

U.S. stamp to celebrate a Hindu holiday for the first time

by [Adelle M. Banks](#) in the [September 28, 2016](#) issue

Never before has a U.S. stamp celebrated anything Hindu.

But coming soon to a post office near you: a stamp marking the Hindu holiday of Diwali.

The new forever stamp is scheduled to be featured at a first-day-of-issue dedication ceremony on October 5 at the Consulate General of India in New York City.

Diwali, or the Hindu festival of lights, is observed across the globe with music, fireworks, and dance. It celebrates good triumphing over evil.

The stamp features a photograph of a traditional diya oil lamp, its flame glowing in front of a gold background.

The Hindu American Foundation, which campaigned for the stamp, said the diya is “the most iconic symbol of the holiday.”

The stamp will be issued weeks before the holiday is celebrated at the end of October.

“HAF is proud to have been a part of what truly was a grass-roots community effort,” said Suhag A. Shukla, HAF executive director and legal counsel. “This year and for many more, diyas and spirits will shine brighter, as will greeting cards and gift packages sent donning the Diwali stamp.”

Others, including Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D., Hawaii), the only Hindu member of Congress, had urged people to sign a petition supporting the stamp.

Savetemples.org, a website of the Global Hindu Heritage Foundation, noted that there are already stamps related to Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. “Now it is time to sign the petition and get the Diwali stamp issued for all the Hindus,” the message reads. —Religion News Service

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