

Christmas Day

ingle all the way! Deck the halls with boughs of holly, indulge in delicious treats, and make unforgettable memories with loved ones. Celebrated on December 25th each year, Christmas Day is a holiday that commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, who is the central figure of Christianity. It is the time for Christians around the world to come together and celebrate Jesus and the message of love, peace, and redemption that he brings. Christmas is celebrated by people of many different faith traditions and is widely recognized as a time of joy, celebration and goodwill towards others.

#INSIGHT

Interesting Christmas Facts

Learn all about the history and twinkly traditions of the festive season.



As the year draws to an end, millions of people around the world are enjoying sparkling decorations, colourful lights, delicious food, jolly music, silky jokes and exciting gifts. Yup... because Christmas is here! But how much do you know about this super-fun holiday? It's time to find out in our ten facts about Christmas.

Facts about Christmas

- 1) Christmas is a Christian festival that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, who Christians believe was the son of God. For most people, it takes place every year on 25 December, the day that the Roman Catholic Church chose to mark Jesus' birthday. But, in fact, no one actually knows the exact date Jesus was born.
- 2) Did you know that not all Christians celebrate Christmas on the same day? In countries with large populations of Orthodox Christians, such as Russia, the Ukraine and Romania, Christmas Day falls on 7 January. Some Greek Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on 7 January, too.
- 3) The name 'Christmas' comes from the old English phrase 'Christes mæsse,' which means 'Christ's mass.' But what about 'Xmas'? Lots of people think this is just a modern-day abbreviation, but it actually dates back to the 16th century! The 'X' is said to represent the Greek letter 'Chi,' the first letter in the Greek word for Christ.
- 4) Come Christmas, people around the world enjoy all kinds of jolly, good fun! Many of the festive traditions that we have today came about in the Victorian era, such as Christmas cards, gift-giving and crackers, as well as traditional foods like mince pies and roast turkey! Queen Victoria and her husband, Prince Albert, were huge fans of Christmas, in fact!
- 5) Christmas trees also became popular in Victorian Britain. But these were first seen in 16th Century Germany where, at Christmas time, people decorated fir trees with fruit and nuts, and later with sweets, paper shapes and candles. Amazingly, historians think that the origins of this festive tradition may date back to the Romans and Ancient Egyptians, who used evergreen plants and garlands as symbols of everlasting life.
- 6) Check this out, every year, Norway sends a beautiful home-grown Christmas tree to London, where it is decorated with lights in Trafalgar Square. Standing a



towering 20 m tall, the terrific tree is a gift to say thank you for the help that the UK gave to Norway during World War II. What a tree-mendous gift!

7) We can't talk about Christmas without the mention to the 'big-bearded, rosy-cheeked, jolly man, Father Christmas! But have you wondered how he got the name Santa Claus? It's from *Sinterklaas*, which means Saint Nicholas in Dutch, the language of the Netherlands. St. Nicholas was a Christian bishop who lived in the 4th century. Known for being kind and generous, he later became the patron saint of children.

8) But Santa isn't the only Christmas character, there are many more around the world! In Italy, for example, a kind witch called 'La Befana' is said to fly around on a broomstick delivering toys to children! And in Iceland, children leave shoes under the window for 13 mischievous trolls called the Yule Lads. If the child has been good, they'll find sweets in their shoes, but if they've been bad, the Yule Lads will leave them a rotten potato!

9) We all love to sing along to 'Jingle Bells,' but have you ever noticed that the song doesn't have the word 'Christmas' in it? Or Jesus or Santa Claus? That's because it wasn't originally a Christmas song! In fact, the jolly anthem was written in 1850, entitled 'One Horse Open Sleigh,' for the American holiday, Thanksgiving!

10) Now, imagine if there was no Christmas, but have you ever noticed that the song doesn't have the word 'Christmas' in it? Or Jesus or Santa Claus? That's because it wasn't originally a Christmas song! In fact, the jolly anthem was written in 1850, entitled 'One Horse Open Sleigh,' for the American holiday, Thanksgiving!

A Man for all Seasons... A Man for all Emotions...

PART-2

#MOHAMMED RAFI CENTENARY CELEBRATION



Dr. Pavan Shorey
Vitreoretinal Surgeon,
Author

The persona of Rafi embodied the idea of India, a multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious country. Rafi sang in many languages of India representing his multi-culturalism, the *Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb* of India. He was a master in singing bhajans, invoking the fervour of a bhakti. He

was equally at ease singing for other religions. He firmly believed in Allah, who had endowed him with his unique voice. Three Muslims gave India its best Bhajan, *Man tadapat Hari darshan ko aaj*. Hindi cinema has always promoted communal harmony. Witness this song by Rafi from *Dhool ka phool*, 1959, *Tu Hindu banega na Musalmaan banega*, *Insaan ki aulaad hai Insaan banega*. Rafi was an extremely humble person, with downcast eyes and always spoke in a low voice. Money was never a consideration for him. **Snippet:** In the sixties, Lata ran

a campaign for royalties of their songs. She asked Rafi to support her. Rafi replied that we had already got our fees for the songs, why ask for more? Lata was annoyed and didn't sing with him for six years. Lata's loss was Suman Kalyanpur's gain. She sang 180 duets with Rafi. Mohd Rafi was born on 24 December, 1924 in a village called Kotla Sultan near Amritsar in a poor Muslim family. A *fakir* would cross his village everyday singing Sufi songs. Rafi would follow him

and sing the same songs to his friends. His elder brother, Abdul Hamid, noticed his singing talent. They shifted to Lahore where their father opened a barber shop. His elder brother put Rafi under the tutelage of *Ustad*s of music of that time. There are no details about his study under them. A turning point came when Rafi was 13 years of age. A music concert of K. L. Saigal was organised. But when the great singer of that time had to appear for singing, the lights went out. The crowd was restless, they had to be engaged. Abdul Hamid approached the

organisers and asked them to allow Rafi to sing. Rafi regaled the audience with film songs until the electricity came back. A music director, Shyam Sundar, was in the audience and called for Rafi. He told him to come to Bombay and meet him. Rafi's first song was under his music direction. He met Naushad many times for a break. He was given a chance to sing in the chorus. The song was half-recorded and everybody left for home. When Naushad came out, he found Rafi sitting there. He enquired and came to know that Rafi didn't have the money to take a train. Naushad gave him the money, and little did he know that a lifelong association between the two had commenced. Rafi turned a singing star with the film *Baiju Bawra*. The songs

were superhits and established him as the leading singer amongst his contemporaries. Music Director O P Nayyar once asked Rafi how he could sing for B grade films. Rafi replied that if the song was good, money took a back seat. C. Arjun was one such music director. He approached Rafi for a song saying that he could not pay his full fees. Rafi agreed after hearing the song tune. *Paas baitho tabiyat behal Jayegi (Punar Milan, 1964)*, Ramlal, the music director of V. Shantaram's film *Sehra*, related in an interview that he had recorded the song, *Tu dekho ka fasaana*, with Mahendra Kapoor but was not satisfied with it. He approached Rafi, sang the tune for him but said that he could

pay only half his fees. Rafi agreed and a classic hit was created. The high notes of Rafi matched the high notes of the *Shehnai*, and between them, a true masterpiece was created. We continue the list of songs with actors of his time.

There are many more actors but the prominent ones from the 1950s and 1960s were chosen. There are gems with lesser known actors. It is impossible to mention all of them. Rafi's all-time favourites were, *Suhaani raat dhal chuki from Dulari* and *Man tadapat Hari*

Darshan ko aaj from Baiju Bawra. Rafi was a colossus of Hindi cinema, and he was awarded the *Padam Shri* by the Government of India. His fans still demand a *Bharat Ratna* for him. He lives in our hearts and doesn't require any Ratnas to prove that he was a repos-

itory of talent. We have a *ruhani rishita* (spiritual relation) with him. *Rafi Sahab*, we salute you, on your birth anniversary, for sharing your exceptional songs and teaching us how to be good human beings. **Concluded** rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com

Dharmendra
Rafi sang 104 songs for him.

Aapke hasen rukh pe aaj naya noor hai, Baharein phir bhi aayengi. 1966. Dharmendra looks devastatingly handsome as he sings this beautiful song on the piano. Beautiful lyrics by Anjan, *Khuli laton ki chaon mein khila khila yeh roop hai/ ghata se jaise sun rahi subah subah ki dhooop hai.* Hema Malini admitted in an interview that she fell for Dharmendra after watching this song.

Mujhe dard-e dil kaa pata na tha, Akashloop, 1965. A soliloquy of a hesitant lover, introspecting on the rich-poor divide between him and Nanda. Rafi has brought out these emotions very well.

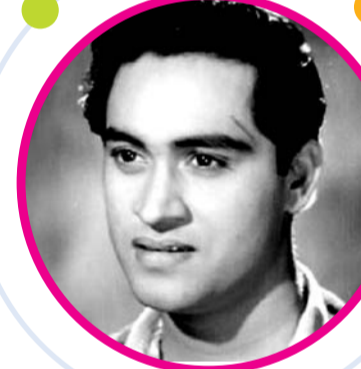
Ek hasen sham ko, Dulhan ek raat ki, 1966. Notice the beautiful humming by Rafi at the beginning of the song.



Jaane kya theonditi rehti hain ye aankhein mujh mein, Shola aur Shabnam, 1961. One of the first films of Dharmendra, this song has a special place in his heart. Rafi matched his soft voice and brought out the pain of lost love when the former lover is trying to rekindle it. *Rakhi barbad mohabat ki becha rahi hai/ Baar baar isko jo choda to bikhar jayegi.* Easily, one of the best Rafi songs.

Hui sham unka khayal aa gaya, Mere humdum mere dost, 1968. The pain of a broken heart comes out in Rafi's vocals, *Wahi gam jise humme kis kis jatan se nikala tha is dil se door/ too chota kar gaya nakti chaal aa gaya.*

Lakhan hai nigahon mein, Phir wahi dil laya hun, 1963. The rhythm in O P Nayyar's music, the *masi* in Rafi's voice helped establish the image of Joy as the lover boy of the sixties. The music and the locales in Kashmir helped the film become a superhit.



Mujhe dekh kar aapka muskurana, Ek musafir Ek hasena, 1962. Rafi has sung this in a sozled voice. Notice how he stretches *Dekhhkar*. O P Nayyar has given exemplary music.

Dil bekrar sa hai, Ishara, 1963. Joy sings this romantic song for Vijayanthimala, filmed in Delhi.

Dil ki awaz bhi sun, Humsaya, 1968. Joy tries to placate his sulking girlfriend, Sharmila. *Ek nazak dekh le, jeene ki izzat de de/ Roothne wali wo pehli se mohobat de de.*

Yahan main ajnabi hun, Job jab phool khila, 1966. Shashi plays a Shikara owner in Dal Lake, Nanda, a city girl, falls for him and brings him to the city. He is a misfit here and sings this song on the piano. *Jahan ka phool hai/ jo/ wahin pe wo khilega/ tere unche mahal mein/ nahin mera ghar/ mujhe yad aa raha hai/ wo chota sa shikara/ yahan main ajnabi hun.*

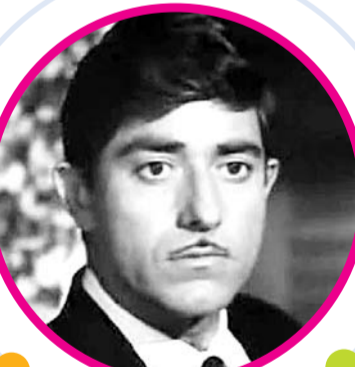


Likhe jo khat tujhe, Kanyadaan, 1969. Shashi is cavorting a village belle, Asha Parekh. Rafi sings in his usual high pitch.

Chale the saath milke, Hasena Maan Jayegi, 1968. Rafi modulated his voice to match Shashi's. It is playful and flirtatious.

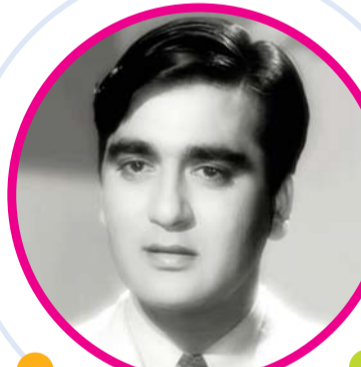
Tum bin jaon kahan, Pyar ka Mausam, 1969. This is the Rafi version, soft and romantic, and there is a Kishore Kumar version also. Mandolin is common in both.

Yeh zulf agar khul ke bikhar jaye to achha, Ka-jal, 1965. Raaj Kumar sings this song for a nautch girl. Ravi asked Sahir to rewrite *bikhar jaye to achha*. Sahir, the egoist, refused. It was left to Rafi to do variations of *achha*, embellishing the song.



Tujhko pukare mera pyar, Neel Kamal, 1966. This song by a *Ruh* (soul) of Raaj Kumar from previous birth entices Waheda Rehman to sleepwalk to him.

Rang aur noor ki baraot kise pesh karun, Gazzi, 1964. The love story of a *Shayar* and a *Shayira*, Sunil and Meena, and this song is a turning point in the film. Rafi's vocals are unique, they have the melancholy of a broken heart and the grudging good wishes on the marriage of his love to someone else.



Yeh wadiyan, yeh fizayin bula rahi hain tumhein, Aaj aur kal, 1963. Sahir/ Ravi/Rafi combine to bring excellence to the song.

Teri Ankhon ke siwa duniya mein rakha kya hai, Chirag, 1969. Sung under the baton of Madan Mohan, Rafi sings in a romantic mood.

Pukarta chala hun main, Mere sanam, 1966. When melody was king, Rafi sings this romantic song under the baton of O P Nayyar.



Nazar na lag jaye, Night in London, 1968. A Westernised tune, watch how well Rafi sings, *O my love.*

Phir milogi kabhi is baat ka wada kar lo, Yeh raat phir na ayege, 1967. A slow duet with Asha, hear him stretch *Hum se ek baar mugaat ka wada kar lo.*

Ghoda Peshori mera, Tanga Lahori mera, Pyar ka bandhan, 1963. Rafi changes his voice to a street singer.

Yeh duniya, yeh mehfil mere kaam ki nahin, Heer Ranjha, 1970. For the lovelorn Ranjha, Rafi sings at a high pitch, *usko khuda mile hai jise khuda ki talashi/ mujhko ek jhalak mere dildaar ki mile.*

Jo gujar rahi hai mujh par, Mere Huzoor, 1968. Listen to Rafi's *alapa* in the beginning and how he carries the lyrics with emotion.

Snippet: When Mahendra Kapoor was a teenager, Rafi took him under his wings. He would accompany Rafi Sahab to the recording studio. On one such occasion, after recording, they descended the studio stairs to find a bunch of teenagers waiting for them. They asked for Rafi's autograph. Rafi looked at Mahendra, he didn't know what they were asking. Mahendra replied that they wanted his signature. "Why," Rafi asked? "Just a *nishani* from you," Rafi said. "You sign in my name."

Aaj kal mein dhal gaya, Bete Bete, 1964. Rafi is soft as he sings a *lori* with lot of sorrow in it. Hear how he sings, *tu bhi so jaa, so gayi rang bhari sham.*

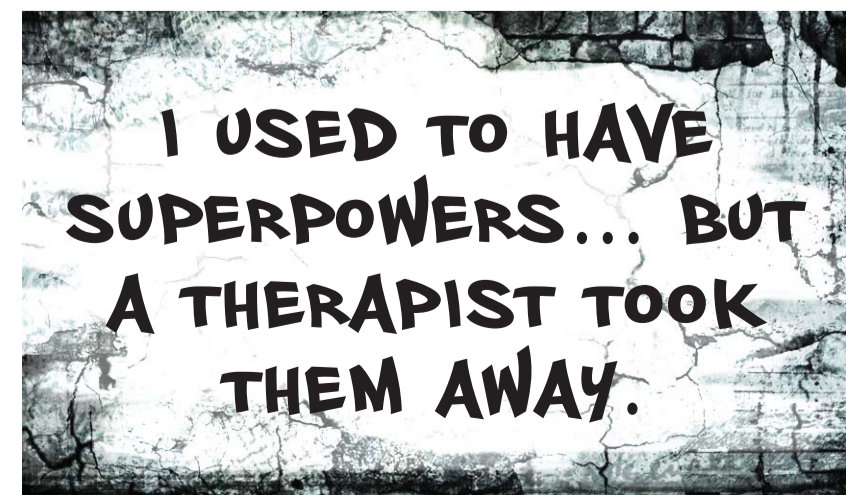
Snippet: Three music directors helped Rafi break out of the Naushad mould. Shankar Jaikishen, with their racy numbers and heavy orchestration, O P Nayyar, with his rhythm and fast music, and S D Burman with his melodious music. Rafi gave his voice to fast numbers for Shammii Kapoor, Joy Mukherjee and Shashi Kapoor.

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Tukde hai mere dil ke, Mere Sanam, 1966. A sad song sung in a somber tone by Rafi.

Na jhatko zulf se paani, Shehnai, 1965. The poet's flight of imagination and Rafi adding his inputs to this romantic song.

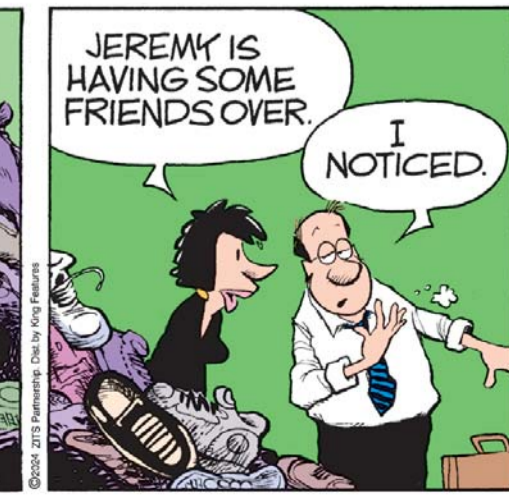
THE WALL



BABY BLUES



ZITS



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman