



Black Cat Appreciation Day

Black Cat Appreciation Day, observed on August 17 in the USA, aims to dispel myths and superstitions surrounding black cats. Often unfairly associated with bad luck, these beautiful felines have long suffered from negative stereotypes, affecting their adoption rates in shelters. This day highlights their charm, uniqueness, and loving nature, encouraging people to see them as symbols of good fortune and companionship. Animal shelters and pet lovers use the occasion to promote black cat adoptions and spread awareness through social media and events. It's a perfect time to celebrate these mysterious, elegant creatures and give them the love they deserve.

#RIDICULOUS

So Much Shoe And No More

16th Century Had Sumptuary Laws Against Shoes: Fashion, Power, and Control



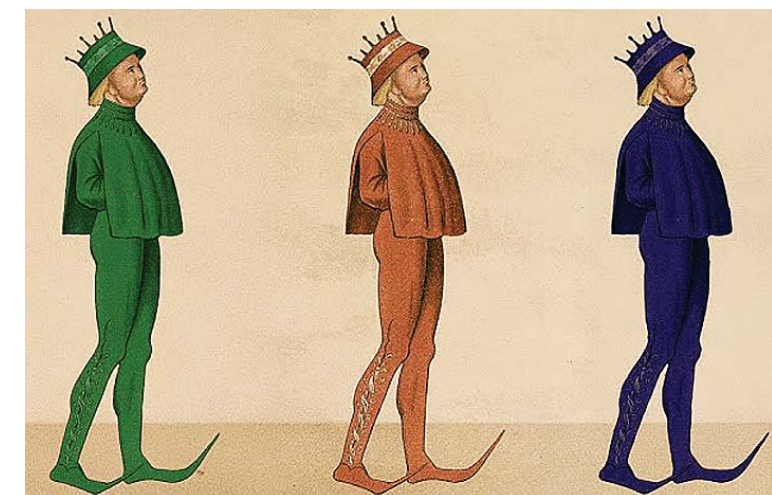
Le Courtisan suivant le Dernier Édité by Abraham Bosse, a French courtier casting aside lace, ribbons and slashed sleeves in favour of sober dress in accordance with the edict of 1633.



In the 16th century, clothing was more than just a matter of personal style; it was a symbol of social order, wealth, and power. Across Europe, monarchs and governments implemented sumptuary laws, regulations intended to restrict extravagance in dress and reinforce social hierarchies. Among the more curious targets of these laws were shoes, particularly those that were deemed too luxurious, fashionable, or revealing.

Sumptuary laws had deep roots in medieval society, but they became especially prominent during the Renaissance. As trade and commerce expanded, members of the rising middle class began to emulate the styles of the nobility, blurring the visual lines between classes. Ruling elites saw this as a threat to the established order and responded by imposing strict dress codes, including on footwear.

In England, under the rule of Henry VIII and later Elizabeth I, various proclamations were issued to control clothing, including shoes. For example, laws banned excessively long toes on men's shoes, a trend known as crack-oes, or poulaines, which were seen as both impractical and vain. Although this trend peaked earlier, its influence lingered, and similar restrictions reappeared periodically. Shoes with extravagant slashing, embroidery, or precious metals were likewise restricted to the upper classes.



Pura Luhur Uluwatu



Uluwatu Temple is not just a must-visit on any Bali itinerary; it's a perched paradise where you can feel the pulse of Bali's spiritual heart while marveling at the island's extraordinary natural beauty. Whether you come for the culture, the views, or the spiritual experience, Uluwatu promises a visit that will stay with you long after you've left its sacred cliffs. It is also the centre of Janmashtami celebrations in Indonesia.



We are celebrating Janmashtami today in many ways suited to each man's temperament and means. But we are not alone, others across the world also celebrate the birth, according to their temperament, belief and culture. Bali in Indonesia is one. Here, it is celebrated, though with local interpretations and traditions woven into the broader Hindu celebrations. While Janmashtami commemorates the birth of Lord Krishna, in Bali, it's often integrated into their existing Hindu festivals and cultural performances. One prominent example is the Legong dance, a classical Balinese dance, which is performed at Pura Luhur Uluwatu temple during Janmashtami to depict stories from Krishna's life.

The Pura Luhur Uluwatu temple, perched on a cliff overlooking the Indian Ocean, is a focal point for Janmashtami festivities, featuring

traditional Balinese dance performances. High above the crashing waves of the Indian Ocean, Uluwatu Temple stands as a breathtaking testament to Bali's spiritual and natural splendor. Perched majestically on a 70-meter cliff, this iconic temple offers more than just a stunning view, it's a gateway to the soul of Bali, where tradition, culture, and the elements converge in a powerful display of beauty and reverence.

More than just a place of worship, Uluwatu Temple is a cultural treasure, drawing visitors from around the world to witness its famous evening Kecak dance performances. As the sun sets, painting the sky with vibrant hues, the temple becomes a living canvas where Bali's rich heritage is brought to life against the dramatic backdrop of the ocean. Located on the Bukit Peninsula, Uluwatu Temple offers not only spiritual solace but also panoramic vistas that are simply unparalleled. The temple's strategic position has made it a cornerstone of Balinese spirituality, while its natural surroundings provide an awe-inspiring experience for those who seek to connect with the island's unique cultural identity.

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Uluwatu Temple is considered one of the six spiritual pillars of Bali, known as the Sad Kahyangan Temples. These six temples are strategically positioned across the island to provide spiritual balance and protection.

Uluwatu Temple specifically guards Bali from evil sea spirits. The temple's location at the edge of a high cliff represents the Hindu belief in the balance between the spiritual and the natural world.

The oldest parts of the temple are the main shrine and its imposing stone gate carved with intricate floral designs, dating back to the 10th century. It is built predominantly from locally sourced coral



stone, which gives it a distinctive color and appearance.

Later, in the 16th century, Dang Hyang Nirartha, further developed the temple complex during his travels through Bali to spread Hinduism. He is said to have attained Moksha here, the freedom from the eternal cycle of life, death, and rebirth. Janmashtami is celebrated by Indian Hindu communities in Indonesia, especially in Medan and Jakarta, with prayers, devotional songs, and storytelling about Lord Krishna's birth. The festival honors the divine love and wisdom of Krishna through temple rituals and family gatherings.

Janmashtami: A Public Holiday?

Janmashtami is not a national public holiday in Indonesia, but it is celebrated as a religious and cultural event by Indian Hindu communities in certain regions. Hindu communi-

#CELEBRATIONS



ties in Indonesia, particularly in Medan, Jakarta, and Surabaya. These communities have preserved their religious and cultural traditions for generations, including festivals like Janmashtami.

Although Balinese Hindus do not specifically observe Janmashtami, as it follows a different calendar and ritual practice, the Indian Hindu diaspora celebrates it with devotion on the date according to their calendar. The festival serves as a reminder of Krishna's teachings in the Bhagavad Gita and his message of love, wisdom, and righteousness. For Indian Indonesians, Janmashtami is more than just a religious occasion, it is also a way to maintain cultural identity, pass traditions to younger generations, and share the story of Lord Krishna with the wider community.

Observance of Janmashtami in Indonesia

The celebrations often begin in temples and homes, where devotees gather to pray, sing bhajans (devotional songs), and read stories from the life of Lord Krishna. Special pujas (rituals) are held in the evening, and at midnight, the believed time of Krishna's birth, a ceremonial aarti is performed. Devotees offer milk, butter, and sweets to honour Krishna, who is

known for his playful and loving nature.

Temples and cultural centers in cities like Medan and Jakarta may also host events such as dance performances, storytelling sessions, and skits portraying scenes from Krishna's childhood. Children sometimes dress as Lord Krishna or Radha, adding joy and color to the celebration. Families come together to share traditional meals and sweets, creating a festive and spiritual atmosphere that brings the community closer.

Janmashtami holds deep spiritual and cultural meaning for Indian Hindus in Indonesia. It is a time to reflect on Krishna's life and teachings, which emphasize love, truth, and devotion. The festival also helps families strengthen their cultural roots and pass on values to the younger generation. Even though it is not a national public holiday, Janmashtami is a cherished celebration that brings communities together. It also showcases Indonesia's cultural diversity and the wide different traditions can thrive side by side. Through Janmashtami, Indian Indonesians not only express their faith but also contribute to the spirit of harmony and mutual respect in the country.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



#TRIED AND TASTED

Gutti Vankaya or Yengai (It's Brinjal)

The ground masala is really easy to make and there's virtually no chopping involved! Always a win for weeknight dinners or special dinners!

Stuffed Brinjal Curry or Eggplant Curry is a delicious South Indian specialty that uses a mix of peanuts, sesame seeds, coconut, chana dal, tamarind, chillies and jaggery to create a nutty, spicy, tangy, sweet base. The ground masala is really easy to make and there's virtually no chopping involved! Always a win for weeknight dinners or special dinners. Goes well with rotis, biryani, or just steamed rice

Prep: 10 minutes Cook: 40 minutes Total: 50 minutes Servings: 6 people

- ¼ Cup Fried Chana Dal, split chickpea lentils
- ¼ Cup Peanuts, groundnuts
- 8 Byadagi Dry Red Chilli
- 8 Guntur Dry Red Chilli
- 12 Cloves Garlic
- 1 ½ Teaspoon Cumin Seeds
- 1 Tablespoon Coriander Seeds
- ½ Tablespoon Sesame Seeds
- 17 Grams Tamarind, lemon sized, approx 1 ½ Tablespoon/ sub with 1 tsp tamarind paste
- 27 Grams Jaggery, approx 2-3 Tablespoons/ sub with brown sugar
- 1 ½ - 2 Teaspoon Salt
- Cup grated Dry Coconut, kopra
- ¼ Cup Water, approx

- Curry
- ¼ Cup Oil, sesame or groundnut
- 1 Teaspoon Mustard Seeds
- 8-10 small purple striped Brinjal
- 1 Large Onion, sliced, approx 1 cup
- 1 1/2 cup Water, divided

Instructions

- Paste
- Add all the paste ingredients except the water to the chutney jar of a mixer. Grind into a fine paste. Add water little by little as you grind it, just enough for you to get a smooth paste. If it becomes too thin, it'll be difficult to stuff the brinjal with it.



Curry

- Make a deep X-shaped cut on the bottom of brinjal, cut till the top without cutting all the way through. The cut should be deep enough to be able to open up the brinjal. Stuff the brinjal well with the prepared paste. Repeat for the remaining brinjal and set aside. Reserve any excess paste.
- Heat oil in a flat bottomed kadai or sauteuse pan. Add mustard seeds and allow them to splutter.
- Add the prepared brinjal to the pan. Spread them out as much as possible and shallow fry for 2-3 minutes on each side. Use tongs to turn the brinjals.
- Add sliced onion and stir. Saute for 2 minutes.
- Add the remaining paste and mix to combine. Fry for 2-3 minutes.
- Add 1 cup water and mix. Cover the pan with a lid and cook on medium-low heat for 25-30 minutes or until the brinjal is cooked. It may take longer to cook depending on the size of the brinjal.
- Add the remaining half cup of water little by little to adjust the consistency of the gravy as desired.
- Serve hot along with rice and ghee or jowar rotis!

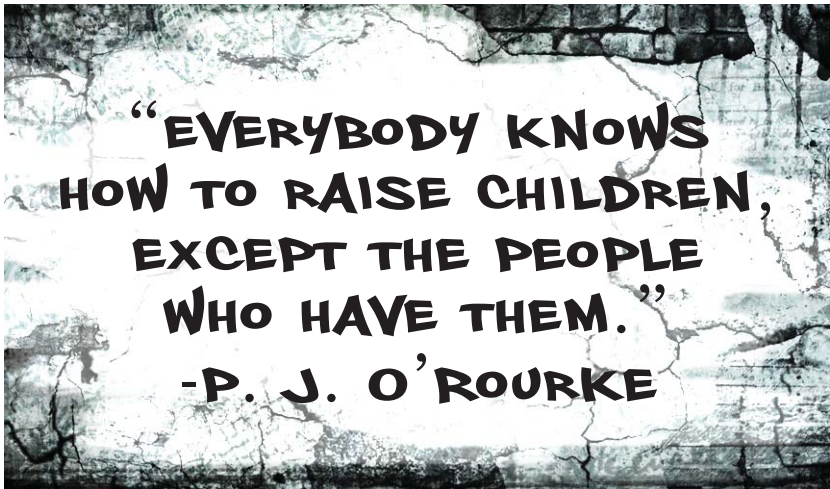
Notes

1. Whole tamarind can be substituted for 1 tsp tamarind paste.
2. If you don't have access to dried coconut, use freshly grated coconut or freshly frozen grated coconut in the same quantity.
3. The amount of water added to the ground paste should be just enough to grind it till smooth. Don't add too much water or the paste will become too thin making it difficult to stuff the brinjal.

Nutrition

Calories: 392 kcal, Carbohydrates: 59 g, Protein: 11 g, Fat: 16 g, Saturated Fat: 3 g, Polyunsaturated Fat: 5 g, Monounsaturated Fat: 8 g, Trans Fat: 0.04 g, Sodium: 1386 mg, Potassium: 1808 mg, Fiber: 23 g, Sugar: 32 g, Vitamin A: 898 IU, Vitamin C: 130 mg, Calcium: 127 mg, Iron: 4 mg

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman