

Pune Festival Brief History

- Lokmanya Tilak started the tradition of the “Sarvajanik Ganesh Utsav” in Maharashtra.
- Shri. Suresh Kalmadi, MP was the chairman of Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation. He started Pune Festival in 1989.
- The Pune Festival is jointly organized by the Citizens of Pune, Pune Festival Committee, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, Tourism Department Govt. of India.
- The Pune Festival has constantly evolved over the 29 years, and now has cultural, musical, literary and sporting events. It is called “Mother of All Festivals”.
- **Events** - Urdu Mushaira, Marathi and Hindi poetic meets, folk theatre, cooking contests, lavani performances, mimicry, flower decoration, magic shows, talent shows, Ganesh decoration competition, Paintings exhibition clean slum contest, one act play competition, women's games in traditional festivals, women's meets, theatre shows in regional languages like Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, Sindhi, English and Marathi, Gujarati dayaro, Kerala festival, Maharashtra folk festival, Ganesh picture exhibition, vintage car rally, water sports, body building, motocross, Ashtavinayak rally, skating contest, cycling race, golf competition, Roll Ball Competition trekking, malakhamb, yoga, bullock cart competition, gavjatra, talent hunt shows for budding artists in Pune and shows by established artists, Ugavate Tare And Indradhanu - mega showcase of events, tourism related discussions and workshops.
- **Artist who performed** - Pt. Bhimsen Joshi, Pt. Ravishankar, Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia, Pt. Shiv Kumar Sharma, Ustad Bismillah Khan, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Asha Bhosale, Hema Malini, Meenakshi Sheshadri, Jagjit Singh, Anup Jalota, Kishori Amonkar, Anuradha Paudwal, Balmurali Krishna, Remo Fernandes, Gurdas Maan, Udit Narayan, Kumar Saanu, Usha Uthup, Pankaj Udhas, Hariharan, Louis Banks, Shubha Mudgal, Nitin Mukesh, Pratibha Pralhad, Shovana Narayan, Ranjana Gouhar, Bharti Shivaji, Pt Bhavani Shankar, Ustad Safad Amjad Khan, Pt Rajan-Sajan Mishra, Alka Yagnik, Sunidhi Chauhan, Alar Melvelli, Pt Satish Vyas, Shiamak Davar, Taufiq Quereshi, U Shrinivasan, Ustad Rashid Khan, Silva Ganesh, Pt. Vijay Ghate, Jatin Lalit, Peenaz Masani, Ananda Shankar, Vishwa Mohan Bhat, Pamela Singh, Surekha Punekar, Apsara Jalgaonkar, Rohini Bhate, Sucheta Bhide-Chaphekar, Shreedhar Phadke, Arun Date, Ashok Hande, Shreya Ghosal, Kaushiki Chakraborty, Pt. Ronu Mujumdar, Makarand Anaspure, Prashant Damle, have all performed here.
- **Eminent Presence by VIP's** - Dilip Kumar, R. K. Laxman, M. F. Husain, Majrooh Sultanpuri, Javed Akhtar, Ali Sardar Jafri, Shashi Kapoor, Dharmendra, Vinod Khanna, Kaifi Azmi, Madhuri Dixit, Subhash Ghai, Shatrughna Sinha, Yukta Mookhey, Ritu Beri, Pooja Bhatt, Amisha Patel, Pooja Batra, Aditya Pancholi, Shakti Kapoor, Govinda, Anupam Kher, Shekhar Suman, Bindu, Fardeen Khan, Aditi Gowitrikar, Amruta Patel, Ronit Roy, Reena Roy, Sudha Chandran, Rani Mukherji, Manisha Koirala, Nilu Phule and Babasaheb Purandare, .
- **Eminent Presence by Industrialists** - Shantanu Rao Kirloskar, Rahul Kumar Bajaj, Neelkanth Kalyani, Vivek Goenka, K. L. Chugh, Vijay Mallya (MP), Nita Ambani.
- **Inauguration at hands of** - Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, K.R. Narayanan, Bhairav Singh Shekhawat, Sonia Gandhi, Sharad Pawar, Madhav Rao Scindia, Shivraj Patil, Ghulam Nabi Azad, K.P. Singhdeo, Vilasrao Deshmukh, Ramkrishna Hegde, Manohar Joshi, Dr. P.C. Alexander, Sudhakar Naik, Amitabh Bachchan, Aishwarya Rai, Renuka Chaudhary, Ambika Soni, Sushil Kumar Shinde, Ashok Chavan Dr. Farooq Abdulla, Subhash Ghai, Gopinath Munde, Chhagan Bhujbal (Tourism Minister GOM), Girish Bapat, Digvijay Singh.
- **Pune Festival Awardees** - Some of the awardees are - Kavi Pradeep, Dilip Kumar, Yoga Acharya Iyengar, Vin. Da Karandikar, Shantanu Rao Kirloskar, Lavani Samradni Yamuna Bai Waikar, Dr. Vijay Bhatkar, Dr. Raghunath Mashelkar, Dr Jabbar Patel, Nana Chudasma, Ritu Beri, Ramdas Phutane, Dr. H. V. Sardesai, Nita Ambani, R.K. Lakshman, Shobha De, Krishnakant Kudale, Pradeep Bhide, Shovana Narayan, Surendra Chavan, Kamalakar Sontakke, Nilu Phule.

Highlights and Achievements

- Following the lead of Pune Festival, many other smaller festivals are also now held in Maharashtra.
- The Urdu Mushaira and Urdu Shairi have always been a part of the Pune Festival and showcases the multi cultural ethos of the city.
- The continuous and constant participation of renowned artist Hema Malini year after year in Pune Festival needs a special mention. Hema Malini is a patron of the Pune Festival and has presented about 26 Ganesh Vandanas

and ballets in total twenty nine years of Pune Festival. She always presents her first new ballet shows in the Pune Festival. She was the Chairperson of Pune Festival Silver Jubilee Committee.

- The next generation of renowned musicians and dancers also get a special exposure at the festival. The daughters of Hema Malini, Esha and Aahana, Pt. Shiv Kumar Sharma's son Rahul, Sarod Maestro Amjad Ali Khan's sons Aman and Ayaan, Pt Bhimsen's Joshi's son Shrinivas Joshi are among the younger generation of artists that have added to the charm of the festival.
- Pune festival has been a launching pad for a plethora of budding artists and many such new artists were noticed on a national scale and on TV channels after their debut here. For instance - Pt Sanjeev Abhayankar, Shaunak Abhisheki, Sharwari Jamenis, Bela Shende, Tejashri Adige, Shefali Lahoti, Nikita Moghe, Prajakta Mali etc.
- Pune Festival has special sections for age groups 7-14, Ugawate Taare- (rising stars) and Indradhanu for age group 15-25. Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Kuchhipudi, Odissi, Western Dance are performed. Classical music, Cine music, light music, devotional songs, natyasangeet, powade, folk music, one act plays etc are performed by these budding artists. In a way, this is a talent search programme.
- The Pune Festival organizes special programs for women providing a platform for thousands of enthusiastic women - the Pune Festival has been adding to the self confidence of the women of Pune.
- Pune Festival has a presentation on regional theatre like Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Sindhi etc. A special Kerala Mahotsav and Kolhapur Mahotsav are also held.
- Every year, many foreign envoys based in India and other representatives attend Pune Festival. They take part in the prestigious golf contest. Many foreign tourists and travel writers attend the festival.
- Pune Festival is being organized by private sponsorships only and all programs are held without any entry fees.
- For drought and floods, the Pune Festival donated funds as a social commitment.

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'I clearly remember the first time when I performed here. I consider myself lucky to be among those who have been a part of the Pune Festival since it was first planned 24 years ago'.

'It is because of the blessing of Lord Ganesha that the event has become so popular among Puneites. " Kalmadiji also plays a very important role in the growth of the Pune Festival. It is because of him that we are able to enthrall the audience with good performance".

– Hema Malini