

Out of the dark of these current times, the Diwali festival shines its light for all Londoners!



On October 29th, The Diwali Festival was held in Trafalgar Square, celebrating the festival of lights, with food, music, dance, and smiles!

In a time of tension and upheaval worldwide, the Diwali festival, celebrating the story of light overcoming darkness is a welcome and positive event for all Londoners to enjoy!

Although, Christmas festivals are held in Trafalgar Square every year, commemorated by the gift of a 20 metre Norwegian spruce tree, to celebrate the birth of Christ in the Christian calendar, it is also equally imperative to champion other religious festivals, like Diwali, Eid or Hanukkah, whilst still respecting those of no faith, in a multi-cultural, multi-faith, inclusive London.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan organised this wonderful annual event and I was fortunate enough to be given the chance to have a chat with him, where he stated that his favourite part of the Diwali festival was “meeting the different people...you meet different people from our great city, and their different backgrounds... those of us that aren’t of that background (Hindu, Sikh or Jain) get to know about Diwali, get to know the stories and learn about each other and get to know each other, with making friendships and kinship and joining each other’s families, that’s what’s so fantastic!”

This year’s Diwali festival exceeded my expectations, nor could the large amount of rain on the day diminish my huge enjoyment of the wonderful array of events on display, with everything from: delicious food from all over the world, spectacular dance sequences representing each state of India as well as stalls with anything and everything you could hope for. The diverse and inclusive communities of London enjoyed celebrating these events, such as, a sign language interpreter translating the entire event (including the music!) alongside children with autism performing on stage and a myriad of female speakers being given a voice and platform. Emphasis on cultural appreciation was beautiful to see, with everyone taking part in activities like, traditional dances and turban and sari tying workshops, as well as, really exploring the Mayor of London’s ethos of ‘London for everyone’ -as one big family of humanity!

This year’s celebration of the Diwali festival in Trafalgar Square was a fascinating and uplifting experience, that I found moving, informative and heart-warming. To see Londoners come together with shared open values of respect and inclusivity, making new friendships, and learning new cultures, was a very powerful and unifying event for our great city of London!