

Sikh Diaspora

The earliest Sikh immigrants arrived in North America in 1880's. Most early arrivals were men and they worked on the railroad construction projects and on the farms in California and in British Columbia. Rampant discrimination of that time did not stop Sikh men from establishing places of worship, starting families, owning farms, and even serving in WW I on behalf of the USA. One such man named Bhagat Singh Thind, a WW I veteran challenged the US law that denied him US citizenship on basis of his race. He took his case all the way to US supreme court, but did not prevail. Later on laws were changed and people of Indian origin granted citizenships. Another notable early success story was of first generation Sikh immigrant Dalip Singh Saund who was elected to US House of Representatives in 1956 in 29th congressional district in California.



Bhagat Singh Thind,
WW I US Veteran

With hard work and solid family values, Sikhs have achieved the American dream and more. They have succeeded in all spheres including business, education, culture, sports, and politics. Among the notable achievers are Nicki Haley, the governor of South Carolina, was born to Sikh immigrant parents; Dr. NS Kapany is pioneer in Fiber Optic field; some of the biggest producers of raisin and peaches are Sikh farmers in California. In Canada, Sikhs have made great strides in public service



Harjit Singh Sajjan
Defense Minister of Canada

as many have been elected as members of the parliament. The national defense minister of Canada is Harjit Singh Sajjan, a Sikh who served in Canadian armed forces in Afghanistan.

Other success stories include CEOs of major corporations, grammy winning artist, and numerous other engineers, doctors, and small business people who are making positive contributions to the USA and Canadian economies.

Sikhs in Solano County

About 5000 Sikhs live in Solano and Napa counties. Guru Nanak Sikh Temple, located on Rockville Road in Fairfield, serves as the spiritual and social center of the local Sikh community. One reason for growth of Sikh community in Solano county is rural and agricultural ambience of the area which resembles their native Punjab.



Punjabi American Cultural Association (PACA)

The Punjabi-American Cultural Association, a non-profit organization, was formed in Solano County, California, in 2001, with the objective of enhancing Sikh awareness and to positively integrate the Punjabi and American cultures. PACA's goal is to create a better understanding among different communities and educate people about the Punjabi culture and Sikh religion, via Diversity Festivals, Inter-faith dialogues, participation in July 4th parade, and annual blanket/coat distributions to needy during the holiday season. PACA also organizes Sunday Punjabi School to connect younger Sikh generation to their roots and heritage. PACA's mission may evolve to reflect the need of the times, but the vision will remain steadfast to see a free, peaceful, and tolerant society.



Punjabi American Cultural Association

5055 Business Center Dr.,
Suite 108-165, Fairfield, CA 94534
info@pacausa.org www.pacausa.org



Sikh Faith and Diaspora An Introduction

"Ek Noor te sab jag upjia kaun bhaley kau mandey"

From the One Light, the entire universe welled up.
So who is good, and who is bad?

-Hymn from Guru Granth Sahib



The Golden Temple

Sikh Faith



Origin

Sikhism is the fifth largest religion in the world. The twenty-five million Sikhs worldwide trace the origin of their religion to Punjab,

located in northern India. Nearly five centuries ago, Guru Nanak, a revolutionary social reformer, put forward a new spiritual path that empowered common man to seek and realize God while living honest family life free from rituals, renunciations, and pilgrimages. Guru Nanak's teachings promoted equality among all human beings; thus firmly rejecting the citadel of social Caste System. Following Guru Nanak, 9 living Gurus carried his message forward, until the last and 10th Guru designated the holy book, **Guru Granth Sahib** as the perpetual living Guru from that time onwards. During the life time of 10 Gurus and afterwards, adherents of Sikhism suffered through barbaric pogroms for fighting against the tyranny of rulers and invaders of their times while working to sustain the social reforms initiated by Guru Nanak.

Guru Granth Sahib

This holy book contains writings of not only Sikh Gurus, but also of Muslim and Hindu saints as well. This is the eternal spiritual guide of Sikhs and is respected as a living Guru.



Shri Guru Granth Sahib

Sikh & Guru

The word Sikh means disciple or student. Guru Nanak gave his followers the name "Sikhs" and advised them to learn throughout their lives to become spiritually enlightened. The word Guru means spiritual guide or "enlightener". In Sikhism, "Guru" refers to the line of spiritual authority, beginning with Guru Nanak, and the nine prophet-teachers who succeeded him.

<i>Ik Onkaar</i>	There is only one God
<i>Sat Naam</i>	His Name is Truth
<i>Karta Purkh</i>	He is the Creator
<i>Nir Bhau</i>	He is without fear
<i>Nir Vair</i>	He is without hate
<i>Akaal Moorat</i>	He is beyond time (Immortal)
<i>Ajooni</i>	He is beyond birth and death
<i>Saibhang</i>	He is self-existent
<i>Gurparsaad</i>	He is realized by the Guru's grace

Mool Mantar

Basic Principles and Practices

1. Central theological belief is that there is **One God** for all of creation, a loving Creator attainable through meditation upon and remembrance of God's Name.
2. Practice daily prayer and meditation to reduce the effects of ego and prevent indulgence in: Pride, Lust, Greed, Anger and Attachment.
3. The four pillars of life are truth, contentment, contemplation and Naam (in the name of God).
4. Reincarnation, karma and salvation – The journey of the soul is governed by the deeds and actions that we perform during our lives.
5. Sikhs are encouraged to earn honest living, and share their blessings with others.
6. One of the most fundamental tenets of Sikhism is that all human beings are equal as they are all created by One God. The tradition of community kitchen (Langar) in every Sikh Temple where

everyone, regardless of class or social status sits together in brotherhood and shares the same meal symbolizing importance of equality.

7. From the beginning, the Sikh philosophy emphasized the need to create gender equality. The scriptures remind that the woman gives birth to the whole humanity, then how can she be treated less than a man.
8. "Goodwill to all Humankind" is part of daily prayers by all pious Sikhs.
9. Living a family life: Encouraged to live as a family unit to provide and nurture children for the perpetual benefit of creation.

Khalsa (Baptized Sikhs)

The Khalsa consists of Sikhs who undergo an initiation ceremony and dedicate themselves to living by the high standards of Sikh Gurus at all times, as well as maintaining their physical distinctiveness in society by maintaining five articles of faith, namely Kesh (uncut hair), Kirpan (a religious sword), Kara (metal bracelet), Kanga(comb), and Kachha(under-shorts).

Turban and Sikhism

Turban has a special place in Sikh life. Physically it covers uncut hair, but moreover it symbolizes self-respect and honor. Color of Turban is a matter of personal choice.



Adult Sikh tying turban