

Edinburgh Diwali will light up the city next weekend

Edinburgh Diwali will light up the city centre next weekend, firstly with a parade led by the Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, and secondly with music and dance at the Ross Bandstand finishing off with the traditional fireworks.

Indian festival Diwali will be celebrated in the capital for the tenth year, but it is the first here in the capital for the Consul General of India, Edinburgh, Mr Siddharth Malik who has just arrived in Edinburgh with his family.

He said: "Diwali, the festival of lights, is a celebration that transcends cultures and unites people in the spirit of hope, joy, and the triumph of good over evil. This beautiful festival, commemorating Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya, is now celebrated globally, and I am delighted to see the vibrant community in Edinburgh embrace this tradition with such enthusiasm.

"I am pleased to extend support of the Consulate General of India in Edinburgh to Edinburgh Diwali as they prepare for their annual celebration on 3 November.

"The colourful parades, music, dance, and fireworks planned for the city centre and the Princes Street Gardens will undoubtedly bring joy and excitement to all. This event is a testament of Indian community's hard-work towards fostering

cultural exchange and sharing traditions with the people of Scotland. I thank the Edinburgh City Council for extending their support. I look forward to joining the festivities and celebrating with everyone.”

The Band of the Royal Regiment of Scotland will step off from St Andrew Square accompanied by the Stockbridge and Glencorse Pipe Bands. The Edinburgh Noise Committee will provide the music for seven different dance troupes showing the diversity of Indian culture.

Rajnish Singh, President of [Edinburgh Diwali](#), said: “We are celebrating our 10th Diwali, Festival of Light, complementing 900 years of Edinburgh city. Diwali is one of the most widely celebrated Indian festivals across the world by the Indian diaspora. We at Edinburgh Diwali organise the festival in such a way that anyone interested can participate with no barriers – open to all and free to attend in the city centre. We had to refresh the event in 2021 post Covid, and are really pleased that it has become one of the most popular communities led event in Edinburgh in a short span of time. We take pride in the way we celebrate the core message of light over darkness with an array of multicultural dance & music and fireworks – Uniting Communities, Celebrating Diversity.

“The organisation of Diwali 2024 is not possible without the hard work of the Edinburgh Diwali committee, volunteers, performers, and the support from City of Edinburgh Council and our sponsors. I would like to extend my gratitude to all of them and to our audience for their continued support. We also highly appreciate the support and guidance from the office of Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Consul General of India, Edinburgh, and many long-standing friends of Edinburgh Diwali.

“We are eagerly looking forward to showcasing a vibrant and fun-filled Diwali 2024. On behalf of my Committee, I would like to invite all the residents and visitors of Edinburgh (and Scotland) to join us on 3 November with family and

friends.”

Lord Provost and Chair of Edinburgh Diwali, Councillor Robert Aldridge said: “Diwali is a vibrant, family-friendly festival of lights, symbolizing the triumph of good over evil. Free and open to all, it has become one of Edinburgh’s unmissable events in recent years. I’m delighted to see it continue to grow and flourish. This year marks the tenth celebration of this Indian festival in Scotland’s capital, offering a lively programme of music, dance, and lights.”

Celebrations will begin at St Andrew Square, where performers from across Indian and Scottish culture will converge before setting off on a parade through Edinburgh’s New Town en route to Princes Street Gardens. The display gathers at St Andrew Square at 1.15pm, before making its way along George Street from 2pm to Castle Street, led by the Rt Hon Lord Provost of Edinburgh, the Consul General of India, Edinburgh, and the Edinburgh Diwali Committee. The parade moves to Ross Bandstand where performances begin at 3.30pm.

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

www.edinburghdiwali.co.uk

Students from **Ahalya Dance Academy** will showcase the ancient art form of Bharatanatyam – a form of classical dance that takes its name from the Tamil words for expression, melody, rhythm, and dance. While the University of Edinburgh’s first South Asian fusion dance society **Junoon Dance** and **Edinburgh Bhangra Crew** will showcase modern day India with a display of contemporary South Asian dance styles. The different states and regions of India will be represented with traditional dance displays from Bihar, Odisha, and Tamil Nadu; and Edinburgh Diwali celebrates multiculturalism in Edinburgh by welcoming **Soles Del Peru**, who will bring a touch of Latin America and carnivale spirit to the parade.

Celebrations continue with the main event at the Ross Bandstand in West Princes Street Gardens from 3.30pm, with a varied and vibrant programme of music, drama, and dance. Indian fusion, Scottish Highland Dancing, and Bollywood all feature with performances from **BollyFeat**, **Dance@Studio21**, and Edinburgh's longest running Indian dance school, **Dance Ihayami**.

Community members from Bharatiya Ashram, Dundee's **Dudhope Multicultural Centre**, will depict the traditional story of Diwali with a dramatisation of the *Ramayana*, an Indian epic that follows the life of Rama, the seventh avatar of the Hindu deity Vishnu.

The evening will culminate with a headline performance from one of the UK's leading British Asian fusion bands, **Kaykay & Co.**. Led by Kaykay Chouhan, their distinctive and contagious mix of Bollywood bangers and Western pop classics will enthral attendees before a show stopping fireworks display designed by 21CC beneath Castle Rock at 6.30pm.

Edinburgh Diwali is an initiative by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and a Committee from the Indian diaspora of different faiths based in Edinburgh to bring Diwali – Festival of Lights, the most famous Indian Festival to Edinburgh so that the mainstream community can **Share, Participate, and Celebrate** the spiritual victory of good over evil.

Edinburgh Diwali takes place thanks to the kind support from the City of Edinburgh Council, People's Postcode Lottery, and People's Postcode Trust. The festival is further supported by Baillie Gifford, BEMIS Scotland, Craigvrack Hotel, Lidl GB, Mr Basrai's World Cuisines, and two of Edinburgh's leading Indian restaurants – Desh and Dishoom.



Dance Iyahami Saanvi Reddy Elluri, Hiti Laitha Kantamaneni and Hiya Lakshmi Kantamaneni



The Lord Provost with Bollyfeat dancers, and Manjari Singh and committee member, Suravi Mishra on far right.



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L-R Back row Rt Hon Lord Provost, Robert Aldridge, Rajnish Singh, President of Edinburgh Diwali and Consul General of India, Edinburgh, Mr Siddharth Malik with Indian dancers