

# Chakra Deities: A Memorable Look

## at the Body's Energy Centers

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A colorful and fun way to remember the purpose of each of the seven major chakras is to become familiar with the associated Hindu gods and goddesses. Each chakra pertains to several aspects of life. As a result, multiple gods and goddesses are connected to each chakra. The chakra deities are generally paired as masculine and feminine beings. For the sake of brevity, we'll take a look at one god and goddess per chakra.

### UNDERSTANDING THE GODS AND GODDESSES

The stories of the gods and goddesses of Hinduism can generally be viewed as religious parables, legends, or mythology. In some cases, the chakra gods and goddesses are based on the lives of historical persons. They can also be seen as personifications of specific qualities. The gods and goddesses exist at multiple levels: psychological, spiritual, mythological and historical.

### FINDING A PERSONAL DEITY

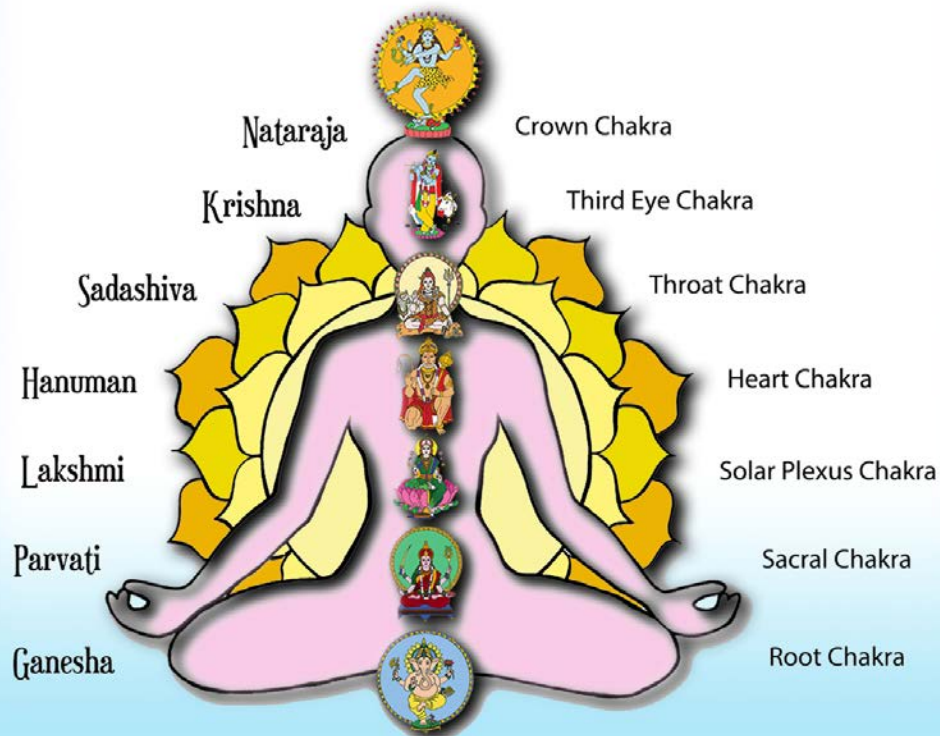
Perhaps the most significant aspect of relating to a chakra god or goddess is the sense of a personal relationship. Giving devotion to a specific deity can reinforce those characteristics within ourselves. This personal connection helps us to orient and navigate in an unseen realm.

### ROOT CHAKRA GODS AND GODDESSES

The root chakra establishes a foundation for the rest of the chakras. The playful elephant-headed god Ganesha is associated with the root chakra. His heavy weight connects him to the energy of the earth. He is the god of overcoming and the master of new beginnings.

The feminine energy of the root chakra is known as the goddess Kundalini. This is the energy that enlivens all of life, the unformed energy of the universe. The goddess Kundalini is a

## Chakra Gods & Goddesses



specific reference to the energy coiled like a snake at the base of the spine. This energy is drawn upwards to the crown by spiritual practices.

### SACRAL CHAKRA GODS AND GODDESSES

The sacral chakra is associated with the Hindu god Vishnu and the goddess Parvati. Vishnu and Krishna are incarnations of the same energy: the preservation of all realms of existence.

Parvati is the Hindu goddess of fertility, love and devotion. This connects her to the sacral chakra as the seat of reproduction. She is the gentle and nurturing aspect of the goddess energy, perhaps akin to a hearth goddess.

### SOLAR PLEXUS CHAKRA GODS AND GODDESSES

The solar plexus chakra is associated with the god Rudra and the goddess Lakshmi. The solar plexus is the fire center, often symbolized by yellow or a sun-like image. Rudra is a form of Shiva, usually depicted as scarlet in hue and having three eyes. This is a form of Shiva that annihilates desire and wrong action.

Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth, fortune and prosperity. Her name is derived from a Sanskrit word meaning goal, aim or sign. In addition, Lakshmi is usually shown seated or standing on a lotus. The lotus symbolizes creation, beauty, harmony, diversity, stability, and support.

### HEART CHAKRA GODS AND GODDESSES

One of the main deities associated with the heart chakra in Hinduism is Hanuman. Hanuman is the amazing monkey-faced god who features prominently in the Hindu epic the *Ramayana*. He is an Eastern superhero, perhaps akin to Superman, Spiderman, or Batman in the West. He is a joyful figure, blessed with both agility and strength, known for loyalty and devotion. These specific qualities associate him with the heart chakra.

The goddess Kuan Yin is also associated with the heart chakra. She appears in East Indian sutras (scriptures) as well as in

Tibetan Buddhism. In some sects, she is synonymous with the Buddha Avalokitesvara. Kuan Yin embodies compassion, the primary quality of the heart. Kuan Yin also symbolizes mercy and compassion.

### THROAT CHAKRA GODS AND GODDESSES

The throat chakra is connected to creativity and self-expression as well as the actions of speaking, chanting, and singing. One of the central Hindu gods associated with the throat chakra is Sadashiva. Sadashiva is the highest form of Shiva, the Hindu god of dissolution. Shiva expresses freedom, liberation and joy.

A feminine deity related to the throat chakra is Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of wisdom, music and the arts. Her name means “the flowing one.” Her mantras often contain the seed syllable AIM, a feminine counterpart to the sound of OM. This syllable is purported to strengthen the voice, clear the senses, and open the lungs.

### THIRD EYE CHAKRA GODS AND GODDESSES

The third eye is associated with Krishna, one of the most well-known of the Hindu deities, and with the goddess Shakti. Krishna was the son of Queen Devaki and King Vasudeva. Devaki’s brother was Kansa, an evil tyrant. He was told that a child of Devaki would kill him, so he set out to murder the young Krishna.

For his own protection, Krishna was sent to live in the country. Krishna’s childhood was spent among the cow herds. This is the origin of Krishna’s childhood names, Gopala and Govinda. “Go” means both “light” and “cow.” Krishna is the protector of sacred light.

The third eye chakra is symbolized by a central circle and a right and left lotus petal. The two petals of the 3rd eye symbol represent the ida and pingala (mystical spiritual channels). One of the petals represents the goddess Shakti and the other represents the

god Shiva. On the physical level, these two petals represent the pineal and pituitary glands.

### CROWN CHAKRA GODS AND GODDESSES

One of the presiding deities for the crown chakra is Nataraja—Lord of the Dance. Nataraja is a dancing form of Shiva, a joyful being spinning throughout creation. Nataraja represents the ecstatic state of enlightenment when the energy of the root chakra has reached the crown.

The goddess for the crown chakra is Chamunda, often interchanged with the goddesses Kali or Durga. The Goddess Chamunda is a fearsome goddess of war, time, death, and disasters. Chamunda may have originated as a tribal goddess, later assimilated into mainstream Hinduism.

Kali is a more well-known version of this fierce goddess. She is an intimidating figure, brandishing multiple weapons with her many arms. Kali wears a skirt of severed arms and a gruesome garland of heads. These grisly body parts are symbolic of the demonic forces that she slays to protect her devotees.

### AMPLIFYING THE ENERGY OF THE CHAKRAS

There are several ways to develop a deeper understanding of the Hindu deities. You can strengthen your own chakras through developing this connection. You may want to pursue further study of the chakra deities to understand the qualities that they possess. These could be yogic siddhis (powers) or admirable personal characteristics such as fearlessness, compassion or loyalty.

Another approach is to investigate the iconography or symbolism in depictions of one or more of the chakra deities. Many gods and goddesses hold symbolic objects in their hands or use their hands in mudras or symbolic gestures. You can also meditate on an image or statue of the chakra deity or use mantras or chants to activate the qualities of the deity within yourself. ■

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