



UTTARAKHAND JUDICIAL AND LEGAL ACADEMY

TRADITIONS OF UTTARAKHAND



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Uttarakhand

- Uttarakhand formerly known as **Uttaranchal** is also called **Dev Bhumi “Land of Gods”** due to a large number of pilgrimage temples situated there, **Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, and Yamunotri** form the Char Dham yatra.
- Uttarakhand is divided into two major regions of **Garhwal and Kumaon**. It was founded on November 9th, 2000 and borders **Tibet, Nepal, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and Haryana**.
- The meaning of **Uttarakhand** is **“Northern Land”**, where **Uttar** means **“North”** and **Khand** means **“Land”**.

RENAMING OF STATE AND MYTHOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE STATE

- Earlier, the state was named Uttaranchal by Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) led central government and Uttar Pradesh State Government when they started a fresh round of state reorganisation in 1998. **However, in 2006, Union Cabinet of India to the agreed to the demands of the Uttaranchal Legislative Assembly and leading members of the Uttarakhand Statehood Movement and renamed Uttaranchal as Uttarakhand.** The state also finds its mention in history as a part of the Kuru and the Panchal kingdoms (mahajanpads) during the Vedic age. **In Hindu mythology also, Uttarakhand has been recognized as a part of the famed Kedarkhand (Now Garhwal) and Manaskhand (Kumaon).** It is also believed the famous sage Vyas composed the epic of Mahabharata in Uttarakhand. The signs of the practise of Shaivism in ancient times along with Buddhism and Folk Shamanic religion was also found in the state.



HOLY LAND OF INDIA: UTTARAKHAND

- The dwelling of Gods and Goddesses, the heaven on Earth, home of sacred rivers, and dotted with religious shrines. **Uttarakhand state is rightly named as the Holy land of India. Uttarakhand, has been the centre of religious and spiritual knowledge for ages. ,**
- The history and culture of Uttarakhand are deeply connected with religion and celebrated everywhere. Many cultures and ethnicities coexist here with peace and harmony.
- Most of the state is divided into two regions named Garhwal and Kumaon. It is also home to Jaunsaries, Tibetan refugees, Bokshas, among others.

Uttarakhand is known for its beautiful Garhwali and Kumaoni culture. **The various traditions, religions, fairs, festivals, folk dances, music are what separate the state from other part of the country .**

IMPORTANCE OF TRADITION

- Famed for their simple lifestyle, honesty, and humility, **the people of Uttarakhand reflect a sincere bond with nature and gods**. Although, the state has a fair amount of cities that are plush with all state-of-the-art amenities and crowd from other parts of the country, however, this could not take the people of Uttarakhand away from their culture and traditional values. **The culture of Uttarakhand still revolves around its traditional ethics, moral values, the simplicity of nature and a rich mythology.**

TRADITIONAL VALUES

- The people of Uttarakhand indulge in vivid celebrations and performing of rituals around the year due to **their deep-rooted connection with nature and the rich mythology.**

Like their simple lifestyle, **the festivals and fairs in Uttarakhand are also simple yet culturally rich.**

- Each season is welcome with **hearty folk songs and dance and so are the agricultural periods.**
- The **ancestor spirit worship is exclusive to the state, Jaagar, as it is locally called, is held to wake the Gods and the local deities up from their inactive stage to solve their problems and shower on them many blessings.**

ORIGIN AND ETHNICITY

- Apart from Gharwali and Kumaonis, **the Bhotiyas, Jaunsarues, the Tharus, the Bokshas and the Rajis** are the notable ethnic group of people living in Uttarakhand.
- There is a nomadic community of Muslim seen here and they are mainly into animal husbandry. They are known as Van Gujjars.
- The people of Uttarakhand constitute various tribal groups where some of the important communities which forms the ethnicity of Uttarakhand are Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Nordic races and the Dravidians

ORIGIN AND ETHNICITY

- **Jaunsari** are a group of small tribal people who are classified into two original tribal groups namely the Koltas and Khasas. These people have their own **distinct way of dressing and cultural practices.**
- In fact this is one of the very communities in the world which follow the **polyandrous system** where the wives can have more than one husband at a time.
- The Bhotias are those who live in the mountains of Himalayas and they all have more or less the same physical appearance like that of the Tibetans.
- The Bhotias are classified into different sub sects namely the Jadhhs, the Marchas and the Shaukas where each group have their own different culture.

TRIBES OF UTTARAKHAND

- **Tribes of Uttarakhand** represent the ethnic groups living in the state. Every district of Uttarakhand has a more or less moderate percentage of the tribal population.
- In the state of Uttarakhand, the main focus of the tribal population is in rural areas. According to the records, about **94.50 percent of the total tribal population resides in rural areas** and the remaining percentage of tribal population resides in urban areas.
- Uttarakhand have **5 major tribes** identified by the Government of India. These are Tharu, Jaunsari, Buksa, Bhotia, and Raji.
- As of **2011 India census**, Uttarakhand has a tribal population of 2,91,903, with **Tharu being the largest tribe**, followed by Jaunsari and Buksa.

Tharu Tribe of Uttarakhand

Tharu tribe is the largest tribal group of the state. The Tharu are the tribals of the eastern region of the Terai. They trace their ancestry to the native expatriate Tibetan tribes.

Tharu people live in large families under one roof like joint families. A distinctive feature of Tharu culture is that their community has a matriarchal nature.

Women have respectable position in the family and full right to run the household independently.

Tharu has strong traditional panchayat organization to settle their disputes on the basis of a common code of conduct. Widow remarriage is also allowed.



Jaunsari Tribe of Uttarakhand

- The Jaunsari tribe is the **second largest tribal group** of Uttarakhand. The entire population of the state is scattered all over the state with **more than 356** villages.
- They inhabit **Jaunsar-Bawar** (Inner Dehradun district) and **Rawain** (present day Uttarkashi). This group has a distinctive style of dressing and special cultural upbringing. The Jaunsari community is recognized as one of the rare polyandry societies in the world.
- Jaunsari are known to be **Hindu but they do not worship Hindu deities**. They have their own gods, the principal among them being Mahasu Devta.



Buksa Tribe of Uttarakhand

- The next major tribal group of Uttarakhand is the Buksa tribe. The Buksa's are residents of the Terai region of Uttarakhand and they claim their ancestry from the Rajputs. They have retained their age old traditional ways of living.
- The culture of the Buksa reflects a typical Hindu society but they also accent the existence of spirits of nature and eat meat. They are mainly spread over 173 villages in Nainital and Dehradun districts. However, the main concentration of Buksa tribe is found in Gadarnur, Ramnagar, Bajpur and Kashipur areas.



Bhotia Tribe of Uttarakhand

- The Bhotia traditionally live in the heights of the Himalayas and are divided into several sub-groups, most notably the Jadhhs, Marchas and Shaukas. These three groups have diverse cultures but have a common Tibeto-Mongoloid-like physical appearance.
- They are mostly found in Almora, Chamoli, Pithoragarh and Uttarkashi district of the state. Which are spread over 291 villages. The weaving of woolen yarns and the making of woolen goods such as carpets, blankets, sweaters and their traditional garments has been the specialty of the Bhotias.



Raji Tribe of Uttarakhand

- Raji tribe is the **smallest tribal group** of Uttarakhand. The Raji are known as Vanrawat and they live in the forests around **Askot in southern Pithoragarh**. Raji also claims a **matriarchal culture** with women as the head of their community.
- The Rajis have their own dialect which is quite different from the neighboring tribal and non-tribal communities. However, they can speak and converse in the **Kumaoni-Pahari dialect as well as the broken Hindi language**. Their wedding rituals are simple, without brahmins or priests. With the acceleration of development and communication with the outside world, Raji have struggled to maintain a way of life that they value greatly.



A close-up photograph of four women dressed in traditional Uttarakhand attire. They are wearing colorful headscarves (purple, red, pink, and green) and traditional jewelry, including necklaces and earrings. The women are smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

TRADITIONS OF UTTARAKHAND

PEOPLE OF UTTARAKHAND

- Uttarakhand is home to multiple ethnic groups, each having its own culture. These groups include the Jaunsari, Bhotia, Buxa, Tharu, and Raji. Sometimes, the people of this state are called “Paharis.”



GHARWALI CULTURE

- The culture of Gharwal presents an interesting blend of indigenous population and traditions of other immigrants that settled here periodically.
- Garhwali is the main language spoken here that has a number of dialects too including Jaunsari, Marchi, Jadhi and Sailani.
- These include Rajputs who are believed to belong to the Aryan origin, Brahmins who migrated after the Rajputs or later, tribals of Garhwali who stay in the Northern tracts and comprise of Jaunsaris, Jadhhs, Marchas and Van Gujars.
- The local cuisine of Gharwal region is simple but nutritious including pulses cereals seasonal fruits and vegetables. Some of the local food are fannah, baadi, ras, gulgula, jhangora ki kheer, kandali, phanu.

KUMAONI CULTURE

- The people of Kumaon speak **13 dialects** including Kumaiya, Gangola, Soryali, Sirali, Askoti, Danpuriya, Johari, Chaugarkhyali, Majh Kumaiya, Khasparjia, Pachhai and Rauchaubhaisi. This group of languages is known as the group of Central Pahari languages.
- Kumaon is also **rich in its folk literature** which comprises myths, heroes, heroines, bravery, Gods, Goddesses and the characters drawn from Ramayana and Mahabharatha.
- The most **popular dance form of Kumaon is known as Chhalaria** and it is related to the martial traditions of the region.
- All the festivals are celebrated with a lot of enthusiasm and witness such traditional dance forms even today.

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

➤ BIRTH RITES

- The birth of a child is considered auspicious. On the birth of a child the woman is segregated for all-purpose for a few days until a 'Puja' is performed for the purification of the woman. 'NamKaran' (christening) ceremony is also gone through on another auspicious day.
- The Namkaran is generally scheduled on the 11th day of birth for both girls and boys. Later on, in case of a son, at the age of 3, 5 or 7 another ceremony called 'Chura Karam' is performed with great enthusiasm, when the head of the child is shaved off and is introduced to schooling by making him write a few letters on a 'Takhti' (wooden board). A special 'Puja' and feast is arranged on this occasion.
- All these ceremonies are gone through strictly in accordance to scriptures read on the occasion by the 'Purohit' (Brahmin who is responsible to perform Puja and other rituals according to Hindu scriptures).

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

➤ FUNERAL RITES

- Funeral rites are also performed strictly in accordance with 'Shastras'. In case of death of an unmarried young man or women the body is normally buried and not cremated. There is general mourning for a week or so by the entire village or the caste group affected.
- All celebrations like marriages are cancelled within the caste group or village concerned. However, in case of an adult who is married, the body is cremated. There may be special mourning for 13 days, after which a Puja is performed, called 'Terween', and feast is given in case of an old man.
- There may also be a Puja and feast after 12 months known as 'Barsi'. No marriage ceremony takes place in the family concerned for a year and festivals too are not celebrated in the village during that period to mourn the death of a person.

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

➤ MARRIAGE RITES

- With the present trend in the country, strict equality laws and the changing out-look of Hindu society, widow marriage are also being solemnized, where acceptable, with their relations and other members of their families. 'Polygamy' is not common now but Polyandry is still practiced in some areas of Chakrata Tehsil of Dehradun district. Marriages among the tribes (Boksa, Tharu and Bhotiyas) are solemnized with certain variations in accordance with tribal customs.
- While talking about customs and traditions, usually, the marriages are pre-arranged. Having selected the girl, further negotiations are done on the basis of matching the horoscopes of the prospective bride and bridegroom. The horoscopes are studied by a 'Purohit' or an Astrologer from both the side. Status of the family and the caste are the main pre-requisites for negotiating any marriage offer.

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

rites and rituals

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rites and rituals

➤ MARRIAGE RITES

- A small ceremony is held when the proposal is accepted by **changing Teeka (Vermillion)** at the residence of the prospective bride. This is followed by an **engagement ceremony** on any auspicious day where a **'Necklace'** is also presented to the girl.
- Traditionally **the marriage procession is led with a white flag called 'Nishan' which represents the bridegroom.** This is followed by the local band consisting of a Shehnai, piper and a pair of drummers and a Nagara. This in turn is followed by a white 'Palki' in which the bridegroom is carried. The last man of the marriage procession carries another **flag which is red and represents the bride.** On arrival at the bride's residence a reception is given in accordance with local customs and rites and a feast is given to the marriage party.
- Thereafter, **'Nath' (Nose ring) ceremony** is performed at a pre selected auspicious time when the 'Nath' is presented to the bride. Next day the **betrothal ceremony** takes place at a specially erected **'Bedi' which includes 'Havan'** and the bride and the bridegroom complete **seven rounds (Phera)** of the sacred fire as per ritual conducted strictly according to the Shastras (Hindu scriptures) read by the Purohit.

rites and rituals

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rites and rituals

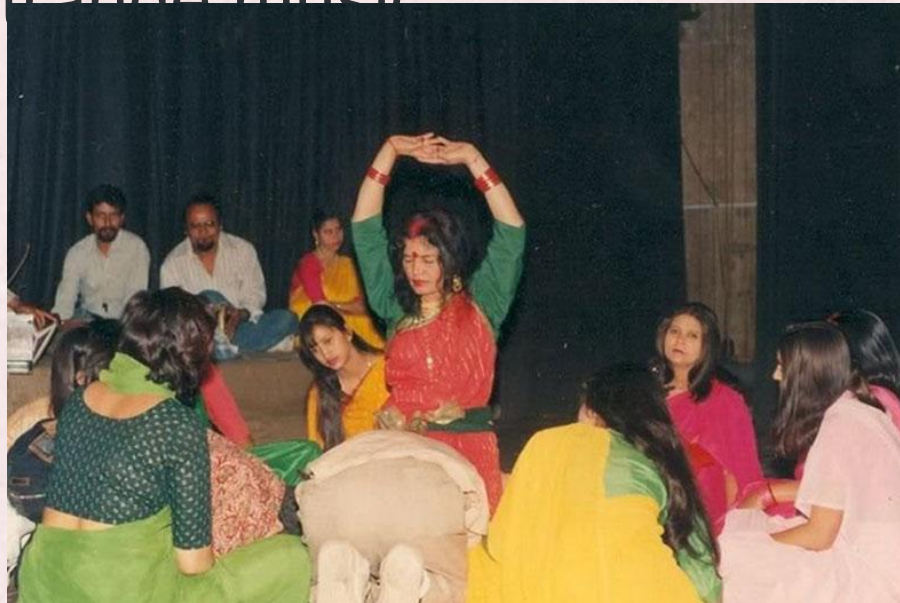
➤ MARRIAGE RITES

- At the end, dowry or gifts if any, according to the status of the family, are given to the bridegroom. After a normal feast, the marriage party leaves the house of the bride. While returning, the marriage party is led with the red flag, followed by the red 'Doli' of the bride and the Palki of the bridegroom. The white flag remains at the end. Various other rituals and 'Puja' are gone through till the bride finally steps into the house of the bridegroom.
- There is no 'Gauna' (Second marriage) system in Uttarakhand like in the plains but once again immediately after the marriage the bridegroom is required to come to the house of the bride and take her to his house on another auspicious day. Thereafter the marriage is considered to be finally solemnized

rites and rituals

➤ Calling of Gods, Local Deities, and long Dead Ancestors

In this ritual deities or ancestors possess some pure soul for a short time to answer the questions troubled people are looking for. That's what happens when a special prayer ceremony called *Jagari* is organized in the dead of the night by the special *pujari* where possessed people dance around a big blazing fire with strange music.



rites and rituals

➤ Sacrificial Lambs

- Goddess Kali and most of the local deities and ancestors are presented with these offerings, in hopes of fulfilling wishes like marrying your daughter off in a good family or getting rid of some age-old ailment.



rites and rituals

➤ Offer a Sacrifice if you bear a son

- It is mandatory to offer a sacrifice to all the deities who are your home-gods or *isht devtas*, if the person can afford it.
- It is believed that it pleases them, and they offer their blessings in return for a long happy life of the child.



rites and rituals

➤ You forever carry your ancestors

- Your ancestors are your responsibility even after they are dead for a hundred years. It is believed that they can be given as a dowry go into another family.
- A person has to take care of their temples, feed them and pray to them unless you have a daughter whom you can transfer the responsibilities. These are for those ancestors whose souls still linger around.



rites and rituals

➤ Fairies possessing pretty newlyweds

- It is believed in Uttarakhand that if a young maiden or a newlywed woman is acting all weird, the fairies must have possessed them. These fairies come down on the highest peaks of snow clad regions and dance at noon.
- Its believed that if you happen to pass by and you are pretty, they take a liking to you and get stuck to you unless some [witchcraft](#) ritual is performed to detach them from your head.



rites and rituals

- Polyandry is practiced in a small group of followers of *Pandavas* in the lower regions of Himalaya, near Dehradun.
- Since *Draupadi* had five husbands, they believe that if a girl marries the eldest brother, all the other brothers automatically become her husband.



FOOD OF UTTARAKHAND

- The food of Uttarakhand is dominated by Garhwali cuisine and Kumaoni cuisine, two of its main regions. The dishes are **simple and locally grown without being dominated by complex spices.** Some of the most famous dishes of Uttarakhand are **cooked over a slow fire and consists of lentils.** Some of the most delicious mouth-watering specialities of Uttarakhand include-
 - **Urad Dal ke pakode** which are spicy pakoras prepared from different pulses.
 - **Phanu** made from dals
 - **Jhangore ki kheer** which is a sweet dish prepared with Jhangora.
 - **Chainsoo** which is made from black gram dal.
 - **Bhang ki chutney** which is a sour-tasting chutney prepared from roasted bhang and cumin seeds mixed with lemon juice.

FOOD OF UTTARAKHAND

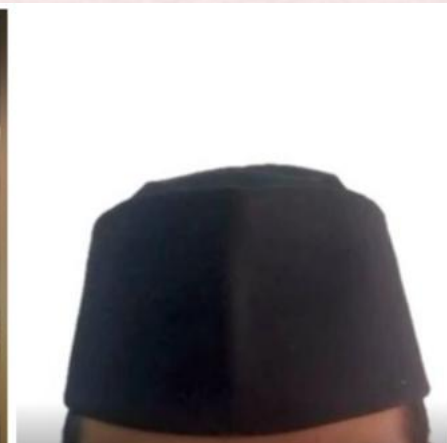
- **Dubuk** which is made from pahadi bhatt dal
- **Kumaoni Raita** which is made from cucumber
- **Bal Mithai**- Uttarakhand is also known for its wonderful collection of sweet dish preparations which include Bal Mithai of Almora, Singodi and so much more which are made from desiccated coconut and sweet Khoya.



Traditional Dresses Of Uttarakhand

➤ Traditional Costumes Of Men

- Men like to wear simple outfit in the hilly areas such as kurta or shirt with pyjama, a round cap and sadri (a type of jacket). Traditional Garhwali Kumaoni traditional Topi (cap) is made of fine black clothe and traditionally worn by men across the hill state.



Traditional Costumes Of Women

- Women usually wear saree, **Angra** (a type of jacket) and woollen clothing due to cold weather. **Woollen jackets** are also famous in the winters



Traditional Costumes Of Women

- **Rangwali Pichora** is a traditional garment that is worn in most traditional occasions and weddings in uttarakhand. Rangwali Pichora has a special significance as it **symbolises family prosperity, fertility and the happiness in a woman.**



TRADITIONAL JEWELLERY

➤ HANSULI

- Married women wear big naths made from gold covering their entire cheek, **hansuli**, **also known as Khagwali** black beaded necklace or chareu, bichuye (toe rings) made from silver, and sindoor.
- It is worn by women of the **Gharwali, Kumaoni, Jaunsari and Bhotiya** tribe.
- Women typically wear Hansuli on the occasions of **festivals, weddings, social events and family functions.**



➤ PAHUNCHI

- A **pahunchi** is a gold bracelet that is popular in both the Garhwal and Kumaon regions of Uttarakhand.
- **Pahunchi is an auspicious diamond for married ladies in Kumaon.** It was typically worn by married ladies at festivals and other family occasions.
- Pahunchi is typically produced in **one tola or more gold, depending on the status of the bride's family. Red-coloured linen served as the foundation for the flawless gold pearls.** The colour red was chosen since it is auspicious for married women.



➤ GALA BANDH

- **Gala bandh** worn by ladies from **Kumauni, Garhwali, Bhotiya, and Jaunsari** tribes. Gala bandh, as the name suggests, is a **choker necklace** worn by married ladies around their necks.
- The Gala bandh, or ornamental belt, is intricately detailed. With the help of a thread, the **golden square-shaped patches** are attached to a red-coloured belt.



➤ DHAGULU

- **Dhagulu**, also known as Dhaglu, is a **spherical silver bangle**. It is a popular item of **jewellery in Nepal** and worn in some areas of Kumaon because it shares a border with Nepal. Even now, a few elderly Kumaon women can be seen daintily carrying this special jewellery.



➤ SIKKA MALA

- The **Sikka mala, also known as Kaldaar**, is a type of jewellery that is popular in **several Himalayan** locations. This simple necklace is embellished with various **antique coins or sikkas**, giving it a unique appearance.



FESTIVALS CELEBRATED

➤ Holi of Kumaon

- The Holi of Kumaon is celebrated in three forms namely **Baithki Holi**, **Khari Holi** and **Mahila Holi**. The unique feature about this festival is that it is celebrated with a lot of music. People also make the traditional **gujiya**, and fried potatoes called **aloo gutuk** which are served with a Himalayan spice called ‘**jamboo**’.



➤ Harela

- People belonging to the Kumaon community celebrate this festival during the month of Shravana, i.e., July-August. The day when Navaratri begins, women sow **seven different types of grains** in a basket full of soil. These grains then germinate and turn into yellow leaves known as 'Harela'. These leaves are then cut on the very last day (the tenth day) and are placed behind their ears or on their head.



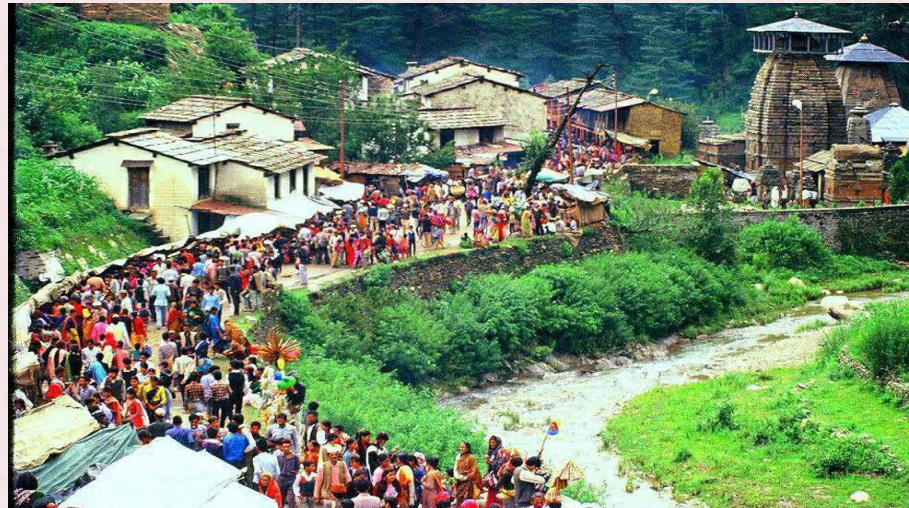
➤ GHUGHUTIYA

- The festival of Makar Sankranti is an auspicious and important celebration throughout India. In Kumaon region, **Makar Sankranti** is called '**Ghughutia**'. '**Khichdi Sankrant**' or '**Gholdiya**' in the Garhwal region, and is commonly known as 'Uttarayani' all over Uttarakhand.
- The locals prepare deep-fried sweets called *ghughute* from sweetened flour and jaggery that are shaped like drums, pomegranates, knives, and swords.
- These sweets are then tied into a string and are garlanded around the children's neck. The children adorn these necklaces and in order to attract the 'kale kauve' or the black crows, they chant "Kale kauwa kale, ghughuti mala khale" (O black crow, eat this garland made out of ghughute), offering them the sweets from their garland and seeking blessings from them.



➤ Fair of Jageshwar

- This fair is carried out in the temple of Lord Shiva in Jageshwar [Located 32 km from Almora] on the fifteenth day of Baisakh month which is the period extending from late March to early April. People take a dip in the pool known as Brahma Kund as a kind of belief during the fair. The people also worship Lord Shiva on this day.



➤ PHOOL DEI

- Phool Dei is a festival that marks the **end of winter and the beginning of spring**. During this time, the villagers prepare a **ceremonial pudding** called '**dei**' from ingredients **like jaggery (or gud), curd, and flour** to celebrate the arrival of spring and the blooming flowers. It would not be a celebration without this meal.
- Participation from young women is essential to the success of this Uttarakhand celebration. They perform the traditional **hymn "Phool Dei"** as they pass from home to home, receiving donations of jaggery, rice, and coconut in exchange. Flowers and rice are left at people's doorsteps in the belief that it will bring good luck. For their kindness, the girls receive treats and prayers.



➤ Kumbh Mela

- **Kumbh Mela** is one of the biggest and the most popular festival of Uttarakhand organized on the banks of river Ganga. This mela is a **3-month long festival** and takes place on rotation between Allahabad, Haridwar, Ujjain, and Nasik.
- **Kumbha mela** [in every 3 years]
- **Ardh kumbha** [in every 6 years]
- **Maha kumbha** [in every 12 years]



FOLK DANCES

□ Ramola dance - is a popular dance form in the state and is mainly performed as worship to **Lord Krishna**. It is celebrated during the festival of Holi where people come together to celebrate and the festivity lasts for more than a month. In the past, this dance also used to be performed by wandering minstrels who used **to go from one village to the next and announce the oncoming of the spring** which is considered to be the most important time of the year to agriculturalists.



Ramola

□ Jagars dance- This hill folk dance is categorized in the **spiritual and ghost worship** which is accompanied with a regional folk song . Spirits are also summoned who generally demands a goat or a bird sacrifice. Along with dancing they also put their hands in blazing fire without being harmed and perform other such incredibly surprising acts. The instruments used are a big drum (**Dhol**), a smaller drum (**Damua**), Hurka and **Thall**.



❑ **Chancheri Dance** - Chancheri is danced in a **semi circle** in a very slow tempo but it follows the traditional group dance by unconfined joy. In **Bageshwar district** there is group dance performed by the men and women in a semicircle with gradually increasing pace putting across unbridled joy. The female dancers danced in the semicircle and male will perform in rest of the circle. **Love and inspirational music** is played in this group dance.



❑ **Chholiya Dance** -It is a **Rajput dance** form which is mainly performed during the marriage ceremonies. It is also known as the **Sword Dance**. It describes the traditional martial art practice of the **Kumaoni tribe** of Uttarakhand. It includes circular and angular movement of body parts and mock fights. The dance is performed with sword and shield in pairs.



□ **Jhora dance** - It is a famous dance performed in Kumaon. This dance form unites both high as well as the lower community. People dance in groups irrespective of their community. **Men and women move in a circle**, holding each other's arms, and dancing with utmost grace.



At the weddings and fairs and even at the arrival of the spring season, people do Jhora dance.

□ **Langvir Nritya** - This dance is mainly performed in the Tehri Garhwal regions by the men of Uttarakhand using a **bamboo pole fixed in one place**.

- ❑ Pandav Nritya– Different incidents of Mahabharat are showcased by the people, who dress up as these different characters. It is mainly performed in the Gharwal region. It is somewhat like Ram Lila as just like that it has also managed to keep the local folklore animated amongst the local people. It is primarily performed during the holy eve of Diwali and Dussehra.



- ❑ Bhotiya dance– The traditional tribe of Uttarakhand is known as Bhotiyas. Many men and women perform this dance highlighting the ancient culture and civilization of the Bhotiya community. It is like a death ritual performed by the community. According to traditional beliefs, the departed soul of the dead person remains in a goat or sheep. The Bhotiya dance liberates the departed soul from the animal. All the people in the community perform this dance to free the soul of the dead person.



FOLK SONGS

- **Bajuband**

Sung **by the village women** while performing their daily chores on the fields or at home this is a collection of folk songs expressing various different **emotions like love, sorrow, happiness etc.** these colourful and enchanting songs are so poetic that they have been compared with the words written by the great poet William Wordsworth. The songs are generally very sweet sounding, romantic as well as mesmerizing.

- **Chhopati**

This is one of the most popular forms of song and music in Uttarakhand which is sung during celebrations, festivals, fairs, weddings etc. **played with the help of Dhol, Dholki, Turri, Mandan** and others, this song is performed between a man and a woman **in a question answer form** which is an extremely entertaining thing to watch. It comes under the category of being a ‘love song’ and is mostly sung by the people belonging to the regions of Rawain – Jaunpur in the district of Tehri Garhwal. This song is generally accompanied with a dance performance which is a very lively and fun activity to even witness.

- **Jagar**

Finding its roots in the **Sanskrit word 'Jaga'** meaning to wake, these songs are practised by both Garhwali and Kumaoni groups of people in a ritual form for the spirits of their ancestors. By chanting these songs it is said that all the **local deities and gods are awakened** from their dormant state. This Jagar performance is **also done to seek penance or justice from the gods**. The government of India has also recognised the importance of folk songs and music by awarding the only woman Jagar singer, Basanti Devi Bisht, Padma Shri award.

- **Basanti**

Basanti songs are primarily composed and sang to welcome the **season change from winter to spring**. Their songs sound extremely cheerful, happy and clearly **represent the blooming of the flowers** that occurs throughout the hills. This song is one of the most special songs here which is sung with great zeal throughout the entire hill folk. just as the hill sides get dotted with colourful high altitude flowers and plants, people individually or in groups burst out singing their favourite Basanti song.

- **Mangal Geet / Gaali Mangal Geet**

- Mangal Geet or the auspicious songs are composed with an **aim of being sung at weddings or during sacred ceremonies**. While the song is being sung simultaneously the purohit keeps on chanting **holy Sanskrit Shlokas**. Mangal Geet is sang in the form of a poem while singing these songs people **also include some tease language** in between and since it is an age old tradition this is not considered as an offence or bad language. These are also the songs that add an element of joy making weddings a memorable event. This mostly takes place in a Garhwali wedding and is also an essential part during this auspicious event.

- **Chhura**

- These folk songs are **sung by the shepherd folk** of the hills who sing it in the form of an **advice that is being given from the older generation to the younger generation** which are based on their life experiences and feel that it may come in handy for them while grazing sheep and goats and their other cattle. Men as well as women take part in this songs and it is well taken care of by the respected elders of the community.

- **Khuded –**

- This folks song is centred around the **Garhwal division** and is sang to **depict the sadness and the sufferings faced by a woman which is caused when she is separated from her husband**. Through the song she says how much she laments and misses the presence of her better half when he is out for work and has gone out looking for a job. She curses the circumstances which has caused both of them to be away from each other. Songs in this category are cleverly formed which completes three aims at once like the season, **poverty and the separation phase**. The song sounds extremely melancholic and clearly depicts what the singer is feeling.

ART FORMS OF UTTARAKHAND

Apart from the abundant scenic landscape, the state of Uttarakhand also has a rich tradition of various art forms like jewellery making, wood carvings, painting, decorative temples and many more. Needless to say, most of the **arts of Uttarakhand** and the local artists derive inspiration from nature. Whether you are artistically inclined or not, knowing about the rich history and significance of beautiful **art forms of Uttarakhand** will leave you intrigued and stunned.



MINIATURE PAINTING

The miniature painting of Uttarakhand is one of the major and important schools of miniature painting in India. It dates back to the Mughal era. The [Mughal Prince, Sulaiman Sukoh](#), who was attracted by the natural beauty of the region, came to Uttarakhand during his years of exile to spend time in the laps of the mighty Himalayas. **He brought with him his painters** who first started miniature painting in the region. Inspired by the natural beauty of the land, the Prince's painters created many stunning artworks during the era, which continue to inspire many generations of new artists till date.



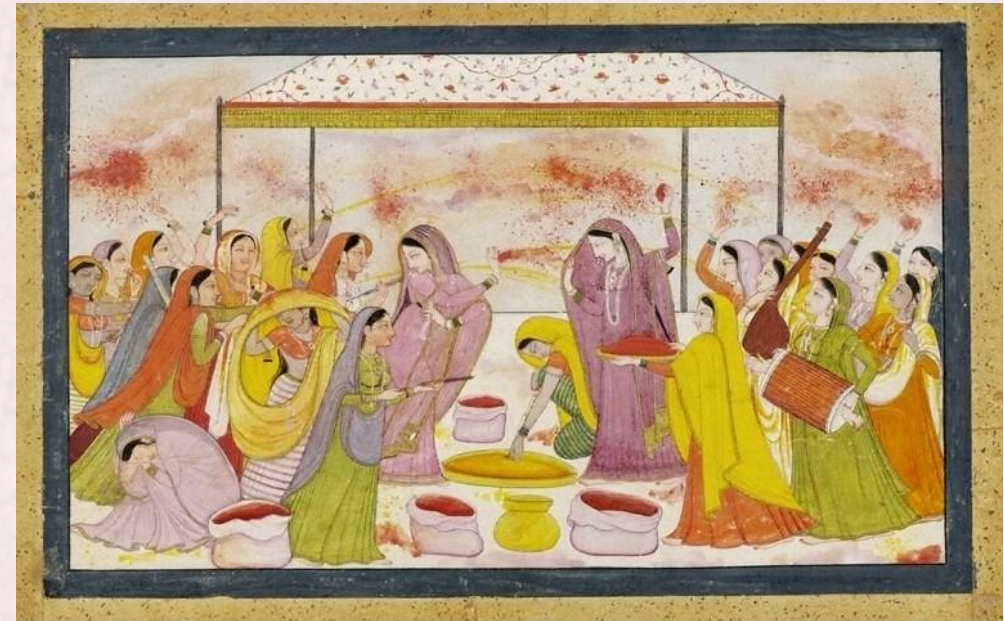
AIPEN

- An indigenous **Uttarakhand folk art** form, Aipen is one of the traditional forms of Rangoli that is practised everywhere in the state
- Aipen involves drawing various repetitive **geometric patterns** and motifs.
- It is done on empty walls, which are brick-red in color, called ***Geru***.
- The actual art is done with a white paste made of **rice flour**. The art is frequent to floors and walls of **Puja rooms** and entrances of homes.
- Aepan are used as ritual designs for pujas, festivals, ceremonies connected with birth, janeu (sacred thread ceremony), marriage and death.



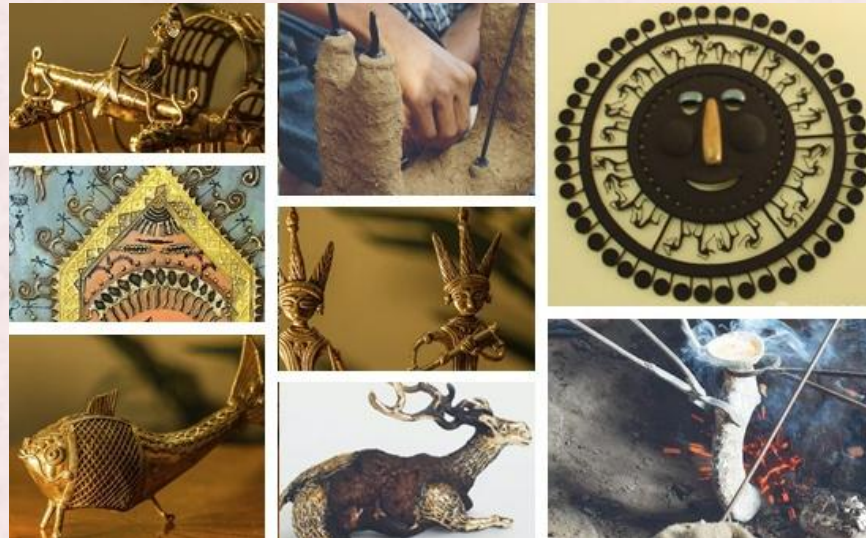
PAHARI PAINTINGS

- Paintings of Uttarakhand range from the folk arts of the women of Kumaon to the most exquisite miniature arts of Garhwal. Uttarakhand is home to one of the most beautiful and defining Gharanas or school of the **Pahari School of painting** known as the **Garhwal School of Painting**.
- The pioneer of the Garhwal School of painting was the **Mola Ram** who was not only a painter but also a poet, a historian and a diplomat. Mola Ram developed a new style of painting that had a divinely romantic charm with beautiful poems.
- The paintings are filled with **divinity, love and a respectful depiction of the sensuality of a women** as being perfect and divine.



DEKARAS

- Uttarkhand has an unique art called the Dekaras which are beautifully designed **clay models of the various Gods and Goddesses** created in three-dimensional forms out of a mixture of fine clay mixed and color.
- The Dekaras are created with unique vibrant hues depict historically auspicious events like the marriage of Lord Shiva to Goddess Parvathi and are also made on the holy occasions like **Karthik Sankranti**. It is said that the Dekaras **bring divine blessings** into the



WOOD CARVINGS



Mahasu Devta Temple at Hanol, Dehradun district is notable for its **traditional wooden architecture**. It is also included in the Archaeological survey of India's list of ancient temples.

Among the prominent local crafts is **wood carving** known as **Likhai**, which appears most frequently in the **ornately decorated temples** of Uttarakhand. Intricately carved designs of floral patterns, deities, and geometrical motifs also decorate the doors, windows, ceilings, and walls of village houses. Paintings and murals are used to decorate both houses and temples. **Pahari painting** is a form of painting that flourished in the region between the 17th and 19th century.

PAHADHI JUNIYALI DOLLS

- Uttarakhand has made a new addition to its immense bouquet of arts and crafts with its Pahadi Juniyali doll. A company called Phyonli & Pines LLP's has launched range of Pahadi Doll Junyali like its American cousin Barbie, in various shapes and sizes, including a version of Juniyali with a Pichora.
- This doll is handcrafted by the artists of Uttarakhand **to depict the culture, costumes and traditions** of pahadis.



Languages of Uttarakhand

- Uttarakhand is also called the "Dev Bhoomi" or the land of Gods. This is because, this place is covered by the beautiful nature and it is therefore believed that even the Gods could not resist themselves from visiting this beautiful place. The dev bhoomi is divided into 2 parts - **the Kumaon and the Garhwal.**
- There are different tribes residing here and these include the **Bhotia, the tharu, the Jannsari and others.** Here people belonging to different ethnicities reside. They speak different languages. It is true that the main languages spoken here are **Kumaoni and Garhwali**, however, these languages are not the **official languages of this place**

- **List of the languages that people in this state speak:**

- Hindi
- Kumaoni
- Garhwali
- Jaunsari
- Sanskrit
- Urdu

A large crowd of people is gathered along a riverbank, likely participating in a religious festival or ceremony. The crowd is dense and extends far into the distance. In the background, there are multi-story buildings, possibly residential or commercial, situated along the river. The sky is overcast and hazy. The text "RELIGION AND TRADITION" is overlaid in the center of the image.

RELIGION AND TRADITION

RELIGION AND TRADITION

- In Uttarakhand being a **Devbhoomi** religion plays an **important role in shaping the tradition** of Uttarakhand.
- In Uttarakhand **several rivers and places** have acquired religious importance in mainstream Hindu mythology. Being a Himalayan state it has various glaciers which are origin places of several rivers.
- There are many **pilgrimage sites** which are visited not only by natives of Uttarakhand but also by people across country.
- There are some **yatras that hold religious importance** and people very devotedly attend it.

GANGA

- Ganga is longest river of Uttarakhand with profound religious significance.
- Its origin in hindu mythology is related to legendary king Bhagiratha. He brought ganga to earth from the heavens so as to bestow nirvana to his ancestors who were cursed by sage Kapila.
- After years of great penance, river ganga descended on earth and lord shiva agreed to channelise its flow therefore ganga flowed from shiva's hair.
- The place where sacred originated is known as gaumukh which is a part of Gangotri glacier.

GANGA

- The followers of hindu religion believes that bathing in the pious river can help wash all sins. They believe that mere touch of the river can help attain salvation(moksha) and so the ashes of dead are immersed in the sacred river.
- Scientifically the water of ganga is pure due to presence of bacteriophages, the viruses that don't allow bacterial growth. The water of ganga have shown to retain high amounts of oxygen
- **KUMBH-** It's a major festival in Hinduism. It is celebrated at those four places where drops of AMRIT fell after SAMUDRA MANTHAN, which are Haridwar (Ganga), Prayagraj (confluence of Ganga-Yamuna-Saraswati), Nashik (Godavari) and Ujjain (Shipra). This festival is marked with ritual dip in the waters.
- It has been inscribed on the UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. It is known as world's largest religious gathering.

PANCH PRAYAG

- Ganga the lifeline of india, is formed from five major rivers which meet at five different confluences and at last river Ganga is formed. These are known as PANCH PRAYAGS which are as follows-

1. VISHNUPRAYAG- here Alaknanda (Satopanth glacier) is joined by Dhauliganga (Niti pass).
2. NANDAPRAYAG- here Alaknanda river is joined by Nandakini.
3. KARNAPRAYAG- here Alaknanda is joined by Pindar.
4. RUDRAPRAYAG- here Alaknanda is joined by Mandakini (chorabari glacier).
5. DEVPRAYAG- here Alaknanda is joined by Bhagirathi and at this confluence GANGA is formed.



CHAR DHAMS

- Uttarakhand contains four pilgrimage sites and they are known as chota char dhams . These sites are-

1. Kedarnath
2. Badrinath
3. Gangotri
4. Yamunotri



KEDARNATH

- It is situated in district rudraprayag at 11,755 ft near chorabari glacier which is the source of mandakini river.
- The temple's construction is credited to Pandavas. When they defeated and slayed their cousins at Kurukshetra war, they wished to atone for the sins of committing fratricide and brahmahatya.
- On the advice of krishna they handed over the rein of the kingdom to their kin and left in search of shiva to seek his blessings. Shiva wanted to avoid them and therefore he assumes the form of a bull and hid in garhwal region.
- Bhima recognised the bull grazing near guptakashi and caught hold of him. The bull disappeared into ground to reappear in parts, with hump rising at KEDARNATH, the arms appearing at TUNGNATH, the face showing up at RUDRANATH, the navel and stomach at MADHYAMAHESHWAR and hair appearing at KALPESHWAR. Pandavas built temples at those five places for venerating and worshipping shiva.

BADRINATH

- It is situated in district Chamoli at 10,800 ft.
- It is one of the char dham pilgrimages of india (Dwarika, Puri, Rameshwaram).
- It was re-established by Adi Shankaracharya in the 8th century.
- According to Bhagwata Purana, in Badrikashram the Vishnu in his incarnation as Nara and Narayana had been undergoing penance since time immerorial for welfare of all living entities.
- Another lore states that the areas was full of Badri bushes and Vishnu meditated here. His beloved Lakshmi stood next to him, sheltering him from scorching sunlight and thus turned into BADRIVISHAL and her lord became BADRINATH.

GANGOTRI

- It is situated in district Uttarkashi at 10,200 ft. at the banks of river BHAGIRATHI.
- According to popular Hindu legend goddess Ganga descended here when lord Shiva released her from locks of his hair upon request from king Bhagirath. It is seat of the goddess Ganga.
- The origin of the holy river is at Gaumukh, set in the Gangotri glacier.
- The original Gangotri temple was built by Nepalese General Amar Singh Thapa.
- Temple is closed on Diwali and reopened on Akshaya Tritiya every year. During this time idol of the goddess is kept at MUKHBA village near Harsil.

YAMUNOTRI

- It is situated in district Uttarkashi at 10,804 ft.
- It is the source of river Yamuna and seat of goddess Yamuna.
- the temple is built by Maharaja Pratap Shah of Tehri Garhwal. The deity is of black marble.
- There are hot water springs near temple. Surya kund is the most important kund.
- Devotees prepare rice and potato tied in muslin cloth in hot water springs to offer at temple.

NANDA DEVI RAJ JAT YATRA

- It is a three week long pilgrimage and festival of Uttarakhand celebrated in Chamoli district. It is organised once in 12 years.
- Traditionally only the deities of Garhwal Division took part in it. Sometimes during peaceful periods between the kingdoms of Garhwal and Kumaon , the goddess “Nanda of Almora” was invited and took part in the Raaj-Jaat, while mostly there were separate Nanda-Sunanda fairs in Kumaon.
- In 2000, the goddess “ Nanda of Almora” took part in Raaj-Jaat after 90 years and a number of other deities from Kumaon accompanied her
- At present people from entire Garhwal division-Kumaon Division participate in Nanda Devi Raaj Jaat Yatra.



Continued.

- The Jaat (yatra) starts from Nauti village near Karnaprayag and goes upto Roopkund and Homkund with a four horned sheep (called Chausingya-Meda in Garhwali)
- After havan-yagya is done sheep is freed with decorated ornaments, food, clothing and other offerings.
- In **GARHWAL-DIVISION** the whole yatra signifies the journey of the newly wed Nanda Devi (Parvati) leaving her maternal home and going to Kailash. As per traditions, the goddess visits her maternal home after every 12 years.
- In **KUMAON-DIVISION** Nanda Devi and Sunanda Devi are worshipped together as twin goddesses. During Chand period Nanda Devi worship took the shape of a fair before that it was worshipped only as an idol. The custom to make two idols started from period of Baj Bahadur Chand. It is believed that Nanda Devi and Sunanda Devi took birth as princesses in royal family and to mark this new reincarnation the practice of celebrating a festival for both the sisters together was introduced.

KAILASH MANSAROVAR YATRA

- Kailash Mansarovar is situated in Tibet.
- This yatra is organised during June to September each year through two routes- LIPULEKH PASS (Uttarakhand) and NATHULA PASS (Sikkim).
- It holds religious importance for Hindus because it is believed to be abode of Shiva. It is known for religious value to Jains and Buddhists as well.
- In Uttarakhand Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam in collaboration with Ministry of external affairs organises this yatra.



HEMKUND SAHEB

- It is situated in district Chamoli at 15,197 ft, it is a sikh place of worship and pilgrimage site.
- It is devoted to the tenth sikh guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji, and finds mention in Dasam Granth.
- It is situated in Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve.
- It is recorded in holy Granth Saheb that Guru Gobind Singh Ji meditated by the serene banks of Hemkund lake in one of his previous births.



NANAKMATTA SAHEB

- It is an important sikh pilgrimage which lies on Rudrapur-Tanakpur route.
- It is believed that Guru Nanak Ji, the first Sikh guru visited this place to meditate.
- Thousands of pilgrims come here throughout the year.
- The town also got popular with the construction of Nanakmatta Dam across the Saryu river.



PIRAN KALIYAR SHARIF

- It is a Dargah of 13th century Sufi Saint of Chishti order, Allauddin Ali Ahmed Sabir Kaliyari.
- It is situated at Kaliyari village near Roorkee.
- It is one of the most revered shrines of muslims in India.
- The dargah shrine was built by Ibrahim Lodhi, an Afghan ruler of Delhi Sultanate.



DHARI DEVI TEMPLE

- This temple is situated in District Rudraprayag on the banks of river Alaknanda.
- It is considered as Guardian Deity of entire state of Uttarakhand. Shree is evoked as protector of Char Dham pilgrim trail.
- The temple here celebrates the fierce form of Shakti's upper half as Dhari Devi.
- This temple falls en route to Badrinath, so pilgrims of Char Dhams offer their obeisance before mother before they continue further.



SHAKTI PEETHS

- It is situated in Nainital. It is one of the Shaktipeeth.
- Goddess sati, the wife of Lord shiva overcome by humiliation she felt upon being dishonoured at her father Dakhsa's Yagna, immolated herself in its sacred pyre.
- Lord shiva , when learned about her death was in immense grief and persisted on carrying goddess Sati's dead body and dancing his intense grief across the realms of universe.
- Lord Vishnu had to cut her body into pieces such that the universe is freed of the forces of destruction unleashed due to shiva tandava.
- Every place in which maa Sati's body organs fell was imbued with her shakti.
- The sacrifice of the Divine Feminine to instill the earth with her very essence was commemorated by building a temple in the very site.

SHAKTI PEETHS

➤ NAINA DEVI TEMPLE

- It is located adjacent to beautiful Nainital Lake which adorns the popular tourist destination of Nainital.
- It is believed that eyes of Maa Sati fell at this place and that's why it is known as Naina Devi Temple.
- The temple's annual festival is celebrated on Bhadrapada Shukla Ashtami attract thousand's of devotees to assemble in the sacred premises and pay homage to mother.

➤ SURKANDA DEVI TEMPLE-

- The temple marks the place at which Goddess Sati's head fell.
- the temple is situated in district Tehri.

➤ CHANDRABADNI TEMPLE-

- The temple's legend cites the shrine to have been the place where torso of goddess Sati fell.
- Many tridents are scattered over the place which are believed to be her weapons

MAHASU DEVTA

- It is located on Tiuni-Mori road at Hanol, district Dehradun.
- Mahasu devta is the chief deity of surrounding places in Uttarakhand and in Himachal Pradesh.
- The temple is constructed in Kath-Kuni or Koti-Banal style of architecture.
- Mahasu devta appears in quadruple form as the four brothers which are
 1. Botha Mahasu- seated at Hanol
 2. Bashikh Mahasu- seated at Thadiyar
 3. Pavasi Mahasu- seated at Mahendrath
 4. Chalda Mahasu- continuously moving in order to look after his realm.
- Mahasu devta is considered as a deity of justice and disputes are resolved by Lota-Pani system.



KARN MAHARAJ

- This temple is situated at Devra village near Mori in Uttarakashi.
- The surrounding villages are considered to be his realm(Anga Desh) during Mahabharat kaal.
- The river TONS in the valley is believed to be formed when the subjects of the deity mourned after his death in the war and that's why its water is not suitable for drinking purpose.
- He is believed to be a deity of justice and disputes of people are resolved through Lota-Pani system.



DURYODHANA TEMPLE

- This temple is situated at Jakhol village near Mori in district Uttarkashi.
- This is the only place where Duryodhan is worshipped as he is considered as antagonist in the epic Mahabharat.
- Although the people there as of now call him as Someshwar Mahadev, and deny it to be a temple of Duryodhan.



JAGESHWAR TEMPLE

- Jageshwar is a Hindu shrine near Almora in district Almora.
- It includes a group of 125 ancient Hindu temples dated between 7th to 14th century.
- They predominantly illustrate north Indian Nagara style of architecture.
- Many of them are dedicated to lord shiva, while others in immediate vicinity are dedicated to lord Vishnu and Shakti.



KATARMAL SUN TEMPLE

- This temple is situated at Almora.
- This ancient structure is dedicated to the sun god and a foremost temples of its kind.
- During annual Chhat Puja celebrations brings a lot of devotees from across the country.
- This temple was built in 9th century by the Katyuri kings.
- This temple was built by katarmalla and is a grand complex featuring a shrine dedicated to the ancient avatar of the sun god known as Burhadita or Vraddhaditya.



CONCLUSION

TRADITION- traditions are transmissions of customs or beliefs from generation to generation.

- We have discussed various socio-religious factors that affect traditions of Uttarakhand.
- The purpose for studying this topic is to understand those factors that affect behaviour of people of society in the state.
- Many a things have shaped the traditions that we see in the society such as the dynasties that ruled this place, the political struggles that it faced.
- The geographical and climatic conditions also affect day to day lives of people.

CONCLUSION

- Uttarakhand is a place of gods so we have many pilgrim shrines which are visited by devotees across the country.
- The inhabitants here are god fearing and at some remote places disputes are resolved by deities of justices.
- There are several pious rivers that have great religious significance in mainstream hindu mythology.
- There are many festivals, fairs, art form, cuisine, dance and songs which are peculiar to Uttarakhand.

THANKS !