

Celebrating Lunar New Year in China and Vietnam

Chapel Presentation January 25, 2022

Vietnam

Chúc Mừng Năm Mới

China

Zài Zhōngguó guò Chūnjié

在 中 国 过 春 节

Call to Worship

One: Creator Spirit, You welcome us into a new year with open arms.

All: We come as one to celebrate in your presence.

One: May You embrace each of us as we embrace our own loved ones,

All: filling us with joy and with all that we need.

One: Open to the good that you share with us, we rejoice as one family,

All: renewed by Your love even as You renew the seasons.

One: You are with us whether we are near or far,

All: whether we are at home or abroad.

One: We take comfort in knowing that You nurture and guide us as we look forward to a new year of hope and promise.

All: May we grow, thrive, and bear fruit like a good harvest under Your care. Amen.

What is a “Lunar New Year?”

For many of us, New Year’s Day is always on January 1. This is because we use a solar calendar to determine when seasons begin and how long a year lasts.

Many countries, including Vietnam and China, have traditionally used a calendar based on the moon rather than the sun for this, which is known as a “lunar calendar” or “agricultural calendar.” Lunar calendars are used today for calculating the dates of important traditional holidays, with solar calendars being used for other things.

Since calendars based on the moon are not in synch with those based on the sun, the Lunar New Year falls on a different date each year. In 2022, it falls on February 1.

New Year Traditions: Family (Vietnam)



Tết là ngày để mọi người trong gia đình sum vầy, hỏi thăm sức khỏe và bàn những chuyện đã xảy ra trong năm
New Year is a day for everyone in the family to gather, ask about their health and discuss what happened during the year.

New Year Traditions: Family (China)



在除夕的时候，大家都要回家跟家人团聚在一起，吃团圆饭。
On Lunar New Year's Eve, people gather at home to eat a big "reunion meal" with their families.

New Year Traditions: Food (Vietnam)

Gói bánh chưng, bánh tét:

Bánh chưng is a traditional Vietnamese food which is made from glutinous rice, mung beans, pork and other ingredients.



Bánh chưng là một món ăn truyền thống của Việt Nam được làm từ gạo nếp, đậu xanh, thịt lợn và các nguyên liệu khác.

New Year Traditions: Food (Vietnam)

Mâm Cỗ ngày Tết (The Banquet on Tet Holiday)

Những món ăn ngày Tết không đơn giản chỉ để thưởng thức cũng gia đình, mà mỗi món ăn chứa đựng những giá trị thiêng liêng, vừa hàm chứa ý nghĩa tâm linh, vừa thể hiện bản sắc văn hoá lâu đời của mỗi vùng miền. Ví dụ như là miền Bắc, trên mâm cỗ thường có Thịt đông tượng trưng cho sự may mắn cả năm, thịt gà thể hiện sự ấm no, hạnh phúc, còn giò chả thì gọi lên sự phúc lộc đầy nhà. Mặt khác, ở Miền Nam chúng ta sẽ có thịt kho tàu, món ăn của sự sum vầy ấm cúng, củ kiệu ngâm tượng trưng cho tiền bạc, sự vinh hoa và phú quý, và khổ qua nhồi thịt hàm ý cho sự tiêu tan của những muộn phiền.



The dishes on the Tet holiday are not simply to enjoy with families, but each of them contains different values and spiritual meanings, as well as expresses the colorful and cultural identity of each region. To illustrate, in the North, there is often jellied meat for the whole year of luck; chicken represents warmth and happiness; and spring rolls bring wealth fortune to the house. On the other hand, in the South, we will have caramelized pork, a dish of the cozy reunion, small pickled leeks for money and glories, while stuffed bitter melon soup signifies the dissipation of sorrows.

New Year Traditions: Food (China)

在中国，食物也很有意味。过春节的时候，大家都会包饺子，意思是希望新年充满了幸福。再说，鱼是非吃不可的，但不能吃所有，因为“年年有鱼”和“年年有余”的发音一样，所以必须留下一些。



In China, food also has special meaning. During the New Year, families will make filled dumplings called “jiaozi” to represent their hope for a New Year full of prosperity. In addition, there must be fish—but you can’t eat it all! This is because the phrases, “Every year there’s fish,” and “Every year there’s plenty” sound the same, and Chinese people like to leave some of that plenty for each other.

New Year Traditions: Red Envelopes



Vào những ngày tết, những người lớn tuổi hơn thường lì xì cho trẻ em bằng chiếc phong bao lì xì màu đỏ gửi gắm lời chúc hạnh phúc, may mắn cả năm.

On New Year's Day, older people often give children lucky money with a red envelope to send wishes of happiness and luck for the whole year.

在中国，过春节的时候也要送红包，意思也是祝福收红包的人一年的幸福及好运。

In China, people also give red envelopes with money for the New Year. Red is a lucky color, so the meaning of giving a red envelope is to wish the recipient good luck and prosperity for the New Year.

New Year Traditions: Praying for A Good Year



In both China and Vietnam, starting the New Year with a clean slate—both physically and spiritually—is very important. This is why people will often clean their houses and then dress their best to go to a temple to pray for good fortune in the New Year. In Vietnamese, this practice is called *Đi chùa đầu năm*, while in Chinese, it is known as *去寺庙拜年 qù sì miào bài nián*..

Other New Year Traditions Vietnam: Bày mâm ngũ quả

Một mâm ngũ quả trên bàn thờ tổ tiên trong những ngày Tết tượng trưng cho lòng kính ngưỡng và biết ơn của người Việt đối với Trời Đất và tổ tiên, và cũng thể hiện khát vọng của họ đối với sự thịnh vượng quanh năm. Ngoài ra, “ngũ” còn thể hiện cho ước muốn của những người con đất Việt đạt được ngũ phúc lâm môn: Trường Thọ, Phú Quý, An Khang, Hảo Đức, và Thiện Chung. Mỗi loại quả đều có ý nghĩa riêng vì thế người ta chọn các loại quả khác nhau để có thể bày mâm ngũ quả tùy theo văn hóa từng vùng miền cũng như đặc trưng về khí hậu, sản vật và quan niệm riêng.



A “Mâm Ngũ Quả” (five-fruit tray) on the ancestor altar during the Tet holiday symbolizes the admiration and gratitude of the Vietnamese to Heaven and Earth and their ancestors and demonstrates their aspiration for prosperity. The five fruits tray consists of at least 5 different types of fruits, and each is a symbol of a wish through their names and colors. In addition, “five” also expresses the desire of Vietnamese people to achieve the five blessings of forestry: Longevity, Wealth, Wellbeing, Virtue, and Peace. As each fruit has its own meaning, people choose different fruits to display the five fruits tray depending on the culture of each region along with the characteristics of climate, products, and personal notions.

Other New Year Traditions

China: Pasting Matching Couplets and Inverted Characters



在中国，过年的时候都要贴红纸在家里的门和墙壁上面，写的内容叫做对联，每一行内容就是好运跟幸福。而且，有时候人也会倒贴“福”字，原因是因为“福倒”和“福到”的发音一样。

In China, people often paste matching couplets on the doors and walls of their homes during the New Year to wish for prosperity. They sometimes also paste inverted “Prosperity” characters, since “Prosperity is here” and “Prosperity inverted” are pronounced the same in Chinese.

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新年快乐!

Happy New Year!