



local events & festivals

among the many social and cultural events in Ladakh, the **annual mask dances** (*chhams*) in the Buddhist monasteries constitute the most important part of the region's living heritage. these festivals are held to commemorate the founding of a particular monastery, the birth anniversary of its patron saint or major events in the history and evolution of Tibetan Buddhism.

Thousands of people turn out to attend in their traditional best, making every event a carnival of colors. for the local people, participation in these festivals serves the dual purpose of attaining religious merit as well as social entertainment. the festival dates for 2017 are:

festival name	dates 2017
spituk gu-stor	jan. 25, 26
leh & likir dosmoche	feb. 24, 25
yargon tungshak	march 2, 3
stok guru tse-chu	march 6, 7
matho nagrang	march 11, 12
saka dawa	june 9
yuru kab-gyat	june 21, 22
HH dalai lama's birthday	july 6
hemis tse-chu	july 3, 4
shashukul gu-stor	july 11, 12
stongday gu-stor	july 12, 13
karsha gu-stor	july 21, 22
phyang tse-dup	july 21, 22
korzok gu-stor	july 26, 27
takthok tse-chu	aug. 2, 3
sani nas-jal	aug. 6, 7
deskit gu-stor	oct. 17, 18
thiksey gu-stor	nov. 6, 7
chemde wangchok	nov. 16, 17
galdan namchot	dec. 12
Ladakh Losar	dec. 19



other religious events throughout the year: visitors may assist **pujas**, morning prayers, in the monasteries. please ask for permission first as not all monasteries do allow this. however, you are most welcome to **visit the monastery** rooms. maybe you are lucky to observe monks creating beautifully **colored sand mandalas**. local families invite monks from the respective monastery to their homes to recite **specific prayers**.



the **ladakh festival** held every year is a great opportunity for visitors to get an overview of the cultural heritage of ladakh. dances and local songs are performed by men and women dressed in their traditional clothes. there are archery competitions, polo matches, mask dances, and other activities.

other social events of ladakh are Idun and dzagang ceremonies of newly born babies, marriages, archery competitions, polo or ice hockey matches, death ceremonies, etc. it is a tradition that farmers remember specific happenings related to field work, too.

