosphorus-rich fertilisers like Mustard Oil Cake liquids and bone meal. Apply this directly to the soil every 15 days. Once you see the buds opening, stop fertilising.

Marigolds and Chrysanthemums both need at least six hours of sunlight, so be sure not to keep them in a shady spot all day.

Support the stems and branches, as they can become droopy once the flowers grow bigger. Water the plants thoroughly in the mornings, and check for aphids and Rose Slugs that can damage the plant overnight. I prefer using Neem spray to fight these garden pests, as it is safer than chemical sprays.

As you can see, there is no finish line when it comes to gardening. Nature is constantly in motion, and we need to keep up with her.

THE GREEN OWL
A plant shop by manzee blooms


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Set the Table

This festive season, your dining table deserves more than a pile of plates.

This festive season, give your dining table a little more attention than simply using it as a place to serve food. Explore simple, achievable ways to create an aesthetic festive table using traditional Nepali elements, everyday crockery, flowers, diyas and thoughtful details, turning everyday meals into a more memorable family experience.



Set the Mood

For most Nepali households, the dining table has a fairly straightforward job: hold the dal, bhat, tarkari, achar and enough plates to feed whoever happens to walk through the door. During festivals, its workload increases dramatically. It becomes a landing zone for every food, ranging from sel roti, sweets, fruits, snacks, tea and approximately seventeen serving bowls that somehow all need to fit at once.

But what if, this festive season, we treated the table as part of the celebration itself?

Table setting, or the art of intentionally arranging your dining table, is common in Western cultures but still relatively unfamiliar in everyday Nepali homes. It can sound unnecessarily fancy, almost like something reserved for restaurants or weddings. Yet the idea is much simpler: make the dining table stand out before the food even arrives.

And Dashain is perhaps the perfect excuse to try.

Start With What You Already Have

A beautiful table does not require a shopping spree. In fact, the most charming festive tables often begin with things already sitting inside your cupboards.

Use your everyday dinnerware, then bring out the nicer plates or glasses you usually save "for guests." Add a simple table runner, a clean cotton cloth or even a traditional textile as the base. Wooden trays, brass utensils, ceramic bowls and woven table mats can add warmth while connecting the setting to a distinctly Nepali aesthetic.

Bring a Little Nepal to the Table

Festive table styling does not have to imitate Western dining culture. Nepal already has an abundance of beautiful materials, textures and traditions that can become part of the setting.

A small brass diya, marigold flowers, seasonal leaves, traditional pottery or a few locally made decorative pieces can instantly give the table character. Even a simple bowl filled with marigolds can become the centrepiece.

For Dashain, consider using earthy colours, natural textures and traditional elements rather than covering the table in plastic decorations. The result feels festive without looking like a showroom exploded.

Create a Centrepiece, Not an Obstacle

The centre of the table deserves attention, but nobody wants to conduct dinner around a decorative mountain.

Keep your centrepiece low enough for people to see each other across the table. A row of small flower arrangements, candles, diyas or seasonal fruit can work beautifully.

Leave enough room for serving dishes, because no amount of aesthetic styling can compensate for having nowhere to put the momo platter.

Make It a Family Ritual

Perhaps the best part of festive table setting is that it does not have to become another task for one person, usually the person already cooking everything.

Make setting the table a family activity.

Children can arrange napkins or flowers. Teenagers can experiment with the centrepiece. Someone can be responsible for music. Someone else can polish the brassware that has been sitting untouched for eleven months. Once everyone gets a role, it won't be like a chore.

This festive season, before filling the dining table with food, give it a little thought. Clear the clutter, bring out the good crockery, light a diya, add a few flowers and create a setting that makes everyone want to sit down.

The food may disappear in twenty minutes. The feeling of gathering around a table that was prepared with care can stay much longer.

Use your everyday dinnerware, then bring out the nicer plates or glasses you usually save "for guests." Add a simple table runner, a clean cotton cloth or even a traditional textile as the base.

MARKET.



Leapmotor B03X (A10) becomes 2nd highest-selling vehicle in China

The all-new Leapmotor B03X (A10 in China) has quickly become a major success, ranking China's second-highest-selling vehicle model with 30,652 units sold in August 2026. It reached 100,000 sales in just 135 days, the fastest in Leapmotor's history. The B03X features a 145 kW motor, 55-kWh battery, up to 505 km CLTC range and 16-minute fast charging. Its cabin includes dual high-performance chips, including Qualcomm Snapdragon 8295, while cargo capacity expands from 510 to 1,605 liters. Backed by Stellantis, Leapmotor operates across 45+ countries with 2,000+ sales and service points.



Aloft by Marriott Kathmandu Thamel Team Comes Together to Support Flood Relief Efforts

The team at Aloft by Marriott Kathmandu Thamel came together to support communities affected by the recent floods in Nepal, collectively contributing Rs 1.5 million to the Prime Minister's Disaster Relief Fund, with contributions from both the associates and the hotel.

Going beyond the financial contribution, the team also donated essential relief materials worth more than Rs 3 lakh to Hami Nepal for distribution to flood-affected families. The initiative reflects the team's shared commitment to standing in solidarity with communities across Nepal and supporting those in need during this difficult time.



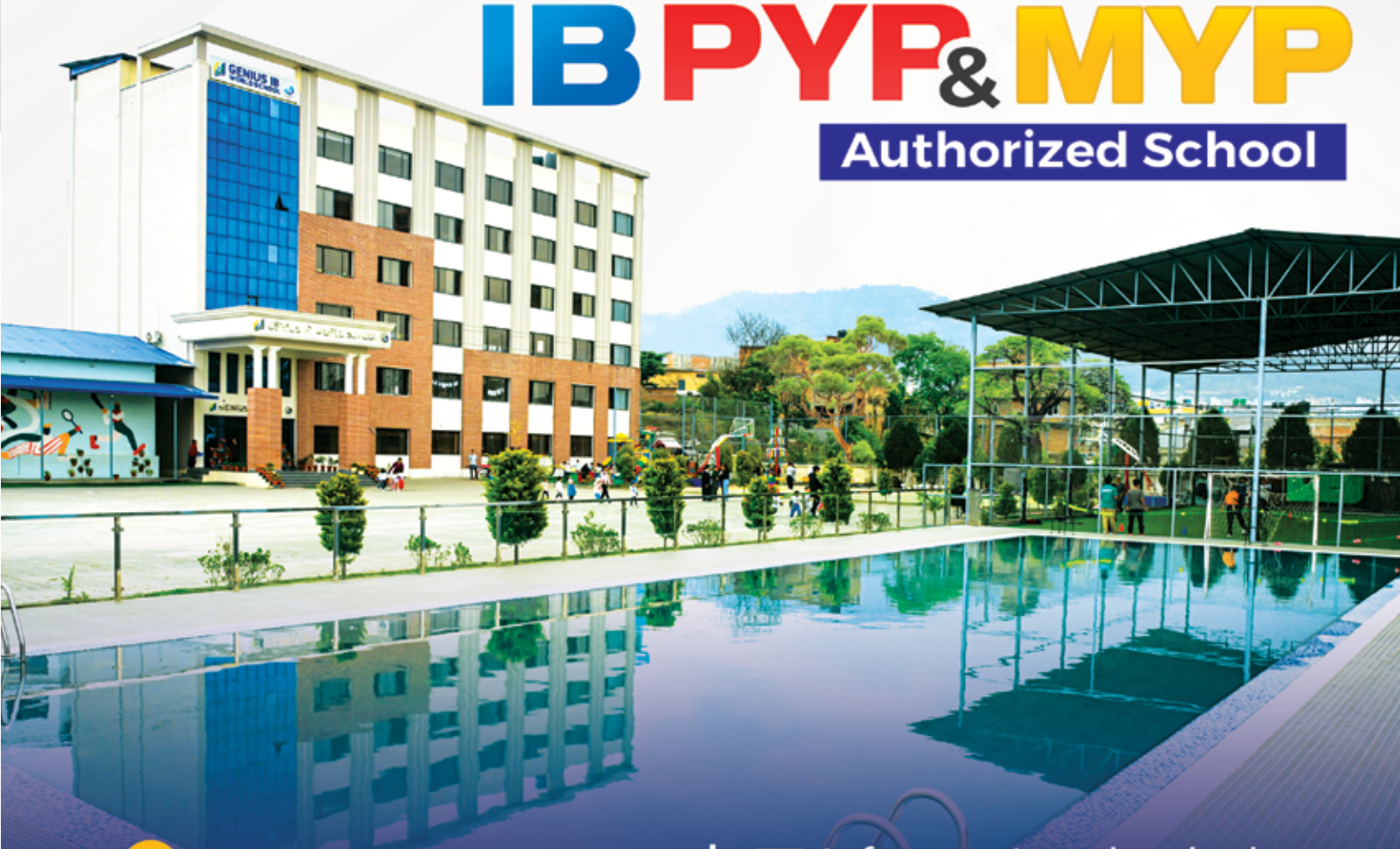
The Soaltee Kathmandu, Autograph Collection Brings the Flavours of South India to Kathmandu with Dosa Fiesta

The Soaltee Kathmandu, Autograph Collection brings the flavours of South India to Kathmandu with its Dosa Fiesta, beginning September 21, 2026, at the Garden Terrace. Available daily from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., the fiesta features freshly prepared dosas by South Indian Specialty Chef Raja. Guests can savour favourites including Chennai Pepper Dosa, Rava Dosa, Egg Dosa, Kari Dosa and Ghee Roast Dosa, paired with fresh accompaniments. Set amid the relaxed Garden Terrace, the experience celebrates the diversity and craftsmanship of South Indian cuisine. The Dosa Fiesta runs daily from September 21 onwards, offering guests an opportunity to enjoy authentic regional flavours in a relaxed setting.

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The Etiquette of Hosting Vegetarian Relatives

By Malika Joshi

FESTIVE GATHERINGS in Nepal often revolve around food. Tables fill quickly, plates become increasingly ambitious, and the host's greatest concern is usually whether everyone has eaten enough. But when a vegetarian relative arrives, hospitality requires a little more thought than simply telling them to avoid the meat.

Whether someone is vegetarian by choice, culture, religion or personal preference, their dietary boundary deserves the same respect as any other guest's needs.

Ask Before You Plan

Don't wait until everyone is seated to discover that your guest cannot eat half the menu. If you know a vegetarian relative is visiting, ask what they are comfortable eating beforehand.

Better still, make sure there are complete vegetarian dishes, not merely side dishes left behind after the meat has been served.

Keep Things Separate

For strict vegetarians, preparation matters as much as ingredients. Using the same serving spoon for meat and vegetarian dishes, frying vegetables in meat-contaminated oil or cooking everything in the same pan can make a meal uncomfortable or unsuitable. If possible, use separate utensils and serving spoons.

Don't Make Them Defend Their Choice

Festive meals are not the appropriate time for an interrogation.

"Just try a little."

"You used to eat meat."

"What's the harm?"

"It's only Dashain!"

A guest shouldn't have to present a legal defence for what is on their plate. Food preferences are personal.



Don't Make Vegetarian Food an Afterthought

A good vegetarian festive menu can be abundant and exciting: paneer dishes, seasonal vegetables, dal, achar, mushroom preparations, pulao, salads, breads and traditional favourites can easily create a satisfying spread.

The goal isn't to create a separate "special meal" that makes the guest feel difficult. It is to ensure they can participate fully in the same celebration.

Be Clear, Not Awkward

If you're unsure about an ingredient, simply ask. If a dish contains meat stock, animal fat or another ingredient your guest may avoid, tell them. And if you're hosting a large gathering, label dishes when useful. It saves everyone from repeatedly asking what they can eat.

Ultimately, good hospitality isn't about making every guest eat the same thing. It is about making sure everyone has something to enjoy without compromising their boundaries.

Because during the festive season, the point is to gather around the table, not to make someone negotiate their way onto it.



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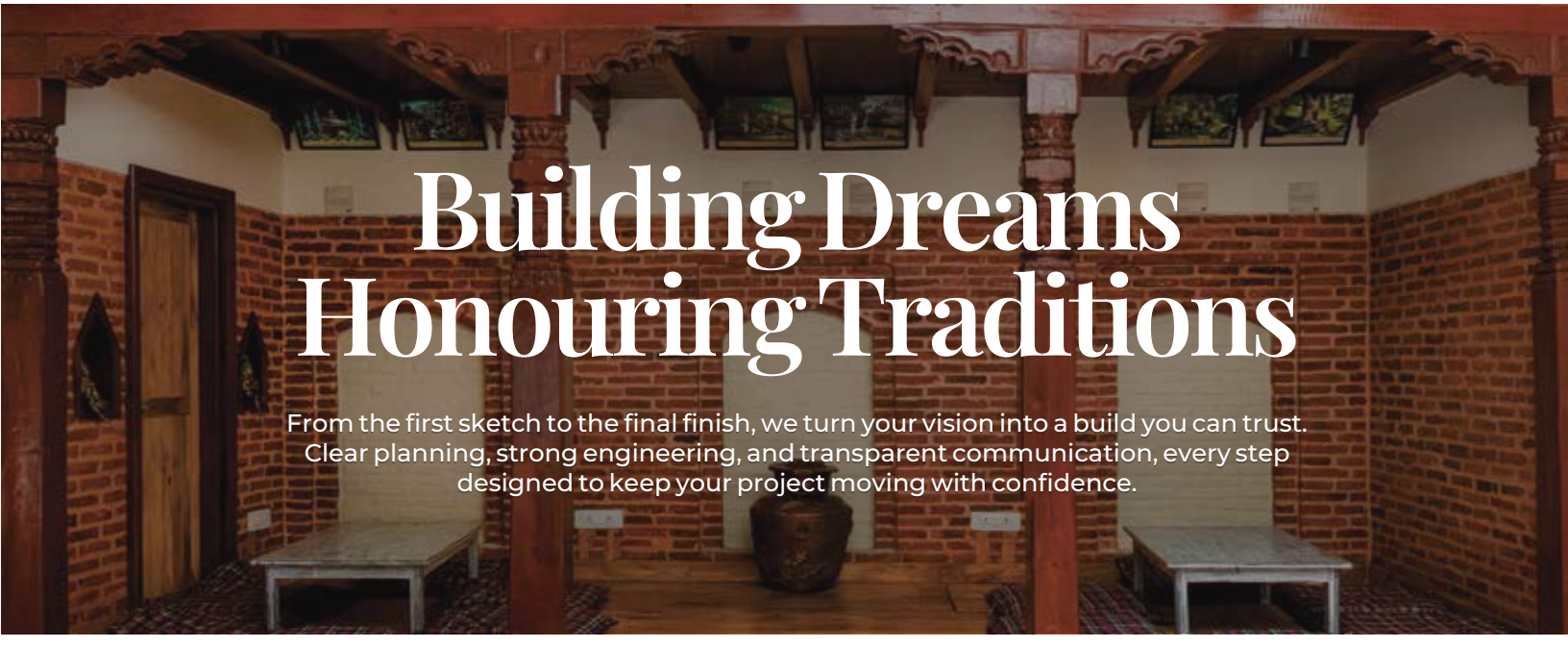
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