



WHAT IS THE #SikhVaisakhi?

Sikhs celebrate Vaisakhi as the Birth of the Khalsa not as the Sikh new year or a harvest festival.

WHAT IS THE KHALSA?

The Khalsa is a collective of committed Sikhs (male and female) who are the leaders and protectors of the Sikhs. The Khalsa was created to fight oppression and uphold freedom and basic needs (food, clothing, health and education) for all people. Every Sikh should aim to join the Khalsa one day.

HOW WAS THE KHALSA CREATED?

In April 1699, the 10th Guru tested the Sikhs by asking for volunteers to sacrifice themselves. The first five who stepped forward, proved their devotion and formed the first Khalsa (Punj Piare). Anyone can join the Khalsa through an initiation ceremony which is carried out by five exemplary members of the Khalsa.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Punj Piare names give the ideal Khalsa qualities. When we have empathy (Daya) for others, we can give them justice (Dharam), but this requires courage (Himmat) to face up to evil-doers and commitment (Mohkam) to keep going through tough times, until the Khalsa is sovereign (Sahib).

WHY LOOK DIFFERENT?

Guruji gave Khalsa a distinct form so people could ask them for help. The Khalsa is always be armed with a Kirpan (sword) and has royal surnames; Singh for men and Kaur for women. The Turban worn by Khalsa reflects their sovereign nature.



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WHAT IS A NAGAR KIRTAN?

Sikh communities celebrate festivals by holding public processions and sharing their joy with other communities.

Nagar = town

Kirtan = singing of spiritual hymns

Nagar Kirtans stems from 'Parbhaat Pheri' in Punjab when Sikhs would wake up before dawn and join in groups to sing Gods praises on the way to the Gurdwara.

DID YOU KNOW?

Nagar Kirtans are led by the Sikh scriptural Guru Sri Guru Granth Sahib ji, and Five Khalsa representing the spirit and body of the Guru.

WHY SING KIRTAN?

All of Guru's writings are in poetry. Singing these divine songs of love lets us see through Guru's enlightened eyes. We sing in groups as this is the fastest way to experience and fall in love with God. This is when our spiritual life begins. Deep down, our soul loves and thirsts for God. Temporarily, the world might distract us from this thirst but, without this divine experience, we remain unfulfilled.

WHY ALL THE FREE FOOD (LANGAR)?

This is a form of selfless service (seva) that was actually instituted by Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the 1st Guru. All Gurdwaras must Serve Free Langar to all visitors regardless of race, religion or social status. It has 3 main reasons:

- **Fight Hunger**
- **Equality in Action**
- **Teaching Compassion**



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