

Chinese New Year

What Is Chinese New Year?

Chinese New Year is a traditional and very important Chinese holiday. It is also known as the Spring Festival, or the Lunar New Year because the Chinese calendar uses the moon year as well as the solar year.

Chinese New Year is also celebrated in many other countries: Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines are only a few.



Facts About Chinese New Year

- The date changes each year depending on the lunar calendar.
- It is the longest festival in the Chinese calendar, lasting up to 15 days.
- It is a time for people to spring clean their houses.
- Chinese New Year is symbolic of letting go of the past and welcoming new beginnings.

How Is It Celebrated?

Chinese New Year is celebrated through a number of traditions.

Red envelopes: Red represents good luck, fortune and joy in Chinese traditions. Money is given in red envelopes. The amount people receive is usually an even number.

Firecrackers: Firecrackers are popular during the Chinese New Year. They are thought to scare off evil spirits. Some countries have banned them as they can be dangerous.

Lion and dragon dances: These dances are performed by

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talented people, under huge dragon and lion costumes. Loud music with cymbals and drums, is played. This is to frighten away bad spirits. The dragon dance is a popular part of the celebrations.

Food and families: It is usual for Chinese families to gather together for dinner the night before the Chinese New Year begins. Chicken and prawns represent happiness, whilst noodles represent long life.



Legends

Each year is named after a different animal. This comes from a legendary Chinese story. The story goes that the Jade Emperor told the animals to have a race. He would name each year depending on the order the animals finished the race.

Rat won the race, with the pig strolling in last.