



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THIRD INDIAN DIWALI FESTIVAL SET FOR OCTOBER 24 IN BALBOA PARK

The third annual community DIWALI FESTIVAL, the Indian Festival of Lights, will take place in Balboa Park on Sunday, October 24, from 4 to 8 p.m. It will feature arts, a cultural program and procession, music, dancing, Indian food, specialty vendors, family activities and the traditional ceremonial lighting of lamps.

Co-sponsored by the San Diego Indian American Society, Mingei International Museum and the San Diego Museum of Art in association with its Committee for the Arts of the Indian Subcontinent, the event will include an outdoor procession representing India's varied and culturally diverse regions — among them the states of Gujarat, Bengal, Maharashtra, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. The event will end with a cultural performance in the Spreckels Organ Pavilion culminating in the lighting of 1,008 small lamps. Performances of regional dances and the *garba*, a dance in which all visitors may participate, will take place during the festival. Visitors will have the opportunity to sample the varied cuisines of the subcontinent and to shop at a select group of vendors offering Indian goods. Henna artists will provide intricate, traditional ornamentation for Diwali attendees.

Mingei International Museum and the San Diego Museum of Art will remain open to Diwali ticket holders until 7 that evening. There will be Indian musicians playing outside each museum and exhibitions and family activities inside.

This Festival of Lights presents lamp designs used in different eras, traditions and regions of India. Fashioned from brass in India especially for this event, more than 50 large lamps, many of them re-creating ancient designs, will be lighted at sunset.

Diwali celebrates the victory of good over evil. It is a significant festival for Hindus, Jains and Sikhs and a public holiday in India. Homes are decorated with lights; fireworks are displayed and sweets and gifts are given. Its date changes according to the time of the full moon, but it always falls in October or November on the Western calendar.

Admission for the DIWALI FESTIVAL is \$10 for individuals and \$15 for families. Tickets will be available in advance at Mingei International Museum, San Diego Museum of Art, at the Festival or online at www.mingei.org.

Parking for the festival is in the Inspiration Point parking lot at the corner of Park Boulevard and Presidents Way. Tram service is available into and out of the park until 8 p.m. Mingei International Museum and San Diego Museum of Art are located on the Plaza de Panama in the center of Balboa Park. For information, call 619-239-0003, ext. 113 or visit the Museum's website at www.mingei.org.

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