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POWERING INDIGENOUS INTELLECT



# *Ganjifa Cards Of Mysore (Karnataka)*





## HISTORY OF GANJIFA CARDS OF MYSORE

The earliest references to Ganjifa cards date back to the 15th century. It is believed that the game arrived in India with the Mughals, a theory supported by a journal entry from 1527 written by Babur. Additional details about the gameplay are documented in the Humayun-nama, authored by Gulbadan Begum. Over time, regional styles evolved, and Mysore became known for beautifully hand-painted Ganjifa cards inspired by Indian themes and traditions.

# UNIQUENESS OF GANJIFA CARDS

Some distinctive features that make Mysore Ganjifa special :

**Cards are handmade using layers of paper or cloth.**

**Unlike modern rectangular playing cards, Ganjifa cards are traditionally round.**

**Many sets depict mythological stories, making each card meaningful.**

**Fine detailing reflects the miniature painting traditions of Karnataka.**

**The craft survives through a small community of skilled artisans.**



## GAME PLAY

Ganjifa is a trick-taking card game, somewhat similar in concept to games like rummy or bridge but with its own traditional rules. A typical set contains multiple suits, each representing a theme or deity.



- Players are dealt cards, and the objective is to win tricks by playing higher-ranking cards of the same suit or a designated trump suit.
- The ranking of cards often follows a traditional order, and players must remember symbols and suits to play strategically.
- Rules may vary depending on the region and type of Ganjifa set, especially in Dashavatara Ganjifa, where each suit represents one incarnation of Lord Vishnu.



## ART AS A SOUVENIR

Ganjifa cards are not only used for playing but are also admired as collectible art. Tourists and collectors value them for their vibrant colors, storytelling, and craftsmanship. Many sets are framed or displayed as decorative pieces, turning a traditional game into a work of art.



## GI Recognition and Protection

Mysore Ganjifa cards have received Geographical Indication (GI) recognition, helping protect the authenticity of the craft and supporting local artisans. The GI tag ensures that traditional techniques, materials, and regional identity are preserved, keeping this rare and beautiful heritage alive for future generations.



## About RIPA

RIPA (Reinforce Intellectual Property Association) is a dedicated notfor-profit organization focused on the promotion and advancement of indigenous Intellectual Property (IP) in India, with outreach that extends to the international stage.

Our mission centers on addressing both current and future needs for the growth and development of indigenous IP, actively supporting the country's unique innovation landscape through local research and development initiatives. RIPA's commitment to the IP community spans every stage of the IP lifecycle—from idea generation to the successful commercialization of inventions.

Join us to supports indigenous crafts across the country.

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