

《实用口语：如何用英语介绍中国春节？》



What does the holiday mean?

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The term "pass year" is used for the Spring Festival (Chinese New Year). The word "Year" in Chinese characters used to mean a horrible beast. To combat the beast, the Chinese hang "good luck" wishes on red paper on the door and use fireworks in the belief that the beast fears red and fire. This tradition in many ways resemble the Western belief of using garlic and crosses to fight vampires.

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Why New Year is so special?

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The Chinese zodiac features 12 animals in the sequence of Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. This year is the year of Tiger. Each animal represents a different "personality". According to legend, people held a conference with all the animals, informing them that they would pick the 12 to represent the zodiac. However, in spite of being fast, the cat was not picked as its then-close friend, the rat, did not wake it. This action sparked off a rivalry that continues till this day.

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What do people do?

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Eat, eat again, and then eat some more! As the old Chinese saying goes: food is everything.

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The tradition is to have different main courses everyday from the 1st day of the New Year to the 15th day of the New Year, from Jiao Zi (dumplings), noodles, spring rolls, sticky rice cakes, and Tang Yuan (stuffed rice balls). Besides culinary satisfaction, each food has a meaning as well: for instance, Jiao Zi looks like gold, implying a wealthy year ahead.

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