



UDAYASTHAMANA POOJA

Offering **Udayasthamana** ((literally means from sunrise to sunset) **Pooja** is one the most popular and favorite offering to Lord Guruvayurappan. It implies worship from sunrise to sunset. However, the rituals commence from the previous evening itself, after *Deeparadhana*, with Ganapathy Pooja followed by “*Ari Alakka*” (measuring rice) for *Nivedyam* in presence of the *Thanthri*, Temple Representative/*Yajaman*, and the Udayasthamana Pooja sponsor.

On the day of **Udayasthamana Pooja**, the *Garbhagriha* (*Sreekovil*) will open at 6 am for *Nirmalya Darshanam*, *Usha Pooja* followed by 18 poojas & homams, Udayasthamana Pooja is considered as a mini *Utsavam* - on a limited scale. The 18 poojas are for Lord Vishnu for his blessings to bring wealth and related benefits, and particularly for fulfilling one’s desires.

The 18th pooja is *Navaka Pooja* with *Panchagavyam* followed by *Abhishekam* with *Navakam* (nine *kalashams*). These rituals will take about 6 to 6½ hours - until the *Ucha Pooja* is completed.



The reason for performing 18 poojas is that 18 is considered a very auspicious number - though the exact significance of 18 is not known. It could be because there are 18 Puranas; Mahabharatha War having been fought in 18 days for the victory of dharma; Bhagavat Gita having 18 chapters; our body, the “Sookshma Sareeram” constituting 18 aspects (5 Jnanendriyas; 5 Karmendriyas; 5 Pranas; Manassu; Budhi; and Deham); Lord Krishna having fought Jarasandha 18 times and defeated him; Lord Krishna having 18 children, and many more such instances of 18 being an auspicious number.

The next session will start in the evening just after 6 pm with *Sreebhootha Bali* which is a ritual performed during festival days. During *Sreebhootha Bali*, the *Utsava Vighraha* of the Lord (a miniature of Guruvayurappan idol) is taken around within the four outer walls of the temple (the *Chuttambalam*), with the accompaniment of *Chenda* (temple percussion). Thereafter, with *Deeparadhana* at 7 pm and *Dakshina*, the rituals of **Udayasthamana Pooja** are completed.



***Sreebhootha Bali:** There are Bali Kallus representing the Lord’s Council (Parivarams). The Lord Himself (in the form of Utsava Vighram) stands by as offerings are made to the Parivarams. The offerings include that to Big Balikallu (which represents Hari Senan, who is the chief of Lord’s entourage).*

