

The Nuances of Chinese New Year You May Not Know

Here in America we think of Chinese New Year as being relatively similar to ours. We throw a party on New Years Eve, then come up with a resolution that most of us usually can't even hold too for three months. Chinese New Year to us seems like just a day when a couple of firecrackers get shot off, that cool looking multi-person dragon costume gets paraded around the streets and we find out if it's the year of the Rat or the Snake. This is a totally incorrect perception of the real holiday. The parade with the dragon costume actually began in Los Angeles a little over a hundred years ago as a way for immigrants to share their culture. The whole, year based on the animal part is also only about as culturally important as is reading your horoscope in America. The truth is, in China, entering the New Year is more substantial than just an opportunity to party with a day off to rest like it is here. Actually, depending on the region the celebrations and customs can last for over to two weeks after the actual New Year!

To the Chinese, the New Year signifies a time to cleanse the spirit and start fresh, and they go about doing this in a number of ways depending on which region they reside in and how spiritual they are. One practice common to most no matter what faith is an extensive cleaning of their home in order to expel the bad luck from the year before and prepare the home to accept good luck. Many specific traditions regarding food are held to closely, for example abstaining from meat on certain days or making specific items like dumplings on others. In fact on the thirteenth day it's traditional to only eat fruits and vegetables to help cleanse their stomachs of all the food they have eaten during all the festivities in the preceding weeks.

On the day after New Years many older married couples will give the younger members of the family red envelopes with money in them to help them start saving for that year. A lot of times people don't get to see their extended family, or even their parents very often throughout the year, specific trips are worked into the traditions to help families catch up and bury the hatchet on any old animosity. For example generally the first day is for visiting the oldest members of the family, the second day is for married daughters to see their birth parents, and the third day is considered a bad day to interact with family so people often stay in this day.

These complex traditions give the New Year a feel of beginning anew and help confer a sense of peace to the people who take part in them. Adding a few of these into American culture could probably help a lot of people maintain perspective in their lives instead of getting swept up in the hustle and bustle. The next time you see that awesome dragon parade, consider trying one of these traditions, you may feel a little better about yourself afterwards!

About the Author

The CostumeKid is a full time blogger who has made it his mission to ensure that no person goes another Halloween with a bad costume. Whether you need costumes for Halloween, a costume party, even [plus size couples costume](#), the Costume kid has your costume hookup!

Source: <http://www.articlesdirector.com>