

“GHOOMAR”

The Traditional Folk Dance Of Rajasthan

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Image Source - <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/photocontest/detail/travel/traditional-ghoomar-dance-of-rajasthan-india/>

The **Traditional Knowledge System** is the understanding of people gathered in their everyday lives to overcome obstacles and tap into the potential of their immediate neighbourhood. In fact, Traditional Knowledge System has evolved in a specific location within a certain physical and socio-cultural environment, reflecting people's basic knowledge, perception and empirical and experimental information on their own. Traditional Knowledge System represents information, expertise, skills and technology along with standard management practices that are described through cultural systems. In today's environment, where human society faces challenges such as climate change, natural disasters, biodiversity destruction, destabilised ecosystem systems, food and nutrition disparities, health and sanitation concerns, among many others, Traditional Knowledge System needs to concentrate on seeking possible approaches or ways to tackle the problems among plan a sustainable existence.

What is Ghoomar ?

It is the traditional and folk dance of Rajasthan and has been selected as a symbol for Rajasthani ethnic identity by the state government. It is famous worldwide. It is most widely performed by females during rituals and ceremonies celebrating events such as weddings and births, as well as during significant Rajasthani festivals such as *Holi*, *Teej*, *Gangaur*, etc. The word Ghoomar originated from the words *ghoomna* meaning pirouetting or spinning around.



Image 1: Map showing Rajasthan, India

How Ghoomar began ?

It was originally started by the Bhil community and performed for worshipping goddess Saraswati. The Kachwahas of Rajput clan, who reigned over Jaipur, defeated the Bhil tribe, but after a few years, both communities agreed to live in harmony with each other. The result was that the royal Rajput clan embraced some of the traditions and practices of the Bhils, including *Ghoomar*. And from then on, the dance was associated with royalty. Today, however, it is performed by most Rajasthani families, irrespective of their royal status, on special gatherings and festivals, such as *Teej*, *Holi*, the onset of monsoon season (*Badho*) and the arrival of a newlywed bride at her marital house. It is performed throughout the state and the major regions that are known for this dance form include Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kota and Bundi.



Image Source - <https://www.dmyrajasthan.com/ghoomar-folk-dance-rajasthan>

Image 2 : Bhil Tribe performing Ghoomar

Elements of Ghoomar

Ghoomar is known as a dance performed in female circles primarily by Rajput people, and is therefore an obvious female-gendered and caste-specific activity. Two or more Rajasthani women move effortlessly and gracefully in circles during Ghoomar by simultaneously twirling in the clockwise and anticlockwise directions. The dance is represented by veiled women, wrapped in vibrant, colourful dress that drapes their bodies almost entirely, exposing only their hands, forearms and sometimes their bare feet. The women often wear costly and intricate jewellery consisting of necklaces, bracelets and anklets (*ghungru*), most notably. The dancers wear anklets to create melodic sounds when they dance, in response to the beats of *dhol*. The dance is followed by a few Ghoomar compositions, usually sung by groups of low caste or outcaste musicians, most notably the *Dholis*, the *Langas*, and the *Manganiyars*.



Image Source - <https://www.dhnyrajasthan.com/ghoomar-folk-dance-rajasthan>

Image 3 : Royal Rajput ladies performing Ghoomar for occasion

Ghoomar in present time

While Ghoomar was mainly identified with the Rajput women, today women of all castes and groups perform and enjoy the dance and its songs during different celebrations and social events in Rajasthan. Schools, colleges, and universities in Rajasthan have initiated to teach their female students Ghoomar courses, defining Ghoomar as one of Rajasthan's most significant indigenous "folk" dance. Parents in Rajasthan, send their daughters to dance schools as an extracurricular activity or invite dance instructors to their homes to train their daughters in Ghoomar.

Besides its prohibitions, Ghoomar is also prominent among professional dancers and musicians, especially during events and shows which aim to reflect Rajasthan's cultures and traditions. The rise in Rajasthan tourism and cultural activities coordinated by national campaigns have allowed numerous local entertainment groups to make a living by performing Rajasthan Ghoomar dance and songs. Such local musicians and performers employ female artists, who have now established independent groups and dance troupes named "dance parties."



Image Source - <https://www.dmyrajasthan.com/ghoomar-folk-dance-rajasthan>

Bibliography

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