

Pongal Festival 2026

Press Kit



WELCOME

Celebrating Tamil Harvest Traditions

About Pongal

An ancient Tamil harvest festival honoring the Sun, Mother Nature, and farm animals. Celebrated over four days starting January 14th or 15th, marking the auspicious month of 'Tai' in the Tamil calendar.

The word 'Pongal' derives from the Tamil word *pongu*, meaning "to boil over" — a symbol of abundance and prosperity.



Our Mission

The Little India Shopowners' and Heritage Association (LISHA) was established in 2000 by Singapore Tourism Board to preserve Little India's unique heritage and character.

We enhance the business environment while sharing India's rich cultural diversity through meaningful celebrations like Deepavali and Pongal — educating visitors and sustaining our merchant community for future generations.



Press Conference Program

Join us for an exclusive preview of Pongal Festival 2026





LISHA's Pongal Festival 2026

A month-long celebration of Tamil harvest traditions transforming Little India



When

January 9 – February 8, 2026

Four weeks of continuous cultural immersion and celebration



Where

Little India's Serangoon Road

Spectacular light displays, live performances at POLI, and interactive experiences throughout the district



Experience

Authentic Tamil Traditions

Cattle parades, Mass Pongal cooking, traditional dance shows, and cultural demonstrations

- What is Pongal?** A Tamil harvest festival celebrating agricultural abundance, expressing gratitude to the Sun God, Mother Nature, and the sacred cattle who help farmers cultivate the land.

🛒 GRAND OPENING

Grand Arrival of the Cattle

Experience the spectacular parade that officially launches Pongal 2026 in Little India



1

Friday, January 9th, 2026

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM

2

Parade Route

Beautifully decorated cattle proceed around Clive Street

3

Grand Celebration at POLI

Clive Street open field celebration with traditional percussion and stilt walkers

A Living Tradition

Organized with **Vicknesh Dairy Farm**, this annual parade showcases rural Tamil culture in Singapore's urban landscape. Watch magnificently adorned cattle parade alongside rhythmic *thavil* drums and graceful stilt walkers.



Open to all: Families, photography enthusiasts, and anyone curious about Tamil agricultural heritage. Folk dancers will perform throughout, creating an unforgettable celebration.

Cattle Farm Experience

PUBLIC VIEWING

Bring rural Tamil culture to the heart of Singapore with our mini cattle farm exhibition

9

Days of Viewing

January 10-18, 2026

11

Hours Daily

9:00 AM – 8:00 PM

FREE

Admission

No charge for visitors



Meet Our Farm Family

- 1 magnificent bull
- 2 gentle cows
- 2 playful calves
- 2 friendly goats

Photo Opportunities

Capture memorable family photos with our beautifully decorated traditional bull cart — a perfect Instagram moment celebrating Tamil heritage!



Safety Guidelines

Please do not touch animals without permission from trained caretakers. Feeding opportunities available under supervision.

- ☐ This exhibition highlights the profound cultural significance of cattle in Tamil agricultural traditions, especially during Pongal when these animals are honored as sacred partners in harvest.

Grand Opening Ceremony & Street Light-Up Festival

January 10th, 2026 | 6:30 PM – 9:00 PM | POLI @ Clive Street

01

6:30 PM — Grand Illumination

Thousands of decorative lights along Serangoon Road switch on simultaneously, transforming Little India into a glowing wonderland

02

7:30 PM — VIP Lamp Lighting

Distinguished community leaders light the ceremonial oil lamp, inaugurating Pongal 2026 with traditional blessings

03

8:00 PM — Cultural Performances

Traditional South Indian dances, live music, and storytelling bring Tamil heritage to life

04

8:30 PM — Community Celebration

Public viewing, photo opportunities, and mingling under the spectacular light displays



Month-Long Light Display

Duration

January 10 – February 10, 2026
(31 consecutive nights)

Daily Hours

7:00 PM – 12:00 AM
(Every evening)

Coverage

Bukit Timah Junction to Sri Veeramakaliamman Temple

The spectacular street light display illuminates Serangoon Road for an entire month, transforming Little India into Singapore's premier nighttime photography destination.

Pongal Experience Program for Schools

 EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVE

An immersive educational journey bringing Pongal traditions to life through five interactive learning stations



Available Dates

January 12, 13 & 14, 2026



Three Sessions Daily

Session 1: 2:00–3:00 PM

Session 2: 3:15–4:15 PM

Session 3: 4:30–5:30 PM



Target Audience

Upper Primary & Lower Secondary students

Five Interactive Learning Stations



Traditional Instruments

Learn to play *thavil*, *nadaswaram*, and *parai* drums. Discover how music communicates emotions and stories in Tamil culture.



Dance Workshop

Master basic steps of folk dances like Karagam and Mayil Aattam. Express cultural values through graceful movement.



Cultural Storytelling

Expert storytellers share legends and folktales of harvest festivals, revealing deeper meanings behind celebrations.



Craft Activities

Create traditional decorations, kolam patterns, and festival items. Take home lasting mementos of Tamil artistry.



Festival Education

Interactive displays explain agricultural significance, religious aspects, and social importance of Pongal celebrations.

This hands-on program fosters multicultural understanding and appreciation, creating meaningful connections between students and Tamil heritage.

Pongal Distribution for Public & Tourists

Join our three-day community celebration sharing the traditional sweet Pongal dish with everyone

Day 1: January 15th

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Community distribution
Fresh Pongal for all

1

Day 2: January 16th

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Connect with festival spirit
A tradition of sharing

2

Day 3: January 17th

5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
Final distribution
Celebrating abundance

3



Location & Access

Outside Little India Arcade, near MRT and bus stops for convenient access



Authentic Recipe

Traditional sweet Pongal made with fresh rice, jaggery, ghee, cashews, and fragrant cardamom

Sacred Tradition

Sponsored by three local temples, showcasing community unity and devotion

Cultural Experience

Prepared with prayers and blessings. Learn about Tamil culinary customs and hospitality

Partnership Spirit

A unique Singapore moment offering authentic taste and warmth to international visitors

This heartwarming tradition invites everyone to experience Tamil culture through the universal language of food — free of charge, with genuine hospitality.

Pongal Sharing with Seniors

♥ COMMUNITY CARE

Honoring our elders through the spirit of Pongal: sharing and caring for those who built our community

Date & Time

January 15th, 2026

3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Venue

POLI @ Clive Street

Fully accessible for mobility aids and wheelchairs



Why We Share

In Tamil culture, festivals emphasize *charity* and *seva* (service). Sharing our Pongal feast with seniors honors traditional values while celebrating Singapore's commitment to caring for all community members.

This event ensures every senior feels valued, remembered, and loved — embodying the true abundance of Pongal.

Building Intergenerational Connections

This event fosters meaningful interactions between volunteers and seniors, sharing stories and cultural knowledge. Young and old connect through food, music, and shared heritage — enriching everyone involved.

📌 **True abundance** means lifting up every member of our community. Pongal Sharing highlights Singapore's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and ensuring no one is forgotten during celebrations.

Mann Vaasanai Cultural Show

Experience authentic South Indian folk arts celebrating Tamil village traditions

January 11th & 15th, 2026 | 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM | POLI @ Clive Street



Traditional Folk Dances



Karagam

Mesmerizing pot-balancing dance showcasing incredible skill, grace, and balance with elaborately decorated brass pots



Maadu Aattam

Vibrant bull dance celebrating cattle with dynamic movements, colorful costumes, and energetic rhythms honoring farm animals



Mayil Aattam

Graceful peacock dance depicting India's national bird through elegant choreography and flowing, feathered costumes

Folk Songs & Music

Enjoy traditional South Indian folk songs performed with authentic instruments — *thavil*, *nadaswaram*, and percussion — themed around harvest celebrations and village life.

Storytelling Through Performance

Engaging narratives woven through music and dance explain Pongal's origins, agricultural cycles, and cultural significance — offering both education and entertainment.

These vibrant showcases offer an authentic window into the artistic heritage of Tamil culture, preserving centuries-old traditions for new generations.

Mattu Pongal Prayer Ceremony

➔ SACRED RITUAL

Experience the profound spiritual ceremony celebrating the sacred bond between humans and cattle



Sacred Timing

January 16th, 2026

Dedicated to honoring cattle



Ceremony Hours

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Traditional rituals and prayers



Sacred Space

POLI @ Clive Street Open Field

Accessible for all attendees



Ceremony Leaders

Vicknesh Dairy Farm Team

Leading traditional prayers and rituals



Ritual Elements

Sacred Prayers

- Prayers chanted in Tamil
- Blessings for animal health
- Gratitude for their service

Traditional Offerings

- Fresh sugarcane stalks
- Ripe bananas
- Sweet Pongal rice

Cultural Significance

- Ancient environmental stewardship
- Animal welfare reverence
- Sustainable agriculture roots

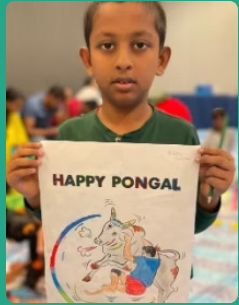
📖 This peaceful ceremony transforms urban Singapore into a sacred space, where community reverence, ancient chants, and the gentle presence of cattle create a profound spiritual atmosphere. It's a rare glimpse into Tamil agricultural spirituality that predates modern sustainability movements by millennia.

Children's Coloring Contest

 YOUTH CREATIVITY

Welcoming students from local and international schools to express creativity while learning Pongal traditions

January 17th, 2026 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM | POLI @ Clive Street



Pre-schoolers & Kindergarten

Ages 3-6

Coloring activities featuring Pongal pots, decorated cattle, and festival decorations



Primary School

Ages 7-12

Drawing and coloring complete Pongal festival scenes with creative freedom



Secondary School

Ages 13-17

Artistic clay pot painting challenge using traditional Tamil motifs and patterns

Competition Benefits

- Develops artistic skills and cultural awareness
- Encourages creativity and self-expression
- Builds understanding of Tamil traditions
- Fosters multicultural appreciation
- Creates lasting memories and friendships

Prizes & Recognition

- Winners in each category receive special awards
- Certificates of participation for all entrants
- Public display of selected artworks
- Cultural gift packs for participants
- Special mention for creativity and effort

Open to All: Students from local and international schools welcome! Celebrating diversity, creativity, and cultural appreciation through art.

Pot Painting Workshop

Workshop Session

17th January, 2026, 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM, Tekka Place

What's Included?

- High-quality clay pot to paint and keep
- Complete set of vibrant acrylic paints
- Professional brushes and painting tools
- Cultural significance explanation

Workshop Fee

Only S\$10 per person

All materials provided

Take your masterpiece home

Perfect souvenir from Singapore!

Immerse yourself in the artistic traditions of Tamil culture with our hands-on Pongal Pot Painting Workshop! This specially designed experience allows both locals and international visitors to create their own piece of festival art while learning about the deep cultural significance behind Pongal celebrations.

Cultural Learning Experience

Our knowledgeable volunteers from LISHA will guide you through the artistic process while sharing fascinating stories about the harvest festival. You'll learn why the clay pot, or "Pongal Paanai," is central to the celebration - it's the vessel in which the sacred sweet rice is cooked, symbolizing abundance and prosperity.

Each participant will discover the meaning behind traditional Pongal motifs: the significance of rice stalks, the symbolism of the sun, and the importance of cattle in agricultural life. These aren't just decorative elements - they represent the deep gratitude Tamil farmers feel for nature's bounty.

Perfect Tourist Activity

This workshop has been specifically curated for tourists seeking authentic cultural experiences. It's an ideal activity for families, couples, or solo travelers who want to take home something meaningful from their Singapore visit. The painted pot serves as both a beautiful decoration and a conversation piece about your cultural journey in Little India.



Mass Pongal Making

Celebrate Singapore's 61st birthday! 50 diverse teams unite to prepare Pongal rice in traditional village style

January 18th, 2026 | 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM | Singapore Indian Association

50 Teams

Diverse pairs working together

Expert Guidance

Master cooks provide support

Traditional Method

Brick stoves & clay pots

Prizes Awarded

Best Pongal, creativity, teamwork

What We Provide

- Traditional brick stoves on wooden platforms
- Quality ingredients: rice, jaggery, ghee, cardamom
- Authentic clay pots and cooking utensils
- Expert cook guidance throughout
- Volunteer support and assistance

Registration Details

Advance booking required — limited to 50 teams (\$5 per pax / \$8 per pair)

All participants receive certificates of participation

Prizes: Cash vouchers for Best Pongal Team, plus special categories for creativity and teamwork

The Sacred Art of Pongal Making



Traditional Setup

Authentic brick stoves recreate village cooking experience in Singapore



Team Collaboration

Partners manage fire, stirring, and timing with expert guidance



Multicultural Unity

LISHA welcomes all races and religions to experience Tamil traditions



Celebration & Awards

Teams win prizes, share Pongal, and build lasting community connections



This hands-on experience offers authentic cultural exchange and understanding of Tamil culinary traditions, fostering community spirit and lasting memories.

Pongal Patti Mandram

TRADITIONAL DEBATE

Experience lively Tamil debates featuring Singaporean orators discussing contemporary issues

January 18th, 2026 | 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM | POLI @ Clive Street Open Field



What is Patti Mandram?

A centuries-old Tamil debate tradition where eloquent speakers present opposing viewpoints with wit, humor, and reasoned arguments. LISHA brings this heritage format to Singapore, adapted for contemporary themes relevant to our multicultural society.

Traditional Format

A renowned speaker moderates debates where orators present opposing viewpoints with eloquence, logic, and clever wordplay — entertaining while educating.

Contemporary Topics

Debates focus on issues affecting migrant workers in Singapore: social integration, cultural preservation, workplace rights, and community support.

Community Dialogue

Interactive format encourages audience participation, fostering understanding between diverse communities and building bridges through respectful discourse.



Patti Mandram blends ancient Tamil debate traditions with modern Singaporean dialogue, fostering community consensus through reasoned discussion, humor, and mutual respect — a unique cultural experience showcasing Tamil intellectual heritage.

EXCLUSIVE TOUR

Big Bus Light-Up Tour

Discover Little India's spectacular Pongal street lights from the best seats in town — an open-top double-decker bus!

\$15

Ticket Price

Per person

50

Capacity

Seats per tour

\$10

Dining Voucher

For Gayathri Restaurant

Tour Details

Available Dates

Weekend evenings only:

- January 16, 17, 23, 24, 2026
- February 5, 6, 7, 8, 2026

Departure Times: 7:00 PM and 8:00 PM

Duration: Approximately 1 hour

Route Highlights

- **Start:** Orchard Hotel
- Slow scenic drive through illuminated Serangoon Road
- Photo stops at key viewing points
- **End:** Gayathri Restaurant, Racecourse Road



Open-Top Experience

Unobstructed panoramic views of the entire illuminated stretch — perfect for photography enthusiasts!

Cultural Commentary

Knowledgeable guides share fascinating stories about Pongal traditions and Little India's heritage throughout the journey.

Dining Discount

Your ticket includes a \$10 voucher for authentic South Indian cuisine at Gayathri Restaurant — the perfect ending!

Booking Essential: Limited to 50 seats per tour. Advance booking highly recommended as tours often sell out. The elevated view offers unique perspectives impossible from ground level. **Children under 5:** No charge.

Our Partners & Sponsors



இந்திய
மரபுவழி
நிலையம்



Join Us in Celebrating Pongal 2026!

A month-long celebration of Tamil culture, tradition, and community spirit in Singapore's Little India



Save the Dates

January 9 – February 8, 2026

One month of cultural celebration



Bring Your Family

Most events FREE

Family-friendly activities creating lasting memories



Experience Culture

Authentic Tamil Traditions

Immerse, learn, taste, and celebrate in Little India!

Contact Little India Shopowners' & Heritage Association (LISHA)

Visit Us

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Website: Pongal.sg

Connect Online

Facebook:

[LiSHA | Singapore Singapore | Facebook](#)

Instagram:

[LiSHA \(@officialishasg\) • Instagram photos and videos](#)



For Tourism Professionals: Enhance your tour packages with authentic cultural experiences. Contact LISHA for group bookings, special arrangements, and partnership opportunities.

Pongal celebrates abundance, gratitude, and community. Join us in Little India for this month-long journey through Tamil culture and heritage — where everyone is welcome, and every moment is memorable!