



Green Golu

Guidebook to a planet friendly way of doing Bommala Kolu (Golu)



Step by step,
a greener tradition

Step by step,
a better planet.

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Green Golu: Celebrating Tradition with Nature



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1. Bommala Koluvu (Golu) Introduction

Bommala Koluvu, also known as "**Golu**" is a traditional display of dolls and figurines arranged in tiers during festivals like **Navaratri** primarily in the southern states of India such as **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka**. The term "Bommala Koluvu" in Telugu literally means a "court of dolls," and the practice has deep cultural, religious, and social significance. It holds deep cultural and spiritual significance across these regions, each bringing unique local customs to the practice.

In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Bommala Koluvu is prominently observed during Sankranti and Navaratri. The display is considered a ritual that brings blessings to the home, especially for prosperity, health, and family well-being.

In Tamil Nadu, Bommala Koluvu, called **Golu**, is synonymous with the Navaratri festival. The dolls displayed often include goddesses like Durga, Saraswati, and Lakshmi, as Navaratri is dedicated to the feminine divine.

In Karnataka, the tradition is known as **Bombe Habba**, observed mainly during Navaratri. Bombe Habba signifies gratitude and aims to instill moral values by depicting mythological stories and significant cultural tales.

Everyday different dishes are prepared and offered at the golu. Traditional and healthy dishes made of millets, jaggery can be offered during the golu. Children through this can learn the nutritional benefits of various foods.





Seviya Payasam



Sweet Booleru



Chintapandu pulihora



Annam Payasam



Medu Vada



Coconut Sweet

Neivedyams



Ghee Pongal



Ginger Vadaa



Peanut Laddu



Moong Dal Laddu

Cocnut Rice



Neivedyams

2.

Green Golu: Planet – friendly festivity

Setting up the Golu display

Koluvu

The Koluvu is an arrangement of idols and dolls in the form of step-like horizontal arrays.

Days before Navaratri begins, families set up a tiered arrangement (usually made of wood or metal shelves). The number of tiers is traditionally an odd number (3, 5, 7, 9, or 11), and they are covered with clean, colorful cloth. The display is meticulously arranged, with each doll or figurine having its designated spot.

The arrangement often begins with deities on the top tier and infinity as well other themes on the lower levels with tiers including prominent leaders in society to grassroots as narrative further down.

This also is passed on as a tradition over generations with significance to women as celebrating the collection inter-generational in the family. A few dolls are collected while a few are purchased as customary.

Vijayadashami

The last day of Navaratri, known as Vijayadashami, marks the conclusion of the celebrations.

The festival is considered as an auspicious time for **new beginnings**, so families often start new ventures, buy new items, or begin educational pursuits.

The dolls are carefully packed & stored after the celebrations, to be brought out again next year, symbolizing cyclical nature of life and festivals.

Dolls and Figurines



The dolls and figurines, called “**bommai**”, can be made of clay, wood, or metal and often depict gods, goddesses, saints, animals, village scenes, and mythological stories.

Integrating plants

Integrating plants into the **Golu** (Bommala Kolu) arrangement during **Navaratri** is a beautiful way to bring green, positive energy, natural elements and freshness into the display. This combination not only enhances the visual appeal but also signifies **growth, prosperity, and life**.

Plants represent life, renewal, and growth. Adding them to your Golu arrangement signifies the wish for a prosperous & flourishing life, resonating with spiritual essence of Navaratri, which celebrates new beginnings and triumph of good over evil.

Integrating plants with Golu reflects a harmonious relationship between culture, spirituality, and nature. It brings a sense of calm to the display, making arrangement look more vibrant & lively.



Selecting plants for Golu

Choose plants that will not only enhance the aesthetic but also hold cultural and spiritual significance. Here are some ideas for plant selections in Golu

Indoor Plants

Select small, indoor plants that are easy to manage and maintain, like **basil (Tulsi)**, **money plant**, **succulents**, **bonsai**, **spider plants**, **ferns**, or **peace lilies**. These plants are ideal because they do not grow too large and fit well in the setup.

Sacred or Symbolic Plants

Consider using plants that have spiritual or cultural significance, such as **Tulsi (holy basil)**, which is revered in Hindu culture, or **bamboo**, which symbolizes luck and prosperity.

Flowering Plants

Small flowering plants like **marigold**, **jasmine**, or **roses** can add color and fragrance to the display, enhancing its beauty.

Arranging Plants

Arrange plants on either side of the Golu setup for a balanced look.

Some of the other placement ideas include

Base Level Arrangement

Place larger pots on the ground level around the base of the Golu steps. This will create a green border around the setup, grounding it and making the whole arrangement feel more connected to nature.

Corner Decoration

Use plants in the corners of the Golu setup to frame the display. Tall plants like bamboo or areca palms can be placed to create a natural

backdrop.

On Steps

Small plants can be placed directly on the steps, especially on the lower tiers where there might be space between dolls. Ensure they don't obstruct the view of the dolls or figurines.

Hanging Plants

If one has space, consider hanging small planters or macrame pots with trailing plants around the Golu area. This creates a cascading greenery effect that enhances the display's aesthetics.

Themed Ideas for Plants

Plants in golu can be arranged with different themes. Themes can be a meaningful way to honor nature and promote environmental consciousness while staying rooted in the tradition of Golu. Here are some ideas for setting up a Green Golu with eco-friendly, nature-inspired themes.

Mythological Gardens

You can use plants to create a scene from mythology, such as a garden scene from **Vrindavan** (depicting Lord Krishna) or **Ashoka Vatika** (from the Ramayana). Use small plants, miniature trees, and flower arrangements to depict these settings.

Harvest and Prosperity Themes

Place plants that symbolize the harvest, such as **paddy saplings**, **turmeric plants**, or **banana plants**. This can represent themes of agricultural abundance and prosperity, which are often celebrated during festivals.



Suggested Plant Combinations

Here are a few ideas

Divine Theme

Tulsi plant and Jasmine flowers for goddess figurines (Lakshmi, Saraswati).

Farm Theme

Seedlings or microgreens and herbs like mint or coriander around farming dolls.

Temple or Sacred Grove

Bonsai Peepal, Banyan, Temple tree, Oleander etc and moss around temple or forest scenes.

Prosperity and Wellness

Money plant (Pothos) and Aloe Vera near family or health-themed figurines.

Festive Decor

Marigold blooms, Chrysanthemums and Banana plant leaves for overall décor around the Golu base.

Caring for the Golu Plants

Following are the few aspects you should be looking at to take care of the Golu plants and ensure their proper growth.

Light

Choose plants that can thrive indoors with indirect sunlight, or arrange your Golu in a spot where the plants can get some natural light during the day.

For plants needing more light, use a small grow light or LED lamp to supplement natural light. Keep it on for a few hours to ensure the plants get enough light to maintain health.

Water

Make sure to water the plants regularly but avoid overwatering, as the setup should remain tidy.

Place a waterproof mat or tray under the pots to prevent water spillage.

Plants that are kept inside need less water so avoid over watering the plants. Check the soil and water the plants as required.

Maintenance

Plants that don't require frequent watering or sunlight are easier to manage, especially if the Golu display will be set up indoors.

Trim off any dead or yellowing leaves and also wipe the leaves with a damp cloth to remove dust.

Check regularly for any pests and other fungal growth.

Environment & Surrounding

Don't overcrowd the golu space. Try placing the plants some distance away from each other so there's no clutter.

3.

Plants for Golu

Using indigenous plants in a Green Golu is a beautiful way to bring nature indoors, celebrate Indian flora, and deepen the cultural significance of your Golu display.

Native Plants

Some common native plants that are easily available and can be included in the Bommala Koluvu are listed next in this section.



Tulsi

Symbolism: Medicinal properties and spiritual relevance in Hindu culture (believed to bring good luck, ward off evil, and purify the surroundings)

Placement: Place a small Tulsi plant in a decorative pot on a lower step or beside the Koluvu arrangement. It can also serve as a focal point to represent health and spirituality in your Golu setup.

Banana

Symbolism: Sacred in Hindu rituals, symbolizes prosperity & well-being, and is often used as a backdrop in pooja settings & auspicious events.

Placement: Use banana plants on either side of the Golu display or at the base, framing the setup. Banana leaves or small saplings can also be arranged creatively to create a lush, green border.





Turmeric

Symbolism: Considered sacred, symbolizing purity and prosperity, and has deep cultural roots, often associated with auspiciousness in Hindu rituals.

Placement: Small turmeric plants can be placed in earthen pots on the Golu steps. You can even arrange them to depict a traditional agricultural scene.

Betel Leaves

Symbolism: Signify respect and are used in many Hindu rituals & ceremonies; are often given to guests as a mark of honor.

Placement: Arrange betel leaves in small earthen bowls or add them to a decorative scene. They can also be used to adorn specific figures on the display.



Jasmine

Symbolism: Commonly used in festivals & are associated with purity & devotion. Their sweet fragrance also enhances the ambiance.

Placement: Place jasmine flowers or small jasmine plants around the setup. You can use garlands made of jasmine to decorate the dolls, steps, or backdrop of the Golu.

Areca Palm

Symbolism: Also known as the betel nut plant, it is used in poojas, signifies hospitality & respect.

Placement: Place small areca palms on the base level or sides of the display. They add a tropical touch and create a natural framing effect for the Golu.





Neem

Symbolism: Has purifying properties and is symbolic of protection, health & healing.

Placement: Use neem leaves in small pots or as garlands around the display. You can also add them to traditional scenes depicting rural life or village culture

Lotus Plant

Symbolism: Symbolizes purity, enlightenment & spiritual growth in Hindu culture; it is also associated with goddess Lakshmi, represents beauty and abundance.

Placement: A lotus plant or lotus flower decoration can be placed near the figurine of Goddess Lakshmi or on the top tier of the Golu to symbolize divine grace and prosperity.



Marigold

Symbolism: Flowers symbolize happiness, positivity & celebration; are used in Hindu festivals for their bright colors and are believed to bring good fortune.

Placement: Use fresh marigold flowers or small marigold plants around the base of the Golu. You can also make garlands from marigold flowers to hang around the setup.

Mango Leaves

Symbolism: Represent joy, abundance and invite positive energy into the home. They are commonly used in torans during festivals.

Placement: Hang mango leaf garlands above or around the Golu setup to add a festive touch and invite positive energy. You can also place mango leaves on small pots on the steps for added decoration.



Other Plants

1. Wood Apple

Telugu Name: Maredu or Bilva



Also known as Bilva Patra, its a deciduous shrub or small to medium-sized tree. The leaf is trifoliate. The fruit is sweet, aromatic and pleasant, although tangy and slightly astringent in some varieties. Leaves and fruit play a main role in worship, because the leaf's triple shape is seen to symbolise Lord Shiva's trident.

Medicinal value: The leaves, bark, roots, fruits, and seeds are used in traditional medicine to treat various illnesses.

2. Peepal

Telugu Name: Raavi chettu



Also called as sacred fig, it is a large dry season deciduous or semi evergreen tree. The leaves are cordate in shape with a distinctive extended drip tip. The peepal tree is considered sacred in many religions.

Medicinal value: Used in disorders including asthma, diabetes, diarrhea, epilepsy, gastric problems and inflammatory disorders.

3. Ashoka Tree

Telugu Name: Ashokavriksham



The ashoka is a small evergreen tree. The tree has large clusters of vibrant flowers. The colours of the flowers vary widely, ranging from orange-yellow to red. The ashoka tree is considered sacred throughout the Indian subcontinent.

Medicinal value: The juice obtained from boiling the bark is a cure for some ailments of women, and a pulp of the blossoms is one of the remedies used for dysentery.

4. Lotus

Telugu Name: Kamalam or Taamara

Lotus plants are adapted to grow in flood plains of slow-moving rivers and deltas; require a nutrient-rich and loamy soil. Flowers, stems, seeds, leaves are edible.

Medicinal value: The whole plant is used as an herbal medicine to cure diarrhea, insomnia, fever, body heat imbalance and gastritis.

5. Coconut

Telugu Name: Kobbari chettu

The slender, leaning, ringed trunk of the coconut palm rises to a height of up to 25 meters (80 feet) from a swollen base and is surmounted by a graceful crown of giant featherlike leaves.

The coconut tree provides food, fuel, cosmetics, folk medicine and building materials, among many other uses

6. Mango

Telugu Name: Mamidi cettu



It is a large evergreen tree valued mainly for its fruits, both green and ripe. The wood is used for musical instruments such as ukuleles, plywood and low-cost furniture. Mango leaves improve soil fertility when used as mulch for crops.

Medicinal use :The seeds are used in asthma and as an astringent. Fumes from the burning leaves are inhaled for relief from hiccups and infections of the throat.

7. Marigold

Telugu Name: Banthipuvvu

Marigolds are a genus of annual herbs with bright, daisy-shaped flowers that come in a variety of colors of yellow, orange, or red composite flowers that are solitary on the stems



or clustered. Marigolds thrive in full sunshine and can often withstand very hot summers. Marigolds are the ultimate companion flower. This cheery annual attracts all manner of pollinating insects into the garden.

Medicinal use: Marigold is beneficial as an antiseptic and an excellent remedy for wound treatment.

8. Kadam

Telugu Name: Kadhambamu



Also known as Cadamba, it is a large tree with a broad crown and straight cylindrical bole. It is quick growing, with broad spreading branches and grows rapidly in the first 6–8 years. Flowers

orange, small, in dense, globose heads. They appear like solid, hairy orange balls. Various religions in India have strongly believed that God lives inside a Cadamba tree based on its enormous significance to humankind

Medicinal value: It is believed to have medicinal value in curing astringent, ulcer, digestive, diarrhoea, expectorant, fever and vomiting

9. Parijata

Telugu Name: Parijatham



Also called as night Jasmine, it is a shrub or a small tree growing to 10 m tall, with flaky grey bark. The flowers are fragrant, with a five to eight lobed white corolla with an orange-red centre. An orange dye from the corolla, nyctanthin, is used to dye silk. Parijat (also written as Pārijat) tree finds special mention in many Hindu scriptures and is considered as sacred.

Medicinal value: The leaves have been used in Ayurvedic medicine and Homoeopathy for sciatica, arthritis, and fevers, and as a laxative.

10. Champak

Telugu Name: Sampangi

A charismatic tall tree that produces fragrant yellow flowers throughout the year. These flowers are rich in essential oil, often used for perfumery and religious offerings. Flowers vary shades of cream to yellow-orange bloom during June to September.

Medicinal value: Traditionally been used to treat diarrhea, cough, bronchitis, hypertension,

dyspepsia, fever, rheumatism, abscesses, dysmenorrhea and inflammation.

11. Butterfly Pea

Telugu Name: Shankupushpam



It is a perennial herbaceous plant, with elliptic, obtuse leaves. It grows as a vine or creeper. Its most striking feature is the color of its flowers, a vivid deep blue; solitary, with light yellow markings. Some varieties yield white flowers and pink. Flowers are used to dye natural fibers and also used as natural food colouring to colour glutinous rice and desserts.

Medicinal value: The flower and the plant are linked to several health benefits, including increased weight loss, better blood sugar control, and improvements in hair and skin health.

12. Crape Jasmine

Telugu Name: Nandhivardhanam



It is an evergreen round shrub with large, glossy dark green leaves and waxy, white flowers. Its flower petals are twisted like pinwheels and are fragrant, especially at night

The fragrant and beautiful flowers make it a popular choice for gardens, parks, and landscaping projects. It can be grown as a standalone specimen plant, in hedges, or as part of mixed shrub borders.

Medicinal value: It is used to soothe skin infections and rheumatism.

13. Datura

Telugu Name: Ummetha



It is a shrub upto 1.4m tall and somewhat variable in appearance. Its stems are slightly furry. Flowers are single, trumpet-shaped and held vertically. Flower colour ranges from white to cream, yellow, red, and violet. They are pleasantly scented particularly at night.

All species of Datura are extremely poisonous and psychoactive, especially their seeds and flowers.

Medicinal value: It is used in many diseases, including neurological and heart diseases.

14. Kusha Grass

Telugu Name: Dharba gaddi

The grass is tall, tufted, leafy, perennial grass, branching from the base, erect from a stout creeping rootstock. It is perennial grass, long

known and used in human history. Kusha has been historically significant in various cultures, especially in Hinduism, where it is considered sacred and used in religious ceremonies.

Medicinal value: Ayurvedic herb used for the treatment of diarrhea, skin diseases, renal calculi.

15. Long Pepper

Telugu Name: Pippallu

It is a flowering vine, cultivated for its fruit, which is usually dried and used as a spice and seasoning. Long pepper has a taste similar to, but sweeter and more pungent than, that of its close relative *Piper nigrum* – from which black, green and white pepper are obtained. The older leaves are dentate, dark in color and heart shaped.

Medicinal value: It is certainly one of the most widely used of all Ayurvedic herbs. It is one of the best herbs for enhancing digestion, assimilation and metabolism of the foods we eat.

16. Krishna Tulsi

Telugu Name: Krishna tulasi



It is an aromatic perennial plant with hairy stems. Leaves are green or purple. Tulsi is grown for religious and traditional medicine purposes. And it is also grown for its essential oil.

Medicinal value: Used in common cold ulcers, vomiting, and diarrhea. Tulsi extracts boost the immune system and have healing properties.

17. Lakshmi Tulsi

Telugu Name: Lakshmi tulasi

Lakshmi Tulasi is also known as Holy Basil, it is considered as the Queen of Herbs. It is an aromatic perennial plant. It is cultivated for religious and traditional medicine purposes.

Uses: Krishna Tulsi is often given to children with coughs or colds, and can help with fevers. It is also said to have antioxidant properties that are good for the heart and diabetes. Lakshmi Tulsi is used in Ayurvedic and Siddha practices to treat diseases.

Cultural significance

Krishna Tulsi is considered especially sacred to Krishna, as its purple color is similar to Krishna's dark complexion. Lakshmi Tulsi is believed to be the living incarnation of Goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, fortune, and prosperity.

Religious significance

Krishna devotees wear tulsi beads as a symbol of their surrender to Lord Krishna. Lakshmi Tulsi is especially important in the worship of Hanuman.

18. Hibiscus

Telugu Name: Mandhara



Also known as 'Sleeping pink' it is an annual herbaceous plant with vertical growth, reaching a height of about two meters. It is grown for its large somewhat bell-shaped blossoms. Cultivated varieties have red, white, yellow, or orange flowers. The beautiful, exotic-looking flowers are short-lived, typically blooming for

only one day.

Medicinal value: Hibiscus is used for treating loss of appetite, colds, heart and nerve diseases and hair growth.

19. Oleander

Telugu Name: Ganneru chettu



Also called as Nerium, it is a shrub or small tree cultivated worldwide in temperate and subtropical areas as an ornamental and landscaping plant. It is tolerant to both drought and inundation. White, pink or red five-lobed flowers grow in clusters year-round, peaking during the summer.

Nerium is a poisonous plant but its bitterness renders it unpalatable to humans and most animals, so poisoning cases are rare and the general risk for human mortality is low.

Medicinal value: It is used in the treatment of cardiac illness, asthma, diabetes mellitus, corns, scabies, cancer, epilepsy, and in wound healing.

20. Wood Apple

Telugu Name: Velagapandu



A large tree growing to 9 metres (30 ft) tall, with rough, spiny bark. The flowers are white and have five petals. The fruit may be sweet or sour. It has a very hard rind which can be difficult to crack open, it appears greenish-brown in colour from outside and contains sticky brown pulp and small white seeds. Fruit contains a considerable amount of protein, carbohydrate, iron, fat, calcium, Vitamin B & C etc. 100 g of ripe fruit pulp contains up to 49 KCal.

Medicinal value: The fruit is much used as a liver and cardiac tonic and when in unripe state, as a means of halting diarrhea and dysentery. It is effective in treatment for sore throat, and disease of the gums.

21.Amla

Telugu Name: Usiri kaya

The tree is small to medium in size, reaching 1–8 metres in height. The bark is mottled. The fruits contain high amounts of ascorbic acid (vitamin C) and have a bitter taste.

Medicinal value : Used to treat diabetes, diarrhea, fever, gonorrhea, alopecia, headache, dyspepsia, inflammation, oral ulcer, vomiting, pruritus, scurvy, pain, and wounds.

22. Turmeric

Telugu Name: Pasupu



Turmeric plants reach about 1 metre (3.3 feet) in height and bear long simple leaves with long petioles (leaf stems). The leaves emerge from

the branching rhizomes that lie just below the soil surface.

The rhizome has a pepperlike aroma and a somewhat bitter warm taste and has a strong staining orange-yellow colour. Rhizome is used as condiment, a textile dye, and medically as an aromatic stimulant.

Medicinal value: Turmeric is thought to have many medicinal properties including strengthening the overall energy of the body, relieving gas, dispelling worms, improving digestion, regulating menstruation, dissolving gallstones, and relieving arthritis.

23.Dracaena

Dracaena is an evergreen shrub, grown as a houseplant. It has thick, irregular stems and richly colored, evergreen leaves. There are many types of dracaena to choose from, most of them have spear or grass shaped leaves that extend off one or more thickened, cane like main stems.

Use : One of the most effective houseplants in air purification. It helps remove formaldehyde, benzene, trichloroethylene, and carbon dioxide.

24.Vanilla

Telugu Name: Vanilla mokka

Vanilla plants have a long, fleshy climbing stem that attaches to trees by aerial rootlets; roots also penetrate the soil. Numerous flowers open a few at a time and last a single day.

The fruit, a long capsule, reaches its full length of about 20 cm (8 inches) in four to six weeks but may take up to nine months to mature.

Use : Vanilla is a popular flavoring ingredient in foods and beverages, and is also used in syrups for medications and perfumes.

25. Adamant Creeper

Telugu Name: nalleru

Cissus quadrangularis is an evergreen climber growing at a fast rate. Toothed trilobe leaves wide appear at the nodes. Each has a tendril emerging from the opposite side of the node. Prefers well-drained soil and can grow in nutritionally poor soil.

Medicinal use: Used as a herbal supplement to treat conditions such as hemorrhoids, bone loss, allergies, asthma, and diabetes.

26. Peace Lily



Peace lilies are sturdy, easy to grow plants with glossy, dark green oval leaves that narrow to a point.

Most peace lilies grow between 1 to 4 feet tall and wide, but a few cultivars may get as large as 6 feet tall and wide. These plants also periodically produce lightly fragrant white flowers.

Use : Peace lilies are effective at removing harmful chemicals, mold spores, and toxic gases.

27. Velvet Apple

It is a slow-growing, evergreen tree. It varies in habit from a small, straggly tree with drooping branches, to an erect, straight tree normally up to 18 metres tall. The tree is also the source of a valuable timber that is used locally and traded, especially in the form of carvings. Produces edible fruit with velvety, reddish-brown fur. A distinct cheese-like aroma adds to the fruit's allure.

Use : commonly as a backyard tree, and is also

often used as a shade tree along the sides of roads

Medicinal use : Promotes digestive health, preventing constipation and bloating. High Vitamin C content enhances immunity and provides various health benefits.

28. Macadamia Nuts

Macadamia trees commonly grow to 18 metres (60 feet) high. They have shiny leathery leaves. Fragrant pink or white flowers are borne in clusters and are succeeded by bunches of up to 20 fruits. Commonly known as macadamia nuts, the seeds are often roasted and salted or are used by bakers and chocolatiers in confections and chocolates.

Medicinal use: The soluble fiber in macadamia nuts may work like a prebiotic to feed the beneficial bacteria in your gut as well as improve your digestive health.

29. Noni

Telugu Name: Noni pandu

It is a shrub or small tree up to 6 m tall, with grey-brown bark. Fruits are initially green, transitioning through pale yellow to white or grey, and when ripe they emit a pungent odour similar to blue cheese. They are irregularly ellipsoid or ovoid. A variety of beverages (juice drinks), powders (from dried ripe or unripe fruits), cosmetic products (lotions, soaps), oil (from seeds), and leaf powders are made.

Medicinal use: Noni has a large range of therapeutic claims, including antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal, antihelminthic, antitumor, analgesic, hypotensive, anti-inflammatory, and immune enhancing effects.

30. Black Sapota

Telugu Name: Nalupu sapota

Also called as chocolate pudding fruit, the mature trees can grow to over 25 m (82 ft) in height and are evergreen. The leaves are elliptic-oblong,



tapered at both ends. Fruiting takes about 3–4 years from seed and the trees are heavy bearers. The pulp is white and inedible when unripe but transforms into a flavor, color, and texture often compared to chocolate pudding when ripe. Ripe fruit is described as having “the flavor and consistency of chocolate pudding.”

Medicinal use: Fighting off infections, Encouraging weight loss, Supporting eye health, Promoting gut health, Enhancing bone health, and Ensuring hormonal balance.

31. Santol

Also called as Wild Mangosteen, it is a tropical fruit native to Southeast Asia, with a round to oblong shape. The skin is thick and leathery, turning from green to yellow or red when ripe. The fruit has a juicy, tart to sweet pulp surrounding large seeds. The flavor is somewhat similar to apple or peach, and it is often used in juices, jams, or eaten fresh.

Medicinal value: The leaves are believed to have anti-inflammatory properties and can be used for treating skin irritations or rashes. It is also used as a traditional remedy for digestive problems.

32. Ice Cream Bean

Ice cream bean is a large, fast-growing tropical tree native to Central and South America. The tree produces long, green pods, which contain sweet, cottony pulp surrounding seeds. The flavor of the pulp is mildly sweet, resembling vanilla or ice cream, hence the name.

Medicinal use: The bark of the tree is used in

traditional medicine to treat infections and inflammation. The pulp of the fruit is rich in fiber and antioxidants, which may aid in digestion and boost the immune system.

33. Tropical Apricot

Tropical apricot is a deciduous fruit tree found in tropical regions, producing small, golden-yellow, plum-like fruits. The fruit is sweet and tangy, and can be eaten raw or made into jams and juices. The flesh surrounds a large, hard seed, and the fruit is similar in taste to a traditional apricot or mango.

Medicinal Value: The fruit is high in vitamin C, which supports immune health and prevents scurvy. The leaves and bark are used in traditional medicine to treat coughs, diarrhea, and other digestive issues.

34. Pagoda Flower



Also called as Krishna Kreedam, it is a flowering plant that is native to Indo-Malesia. It is a shrub that can grow up to 2.5 meters tall. The plant's leaves are simple, opposite, and orbicular. The

flowers are red and have a slender tube. The flowers within the pyramid shaped cluster are tiered, like a Japanese pagoda.

Medicinal value: Used traditionally in countries such as India, China and Japan for treating rheumatism, ulcer, neuralgia, inflammation, and wounds.

35. Lipstick Tree

Telugu Name: Sindhuri

It is a small tropical evergreen tree that yields a red-orange dye from its seeds. It bears clusters of 5 cm (2 in) bright white or pink flowers, resembling single wild roses, that appear at the tips of the branches. The fruits of the *Bixa orellana* are globular, ovoid capsules arranged in clusters resembling spiky looking red-brown seed pods covered in soft spines

Medicinal use: This waxy substance from the seed is used as a natural food coloring, condiment, and in traditional cosmetics. The plant also has traditional medicinal applications, particularly for wound healing and antioxidant properties

36. Tortoise Flower

Also known as willowleaf angelonia, they are herbaceous plants occurring mainly in arid and semi-arid habitats. The flowers are highly specialized regarding the pollination, because they have hairs in the inner corolla. Primarily used in gardens for their colorful, upright flower spikes, attracting pollinators like bees and butterflies.

37. Blue Salvia

This is a tall herbaceous shrub. The plant has bright green healthy looking leaves and bears spikes of bright blue flower heads. This plant grows up to five feet tall and has opposite leaves that are widely spaced along the stem. It flowers all summer long. The flowers are a favourite of bees and butterflies. The name "sage" refers to this plant being traditionally used as medicine for pain. The flowers add a wonderful shade of blue in the autumn season when yellow and white flowers seem to dominate the landscape

38. Musical Note Plant

Musical Note plant is a small bushy shrub native to parts of Africa. In India it is cultivated as a garden plant. It has small elliptic leaves with toothed margins. The most interesting thing about the plant is its white flowers which form delicate shapes with their long tubular flowers. They appear in large masses. The buds resemble musical notes, hence the common name. The flowers are white, showy with long red stamens protruding out. This landscape plant is easy to grow.

39. Malabar Nut

Telugu Name: Addasaram



Adathoda means 'untouched by goats' in Tamil. The name derives from the fact that animals like goats do not eat this plant due to its extreme bitter taste. It is a shrub with lance-shaped leaves 8-9 centimeters in length. It features lush, dark green leaves and produces clusters of white or purple-tinted flowers. The plant is known for its low-maintenance, fast-growing nature and drought tolerance.

Medicinal use: Used in treating respiratory conditions such as coughs, colds & asthma.

40. European Pentas

It is also called Egyptian stars for the bloom's five-pointed shape. The plant is a shrub that gets up to 6 feet tall. It is a scrubby plant with

an unruly shape, sporting oval to spear-shaped foliage. The flowers are generally pink, red, or white but new cultivars have introduced tones of purple and lavender and mixed blooms such as pink with red centers

Use: Top choice for attracting pollinators like butterflies and bees.

41. Day Blooming Jasmine

Telugu Name: Pagadamalle



It is an erect evergreen woody shrub with numerous leafy branches. The branches, which are green and with well-marked white lenticels when young, fawn with age. Clusters of tubular white flowers have a modest sweet fragrance, a chocolate scent - nothing like the intoxicating aroma. The bloom petals are bent backwards. The fruits are poisonous (affect the nervous system) to humans and other mammals.

Medicinal use: Used in different traditional medicinal practices to treat pain, burn, swelling and related disorders.

42. Dhavanam

Telugu Name: Dhavanamu

The plant is woody in the lower part of the stem, but with yearly branches. The stem and leaves are covered with grayish-white tomentum. It is commercially cultivated for its fragrant leaves and flowers. It is a preferred food for the larvae of a number of butterfly species.

Medicinal use: Remarkable antiseptic to relieve you from infections. It acts as an antidepressant. Relieves congestion and eases respiration.

43. Camphor Tulsi

Telugu Name: Karpura Tulsi

Camphor Basil is an aromatic, perennial shrub up to 2 m tall. Stems are rounded-quadrangular, much branched, woody with epidermis sometimes peeling off in strips below. The leaves contain aromatic oils, which is the essence of the plant.

Medicinal use: The leaves contain aromatic oils, which is the essence of the plant.

44. Butterfly Bush

It is a woody shrub with a weeping form. It is semi-evergreen in tropical climates. It normally grows to a height of 3 m tall. The leaf is green on top, but whitish with downy hairs on the bottom. This is ideal for butterfly gardens as its fragrant flowers will attract butterflies seeking for nectar.

45. Rosemary



Shrub with fragrant, evergreen, needle-like leaves and purple or white, pink, or blue flowers. Since it is attractive and drought-tolerant, rosemary is used as an ornamental plant in gardens.

46. Caribbean Swordleaf

It is an evergreen perennial herbaceous species. Egg-shaped flowers are borne in erect branches. Alternate simple leaves are linear with pointed tip, margin finely toothed towards the tip and bases wrapping the stem. It is cultivated as an ornamental plant, sometimes referred to by local names such as angel fan flower.

Medicinal use: It is used to relieve pain and reduce inflammation.

48. Alocasia



Alocasia, or elephant's ear, are popular indoor plants with large heart-shaped or arrow-shaped leaves that grow from tuberous rhizomes. Their araceous flowers grow at the end of a short stalk, but are not conspicuous; often hidden behind the leaf petioles. They are water-loving plants.

49. Caladium

It is a tropical perennial with colorful, heart-shaped leaves, an ornamental plant with leaves that can have spots & come in colors, including red, pink, green, and white. Plants are vigorous and can quickly fill a landscape space. Its leaves are resistant to sunburn, allowing this cultivar to perform well in full-sun landscapes.

Use: Caladium leaves can be used in flower vases, centerpieces, and event decor.

50. Laxman Phal

Telugu Name: Lakshmana Phalam

It is a broadleaf, flowering, evergreen tree. A bushy tree that stands at about 6 meters in height, can be distinguished by its broad, oblong leaves and its heart-shaped green fruit which has thorns on its outer skin.

It is often said to resemble a custard apple as it has creamy pulp fruit inside with blackish-brown seeds. Also, it tastes like a combination of pineapple and strawberry.

Medicinal use: The leaves are usually boiled to make tea. It is believed to have medicinal benefits such as preventing cancer and anti-inflammation.

51. Bamboo



Bamboo is moderately loose clumps and has no thorns. It has lemon-yellow culms (stems) with green stripes and dark green leaves. The woody, above ground stems are known as culms and grow up to 4-10 cm wide.

The underground part of the stem is known as a rhizome. is widely planted and used for a variety of purposes, primarily for use in light construction such as houses, huts, boats.

52. Lemon Grass

Telugu Name: Nimmagaddi



Tropical perennial grass known for aromatic leaves & culinary versatility. This thrives in warm climates and is a staple in many Asian cuisines, imparting a refreshing citrus flavor to dishes.

Use: Lemon Grass special is its unique ability to enhance both flavor and health. Rich in antioxidants and essential oils, it is often used in herbal teas and natural remedies.

52. Cape Jasmine

Gardenias are beautiful, shrubby evergreen houseplants well loved for their creamy, fragrant blooms. The shrub that can grow 6-8 ft high with almost equal spread. The leaves are elliptic-oblong, glossy and leathery. It is highly prized for a profusion of sweetly fragrant, white blooms that serve as excellent cut flowers.

53. Pink Ruspolia



Ruddy Rose Pink or Pink Ruspolia is a hardy, attractive, semi-deciduous shrub with scrambling habitat. The large pink flowering heads (December to May) are long lasting in a vase. Also great in a wildlife friendly garden as the flowers attract carpenter bees and masses of butterflies.

54. White Ginger

It is a beautiful and fragrant flower native to East India. It is a robust, attractive plant that will reach 6 feet in containers. Leaves are lance-shaped and sharp-pointed. From midsummer through autumn the stalks are topped with 6-12 in long clusters of wonderfully fragrant white flowers that look like butterflies.

Medicinal use : Extract of rhizomes is given in bronchitis. Decoction of rhizomes is used for gargling in tonsillitis or simply as a mouth wash to avoid bad breath.

55. Insulin Plant

It is a perennial, upright, spreading plant reaching about two feet tall. With spirally arranged leaves and attractive flowers. In southern India, it usually grows as an ornamental plant

Medicinal use: its leaves are used as a dietary supplement in the treatment of diabetes

56. Origanum Majorana

Telugu name: Maruvamu



Marjoram is a bushy half-hardy perennial herb that is often cultivated as an annual. A sweet-smelling herb with flavors similar to but sweeter than oregano. If grown in a hanging basket, stems form a cascade of attractive foliage.

Use: It is a prized medicinal herb used for digestive issues, respiratory health, and to reduce pain. It is also known for its antioxidant and anti-bacterial properties.

5.

Handmade dolls & Sustainable Artisanship

Handmade dolls reflect India's rich artisanal heritage. By using them in Bommala Kolu, families can support traditional crafts and sustain skills that have been passed down through generations. The dolls are often made from eco-friendly materials like clay, wood, fabric, and natural dyes. They avoid the use of plastic, making them sustainable and less harmful to the environment.

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The Golu festival is known for its vibrant display of dolls. This tradition carries a unique charm, blending devotion, artistry, and storytelling. In recent years, there has been a growing shift towards sustainable, handcrafted dolls that reflect both cultural heritage and environmental responsibility.

Traditional Golu Dolls

Traditionally, these were made of clay, shaped and painted by local artisans, often narrating episodes from mythology, folklore, and village life. With mass production and plastic figurines becoming common, much of this artisanal craft was at risk of fading away.

However, eco-conscious communities in Telangana are reviving the handmade tradition by encouraging artisans to use natural clay,

organic colors, paper-mâché, terracotta, and even plant-based materials. These eco-friendly dolls not only reduce environmental impact but also support rural livelihoods and keep indigenous skills alive.



By choosing sustainable Golu dolls, devotees embrace a greener way of celebration—honoring nature while continuing spiritual practice.

Each handcrafted doll becomes more than decoration; it is a symbol of mindful festivity, respect for the earth, and a bridge between cultural continuity and environmental stewardship. This movement ensures Golu remains both meaningful and sustainable for future generations.



5.

Creating a balanced and beautiful display

Visual Harmony

Balance and Symmetry: When placing plants, make sure the display looks balanced. If you have a tall plant on one side, try to place another of similar height on the opposite side for symmetry.

Size Variation: Mix plants of different heights and sizes to create depth. Taller plants can be used as a backdrop, while smaller ones can be placed in the foreground or on the steps.

Color Coordination: If you are using flowering plants, try to coordinate the colors to match or contrast nicely with the dolls and figurines on display.

Decoration

Ornaments and Lights: You can decorate the plants with small lights, golden threads, or miniature ornaments to match the theme of your Golu. Adding small **diya** lamps or fairy lights near the plants can create a warm and inviting ambiance.

Colored Pots: Use decorative pots that complement the theme of your Golu. Bright, colorful pots can add to the festive spirit, while traditional clay pots can give a more rustic, natural feel.





6.

Preserving your Golu Collection

After the Golu festival, the dolls are removed from display and stored for the following year. The dolls are symbolically put to sleep on the final day of the festival.

1. Clean and dust all the dolls before storing them. A soft cloth or soft-bristled brush can be used to clean the dirt.

2. Wrap each doll in soft, protective material such as bubble wrap, tissue paper, or cotton cloth. Avoid newspapers, as ink may transfer to the dolls.

3. Wrap the face of the dolls in cotton so that the features like the nose don't get distorted. Consider labeling each doll or set with a small tag, especially if you have a large collection. This will make it easier to locate specific dolls next year.

4. Use strong cardboard or old trunks with lids for storage. The old trunks are ideal as they are sturdy, waterproof, and pest-resistant.

5. Organize the dolls by size, or material if you have multiple boxes. For instance, keep clay dolls separate from wooden or ceramic dolls.

6. Adding a few cloves or camphor tablets can help prevent pests like silverfish and moths. Be careful not to place these directly on the dolls; wrap them in small pouches or tissue first.

7. Store the boxes in a dry, well-ventilated space away from dampness or humidity, which can lead to mold, especially on clay dolls.

8. Avoid stacking too many boxes on top of each other, as the weight could damage dolls in the lower boxes

Using Plants after the Golu

Here are a few ways in which the plants can be used after the golu.

1. The plants used in the green golu can directly be planted in the garden. The saplings and seeds can be used for next year's golu. The potted flowering plants can be used in the porticos or walkways.

2. Indoor plants can be used indoors and can be maintained throughout the year. These plants can be repotted and used again in the coming years.

3. If one doesn't have a large place or garden, the saplings can be donated to the visitors as return gifts on the last day of the festival. Sapling of large trees can be planted in parks or common areas in the apartments.

4. The golu beautifully represents the cyclic nature of life, creation, and tradition, reflected in the yearly ritual of setting up and dismantling the display. The festival itself, with its rhythm of setup, celebration, and dismantling, represents renewal and the cyclical nature of time as marked by the seasons. The yearly golu honors the environment and life cycles of plants, animals, and seasons through the display.

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Organo Et School:

Organo Et School empowers people to embrace eco-living mindsets, behaviors, and habits. We recognize that for any positive impact to be sustainable, it must be long-term and inter-generational. UNESCO recognized Organo Et School as a green citizen initiative and Uplink, the open innovation platform of the World Economic Forum (WEF) recognized OES as Global Innovative Solution.

Organo Et School is an experiential learning initiative set up by Organo in 2017 and has been facilitating field visits and workshops for Schools and Interest Groups. Organo Et School has impacted over 11,500+ students, 5,000+ adults, 1,500+ families, 40+ schools, 15+ communities, 10+ corporates over the past 8 years.

Join us on our journey toward sustainable living by subscribing to our channel and following us on Instagram for the latest updates.



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