

From temple rituals to regional traditions -how are 25 unique Diwali celebrations observed across Bharat?

This report compiles **25 unique rituals and celebrations of Diwali across Bharat**, highlighting temple traditions, regional customs, and festive practices that reflect the festival's rich cultural and spiritual diversity.

On **20 October 2025**, Bharat will celebrate Diwali, marking Bhagwan Ram and Sita Mata's return to Ayodhya after defeating Ravana. As per the Mahapurana, Goddess Lakshmi, once humbled by Lord Vishnu, was blessed with Ganesha as her adoptive son by Goddess Parvati hence both are worshipped together during Diwali.

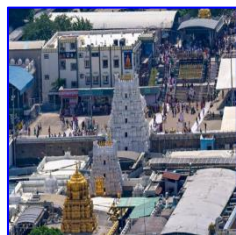
This report is in two parts

Part 1: Unique rituals in temples (8 incidents)

Part 2: Unique Rituals in various States(17 incidents)

Part 1: Unique rituals in temples (8 incidents)

S. No.	Details	Visaul & Source
1.	Lakhs of lamps illuminate the Ram Janmabhoomi complex on Diwali Place: Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, Occasion: The night of Kartik Amavasya Mandir Name: Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir Description: Ayodhya's Deepotsav is not just a festival of lamps but a celebration of the commemoration of the arrival of Rama and the victory of light over darkness. Every year the celebration of Diwali in Ayodhya touches new heights. Around 1.71 lakh lamps were lit in 2017, which was a big event at that time. ✧ In 2024, the festival of lights in Ayodhya set a Guinness World Record with 25.12 lakh lamps and 1,121 Vedacharyas performing collective aarti. Highlights included a drone show, eco-friendly cow-dung lamps, and "Ek Diya Ram Ke Naam." For 2025, organizers plan to light 29 lakh lamps using 65,000 liters of oil.	 Jansatta
2.	Millions of lamps are lit in Kashi to welcome the deities Place: Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh Occasion: 15 days after Kartik Purnima (Dev Deepawali) Mandir Name - Kashi Vishwanath ✧ According to the Kashikhandam of Skanda Purana, it is believed that King Divodas had banned the entry of gods into his kingdom Kashi regarding the celebration of Dev Deepawali in Kashi. On the day of Kartik Purnima, Lord Shiva came to Panchganga Ghat in Kashi and took a bath in the Ganges. This pleased the gods and they entered Kashi and celebrated Diwali by lighting a lamp. ✧ Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar, inspired by Adi Shankaracharya, renovated the Shri Kashi Vishwanath Mandir in 1785 and started the Dev Deepawali festival in Kashi by lighting a lamp on the Hazara Stambh at Panchganga Ghat.	 Dainik Bhaskar

3.	Special Bhasma Aarti is performed on Diwali in Mahakal Place: Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh Occasion: Kartik Amavasya (The first festival of Diwali starts from the Mahakaleshwar Mandir itself.) Mandir Name: Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga Mandir Description: In the Mahakaleshwar Mandir of Ujjain, saffron and sandalwood paste is applied to Lord Mahakal on Deepawali. After this, the Lord is bathed with hot water. After offering Panchamrit Abhisheka and Bhasma, special adornment of Lord Mahakal is done ✧ In Mahakal, a special Bhasma Aarti is performed on Deepawali, in which thousands of devotees are present. Diwali is started with Phuljhadi and Deep Aarti. ✧ The tradition of this particular festival is centuries old. It is believed that Deepawali used to start from the courtyard of the king of Ujjain, so that this festival is celebrated in the courtyard of Lord Mahakal before the festival of the people. Mahakaleshwar Mandir is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas and all major religious festivals begin from this Mandir. This is the reason why Ujjain's Diwali is considered unique.	 Dainik Jagran
4.	Special Diwali 'Asthanam' is celebrated at Balaji Mandir Place: Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh Occasion: Amavasya of Kartik month (Diwali) Mandir Name: Sri Venkateswara Swamy Tirupati Balaji Mandir Description: The celebration of Diwali at Tirupati Balaji Mandir holds special religious significance and is celebrated as "Deepavali Asthanam". ✧ This festival is especially celebrated with Lord Sri Venkateswara (Malayappa Swamy) and his wives Sri Devi and Bhu Devi. Deepavali Asthanam is held at the Ghanta Mandapam located near the 'Bangaru Vakili' (Golden Gate) of the Tirumala Mandir. Lord Malayappa Swamy is enshrined on his vehicle 'Sarvabhupala Vahanam'. ✧ Special pujas, archanas and aarti are performed by the priests. It also includes the Maha Aarti of Diyas (Mahadepa Aradhana), in which thousands of lamps are lit in the Mandir premises.	 Tirupatitirumalainf o
5.	First a lamp at Baba's door, then a lit Diwali in the house in Deoghar Place: Deoghar (Jharkhand) Occasion: Amavasya of Kartik month (Diwali) Name of the Mandir: Baba Baidyanath Dham Description: The tradition of celebrating Diwali in Baba Baidyanath Dham, Deoghar, one of the twelve Jyotirlingas of India, is different from the whole country. People light lamps in the Baba Mandir before lighting lamps in their homes. ✧ The significance of this tradition, which has been going on for centuries, is that the prosperity and happiness and peace of the house begins with the worship of Baba. ✧ It is mentioned in the Puranas that Ravana sacrificed his arms to please Shiva and Shiva himself came in the form of "Vaidya" and treated him, since then this place is called Baidyanath Dham.	 Etv bhara

6.	Puri Jagannath has a unique tradition of Deepdaan on Diwali Place: Puri, Odisha Occasion: Dev Deepawali (Margashirsha Krishna Chaturdashi to Pratipada) Mandir Name - Shri Jagannath Mandir Description: The festival of Diwali is especially celebrated as Dev Deepawali in the Jagannath Mandir of Puri. On this occasion, the Mandir is decorated with lamps and colorful lights, and devotees perform Deepdan for the salvation of the souls of their ancestors. It is believed that on the day of Diwali, the spirits of the ancestors come to earth and then return to Brahma Lok. ✧ During this time, special puja of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha is performed in the Mandir and prasad is distributed to the devotees. ✧ The rituals such as cleaning the sanctum sanctorum and jewel throne, lighting lamps on trees made of rice and fruits, and installing Mahalamps on the roof of the Mandir are performed with full devotion and devotion during the three days of Dev Deepawali. On the occasion of Puri Dev Diwali, lakhs of devotees come to Puri and pay obeisance to Lord Jagannath.	 Mahaprasada, Newindianexpress
7.	Mathuradhish Mandir has been a unique tradition for 400 years on Diwali Place: Kota, Rajasthan Occasion: Amavasya of Kartik month (Diwali) Mandir Name: Mathuradhish Mandir Description: A unique tradition of hundreds of years old is performed on Diwali in the Pushtimargi Mathuradhish Mandir located on the banks of Yamuna in Agra. On this day, Lord Mathuradhish plays the game of Chaupar all night, with Mata Lakshmi, Radha Rani and the cowherds. ✧ Devotees start gathering at the Mandir from the evening of Diwali. Mangala Aarti is held at 6:00 am, Shringar Aarti at 6:30 am, and Rajbhog at 11:00 am. ✧ In the evening, after the Udyapan Darshan and Bhog, the Chaupar chessboard is laid in front of the Lord in the Mandir. At 10:00 pm, the gates of the Mandir are closed, but the Lord is not put to sleep. This unique tradition takes place only on the day of Diwali.	 News18
8.	A special tradition of lighting the torch on the top of the Mahalakshmi Mandir on Diwali. Place: Kolhapur, Maharashtra Occasion: Amavasya of Kartik month (Diwali) Mandir Name: Mahalakshmi Mandir Description: A unique Deepdan tradition is performed on Diwali in the Mahalakshmi Mandir of Kolhapur, which is called Kakra tradition. From Narak Chaturdashi to Tripurari Purnima, the goddess has Kartik baths and rituals. ✧ During this time, devotees light lamps on the Mandir peak, creating an atmosphere of spiritual light and enthusiasm throughout the city. ✧ Before sunrise, devotees gather at the Mandir and prepare thick vat (kakra) from the yarn and ghee brought. The ritual signifies the welcome of Goddess Lakshmi and the spiritual message of Diwali, the victory of light over darkness.	 News18

Part 2: Unique Rituals in various States (17 incidents)

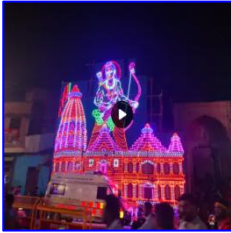
9.	Offerings of 108 Elements in Odisha's Kali Puja Rituals during diwali State: Odisha Rituals: Odisha embraces the tradition of performing Kali Puja, also known as Shyama Puja during the five-day Diwali celebration. ✧ Goddess Kali is worshipped twice once on Narak Chaturdashi and again on the dark Amavasya night of Diwali. ✧ Kali Puja can be performed in two ways: general worship and tantric worship. General worship is open to anyone. In this practice, 108 hibiscus flowers, 108 bilva leaves, 108 clay lamps, and 108 blades of grass are offered to Goddess Kali.	 India Today
10.	Kali Puja Rituals in West Bengal offering red hibiscus flowers, sweets to the goddess Kali. State: West Bengal Rituals: The rituals and customs that define Kali Puja include prayers, tantra puja, offerings, meditation, decorations and immersion of the idol. ✧ The worship includes tantric rites and mantras, and offerings of red hibiscus flowers, sweets, rice, lentils, fish, and meat to the goddess Kali. ✧ Worshippers receive Prasad, a sacred offering that includes Khichdi, Labra, and various vegetables. ✧ Bengalis light 14 diyas at home the night before Kali Puja as part of the Bhoot Chaturdashi ritual, which is believed to drive out evil spirits.	 Live mint
11.	Sacred Cow Worship: Honoring Cows for Prosperity in Gujarat during Diwali State: Gujarat Rituals: Vasu Baras, marking the start of the Diwali festival, celebrated primarily in Maharashtra and Gujarats. Worshippers feed cows, decorate them with turmeric and Tilak. ✧ Labh Panchami, also known as Saubhagya Labh Pancham, this is the last day of the Diwali festival. ✧ On the day of Labh Panchami, people distribute clothes, sweets, money, and other essential items among the needy people.	 The economic Times

12.	Maharashtra Diwali Rituals, Prayers to Lord Kuber, Laxmi, and Dhanvantri State: Maharashtra Rituals: Yama Deepam is celebrated on 13th day or Trayodashi Tithi (Dhanteras) of Krishna Paksha in the month of Kartik. ✧ Yama Deepam Devotees worship Lord Kuber, Mata Laxmi, Lord Dhanvantri and Lord Yama (the God of death). ✧ This ritual of offering a four faced diya to Lord Yama is performed during the Pradosh Kaal which occurs in the evening time or at the time of Gaudhuli. ✧ It is believed that Lord Yama protects the devotees with longevity, well being and also give protection against all the evil energies.	 Times Of India
13.	In Chhattisgarh, Diwali rituals begin by marrying field crops to Lord Narayana State: Chhattisgarh Rituals: A ceremony marries field crops to a Lord Narayana idol to start the festival. ✧ The three-day Diwali festival honors Lakshmi. Drums are played and cattle are decorated. ✧ Tribal groups in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region celebrate "Diwali" as "Diyari" with unique customs. ✧ Mahalakshmi Puja in Bastar is called by the local tribals as "Raja Diyari".	 Archbishop Live You tube Link
14.	In Himachal Pradesh, Diwali is followed by the "Pathar Ka Mela" in Dhami State: Himanchal Pradesh Rituals: In Dhami, Himachal Pradesh "Pathar Ka Mela" that involves stone-pelting, and getting struck during the festivities is lucky. ✧ Following Diwali, a yearly ritual involves two local groups hurling stones at each other. The blood of the wounded is used to apply tilak to the image of Goddess Kali at a nearby Mandir.	 Etv Bharat

15.	In Goa, Diwali begins with the burning of Narakasur on Narak Chaturdashi State: Goa Rituals: On the eve of Diwali, Goa sees the burning of Narkasur on Narkasur Chaturdashi (Choti Diwali or Kali Chaudas), a massive effigy of a demon that represents evil and darkness. ✧ People celebrate Narak Chaturdashi to commemorate Lord Krishna's victory over the demon king Narakasura. ✧ Devotee often use special oils and aromatic herbs during the bath, symbolizing the cleansing of impurities and the beginning of a new, positive phase in life.	 Herald
16.	During the second day of Diwali, Ujjain celebrates Govardhan Puja, where devotees allow cows to walk over them State: Madhya Pradesh (Ujjain) Rituals: The tradition is observed on the second day of Diwali, known as Govardhan Puja, in which devotees allow cows to walk over them. Devotees believe that by doing this, their wishes will be fulfilled. ✧ Devotees who observe the tradition fast for five days, stay at the Mandir, and perform bhajan-kirtan during that time.	 Times of India Video
17.	Naivedyam is offered to deities as part of Tamil Nadu's Diwali rituals State: Tamil Nadu Rituals: Deepavali is celebrated in South India a day ahead of Diwali in the northern states. ✧ The eldest member of the family or the lady of the household puts three drops of sesame oil (with a gentle massage) on the heads of all family members before sunrise. Then a mix of herb powders or shikakai is used to wash off the oil. ✧ People light a lamp known locally as kuthu vilaku and offer naivedyam to deities.	 The Indian Express

18.	On Diwali Padwa, husbands traditionally present gifts to their wives in Karnataka State: Karnataka Rituals: After Deepavali, Karnataka and Maharashtra observe Bali Pratipada also known Diwali Padwa. ✧ On Diwali Padwa, it is traditional for husbands to present small gifts to their wives, including items like jewelry, perfumes, or clothing. ✧ The festival of Balipratipada commemorates the reign of the demon king Vamana, a manifestation of Vishnu, who murdered the asura King Balindra, also known as Mahabali.	 Lokmat Times
19.	A lamp is lit on one side of the house to symbolize Lakshmi's presence during Diwali in Bihar State: Bihar (Mithila) Rituals: In Mithila region of Bihar, the poorness are burnt. They are collected from the entire house. Along with this, Goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, is allowed to enter the house. ✧ On the night of Diwali, in the houses of Mithila, a lamp is lit on one side and on the other side, "Lakshmi is in the house, poverty is outside", and at the end hookah-pati is played.	 Dainik Bhaskar
20.	In Chhattisgarh, Madhai Mela, where married women participate in the ritual hoping to be blessed with children State: Chhattisgarh (Raipur) Occasion: Madhai Mela, first Friday after Diwali Rituals: In Chhattisgarh, during Madhai Mela on the first Friday after Diwali, hundreds of married women longing to conceive lie face down on the road leading to the Mandir. Mandir priests and 'baigas' (witch doctors) walk over their backs carrying large flags, believing that this ritual will bless the women with children. The ritual draws participants from over 50 villages and continues a decades-old tradition.	 Times of India

21.	Igas Diwali, Lighting Bhailo Torches, Folk Dances, and Honoring Livestock Rituals State: Uttarakhand Rituals: Igas Diwali, celebrated eleven days after the main Diwali on Kartik Shukla Ekadashi, is marked by the lighting of Bhailo torches made from pine wood and sesame stalks, which villagers swing while singing and dancing to traditional folk songs like “Bhailo Re Bhailo” and “Kakhdi Ko Railu.” Folk performances such as Jhummelon and Pandava Nritya bring local legends to life, while cows and oxen are bathed, adorned, and worshipped in gratitude for their contribution to village life. ✧ Families prepare and share festive delicacies like arsa, singal, and pua around the Bhailo fire, celebrating unity, heritage, and reverence for nature in the heart of Uttarakhand’s hills.	 Outlook India
22.	Crying Diwali of Gajendragad, Lambani Kanyamanis’ Emotional and Nature Honoring Rituals State: Karnataka (Gajendragad) Rituals: In Gajendragad, Karnataka, the Lambani community celebrates a special Diwali tradition where unmarried girls called Kanyamanis wear traditional attire, light lamps, seek elders’ blessings, and share emotional tears symbolizing joy, sisterhood, and the upcoming separation of those soon to marry. ✧ The celebrations also include a group walk to nearby hills, where the girls sing poetic Lambani songs and collect colorful flowers. They later perform a ritual pooja by mixing these flowers with dung to make Hattevvann and offering it to the village deity. ✧ The festival concludes with rhythmic takkant folk dances, singing, and prayers before the Sewalal Mandir, reflecting deep cultural roots, emotional unity, and an eco-friendly Diwali free of firecrackers.	 Curly Tales
23.	Bundelkhand’s Erch Revives 12-Year-Old Mock Dacoit Tradition, Reenacting Rebel Bandit Rituals During Diwali State: Uttar Pradesh (Jhansi) Rituals: In Jhansi’s Erch town, a few days before Diwali, locals celebrate a unique tradition that revives the legacy of Bundelkhand’s famed dacoits, remembered as rebels or “Baghis.” Villagers dress up as bandits, wielding fake guns and cheerfully stopping passersby to demand mock donations, recreating the spirit of the old outlaws once viewed as folk heroes like Robin Hood. Residents familiar with the ritual join in with smiles and small offerings, while newcomers are momentarily startled before realizing it’s all in jest. Revived after a 12-year gap, this playful custom keeps Bundelkhand’s folklore and cultural humor alive.	 UP Tak

24.	Didwana's Māṇḍḍa Ritual, Women Create Rangoli on Homes and Shops to Bring Prosperity State: Rajasthan (Didwana, Banswara & Dungarpur) Rituals: In Rajasthan, Diwali traditions vary across regions. In Didwana, women make Māṇḍḍa rangolis from yellow clay, cow dung, lime, and ochre. In Vagad, newlyweds perform the Meriyu ritual, lighting a sugarcane-and-coconut lamp as a symbol of unity. In Bikaner's Barah Guwad, people play the fiery Barnati game, lighting wicks on wooden frames to celebrate together.	 Rajasthan Ndtv
25.	Bundelkhand Celebrates Diwali with Energetic Lath Mar Folk Dance State: Uttar Pradesh (Bundelkhand) Rituals: In Bundelkhand, people celebrate Diwali with the traditional Lath Mar dance, featuring dholak, dhal, and lathis, alongside Rai folk song performances, devotional bathing in the Mandakini River, circumambulation of Damodar Giri, and community feasts and cultural gatherings.	 Dainik Bhaskar