

लपलेबाई लक्ष्मीबाई

Newsletter for the Los Angeles Mumbai Sister City Affiliation

Website: <http://sistercities.lacity.org/html/05.htm>

Spring 2017 Issue

PAMELA WRONA, EDITOR/DESIGNER

Dear Mumbai Mates,

Namaste!

On behalf of the Los Angeles Mumbai Sister City board members, I wish you all a lovely spring season.

The Sister City program was founded in the 1950s by President Eisenhower to foster international relations and understand world cultures. This program seems so relevant and valuable given the current landscape in this country. Now more than ever, we need to accept, appreciate, and embrace multiculturalism.

Presenting our annual Diwali dinner and other activities, we offer the diversity of India's culture through food, dance, music, film, etc. We appreciate the support of all the members who continue to attend our events. We had another successful Diwali dinner in November 2016 at the Spice Affair restaurant. We are grateful to all our sponsors — several local businesses that provided items for our gift bags and raffle prizes. And many thanks again to our returning wine sponsor, the very generous Jean Charles Boisset, proprietor of Raymond Vineyards in Napa Valley.

For the past several years we've had a wonderful partnership with *Americares* and forwarded our Diwali dinner funds to its Mobile Medical program. This year we have chosen to partner with PACE Universal - Promise of Assurance to Children Everywhere (www.paceuniversal.org).

PACE was founded in 2003 by Solvang-based Deepa Willingham. Her work began with the construction of what became the PACE Learning Center in the poor village of Piyali Junction, outside Calcutta, Deepa's childhood home. Piyali is a major hub for trafficking of girls. Today, the center educates 250 girls in academic subjects and life skills. Our partnership with PACE includes sponsoring five young girls and two women for one year. We suggest you visit the PACE website and see all the great work accomplished by Deepa and her team.

We thank you all for your continued support and interest in Los Angeles Mumbai Sister City. This type of international outreach program is much needed now.

Vishwa Shanti (World Peace)!

Mira Advani Honeycutt

Chairperson, LA Mumbai Sister City

For information on Mumbai, visit <http://www.mcgm.gov.in>

लराह वीज्वाी...



Kathak dancer Anvita Sharma



Dimple Bhasin, Romina Pailey, Jill Longo,
Helena Danni, and Rishika Tartaglia



Seated: Dr. Mizban,
Shahala Mizban, and
Alireza Nakhjiri.
Standing: Mira Advani
Honeycutt and
Tara Nakhjiri

इटॉ लराह वीजवॉ...



Brian and Ruth Eklund, Linda Burum,
Sat and Meena Garg



The younger generation!



The Tartaglias: Rishika, Pete,
Marco, and Maya



Robyn Holmes and Timothy Xu, flanked by Mumbai Board
members Pamela Wrona and Cathy Root

Mumbai-born Indian food expert Raghavan Iyer came to Los Angeles recently to promote his latest book, “Smashed, Mashed, Boiled and Baked” (Workman Publishing), which is all about potatoes. The book includes a couple of delicious Indian dishes such as Roasted Potatoes with Spinach Sauce to serve as a side dish or for Sunday brunch. For more of his Indian recipes, check out his other books, which include “660 Curries” and “The Turmeric Trail.”



ROASTED POTATOES WITH SPINACH SAUCE

- 1 pound Yukon Gold potatoes
- 2 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 small red onion, coarsely chopped
- 4 slices fresh ginger, each about the size of a quarter
- 1 or 2 serrano chiles, stems discarded
- 2 tablespoons ghee or unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds, ground
- 1 teaspoon coarse sea or kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 large tomato, cored and finely chopped
- 1 pound spinach leaves, rinsed and dried
- ¼ cup whipping cream

Peel the potatoes and rinse under cold running water. Cut them into 1-inch cubes and submerge in a bowl of cold water for 10 to 30 minutes. Drain the potatoes in a colander and rinse again. Shake to eliminate excess water. Spread out on a kitchen towel or several layers of paper towels and dry well.

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet or cast-iron pan over medium heat. Add the potatoes, cover and roast, stirring occasionally to brown evenly, until the potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork but not falling apart, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from heat.

Combine the onion, ginger and chiles in a food processor and pulse until minced.

Melt the ghee in a large saucepan over medium high heat. When hot, sprinkle in the cumin seeds and cook until they sizzle, turn reddish brown and smell nutty, 5 to 10 seconds. Immediately add the minced onion mixture and stir-fry until the onion is light brown around the edges and the chiles smell pungent, 5 to 7 minutes.

Stir in the coriander, salt, cayenne and turmeric and cook 10 to 15 seconds. Add the tomato and cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until softened but still chunky, about 3 minutes.

Add the spinach, in batches if it won't all fit, and stir until wilted, 4 to 6 minutes. Deglaze the pan with the water released by the spinach. Stir in the potatoes, cover the pan and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are warmed through, 2 to 3 minutes.

Fold in the cream and cook until warmed through, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve warm.

Makes 4 servings.

Ed. Note: This year's Holi celebration is past, but here's a little primer to help you prepare for next year's fun!



The Holi Festival

by Padma Sahgal

Brilliant splashes of multi colors, high-energy music and dance, and an aura of fun define Holi, India's favorite festival, which celebrates the harvest and advent of spring. This year Holi was on March 13th — “Phaguna Purnima” or the full moon — heralding the “Vasantha-ritu” or springtime. There are many myths and legends connected with this ancient ritual. Basically they all celebrate the triumph of good and the destruction of evil. It is said a cruel king summoned his sister, Holika, who was immune to fire, to destroy his innocent son, Prahlad, so he could continue his reign of terror. Instead, the gods protected the boy, while Holika was consumed by the fire.

During Holi, people celebrate the season of harvest and the benevolence of the gods. They splash each other with bright colors, sing and dance, forget grudges, and embrace each other in friendship. There are sweets to be shared and bhang, a spiked drink, adds to the merriment. There are stories of Lord Krishna and his consort Radha with her retinue of gopis (milkmaids), dousing each other with giant syringes of brilliant color. The rowdy song and dance numbers depicting Holi are a staple of Bollywood films.



India is an ancient civilization and this custom has been passed down over centuries: there are sculptures on the walls of ancient temples. One plaque relates “A 16th century panel [sculpted] in a temple at Hampi, capital of Vijayanagar, shows a joyous scene of Holi. The painting depicts a prince and his princess standing amidst maids waiting with syringes or pichkaris to drench the royal couple in colored water.”



This is one day to literally let your hair down, and let go. Forgive and forget differences, and generally have a good time!

travels to india

LA Mumbai Sister City Board members Cathy Root and Cliff Meyer have traveled numerous times to India and publish an entertaining blog detailing their trips. You can follow their most recent adventures at <http://ccindia2017.blogspot.com>, where there is also access to reports on previous trips. And they take great photos! Here's just one example:



upcoming indian films

Opens May 12: *Sarkar 3*, an Indian political crime thriller film directed by Ram Gopal Varma. This is the third installment of the *Sarkar* film series, which stars Amitabh Bachchan in the lead role.

Opens August 11: *The Ring*, an Indian romantic drama film written and directed by Imtiaz Ali. It features Shah Rukh Khan, Anushka Sharma, and Evelyn Sharma in the lead roles. This film marks the third collaboration between Shah Rukh Khan and Anushka Sharma after *Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi* (2008) and *Jab Tak Hai Jaan* (2012).

