



*A happy and prosperous Vaisakhi!*

# Vaisakhi

Sikh

[vaisākhi](#) 

The Sikh New Year festival is one of the most important dates in the Sikh calendar. It marks the start of the Punjabi New Year, but it is also a day to celebrate the birth of the Khalsa. The Khalsa was created on the Vaisakhi of 1699, when the 10th Guru of Sikhism, Guru Gobind Singh, organized the Sikh religion in armed resistance to oppression. The Khalsa was given a responsibility to live the life of a Saint-Soldier, committing to a life of both spirituality and social justice. This holiday symbolizes standing up to oppression, and fighting for the rights of all. It occurs during the traditional harvest festival in Punjab.



This collection of information sheets on major holidays and cultural events is a joint partnership of the School of Information staff, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the Office of the Provost. Facts have been vetted by U-M's Association of Religious Counselors (ARC), and other campus groups. Public feedback is welcome; please email [DEIHolidayFacts@umich.edu](mailto:DEIHolidayFacts@umich.edu).

## Date

- Vaisakhi is celebrated on 13 or 14 of April.
- Link to [Interfaith Calendar](#) for exact date/year lookup.

## Greetings

Wishing a celebrant a Happy and Prosperous Vaisakhi is welcome.

## Common Practices and Celebrations

- Celebrations always include singing and music, as well as reading aloud scriptures and chanting. Displays of Gatka, or Sikh Martial Arts, are also done.
- Sikhs visit their temples, called Gurdwaras in traditional Punjabi clothes. Large community meals, or Langars are organized, and all sit and eat together. These meals symbolize the equality of the rich and poor. Everyone is welcome to partake of the community meal.
- Nagar Kirtan- Groups of Sikhs travel together in the city, singing hymns, and led by the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy scripture. These processions are led by the Panj Pyaarey, or five baptized Sikhs, which symbolizes the first five Sikhs who were baptized on Vaisakhi during the creation of the Khalsa.
- Sikhs remember the sacrifices of the Gurus and the Khalsa for the upliftment of humanity.
- The festival features traditional Punjabi delicacies that are enriching and energizing.

## Impact to U-M Community

- It is an optional holiday and those celebrating may choose to take the day off.
- Link to [U-M Guidance Regarding Conflicts](#).

## U-M Campus Resources

- [Maize Pages - Sikh](#), U-M
- [Association of Religious Counselors](#), U-M

## Information Sources

- [BBC](#)
- [Boston Public Library](#)

## Photo credit:

"A demonstration of the Vaddah Chakar, the Sikh martial arts weapon, during the 2010 Vaisakhi Festival in Southampton" by Anguskirk is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

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