

WELCOME TO THE YEAR OF THE OX

HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR!

THE HISTORY OF CHINESE NEW YEAR IN SAN FRANCISCO

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San Francisco has the oldest Chinese community in North America[1] and the second largest Chinese American population in the US. [2] Chinese roots here are deep and rich. One tradition that has endured, even flourished, especially in SF, is Chinese New Year.

Chinese New Year is based on the ancient Chinese lunar calendar. This calendar was not static and was changed according to which emperor held power and varied from region to region. [3] Today, the date of Chinese New Year is measured by the lunar phases of the moon as well as solar solstices and equinoxes. Consequently, the date also varies from year to year. Chinese New Year typically begins with the new moon that occurs between the end of January and the end of February and lasts about 15 days [4]. This year, the New Year starts on February 12.

[1] <https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/san-francisco-chinatown>

[2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Chinese_Americans_in_San_Francisco

[3] <https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/chinese-new-year>

[4] Id





The animal associated with each year corresponds to the Chinese zodiac, a cycle of 12 signs.[1] As myth goes, the Jade Emperor wanted 12 animals to be his guards. So he sent an emissary to earth with a message that the first ones through his gates would have a higher rank.[2] The animals entered in the following order: rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig. [3] This year is the year of the Ox. Oxes are known for being honest, diligent, dependable, and for great strength and determination. [4] Oxes have abundant patience and a desire for progress. [5] They persist according to their ideals and abilities despite surrounding pressures. [6] Oxes are methodical and always have a detailed plan in place; consequently, people of the Ox zodiac sign often enjoy great success. [7] If you were born in 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985 or 1997, you are an Ox. [8] Your lucky colors are red, blue and purple. Your lucky numbers are 1 and 9. [9]

Some common themes in every year's parade are the dragon and lion dances. In Chinese culture, dragons symbolize wisdom, power, and wealth and are believed to bring good luck.[10] Lions symbolize power, wisdom, and superiority and the lion dance is for good fortune and to chase away evil spirits.[11] Likewise, the ear shattering firecrackers are also to scare away evil spirits.[12] Legend has it that at the beginning of every new year, a monster called Nian would attack villagers. But it was discovered that Nian was afraid of loud noises and the color red.[13] Hence the fireworks and the ubiquitous red seen everywhere during Chinese New Year.

Unfortunately, this year's Chinese New Year's parade is canceled. It's been a tradition in SF since 1851[14] where it was used as a means to introduce Chinese culture and traditions to the wider community.[15] Pre-covid, the parade was attended by hundreds of thousands of people and watched by millions more on television.[16] The planning and organization of the parade usually takes about 6 months and up to 200k firecrackers.[17] This year, in lieu of a live parade, there will be a Parade Broadcast Special.[18]

**SFLPA wishes everyone good health, good luck, and good fortune,
and a very Happy Chinese New Year!**

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- [5] <https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/chinese-zodiac/story.htm>
 - [6] Id
 - [7] Id
 - [8] https://www.travelchinaguide.com/intro/social_customs/zodiac/ox.htm
 - [9] Id
 - [10] Id
 - [11] Id
 - [12] Id
 - [13] Id
 - [14] <https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/special-report/chinese-new-year/new-year-dragon-dance.htm>
 - [15] <https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/special-report/chinese-new-year/new-year-lion-dance.htm>
 - [16] <https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/festivals/chinese-new-year-firecrackers.htm>
 - [17] <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chinese-New-Year>
 - [18] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco_Chinese_New_Year_Festival_and_Parade
 - [19] <https://chinese-parade.com/about-the-parade/>
 - [20] William Gee, Southwest Airlines Chinese New Year Festival & Parade, Bleacher Tickets & Public Relations
 - [21] Id
 - [22] https://chinese-parade.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/CNYP-2021-Press-Release_Final.pdf

