

# How is the Pongal Festival Celebrated?

If you're wondering how to celebrate Thai Pongal, here's your answer – each day of Pongal is celebrated in a different way.

## 1. Bhogi Pongal

This is the first day of Pongal and bonfires are lit to signify the beginning. They burn throughout the night and buffalo-hide drums are used to play traditional folk songs as people dance around and make offerings to Mother Earth or the Sun God. Rice is harvested from the paddies, boiled and cooked with milk for offering it to the Lord. Homes are cleaned and de-cluttered before lighting up the bonfires for celebration.

## Surya or Thai Pongal (January 15, 2025)

The second and most significant day, Thai Pongal honours the Sun God. Families prepare the traditional sweet rice dish, Pongal, using freshly harvested rice, milk, and jaggery. The dish is offered to the Sun as gratitude for a bountiful harvest and shared among loved ones.

## Mattu Pongal (January 16, 2025)

Mattu Pongal pays tribute to cattle, the backbone of agriculture. Farmers bathe their cattle, paint their horns, adorn them with garlands, and feed them special treats.

## Kaanum Pongal (January 17, 2025)

The festival concludes with Kaanum Pongal, a day for family gatherings, relaxation, and cultural festivities. Loved ones come together to celebrate unity, share meals, and pray for prosperity and health.