

Chinese New Year 2025



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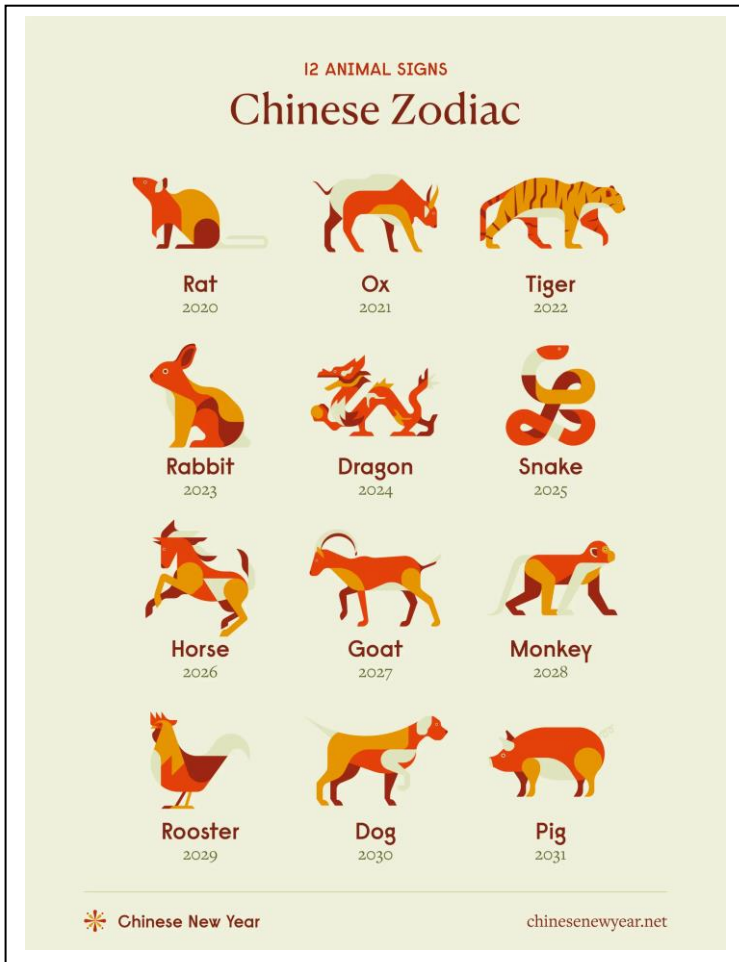
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Foreword

The Lunar New Year in 2025 begins on 29 January, ushering the Year of the Snake. The new year period lasts 15 days during which blessings are exchanged between family members, relatives and friends.

This exhibition aims to introduce some of the Chinese New Year (CNY) decorations symbolizing good fortune, success and happiness. Red is prominently used in decorations as it is considered an auspicious colour.

Set against a background of a Chinese ink painting, there is a garden scene with a pavilion. Why the pavilion? It has historically been a space for social gatherings, artistic pursuits and cultural events. CNY is time for social gatherings.



The Year of the Snake

The snake is the 6th of the 12-year cycle of animals in the Chinese zodiac. As this animal is known for shredding its skin, 2025 signifying 'letting go of the past baggage and embracing new beginnings.'

Kumquats or mandarin oranges

They symbolize prosperity and good luck. Homes are decorated with kumquat plants during the new year. When visiting a household of a relative or friend, a visitor traditionally brings a pair of mandarins for the host/hostess and in return the latter gives the visitor two oranges before they leave. Exchange of blessings.



Sweet glutinous rice cake (Niangao).

This sticky rice cake represents togetherness of family members. The word 'gao' meaning cake sounds like 'high' in Chinese. So, it also symbolizes promotion, getting higher grades in studies, growth in business.

Red Packets (Hong Bao).

These are given to wish recipients good fortune, happiness and prosperity. They usually contain new crisp even-numbered currency notes, e.g. \$8, \$60. It is a tradition for the elders or married couples to give their unmarried young ones red packets. Even numbers are considered lucky, especially 8 and 6. The only unlucky even number is 4 as it sounds like 'death'.

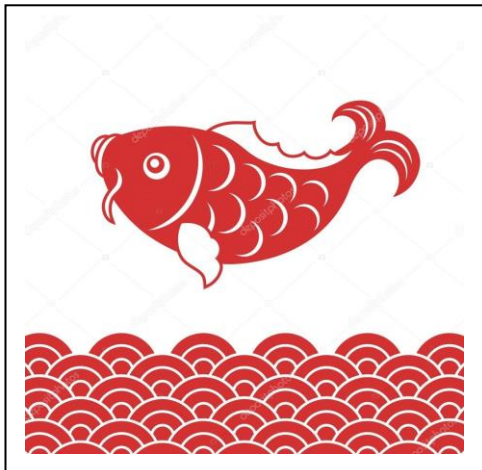


Fu.

It is a Chinese custom to paste this character on doors to welcome good fortune. Sometimes, it is positioned upside down. The pronunciation of 'upside-down' is similar to 'arrive' in Chinese. Hence, the inverted symbol means "Good fortune is here"

Candy box.

Festive seasons customarily are accompanied with sweet foodstuff. In every household, a candy box filled with nuts and sweets are placed on a table throughout the 15 days of the new year, awaiting to be served to visitors.

**Fish (yu).**

Fish ('yu' in Chinese) is normally consumed during the New Year's Eve reunion dinner when family members gather as its pronunciation means abundance. 'Yusheng' is a popular dish served in restaurants or as takeaway during CNY. It is a kind of veggie salad with small pieces of raw fish. Tossing 'yusheng' is a gesture to bring prosperity.

Gold Coins.

Gold coins hung with red strings symbolize wealth and success in one's endeavour. Note that the round coin has a square centre. The roundness represents heaven and the square earth, signifying harmony and protection.



Characteristics of the Snake.

People born in the year of the Snake (such as 1941, 1953, 1965) are considered to be mysterious and private, intelligent, intuitive, goal-oriented, caring, able to communicate and solve problems well.

Acknowledgements

Gong Xi Fa Cai

Thank you for visiting the Gek Contemporary. Hope to see you again soon.