

Events of the Month

October 2020

The second half of the year is a busy time for those who follow the Hindu festivity calendar. Festivals like Navratri, Dussehra, and Diwali all fall within weeks of each other. It is also a fun time for kids, with so many celebrations and so many things to do. Navratri starts on October 17, this year and will continue till October 25th. We are celebrating Dussehra or Vijayadashami on October 26th.

Navratri

Navratri is an Indian festival celebrated by those who follow the Hindu tradition, even though anyone can enjoy the festivities and celebrations. Durga Puja and Navratri festival is celebrated by worshipping Goddess Durga and her nine different avatars, hence the name Navratri, 'nav' meaning nine and 'ratri' meaning night. For all the nine days that the festival is celebrated, one form of goddess Durga is worshipped each day, and a color is chosen for each day. Those who religiously follow the festival dress in the color of the day. There are different historical legends in different parts of India, so here is a look:

1. According to The Mythology of Eastern India:

Uma was the daughter of Daksha, who was the king of the Himalaya. She was known for her beauty and was a virtuous girl. Ever since she was a child, Uma wanted to marry Shiva and had been trying to worship him to please him and make him agree. When Shiva came to tell Daksha that he would marry Uma, her father was quite upset and did not want his daughter to marry him. He told his daughter and son-in-law that he would not think of them as a family anymore.

One day Daksha was performing a special yagna but did not invite Uma and Shiva, which angered Uma. She jumped into the fire and came to be known as 'Sati.' However, she was reborn again and married Shiva, after which her father accepted them both. Ever since then, she comes home every year to her parents during Navratri.

2. According to The Mythology of North India:

The demon Mahisasura worshipped Shiva and became immortal. He started killing people and wanted to rule over all the gods, as he thought no one would be able to kill him anymore. The gods asked Shiva for help and to save the world from Mahisasura's evil behavior. Shiva united with Vishnu and Brahma to create a female warrior goddess known as Durga. When Mahisasura saw Durga, he fell in love with her beauty and asked to marry her. She agreed on the condition that he would have to defeat her in a battle. Mahisasura was sure he would win, so the battle continued for nine nights and on the last night, she beheaded him. The nine nights are celebrated as part of the Navratri festival.

Dussehra AKA Vijayadashami

Dussehra is another very popular festival celebrated in India, which is celebrated on the tenth day of the celebrations of Navratri commence. While some parts of India celebrate it to mark goddess Durga's victory over Mahisasura, other parts celebrate it as Ram's win over Ravana.

The Mythology of Rama And Ravana:

Dussehra is mostly about the victory of good over evil. Ravana had abducted Rama's wife Sita, after which Rama, with his brother Lakshman and follower Hanuman, waged war against Ravana to bring Seeta back. Rama worshipped goddess Durga to get her blessings and killed Ravana. The day is celebrated as Dussehra.

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Halloween Blue Hunter's Moon

In total, for 2020, we'll have 13 full Moons, including 2 two Supermoons, and a full Moon on Halloween, which is more uncommon than you may realize. Usually, we have one for each month, making the total 12 for the year. But on occasion, some months will have two full Moons. This is the case for October 2020: we'll have a full Moon on Thursday, October 1st, which will be the Harvest Moon, and again on Saturday, October 31st—a Halloween full Hunter's Moon in all time zones (the Moon turns full at 10:49 a.m. EDT), making this a super fun rare treat.

When we think of "All Halloween's Eve," many of us conjure up terrifying images of werewolves, goblins, zombies, and other scary things that go "bump" in the night, all lit up by a spooky full Moon. But how common is a Halloween full Moon? Apparently, not very.

In 2001, ghosts and goblins in Central and Pacific time zones trick-or-treated by the light of a full Moon, but a Halloween full Moon hadn't appeared for everyone in all time zones since 1944!

Blue Moon Definition: For more than half a century, whenever two full Moons appear in a single month (which happens on average every 2 1/2 to 3 years), the second full Moon is christened a "Blue Moon." When you look at the full Moon on Halloween night, it won't appear blue in color but you'll be looking at something pretty uncommon. A full Moon on Halloween occurs roughly once every 19 years—a pattern known as the Metonic Cycle.

For a Halloween full Moon, the Metonic Cycle worked well early in the 20th Century—in the years 1925 and 1944. But thereafter, using the cycle, the date of full Moon shifted a day to November 1st (in 1963, 1982, and 2001). But then, in 2020, it returned to October 31st. Making it a rarer sight, indeed.

Fun fact: Any time the Moon is technically "full" on October 31st (as it will be this year), it would also have to be a Blue Moon because the lunar cycle is only 29.5 days long.

There is an alternate definition of a "Blue Moon" —when there are 4 full Moons in a single season, the third is considered a "Blue Moon."

Resources:

<https://www.momjunction.com>

<https://www.farmersalmanac.com/blue-moon-supermoon-2020-104546>

www.pinterest.com