



- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

## Monkey Buffet Festival

***Published on: June 24th, 2020***

Around the world, for bringing people together and celebrating for common causes, festivals have been the perfect reasons for uniting the society. Humans, as social animals, need occasions where they could meet and greet other fellow beings. A festival is an event ordinarily celebrated by a community and centers on some characteristic aspect of that community and its religion or culture. It is often marked as a local or national holiday. A festival constitutes typical cases of glocalization, as well as the high culture – low culture inter-relationships. Festivals often serve to fulfill specific communal purposes, especially in regard to commemoration or thanking the Gods. Festivals acts as an introduction mark of a community.

There are at least thousands of festivals which are celebrated around the world and we are aware of some of them and unaware of others. While some festivals are celebrated to show devotion to Gods and increase companionship among humans, a few festivals also highlight the relation between humans and other creatures of the Earth. One of

the festivals which combines devotion to God with respect for fellow creatures of the Earth in the most beautiful way is "The Monkey Buffet Festival".

The Monkey Buffet Festival is held annually in Lopburi, Thailand. The festival includes giving fruits and vegetables to local monkey population of Lopburi province in the north of Bangkok. The annual fest invites local macaques to dine on towers of fruits and vegetables among the ruins of a 13th Century temple. The monkey buffet festival kicks off with an opening ceremony that includes performances by dancers in monkey costumes. When the monkeys arrive, hosts remove sheets from the banquet tables, revealing decorative spreads of towering pyramids of watermelon, durian, lettuce, pineapple and more; equaling to 2 tons of offerings.

Respect for monkeys traces at least 2000 years to the epic tale of Rama, a divine prince and his struggles to rescue his wife Sita from the clutches of a demon lord Raavan. According to the tale, the monkey king Hanuman and his army helped rescue Sita. Since that time, monkeys have been appreciated as a sign of good luck and prosperity. This annual buffet is one way by which people mark their appreciation. From what began in 1989 by hotelier Tongyuth Kit Wattanam Sont, the monkey buffet festival was launched with the help of the tourism authority of Thailand. Over the years, the festival has expanded to a large number of primates. In turn, it has seen an increase in the number of visitors who attend this unique event.

The festival is one of the best ways to honor the animal which has an ancestral relation with humans. It fulfills the religious beliefs as well as promotes the notion of 'love for animals'. Though the festival is celebrated in the memory of the Indian God Hanuman, but it is still quite unknown in India. The festival should be celebrated in India as well, as lord Hanuman is one of the most worshiped God in the country and no other way can be better than this to honor this monkey God in the country where monkeys are considered a big threat by many.

#### Summary

India is considered as a land of festivals where different communities celebrate their cultures in their own unique ways. Lord Ram and Hanuman are considered the most divine lords of our country but still monkey buffet festival is unknown to the worshippers of these two Gods. India has a large monkey population and people here, instead of considering them as sign of good luck, refer to them as a 'Threat'. Therefore, monkey buffet festival should be celebrated in India as well because it is a good way to pay respect to the monkey God Hanuman as well as for reducing human-monkey conflicts and maintaining a friendly relationship with these beautiful creatures.

By: Sarthak.S.Kain

College: Maharaja Agrasen College



Navigated to Monkey Buffet Festival