

## Ideas on how to bring Marathi culture home

The BMM2009 Philadelphia Young Adults committee surveyed the community to find and share ideas on how we can bring Marathi culture home.

We hope that even after the convention is over, you will think about using some of these ways to bring more Marathi culture into your home. Many attachments are available using the links below. Please note that the BMM is not endorsing any of these sites and is not responsible for their content and accuracy.

Thanks to all who have submitted ideas to this list! This list is still a work in progress, we will continue to update it as we get more ideas from the community.

### COMMUNITY / FAMILY

- Attending Maharashtra mandal events. They are a great, local way to surround yourself and your family with Marathi community members. If you are new to attending mandal activities, start with a big one like Ganapati.
  - o *Here is a quote from a member of the next generation: "Mom and Dad took us to Marathi Vishwa events, where we mingled with our Marathi family friends. We participated in their activities. It allowed us to feel a sense of community without the pressure of having to speak proper Marathi all of the time."*
- Attending BMM conventions
- Visit India
- Having extended family members such as grandparents live in the house or nearby.
- Call your Aji / Ajoba. (Need some tips on some things you can say in Marathi? The My Marathi CDs have some conversations you can start with. See language section.)
- Give your kids Marathi names – most names have Sanskrit based meanings. Many sites are available by searching such as this link: [www.babynames.indobase.com](http://www.babynames.indobase.com)
- Search for on-line communities such as those on Facebook.

### LANGUAGE

- Ask your local Maharashtra Mandal if there are Marathi schools available for kids. Many young adults are still very close with the friends they made in Marathi school.
- If you are fluent in Marathi – speak Marathi in the house as completely and as long as possible. Even if your kids start to speak back in English as they get older, continuing to hear as much Marathi as possible helps retention.
- It is tough to bring some Marathi language into their kids' lives when all they hear outside is English? (even tougher when a lot of us don't feel like we are fluent enough ourselves to teach our kids Marathi)- but we can start with teaching them what we do know.
  1. Try choosing a few key Marathi words/phrases that you use in Marathi with them consistently.
  2. Say the same thing in Marathi and English so they learn both
  3. Get the grandparents to speak Marathi as much as possible around the kids- they will most likely love that you asked them too

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[www.MyMarathiLearning.com](http://www.MyMarathiLearning.com) on the Freebies page

- For very young kids- there is a set of video CDs called parichishala: [www/parichishala.tv](http://www/parichishala.tv) (animated kids' VCDs with original songs sung to the tune of familiar English nursery rhyme to learn Marathi letters and words)
- For older kids / young adults – there is a set of interactive CDs called My Marathi as a resource for Marathi language self study. (These CDs were built by the next generation of our community for the next generation and is a non-profit project.) See this link: [www.MyMarathiLearning.com](http://www.MyMarathiLearning.com) for more info / demo.
- [www.matrubasha.com](http://www.matrubasha.com) is a site with interactive games and printable activities for kids to learn Marathi. (has Marathi, Gujarati, and Hindi)
- Check out - marathi radio station – [eprasaran.com](http://eprasaran.com) (need to understand marathi)

## RELIGION / HOLIDAYS

- Sharing simple Hindu prayers (morning prayer, before dinner prayer, before bedtime prayer etc. – printable translations with phonetic English & Marathi text can be downloaded – see link in footer\*)
- Celebrate holidays according to the Marathi calendar. My Marathi cultural tour file describes the Hindu holidays. You can also purchase a panchang calendar detailing the holidays for that year – these are available in English too, but you may have to get them from someone going to India.
- The two major epics of Hindu Mythology are the Ramayan and the Mahabharat. Each is made up of many stories teaching many different morals. One pivotal part of the story of the Mahabharat led to the reciting of the holiest of Hindu scripture- the Bhagavad Gita. You can find English versions of these works and explore. A brief summary is included in the My Marathi Cultural Tour\*.
- Family participation in annual Ganapati celebrations- singing aratis. Translation handouts can be downloaded.\*
- Researching the meaning of Ganapati or Diwali celebrations and doing a presentation or a fun crafts activity at your kids' school. That gives parents a chance to do some research, and get involved with the child. Such as for BhAU bheedz- making rAkhee as a craft project for Diwali or to make a lantern (AkAsh kandil), or making an image of Ganesh.

## MUSIC/ DANCE / ART / LITERATURE

- Marathi- dances these are since typical Maharshtrian dances.
  - o Folk dances – koLee
  - o Lavani dances
  - o Legime dances
- To inspire young kids- there was a really famous show on TV in Maharashtra in early 2009 similar to American Idol called sA re ga ma pa – Little Champs. Search YouTube for video clips.
- Musical instruments- you can take lessons in these instruments
  - o Dol, peTee, sitar, tabla, tamborA

## FOOD

- Cook Marathi food- one resource is the Mom's kitchen cookbook available through [www.bmmonline.org](http://www.bmmonline.org) BMM Mart.
- Don't forget the traditional staples that you might have grown up with such as...
  - o thup/sAkhar/polee – you can great fresh poLees in desi grocery stores now
  - o waraN/bAt - (rice and dAl)

## STUFF FOR KIDS

- Using Marathi pet names for your kids (sonyA, gunDU, etc), tai, dAdA
- Children's sayings/songs that 'everyone' knows (we are hoping to post some video to YouTube soon to demonstrate). Blank lines are where you insert the child's name.
  - o TALyA, TALyA, puranAchyA poLyA, bunditse IADU, \_\_\_\_\_-IA wADU (you recite while clapping your hands)
  - o \_\_\_\_\_ UbhA rAhilA, Amhee nAhee pAhilA (you recite when you are holding your child in a standing position, of if they stand on their own)
  - o Tho de re Tho de re Tho de re Tho (bring forehead close to the baby boy's forehead). For a girl you can say 'ga' instead of 're.'
  - o Ye re ye re pAUUsA, tuIA deto paisa, paisa dzhAIA khoTA, pAUUs AIA moThA
- Amar Chitra Kata – stories – in comic book format. If you were a kid in the 70's, 80s you might have had these comics telling the stories. [www.amarchitrakatha.com](http://www.amarchitrakatha.com)
- Akbar / Birbal stories – famous kids stories teaching different morals. There are many sites you can search for if you google Akbar & Birbal, a couple sites you can try are [www.dindima.com](http://www.dindima.com) click on storytime -> witty tales, or [www.infowareindia.net/akbarbirbal.html](http://www.infowareindia.net/akbarbirbal.html)
- Chandamama- children's website with stories on Indian mythology. It is an interactive website for children of all ages with a collection of illustrated stories and comics. You may have read these when you were a kid. [www.chandamama.com](http://www.chandamama.com)

## HISTORY / FAMOUS FIGURES

- Wikipedia has a big list of famous Marathi figures in Politics, Activists, Reformers , Academics, Science and Technology, Cinema And Theatre, Literature, Music, Pop Music, Sports, Wrestlers, Business and Industry, Bureaucracy. See this link: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_famous\\_marathi\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_famous_marathi_people)
- Maharashtra historical figures- you can search the web for information: Shivaji, Lokmanya Tilak, Bhajirao Peshwe, Babasaheb Ambedkar
- Some famous Maharashtra actors/actresses/entertainers you can search for more information on are... Asha Bhosle, Lata Mangeshkar, Madhuri Dixit, Nana Patekar, Sonali Bendre, Amol Palekar, Pu. La. Deshpande - comedian

## RITUALS / CUSTOMS

Choosing a few cultural traditions to use consistently with the kids. (such as namaskAr to grandparents / elders). These are just a few of the many traditions typical to Maharashtra culture. A lot of traditions have become westernized, but most you will

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see performed all around you when you visit India. This certainly is not an all-inclusive list, but this should give you a taste...

- Teaching respectful behavior with elders (using words like tumhee, tumhAIA...)
- Having tea is a big part of Marathi culture. You can make boiled tea with ginger.
- Marathi Home remedies- haLad dudh for sore throat (turmeric in warm milk), clove oil for toothache, lemon in warm water in the morning to cleanse your system
- Performing daily puja- (steps of daily puja are described in the My Marathi Cultural Tour\*)
- Indian/Marathi games such as hututu, KabaDee
- Hang a toran (toraN) over the door
- Wearing Indian clothes to Indian or non-Indian functions
- Marathis eat meals with their right hand only so that the left hand is free to serve, pass things or for whatever reason. If one is eating while sitting on the floor, one is usually sitting cross-legged (mANDee ghAIUn pōE# 9 dō) and sitting up straight.
- Performing namaskAr (nāVn d) is one way of showing respect to an elder. There are different forms of namaskAr for different degrees of respect. This act varies from just joining your hands together when saying namaskAr (also used when meeting someone new), to joining your hands together and bending over to touch the feet of the person you are showing respect to (wAkUn namaskAr yā# nāVn d), to the most respectful namaskAr called sAshhTAng namaskAr (vā# nāVn d) usually reserved for God. namaskAr should be performed without shoes on and should never be performed in doorways.

#### Some other notes from the community on what has / has not worked:

##### WHAT HASN'T WORKED:

- Forcing kids to do things

##### WHAT HAS WORKED:

- Forcing kids to do things (within reason) – make it a mandatory part of their life to include certain cultural aspects into their lives.
- But we need to 'walk the walk' and set an example that parents are also trying.