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## **4<sup>th</sup> Annual IndiaFest Milwaukee Returns to Humboldt Park Aug. 20** *Experience Mini-India*

Milwaukee, WI (July 7, 2016) – Vibrant traditional dress, authentic Indian cuisine, and classical to contemporary music and dance come together to celebrate Indian culture, collaboration, and inclusion at the free IndiaFest Milwaukee, Saturday, Aug. 20, from 11 a.m.-9 p.m., in Humboldt Park. The park is located at 3000 S. Howell Ave.

“IndiaFest Milwaukee exemplifies a true community spirit,” said Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele. “It is heartwarming to see so many volunteers reaching out to the wider community to share and to celebrate the rich traditions of India.”

Now in its fourth year, the outdoor festival focused entirely on India has seen an audience of about 28,000 including the Chief of Air India and other dignitaries. Over 1,200 participants have showcased their talents at the festival to promise more fun – or more masti.

“There is no better way for families and friends to learn about Indian culture,” said Purnima Nath, President of Spindle India, a non-profit, non-political organization and the event’s organizer and producer. “We are weaving happiness as we bring people together through collaboration. Our goal is to weave India’s colorful cultural threads into the rich multicultural tapestry of American culture.”

India comprises 29 states and seven union territories. Each has a unique combination of language, traditions, religion, clothing, and history.

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“This myriad of diversity comes together in our “mini-India” celebration,” Nath said. “Diversity is the blood of globalism. Inclusiveness is the mantra of living.”

The daylong event opens with a welcome ceremony observing the 70<sup>th</sup> Independence Day of India. The ceremony will feature a parade, flag hoisting, national anthem, and patriotic songs.

Music and dance performances will illustrate various cultures in the Indian states.

Musicians will use traditional and contemporary instruments to perform a variety of styles as well as a fusion of styles. Performances will be widely varied and include a set by renowned artists from India and popular Bollywood songs by the group Lotus. In addition, Wisconsin Indian Singing Idol, a singing competition launched by Spindle India at the 2015 IndiaFest Milwaukee, will continue to recognize local talent.

Dance styles will also range from classical to contemporary. Traditional forms of Indian dance, such as Bharat Natyam with traces of temple dances, and the popular Punjabi folk dances, Bhangra and Giddha, will be presented. Also engaging the audience will be the energetic Bollywood dance numbers performed in multi-hued costumes.

In addition to the colorful costumes seen in the dance performances, visitors may watch a glamour fashion show and see Indian dress up-close in displays of the Indian states. Event-goers may also learn how to tie a turban or sari.

Throughout the festival, the aroma of Indian spices will be wafting on the air. Some of the best restaurants and providers from the Milwaukee and Chicago areas will offer a variety of menu items. Foods available range from dosas, similar to crepes or pancakes, to chaats, savory snacks often sold from food carts in India, to biriyanis, rice-based dishes with vegetables or chicken. Beer, other adult beverages, and non-alcoholic beverages—including ethnic beverages—will also be available for purchase.

Additional vendors will offer unique products and services from colorful exotic arts, clothing, and jewelry to temporary hand-painted Henna designs.

As keepsakes of their IndiaFest tour, visitors may take pictures in front of popular Indian landmarks on display.

IndiaFest Milwaukee was launched in 2013 as a 100 percent volunteer initiative. Its purpose is to bring communities together through culture and collaboration for better business opportunities and a stronger community.

The Consulate General of India in Chicago, Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, sent a letter of appreciation to Spindle India for organizing the event. He wrote, “I congratulate Spindle India for bringing the entire community together from corporations, business organizations, and at the same time, promoting Indian culture and diversity in the United States of America.”

For the flavor of the festival, visit [indiafestmilwaukee.org](http://indiafestmilwaukee.org).

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