


# How I Celebrate

UTS Multicultural Women's Network

2023

UTS  
UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY  
SYDNEY

Multicultural  
Women's Network



The UTS Multicultural Women's Network acknowledge the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, the Boorooberongal people of the Dharug Nation, the Bidiagal people and the Gamaygal people upon whose ancestral lands the UTS campus stand. We pay respect to Elders past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these lands and recognising their continuing connection to land, waters, country, and community. We acknowledge the historical oppression of land, language, and culture of First Nations People and commit to the decolonising journey we all share.



Multicultural  
Women's Network

## WHAT?

The Multicultural Women's Network aims to showcase significant cultural events through our e-booklets.

## WHY?

To acknowledge the cultural diversity of UTS. Using an assets-based approach of amplifying how people celebrate, this project aims to empower people to feel proud of their cultural backgrounds, as well as to celebrate the cultural diversity of our UTS community.

## WHO?

This is for UTS staff, students and anyone else you think would benefit from learning more about cultural events.

This month, we're spotlighting





# What is Holi?

'Holi has been celebrated in the Indian subcontinent for centuries, with poems documenting celebrations dating back to the 4th century. It marks the beginning of spring after a long winter, symbolic of the triumph of good over evil. It is celebrated in March, corresponding to the Hindu calendar month of Phalgun.'

'There are varying accounts of Holi's origin mentioned in several works of ancient Indian literature. According to one popular version of the story, an evil king became so powerful that he forced his subjects to worship him as their god. But to the king's ire, his son Prahlada continued to be an ardent devotee of the Hindu deity Lord Vishnu.'

'The angry king plotted with his sister, Holika, to kill his son. Holika, who was immune to fire, tricked Prahlada to sit in a pyre with her. When the pyre was lit, the boy's devotion to Lord Vishnu helped him walk away unscathed while Holika, from whom the festival derives its name, was burned to death despite her immunity.'

Source: <https://time.com/5799354/what-is-holi/>

## Other stories...

Holi celebrates the eternal and divine love of god Radha Krishna.

'Holi has a rich ancient history and every family would have a different story: triumph of good over evil, representing the love between Radha Krishna or even marking the onset of spring.

For me, Holi is a festival of colours, which fills up the joy in your life with family spirit and bonding much more than the colours itself.' (*Nema Madnani*)

*For more information: R Deepta, A.K. Ramanujan's 'Mythologies' Poems: An Analysis, Points of View, Volume XIV, Number 1, Summer 2007, pp. 74–81.*

Or scan the QR code

**Read about the  
legends behind Holi**

<http://bit.ly/3IM9Fae>





**Stories  
from our  
UTS  
community**



## A time you were at your happiest celebrating Holi...

Holi has always been very special for my family since that would be the only festival where Dad would close his clinic for 2-3 days straight and he would spend all that time with us at home.

Seeing the entire family together, giggling, eating, and working together would always fill up my heart.  
**I miss those pure and precious childhood moments.**

This moment would happen almost every year when all the family would get together to make "Gujiyas" in the kitchen. It is a flaky, deep-fried pastry filled with coconut, sugar, and nuts. My grandmother would keep all the ingredients ready and we would all work in an assembly line to get around 100ish Gujiyas made, stealing and eating a bunch of them in the process.



**Nema Madnani**  
Student Equity Project Officer, UTS Centre for  
Social Justice and Inclusion



## A time you were at your happiest celebrating Holi...

Back in 8th grade, I remember waking to this sweet aroma of gujiya...and a whole lot of other food items.

**I remember feeling overjoyed** as soon as I picked up my water gun, balloons and some Holi colours to get ready for the battle day.

Traditionally Holi is a festival of colours but people in my housing colony celebrated it differently. They added water to colours to make it more fun. I went downstairs to see people from all different backgrounds and ages coming together to play Holi at its peak.

Everyone looked so happy, some people had water guns, and some had colours in their hands, **it felt like a scene right out of a movie.** Every member of the building knew the traditional custom that had developed over the years, i.e. to completely drench the newcomer with water and colours. The worst/best part about this is, even the elders of the society joined in on the fun.

**Manav Kumar**  
Intern, UTS Startups



## A time you were at your happiest celebrating Holi...

Holi...brings a lot of energy and happiness because you're overwhelmed with beautiful colours and amazing music. This moment made me feel very free and alive.

**Harshita Kashyap**

**Executive Member, UTS Indian Society  
Design and Architecture, UTS College**

In the Holi festival, the role any individual plays is celebrating happiness and good over evil. Our strength is the celebration itself and the positivity we achieve from it.

Holi Cruise - Celebrating Holi with friends and dancing to music was when I felt alive and since it was on a cruise it felt like everyone was away from the real world and was living in the moment.

**Pranavi Ragipani**

**Student of Interior Architecture,  
Member of UTS Indian Society**



## What role did you play?



...being the only daughter in the family, my role was to help my grandmother and mother in the kitchen. These moments that I have spent in the kitchen with my grandmother are so precious to me; they are the reason why I started loving cooking and exploring different cuisines.

My interest and eagerness during each Holi and specifically this activity would always bring joy to everyone! My dad would always say- "we can't come into action unless Nema does."

**Nema Madnani**



## What role did you play?

The joy on my mother's face to see her entire family together celebrating Holi is and always will be one of the happiest memories in my life. Helping mom cook in the kitchen, and playing Holi with my dad and younger brother bought a sense of joy and unity. Holi brought a sense of companionship that no other festival does.

**Manav Kumar**









# Malang Holi festival

## Holi Festival Of Colours (Malang)

Celebration for the festival of Holi with a DJ, Holi colours, food etc.

### When:

- 11 Mar 2023, 1pm
- 11 Mar 2023, 4pm

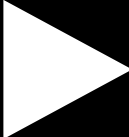
### Where

- UTS Alumni Green, 638 Jones St, Ultimo NSW 2007

To get tickets and for more information:  
<https://www.activateuts.com.au/events/holi/>



**UTS INDIAN SOCIETY**

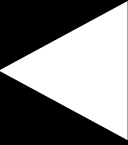


Here's wishing everyone a

**Happy  
Holi!**



Multicultural  
Women's Network





# JOIN US!

Supporting women at UTS to  
reach their full potential



For more information,  
email:  
[mwn@uts.edu.au](mailto:mwn@uts.edu.au)

**This booklet  
was created by  
Dr. Elaine  
Laforteza**

A big thanks to the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion for their support and to everyone who shared their stories.



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