



Hornbill Festival, Nagaland

The tribes of Nagaland celebrate their festivals with gusto and fervor. More than 60% of the population of Nagaland depends on agriculture and therefore most of their festivals revolve round agriculture. They consider their festivals sacred and so participation in these festivals is compulsory.

Each tribe celebrates its own festival with dedication and passion. To encourage inter-tribal interaction and to promote cultural heritage of Nagaland, the Government of Nagaland organizes the Hornbill Festival every year in the first week of December.

Named after the hornbill, the globally respected bird and which is displayed in folklore in most of the state's tribes, the Festival aims at preserving and sustaining the rich historical traditions and heritage of Nagaland. The people of Nagaland celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm and spirit. Most of the population in Nagaland is dependent upon agriculture and hence most of celebrations revolve around agriculture. These festivals are considered as extremely auspicious and so the participation in these festivals is mandatory

The weeklong festival is marked with traditional dances, folk music, ethnic art and craft and exciting series of games. Local handicraft is the major highlight of the festival. Hornbill is the name of a globally famed bird that shows up in the folklore of various state's tribes. The festival ties all of Nagaland in one elephantine color splashed mélange of performances and demonstrations. On the eve of this auspicious occasion Naga tribe represent their cultural art in the form of wood carvings, sculptures and paintings.



Dates - Hornbill Festival
01 - 07 December 2011





Jodhpur RIFF *Rajasthan International Folk Festival*

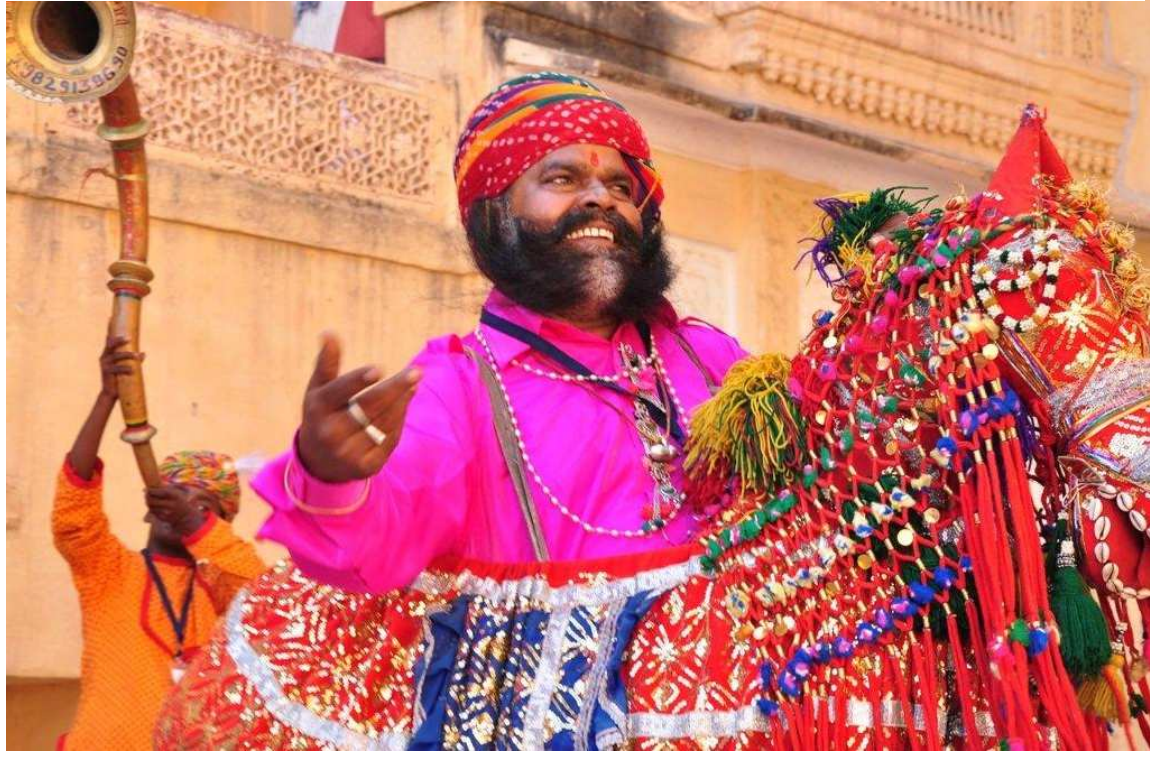
Begun in 2007, the Jodhpur RIFF brings together more than 250 Musicians and performing artists from across Rajasthan and around the world to celebrate their musical heritage and create new sounds through innovative collaborations, for five days in October each year.

Timed to coincide with the brightest full moon of the year in north India, Sharad Purnima, Jodhpur RIFF features a series of spectacular concerts and events based in and around Mehrangarh Fort - voted "Asia's Best Fortress" by Times Magazine.

Jodhpur RIFF includes performances by master musicians from local Rajasthan communities, sensational headline acts showcased each night on the Main Stage, and cutting-edge global dance grooves that will keep the party going late into the night at Club Mehran. Interactive daytime sessions for visitors, school children and families are staged against the breathtaking backdrop of the Fort.

Dates - Jodhpur RIFF

12 -16 October 2011





Rath Yatra Celebrations

The Rath Yatra festival is based around the worship of Lord Jagannath (a reincarnation of Lords Vishnu and Krishna). It commemorates his annual visit to his aunt's home. This festival lasts 10 days with the main festivities on the first day. The largest celebration is at the Jagannath temple in Puri, Orissa.

The **Puri Rath Yatra** is world famous for the crowd that it attracts. Puri being the abode of these three deities, the place plays host to devotees, tourists and about one million pilgrims from across India and abroad.

The exuberant Rath Yatra festival sees Lord Jagannath, along with his elder brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra, venture out of their abode in the Jagannath temple. The three of them travel to their aunt's Gundicha Temple a short distance away, where they remain for seven days before returning.

The gods are transported on towering chariots, which have been made to resemble temples, giving the festival its name of Rath Yatra -- the Chariot Festival.

Rath Yatra Rituals

The Rath Yatra is a community festival. People don't worship in their houses or fast.

Every year, three huge new chariots are made for the festival. The deities are bathed, dressed, and placed in their respective chariots. Amidst the beating of drums and gongs, and the blowing of conch shells, thousands of devotees pull the chariots through the streets to the Gundicha Temple. People come from far off places to take part in the event each year.

When the gods return, they're decorated and adorned with ornaments of pure gold, before being placed back inside the Jagannath temple on the tenth day.

An entertaining comic scene is enacted for onlookers, as part of the grand finale.



Dates - Rath Yatra

3 - 13 July 2011



The Origin of 'Juggernaut': History has it that when the British first observed the Rath Yatra in the 18th century, they were so amazed that they sent home descriptions which gave rise to the term 'juggernaut'!