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:::: 12 names of ganesh :::: sumukha :::: ekadanta :::: kapila :::: gajakarna :::: lambodara :::: vikata :::: vighnanasaka :::: ganadhipa :::: dhumraketu ::: ganadhyaksha :::: bhalachandra :::: gajanana ::: om shree ganeshya namah ::::
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Lord Ganesh is the symbol of wisdom and a bringer of good luck.

His small eyes : represent wisdom His long ears : miss nothing

His long nose: can smell out anything
His mouse: reflects how much impo

His mouse : reflects how much importance a wise man gives to the smallest of forms

Ganesha photos, statues and other decorations are placed on doors, gates and entrances, generally facing the east direction, where the sun rises, as he is seen to be a great clearer of obstacles. Ganesha is worshipped when a new house is bought, new shop, new company, etc. He is the first of all Lords to be worshipped, where the Lord Ganesha prayer is recited.

### why does ganesha have an elephant head

Ganesh's father, Lord Shiva was away in war for a long time and Goddess Parvati was scared of being alone. Therefore she created a son, out of the sandalwood paste she used to bath with, and breathed life into him. She then named him Ganesh, and his purpose was to protect the house. As Ganesh's mother, went for a shower, she left Ganesh on the lookout for danger. Not knowing that Lord Shiva was his father, he refused to let him in the house. Lord Shiva got angry and chopped of Ganesh's head. When Parvati came out of the shower, she was grieved to see her son dead. Shiva vowed that he would cut of the head of the next animal to walk up the hill and replace it with Ganesh's. An elephant marched up the hill and instantly his head was cut off and placed on Ganesh's body. Lord Shiva also promised that to make up for what he had done, Ganesh would be the first of the Lord's to be worshipped.

### why does ganesh have one tusk?

Indra, the god of the skies, invited Ganesha to a feast. Taking his vehicle (his mouse), Ganesha began his journey to Indra's palace. Because the mouse could not carry all his weight, he lost his balance and fell. The moon, shining in the night sky, laughed at him. Angered by this insult, ganesha broke off his left tusk and threw it to the moon. And that's why he may be called Ekadanta (means "with one tooth"). Ganesha also cursed the moon "that whoever looked at the moon on the ganesh chaturthi night, they would undergo privations." Even today, devotees avoid looking at the moon on ganesha days.

## a इरिंग्यु of ganesh

Ganesh had a brother called Kartikeya, who was very proud of his wisdom, speed and efficiency. He challenged Ganesh to a race around the world seven times. As Kartikeya made a tour of the world, Ganesha simply walked around his parents, Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati seven times, claiming victory. This shows the importance of God and parents in everyone lives.

# ganesh chaturthi

This festival is the celebration of Ganesh's birthday. However, it is celebrated in a very different way. It comes on the 4<sup>th</sup> day on the bright half of the month Bhadarvo. Months in advance, the excitement and enthusiasm begins, as models of Ganesh are being made in different poses (according to research, there are 91 poses that Ganesh's murti's can be found in), colours and sizes. They are usually made in Bombay, Pune and Pen. Then they are often imported to other countries or villages. These are used for worship in houses and temples from one to ten days, depending on the family's tradition. Indian sweets are made, containing coconut and sugar. They are shared with friends and family on the day of Ganesh Chaturthi.

By the fifth day, idols of Gauri and Parvati are also in houses for worship. The ganesha idols can be immersed into the seas before midnight on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> days led by a procession of music, bells and drums. The whole village gathers around, and farewells Lord Ganesha into the waters. It is a very emotional moment and like the phoenix, he will rise again next year.

# the ganeshya puja

A Ganesha puja is also carried out on this day. It involves preparing a corner of the house, to welcome Ganesh. "Panchamrut" is prepared, this is a liquid made out of the five nectars, milk, curd, ghee, honey and sugar or sakar. Both, with water is used to cleanse the murti of Ganesh. He is then given red clothing and a sacred thread. He is then covered with red sandalwood paste, offered red & yellow flowers. The diva lamp is lit, the bells chime and he is offered food in six symbolic mouthfuls.

This puja is performed twice a day, morning and evening. Touching the idol with the blades of Durva grass, he is brought to life step by step, going through the 15 out of 16 rites of passage that Hindus go through in their lifetime (16<sup>th</sup> being for death). The puja ends as a mantra and the Ganeshya prayer is chanted. The family gathers around and rice grains are placed on his head, then moving the idol so he is unseated.

may the blessings of sering ganesha be upon you all!

may be remove all the obstacles that stand in your spiritual path!

may be bestow on you all material prosperity as well as liberation!