



PAHARI DANCE: THE RHYTHM OF CULTURE AND IDENTITY

Pahari dance is an age-old tradition that blends rhythm, devotion and celebration. Deeply connected to seasonal cycles, festivals and folklore it reflects the soul of the Pahari people. The most iconic form, **Nati**, originates from Himachal Pradesh and is recognized by UNESCO as the **world's largest folk dance**. It varies across regions **Kullu Nati** celebrates valor and harvest, **Mahasu Nati** is ritualistic, while **Kinnauri** and **Sirmauri Nati** preserve tribal myths.

Women perform **Laman** and **Jhoori**, expressive dances of love, often accompanied by poetic verses and graceful movements. In Kashmir, the elegant Rouf is performed during Eid and spring, symbolizing fertility and renewal.

These dances are performed in circles or rows, symbolizing unity and harmony. Folk instruments like **dhol**, **damau**, **shehnai** and **narsingha** provide rhythm. Pahari dances are not mere entertainment they are living traditions that pass on stories, history and collective identity from one generation to the next.

PAHARI FOLK MUSIC: SOUL OF THE MOUNTAINS

Pahari folk music flows like the rivers of the hills pure, powerful and timeless. Rooted in oral tradition, it reflects **love**, **longing**, **bravery** and **devotion**. Songs like **Jagar**, **Mangal**, **Baramasa** and **Laman** are sung at weddings, harvests and festivals, narrating folk tales and ancestral legends.

Music here is community driven sung in groups during evenings or rituals. Instruments are simple yet soul stirring. The **dhol (double-headed drum)** and **damau** set the rhythm, while the **turhi (curved brass trumpet)**, **ransinga** and **bhankora** add festive energy. The **algoza (twin flute)**, **ektara**, and **sarangi** bring a haunting melody to ballads and spiritual hymns.

In Kashmir, **rouf** songs and **chakri** performances echo in the valleys, accompanied by the **santoor** and **rabab**. Music unites the Pahari people it's not just entertainment but a way to express identity, memory and emotion passed down through generations like sacred soundtracks of the hills.

PAHARI POETRY: SOULFUL SONGS OF THE MOUNTAINS

Pahari poetry is the heartbeat of the hills flowing like mountain streams, echoing through valleys with tales of love, nature, loss and devotion. Rooted in oral traditions, it captures everyday life with deep emotion and lyrical grace. Poems like **Jagar**, **Baramasa** and **Laman** are sung, not just spoken offering prayers to gods, longing for lost love or **celebrating rain** after drought.

Legends like Hakeem Manzoor gave Pahari poetry a modern voice, blending romance and rebellion in collections like **Barf Rutun ki Aag**. Abdul Ahad Azad, the “**poet of the poor**,” penned verses of equality and awakening. From Himachal, Vidyanand Sarek preserved forgotten folklore, while Chander Singh Rahi made poetry sing through music.

Works like **Pull Pulekhey** and **Mithre Dard** are treasured collections that carry the scent of pine, the rhythm of rivers and the soul of the people. In every verse, the mountains speak.