

Maa Brahmcharini — The second manifestation of Maa Durga

Maa Brahmcharini is the second manifestation of Maa Durga who is worshipped on the second day of Navratra. Here word "Brahm" refers to "Tapa". So Brahmcharini means Tapa Charini - The one who performs Tapa or penance. It is said that the "Vedas", "Tatva" and "Tapa" are synonyms of word "Brahm". The form of Brahmcharini is tremendously effulgent and extremely majestic.

**Brahmcharini**  
She holds a rosary in her right hand and Kamandalu in her left. She personifies love and loyalty. Mata Bhramacharni is store-house of knowledge and wisdom. Rudraksha is her most adorned ornament. When she was incarnated as the daughter of Himalaya, then influenced by the instructions of Devrishī Narada, she practiced very hard penances in order to obtain Lord Shiva as her divine consort. Due to her unearthly penances she was termed as Brahmacharini. She spent one thousand years, only on fruits and beet-roots. One hundred years she spent only by eating leafy vegetables.  
For a sufficient period of time observing complete fast she suffered tormenting of nature like torrential rains and scorching sun and biting cold, under the open sky. After such a difficult routine she lived only on dry Bilva Pattaras (leaves) fallen on the ground for three thousand years. She kept herself engrossed for twenty-four hours in worshipping Lord Shiva. After that she gave up eating even these dry leaves. For several thousand years she went on without any food and water. Because she gave up eating dry Bilva leaves so she was known to be Aparna as one of her epithets.  
After the hardship of penance for several thousand years her body became extremely lean and thin. She was reduced to skeleton only. Her penance, sharpened as it was, caused great disturbance in all the three worlds. The whole universe was shaken. The Gods, the Rishis, the Siddhas, the Munis all eulogised her penance as an unprecedented virtuous action.  
Ultimately Lord Brahma through an oracle addressed her and said to her in a very pleasant manner-O Goddess, so far nobody has ever practiced such an austere penance. Only you could have done it. This wonderful deed is being praised in all the four quarters. Your desire would be fulfilled. You will decidedly get Lord Shiva as your divine consort. Now stop your penance and go home. Your father would be shortly coming to take you back.  
Legend states that in a previous birth she was Parvati Hemavati the daughter of Himvan. Once when she was busy in games with her friends,Naradaji came to see her and on reading her hand/palm-lines Narad Muni stated that, "You will get married with a naked-terrible 'Bhole Baba' who was with you in the form of Sati, the daughter of Daksh in previous birth. But now you have to perform penance for him."  
There upon Parvati told her mother Menaka that she would marry none except Shambhu, otherwise she would remain unmarried. Saying this she went to observe penance. That is why her name is famous as Tapacharini - Brahmacharini. From that time her name Uma also became familiar. She is the one who practices devout austerity. Filled with bliss and happiness, she is the way to emancipation - Moksha.'Brahma' here refers to the meditative aspect of Brahmacharini and is always depicted as pious women or Sannyasin.  
She is also worshipped as Goddess Tara and is associated with the pious form of Goddess Shakti. She is believed to be that aspect of Mother Goddess, which was present in Sati and Goddess Parvati, when they both did intense austerities to get Lord Shiva as husband.  
During the penance Mata Parvati did in order to gain Lord Shivji as her consort for thousands of yrs. without eating even leaves she was called 'Aparna'. Seeing her body her mother uttered U-ma and so she is also called 'Uma'.  
Her worship increases sacrifice,good deeds and restraint in humans. Rudraksha is her most adorned ornament.In some regions, Goddess Chamunda Swarup of Durga is worshiped on the second day of Navratrī.  
In this form she is believed to have killed the demons Chanda and Munda.There is a famous Chamunda Mata Temple at Jodhpur.



NAVRATRA SPECIAL RECIPE

Palak Makhana



**Ingredients**  
300 grams Spinach Leaves (Palak)  
2 Tomatoes, diced  
1 cup Lotus Seeds  
1 teaspoon Cumin seeds  
1 teaspoon Garam masala powder  
1/2 teaspoon Red chilli powder  
1/2 teaspoon Turmeric powder (Haldi)  
1 Cinnamon Stick  
2 tablespoon Milk  
1 tablespoon Ghee  
Salt, to taste

**Method:**  
We begin the Palak Makhana by washing the spinach thoroughly under running water. Drain the spinach and cook it in a pressure cooker with little bit of turmeric powder, cumin seeds and green chillies for 2 whistle.  
Once the whistle is done let it cool down till the pressure comes out naturally. Blend it into paste and keep it aside.  
Roast the makhana with ghee on a flat bottomed non-stick pan. Remove the makhana and in the same pan add little bit of oil and temper the cumin seeds and add the tomatoes.Cook until they loose all the liquids and add all the spice powders.  
Add little water and simmer it for 2 minutes. Add the blended spinach mixture along with milk and simmer it for 3 minutes again.  
Finally, add the makhana and bring it to a boil.  
You can serve your creamy Palak makhana with Ajwain puri or Jeera pulao to make a complete wholesome meal.

Devi – Divine Mother

BHANUMATHI NARASIMHAN

We are all floating in the effulgence of one scintillating unseen cosmic energy called the 'Devi'. The Devi or the Divine Mother is the womb of all creation. She is the seed of all dynamism, radiance, beauty, equanimity, peace and nourishment. She is the life force energy. A mother has total love for her child. The Divine Mother has unconditional and unquantifiable love for Her children which includes every being in this entire creation. During the nine nights of Navaratri, the Devi is worshipped in all Her names and forms. Names have a significance.  
We remember a sandalwood tree by the memory of its perfume. Each name and form of the Devi refers to a specific quality or attribute of the Divine. By remembering the form or by chanting the many names of Devi, we enliven those qualities in our consciousness and they manifest in us according to the need of the hour.  
Navaratri is a journey from the outer world of names and forms to the subtle world of energies, invoked through the various yagnas, to the innermost core of our being - the Self. The first three days celebrate the Devi in the form of Durga. Durga also means hill. A very difficult task is often described as an uphill task.  
In the presence of Durga, negative forces fade away. Difficulties find it difficult to exist in Her presence! The goddess is depicted as riding a lion or tiger as her mount, alluding to the aspect of courage and valour which are the essence of Devi Durga.  
The Nava Durga are the nine aspects of Durga energy which act like a shield to ward off all negativities. When you have obstacles and mental blocks, just remembering these qualities of the Devi, can cure the mental blocks. Especially in the case of people suffering from anxiety, doubting oneself, doubting one's ability, 'lack' consciousness, feeling threatened by enmity and negativity - simply by chanting the names of the Devis, it is like mantras that elevate your consciousness and you can become more centered, courageous and composed.  
This is the significance of the aspect of the Divine as Devi Durga. The Devi Durga, in Her form as Mahishasuramardhini, is the destroyer of Mahisha. The word



Mahisha means buffalo which is a symbol of laziness, lethargy, and inertia.  
These are the qualities which impede the spiritual and material progress of an individual. The Devi is a storehouse of positive energy and any trace of laziness or inertia dissolves in Her very presence.  
The second set of three days honor the Devi as Lakshmi. Lakshmi is goddess of wealth and prosperity. Wealth is a vital ingredient bestowed upon us for the maintenance and progress in our life. It is much more than just having money. It means abundance in knowledge, skills and talents. Lakshmi is the energy that manifests as the complete spiritual and material well-being of a person.  
The final three days are dedicated to Saraswati. Saraswati is the goddess of knowledge- the one who gives the essence (sara) of the Self (swa). She is often depicted as being seated on a rock.Knowledge, like a rock, is a steadfast support. It stays with us at all times. She plays the veena, a musical instrument whose mellifluous notes bring harmony and peace to the mind.  
Similarly, spiritual knowledge brings relaxation and celebration into ones' life. Goddess Saraswati is the ocean of understanding and the consciousness which vibrates with different types of learning. She is the source of spiritual light, remover of all ignorance and the source of knowledge.  
While worshipping the Devi in her various names and forms, we offer flowers in a multitude of hues and fragrances like jasmine, hibiscus, lotus, lilies, rose, and so on. From the outer beauty, as we turn our focus inward and are soaked in the divine attributes, our conscious flowers. We offer our blossomed consciousness too. Worshipping Her through the blossomed consciousness is the ultimate offering.  
The Divine Mother is the unfathomable, infinite, supreme, pure consciousness. A child does not try to know the mother. The child simply has faith in her. In the same way, having faith in the Divine Mother is the source of the greatest strength.  
It is a great wealth and a blessing. Navaratri is a time for us to soak in this blessing, relax in the depth of our being and feel grateful for the abundance and beauty in our lives.

General Knowledge Question

- 1.Which one of the following waves are used by the common TV remote control?

A.Radio waves  
B.Lasers  
C.Infrared waves  
D.Ultrasonic waves
- 2.Given bellow are the psychological manifestations of noise pollution.

(i)Constriction of blood vessels  
(ii)Increase in the rate of heart beat  
(iii)Digestive spasms  
(iv)Dilation of pupil of the eye
- Select the correct options

A.(i) and (ii) are correct  
B.(i) and (iii) are correct  
C.(ii) and (iv) are correct  
D.(i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) are correct
- 3.Which gas is safe and an effective extinguisher for all confined fires?

A.Nitrogen dioxide  
B.Carbon dioxide  
C.Sulphur dioxide  
D.Nitrous Oxide
- 4.Which one of the following statements is incorrect about laser?

A.It is a technique for producing intense beams of light, ultraviolet or infrared radiation of different wavelength.  
B.Even in diamond laser beam can drill a hole.
- C.A variety of lasers have been made from solids like the ruby crystal and semi conducting materials, liquids and gases.  
D.All waves in laser, travel in phase.
- 5.Which one of the following elements the drum of a Photostat machine is made up of:

A.Aluminium  
B.Selenium  
C.Barium  
D.Caesium
- 6.If we say the child has an IQ of 100, what does this means?

A.The performance of the child is below average.  
B.The performance of the child is above average.  
C.The mental age of the child is equal to his actual age.  
D.The performance of the child cannot be better.
- 7.Which bacteria is responsible for the formation of curd?

A.Lactic acid bacteria  
B.Lactobacillus Acidophilus  
C.Lactobacillus aureus  
D.Bacillus radiceicola
- 8.Which one of the following bacteria present in the soil produces a peculiar smell if it rains on perched soil?

A.Streptomycetes  
B.Staphymycetes  
C.Diplomycetes  
D.Micrococuss
- 9.In poorly ventilated buildings which one of the following inert gases can be accumulated?

A.Helium  
B.Neon  
C.Argon  
D.Radon
- 10.Honey is sweeter than cane sugar or corn syrup. Which one of the following carbon sugars is responsible for this?

A.Dextrose  
B.Levulose  
C.Sucrose  
D.Fructose
11. Which Polymer is used in making non-stick kitchen ware?

A. Nylon  
B. Teflon  
C. Polystyrene  
D. Bakelite
12. Name the polymer used in making bullet proof glass?

A. Melamine  
B. Bakelite  
C. Lexan  
D. Vinyl rubber
13. For pipe insulation which polymer is used?

A. PVC  
B. Polythene  
C. Teflon  
D. None of the above

- Answers:**  
1. Infrared waves  
2. (i), (iii), (iv) are correct  
3. Carbon dioxide  
4. It is a technique for producing intense beams of light, ultraviolet or infrared radiation of different wavelength.  
5. Selenium  
6. The mental age of the child is equal to his actual age.  
7. Lactobacillus Acidophilus  
8. Streptomycetes  
9. Radon  
10. Teflon  
11. Lexan  
12. Lexan  
13. PVC

ASTRO SPEAK

- ARIES**

As an Aries, you come equipped with a natural enthusiasm to conquer whatever you set your sights on. Don't be afraid to unleash that power and aim it towards something you'd like to accomplish today, as the life-giving sun aligns with your ruling planet, go-getter Mars. This aspect provides ample energy, motivation, and follow-through. Meanwhile, the hard-working Taurus moon backs your efforts.
- LIBRA**

So much is stirring beneath the surface, Libra. Let yourself go within to explore the material that's trying to emerge. The sensual Taurus moon's union with insight-bringing Uranus can bring important revelations around partnership matters to the forefront of your thinking. Elsewhere, the sun's positive alignment with go-getter Mars helps you to be confident and confrontational in one-on-one interactions.
- TAURUS**

You're breaking through old, stifling boundaries you've created for yourself today, Taurus. The moon glides through your sign, sending your attention towards your physical and emotional wellbeing. Luna's union with shake-it-up Uranus provides fresh insights and stimulates your need for spontaneity but can also find you behaving erratically if your sense of personal freedom feels hindered.
- SCORPIO**

Don't hold back now, Scorpio. You're ready to push forward and you have the energy and confidence to do what you must today, as the sun forms a supportive connection with go-getter Mars. This pairing of planets pushes you to get ahead with projects on the work front or joint collaborations. Elsewhere, the Taurus moon's union with electric Uranus brings new insights to the partnership arena.
- GEMINI**

Tuesday's cosmic landscape is pumped full of energy to take advantage of, Gemini. Yet, for you to make the most of it, you'll find you need a slower pace and solitude. The grounding Taurus moon increases your need for privacy and peace, and her union with insight-bringing Uranus can usher a variety of important revelations. Elsewhere, the sun providing stamina and enthusiasm to any undertaking.
- SAGITTARIUS**

It's easier than usual to make things happen today. The life-giving sun aligns with self-motivated Mars, providing ample energy, confidence, and follow-through to anything you aim your attention towards. The grounding Taurus moon helps you focus your attention on getting ahead with productive efforts, especially in the creative arena. Luna's union with Uranus can bring unexpected changes on the work front.
- CANCER**

You've got your mind's eye focused on your most ambitious goals today, Cancer. You need only take a few steps in the right direction to get the ball rolling. Tuesday's skies witness the enthusiastic union of the sun and courageous Mars, providing you with ample energy and confidence to apply towards career efforts. All the while, the grounding Taurus moon helps you keep your eyes on the prize.
- CAPRICORN**

Capricorn people come equipped with a naturally ambitious approach to the world around them. You're ready to activate this energy Tuesday's skies, as the sun forms a strong connection with enthusiastic Mars. This pairing of planets provides stamina, courage, and drive for any work efforts you aim your focus at. Elsewhere, the earthy Taurus moon stimulates your need for creative activity and play.
- LEO**

As a Leo, you're cosmically guided by the life-giving sun. Today's skies witness the sun's optimistic and energizing union with trail-blazing Mars. This pairing gives you the guts, follow-through, and motivation you need to apply towards any ambitious efforts you have waiting in the wings. Meanwhile, the practical Taurus moon's union with surprise-bringer Uranus brings new insights to career matters.
- AQUARIUS**

You work best if you're left to your own devices today. The moon wanders through practical Taurus, centering your attention on family matters and the reality of your home environment. Luna's union with Uranus is likely to bring revelations to the forefront around unspoken family dynamics.This is all while the sun's union with energetic Mars makes an ideal energy for tackling any work requiring stamina and confidence.
- VIRGO**

Virgo, people pride themselves on their ability to be productive and efficient. You can make the most of this skill under Tuesday's cosmic landscape, as the sun supportively aligns with self-reliant Mars. This pairing of planets provides stamina, courage, and confidence that can be applied to any effort you set your sights on.
- PISCES**

As a Pisces, it can be difficult for you to be self-assertive when you need to be. Tuesday's skies provide a helping hand in this department, as the sun forms a pact with courageous Mars. This pairing of planets offers up an ideal mix of energy including boasting, increased confidence, drive, and follow-through. Apply yourself to any efforts that need an extra boost!

