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अभिकल्प विद्यालय



DEP502: Design Research Seminar II

DESIGN EXPLORATORY PROJECT (DES)

Information Visualisation of Festivals celebrated by Women in India

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Introduction

India is a land of festivals. A wide variety and range of festivals are celebrated in India by different religions, states and castes (Arora, 1986). The larger festivals that are elaborately celebrated are documented and popularised by the media. However, a number of smaller festivals celebrated are being forgotten. Through this project, I wanted to document these **lesser known Indian festivals**.

Books have mentioned that multiple Indian festivals were celebrated every week leading to over hundreds of festivals (Bajaj, 2021). Traditionally different festivals were celebrated by the 4 different castes. Festivals were also celebrated differently in different states. Given the vast diversity and number of festivals, I decided to pick festivals celebrated by the **Vaishya** caste (from **Uttar Pradesh**). As I belong to this community, I was able to refer books and learn knowledge of these festivals through family.

33 Festivals were identified (see Fig 1) along with their significance. For the scope of this project, possible approaches to narrow down the number of festivals were considered, such as -

- 4 Historically significant,

- Most popular,
- Lost (least known),
- Season based,
- Celebrated by women

Sr. No.	Festival	4 Caste Based	Most Popular	Lost Festivals	Season Based	Married Ladies	Community
1	Makar Sankranti		■		■		■
2	Sakat chauth			■		■	■
3	Basant panchami				■		■
4	Maha shivratri		■				■
5	Holi Pooja						■
6	Holi khelane vali	■					■
7	Gudi padwa		■				■
8	Chitra Navratri			■			■
9	Gan Gaur Pooja					■	■
10	Navratri ashtami Pooja						■
11	Ram navami						■
12	Hanuman Jayanti						■
13	Badh mavas			■	■		■
14	Haritalika teej			■		■	■
15	Raksha Bandhan	■	■				■
16	Boodhi teej			■		■	■
17	Jamashtami		■				■
18	Sati ki amavasya		■	■		■	■
19	Ganesh chaturthi		■				■
20	Shradha						■
21	Sharad Navratri				■		■
22	Dashhra	■	■				■
23	Sharad poornima			■	■		■
24	Karwa chauth					■	■
25	Ahoi ashtami					■	■
26	Deepawali - Dhanteras						■
27	Deepawali - Narak chaudas						■
28	Deepawali - Main Deepawali	■	■				■
29	Deepawali - Govardhan poona						■
30	Deepawali - bhai dooj						■
31	Dev uthan ekadashi			■			■
32	Kartik poornima				■		■
33	Margshirsh guruwara						■
Total		4	8	9	7	7	33

Fig 1. Possible approaches to select festivals

Context

Selection of Festivals

Finally, 5 lesser known festivals celebrated by only **women** were selected for the information visualisation. The festivals selected were - Sakat Chauth, Gan Gaur Pooja, Sati ki Amavasya, Karwa Chauth and Ahoi Ashtami.

The context for this project was to visualise the information of the selected 5 festivals such that they can be easily **understood** and **practised** by the upcoming generation of **young Indians**.

The practical information required to practise these festivals in today's context would be communicated.

Background Reading

I looked at examples of cultural mapping and information mapping to understand ways of **data organisation** for the visualisation.

Cultural Mapping

Cultural Mapping is a systematic approach to identifying, recording, classifying and analyzing a community's cultural resources .

The cultural map of St. Thomas (2015) (see Fig 2) serves as a gateway for organisations, businesses, community groups and the public to easily identify and explore the city's assets.

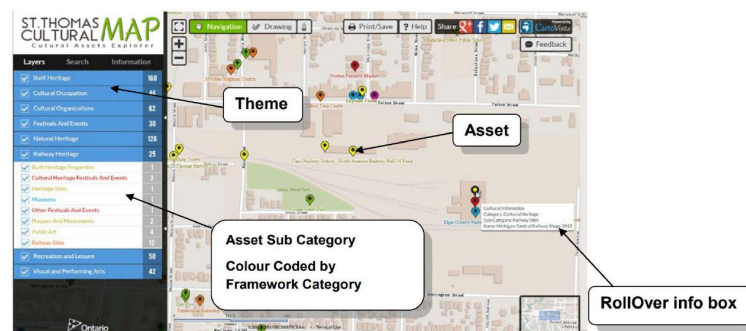


Fig 2. St. Thomas Cultural Map (2015)

The cultural map may consist of layers, keyword search, information window, annotation and drawing tools.

Information Mapping

Information Mapping is writing without paragraphs. Instead, there's a set format to guide the writer and reader along the easiest pathway to communication (Horn et al., 1974).

It involves identifying, categorizing, interrelating and sequencing, and presenting graphical information for learning and reference.

It increases reading efficiency as it can be simple, modular, an expandable classification system and consistent by using information blocks, information map, unit and course (see Fig 3).

It is used for conceptual, procedural, process, classification, structural and decision information.

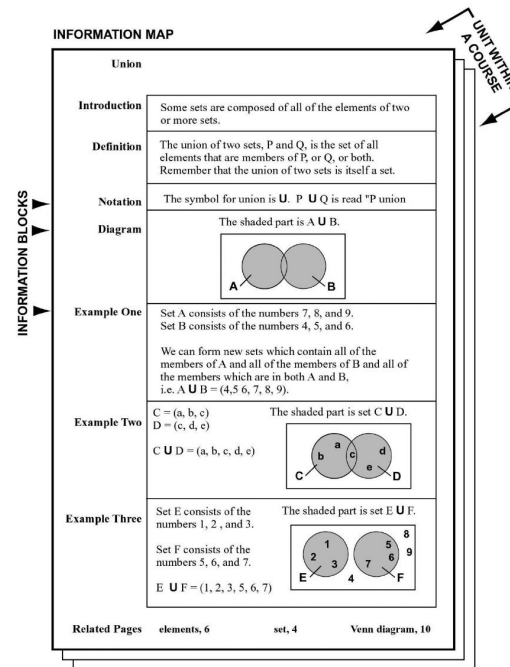


Fig 3. Information Block, Information Map, Unit, Course (Horn et al., 1974)

The principles of data organisation used by these methods were used in data analysis for the final visualisation.

Data Collection

Data was collected for each of the 5 selected festivals from books and information through family. Data was collected on their -

- Significance
- Date (Tithi)
- Rituals (Practical information needed for practice)

Fig 4 shows the initial data collected for one of the festivals - Sakat Chauth.

2. Sakat Chauth:

- A. Significance: it is celebrated for worshipping lord Ganesh.
- B. Tithi: Magh month krishna paksh charurthi. One of the most important chaturthi. Similar to karwa chauth. Mothers of sons do it.
- C. Rituals:
 - a. Ladies observe fast if possible Nirjal.
 - b. In the evening do Pooja of ganeshji
 - i. Keep ganesh ji statue on a chakla
 - ii. Keep one lock and key
 - iii. Make two figures of a boy, one with ghee and another one with oil.
 - iv. Mix raw til and gud and make mounds of 5 supari, 2 mutthi (fists) and 1 small ladoo.
 - v. Keep roli, chawal and til for Pooja.
 - vi. Listen to stories :
 1. Aav pakane vali
 2. Ganeshji ki kahani
 - vii. Worship moon at moonrise, offer ardhya, til and gud and make bayana.
 - viii. For bayana, keep 4 laddoos of til, and money. at the time of making bayana, keep 1 ladoo in your paloo.
 - ix. After bayana, have food, but first have til ladoo.

Fig 4. Data collection - Sakat Chauth

The entire data collection document can be viewed [here](#).

Secondary Research

I also looked at existing documentations of Indian festivals. These were mapped onto the English calendar by Drik Panchang (2021) (see Fig 5).

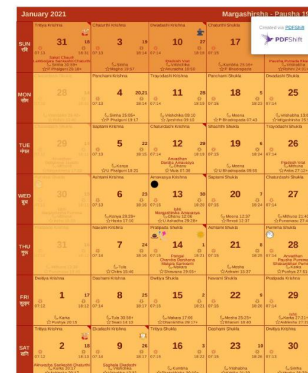


Fig 5. Documentation by Drik Panchang (2021)

Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed to map to on a timeline, identify [themes](#), [categories](#) of objects included and [sensory experiences](#).

The themes identified helped answer questions related to the activities in the festivals - which God was worshiped, whether fasting was involved, when was pooja practised etc. The rituals were mapped based on the time of the day which helped understand when most of the festival activities happened. Categories of objects involved in the festival were identified. Sensory experiences such creating visuals, smell arising from cooking activities and sounds from singing/storytelling were also identified.

Fig 6 shows the data analysis for the 5 festivals.

Through this analysis, a holistic picture of the festivals was created. The timeline and themes could serve as a structure for data organisation while the categories and sensory experiences could be visualised in different ways to capture the [essence](#) of the festivals.

Similar and different themes, categories and sensory experiences could also be observed across different festivals.

Cross-Analysis

Through a cross-analysis, [common topics](#) with [different information](#) were identified and organised to create the final visualisation.

Common topics included -

- Tithi
- Objective
- Ishta Dev
- Bhog
- Pooja Thali
- Ardhya
- Bayana
- Pooja Rituals

Representing the festivals under a structure created by these common topics would enable [comparing](#) the different festivals visually.

The [final data organisation](#) for all the 5 festivals used in the final visualisation can be viewed [here](#).

Timeline	Content - Sakat Chauth	Themes	Categories	Sensory
Significance (Why?) (for Whom?)	It is celebrated for worshipping Ganeshji. Mothers of sons do it. One of the most important Chaturthi. Similar to Karwa Chauth.	God	Ganesh	
Tithi (When?)	Magh month. Krishna Paksh Charurthi.	Lunar Calendar		
Rituals (How+What+When?)				
All day	Ladies observe fast, if possible nirjal.	Fast	Without food, without water	
Evening	In the evening do pooja of Ganeshji.	Pooja	Ganesh	
Preparations	Keep Ganeshji statue on a chakia. Keep one lock and key. Make two figures of a boy, one with ghee and another one with oil. Mix raw til and gud and make mounds of 5 supari, 2 mutthi (fists) and 1 small ladoo. Keep roli, chawal and til for Pooja.		Objects Drawings Food Pooja articles	Visual (Drawing) Smell (Cooking)
Proceedings	Listen to stories : Aav pakane vali, Ganeshji ki kahani.	Storytelling		Sound (Storytelling)
Night				
Proceedings	Worship moon at moonrise, offer ardhya, til and gud and make bayana.	Pooja		
Preparations	For bayana, keep 4 laddoos of til and money. At the time of making bayana, keep 1 ladoo in your paloo.		Bayana	
Post proceedings	After bayana, have food, but first have til ladoo.			

Timeline	Content - Ahoi Ashtami	Themes	Categories	Sensory
Significance (Why?) (for Whom?)	This is celebrated for wellness of children.			
Tithi (When?)	Ashtami.	Lunar Calendar		
Rituals (How+What+When?)				
All day	Ladies with sons observe this fast.	Fast	Without food	
Preparations	For pooja, Put poster of ahoi ashtami on the wall. Keep two kalash filled with water on wheat grains or rice grains. Keep raw vegetables on the cover of one kakash like potatoes, arbi, carrot, capsicum etc. Keep 2 poori and 2 pooa on the second one. Make aate ka halwa. Keep sugarcane for pooja.	Pooja	Ganesh Pooja articles Objects, food Objects, food Food Food Food	Smell (Food) Smell (Food)
Proceedings	Say story. Use halwa to stick kakawa on the poster. Do pooja of raja, rani, syahoo, 7 sons and 7 daughters in law. Offer ardhya to sun.	Storytelling Pooja		Sound (Storytelling)
Post proceedings	Make bayana of 8 poos and 9 poos and give to someone elder.		Ardhya Bayana	
Notes	In some houses, ardhya is offered to star rising in the evening. Till that time, ladies observe fast.		Fast, Night	

Timeline	Content - Gan Gaur Pooja	Themes	Categories	Sensory
Significance (Why?) (for Whom?)	We do Pooja of Shiv Parvati for Akhand Saubhagya.	God	Shiv Parvati	
Tithi (When?)	3rd Day of Chaitra Navratri.	Lunar Calendar		
Rituals (How+What+When?)				
Morning?	All ladies and girls do Pooja of Shiv & Parvati.	Pooja	Shiv Parvati	
Preparations?	We make gunas. Married ladies offer 16 gunas, keep 16 gunas in godi. Girls offer 8 gunas, keep 8 gunas in godi.		Gunas	
Proceedings?	Offer durva and gunas to Shiv Parvati. Sing songs for Gan Gaur. Listen to stories. Married ladies make bayana for 16 gunas and money. While doing offering of water, ring is put in the Kakashi of water.		Durva, gunas Singing songs Storytelling Objects	Sound (Singing) Sound (Storytelling) Sound (Metal in water)
Evening	In the evening, again water is offered and ring is taken out.		Objects	

Timeline	Content - Sati ki Amavasya	Themes	Categories	Sensory
Significance (Why?) (for Whom?)	To remember Sati and her sacrifices.	God?	Sati	
Tithi (When?)	Bhadrapad ki Amasvya.	Lunar Calendar		
Rituals (How+What+When?)				
Morning?				
Preparations	Make chila and chilari (with design of kangoor). Call for new roli, mehndi. Divide in two places. Make swastik. Light diya.		Food, drawings Objects Swastik Diya	Smell (Food), Visual (Design) Visual (Light)
Proceedings	Do Pooja and put dots of roli and mehndi 9x9. Cover diya by chalani.	Pooja	Drawings Objects	
Notes	Take 7 rounds of it.			
Post proceedings	This Pooja should not be seen by unmarried girls. One set is for sati and another set is given to behan beti.	Storytelling		Sound (Storytelling)

Timeline	Content - Karwa Chauth	Themes	Categories	Sensory
Significance (Why?) (for Whom?)	This upwas is done for husband's good health and longevity.			
Tithi (When?)	Chaturthi.	Lunar Calendar		
Rituals (How+What+When?)				
All day	Married ladies observe nirjal vrat for whole day and offer ardhya to moon and then only they eat food.	Fast	Without food, without water	
Sunset	At the time of sunset, pooja is done, each one keeps one karwa filled with water.	Pooja		
Proceedings	Make a Swastik on the ground. Keep karwa filled with water. On top of karwa, keep wheat grains and gud on the cover of karwa. Say story of seven brothers and one sister. Exchange karwa for 14 times with you co-sister (devranis or nanad). If no one is there for exchange, exchange can be done with another karwa.		Swastik Objects Objects, food	Smell (Food)
Moonrise	At the time of moon rise, offer ardhya, offer bhoga, make bayana and then drink water to break the vrat.	Pooja	Ardhya	

Fig 6. Data Analysis - Sakat Chauth, Ahoi Ashtami, Gan Gaur Pooja, Sati ki Amavasya and Karwa Chauth

Ideation

Ideas were brainstormed to visualise the content.

Pooja Thali

Pooja Thali was a common element present in all festivals and could be used to visualise the pooja articles required for a festival. Fig 7 shows how the pooja thali could be represented across the different festivals. This would allow one to compare the similar and different articles required for the different festivals.

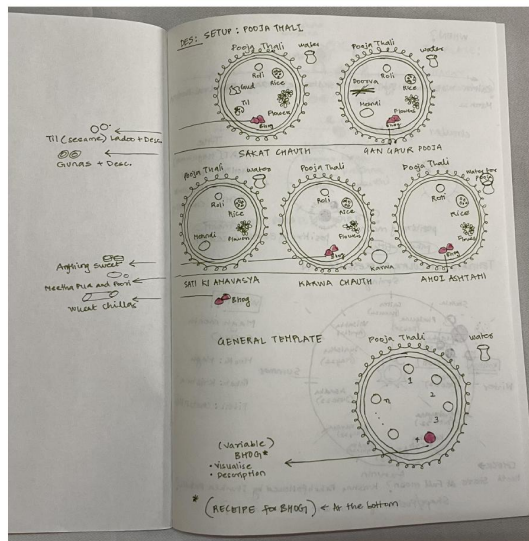


Fig 7. Pooja Thali

Tithi

The dates for celebrating the festivals are derived from the [lunar calendar](#) from Drik Panchang (2021). Tithi (or when the festival is celebrated) could be represented by visualising the position of the sun, Earth and the moon. This visualization could be linear or circular (representative) as shown in Fig 8.

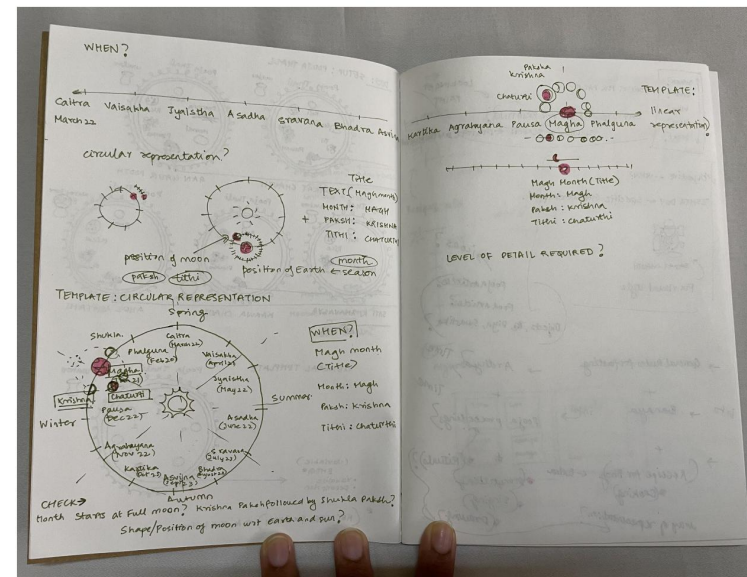


Fig 8. Tithi

Pooja Rituals

The Pooja Rituals could be visualised as a [step-by-step process](#).

[Icons](#) could be used to visualise the [sensory experiences](#) and [images](#) could be used to visualise the [actual](#) objects involved.

Overall visualisation

The overall visualisation of each festival could be created using a similar layout which could help compare the different aspects such as preparation, duration, sensory experience etc

Design

Information Architecture

Based on the final data organisation an information architecture was created for the visualisation (see Fig 9).

2 major chunks of [pooja preparations](#) and [pooja rituals](#) were identified. The 4 W and 1 H questions were answered to curate the content in the form of a [synopsis](#).

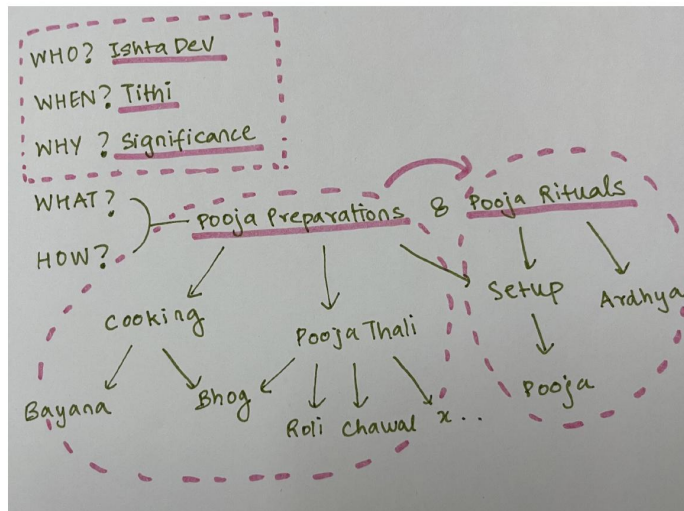


Fig 9. Information Architecture

Medium

A [web visualisation](#) was finalised as the medium for the visualisation.

This medium would ensure greater [reach](#) of the visualisation. It would enable [interactivity](#) and possibility to build further on the same visualisation.

A web visualisation would also be [easily accessible](#) to the upcoming tech savvy generation for whom this visualization is primarily intended.

Moodboard

A moodboard was created by compiling relevant [images](#) to help ideate a visual style (see Fig 10).



Fig 10. Moodboard

Visual Style

A visual style was finalised for the visualization.

Colours

The colours [yellow](#) and [red](#) were primarily used as they are considered religiously [auspicious](#).

A colour palette was created to represent the [essential](#) pooja articles (see Fig 11).

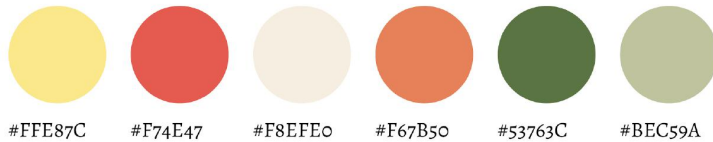


Fig 11. Colour Palette

Illustrations

Illustrations were used instead of images to maintain [consistency](#) and bring out the [aesthetic](#) of [Indian festivals](#).

Illustration styles used in existing religious books were looked at (see Fig 12). [Line drawing](#) was used to represent different Gods as well as processes.

A [similar line drawing style](#) was derived to illustrate the Gods, pooja thali and pooja (see Fig 13) in the final visualisation. A base colour of [yellow](#) was used and only the [essential pooja articles](#) were [highlighted](#) using different colours.

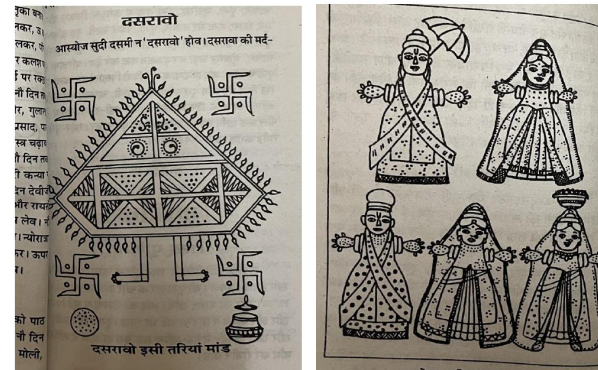


Fig 12. Illustrations in religious books

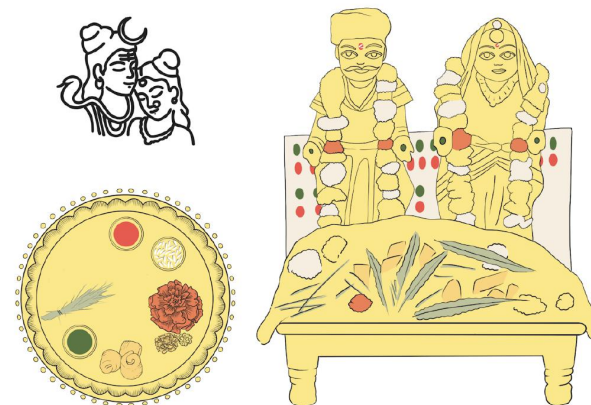


Fig 13. Some illustrations of Gods, pooja thali and pooja

Typography

The typeface **Alegreya** was used for the visualisation.

Alegreya regular 14 pt - Body Text

Alegreya bold 18 pt - Heading 2

Alegreya regular 12 pt - Captions

Alegreya bold 56 pt - Heading 1

Icons

Outlined icons were used as they were coherent with the illustration style (see Fig 14).



Fig 14. Outlined Icons

Explorations

Different ways of information organisation were experimented with.

A **6 column layout** which would work both as a **web visualisation** and a **printed book** was created. The top highlighted the primary information. The left hand side consisted of the pooja preparations and the right, the pooja rituals. A **vertical timeline** was used for the pooja

rituals. **Colour** was used to visualise the cooking and storytelling activities (see Fig 15 a). A reverse colour version was also experimented with (see Fig 15 b).

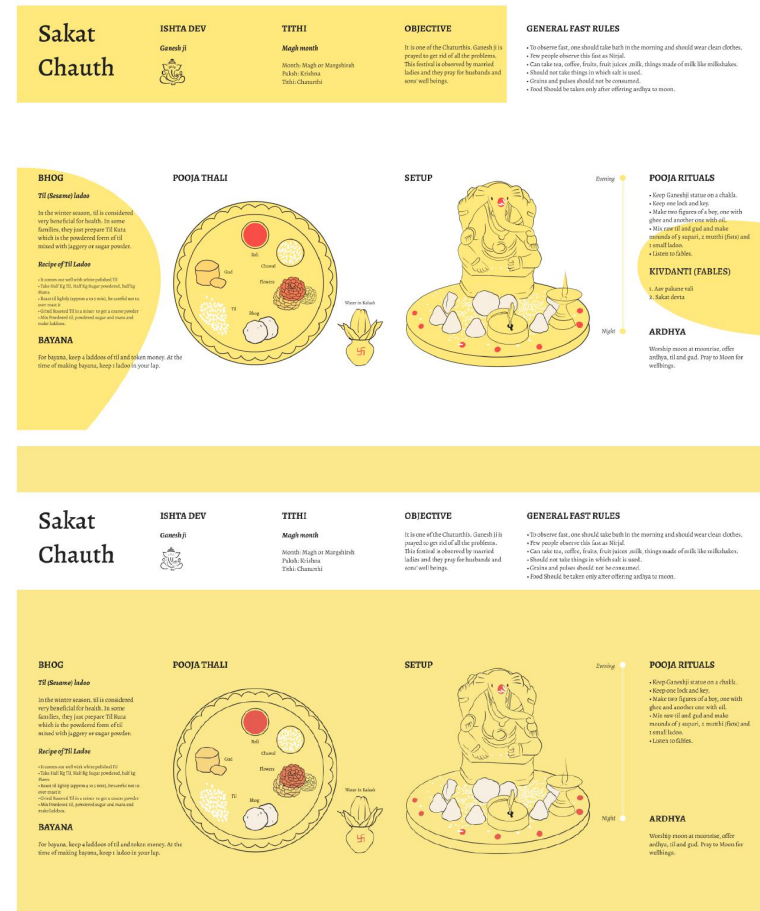


Fig 15. a. 6 column exploration (T) b. Reverse colours (B)

A 3 column layout which was more appropriate for a web visualisation was then created. The primary information was highlighted in the 1st column, the preparations were visualised in the 2nd column and the rituals in the 3rd. Different ways to organise the content were explored (see Fig 16).



Fig 16. 3 column exploration

Feedback

Feedback from my guide as well as peer feedback was incorporated to improve the information organisation and visual aesthetic of the information visualisation.

- A 3 column grid was finalised - **who**, **when** and **why** were visualised in the first column with the highest priority, the second column consisted of **pooja preparations** and the third column consisted of **pooja rituals (what, how)**.
- The pooja thali illustration was improved to serve as a **diagram** with clearer **labels** (see Fig 17).

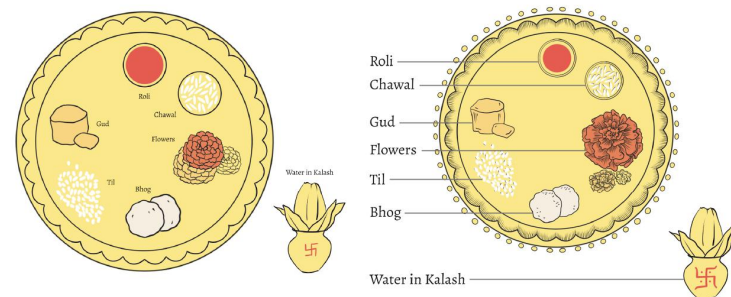


Fig 17. Pooja Thali (L), Pooja Thali based on feedback

- The recipe of the bhog was **hyperlinked** instead of displaying the information in the synopsis. This way only the essential information was

displayed in the visualisation and the additional information was linked.

- Visualisation of the [tithi](#) was also [not included](#) in the information visualisation as it would deviate attention from the topic and would be a whole different complex topic to understand.
- Stories and songs were highlighted as [tags](#).
- [Icons](#) were included in the timeline.
- The static illustrations of the pooja were converted into [gifs](#) to visually represent the [step-by-step process](#) involved in the pooja rituals (see Fig 18).



Fig 18. Making of the Sakat Chauth gif

- An [introduction](#) to the visualisation and [glossary](#) were also included.

Final Visualisation

Based on the feedback, a final visualisation was designed and protyped on Figma.

Interactive Prototype Link

View the interactive prototype (with links and gifs) [here](#).

Static Visualisation

A static version of the final visualisation is shown below.

Information Visualisation of Festivals celebrated by Women in India

Sakat Chauth

Gan Gaur Pooja

Sati Ki Amavasya

Karwa Chauth

Ahoi Ashtami

Sakat Chauth

ISHTA DEV



Ganesh ji

TITHI

Month: **Magh** or Margshirsh

Paksh: **Krishna**

Tithi: **Chaturthi**

SIGNIFICANCE

Sakat Chauth is one of the Chaturthis. We pray to Ganesh ji to get rid of all our problems. Married ladies pray for the well being of their husbands and sons.

Preparations

BHOG

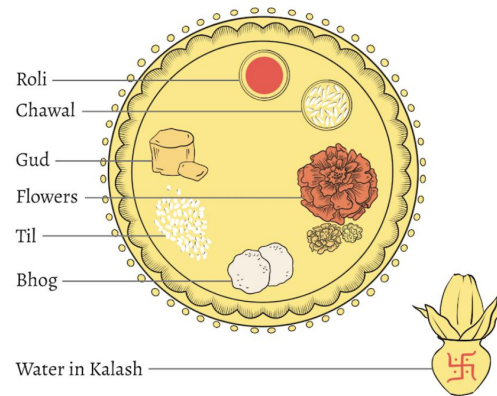
Til (Sesame) ladoo [Recipe](#)

In the winter season, til is very beneficial for health. Some families prepare til kuta which is the powdered form of til mixed with jaggery or sugar powder.

BAYANA

At the time of making bayana, keep 1 ladoo in your lap. For bayana keep 4 laddoos of til and token money.

POOJA THALI



Rituals

All Day Fast

Evening **POOJA**

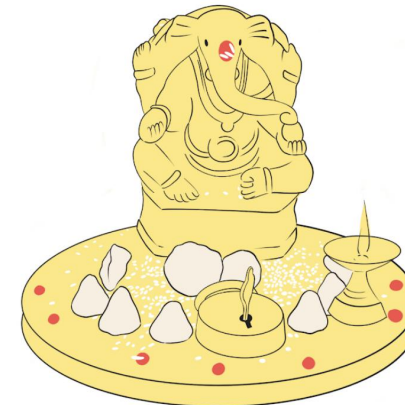
- Keep the Ganeshji statue on a chakla.
- Keep one lock and key.
- Make two figures of a boy, one with ghee and another one with oil.
- Mix raw til and gud and make mounds of 5 supari, 2 mutthi (fists) and 1 small ladoo.
- Listen to fables.

Aav pakane vali

Sakat devta

Night **ARDHYA**

Worship moon at moonrise, offer ardhya, til and gud. Pray to Moon for well being.



Gan Gaur Pooja

ISHTA DEV



Parvati & Shiv

TITHI

Month: **Chaitra**
 Paksh: **Shukla**
 Tithi: **Tritiya**

SIGNIFICANCE

Gan Gaur Pooja is celebrated for getting a good husband. It is celebrated by all girls and ladies. Shiv and Parti are known as an inseparable couple.

Preparations

BHOJ

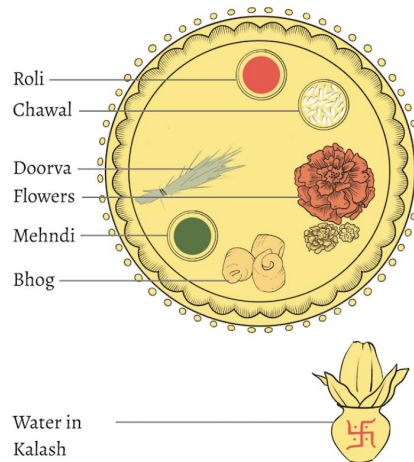
Gunas [Recipe](#)

Gunas are the savouries made with maida/wheat flour in a ring shape.

BAYANA

Unmarried girls do not make bayana. Married ladies make bayana of 16 gunas and token money.

POOJA THALI



Rituals

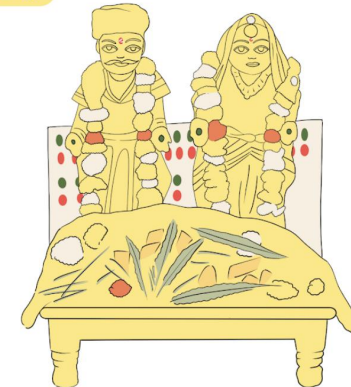
Morning ☀️ **POOJA**

- On a chowki (stool), keep a photo of Parvati & Shiv.
- Keep one sheet of paper to put bindis.
- Do pooja of Parvati & Shiv.
- Married ladies put 16 bindis (dots) with Roli and then 16 bindis with Mehndi on the paper. Unmarried girls put 8 with both similarly.
- Do pooja of that paper too.
- Offer gunas to Parvati & Shiv photo. Married Ladies offer 16 gunas. Unmarried girls offer 8 gunas.
- While doing this pooja, keep gunas in your lap - 16 for married ladies and 8 for unmarried girls.
- Girls/ladies tangle their hands and with the help of durva, they offer water to Shiv & Parvati. At the same time they sing songs.
- Songs are to say that girls are offering pooja and pray to get a good father, good brother and a good husband.
- When all the things are done, a ring is put in the water.

🎵 Prayers & Songs

Evening 🌅 **VISARJAN**

In the evening, water is offered to Parvati & Shiv again. Usually, it is done by a young girl. The ring is taken out.



Sati Ki Amavasya

ISHTA DEV



Rani Sati

TITHI

Month: **Bhadrapad**
 Paksh: **Krishna**
 Tithi: **Amavasya**

SIGNIFICANCE

To remember Rani Sati (also known as dadi sati) and her sacrifices and seek their blessings for the family. Everyone except unmarried girls in the family do this pooja.

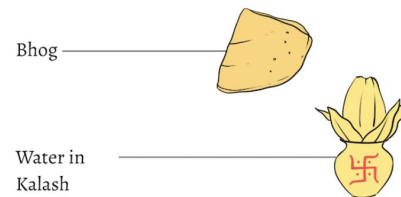
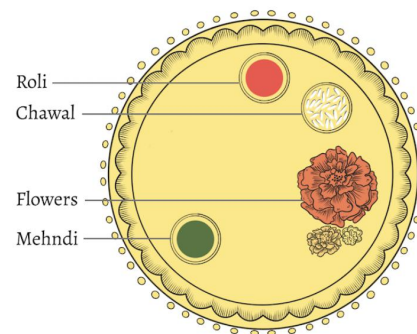
Preparations

BHOG

Wheat Chilas [Recipe](#)

These are sweet dosas kind of thing made with wheat flour.

POOJA THALI



Rituals

Morning ☀️ **POOJA**

- Instead of any photo, a swastika is made on the floor. The floor should be clean.
- A diya is lit and kept on the swastika.
- It is surrounded by 3 bricks in such a way that one side is open.
- The bhog is kept in two plates on both sides of diya.
- Along with bhog, packed roli and chawal are also kept.
- Pooja is done for the diya.
- On the floor, bindis (dots) are put with roli and mehndi in such a way that there are 9 rows and 9 columns.
- Everyone should take seven rounds of the diya.
- This pooja should not be seen by girls.
- One set of bhog is meant for Sati, it can be sent to a temple or can be given to a brahmani.
- The other set of bhog is given to married girls of the house. If no such person is there nearby, it can be given to any married lady.



Karwa Chauth

ISHTA DEV



Karwa Mata

TITHI

Month: **Kartik**
Paksh: **Krishna**
Tithi: **Chaturthi**

SIGNIFICANCE

Karwa Chauth is observed by married ladies and they pray for husband's longevity and good health. It has been the most popular festival for married ladies.

Preparations

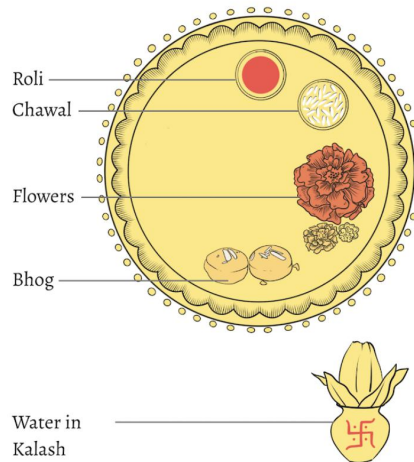
BHOG

Anything sweet

BAYANA

Token Money and anything which the mother-in-law likes.

POOJA THALI



Rituals

All Day Fast (without water)

Evening 🌙 POOJA

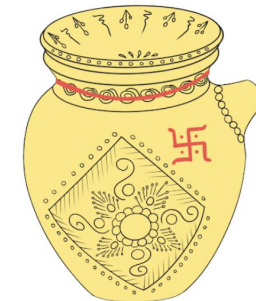
- Make a Swastika on the ground.
- Keep karwa filled with water. Karwa is decorated with a swastika on it, also a kalawa is tied to the karwa.
- On top of karwa, keep wheat grains and gud on the cover of karwa.
- Listen to the story of seven brothers and one sister.
- Exchange karwa 14 times with you co-sister(devranis or nanad). If no one is there for exchange, exchange can be done with another karwa.

📖 **Seven brothers and one sister**

- This is a very strict vrat, so after pooja in the evening, ladies take tea or coffee.

Night 🌙 ARDHYA

Worship the moon at moonrise, offer ardhya, sweets. For ardhya, the water from the same karwa is taken which was used in the pooja. Pray to the moon for your husband's long life. In some communities, the moon is first seen through a sieve and then the face of the husband is seen with the same sieve.



Ahoi Ashtami

ISHTA DEV



Karwa Mata

TITHI

Month: **Kartik**
 Paksh: **Krishna**
 Tithi: **Ashtami**

SIGNIFICANCE

Ahoi Ashtami is celebrated for the wellness of children, especially sons.

Preparations

BHOG

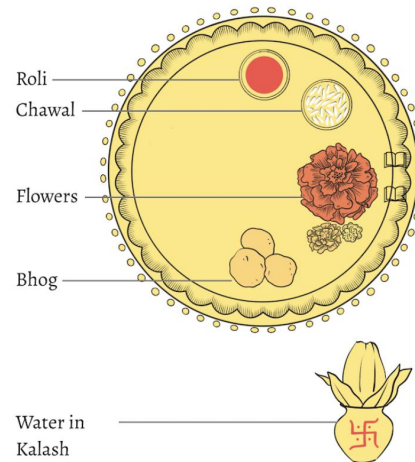
Meetha Pua and Poori [Recipe](#)

Puas are sweet dumplings made with wheat flour and jaggery/sugar.

BAYANA

8 Puas and 9 Pooris.

POOJA THALI



Rituals

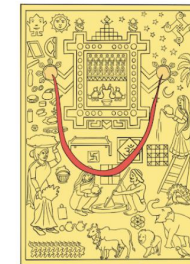
All Day Fast

Morning ☀️ **ARDHYA**

Ardhya is offered to the sun. In some families, ardhya is offered to a star rising in the evening and pooja is also done in the evening.

POOJA

- Put poster of Ahoi Ashtami on the wall.
- Keep two kalash filled with water. Kalash should not be kept on the ground directly. Keep some wheat grains or rice grains below the kalash.
- Keep raw vegetables on the cover of one kalash like potatoes, arbi, carrot, capsicum etc.
- Keep 2 poori and 2 ouaa on the second one.
- Make aate ka halwa.
- Keep sugarcane for pooja.
- Use halwa to stick kakawa on the poster.
- Do pooja of raja, rani, syahoo, 7 sons and 7 daughters in law.
- Listen to story.



📖 **Ahoi Mata**

📖 **Seven sisters in law and one sister**



Glossary

Ardhya

It is the process of worshipping and offering water to the planets like sun or moon. In most of the festivals, where ladies observe fast for the full day, it is a practice to first worship moon and offer water and sweets to the moon and then only fast is broken. We wait for the time when the moon rises and then only the fast is considered as complete.

Bayana

It has been a custom to offer gift to the elderly lady of the house (in most cases mother in law), this is called bayana. It consists of token money and something sweet. If mother in law is not there, it should be given to sister-in-law, elder brother's wife, father in law or anyone in the in laws side. If there are no relatives nearby, it can be given to a brahmin.

Bhog

It has been a practice to make sweets at home for pooja, for offering to God and also to be consumed by everyone at home. Different sweets are made in different festivals. Nowadays, people are replacing these sweets with readymade sweets or chocolates.

Chaturti

In Lunar calendar, the 4th day of every every month in krishna paksh is dedicated to lord Ganesh, it is celebrated as 'Sankashti' which means to remove all problems (sankat). There are 12 such sankashti in full year. The 4th day of shukla paksh is celebrated as Vinayak chaturthi.

General fast rules

- To observe fast, one should take bath in the morning and should wear clean clothes.
- Can take tea, coffee, fruits, milk, things made of milk like milkshakes.
- Should not take things in which salt is used.
- Grains and pulses should not be consumed.

Ishta Dev

For each festival, we worship a specific God or Goddess.

Kalash

In many poojas, a Kalash is kept, It is filled with water. It is a symbol of all gods and goddesses. It can be of silver, brass or earthen pot. A kalawa is tied to the kalash and swastik is made. On top of it five mango tree leaves are kept and on top of it a whole coconut is kept. A swastika is made on the coconut too. It is considered very auspicious. Few people cover it with red cloth.

Kalawa

It is a cotton thread also known as mauli. It is considered a sacred thread and is used in pooja.

Pooja Thali

Usually, pooja thali contains:

- Roli or kumkum - to offer tika to God and also to the person doing the pooja.
- Chawal or Akshat
- Flowers
- Bhog

Significance

Festivals are meant to celebrate the joys with which we are blessed. Each festival is linked to praying God with a purpose of well being of the family. Husbands and sons were given more importance, so there are festivals dedicated to them. In modern times, women wish for the well being of all the members of family.

Possibility of Future Work

[More information](#) on the festivals can be included when hovered over or as links.

[Similar lesser known festivals](#) can be documented in this manner which helps communicate a [synopsis](#) and [practical information](#).

A larger project could include creating a [library](#) of festivals visualised in the same format which also helps one [compare](#) and [observe trends](#) across festivals.

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