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NYC Launches Its First-Ever South Asian Comedy Festival as South Asian Comics Reach Mainstream Spotlight

Three-day festival will feature more than 40 comedians across five unique shows, celebrating the diverse voices shaping the future of stand-up comedy.

NEW YORK, NY — New York City has long been home to world-renowned comedy festivals and some of the biggest names in stand-up. But despite being home to one of the largest South Asian communities in the United States—and despite the growing prominence of South Asian comedians on stages, streaming platforms, television, podcasts, and social media—the city has never had a comedy festival dedicated exclusively to South Asian performers.

This October, that changes.

From **October 16–18, 2026**, the inaugural **NYC South Asian Comedy Festival** will bring together more than 40 comedians from across the South Asian diaspora for a three-day celebration of stand-up comedy, culture, and community. Produced by Laughing Lassi, New York City's leading South Asian comedy show, the festival will feature performers representing India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and beyond across five unique shows at Lofte 23, Broadway Comedy Club, and Top Secret Comedy Club.

The festival arrives at a pivotal moment for comedy and culture. South Asian comedians are increasingly becoming some of the most recognizable voices in entertainment, earning national audiences while redefining what mainstream comedy looks and sounds like. As audiences continue to seek authentic, culturally specific storytelling, the NYC South Asian Comedy Festival provides a dedicated platform for performers whose perspectives have often been underrepresented at major comedy festivals.

Rather than presenting South Asian comedy as a single perspective, the festival celebrates the remarkable diversity of the diaspora. Comedians from different countries, religions, languages, and life experiences will share the stage, demonstrating that South Asian comedy is as varied

as the communities it represents—and that its appeal extends far beyond South Asian audiences.

"South Asia isn't one accent or one story—and neither is its comedy," said **Ali Mehedi**, Producer and Director of the NYC South Asian Comedy Festival. "For years, South Asian comedians have appeared as one or two performers on larger festival lineups. This festival changes that. We're creating an entire weekend where our community's stories take center stage while welcoming everyone who loves great comedy."

The festival will feature five signature shows, each offering a distinct comedy experience:

- **Best of NYC Showcase** — An opening-night showcase featuring some of New York's strongest South Asian comedians, followed by an after-party with a live DJ.
- **Brown Unhinged** — A bold, uncensored showcase pushing the boundaries of stand-up.
- **Roast Battle** — A one-of-a-kind competition where comedians representing India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka face off in a fast-paced battle of wit.
- **Family Friendly Comedy Show** — A clean stand-up showcase designed for audiences of all ages.
- **Desi Women Takeover** — A closing-night showcase highlighting an all-women lineup of South Asian comedians.

The lineup features more than 40 performers from around the world, including acclaimed comedians **Aparna Nancherla**, **Abby Govindan**, **Vik Pandya**, **Gauri B**, **Aanchal Agrawal**, and many more. Together, they represent an exciting mix of nationally recognized headliners and emerging voices helping shape the next generation of stand-up comedy.

Unlike many comedy festivals, every comedian was selected through a multi-judge review process to ensure a lineup that reflects the breadth of South Asian identities, comedic styles, and lived experiences.

The festival also builds on the success of Laughing Lassi, which has spent the past four years producing sold-out South Asian comedy shows throughout New York City while helping introduce hundreds of comedians to new audiences. What began as a monthly showcase has grown into one of the country's leading platforms for South Asian stand-up, making the launch of a dedicated festival a natural next step.

"Our goal is bigger than putting on a great weekend of shows," Mehedi added. "We're creating a home for South Asian comedy in New York—a place where established comics, emerging talent, and audiences from every background can come together to celebrate great stand-up. We hope this festival becomes an annual tradition that helps launch careers, builds community, and reflects where comedy is headed."

The NYC South Asian Comedy Festival takes place **October 16–18, 2026**, across three New York City venues. With approximately 650 total seats available across all five shows, organizers encourage audiences to purchase tickets early.

Festival Details

Event: NYC South Asian Comedy Festival

Dates: October 16–18, 2026

Locations: Lofte 23, Broadway Comedy Club, and Top Secret Comedy Club

Tickets: Available now at https://southasiancomedyfest.com

About NYC South Asian Comedy Festival

The NYC South Asian Comedy Festival is New York City's first festival dedicated exclusively to South Asian stand-up comedy. Produced by Laughing Lassi, the festival brings together established headliners, emerging talent, and rising comedians from across the global South Asian diaspora for a weekend celebrating the richness, diversity, and humor of South Asian culture. Through multiple themed showcases, the festival aims to create a lasting platform for comedians while introducing broader audiences to one of the fastest-growing and most dynamic voices in comedy.

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