



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 24, 2025

Holi, the Indian Festival of Colors, Returns to Cheekwood

4th Annual Event Highlights Indian Culture Through Traditions, Food and Dance

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Vibrant sights, sounds and colors will fill the grounds at Cheekwood Estate & Gardens for Holi, the dynamic Indian “Festival of Spring” and the “Festival of Colors.”

This educational event introduces visitors to Indian culture and is the first of four multicultural festivals celebrated throughout the year at Cheekwood.

Guests will have the chance to celebrate the arrival of spring while receiving custom Henna tattoos and participating in color throwing traditions. The festival will also feature hands-on activities for all ages, tasty fare from local food vendors, shopping opportunities, and music and dance performances. Holi will occur against a backdrop of thousands of blooming bulbs, as Cheekwood in Bloom continues.

“Holi is a time of joy, renewal, and togetherness, and we are delighted to once again bring this celebration to Cheekwood,” said Sam Patel, Chair of the Cheekwood Indian Advisory Committee and a member of the Cheekwood Board of Trustees. “With its beautiful gardens and welcoming community, Cheekwood provides the perfect setting to embrace the spirit of Holi—spreading love, unity, and the triumph of good over adversity. We look forward to celebrating with guests of all backgrounds as we share the colors, traditions, and energy of this cherished festival.”

Holi will be held March 22, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Schedule of Events

- 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. – Hands-On Activities
- 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. – Arts & Goods Vendors Open
- 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. – Food Vendors Open
- 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. – DJ Performance
- 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m. – Dance Performances
- 10:45 a.m., 12:15 p.m., 1:45 p.m., 3:15 p.m. – Color Throwing

Hands-On Activities

Color Throwing

Brightly colored powders called *gula* are thrown in celebration. Every color represents something in Indian culture ranging from love to health to the sun. Color packets are included in the price of admission and every ticket holder will receive a pass to be

redeemed for one packet of color. Color packets will only be available at the start of each color throwing event on Arboretum Lawn and must be used when received.

The color powder is non-toxic and environmentally friendly. Most of the color powder will shake or wash off, but it may discolor clothes. Please note, no entry to the Mansion is permitted after a guest has participated in color throwing.

Henna

The art of Henna—called *mehndi* in Hindi and Urdu—has been practiced in Pakistan, India, Africa, and the Middle East for over 5,000 years. The leaves of the henna plant are dried, crushed into a fine powder, and made into a creamy paste using a variety of techniques. This paste is then applied to the skin, staining the top layer of skin only. Guests will have the opportunity to receive a free temporary tattoo or purchase a custom design from a Henna artist.

Watercolor Cards

Embrace the dynamic colors associated with Holi and take home a custom keepsake from the event. Artists of all ages can use spray bottles filled with color powder and water to create their own abstract designs on blank sheets of paper. Each card is branded with the Holi 2025 logo and makes for a perfect souvenir to remember the day.

Celebrate Peacocks

Guests can learn about the significance of the peacock in Indian culture and create their own peacock out of paper. The peacock has been an inspiration and played a pivotal role in Indian tradition for centuries and was named the National Bird of India in 1963. The bird is a symbol of royalty, watchfulness, and protection and is often used as a motif in architecture, jewelry, and painting. In Hinduism, the peacock is associated with and favored by many gods and goddesses.

Decorate a Sari or Kurta Pajama

Traditional Indian clothing varies based on the climates, geography, and cultural traditions of the different regions of India. The Kurta is a loose-fitting shirt with or without a collar that is worn by men and reaches the knees. The Pajama is a lightweight pant worn with a Kurta. The Sari is a traditional dress worn by women. It is one piece of fabric that is commonly wrapped around the waist and draped over the shoulder. Attendees will have a chance to design and decorate their own Sari or Kurta Pajama on paper.

DJ and Dance Performances

From the Arboretum Lawn, **DJ Srikanth** spins a high-energy mix of Bollywood hits, Punjabi beats, Indian fusion, and global dance anthems that will keep you moving all day long.

Also head to the Frist Learning Center Courtyard to enjoy performances by multiple local groups who showcase the richness of Indian culture through a variety of styles of dance.

Vendors

Holi will feature traditional Indian food from local food trucks and locally owned restaurants. Clothing, jewelry and art will also be available for purchase from local business owners.

Ticket Information

Holi will be held rain or shine. All activities are included with membership or general admission. Advance reservations are required. To purchase tickets, visit <https://cheekwood.org/>

Holi is presented by HCA Healthcare, supported by Asurion and funded by Cumberland Trust.

Middle Tennessee Daffodil Show

This annual show hosted by The Middle Tennessee Daffodil Society (MTDS) returns to Cheekwood. The show features divisions for horticulture, photography and floral design. It is open to the public March 22 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and on March 23 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event is held in Massey Auditorium inside Botanic Hall and can be accessed with a Gardens Only or Gardens + Mansion ticket. To reserve tickets visit: <https://cheekwood.org/calendar-events/middle-tennessee-daffodil-show/>

Cheekwood in Bloom

Love is in the air as Cheekwood in Bloom continues until April 13. Embrace the hopefulness of the season as 250,000 blooms come to life. Take a photo with artist Robert Indiana's iconic "LOVE" sculpture in front of the Historic Mansion, and marvel in the beauty of the gardens. Enjoy the stunning view of blooming tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths as music in the Beer Garden delights the ears each weekend and the joy of spring warms your heart.

About Cheekwood Estate & Gardens

With its intact and picturesque vistas, Cheekwood is distinguished as one of the leading Country Place Era estates in the nation. Formerly the family home of Mabel and Leslie Cheek, the 1930s estate, with its 30,000-square-foot Mansion and 55-acres of gardens, today serves the public as a botanical garden, arboretum, and art museum with furnished period rooms and galleries devoted to American art from the 18th to mid-20th centuries. The property includes 13 distinct gardens including the Blevins Japanese Garden and the Bracken Foundation Children's Garden, as well as a 1.5-mile woodland trail featuring outdoor monumental sculpture. Each year, Cheekwood hosts seasonal festivals including Cheekwood in Bloom, Summertime at Cheekwood, Cheekwood Harvest and Holiday LIGHTS. Cheekwood is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and nationally as a Level II Arboretum. It is a three-time voted USA Today Top 10 Botanical Garden, in 2024 received a Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice Award, and in 2021 was named by Fodors as one of the 12 Most Beautiful Gardens in the American South. Cheekwood is located eight miles southwest of downtown Nashville at 1200 Forrest Park Drive. It is open Tuesday through Sunday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., with extended days and hours of operation depending on the season. Visit cheekwood.org for current hours and to purchase advance tickets required for admission.

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Images for Media

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