

multi- BUZZ

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Holi - the festival of colours *by Sunita Singh*

Holi is a festival celebrated by the Indian subcontinent and the Indian diaspora across the world. In some Indian states, Holi is known as Dolyatra or Basanta-Utsav. The festival of Holi is celebrated on the day after the full moon in early March every year. Holi is also associated with the immortal love of Krishna and Radha, and hence, is spread over 16 days in Vrindavan as well as Mathura - the two cities with which Lord Krishna shared a deep affiliation. Apart from the usual fun with coloured powder and water, Holi is celebrated as it is Spring time in the Indian subcontinent.

Holi Story: The Legend of Holika and Prahlad

Holi has various Indian legends associated with it. A popular legend is that of demon King Hiranyakashap and his sister Holika. He was very egoistic and commanded that everyone should worship only him. But to his great disappointment, his son Prahlad became an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu and refused to worship his father. Hiranyakashyap tried many times to kill his son Prahlad but Lord Vishnu saved him every time. Finally, he asked his sister, Holika to enter a blazing fire with Prahlad in her lap. Holika had a boon, whereby, she could enter the fire unharmed. Holika deceitfully persuaded young Prahlad to sit in her lap and she took her seat in a blazing fire. Holika did not know that the boon worked only when she entered the fire alone. Prahlad, who kept chanting the name of Lord Vishnu, came out unharmed, as the lord blessed him for his utmost devotion. Prahlad felt sorry for Holika and named this festival after her. This festival signifies the triumph of Good over evil.



Celebration takes a Marketing turn

Colours fill the air as people apply Gulal, which is colour made out of flowers and added fragrances, to their near and dear ones. Days before Holi, the markets are flooded with colours of every shade and hue. This sets the mood of the people until the actual day of Holi. It is a colourful sight to watch piles and piles of bright red, green, pink and yellow colours line up every where on the streets.

This is a period when people spring clean their homes. This means redecorating and refurbishing their homes and throwing out the old. What an opportunity for a marketer to cash in on those additional sales. This is also a period when marketers in India and other subcontinent countries, integrate this phenomenon into their product offers for the enthusiastic people celebrating Holi. Even for marketers in Australia there are immense opportunities for targeting these audiences during the Holi period. Festivals and events across the country allow for the purest form of direct marketing. A targeted message from a marketer reaching over 100,000+ attendees at the Darling Harbour Holi Mahotsav during the Holi festivities in Sydney, cannot be underestimated.

These newer channels of reach are growing in importance as new migrants, 457 Visa holders, International students join in for the celebrations with the Australian Indian residents.



From the Editor's Desk



In this issue we talk about the upcoming Indian festival of Holi. A great time for Australian Indians who love to connect with family and friends and enjoy the myriad colours of Holi!

Holi is an equally interesting period for marketers who may want to communicate with an Indian subcontinent audience of over half a million (by ancestry) based in Australia. If we add the 457 Visa holders and international students, the numbers increase vastly.

Australia day was a wonderful day enjoyed by all despite the rainy weather. I attended the New South Wales Government, Australia Day cocktail celebrations at the Darling Harbour Convention Centre. Darling Harbour was engulfed with a sea of humanity. The multitude of cultures represented on the day was truly amazing.

The Young Australian of the Year for 2012 is Marita Cheng, an Australian young woman of Chinese heritage. Truly a celebration of Multicultural Australia on Australia Day.

Wishing our readers a happy Holi!

Sheba Nandkolyar



The colours of Holi spread beyond India **by Louise Abbott**



The colours of the Indian festival Holi have extended across the globe, spread by Indian diaspora and those who appreciate Indian culture. Fiji, where nearly 45% of the population are of Indian origin, typically spends three days celebrating the festival and the country's plurality every year. Fiji's Multi-Ethnic Affairs Minister describes the event as one that breaks racial boundaries and spreads religious tolerance. Holi is also a public holiday in Mauritius, which has an Indian majority of 63%, and revellers throw colour with as much enthusiasm on the tiny island off the south eastern coast of Africa as they do in Holi's homeland. Leicester, UK, which also has a large Indian community, sees upwards of 15,000 people celebrate each year, painting a normally green part of England, not only red, but pink, blue and yellow. Singapore becomes a mini India during the Holi festival.

In Australia, many community groups organise Holi celebrations as means of promoting understanding and appreciation of Indian culture. Colour flies across the country, wherever members of Australia's half-a-million strong Indian subcontinent population are present. Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney host Holi events, with Darling Harbour celebrating its tenth Holi festival this year. Holi even made its way to Parliament House in Canberra when the Federal Member for Holt, Victoria, Anthony Byrne, spoke appreciatively of his local Holi celebrations during Parliament last year.



Holi traditionally facilitates the loosening of social boundaries within Indian society. Why not use this year's festival to learn more about Indian culture and contribute to social and cultural harmony. Wherever you are this 8th of March, think of spreading some colour!

Celebrating Australia Day - A Multicultural Perspective

by Phoebe Pulido



Australia as a country has come a long way since Federation in 1901. With some 6 million Australians born overseas, Australia Day has come to mean a lot more than just another public holiday.

Multiculturalism affects all Australians and brings about understanding, acceptance and tolerance no matter your country of origin. Being a recent citizen of the country, does not mean you are any less Australian than your Anglo-Australian counterparts either!

Being an Australian born Filipino, I have come to know Australia Day as an occasion to celebrate with family, have a picnic in the park, throw a prawn on the barbie, or

watch the local Australia Day concerts and fireworks. Being born and raised in such a multicultural country definitely gives me a broad perspective of cultures and traditions, making my home country truly unique.

A few years ago, I participated in the Australia Day parade in Sydney with a Filipino marching band. The spirit of the crowd waving and cheering resonated with me and gave me a sense of pride in being part of such a generous and patriotic community. Marching along with ex-servicemen and veterans, I understood the meaning of Australian freedom, honour and pride.

These days, the local Australia Day annual concert and fireworks bring about the same spirit of celebration in the suburbs. Seeing multicultural families sharing a picnic in the park, listening to Australian musical talents, makes my Australia day complete. What a multicultural country we live in!





A ristretto* with Daniel Assaf...

We catch up with Multicall's Strategy Soldier, Daniel Assaf...

Dan, you've been in a long term relationship...
It's been 10 years since it all began and it has only grown stronger and better by the years! Oh I forgot to ask, which relationship are you talking about? I have two...

Multicall of course...

That's certainly one of them! It has been as demanding as my other relationship and equally rewarding. This relationship too has grown stronger by the year. And is today a whole new world comprising of Marketing Strategy and Insights, New Audience Segmentation, Newer Channels of Reach, Experiential, Social Networking and a lot more.

And your other relationship...

It began on that fateful summer day when I met Micheline while on a holiday in Lebanon, met with her parents approval in the US and proposed to her in Rome. She is now happily settled in Sydney.

What a globe trotter you are...

Most multicultural Australians are globe trotters and global citizens. This includes me!

At Multicall HQ, you're known for your card tricks, riddles and brain teasers – is it all just another arm of Strategy?

It sure is. I have very fond memories of my Year 9 Chemistry teacher reminding us on a daily basis: 'There are two kinds of people in life; the quick and the dead'. Clearly, he was suggesting that in life you have to keep an active brain and an open mind. Every challenge offers a solution, but it's often how quickly and efficiently you can achieve it is all that matters.

Being part Italian and part Lebanese, we're sure there's never a shortage of amazing food on the table at home. Which meals would you say embody the Lebanese and Italian cultures respectively?

Going by my ever-growing waistline, it is safe to say that being under-nourished was never a concern in our household, nor did we shy away from many dishes. I'd say you really can't go past a plate of spaghetti con aglio e olio to experience the simple but oh so delicious tastes that embody Italian cooking. And as for the Lebanese cuisine, a bowl of freshly made tabbouli with plenty of lemon juice and a plate of hummus will never go to waste. By the way – Did you hear what happened to the chickpea? It was charged with 'hummus-ide'! I'm also known for my "dad jokes" around the office!

Has your work inspired you to travel to any uncovered territories this year and experience a culture other than your own?

I'm actually very excited to be venturing into several Asian hot-spots this year. In April, I plan to make a quick trip to China, particularly Guangzhou and Shanghai, though I'd love to visit the Sichuan province to experience some Wanjun (a premium baijiu label from our friends at Moet Hennessy). I'm also planning a stop-over in Taiwan and Hong Kong. I am never one to turn down any cultural experience, so hopefully I will have a few weird and wacky stories to relate to all our friends once I am back.

** Ristretto - An Italian coffee*