

Seasons of India By Raji Kaloji

India has always believed in a harmonious relation between man and nature. Different seasons have festivals which celebrate nature during that season. According to Hindu calendar there are six seasons or "Ritu" in a year. Hindu calendar is a lunar based calendar. The distinction in seasons is less marked in Southern India where there are longer summers and milder winters.



1. Vasanth Ritu or Spring season- Springtime is neither hot nor cold.

The first two months of Hindu calendar, Chaitra and Baisakh fall during this season, generally in the months of March and April. This season is unparalleled in its exquisite beauty and hence rightfully so, it is called "Ritu Raj" or the "King of seasons". This is the time when trees are in bloom, beautiful flowers fill the earth with their color and perfume. Birds such as the koyal are pouring forth their melody and the bees are humming around the beautiful flowers. Auspicious occasions or festivals during this time generally celebrate the beauty of nature. Vasanth Panchami, Holi, Ugadi (New Year), Baisakhi, Vishu, Bihu are some festivals which celebrate nature's bounty during this season.



2. Grishma Ritu or Summer season- Summer is

when the weather is hottest in most parts of India. The two Hindu months of Jyestha and Aashadha fall during this season, generally in the months of May and June. The land is extremely parched and everyone yearns for a few drops of rain to soak the soil. People look forward to eating the delicious mangoes and getting some respite from the heat in the cool moonlit nights. Festivals such as Guru Purina and Rath Yatra are celebrated during this season.



3. Varsha Ritu or Rainy season- The monsoon season is when it rains

in most parts of India. Black clouds and rumbling thunder add to the magic of the monsoon. Animals and birds are affected by this and the graceful peacocks break into dance of liberation and freedom from the misery of the heat. Rivers flow fast and furiously towards the ocean, forests look lush and luxuriant. The two Hindu months of Shravan and Bhadrapad or popularly known as "Savan and Bhado" fall during this season, generally in the months of July and August. Hindu festivals such as Raksha Bandhan, Krishna Janmashtami and Ganesh Chaturthi are celebrated during this season.



4. Sharad Ritu or Autumn season- This is the season when the hot

weather recedes from most parts of India. After the rain comes anticipation of something beautiful. The Earth is covered with white flowers, the sky is lit with white moon and the lakes are adorned with white swans. The two Hindu months of Ashwin and Karthik fall during this season, generally in the months of September and October. It is festival time and people look forward to spreading cheer and joy by celebrating some of the important Hindu festivals such as Navaratri and Vijay Dashami.



5. Hemant Ritu or Pre-winter season- This time before winter is called Hemant Ritu when it is perhaps the most pleasant time of the year in India. Frost now appears on earth, dew drops adorn long blades of grass, days are small and nights are long. The two Hindu months of Margashirsha and Pausha fall during this season, generally in the months of November and December. Hindu festivals such as Diwali(Festival of Lights) and Bhaiya Dooj are celebrated at this time.



6. Shishir Ritu or Winter season- Winter time is the coldest time in all parts of India. The Earth has a different look now, as if nature has come to a standstill. But this is also a sign of new beginning, new life springing forward in the upcoming spring season. The two Hindu months of Magh and Falgun fall during this season, generally in the months of January and February. It snows in some hilly regions of Northern India. Some important harvest festivals such as Lohri, Pongal, Makara Sankranti and the Hindu festival of Mahashivaratri are celebrated during this season.

