

# THE UTSAVAS

## SHRI KRISHNA'S FESTIVE YEAR

"We experience Krishna with our eyes, we feel Him through all of our senses. Hari is the desire, the festival of our hearts. To imbibe Krishna's form is the ultimate reward." (Venu Gita, Subodhini)

Even though *bhaktas* constantly celebrate Shri Krishna's form and lila in the Path of Grace, there are certain days set aside as special occasions. Other festivals are connected with the lilas Lord Krishna performed here on earth, such as the swing festival of *Hindola*, and the celebration of *Annakuta*, when Shri Krishna is offered a mountain of food. Other festivals like *Makar Sankranti*, are of Vedic origin, while some festivals have their roots in local traditions. The entire forty day season of *Basant* is considered to be a festival. Every three years, when an extra month is added to the calendar, any festival can be celebrated on any day for the entire month!

*Bhaktas* are always looking forward to celebrating Shri Krishna. The sanskrit word, *utsava* not only means festival, but carries the meaning of delight, merriment and pleasure. *Utsavas* elevate not only the mood of the *bhakta*, but of Shri Krishna as well. Shri Krishna is always in a festive mood. Chaturbhujadas sings,

*Today Krishna is new, tomorrow He is new.  
Every day He is more and more.*



*Shri Giridhar, the Mountain-Holder,  
The enjoyer of the refined mood.*

According to the Indian calendar, there are six seasons, spring, summer, monsoon season, autumn, early winter and winter. Each season is duly glorified in Shri Krishna's seva. The *ragas*, ornaments and food offerings all vary according to the season, time of day and *lila*. The different seasons are an additional source of inspiration, providing an atmosphere to accommodate the different *lilas*, as well as a way for nature to mingle with the Divine. The summer season is a time to enjoy fountains and water sports. The winter is a time to snuggle in silk quilts. Every season brings its own inherent joy, an opportunity to nourish the firm mood of devotion. Regardless of whether it is spring, summer, monsoon or winter, Shri Krishna's homes are filled with joy and merriment. Hardly a week passes without a festival. The festivals herald the changing of the seasons, and special celebrations are held on the birthdays of Shri Vallabhacharya, Shri Gusainji as well as other influential descendants of Shri Vallabhacharya. Other days are also celebrated that mark significant events in the history of the lineage.

The six different seasons represent the Blessed Lord's six different attributes. The summer season is Shri Krishna's quality of Lordship. The rainy season holds His valor, the autumn His fame and the beginning of winter, His wealth. The second phase of winter called *shishira*, is knowledge. The king of all seasons, spring, is His virtue of renunciation. Shri Krishna is *Dharmai*, the One who holds all divine virtues.

Every festival, regardless of origin, is transformed and acquires divine significance if it falls within the orbit of Shri Krishna's blessed worship. As *seva* is an act of love, every celebration enriches that bhakti mood and presents an additional opportunity for the Blessed One to shower His boundless grace. A celebration is something to look forward



to, then it is enjoyed and finally remembered. The festival of Shri Krishna's appearance, *Janmastami*, is celebrated in song one month before the actual day. The pre-celebration increases divine anticipation and heightens and prolongs the celebration. The celebratory mood maintains the flow of nectar and gives bhaktas an opportunity to participate and savour the experience of Shri Krishna. When it elicits a divine response, then it is known that Shri Krishna has joined the celebrations.

On festive days, Shri Krishna is adorned with special garments and praised with unique songs to the accompaniment of cymbals. The utsava seva was greatly enhanced by Shri Gusainji who added his own unique Vrindavan flavor to the festive mood. He honored Vedic tradition and also introduced inspiring elements that he found in the royal homes of India. The paintings, food offerings, garments and other items used in the *seva* all became part of the ultimate sacrifice. Everything is used to please Shri Krishna who appears before his bhaktas according to the way they envision him.

Each season brings different types of cloth, paintings, poetry, melodies, poems, perfumes and food offerings. There are fifty-two major festivals during the year, but the bhakta's mood brings this festive number to infinity as they can make a celebration or *manorath* whenever they want. The gurus of the path of grace are the Gopis and they are the enlightened festival performers. Blessed bhaktas emulate their *bhavas*, for the Vrindavan bhaktas are not only the perfect devotional models, but are the inner festival of Shri Krishna's heart.

Each quarter of the year is associated with one of Shri Krishna's most beloved gopis. They are Radha (also known as Shri Svaminiji), Shri Chandravali, Shri Lalita and Shri Yamuna. We will begin the utsava section with Shri Radha's quarter that covers the months of Shravana, Bhadrapada and



Ashvina, (corresponding roughly to August, September and October.) This quarter, which begins with the monsoon season is very romantic and beloved to Shri Krishna and so it is only natural that Shri Radha, His most beloved, is associated with this season.

Many painted *pichvais* are used in the *seva* during this season. They are full of peacocks, pouring rains and the green groves of Vrindavan. They all support and nourish the mood of love in union. The poetry describes the beauty of the season and reinforces the romantic mood. Green, in all its varying shades, dominates the color scheme. The monsoon *raga* of *Malhar* is sung and further enhances the mood.

Surdas tell us, "The pleasures of singing of Gopal are not equalled by mantra recitations, austerities or by bathing in millions of holy places."

During the various festivals, poetry is sung in classical *raga*. The poems describe Shri Krishna's festivals and reveal the way the Gopis celebrate. They can also contain practical *bhakti* advice. The grace-filled compositions that are sung before Shri Krishna are all composed by realized beings, that is, *bhaktas* who have come face to face with the Lord of Sweetness. They reveal the *bhakta's* inner reality, her festive mood and are encoded in a *lila* language that can only be understood by the one who has entrance into the Path. A careful review of the words of the poets provides us with glimpses of Shri Krishna's festive playground.

The Path of Grace emulates the selfless love of the Gopis. We follow their paths and festivals through the lovely groves of Vrindavan. The sublime celebratory approach is to connect to the Divine source while living in this world and then to live off of His *prasada*, His causesless grace. Then the heart becomes addicted to nectar. Shri Krishna's celebrations all enhance the devotional mood.

The dates of the festivals are fixed by the Hindu lunar calendar. The days of the new moon and full moon divide

the lunar month into two parts. Now I offer a short review of the main celebrations.

## THE SWING SEASON (From Shravana Krishna 1)

During this month of union, (roughly August) Shri Krishna plays with all of His *bhaktas* in Vrindavan by the door of His lila bower. There He fills His *bhaktas* with His inner nectar. Every day for one month after Shravana Krishna 1, Shri Krishna sits in a *Hindola* (a swing). *Hindolas* can be painted, studded with jewels or mirrors, decorated with fruits or flowers or can be made of silver or even gold. Rasika Pritam explains...

### Raga Vihaga

*Swing Swing Swing beloved Krishna, swing!  
A golden Hindola stands by Yamuna's banks.  
Surrounded by lovely blossoming trees and vines.  
Rasika Pritam sings, "When I behold this lila,  
The pangs in my heart are relieved."*

### Raga Vihaga

*They Both swing arm in arm.  
Look by the door of the fresh forest bower.  
See the splendor all around.*

*Krishna first plays a full scale on his flute  
And then plays a protracted tone,  
And then softens the note.*



*Sings Svami Haridas,  
"Radha plays in Krishna's bower.  
When I behold that divine beauty  
I give everything else away."*

## HARIYALI AMAVASYA (Shravana Krishna 15)

This August festival is noteworthy for its imaginative use of the color green. On this day, all the Lord's garments are green. The coverings of Shri Krishna's seat and cushions are all green. Shri Krishna's ornaments are studded with emeralds and precious green stones. The *Hindola* is adorned with green leaves. Pistachio and other green foods are offered on this day and the songs that are sung in front of Shri Krishna praise the green monsoon season.

A song by Shri Harirayaji Mahaprabhu is sung on this day and conveys the mood of this festival,

*O friend, Shravana, the green season is here  
The earth is green the flowering trees and bowers,  
The garments, even Hari's crown is green.*

## THAKURANI TIJ (Shravana Shukla 3)

This August festival has its origins in the royal homes of Rajasthan, but in Shri Krishna's temples, the day is dedicated to Shri Radha. Shri Krishna swings in a wooden *hindola* that has mirrors embedded in it. The painted *pichhvai* shows dark monsoon clouds, rain and streaks of lightening. The poet Surdas describes the lila,

Raga Malhar

*How can I come? These rain drops will drench my sari.  
First the clouds thunder, then the wind howls  
And thirdly, it is as dark as night.*

*O Krishna! I am fair and delicate.  
Secondly I have a pot of curds on my head  
And thirdly, the Yamuna is flooded.*

*Sings Surdas,  
"When Radha's nose ring gets caught in her sari  
Young Krishna comes to her aid."*

## PAVITRA EKADASHI (Shravana Shukla 11)

This is the day when in Shrimad Gokul, Shri Vallabhacharya received the command from Shri Krishna to initiate divine souls with the *Brahma Sambandha mantra*. By the soul's connection with Shri Krishna, all impurities are removed and the soul becomes bound to Shri Krishna. On this day, the blessed Lord is adorned with a garland of three hundred and sixty silk threads, one for each day of the year. On the following day, the lineage holders are adorned with a silk garland.

## JANMASHTAMI (Bhadrapada Krishna 8)

Shri Krishna's appearance day (generally occurring in August) is one of the most important festivals of the year. On this



day the Blessed Lord is bathed with milk, ghee, curds, honey and powdered sugar and adorned in saffron-colored garments that show the great affection Shri Krishna and Shri Svamini share for each other. The ornaments are largely red in color, a hue that increases the excitement of the amorous mood. Shri Krishna's necklaces are really the forms of His *bhaktas* and that is why He wears them near His heart.

Shri Krishna wears peacock feathers and a tiger-nail locket is put around His neck to protect Him from the evil eye. Lotus motifs are painted on Shri Krishna's cheeks with a saffron paste.

Shri Krishna's appearance is at midnight and all the Gopis come and make secret offerings to their Beloved. Shri Krishna's entrance into the world of matter is strictly to shower grace over His *bhaktas*. He appeared not only to relieve the burdens of the world, but to shower grace.

### Raga Kanharo

*As soon as Shri Krishna was born there was joy.  
Krishna is full of the nine jewels of life  
And removes every suffering.  
Vasudeva and Devaki make a cradle  
And swing infant Krishna.*

*Then with a lion's roar  
Vasudeva crosses the Yamuna river towards Gokul.  
There Nanda and Yashoda's hearts are ecstatic  
When they find their new-born Krishna.  
They call the sage Garga and Paramananda proclaims,  
"Krishna has been born in Gokul!"*



# NANDAMAHOTSAVA (Bhadrapada Krishna 9)

*Nandamahotsava* is celebrated on the day following Shri Krishna's birthday and it commemorates the celebrations in the home of Nanda and Yashoda in Gokul. Joy overflows as everyone's desires are filled with the presence of Shri Krishna in their lives. Child Krishna is swung in a cradle and even today, lineage-holders dress up as Yashoda and swing their Beloved Krishna. Milk and curd mixed with turmeric are sprinkled over everyone as they sing and dance in the festive celebration.

## Raga Saranga

*Today Krishna's father, Nanda, is delighted.  
The Gopis dance, celebrate and sing auspicious songs.  
They wear red and yellow blouses with  
New saris lined with pearls. They have anointed  
themselves with choba and sandalwood paste  
And put red powder along the parts of their hair.*

*All the cowlads bring butter, milk and curds  
In large pots while the flutes and horns sound  
In tune with the lovely songs.  
Turmeric, grass, rice, curd and kumkum powder  
Are thrown and make the courtyard muddy.*

*Everyone laughs and embraces each other,  
Their hearts joyous with love while the  
Great sages recite the four Vedas and  
The five sounds join the drum.  
In Gokul, the Great Bliss increases.  
The happy heart is delighted.*

Raga Vilavala

*O friend, slowly rock and sway Child Krishna  
If I had a cradle, it would be made of sandalwood  
With strands of hanging pearls.*

*Gopis and friends sing auspicious songs.  
A banner of leaves hangs above the door.  
Sings Krishna Jivan, Hari's Beloved,  
I celebrate and offer Krishna a pearl necklace.*

**RADHASTHAMI**  
*(Bhadrapada Shukla 8)*

Shri Krishna's most beloved, Shri Radha, appears on this day (often September). She is two years older than Shri Krishna and it is said that She did not open Her eyes until She saw Him. He was the first thing She ever saw! This day is similar to the appearance day of Shri Krishna, for She is His inner form, and that is why the ornaments Shri Krishna wears on this day are similar to those of His own appearance day. Her manifestation is full of nectar and many special preparations and songs are offered on this most sacred of days. Shri Gusainji calls the name of Shri Radha the secret inner essence of the Vedas.

**DAN**  
*(From Bhadrapada Shukla 11 to the new moon)*

Shri Krishna does nothing unless it is connected to nectar and so in the *Dan Lila*, Shri Krishna stops the Svaminis and



attempts to collect tax on their dairy products (secret forms of elixir). Bhadra Shukla 12 marks the appearance day of Lord Vaman who appeared as a dwarf and asked for three steps of land from Bali Raja. He then fooled Bali Raja by taking on a cosmic form and in two strides covered all the worlds and put the third step on Bali's head. In this way Shri Hari accepted Bali Raja's offerings. Lord Vaman is the avatar of action.

Raga Kalyan

*Krishna! Since when have you started to tax our curds?  
You broke my pot and snapped my necklace  
But I know your heart.*

*Listen Queen Yashoda, I follow Nanda's rule.  
Askarana's Lord is the clever Mohan,  
An ocean of virtue and very proud.*

## SANJHI

*(From Bhadrapada Shukla 15)*

From Bhadrapada Shukla 15 onwards, (generally in September) Shri Krishna and His bhaktas celebrate the *Sanjhi Lila* for fifteen days. *Sanjhi* are large flower arrangements made on the floor that often cover half of the temple courtyard. They are placed before Shri Krishna during the afternoon darshans. Sometimes *Sanjhi Lila* and *Dan Lila* are combined and Gopis with pots on their heads are part of the *Sanjhi Lila*. *Sanjhis* can also be made of dry fruits, leaves or powdered colors that can even be sprinkled on the surface of water in trays. On the *Lila* level, during the *Sanjhi Lila*, Shri Krishna sometimes dresses up as a Gopi. Then the

Beloved goes out to pick flowers with other Gopis in hopes of some special meeting with His dear ones.

### Raga Gori

*I came alone at sunset to gather flowers.  
Krishna, as You head home with the cows  
I am lucky to meet You.  
In front of me there is a mass of dark rain clouds-  
I can no longer see the path.  
My chundari sari will bleed from the drops of rain.  
O Krishna! Protect me from these showers.  
The lightening bolts are blindingly bright.  
I am so afraid and you are so unattached.  
Take me with you, embrace me.*

*Sings Surdas, "O Enchanter,  
People claim you are virtuous.  
Now don't be so prideful.  
Place your black blanket over me."*

## MAHA RASA (Ashvina Shukla 15)

This is one of the most important festivals which celebrates Shri Krishna's circular dance with the Gopis on the autumnal full moon night. In this dance, the Gopis find a congregation of nectar and unite their souls, mind-hearts, speech, elan, senses and bodies with Shri Krishna. They have waited a long time for this experience. Now they are blessed and are able to dance with God in this world. It is the supreme reward.



Shri Krishna is dressed in a silver brocaded dance dress called *kachhani*. All His ornaments are of diamonds. The *pichhvai* painting that hangs behind Shri Krishna depicts His *Rasa* Dance. On this day all the vessels to be used are silver. Even the foods and the beverages served are white. The main offering is rice pudding. It is placed beneath the rays of the full moon. Everything used in the *seva* blends into the silver rays of the full moon. The sight of Shri Krishna's dance is reserved for His chosen few.

### Raga Iman

*By the banks of the Yamuna  
During the autumn night  
Krishna and the desirous Radha dance  
To the beat of the drum. It says...  
Tri tata tri tata gira gira gira  
Dhi dhi talang jhan jhan jhan janana janana  
The upanga plays and Krishna enjoys the sounds.  
Ta tirka ta ta tatatat tatatat*

*Radhe sings and is more lovely  
Than a million loves  
Krishnadas describes the glory of that dance  
While Radha and Krishna dance  
To the sound of the mridang drum-  
Karta te karta te, kankrite kankrite!*

Shri Lalita Gopi takes care of the next three months of *seva*, *Kartika*, *Margashirsha* and *Pousha* (the approximate equivalents of November, December and January). These are the first days of winter and Shri Krishna is richly clad in heavily brocaded clothes and ornaments. Even the *pichhvais* are richly brocaded and embroidered with gold and silver thread. Strong and rich colours are preferred.

*DIVALI*  
(*Kartika Krishna 15*)

This major festival of the quarter marks the end of the Hindu year (usually November). Shri Krishna wears clothes of silver brocade and a fan-shaped plume of peacock feathers. His ornaments are made from diamonds, rubies and emeralds. Cows are decorated and brought into the temple. For a few days before this festival Shri Krishna rests in a *Hatari*, a pavillion of mirrors where Shri Krishna sells various sweets and tries to attract the Gopis. He bargains in the currency of love. Paramananda sings of the occasion:

Raga Kanharo

*Today is the auspicious day of Diwali,  
The Braja woman gather and sing auspicious songs.  
They decorate the courtyard by the auspicious gate.  
Fruits, nuts, other sweets and fried foods  
Are brought on a golden tray.  
Paramananda follows Shri Krishna, who is  
Adorned with precious garments and jewels.*

*ANNAKUTA*  
(*Kartika Shukla 1*)

This is the most renowned festival of Pushti Marga and takes place on the day after *Diwali*. It commemorates the lifting of the Govardhana Hill by Shri Krishna. He did so to protect the inhabitants of Vraja from the rainstorms sent by a



wrathful Indra when the people of Vraja stopped their annual sacrifices and offerings to him. In this lila, Shri Krishna directs the worship of the *bhaktas* away from the material devas and towards the Supreme Brahman.

A huge mound of rice and many other items are all offered to Shri Krishna. Cows are beautifully decorated with peacock feathers on their heads and brought into the temple. Anklet bells are tied to their hooves. The backs of the cowherds and the cows are marked with imprints of red hands, for red is the color of love.

### Raga Sarang

*See Hari eat with a thousand arms.  
Over there He is talking with the Gopis.  
Lalita says to Radha, "See! There He is!  
The One who inhabits your heart."*

*Blessed are all the Gokul residents  
That live with the Lord of Gokul.  
Nanda sees Him eat and becomes blissful.  
All the men and women of Gokul are full of joy.*

*Sings Surdas, "Virtuous Krishna, is an ocean of bliss,  
And Dances to the Gopis' beat."*

## PRABODHINI EKADASHI

(Kartika Shukla 11)

This day (usually in November) commemorates the awakening of the gods from four months of deep slumber. A marriage alter made of sugarcane is erected where the marriage of a *shaligrama* (a round black stone symbolic of

Vishnu) to Tulsi, the sacred basil plant, is celebrated. The *shaligrama* is bathed with ghee, honey, sugar, milk and curd. Marriage poems are sung throughout the night.

*"O Mother, I want a wife.  
Just like that charming Radha who came to our home  
Wearing jingling tinkling anklets.  
She will cook delicious food for me and  
Serve me well. She will fan me while veiling herself  
From father Nanda Baba and hold me in her lap  
And captivate me."*

*Yashoda replies, "Beloved son; go and tell your father.  
He will arrange for that marriage."  
Sings Chaturbhujā, "When Yashoda and Nanda Baba  
Hear Child Krishna's words, joy's congregation arises.  
Their hearts overflow with Joy."*

## SHRI GUSAINJI'S BIRTHDAY (Poush Krishna 9)

Shri Gusainji, also known as Shri Vitthalnathji, is Shri Krishna's incarnation and the son of Shri Vallabhacharya. He embellished Shri Krishna's *seva* in the Path of Grace and composed a great volume of Sanskrit literature. His devotional contributions are immense and his appearance day, (usually in December), is one of the most important events of the year.

Raga Saranga

*Shri Vitthalnathji's lotus feet purify the three worlds.  
I repeatedly look, touch and bow to them.*



*The most beautiful Shri Vitthalnathji-  
Contains the power of the Mountain-Holder.  
He appears as a human for the benefit of the saints-  
To show the inner lila. He is the moon of Vrindavan.  
A ghost who took a drop of water  
That touched his feet was immediately liberated.  
You are a Lord, full of compassion, a treasure of bliss.  
Bhagavandas explains, "Your play is continuous,  
Lord of Delight, Victory! Victory!  
The Srutis sing your glories"*

Shri Chandravali presides over the months of *Magha*, *Phalgun* and *Chaitra*, (corresponding to February, March and April.) These are the spring months, traditionally associated with *Kamadeva*, the God of Love.

## VASANT PANCHAMI AND THE FORTY DAYS OF HOLI (*Magh Shukla 5 - Chaitra Krishna 1*)

The *Holi* festival celebrates the arrival of spring. It begins with *Vasant Panchami*, (usually in February) marking the birthday of *Kamadeva*, the Lord of love. For forty days afterwards, red and white powders and sandalwood paste are sprinkled over Shri Krishna. During *Holi*, Shri Krishna plays in unrestricted ways with all of his *bhaktas*. This is considered to be Shri Krishna's favorite festival and the Blessed Lord Krishna wears mostly white during these days so that the colors His *bhaktas* throw at him will stay. Shri Krishna loves this festival so much that after it is over, great efforts are taken to make Him forget it!

## Raga Basant

*Enchanter of my heart- tell me the truth  
Only then will I play Holi with you.*

*O Mohan, where did you spend Your night?  
Where did you err?*

*On your face, stains of her betal  
The impressions of her bangles  
exposed on your back.*

*The indentations of her necklace-  
all upon your chest!*

*You present one image-  
yet your heart contains another-  
and your movements, yet another.*

*Tell me clever Krishna*

*Do You think I am that stupid!  
You show up now in the morning  
with some contrived story.*

*Sings Surdas,*

*"O Lord don't be like that!*

*Come and meet me and don't pillage.*

*Son of Nanda, I know you will do  
whatever you want-*

*For these are the days of Holi."*

## Raga Basant

*O friend, over Shri Giridhar's beauty  
I break the grass and offer everything!  
Krishna is covered with choba resin,  
Sandalwood paste, white and red powders.  
The water-guns spray their colors*



*And Lal's eyes are filled with color.  
The beauty of his body has swindled  
All of Cupid's charms.  
Sings Krishnadas, "Blessed so blessed is Radha  
She gulps Krishna's nectar."*

## DOLOTSAVA (Chaitra Krishna 1)

This festival takes place on the day after Holi, (usually some time in March) when the demoness Holika is burnt. Shri Krishna and His Beloved sit in a Dola swing that is decorated with mango blossoms and other flowers. This is a *kunja lila*, part of Shri Krishna's sport in the divine inner bower. On this day there are four separate swing darshans and the throwing of color reaches its zenith. Shri Krishna is all dressed in white. Dol is the grand finale of the spring *Vasant* festival.

### Raga Kalyana

*The Gopis swing Krishna in the Dol swing  
Lalita and other the Gopis behold  
Radha's husband and put choba,  
Sandalwood paste and red powder on Him.  
They fill the air with red and white powders.*

*Krishna with lotus-like eyes eats betal  
And wears a garland over His heart while  
The mridang drum holds the beat, the agoti sounds  
And the flute plays so sweetly.*

*Nandadas sees the Gopis sing, Gopal is delighted.*

The next three months of *Vaishakha*, *Yjestha* and *Asadha* (usually May June and July) are the months of Shri Yamunaji's seva. Her company cools the Lord and protects Him from the scorching heat of the season. During these months, the Lord is constantly fanned and lightly dressed in fine light cotton clothes. Flowers are abundantly used in garlands and pavillions, and fountains spray water to cool the atmosphere. White and pastel colors dominate this season.

## LORD RAMA'S APPEARANCE DAY (Chaitra Shukla 9)

*O friend, Lord Ram has appeared!  
Dasharaths sin of three murders  
Was removed when he heard  
The charming name of Ram.*

*During the great celebration-  
The bards lose themselves and  
All of earth's residents rejoice.  
The young women break out in song.  
"Glories, Glories to Ram"  
Their voices resound around the world.  
The saints' hearts' are delighted.  
Paramanandadas celebrates the event  
And takes shelter at his lotus feet.*



SHRI VALLABHACHARYA'S  
APPEARANCE DAY  
(*Vakshakha Krishna 11*)

This is the major festival for the lineage (often coming in the month of April). Songs in praise of Shri Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya begin fifteen days before the celebration. The very form of Shri Svaminiji (Shri Vallabhacharya) manifested upon the earth to uplift divine souls. He taught his disciples to love Shri Krishna in the devotional mood of the Gopis of Vrindavan. He coupled a pure non-dualist view with divine appreciation and gifted his intimate ones the experience of Shri Krishna's *lila*.

Raga Sarang

*Shri Vallabhacharya wears a saffron-colored dhoti  
And shawl. Tilaks and mudras adorn his body.  
He sits at his father Lakshman's home.  
It is his birthday.*

*From head to toe, he is an amazing experience.  
His beauty vanquishes a million loves,  
The zenith of loveliness, his brilliance is unlimited.  
Nearby divine women sing lila praises.*

*Padmanabha sees Shri Krishna as Vallabh,  
The Lord of speech.  
Those who were there were truly fortunate.*

Raga Kanero

*The lila would become old  
If Shri Vallabh did not appear.  
The earth would become barren.*

*Everyday, Shri Vallabh's beauty is new-  
Like a chosen jewel set in gold  
Sagunadas sings, "I am a follower of his entire home-  
His glories are sung by the sages."*

## YAMUNA DASHAMI (Jyeshtha Krishna 10)

This festival, (occurring in May) is in honour of the river Yamuna. Shri Nathji is dressed in a white *arbandha*, a light dress reaching from the waist to the knees, a white turban and pearls. A song from the Gita Govinda is sung describing Shri Krishna's water sports in the river Yamuna:

*In the woods on the windswept Yamuna banks  
Krishna waits...  
He calls your name  
On his sweet reed flute  
He cherishes the breeze-blown pollen  
That has touched your delicate body.*

## SNANA YATRA (Jyestha Shukla 15)

On this day, in the middle of the hot season, (May) Shri Krishna wears a light *dhoti*. He wears an *shawl* on His shoulders and pearled ornaments. He is bathed before the public with cool water poured through a conch and is offered 125,000 mangoes, an auspicious number of the season's most luscious fruit.