

CELEBRATE GALUNGAN

Galunga is the most important and joyful holiday and cultural celebration in Bali. Held throughout the island it is based on Hindu beliefs symbolising the victory of virtue (*Dharma*) over evil (*Adharma*). It is a celebration of the creation of the universe. At this time all ancestral spirits are called to come down to earth and dwell again in the homes of their descendants.

There is one main day of the festival, but preparations begin days before, and is followed ten days later by *Kuningan* when the ancestors are bidden farewell. *Galungan* is celebrated every 210 days, so the dates vary each year.

During *Galungan* each home prepares a long bamboo pole *penjor* which is splendidly decorated with woven young coconut leaves fruit, cakes and flowers, These poles are then placed outside near the right side entrance of every house and can often be seen bending over small village roads. By the gate to each house a small bamboo altar of intricately woven palm leaves *Lamaks* covered with flowers and fruits welcomes the ancestral spirits back to the home.

Each house places welcoming offerings in the family shrines which consist of woven baskets piled high with delicately placed fruit and flowers. On the day all of Bali can be seen to be out on the roads. Every one is sporting fine clothes visiting temples to pray for ancestors, calling in to visit family and friends and enjoying the holiday.

Ten days later *Kuningan* sees the ancestors bid farewell with more offerings and freshly woven *lamak* and the traditional *Barong* dance is performed in streets and gathering places with troops of children following.

Make a Penjor

You Will Need

- Large bamboo pole (fine at top so it will bend a little)
- 12 paper flowers previously made by the children
- 2 oranges
- 2 lemons
- Ribbon in bows or lengths to dangle
- Palm leaves as a substitute for young coconut leaves
- 7 pieces of fishing line cut into 60cm lengths
- Thick darning needle



What to do

- With darning needle string flowers in groups of three onto fishing line allowing 10cm between flowers
- Thread darning needle with length of fishing line push through centre of single fruit and tie by looping and tying at top
- Weave or plait palm leaves various shapes
- Assemble Penjor by securely tying decorations from the top of bamboo pole every 20cm or so leaving the bottom 1.5 metres free (for safety reasons)
- On August 2 place on the right hand side entrance to the centre or gate and leave for as long as possible, up to 10 days.