

# Bali's Penjor





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There are two types of *penjor*: decorative and ritual. Decorative *penjor* are mainly there to lighten the place up, like in front of hotels, and are used for secular occasions, like a forum or weddings in Java; whereas ritual *penjor* cannot be used willy-nilly because they have a religious significance





## Why are Penjor made?

Penjor are erected to symbolize the dominance of good (dharma) over evil (adharma) as well as to **offer thanks** to the gods. In addition, penjor show **devotion** to *Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa* in his manifestation as Hyang Giri Pati (the God of the mountain).

The curved part of the *penjor* are tall tapered poles made from bamboo that symbolizes Mount Agung, the highest mountain in Bali that is considered the home of the gods.

Roughly halfway down the pole, also made from bamboo, is attached a structure. This is called *sanggah cucuk*. Offerings are placed in the *sanggah cucuk* for the gods when they come down to Earth for **Galungan**.



## When are Penjor erected?

Penjor are erected outside Balinese Hindu home the Tuesday before Galungan. Galungan is one of the most important religious ceremonies in Bali, and is held roughly twice a year, every 210 days. During Galungan, it is believed that the spirits of the ancestors visit the earth. The 10-day period ends with **Kuningan** when the gods and ancestors return to their own realm.

If you visit Bali these times of the year, you will see *penjor* decorations lining the streets, towering outside the entrance to houses and local businesses.





Yoga Garden wishes to thank Holly Burgin for the beautiful penjor that has been erected in the garden, and for her permission to share her summary of the historical and cultural significance.