

[It's My Birthday](#)

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It's My Birthday

L. Ganesha, Sivaloka

It's a divine time of year again, Ganesha Chaturthi, that most auspicious fourth day after the new moon in the lunar month of August-September when I was magically created by my Divine Father Siva and Mother Parvati. Every year My devotees celebrate, and I become the honored guest of every Hindu home--in Adelaide, Amsterdam and Auckland; Bangalore, Bangkok and Bombay; Calcutta, Calgary and Coimbatore; Dar es Salaam, Delhi and Dhaka; not to mention New York, San Francisco, Hamburg, Copenhagen and thousands more--and that's just on your planet. Why, last year so many modakas were given to me the goodies were piled higher than Mount Kailash. I had to borrow a couple million of My Father's ganas to transport them, as Mushika, my Divine Mouse, was not quite up to the ever-increasing task, and some felt He was nibbling indulgently on the goodies He was supposed to transport. It actually took me a record two whole days to eat every single one!

Everyone knows My biggest party is in Mumbai, for in 1910 I ordered Lokmanya Tilak to turn My birthday celebration into an especially grand party. "That will bring the people together," I divinely revealed to him, "and help create a strong, united

Hindu India, based on her holy tradition and scriptural teachings." I am the Remover of Obstacles, and of British colonization too, you see.

To this day in Mumbai giant puja platforms are erected blocking streets and byways, and neighborhoods vie with one another for creating the grandest image of Me. Ten days of spiritual fervor culminate in the Visarjana, the eleventh day of departure, when each of the carefully crafted and devotedly worshiped images is paraded to the beach and lovingly placed into the ocean.

Mine is a symbolic departure, for truly as I exist everywhere, I can go nowhere. But think of it like this--the ocean represents the consciousness of God, my Father, Siva. As My clay image dissolves in the ocean, so do I return to My universal, every present form, one aspect of the Mind of God. If you touch the ocean or a river at any one place, you are touching all the water in that ocean or river. Just so, your mind is part of the one great mind of God. My form is gone, yet My intelligence remains everywhere, but to be called upon in the depths of your worship and yoga.

Now there are, of course, rules for celebrating My birthday properly. The first is an abundance of modaka and other sweets. Many have tried, but none have exceeded my capacity to consume and enjoy such sweet goodies. Second, in every home a clay image of Me is installed in the family shrine room. It is permissible if you buy this image, for My divine army of artisans needs the business; but it is more auspicious for you and your family to make Me yourself. Clay is the material of

choice--it's easily available, it dissolves in water, and it doesn't float. I'm supposed to rejoin the Ocean of Consciousness, not float away on top of it on Visarjana day.

As I reside in your home, I am naturally treated as the most special of guests, which, frankly speaking, I am. I will not be embarrassed when dressed in the finest clothes, or offered the choicest fruits (and sweets, of course--must I keep reminding you?). Grand puja on a daily basis would be befitting the occasion too, as well as bhajans and good fellowship with friends and family.

Each part of India and now the world has its own special way to celebrate My birthday. In Karnataka, for example, young people make a ritual of seeing 108 Vinayakas on this occasion, so they go about visiting their friends' and relatives' houses on this day. Worship of Me on this day will confer advancement in learning to young students and success in any enterprise undertaken.

My departure on the eleventh day is truly spectacular in many cities, not just Mumbai. In small and large groups I am paraded from temples and homes to the nearest river, lake or best of all, the ocean. With puja, bhajan and cries of "Victory, Victory," the young and hardy carry Me out into the calm waters and sometimes cold or rushing surf. Then as My image settles beneath the waves, they say "Good-bye" and raise their hands in namaskaram. Though they know I have gone nowhere, even grown men are known to cry at the departure of my corpulent visible form.

I am an expert at bringing devotees together, and manage to belong to all sects of Hinduism without prejudice--it's like being a citizen of every country and a member of every race of your world. Therefore, My birthday is a modern-day celebration of Hindu Solidarity, especially outside of India when every temple and society gather to participate as a one unit on this Visarjana day. The first such Hindu Solidarity day was held in San Francisco in 1988, when more than 20 Hindu organizations of various traditions participated against the majestic backdrop of the Golden Gate Bridge. My parade was led by my favorite animal--an elephant, obviously. Horns sounded, drums played and bells rang out pujas as hundreds of images of Me were dramatically conveyed to the Pacific Ocean (which, by the way, is one cold ocean, brrrr!). The thousands of worshippers stated with delight that they felt as if they were back in India. The celebration proved to one and all that I am present everywhere at all times, and that Hinduism had reached a new level of maturity in the US, as devotees boldly proclaimed their faith at such a grand public ceremony. The Hindus of Sydney, Australia, followed suit a few years later and now dozens of Hindu communities outside India celebrate My birthday in grand style, coming together in a cooperative and religious spirit under My divine guidance.

Now, let My 1996 party begin!

Lord Ganesha is a Mahadeva in charge of dharma and worshiped before beginning any task. In the literary world, He is best known a scribe of the Mahabharata as well as the Tantras. He lives in the Himalayas on Mt. Kailash with His Parents and younger brother Kartikkeya.