



WWW.MELAHERITAGE.UK

CULTURAL TRADITIONS

Mela Across the World

Mela is a Sanskrit word meaning 'gathering'. Generally in "melas" people can find eateries, entertainment activities, shops and games. It is used in the Indian subcontinent for all sizes of gatherings and can be religious, commercial, cultural or sport-related. In rural traditions melas or village fairs were (and in some cases still are) of great importance. This led to their export around the world by south Asian diaspora communities wishing to bring something of that tradition to their new countries.

The element of exportation developed censorship and pride which ultimately became the ingredient that had the huge impact on communities – A Mela was much more than just another community festival, the generations could relate to it and it became theirs. Their tradition and their celebration but open to all.

FACT The Kumbh (meaning pot) Mela is the largest Mela in the world. It happens every 12 years in India and attracts up to 60 million people.

ACTIVITY India is a land of fairs and festivals. Research and identify 3 different Melas or events happening in India this year and find out about the history and significance of them.

