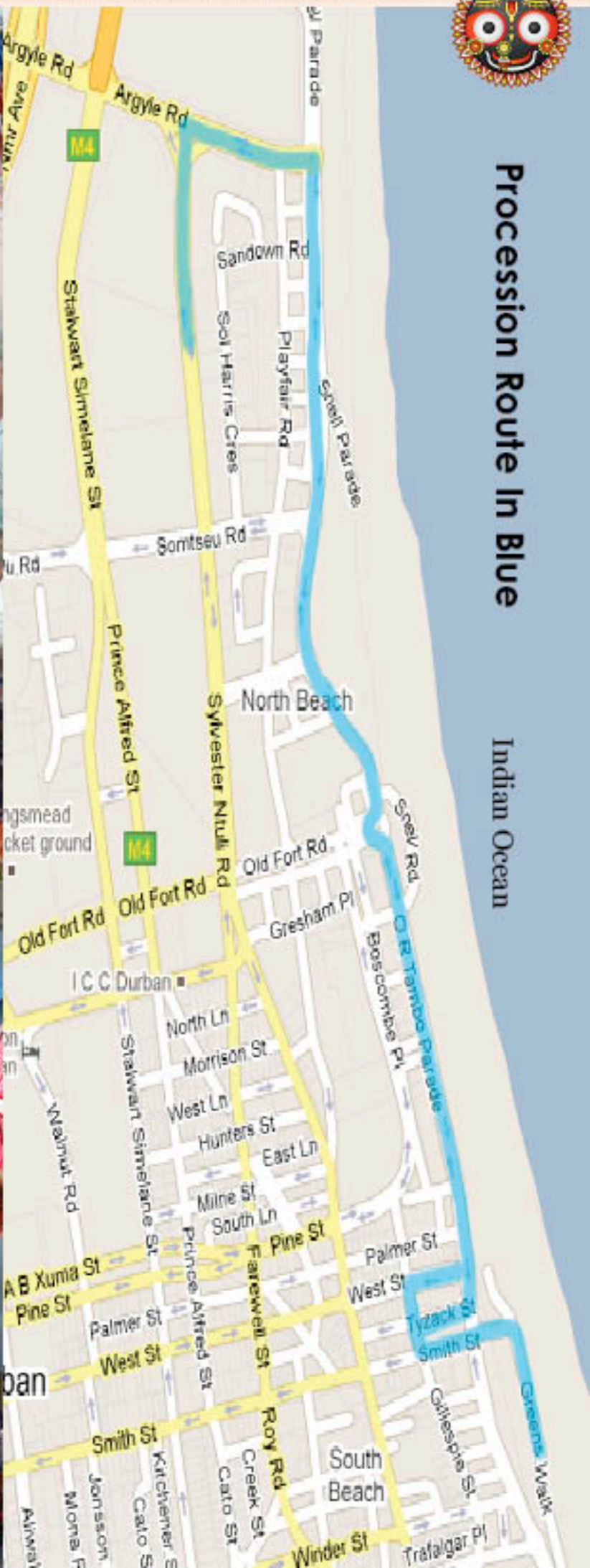
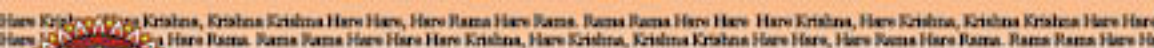


Indian Ocean





By Ramvijay Das

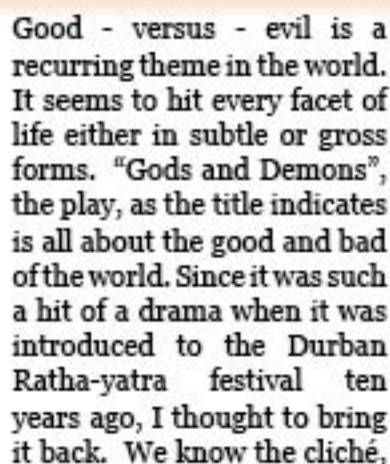
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- A photograph showing two men standing next to a large, dark metal pot (cauldron) placed over a fire. The man on the left is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants, and the man on the right is wearing a dark shirt and dark pants. They are outdoors at night, and the fire is burning brightly in a pit. There are some objects on the ground, including what looks like a metal bucket or container on the right.



By Nishana Baboolall

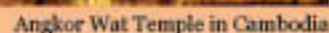
The Vedic scriptures state that anyone who sees Lord Jagannath or pulls His chariots achieves immense spiritual benefit. To imbibe Lord Jagannath's merciful mood, this year we aim to extend the river of mercy throughout the four day festival by bringing Their Lordships Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadra in full view of all. Their Lordships will now be among us—sitting on Their thrones under the deep night sky, smiling and receiving all who enter Their court.

By Bhaktimarg Swami



"Gods and Demons" is the tale of a truce between the two forces who hope to achieve the rich resources that the world offers and ultimately, the ambrosial immortal elixir, *amrita*. The two groups make an alliance because they realize only through collaboration does such a great task get accomplished. It gets fun when a self-centred demon beefs about what he perceives as partiality for the side of the demigods, which is an accurate assessment because that's what Vishnu, the main character, does.

Lord Jagannath's sitting place will incorporate ancient South Indian architecture that is illuminated by day and night themes. Displays of ancient sculptures will adorn the open temple. Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu will be on Lord Jagannath's right and on His left a melodious *kirtan* party. The entrance will boast the design of the Angkor Wat (the largest temple in the world in Cambodia, originally dedicated to Lord Vishnu) and Jaipur style sculptures with palace architectural elements. The outside features of the remaining tents will be adorned with enchanting artwork on canvass. The project promises to transform Ratha-yatra as we know it. A spectacular setting befitting the most magnificent merciful Lord of the Universe!



A prominent dancer from India once told me that the story of the milk ocean's churning was the first dramatization ever by Bharat Muni, the originator of Sanskrit drama, so that's interesting. The biggest challenge with "Gods and Demons" is the need for what seems like a cast of thousands.

In addition to this main presentation, I'm anticipating for the stage a series of shorter skits, but they will remain as a kept secret for now, but we will use the usual 'east-meets-west' and 'old-and-new' fusion techniques to make the message relevant and appealing to everyone.

The whole effort with drama period should be to engage the audience in a higher consciousness, to bring them, if I could use the word, enter-lightenment and to give the actors, all youthful volunteers from across Africa and abroad, something experiential. Transformation should take place for all. It is as our guru, Srila Prabhupada, would have it as he was a great supporter of the performing arts.



Surprise, magic, laughter and love await all visitors to the Village. The 21st century has posed several challenges to our children – television, mobile phones and other modern technical gadgets have overpowered their young minds. Children are inundated with an array of options – do we have a spiritual, Vedic, traditional option for these children? It was with this thought and mood the concept of the Little Gokul Village was conceived.

Emphasis will be on creating an environment that will enable children to participate in Lord Krishna's pastimes and Vedic practices by engaging in fun activities that will have a lasting impression. Each activity or event will be carefully planned and executed to once again remind children of the true purpose of life – reigniting our eternal relationship with Lord Krishna. We remind the children that connecting with Krishna can be carried out in a fun and relaxed manner.

Srila Prabhupada emphasized the duty of parents are to provide spiritual enlightenment to their children. This Village also affords parents the opportunity to provide something of value, to escape the mundane pressures of daily life and expose their children to a spiritual wonderland, certainly a rare experience in modern society.

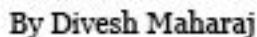
Villagers will be offered a hand at archery at the *Pandava Hero Camp* – highlighting the characteristics of the true heroes the Pandava brothers. Television sets and computer screens are often occupied with ‘superhero characters’ but the true heroes of the *Mahabharat* are unheard. Whilst activities will stimulate the fine and gross motor skills – children will also be educated on the characters and moral values of Vedic life.

Walking through Radharani's secret grove in Radha Nikunj, young girls and boys will be adorned with beautiful accessories as the Prince or Princess of the Village. Krishna loved to steal butter and this caused much confusion in Mathura – will Krishna be stealing butter in Little Gokul Village also? The children will find out in "Mother Yashoda's Kitchen" where their tastebuds will be tantalized. Children will get to prepare treats (in a replica of a traditional Vedic kitchen) and offer the delicacies to Krishna before enjoying them!

Puppet-shows, storytelling, Vedic games, dances and enthralling dramas await the children of the Village. In the evening, the Village will come alive with the pastimes of Vrindavan, especially Krishna and Balaram confronting the demons!

Little Gokul Village promises to be a highlight of Ratha-yatra 2011. So this year bring your children for a magical journey, creating enthusiasm in their young minds and hearts to engage in service to Krishna through wonderfully colourful and exciting activities at the Little Gokul Village.





By Nityananda Pran Das

We live in a society where our children are slowly losing their morals and values. Controlled by vices of technology children are exposed to a corrupt world. It is essential to help children to take control of their lives so that they become more God conscious. It is now that the seed of Krishna consciousness needs to be sown into the hearts of our most precious gifts, our children.

Weeks of preparation coupled with rigorous advertising created hype in Newcastle. It was time for the December holidays but it was going to be a memorable one for all the kids and youth, as it was the first Children's Day with Lord Jagannath.

The rain on Sunday morning did not stop the enthusiasm of the devotees. Lord Jagannath, Lord Baladev, and Subhadra Devi were adorned in Their finest awaiting to give their *darshan*.

At eleven o'clock, the skies cleared, children of all backgrounds gathered along with the community and waited patiently. Lord Jagannath arrived in style—resembling a wedding procession, everyone was struck with amazement. The sounds of conch shells as well as vuvuzela's announced the Lords' arrival. Children formed a guard of honour to receive Jagannath and everyone present showered the Lord with flower petals. Before the procession, 11 year old, Rishay offered an *arati* and thereafter several guests were offered garlands and were requested to break the ceremonial coconut. The chariot procession

“We are about to begin chanting. We know that Krishna’s name is so powerful that it destroys all sinful reactions, and that one who chants even a single name of Krishna becomes the topmost human being. We also understand the mind’s nature and that inattention is our greatest obstacle. How, we wonder, can we capture the racing mind and focus it on the holy name? The easiest way to slow the mind is to give it a simple task. We have to stop trying to listen to our “rounds” – that task is too complicated for the mind and causes it to jump ahead to all the yet-to-be-chanted rounds. Instead, make the mind’s task easy: listen to only one mantra, the mantra you are chanting now.”

(Excerpt from Japa by His Grace Bhurijana Das)

lasted for almost an hour and half. Children danced and chanted with so much energy, while parents walked alongside the chariot.

When we arrived at the temple, everyone was treated to delicious pasta, *halava* and juice. Activities were arranged for everyone, but I must confess both young and old enjoyed chanting and dancing. Children were treated to party packs. A special offering of 84 food preparations was offered to Lord Jagannath and the *maha-prasad* distributed to everyone.

The primary objective for arranging this festival was to try to increase our efforts to spread Krishna consciousness in Newcastle. Srila Prabhupada continuously emphasized the need to preach so as a humble offering to him and

under the direction of our *diksha-* and *siksha-gurus* we submit this as our service. We would like to thank all the sponsors, well wishers and the dedicated team of Vaishnava's for the support in the arrangements for the festival.

Comments from Children:

"It was a fun day pulling Lord Jagannath along the street. I enjoyed the festival because I carried Lord Jagannath!" Tulsi Das (7yrs)

"I loved the nice sweets and party packs that we were given." Themba (4yrs)

"I enjoyed the festival, because all the children did everything, I enjoyed the *prasad*, the dancing and singing." Thembisso (6yrs)





Vedic Observer Cultural Cataracts

By Jack Hebner

Spiritual and intellectual efforts of hundreds of millions of people over millennia have graced India with a rich and complex culture — a culture whose subtlety knows no rival. During the last three centuries the attempts of most Westerners to penetrate the spiritual dimension of Indian culture has at best been doomed to superficiality.

Although some sincere seekers of truth from outside India's borders have succeeded in their pursuit of Indian spirituality (and this is increasing as time goes on), still, the vast majority of the Western world remains caught in the slumber of misconception, much of which can be traced to an insufficient fund of knowledge and misinformation. Without the benefit of a preliminary briefing or education in Indian spirituality, a newcomer to India is certainly at a decided disadvantage, and is apt to view things according to his or her own cultural or religious biases. Of course this cultural cataract has marred many attempts to understand another's culture, yet the British view of India is perhaps one of the most vivid examples of misunderstanding that continues to take its toll today, some 40 years after Indian independence. Thus perhaps the richest spiritual heritage on Earth has been relegated to obscurity in modern times.

How the basic misconceptions about Indian spirituality first developed vividly comes to light when we examine history between 1690 and 1947, during which time Great Britain occupied India. The British began their conquest of India from Calcutta, where they established the East India Company — a business venture that was destined to rule India with an iron fist for almost 250 years. When the Britishers returned to their motherland, they depicted India as a barbaric, uncivilized country filled with polytheism, mythology, and idolatry. The scene they painted portrayed India as a country of primitive worshipers bowed down before a ghastly statue of some god or goddess. To them this represented one of the most hideous examples of human degradation, one of those horrors of ignorance which the British had long left behind. The British summed up India as a hodgepodge of heathenistic superstitions.

They felt nothing of value could be gained from the "primitive Hindus" except their abundance of gold and jewels. However, in actuality the British had stumbled upon the oldest and most civilized society — in terms of spiritual culture — in the world. Sadly, the British view of India was to become the prominent world view of India.

During the early days of imperial rule in India, the British received some of their first impressions of India's spiritual culture via their encounters in the holy city of Jagannath Puri — encounters which plunged the British deep into severe cultural shock.

The British regarded all the stories about the appearance of Jagannath as mythology and never took them seriously. Neither did the British ever enter the temple to observe the loving ecstasy of the devotees who worship Jagannath. They assumed the whole affair to be idol worship. However, there was one occasion when the British did get the opportunity to see Jagannath face to face and to witness the great devotion of his devotees. Every year the temple of Jagannath holds a marvellous festival called Rathayatra. It appears from the temple records that this festival is the oldest regularly performed spiritual function in human society.

Unfortunately, the British did not have the same visions of Jagannath as did his devotees. Not only did they see something less beautiful and charming but they saw something quite ghastly. Perhaps it was a projection of their own inner natures since it was they who had come to India as conquerors and not as seekers of truth. The British described Jagannath as "a frightful visage painted black, with a distended mouth of bloody horror." Seeing the grand procession of the Rathayatra, the British experienced further disdain and coined the term "juggernaut." This word gradually found its way into the Oxford Dictionary with the meaning "a massive, inexorable force that crushes everything in its path." It could hardly be expected that the British should have immediately fallen in love with Jagannath or worshiped him, but at least they could have investigated the meaning and philosophy behind him. Instead they maligned Jagannath to the world as "a horrible, bloodthirsty idol." Lamentable as it was, the British view of India spread throughout the world, and thus for centuries the real beauty of India's spiritual conceptions remained undiscovered.

But fortunately, we in the Western world are gradually maturing culturally, and are becoming more open-minded and receptive than ever before to learning what India has to offer the West. And Jagannath's big eyes are still beaming, and his wide smile still invites all people to come to Jagannath Puri every year to enjoy the spiritual bliss of the Rathayatra. I have seen this festival with my own eyes, and I doubt that I will ever experience anything quite as prodigious and jubilant in my life.

Reprint from Clarion Call Magazine, shortened for the Newsletter



Submitted by Hemangi Devi Dasi

Daily, without electricity or machines, since the temple was inaugurated over two thousand years ago, 1000 temple chefs (*swaras*) prepare more than 100 varieties of vegetarian dishes. Using only locally grown spices (the standard is consistent for the last two thousand years!) and vegetables, in enormous quantities, they cook on wood burning stoves. The food is offered to the temple Deities, and then distributed this as *prasad* (sanctified food). All members of the kitchen staff begin training at age twelve. They serve for life, or until they become too old to perform their duties.

Ingredients:

- 2 cup cake flour
- A pinch of salt
- ¼ cup ghee
- ½ cup water

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- 2-3 drops rose water (optional)

Extra ghee for deep frying

1. In a mixing bowl, combine 1½ cup flour, salt and 1½ Tbsp ghee. Add a little water at a time to make a stiff dough. Knead well. Allow dough to stand for 2-3 hours.
2. In a small mixing bowl, combine the remaining flour and ghee to form a thick paste. Set aside.
3. On a floured surface, roll the dough into a 25 x 30 cm rectangle of thickness similar to that of a chapati. Spread the flour and ghee paste evenly. Starting from the longer side (30 cm side), roll the dough finally leading to a rope. Seam ends with the paste.
4. Cut the rolled rope into twelve 2.5 cm thick pieces.

In this issue, I offer the recipe of *khaja*, a traditional sweet made in the kitchen of Jagannath Temple of Puri. You may offer this to your Jagannath Deity or for Ratha-yatra.



Roll each piece into a 10 to 12 cm long *khaja*.

5. Deep fry the *khajas* on medium heat (as they need to be crisp) for 10-12 minutes and until golden. Drain on paper towels.

6. While frying the *khajas*, prepare the sugar syrup. In a saucepan, combine the sugar and water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cook uncovered for 15- 20 minutes or until the syrup is sticky. Allow to cool. Add the optional rose water.

7. Dip the fried *khajas* in the warm sugar syrup and keep them aside. Allow the syrup coating to cool.

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Vrinda's
cuisine
where taste blends with divinity

PURE VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT

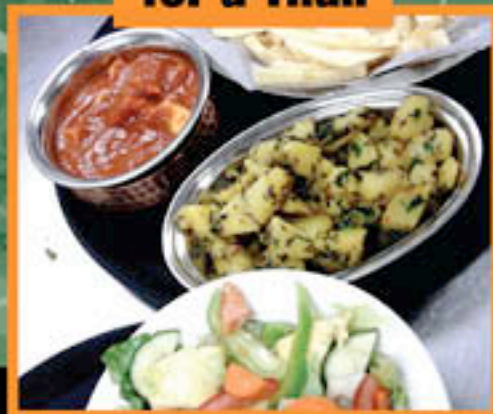


The word "vrinda" is derived from Lord Krishna's birth place, Vrindavan. Vrinda's Divine Cuisine is an authentic vegetarian restaurant situated in Reservoir Hills. His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami founded the restaurant with the aim to provide the highest quality vegetarian food to the community. Vrinda's subsidizes an international feeding programme and is totally non-profit. Everything we prepare is totally fresh and sure to tickle your taste buds. Become part of the Vrinda's family and experience authentic Indian and Chinese vegetarian food.

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