Country Range
Created for the makers

DIWALI MENU AND ACTIVITIES

Diwali, known as the Festival of Lights, is a joyful celebration observed by millions of people around the world, particularly within Hindu, Sikh and Jain communities. Celebrations vary between cultures and families, but often include colourful decorations, glowing diyas (lamps), music, spending time with loved ones and, of course, sharing delicious food and sweet treats.

DIWALI AFTERNOON TEA

This Diwali afternoon tea brings together Indian-inspired flavours such as cardamom, mango and warming spices, creating a wonderful opportunity for residents to enjoy new tastes, reminisce, share stories and celebrate together. The recipes have been designed with independence and ease of eating in mind and are mostly cutlery-free.



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CHEESE & SPINACH PAKORAS



MAKES 20

These are deliberately made as soft little patties rather than traditional crisp, irregular pakoras. The cheese adds protein, calcium and energy, while spinach adds colour and vitamins. Allow approximately two small pakoras per resident. They should be easy to pick up and bite without cutlery. Avoid whole chillies, seeds and large pieces of spinach.

INGREDIENTS

150g Country Range Grated Mature Cheddar

300g Signature by Country Range Mashed Potato with Butter, made according to pack instructions

1tsp Country Range Garam Masala

½tsp Country Range Ground Cumin

¼tsp Country Range Ground Turmeric

1tbsp Country Range Rapeseed Oil

250g frozen chopped spinach, defrosted

75g gram (chickpea) flour

1 medium egg, beaten

1 - 2tbsp full-fat milk, if required

METHOD

1. Squeeze excess water from the spinach, then chop it very finely so there are no long or stringy pieces.
2. Mix the spinach with the warm mashed potato, cheese, gram flour, egg and spices.
3. The mixture should be moist and easy to shape. Add a little milk if it seems dry.
4. Shape into approximately 20 small, flat patties.
5. Place on a lightly oiled baking tray and brush or spray lightly with oil.
6. Bake at 190°C/170°C fan for approximately 15–20 minutes, turning carefully halfway through, until lightly golden.
7. Serve warm rather than very hot.

CARDAMOM SHORTBREAD FINGERS



Making the fingers short makes them easy to pick up, while butter provides useful additional energy for residents with smaller appetites. Make the fingers small enough to hold comfortably. Aim for a short, tender and crumbly texture.

MAKES 24

INGREDIENTS

250g Country Range Plain Flour

75g Country Range Cornflour

225g unsalted butter, softened

90g icing sugar

1tsp ground cardamom

1 - 2tbsp full-fat milk, if required

METHOD

1. Beat the butter and icing sugar together until soft and creamy.
2. Mix together the flour, cornflour and cardamom, then work into the butter mixture.
3. Add just enough milk to produce a soft dough if required.
4. Press into a lined shallow baking tin to a depth of around 1.5cm.
5. Chill for 20 minutes.
6. Bake at 170°C/150°C fan for approximately 20–25 minutes until pale golden.
7. While still warm, cut into small finger-sized pieces.
8. Leave to cool completely.

DATE & OAT ENERGY BITES

MAKES 24



A useful nutrient-dense sweet bite containing oats, dates and full-fat dairy. Keep them soft rather than firm or chewy. Follow your allergen policy. If using peanut butter, check individual allergies carefully and ensure it is thoroughly incorporated rather than served as a sticky spoonful.

INGREDIENTS

250g Country Range Dates

120g Country Range Oat Flakes

½tsp Country Range Ground Cinnamon

75g smooth peanut butter or smooth seed butter

50g full-fat cream cheese

¼tsp ground cardamom

½tsp vanilla extract

40g finely milled oats, for coating

METHOD

1. Cover the dates with boiling water and leave for about 10 minutes. Drain thoroughly.
2. Place the dates, oats, smooth peanut/seed butter, cream cheese, cinnamon, cardamom and vanilla in a food processor.
3. Process until everything forms a soft, cohesive paste. There should be no large pieces of date.
4. Refrigerate for approximately 30 minutes.
5. With damp hands, form into small balls.
6. Roll very lightly in finely milled oats and chill until required.

VEGETABLE SAMOSA FILLING CUPS



This takes the familiar flavour of a vegetable samosa but removes the crisp pastry, producing a colourful, easy-to-hold small portion. Residents who are specifically being supported to eat without cutlery may find a small soft patty or scoop easier to manage independently.

MAKES 24

INGREDIENTS

1tsp Country Range Garam Masala

½tsp Country Range Ground Cumin

½tsp Country Range Ground Coriander

¼tsp Country Range Ground Turmeric

75g Country Range Grated Cheddar (or very finely crumbled paneer)

120g Country Range Frozen Garden Peas

1–2 tbsp Country Range Mango Chutney (optional)

500g potatoes, peeled and diced

150g carrots, peeled and finely diced

1 small onion, very finely diced

1tbsp vegetable oil

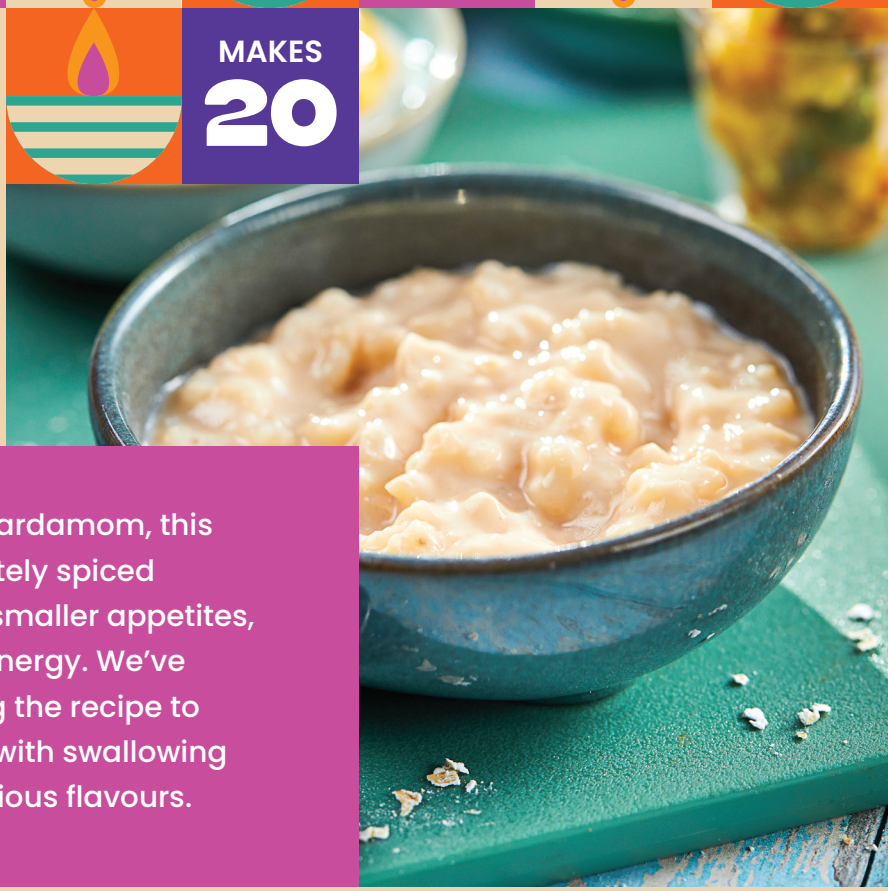
75g full-fat Greek yoghurt

METHOD

1. Boil the potatoes and carrots until soft. Add the peas for the final few minutes.
2. Meanwhile, gently cook the onion in the oil until completely soft without browning.
3. Add the spices and cook for another minute.
4. Drain the vegetables and lightly crush them. There should be no hard pieces.
5. Fold through the onion, yoghurt and cheese.
6. Add a little mango chutney for sweetness if desired, ensuring there are no large fruit pieces.
7. Spoon into small individual reusable cups immediately before service.

RICE KHEER

MAKES 20



Made with milk, rice and aromatic cardamom, this comforting, rich, creamy and delicately spiced dessert is perfect for residents with smaller appetites, with added cream providing extra energy. We've also included guidance for adapting the recipe to IDDSI Level 4 (puréed), so residents with swallowing difficulties can enjoy the same delicious flavours.

INGREDIENTS

100g Country Range Round Grain Rice

Pinch of Country Range Ground Cinnamon (optional)

1ltr full-fat milk

150ml double cream

50g caster sugar

½tsp ground cardamom

1tsp vanilla extract

METHOD

1. Place the rice and milk in a heavy-based saucepan.
2. Bring very gently to a simmer, stirring frequently.
3. Cook over a low heat for approximately 35–45 minutes, stirring regularly, until the rice is extremely tender and the mixture is creamy.
4. Stir in the cream, sugar, cardamom and vanilla.
5. Cook for another 5 minutes until rich and creamy.
6. Serve warm or chilled. You can garnish with nuts or coconut shavings, depending on your residents' individual dietary requirements.

IDDSI LEVEL 4 (PURÉED) RICE KHEER

To make a Level 4 version:

1. Cook the kheer until the rice is exceptionally soft.
2. While still moist, transfer it to a high-powered blender.
3. Blend thoroughly until completely smooth, adding small quantities of whole milk as necessary to achieve the required consistency.
4. Pass through a fine sieve if any rice particles remain.
5. If it is too thin, use your approved thickening method/product according to its instructions. If it is too thick or sticky, adjust carefully with an appropriate fluid and blend again.
6. Re-test after altering the consistency and again at the temperature at which it will actually be served, as consistency can change with temperature.

The finished kheer should sit in a mound on a fork rather than continuously dripping through it. On the Spoon Tilt Test it should hold together on the spoon but slide off fairly easily when tilted, without being firm or sticky.

THIS IS A GUIDE ONLY.

Always test using the IDDSI guidelines at iddsi.org or via the app.

MANGO & YOGHURT

SHRIKHAND-STYLE DESSERT

MAKES 20



This is a quick and easy dessert which can be served in small handheld pots. Full-fat Greek yoghurt increases the energy and protein content while naturally providing a thick, creamy consistency.

INGREDIENTS

- 600g full-fat Greek yoghurt
- 250g smooth mango purée
- 50g icing sugar, or to taste
- ½tsp ground cardamom
- ½tsp vanilla extract
- Finely grated zest of ½ lime, optional

METHOD

1. Place the yoghurt in a bowl and whisk until smooth.
2. Add the icing sugar, cardamom and vanilla and mix thoroughly.
3. Spoon into individual dishes.
4. Swirl the mango purée through the yoghurt to create a bright pattern.
5. Chill until required.

MAKING THE MANGO & YOGHURT DESSERT IDDSI LEVEL 4 (PURÉED)

Yoghurt component

Use a smooth, full-fat yoghurt with absolutely no fruit pieces, seeds or other inclusions.

Whisk until completely smooth. Depending on the particular yoghurt used, it may already meet Level 4 requirements, but don't assume that "Greek" or "thick" yoghurt automatically means Level 4. Test the finished product according to the IDDSI framework.

If it is too thin, thicken according to your approved procedure and manufacturer's directions. If it is excessively firm or sticky, adjust appropriately and re-test.

Mango component

Use smooth mango purée rather than chopped mango if making the mango purée from fresh:

1. Peel and remove the stone from very ripe mango.
2. Blend the flesh until completely smooth.
3. Pass through a fine sieve to remove any fibres.
4. Assess the consistency.
5. If necessary, thicken using the home's approved thickener and method until Level 4 is achieved.
6. Test before serving.

Do not place diced mango, mango fibres or other fruit pieces on a Level 4 plate.

Commercial smooth mango purée can also be useful for consistency, but the finished product still needs to be checked.

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DIWALI DESSERT PLATE

IDDSI LEVEL 4 (PURÉED)

MAKES 20



Here is a way to bring together the desserts for people with dysphagia on an IDDSI Level 4 (puréed) diet. Recipes should be adapted to residents' individual care plans, allergies and prescribed food and fluid textures. Texture-modified recipes should be checked by the home's appropriately trained team and IDDSI tested immediately before service rather than relying on the recipe, because ingredients, brands, preparation and serving temperature can all affect the final consistency.

CREATE A DIWALI DESSERT PLATE FOR IDDSI LEVEL 4 (PURÉED)

Pipe or spoon three separate smooth components onto the plate:

Kheer: a smooth swipe or quenelle of **Level 4 (puréed)** blended rice kheer.

Mango: several small dots or quenelles of **Level 4 (puréed)** mango purée.

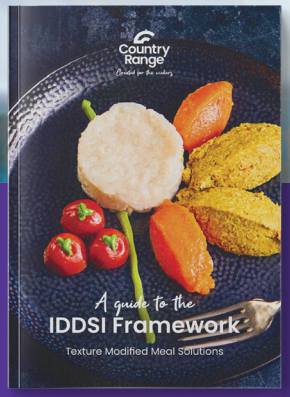
Yoghurt: several small dots or quenelles of **Level 4 (puréed)** yoghurt.

You could alternatively pipe the mango onto the yoghurt to echo the yellow and white design of the original dessert.

You could add more colour and flavour to the plate by piping some strawberry purée that has been tested to IDDSI Level 4 (puréed). Keeping the colours separate gives residents receiving texture-modified food a dessert that looks deliberately plated and celebratory.

Importantly, every component on the plate must independently be appropriate for that resident's prescribed texture. A Level 4 plate shouldn't receive a standard garnish just for decoration. Level 4 food must remain smooth and lump-free, require no chewing, show no liquid separation and pass the relevant IDDSI tests.

FREE IDDSI GUIDE HERE



We worked with iddsi trainer Andy Cullum on all of the recipes in this pack. For more information about modifying meals for people with dysphagia, **download our free Guide to the IDDSI Framework** by scanning this QR code.

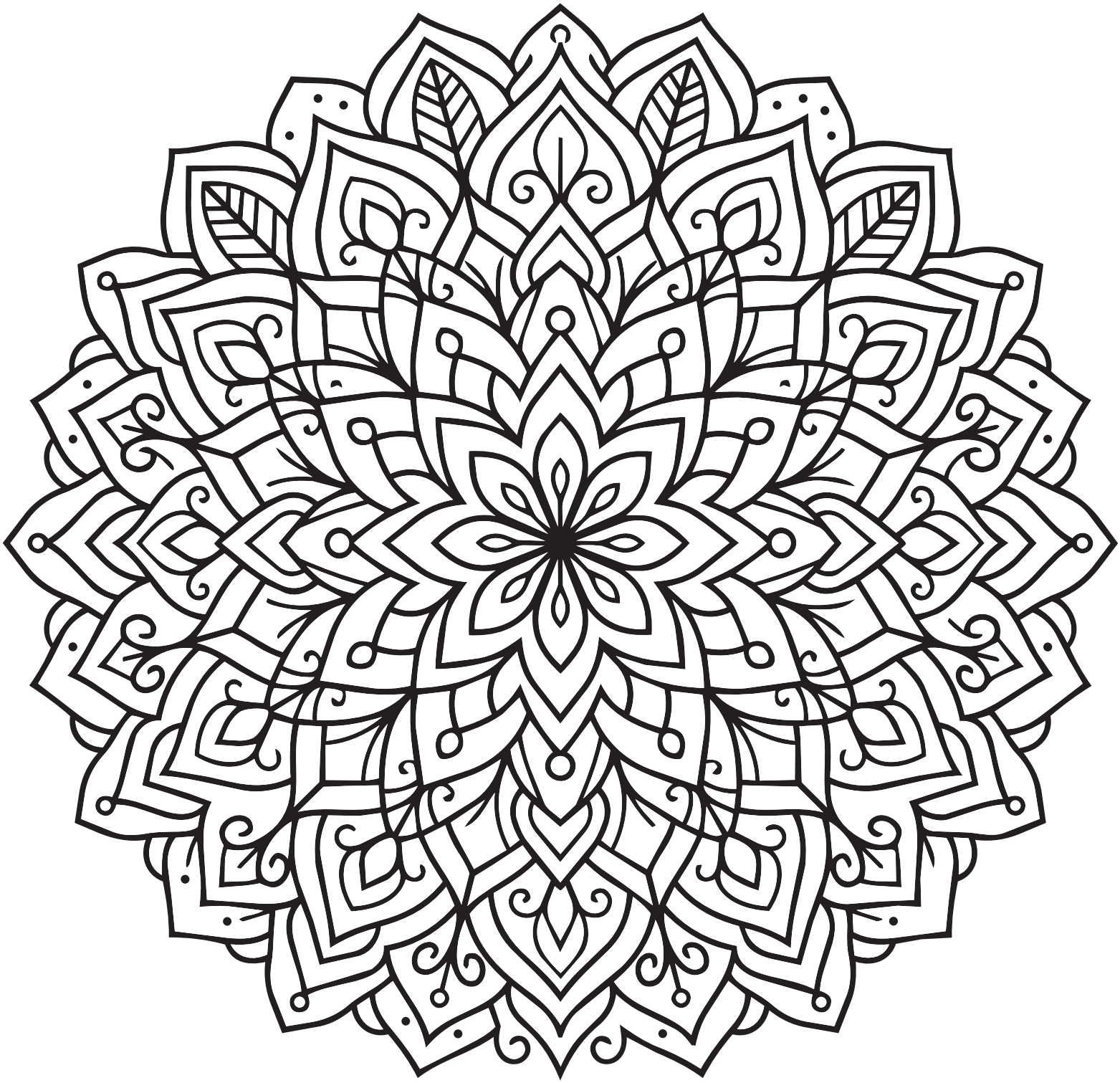
ACTIVITIES

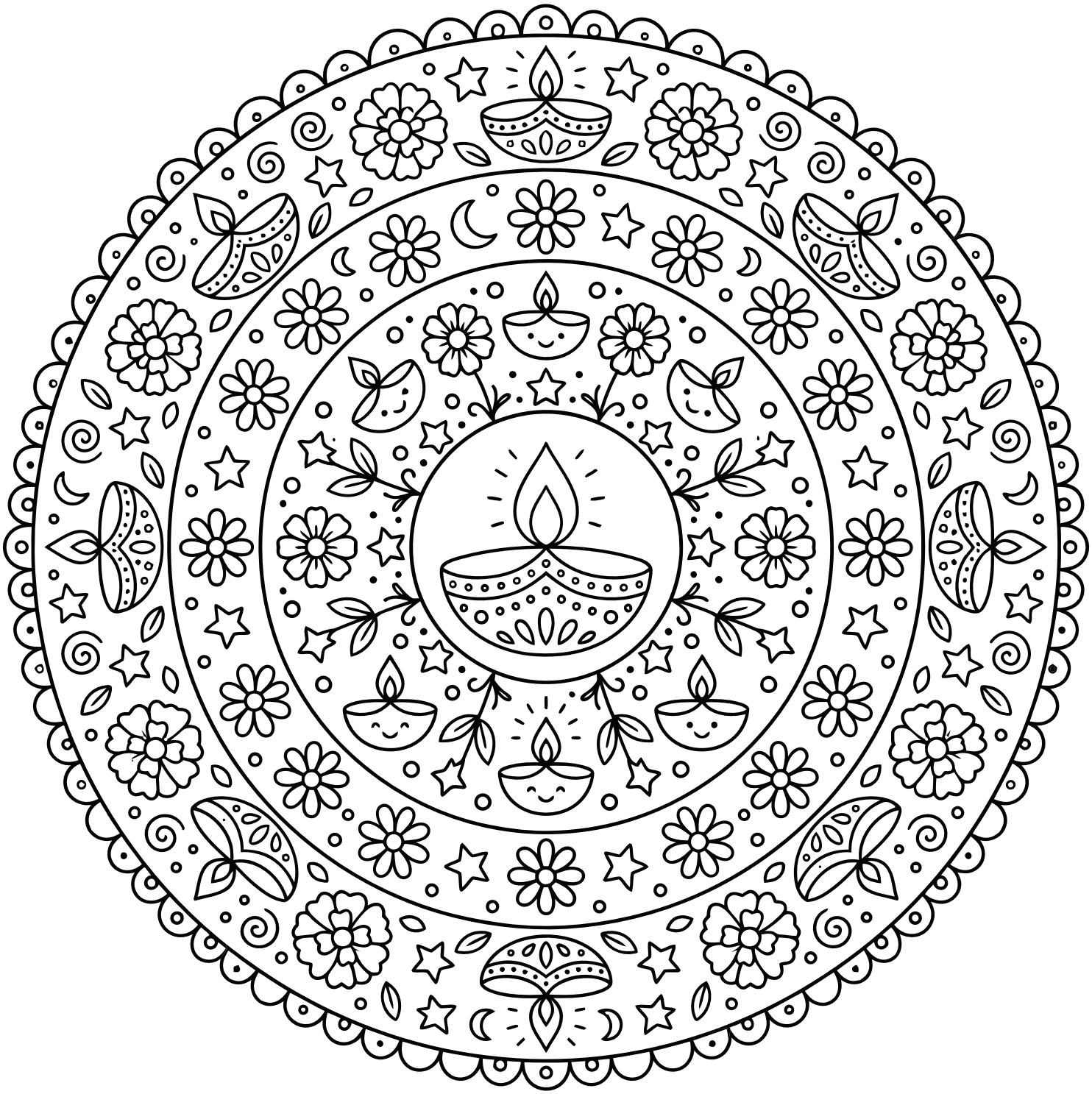
Diwali is a bright and colourful festival and is a lovely way to bring vibrancy and light into the dark, gloomy winter months. Here are some activity ideas to involve your residents in getting creative and awakening the senses.

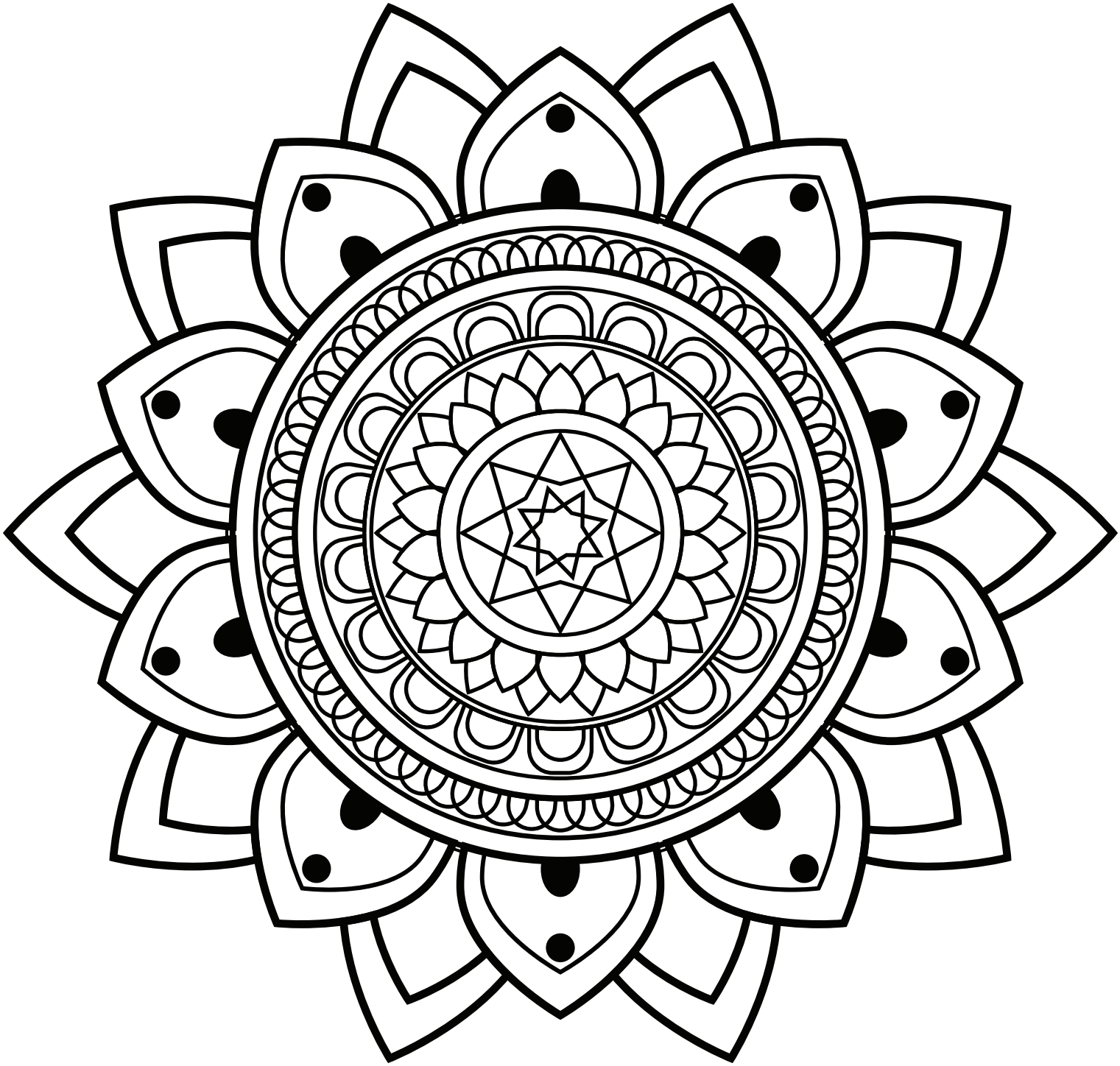


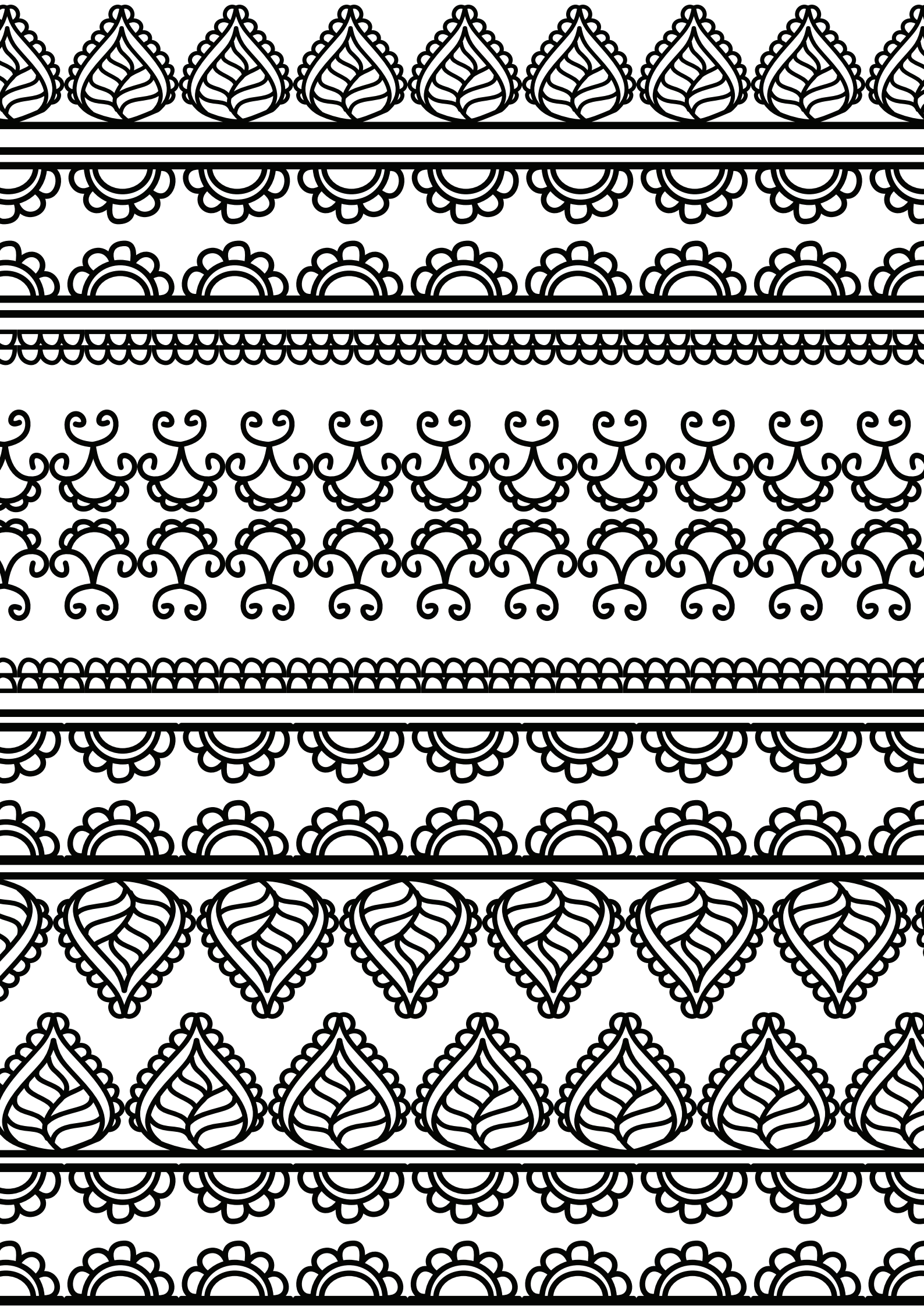


- Rangoli patterns using coloured rice or chalk (we have included some templates to print off in this pack)
- Decorate LED tealights
- Lantern making (we have included a template in this pack)
- Colourful paper garlands
- Spice-smelling sensory session
- Learn about the meaning of Diwali
- Listen to Indian music
- Watch traditional dance performances
- Invite members of the local community to share traditions









DECORATE YOUR OWN LANTERN

1. Cut off the top decorated strip of paper and set aside to use as the handle.
2. Decorate the sheet using coloured pens, paint or biodegradable glitter.
3. Fold your paper in half lengthways along the dashed line.
4. Cut the marked lines along the sheet. Be careful not to cut the edge of the paper.
5. Unfold the paper.
6. Match the long edges together on the lantern and use tape to hold it in place.
7. Staple or stick the handle to the top of the lantern.

