

Śrī Gaurābda 536

Vaiṣṇava Calendar for year 2022–2023

based on the

Viśuddha Śrī Navadvīpa Pañjikā

Māyāpura Calendar



namaḥ om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
śrīmate bhaktisiddhānta-sarasvatīti nāmine

namaḥ om viṣṇu-pādāya ācārya-simha-rūpine
śrī śrīmad bhakti-prajñāna keśava iti nāmine

namaḥ om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti nāmine

namo sajjana-sevaka sajjana preṣṭhāya bhūtale
śrī śrīmad bhaktivedānta vāmana iti nāmine

vajrād api kaṭhorāṇī go-govardhana-sevaka
mṛdūna kusumād api bhaktivedānta trivikrama

vande 'ham śrī guru varam śrī rūpānuga pravaram
vraja-rasa rasikaṁ ca nārāyaṇam taṁ prapannam

śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda
śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

Ekādaśī Māhātmya

ekādaśyām nirāhāraḥ sthitvā 'ham apare 'hani
bhokṣyāmi puṇḍarikākṣa śaraṇam me bhava 'cyuta
Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (13.25)

“On the day of Ekādaśī I shall refrain from eating and will eat on the following day. O Acyuta, please be my refuge!”

ekādaśyām nirāhāro varjayiśyāmi vai jalam
keśava-prīnanārthāya atyanta-damanena ca
Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (15.36)

“On Ekādaśī I shall not eat, forsaking even water. For the sake of pleasing Keśava, I shall engage in this greatest of self-restraints.”

ekādaśī vrata samaṁ vratam nāsti jagattraye
anicchāya 'pi yat kṛtvā gatiḥ evam vidhā 'vayoḥ
ekādaśī vratam ye tu bhakti bhāvena kurvate
na jāne kiṁ bhavet teṣāṁ vāsudeva anukampayā
Padma Purāṇa (Kriyā Yogasāra 23.172,174)

“In the three worlds, there is no kind of fasting which is comparable to the Ekādaśī fast. Even if one performs this fast without a proper attitude, he achieves the Supreme Abode. The Supreme Lord’s mercy for one who fasts on the day of Ekādaśī, with full devotion, is impossible to describe.”

Introduction

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed different devotees at different times and places. He gave important instructions to Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī for two months while visiting Vārāṇasī, and for four months He instructed Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and his family in Śrī Raṅgam. In Jagannātha Purī, He taught Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī for approximately eight months, and at other times He would also teach Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī there. These instructions, spoken by Mahāprabhu to His dear devotees, help us, conditioned souls, to realise our real *svarūpa* and to connect with Śrī Hari's eternal pastimes (*nitya-līlā*). By instructing His devotees, Mahāprabhu taught the whole world that the only purpose of all our activities should be the attainment of *śuddha-bhakti*, or pure devotion. We should not waste our time with all kinds of ideas and desires of this mundane world, which are unrelated to *śuddha-bhakti*. Rather, Mahāprabhu taught us our real identity:

*nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśya na śūdro
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gr̥ha-patir no vana-stho yatir vā
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-pūrnāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*

Padyāvalī 63,

quoted in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 13.80)

I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, or *śūdra*, nor a *brahmacārī*, *gr̥hastha*, *vanaprastha*, or *sannyāsī*. My only identity is that of an insignificant servant of the servants of the servants of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ever-

expanding ocean of fully nectarean transcendental bliss,
who is renowned as the maintainer of the *vraja-gopīs*.

We are not anything related to the material body, be it gender, caste, nationality, race and so on. We are not man, woman, black, white, American, Australian, African, British, Chinese, Indian, Russian, and so on. Each one of us is a part and parcel of God and our real position is to be engaged in His loving service. The love of the *vraja-gopīs*, how they are serving and pleasing Śrī Kṛṣṇa, this is the main principle and objective of our life.

In Jagannātha Purī, many *karmīs* (fruitive workers), and *jñānīs* (impirical philosophers) would not observe Ekādaśī, and even those who did, they would not follow the Ekādaśī-vrata purely; their Ekādaśī-vow was not ‘*śuddha*.’ Mahāprabhu, however, showed by His own example how *śuddha* Ekādaśī should be observed. By following Ekādaśī in the proper way Himself, He taught everyone.

Ekādaśī is *kṛṣṇa-priyā*, very dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Just like Lord Hari and *hari-bhakti* (devotion to the Lord) are *nirguṇa* (free from mundane qualities), the appearance of Ekādaśī-devī for the purpose of helping the conditioned living entities is also *nirguṇa*. The Ekādaśī-vrata as performed by the *karmīs* and *jñānīs* is not equal to the *vrata* that is performed by the *śuddha-bhaktas* (pure devotees) who are on a *nirguṇa* platform.

Nirguṇa means ‘beyond the three modes of material nature,’ or ‘the absence of material qualities.’ Time is material, and so are the sun and the moon, but when they become a medium for *hari-bhakti*, when they connect to the service of Śrī Hari, then they become *nirguṇa*. Similarly, Ekādaśī appears at a certain time, and it is important to understand that it is due

to the presence of Ekādaśī and due to the careful utilization of that time in *śuddha-bhakti*, that this time become *nirguṇa*. To think that the pure, *nirguṇa* nature of Ekādaśī is ascertained due to the position and influence of the sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies is a big mistake and even an offense.

There are many rules and regulations for observing the Ekādaśī-vrata. Scriptures ordain one to observe a fast from grains and other foods, to minimize the demands of the body, and to engage more time in the performance of the different limbs of *bhakti*, such as hearing and chanting. On this day, one should give up the company of worldly-minded and sinful people by staying in a holy *tīrtha* or temple and associating with high class devotees.

One may also avoid all the prohibitions: applying oil on the body, brushing teeth, eating on a bellmetal plate, sleeping, gambling, cheating, criticising others, becoming envious, becoming angry, and engaging in sense gratification.

It is important to note that despite following all these prohibitory rules, including the breaking of one's fast the next day on the specified material time and according to the position of the sun in one's location – if done without actual devotion and without connecting that devotion to one's eternal position as a loving servant of Śrī Hari, none of this practice will be *nirguṇa*. The fruits obtained by such disconnected practices are the same as those attained by performing *āropa-siddha-bhakti* and *saṅga-siddha-bhakti*, or that which is desired by *karmīs* and *jñānīs*, namely sense gratification and liberation.

To carefully honor holy *tithis* such as Ekādaśī as completely transcendental (*nirguṇa*), seeing them only in connection

to one's eternal service in the *nitya-līlā* of Śrī Hari, falls in the category of *svarūpa-siddha-bhakti*. This will, without a doubt, award the fruit of *prema*, which was the root intention and meaning behind Mahāprabhu's instruction to Śrīla Śānātana Gosvāmī, as recorded in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 24.341–342):

*ekādaśī, janmāṣṭamī, vāmana-dvādaśī
śrī-rāma-navamī, āra ṇṛsimha-caturdaśī
ei sabe vidhā-tyāga, aviddhā-karaṇa
akaraṇe doṣa, kaile bhaktira laṅghana*

Vratas such as *Ekādaśī*, *Janmāṣṭamī*, *Vāmana-dvādaśī*, *Rāma-navamī* and *Ṇṛsimha-caturdaśī* must be performed on the *aviddhā* (unmixed) and *śuddhā* (pure) *tithis*, whereas *viddhā* (mixed) *tithis* should be discarded. All these *vratas* should be described, as by observing them, *bhakti* is attained and nourished. Yet, if one does not observe them carefully, one will be negligent in executing devotional service and make many mistakes.

A holy *tithi* should be honored on that day when it is the only, or exclusive, worshipful *tithi*, unmixed with the ordinary *tithi* that precedes it. This is why Mahāprabhu requested Śrīla Śānātana Gosvāmī to explain this, that *vratas* should be observed on unmixed, pure *tithis* only, and that when a *tithi* is *viddhā*, or mixed, it should be discarded.

It is important to understand why this is so. It is not that these *viddhā-tithis* would contaminate the holy *tithis* and make them impure, but rather because performing worship and following a *vrata* on a *viddhā-tithi* would show negligence and dishonor to

the special holy *tithi* one wants to observe. In order to properly honor a king that is about to arrive in a country, one has to make sure that the special reception to welcome the king starts only at that moment when only the king and his party enter. If you would begin the special reception meant for the king at a time when some ordinary people arrive before him, this would be disrespectful and negligent towards that king.

Thus, following Mahāprabhu's order, Śrīla Śānātana Gosvāmī has stated in *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*:

pūrvaviddhā sadā tyājyā
paraviddhā sadā grāhyā

If a particular *tithi* happens to be *pūrva-viddhā*, it is always to be rejected, whereas a *para-viddhā-tithi* is always to be accepted.

What determines whether a *tithi* is *viddhā* or *aviddhā*? For the Vaiṣṇavas, a day begins at the time of Brāhma-muhūrta, which is the second to last *muhūrta* before sunrise. According to Vedic time calculations, a day is divided in thirty parts of 48 minutes each, called *muhūrtas*. Based on the general definition, Brāhma-muhūrta is the period from 1 hour 36 minutes up to 48 minutes before the sunrise. The deeper meaning of Brāhma-muhūrta, however, is that this part of the day is the time of *brāhma*. It is an extremely auspicious period, for it is the time that the Divine Couple awakens. Within Their *aṣṭa-kaliya līlā*, this pastime of awakening takes place in the second to last *muhūrta* (from 4:24 to 5:12 am) of the *nīśānta-līlā* period (from 3:36 to 6 am).

When an Ekādaśī *tithi* is present from the beginning of the Brahma-muhūrta and continues to be present till the end (or even after) the Brāhma-muhūrta of the next day, it is called

sampūrṇā. Such an Ekādaśī is suitable for observing the *śuddha* Ekādaśī-vrata.

If, however, the Daśamī *tithi* (10th moon) is still present when the Brāhma-muhūrta begins, the Ekādaśī *tithi* mixes with that preceding *tithi* and is therefore called *pūrva-viddhā*. Thus, the Ekādaśī-vrata should not be observed on that day, but on the following Dvādaśī day, which then becomes a Mahā-dvādaśī.

On the other hand, if the Ekādaśī *tithi* is present from the beginning of the Brahma-muhūrta, but the Dvādaśī *tithi* (12th moon) already starts before the Brāhma-muhūrta of the next day, then this mixture of the Ekādaśī *tithi* with the Dvādaśī *tithi* is called *parāviddhā*, and although mixed, this day remains suitable to observe the Ekādaśī-vrata.

By observing Ekādaśī-vrata according to the precepts of *uttama-bhakti* – that is, by cultivating endeavors and moods that are favorable to Kṛṣṇa (*ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam*) – devotion is nourished and becomes perfected as *prema-bhakti*. Thus, Ekādaśī-devī is glorified as mother of devotion.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said:

mādhava-tithi, bhakti-jananī, jatane pālana kari

Mādhava's holy *tithis* (such as Ekādaśī and Janmāṣṭamī) are the mother of devotion (*bhakti-jananī*). Very carefully (*jatane*), I will observe and honor it (*pālana kari*). So to carefully observe and honor Ekādaśī means: (1) to reserve this holy time exclusively for transcendental devotional activities of *bhakti*, performed in the company of devotees, and (2) to properly honor this holy *tithi* by observing the *vrata* only on the day when this *tithi* is not mixed with the previous *tithi*.

The rules for the observance of *vratas* that Mahāprabhu established in His dialogue with Śrīla Sanatāna Gosvāmī are meant to connect us with the Lord's *nitya-līlā* and the eternal spiritual world; they are not meant to increase our identification with our material environment, which would be a type of *niyam-āgraha*. While there are very specific rules as to when to observe Ekādaśī-vrata, as explained above, it is important to grasp that the deeper appreciation of these rules is that they are there to connect us to the *nirguṇa* nature of *bhakti*.

When we accept that Brāhma-muhūrta marks the beginning of the *vrata* day, one can either identify Brāhma-muhūrta as a material time, determined by the material sunrise, or one can fully appreciate the real, *nirguṇa* nature of the Brāhma-muhūrta. The latter is more preferable; otherwise, why call this time period 'Brāhma-muhūrta'?

Those who identify Brāhma-muhūrta as determined by the material sunrise will be in an awkward position, for the sun rises in some places at 7 am, in other places at 8 am, 9 am, 10 am, or in some places even very late in the night. In some places the sun does not rise at all, while in other places it does not set. By trying to apply the rules of Ekādaśī to all these places, based on the movement of the material sun, they do not only misunderstand the *nirguṇa* nature of Brāhma-muhūrta, but also extends this misunderstanding to their performance of the Ekādaśī-vrata. This only puts them far away from being able to properly honor Ekādaśī as *nirguṇa*, and as such they will not be able to connect to the Lord's *nitya-līlā*.

The *nirguṇa-bhaktas* on the other hand identify Brāhma-muhūrta as the second to last *muhūrta* (from 4:24 to 5:12 am)

of the Lord's *nīśānta-līlā* period (from 3:36 to 6 am). This auspicious time marks the awakening of the Divine Couple and Their preparing for the upcoming morning. Our *guru-varga* has taught us that this time is the beginning of our day, and that is why we always perform *maṅgala-ārati* at *this* time, regardless of the sunrise being earlier or later. In the same way, when observing the rules for following the *śuddha* Ekādaśī-vrata and determining whether the *tithi* is *aviddhā* or *viddhā*, the *nirguṇa* devotee will only see whether this *nirguṇa* Brāhma-muhūrta has come, regardless of whether the material sun has arisen or not. In this way, as the *nirguṇa-bhaktas* properly honor this *nirguṇa* time, they will consistently connect to the *nirguṇa nitya-līlā* of the Lord and thus nourish their devotion.

Those who follow *śuddha* Ekādaśī-vrata will receive the true fruit (*sat-phala*) of Ekādaśī from Bhagavān Himself, and those who follow *viddhā* Ekādaśī-vrata will receive a false fruit (*ku-phala*) from Mohinī. The history of Rukmāṅgada is evidence of this.

By appreciating how the *nirguṇa-bhaktas*, followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, properly honor the *nirguṇa* time in *vratas*, we can also appreciate easily how they do *vrata* taking shelter only of the *nirguṇa* nature of Mahāprabhu's holy *dhāma*.

Due to contamination of material science and politics, the world is divided into countries and time zones, enhancing one's false identity and disconnecting *sādhakas* from *nitya-līlā*. Therefore *nirguṇa-bhaktas* mercifully recommend that we accept only to be a resident of Mayāpur, in the same mood that our Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advised us to reside in Vṛndāvana by

body and mind, and if we cannot do so by body, we should at least reside there by mind.

Navadvīpa-dhāma, or Māyāpura, is non-different from Vṛndāvana. Indeed, *śāstra* states that in Kali-yuga, all holy *tīrthas* and spiritual potencies reside in Navadvīpa, and the unique and unprecedented power to bestow *prema* to *sādhakas* disregarding their faults and offenses is only available there.

Fully faithful to this completely transcendental nature of Navadvīpa, the *nirguṇa bhaktas* recommend to perform *vrata* taking shelter only of Navadvīpa.

*nadīyā-udayagiri, pūrṇacandra gaurahari,
kṛpā kari' ha-ila udaya*

Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi, 13.98

By His causeless mercy, the full moon, Gaurahari, rose in the district of Nadia (Navadvīpa), which is compared to Udayagiri, where the sun first becomes visible.

In California, Śrīla Gurudeva was once asked by a senior Prabhupāda disciple if devotees in the West could celebrate Gaura Pūrṇimā (and other festival days) before the devotees of Māyāpura do. Gurudeva responded, “Never”.

Later, when told the comment that (Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī) Prabhupāda had said, “The sun first rises in Māyāpura and the rest of the world should follow their observations after,” Gurudeva replied, “Whatever Svāmījī has written should be followed.”

Nirguṇa-bhaktas such as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda did not aspire to the idea of specialised calendars

calculated according to different time zones* but only to the Calendar of Mayāpur time zone**, fully acknowledging that if we connect to Navadvīpa in this way and have full faith of its transcendental (*nirguṇa*) nature, then we can easily become recipients of Mahāprabhu’s mercy, and despite our faults and imperfections, the full result of our *sadhāna* will be attained.

*On Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda’s Vyāsa-pūjā in 1986, Vipramukhya Svāmī related the following during his *puṣpāñjali* offering to Śrīla Prabhupāda: “The question arose: When was Janmāṣṭamī? Our calendar, put out by Pradyumna, said it was one day in the West and a different day in India. By astrological calculation he had worked out the world in time zones, and those who lived West of a particular time zone would observe it on the following day. Seeing the confusion, you said the calculation was “over-intelligent,” and whatever day it was celebrated on in India, it should be celebrated the same day all over the world.”

**The GBC made the following resolution on Feb 25th, 1988:

“That the GBC accepts the Yoga Pīṭha Gauḍīya Pañjikā calendar as authoritative for ISKCON on the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is also Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions that the Pañjikā be followed in any time zone of the world according to the same Calendar date as observed in Māyāpura.”

GBC Resolutions 1988 #53

(<http://gbc.iskcon.org/1988/>)

Śrī Gaurābda 536

Vaiṣṇava Calendar for year 2022–2023
(Fasting days are in bold)

Month of Caitra / Viṣṇu: 19 March—16 April	
25 Mar	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita
28 Mar	Fasting for Pāpamocani Ekādaśī
29 Mar	Pāraṇa after sunrise before 9:34 am Tirobhāva: Śrī Govinda Ghoṣa Mahāprabhu Varāhanagara Śubha Vijay (Mahāprabhu's visit to Varāhanagara)
APRIL	
1 Apr	Amāvasyā (new moon)
6 Apr	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Rāmānujācārya and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Gosvāmī Mahārāja
8 Apr	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja
10 Apr	Śrī Rāma Navamī (Appearance day of Lord Rāma- candra – Fast till noon. Ekādaśī preparations only) Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vallabha Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja
11 Apr	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:00 am
12 Apr	Fasting for Kāmadā Ekādaśī
13 Apr	Pāraṇa after sunrise to 9:30 am
14 Apr	Śrī Keśava-vrata begins (One month continuous watering of Śālāgrāma and Tulasī. Offering satu and water)
16 Apr	Pūrṇimā. Rāsa-yātrā of Lord Balarāma. Vasanta-rāsa-yātrā of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu and Śrī Vaṁśivadananda Ṭhākura

Month of Vaiśākha / Madhusūdana: 17 April—16 May	
21 Apr	Tirobhāva: Śrī Akiñcana Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja & Śrī Nitāidāsa Bābājī Mahārāja
22 Apr	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
23 Apr	Tirobhāva: Śrī Abhirāma Ṭhākura
25 Apr	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vallabha Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja
26 Apr	Tirobhāva: Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura
27 Apr	Fasting for Varūthinī Ekādaśī
28 Apr	Pāraṇa after sunrise to 9:30 am
30 Apr	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita Amāvasyā
MAY	
1 May	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Āloka Paramahamṣa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
2 May	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvara Gosvāmī Mahārāja
3 May	Akṣaya Tritīyā, Candana-yātrā of Lord Jagannātha begins First day of Satya-yuga. Opening of the doors of the Śrī Badrīnārāyaṇa Temple. Appearance day of Śrī Paraśurāma Anniversary day of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti's inauguration in 1940
6 May	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Sankarācārya Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Gabhastanemi Mahārāja
8 May	Jahnu Saptamī

10 May	Āvirbhāva: Sītā-devī (consort of Lord Rāma) and Jāhnavā-devī (consort of Lord Nityānanda) Tirobhāva: Śrī Madhu Paṇḍita
12 May	Fasting for Mohinī Ekādaśī
13 May	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:25 am
15 May	Nṛsimha Caturdaśī (Appearance of Lord Nṛsimhadeva) (Fasting till dusk. Ekādaśī preparations only) End of Śrī Keśava-vrata
16 May	Pāraṇa after sunrise before 9:25 am. Buddha Pūrṇimā Appearance of Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīnivāsa Ācārya & Śrī Mādhavendra Purī Tirobhāva: Śrī Parameśvarī Ṭhākura.
Month of Jyeṣṭha / Trivikrama: 17 May—14 June	
17 May	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja
20 May	Tirobhāva: Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda Prabhu
26 May	Fasting for Aparā Ekādaśī
27 May	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:25 am Āvirbhāva: Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura
30 May	Amāvasyā
JUNE	
9 June	Gaṅgā-daśaharā (Appearance of Ganga), Gaṅgā-pūja Āvirbhāva: Śrī Gaṅgāmātā Gosvāminī Tirobhāva: Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu
10 June	Fasting for Pāṇḍava Nirjala Ekādaśī
11 June	Pāraṇa from 7:10 to 9:30 am
12 June	Dahī-ciḍā festival of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī
14 June	Pūrṇimā. Snāna-yātrā of Lord Jagannātha Tirobhāva: Śrī Mukunda Daṭṭa and Śrī Śrīdhara Paṇḍita

Month of Āṣāḍha / Vāmana: 15 June—13 July	
15 June	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu
19 June	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Vakreśvara Paṇḍita
23 June	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita
24 June	Yoginī Ekādaśī
25 June	Pāraṇa from 7:30 to 9:30 am
29 June	Tirobhāva: Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita and Śrī Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Amāvasyā
30 June	Cleaning of the Guṇḍicā Temple
JULY	
1 July	Ratha-yātrā of Lord Jagannātha Tirobhāva: Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Śrī Śivānanda Sena
3 July	Āvirbhāva: Pūjyapada Śrī Gopānanda Vana Mahārāja
5 July	Herā Pañcamī. Śrī Lakṣmī Vijaya Tirobhāva: Śrī Vakreśvara Paṇḍita
9 July	Lord Jagannātha's return journey. End of the Ratha-yātrā festival Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja
10 July	Fasting for Śayana Ekādaśī Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vijñāna Bhārati Gosvāmī Mahārāja
11 July	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 7:50 am
13 July	Śrī Guru Pūrṇimā. Śrī Vyāsa-puja Tirobhāva: Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī First month of Cāturmāsya begins (Fasting from all green leafy vegetables)

Month of Śrāvaṇa / Śrīdhara: 14 July—12 August	
14 July	Tirobhāva: Śrīla Prabhodānanda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
15 July	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Saurabha Sāra Gosvāmī Mahārāja
18 July	Tirobhāva: Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī
21 July	Tirobhāva: Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī
24 July	Fasting for Kāmikā Ekādaśī
25 July	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:31 am Tirobhava: Śrīpada Bhaktivedānta Tirtha Mahārāja
28 July	Amāvasyā. Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja
AUGUST	
1 Aug	Tirobhāva: Śrī Raghunandana Ṭhākura and Śrī Vamsidāsa Bābājī Mahārāja
8 Aug	Fasting for Pavitrāropana Ekādaśī Beginning of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Jhūlana-yātrā
9 Aug	Pāraṇa from 5:15 to 9:35 am. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Pavitrāropana Utsava Tirobhāva: Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Gaurīdāsa Paṇḍita and Śrī Govinda dāsa
12 Aug	Śrī Baladeva Pūrṇimā (Appearance day of Lord Balarāma) Fast till noon. Ekādaśī preparations only. End of Jhūlana-yātrā. Rakṣa-bandhāna Second month of Cātur-māsya begins (Fasting from yoghurt)

Month of Bhādra / Hṛṣīkeśa: 13 August—10 September	
13 Aug	Pāraṇa from 5:12 to 5:30 am
19 Aug	Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī (Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Appearance Day) Full fast till midnight, then Ekādaśī preparations only
20 Aug	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:35 am. Śrī Nandotsava Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja Prabhupāda
23 Aug	Fasting for Annadā Ekādaśī and Unmilani Mahādvadāśī
24 Aug	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 8:25 am
27 Aug	Amāvasyā
28 Aug	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Gosvāmī Mahārāja
SEPTEMBER	
1 Sept	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī (consort of Śrī Advaita Ācārya)
2 Sept	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Lalitā-devī
4 Sept	Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī (No fasting)
7 Sept	Śrī Vāmana Dvādaśī (Appearance of Śrī Vāmanadeva) Vijayā Mahā-dvādaśī Fasting for Pārśva Ekādaśī and Srāvaṇa Dvādaśī Āvirbhāva: Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī
8 Sept	Pāraṇa after sunrise before 9:35 am Āvirbhāva: Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
9 Sept	Ananta Caturdaśī. Tirobhāva: Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vijñāna Bhāratī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

10 Sept	Pūrṇimā. Śrī Viśvarūpa-mahotsava. Sannyāsa day of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. Third month of Cāturmāsya begins (Fasting from milk)
Month of Āśvina / Padmanābha: 11 September—9 October	
12 Sept	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja
16 Sept	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Gosvāmī Mahārāja
21 Sept	Fasting for Indirā Ekādaśī
22 Sept	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:30 am
25 Sept	Amāvasyā
29 Sept	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja
OCTOBER	
5 Oct	Vijaya Daśamī. Lord Rāmacandra Vijayotsava. Āvirbhāva: Śrī Madhvācārya
6 Oct	Fasting for Pāpāṅkuṣā Ekādaśī
7 Oct	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 6:50 am Tirobhāva: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī
9 Oct	Pūrṇimā. Saradiya Rāsa-yātrā of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Dāmodara-vrata, Kārtika-vrata, Ūrjā-vrata, Niyama-sevā begins. Tirobhāva: Śrī Murāri Gupta and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja Last month of Cāturmāsya (Fasting from sesame seeds, mustard seeds and mustard oil)

Month of Kārtika / Dāmodara: 10 October—8 November	
14 Oct	Tirobhāva: Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktikuśala Nārasimha Gosvāmī Mahārāja
17 Oct	Bahulāṣṭamī. Appearance of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa
18 Oct	Ākāśa dīpa-dāna begins
19 Oct	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Vīracandra Prabhu and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja
21 Oct	Fasting for Ramā Ekādaśī
22 Oct	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:30 am
25 Oct	Amāvasyā. Dīpāvalī (offering ghee lamps in the temple of Śrī Viṣṇu)
26 Oct	Annakūṭa-mahotsava. Śrī Govardhana-pūjā. Go-pūjā Āvirbhāva: Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu.
27 Oct	Yama Dvitīyā. Bhaiya Dooj Tirobhāva: Śrī Vāsudeva Ghoṣa
28 Oct	Tirobhāva: Nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja
29 Oct	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja Prabhupāda
30 Oct	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Śrīrūpa Siddhāntī Gosvāmī Mahārāja Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Āloka Paramahansa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

NOVEMBER	
1 Nov	Gopāṣṭamī. Tirobhāva: Śrī Gadādhara dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrī Dhanañjaya Paṇḍita and Śrī Śrīnivāsa Ācārya
4 Nov	Fasting for Utthāna Ekādaśī Tirobhāva: Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja Bhīṣma-pañcaka begins
5 Nov	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:30 am
7 Nov	Tirobhāva: Śrī Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī, Śrī Kāśīsvara Paṇḍita and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja
8 Nov	Pūrṇimā. Hemanta Rāsa-yātrā of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. End of Kārtika-vrata, niyama-sevā & Bhīṣma-pañcaka. Appearance of Śrī Tulsi-devī Āvirbhāva: Śrī Nimbāditya Ācārya Lunar Eclipse from 4:52 to 6:19 pm
Month of Mārgaśīrṣa / Keśava: 9 November—8 December	
9 Nov	Beginning of Śrī Kātyāyanī-vrata
17 Nov	End of Ākāśa dīpa-dāna
20 Nov	Fasting for Utpannā Ekādaśī Tirobhāva: Śrī Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura
21 Nov	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 7:35 am Tirobhāva: Śrī Kāliyā Kṛṣṇadāsa
22 Nov	Tirobhāva: Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākura
23 Nov	Amāvasyā
26 Nov	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja
29 Nov	Jagannātha-deva Odana Śaṣṭhi Ceremony (Jagannātha-deva begins wearing winter clothes)

DECEMBER	
1 Dec	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja
2 Dec	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja
4 Dec	Fasting for Mokṣadā Ekādaśī. Gītā Jayantī (The day Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā was spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa)
5 Dec	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 7:00 am
8 Dec	Pūrṇimā. End of Śrī Kātyayānī-vrata
Month of Pauṣa / Nārāyaṇa: 9 December—6 January	
12 Dec	Tirobhāva: Nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupada aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda
17 Dec	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja Tirobhāva: Śrīla Gurudeva nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupada aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
19 Dec	Fasting for Saphalā Ekādaśī Tirobhāva: Śrī Devānanda Paṇḍita and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prakāśa Araṇya Gosvāmī Mahārāja
20 Dec	Pāraṇa after sunrise before 9:50 am Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Bhūdeva Śrautī Gosvāmī Mahārāja
21 Dec	Tirobhāva: Śrī Mahesh Paṇḍita and Śrī Uddhāraṇa Ṭhākura
24 Dec	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Locana dāsa Ṭhākura
26 Dec	Tirobhāva: Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrī Jagadīśa Paṇḍita

JANUARY	
2 Jan	Fasting for Putradā Ekādaśī
3 Jan	Pāraṇa from 6:30 to 9:55 am Āvirbhāva: Jagadīśa Paṇḍita
4 Jan	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
6 Jan	Pūrṇimā. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Puṣyā Abhiṣeka
Month of Māgha / Mādhava: 7 January—5 February	
10 Jan	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī Tirobhāva: Śrī Rāmacandra Kavirāja
12 Jan	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja Tirobhāva: Śrī Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu
13 Jan	Tirobhāva: Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī
14 Jan	Tirobhāva: Śrī Locana dāsa Ṭhākura
15 Jan	Makara-saṅkrānti. Gaṅgā Sagar snāna.
18 Jan	Fasting for Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī
19 Jan	Pāraṇa after 6:30 and before 9:40 am Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja
21 Jan	Maunī Amāvasyā Āvirbhāva: Śrīla Gurudeva nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

26 Jan	Vasanta Pañcamī of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Sarasvatī-pūjā Āvirbhāva: Śrī Viṣṇupriya-devī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunandana Ṭhākura and Śrī Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi Tirobhāva: Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Viveka Bhāratī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Svarūpa Parvata Gosvāmī Mahārāja
28 Jan	Śrī Advaita Saptamī (Appearance of Śrī Advaita Ācārya Prabhu) Fast till noon. Ekādaśī preparations only
29 Jan	Pāraṇa from 6:30 to 10:00 am
30 Jan	Tirobhāva: Śrī Madhvācārya
31 Jan	Tirobhāva: Śrī Rāmānujācārya
FEBRUARY	
1 Tue	Fasting vrata for Bhaimi Ekādaśī and Lord Varāhadeva
2 Feb	Pāraṇa from 6:30 to 10:00 am, after performing the pūjā of Lord Varāhadeva. Varāha Dvādaśī (Appearance of Lord Varāhadeva)
3 Feb	Nityānanda Trayodaśī (Appearance of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu) Ekādaśī preparations only
4 Feb	Pāraṇa from 6:30 to 10:00 am
5 Feb	Maghī Pūrṇimā. Mahāprabhu took sannyāsa Āvirbhāva: Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura
Month of Phālguna / Govinda: 6 February—7 March	
8 Feb	Āvirbhāva: Nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

10 Feb	Āvirbhāva: Nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṃ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Bhūdeva Śrautī Gosvāmī Mahārāja Tirobhāva: Śrī Gour Govinda Gosvāmī Mahārāja
11 Feb	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja
16 Feb	Fasting for Vijaya Ekādaśī
17 Feb	Pāraṇa from 6:15 to 10:00 am Tirobhāva: Śrī Īśvara Purī
19 Feb	Śrī Śiva-rātri-vrata (Ekādaśī preparations only)
20 Feb	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:58 am Amāvasyā
21 Feb	Tirobhāva: Śrī Rasikānanda Prabhu, Śrī Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
24 Feb	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Viveka Bhāratī Gosvāmī Mahārāja
26 Feb	Tirobhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja
MARCH	
2 Mar	Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma parikramā begins
3 Mar	Fasting for Āmalakī Ekādaśī
4 Mar	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:54 am Tirobhāva: Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī
7 Mar	Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā (Appearance Day of Śrī Śacināndana Gaurahari) Fast till moonrise

Gaurābda 536 ends

Gaurābda 537 begins

Month of Caitra / Viṣṇu: 8 March—3 April	
8 Mar	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 9:52 am. Festival of Jagannātha Miśra
15 Mar	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita
18 Mar	Fasting for Pāpamocani Ekādaśī
19 Mar	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 6:00 am. Mahāprabhu Varāha Nagara Śubha Vijay (Mahāprabhu's visit to Varāha Nagara) Tirobhāva: Śrī Govinda Ghoṣa
21 Mar	Amāvasyā
26 Mar	Āvirbhāva: Śrī Rāmānujācārya and Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāja
30 Mar	Śrī Rāma Navamī (Appearance of Lord Rāmacandra – Fast till noon. Ekādaśī preparations only) Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vallabha Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja
31 Mar	Pārana after sunrise and before 9:40 am
APRIL	
2 Apr	Vyañjulī Mahā-dvādaśī
3 Apr	Pāraṇa after sunrise and before 6:15 am
6 Apr	Pūrṇimā. Rāsa-yātrā of Lord Balarāma. Vasanta-rāsa-yātrā of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Āvirbhāva: Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu and Śrī Varṇśivadananda Ṭhākura

Overview of the Vratas in this Calendar

Ekādaśī Vrata and Mahā-dvādaśī Vrata

The twenty-four Ekādaśīs that occur within one year are: *Uṭpannā, Mokṣada, Saphalā, Putradā, Ṣaṭ-tilā, Jaya, Vijaya, Āmalaki, Pāpamocani, Kāmadā, Varūthinī, Mohinī, Aparā, Pāṇḍava Nirjala, Yoginī, Deva-śayana, Kāmikā, Pavitrāropana, Aja, Padma, Indirā, Pāsankuśā, Ramā, and Prabodhini*. Two more Ekādaśīs, namely *Padminī* and *Parama*, which occur during the leap-year month of Puruṣottama.

“When there is an important dvādaśī, the Ekādaśī fasting is transferred on the dvādaśī, and this is called Mahā-dvādaśī. The 26th October, 1970, is actually Dvadasi, so the fasting is observed together, or Ekādaśī fasting is disregarded, and the dvādaśī (Mahā-dvādaśī) fasting is taken as important.”

from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda ‘s
Letter to Pradyumna Dāsa (Los Angeles 29 April, 1970)

There are eight Mahā-dvādaśīs, as explained in *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*.

Four Mahā-dvādaśīs are ascertained according to the conjunction of *tithi*:

- (1) **Unmīlanī Mahā-dvādaśī** – when an Ekādaśī extends on the day of Dvādaśī, but the day of Dvādaśī does not extend
- (2) **Vyañjulī Mahā-dvādaśī** – when an Ekādaśī does not extend to the day of Dvādaśī, but the day of Dvādaśī extends onto the day of Trayodaśī
- (3) **Trisprśā Mahā-dvādaśī** – when an Ekādaśī extends up to the sunrise on the day of Dvādaśī and the Dvādaśī extends up to the sunrise of Trayodaśī (but if the above Ekādaśī is conjoined with Daśamī, then it will not be a Trisprśā Mahā-dvādaśī)

(4) **Pakṣavardhinī Mahā-dvādaśī** – when a Dvādaśī that comes prior to an Amāvasyā or Pūrṇimā extends into the next day.

The other four occur according to *nakṣatra*:

(5) **Jayā Mahā-dvādaśī** – when the *nakṣatra* called Punarvasu touches the Dvādaśī day of the waxing moon (according to *Brahma Purāṇa*)

(6) **Vijayā Mahā-dvādaśī** – when Śravaṇa *nakṣatra* conjoins with the Dvādaśī of the waxing moon (as written in the *Viṣṇu-dharmottara*). Śrī Vāmanadeva appeared during the Śravaṇa *nakṣatra*.

(7) **Jayantī Mahā-dvādaśī** – when the Dvādaśī of the waxing moon is conjoined with the Rohinī *nakṣatra*.

(8) **Pāpanāsinī Mahā-dvādaśī** – when the Dvādaśī of the waxing moon is conjoined with Pusya *nakṣatra*. The *Brahma Purāṇa* states that by observing a fast on this day, one can obtain the result of observing one thousand Ekādaśīs.

Rules for parāṇa (breaking of the Ekādaśī fast):

Break the fast on the next day within the specified time for *parāṇa* by taking that from which you have been fasting. For example: If you fully fasted, even from water, then you should break your fast by taking water or *caraṇāmṛta*. If you observed Ekādaśī by eating fruits and roots, then you should break by taking grains.

Restricted foods on Ekādaśī:

- Tomatoes, eggplants, cauliflower, broccoli, bell peppers, carrots, bitter melon, green peas, loki, parmal, toroi, green chili, drumsticks, lady fingers, radish, beets, and banana flowers.
- Peas, chickpeas, and all types of beans, including products made from beans (like papadams, tofu, tempeh)

- All leafy vegetables (like spinach, salads, cabbages) and leafy herbs (like parsley, coriander leaves, celery, herbal tea, and curry leaves)
- Grains (like millet, barley, farina, quinoa, bamboo rice, wild rice, jungle rice, samo rice, amaranth seed, pasta, rice, corn) and all types of flour made from grains and beans (like rice flour, chickpea flour, sesame seeds, urad dahl flour, etc.)
- Starches from corn or the above mentioned grains, and products made from or mixed with these starches (like baking soda, baking powder, soft drinks with corn syrup, custard, cake, halava, certain varieties of cream and cottage cheese, certain sweets and candies, tapioca balls)
- Oils made from grains (like soyabean oil, sun flower oil, corn oil, mustard oil, sesame oil), other types of refined oils and products fried in these oils (like fried nuts, potato chips, and other fried snack foods).
- Honey

Spices not used on Ekādaśī:

hing (asafoetida), chili, sesame seeds, cumin, fenugreek, mustard, tamarind, fennel, cinnamon, mace, nutmeg, bay leaf, cardamon, cloves, oregano, basil, and other leafy spices.

Spices that can be used on Ekādaśī:

black pepper, fresh ginger, sea salt, and fresh turmeric – all taken from a new and clean package.

Foods that can be taken on all fast days:

fruits (fresh and dried), nuts, oils made from nuts and other pure sources (like olive oil, peanut oil, coconut oil, almond oil, and ghee), potatoes, potato chips, pumpkin, cucumber, squash,

lemon, green papaya, green banana, jackfruit, sweet potato, tapioca root, avocado, olives, coconut, all pure milk products.

Cāturmāsya Vrata:

This is the *vrata* observed during the four lunar months of the rainy season. The *vrata* starts on Guru Pūrṇimā, at the beginning of the month of Śravaṇa (also called Śrīdhara Māsa), and it ends at the end of the month of Kārtika (also called Dāmodara Māsa). During this period, devotees fast from certain foods, avoid shaving hair and cutting nails, avoid sense gratification, avoid the association of materialistic and sinful people, and perform more devotional activities in the association of devotees.

Restricted foods during Caturmasya:

Tomatoes, eggplants, all beans, soya, loki, parmal, urad dahl, papadams, mustard, sesame, and honey.

Particular foods that are restricted during each of the four months:

- **First month:** No leafy vegetables, such as spinach, salads of all types, cabbages of all types, kale, leafy herbs (like coriander, mint, parsley, curry), powdered leafy herbs, and teas
- **Second month:** No yoghurt.
- **Third month:** No milk.
- **Fourth month:** No oil, except peanut oil, coconut oil, olive oil, and ghee. Only fruits and roots. Grains allowed once a day.

Śrī Keśava Vrata:

This is the *vrata* of Śālagrāma and Tulasī *jala-dāna* (continuously offering drops of water to Śālagrāma and Tulasī), which starts on the Meṣa Saṅkrānti day and lasts for one solar month. This month falls every year from 14 April to 15 May.

Śrī Keśava *vrata* is a special *vrata*, dedicated to the worship and glorification of Tulasī-devī. By the mercy of Tulasī, who is a special manifestation of Śrī Vṛndā-devī, a *sadhaka* can get entrance to Vṛndāvana and establish a relationship with Keśava, who is that Kṛṣṇa who in Sevā-kuñja takes the help of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* to decorate Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's hair.

During the *vrata*, devotees include the following prayers in their daily *kīrtana* schedule: Śrī Vṛnda-Devyaṣṭakam, Śrī Keśavāṣṭakam, and Daśavatāra Stotram. These prayers are sung while performing the morning *abhiṣeka*, offering sweet rice, *āratī*, and *parikramā* of Śālagrāma-śilā (or Girirāja-śilā) and Tulasī. During the rest of the day, the *śilās* and Tulasī are placed under a hanging clay pot, filled with holy water from Gaṅgā, Yamunā, or other holy *tīrthas*, that gently drips through a tiny hole at the bottom of the pot. In this way, the devotees engage in this service of keeping Śālagrāma and Tulasī cool during this dry summer period. For full details of this *vrata*, please read the book Holy Dust of Vraja (available from bhakta.org).

Candana-yātrā:

This is the sandalwood festival, which begins on Akṣay Tṛtīyā, the third lunar day of the waxing moon in the month of Vaiśākha. This festival is observed publicly for twenty-one days, and another twenty-one days privately within the temple. During this festival, devotees prepare sandalwood paste mixed with some other special ingredients, like camphor, *aguru*, and saffron. With this paste, they nicely cover the full body of Kṛṣṇa, decorating Him with lots of flowers, and offering Him some cooling drinks. The swelter of summer embodies the heat of

Kṛṣṇa's loving separation from Rādhikā and sandalwood is the cooling and fragrant love and affection of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the *gopīs*. Following the example of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, the devotees soothe away Kṛṣṇa's suffering of the heat of separation by smearing sandalwood paste all over His body and thus make Him feel direct meeting with Rādhikā. Just as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says: "*grīṣme govinda-sarvāṅge candra-candana-candrikā* – In the hot summer, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is camphor, sandal paste, and moonlight, cooling the limbs of Lord Govinda" (Śrī Viśākhānandābhīdha-stotra 59).

Kārtika Vrata:

The lunar month of Kārtika is the month of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and therefore it is Kṛṣṇa's favorite month. Kṛṣṇa was once bound to the grinding mortar by the *vātsalya-prema* of Mother Yaśodā and became known as Yaśodā-Dāmodara, yet Kṛṣṇa is continuously bound to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī by the *madhurya-prema* of Śrī Rādhā and Her *sakhīs*, and is thus celebrated as Rādhā-Dāmodara. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa will be bound by the devotees who take shelter of and worship Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in Her month of Kārtika. This is why this month is also known as the month of Dāmodara. In this month, devotees daily sing special *kīrtanas* for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and prayers like *Dāmodarāṣṭakam*, *Kṛpā-katākṣa Stava-rāja*, *Nanda-nandanāṣṭakam*, etc.; listen to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other devotional scriptures; refrain from mundane talks, especially avoiding criticism and discussion on sense gratification; increase rounds of *harināma japa*; follow fasting according to the fourth month of Cāturmāsya; perform pilgrimage and

parikramā to the different pastime places of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vraja; daily offer ghee lamps to Rādhā-Dāmodara; and worship Tulasī. The 16th *Vilāsa* of *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* describes all the glories of Kārtika and how to properly follow Kārtika *vrata*. Please read this chapter to know all the details of Kārtika *vrata*.

Ākāśa Dīpa-dāna:

This one-month vow of daily offering a ghee lamp to the sky begins on Tulā Saṅkrānti (every 18th of October) and ends on Vṛścika Saṅkrānti (every 17th of November). The ghee lamp is offered to the evening sky, while chanting the following *mantra* from *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*:

*dāmodarāya nabhasi tulāyām lolayā saha
pradīpan te prayacchāmi namo' nantāya vedhase*

We offer this lamp with obeisances to Dāmodara, the unlimited and Supreme Creator, and to the Goddess of Fortune (Śrī Rādhā)."

Kātyāyanī Vrata:

Devotees observe this *vrata* from the first day of the lunar month of Mārgaśīrṣa (also called Keśava Māsa) until the full moon day of that month. The *vrata* includes daily rising early in the morning and bathing in a holy river (like Yamunā or Gaṅgā); daily chanting of the *mantra*: *kātyāyanī mahā-māye mahā-yoginy adhiśvari / nanda-gopa-sutaṁ devi patiṁ me kuru te namah* and worshipping the Deity of Yogamāyā with sandalwood pulp, garlands, incense, lamps, fruits, and special food preparations; eating only unspiced *kicharī* (*haviṣyānna*) once a day; and

hearing this pastime and commentaries about this pastime of the *gopīs* performing Kātyāyanī *vrata* from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū*, *Gopāla-campū*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, and other books.

This is a *vrata* not to imitate the *gopīs*, but to help the *sādhaka* realise how *śaraṇāgati* (surrender) is the doorway to *bhakti*. The main limb of surrender is *goptṛtve varaṇam*, fully accepting Kṛṣṇa as one's only *patī*, or maintainer. One can only enter the realm of *bhakti* after becoming free from all bodily identifications and material attachments. Kātyāyanī Mahāmāyā is known as Durgā, meaning 'a fortress,' because this material world, which is under her dominion, is very difficult to escape. But she is only a shadow of *svarūpa-śakti* Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's Yogamāyā manifestation. By surrendering to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and getting the mercy of Yogamāyā, one is easily released by Mahāmāyā. Therefore, the real worshipful Deity of this *vrata* is not Durgā, but Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself, along with Her Yogamāyā manifestations, Paurṇamāsī-devī and Vṛndā-devī. By invoking their mercy, devotees aspiring to enter into *madhurya-rasa* can easily escape the world of Mahāmāyā and enter the realm of Yogamāyā.

Eclipse

- During a lunar or solar eclipse, spend time in chanting *harināma* (*kīrtana* or *japa*).
- The following should be avoided: cooking, drinking, eating, sleeping, using the toilet (as much as possible).
- This time is very auspicious for attaining perfection of one's chanting of *gāyatrī-mantras*.

Journey Guide

Auspicious tithis for traveling

Pratipada (1st after new moon): journey brings good results

Dvitiyā (2nd): very smooth journey

Tṛtīyā (3rd): journey brings victory

Pañcamī (5th): very good for everything, attainment of wishes

Saptamī (7th): journey brings wealth

Daśami (10th): journey recommended for getting properties
or owning land

Ekādaśī (11th): journey brings recovery from illness,
brings good health

Trayodaśī (13th): journey fulfills all vows, brings perfection

Inauspicious tithis for traveling

Caturthī (4th): results in many difficulties, pain,
fighting, robbery and attacks

Saṣṭhi (6th): results in disease

Aṣṭamī (8th): results in mental disturbance,
misunderstandings and bad feelings

Navamī (9th): results in death or bad reputation

Dvādaśī (12th): inauspicious, traveling is forbidden

Caturdaśī (14th): brings danger and accident

Amāvasyā (new moon): inauspicious, traveling is forbidden

Pūrṇimā (full moon): inauspicious, traveling is forbidden

Auspicious results come when the following are seen at the time of travel: a cow with her calf, a bull, an elephant, a horse, fire burning to the right side, a chaste lady, a pot full of water, a brāhmaṇa, a flower garland, a flag, ghee, yoghurt, honey, silver, gold, or rice with husk.



भक्तबान्धव

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