

# Celebrating the Lunar New Year



[Source](#)

The Lunar New Year also referred to as the Spring Festival, Chinese New Year, Tet by Vietnamese Canadians, or Solnal by Korean Canadians, is celebrated in Canada and other countries. [Source](#)

## When is the Lunar New Year?

This year, the Lunar New Year is January 29, 2025.

- The Lunar New Year begins with the first new moon and concludes with the first full moon, spanning 15 days. Since the lunar calendar follows the moon's cycles, the holiday dates shift slightly each year. [Source](#)

## Origins and Significance of the Lunar New Year

- The Lunar New Year is a significant celebration in Chinese tradition. It marks the end of winter and the arrival of spring, symbolizing renewal, prosperity, and hope for a successful harvest in the upcoming year.
- Each year is linked to one of the 12 animals in the Chinese zodiac, with each animal representing its unique symbolism and traits. For example, 2025 is the Year of the Snake, which symbolizes wisdom, knowledge, intelligence, intuition, and creativity. [Source](#)
- Over time, Lunar New Year celebrations extended beyond China, with countries like Vietnam, South Korea, and Malaysia incorporating the festival into their traditions.

- Different regions and communities have their unique ways of observing the Lunar New Year, each with distinct interpretations and traditions. [Source](#)
- For example, in Vietnam, the holiday known as Tết Nguyên Đán (Tết) features unique customs such as displaying peach blossoms and making square sticky rice cakes (banh chung).
- In South Korea, the celebration called Seollal includes honouring ancestors through a ritual known as charye (memorial service) and playing traditional games like yutnori (a board game). [Source](#)
- In many cultures, cleaning and spiritually cleansing the home is essential for preparing for the new year. Ceremonies are performed to attract abundance and good luck. This holiday also encourages connections with family and friends, allowing people to share stories and honour their ancestors. [Source](#)

## Traditions and symbols

### Red envelopes (hongbao or lai see)

- Are a beloved tradition during the Lunar New Year. These envelopes, containing money, are given to children and unmarried young adults. The amounts typically feature even numbers, as odd numbers are associated with funerals. The red colour, symbolizing luck and protection, conveys wishes for a prosperous future. [Source](#)

### Lion and dragon dances

- Accompanied by loud drumbeats and clashing cymbals, the lion dance is typically performed in pairs by skilled artists who imitate a lion's movements to bring good luck. The dragon dance, featuring a long, undulating body, symbolizes strength and fertility. [Source](#)

### Decorations

- Red is the primary colour used in Lunar New Year decorations. Homes and businesses are decorated with red paper cuttings featuring various symbols, poetic door couplets with blessings, and red lanterns to attract prosperity. Additionally, many families place citrus fruits and blooming flowers on their tables to symbolize growth and wealth. [Source](#)

## Fireworks and firecrackers

- Fireworks have traditionally been used to ward off evil spirits and bad luck, creating an exciting atmosphere during the Lunar New Year. Sparklers and confetti poppers are popular alternatives to fireworks. [Source](#)

## Significance of the Lunar New Year in Canada

- Since June 2016, Lunar New Year has been recognized as an official holiday in Canada.
- Additionally, since 1997, Canada Post has commemorated the Lunar New Year by releasing stamps that showcase the astrological sign of the year.
- Beginning in 1999, Canada Post started offering Lunar New Year stamps in various denominations: one for first-class domestic mail and another for international mail, which is also available in a souvenir sheet. [Source](#)
- [Do you know these Lunar New Year traditions?](#) (CBC Kids)
- [It's the Year of the Snake! What's your lunar zodiac animal?](#) (CBC Kids)

## Community Events

- [Markets, concerts and Lunar New Year celebrations: Here's where you can welcome the Year of the snake in Toronto](#) (The Star)
- [Dazzling fireworks show will ring in Lunar New Year in Toronto for the first time ever - January 25](#) (Blogto)
- [Lunar New Year 2025 Celebrations \(January 26\)](#) (Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto)
- [Pacific Mall's Lunar New Year Celebration 2025 \(Feb 1, 2, 8\)](#)

## Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

- At Holland Bloorview, we recognize that empowering and elevating diversity is critical to fostering a healthy team. Creating a sense of well-being and belonging for all employees, volunteers, and students is an important part of this work. We're doing this by supporting the formation of employee resource groups (ERGs) or interest groups.
- The IDEAA office has a [toolkit](#) with instructions for staff members who want to form a resource group. The IDEAA office can assist ERG leads with administrative support, such as creating internal communications, setting up meetings, and sharing information with managers to encourage employee participation in these groups with enough notice. Discretionary funds are available if any ERGs would like to organize an official learning event for their members and the organization.



This resource was developed by the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Anti-Racism Office (IDEAA). If you have any comments or would like to suggest additional resources, please e-mail [ideaa@hollandbloorview.ca](mailto:ideaa@hollandbloorview.ca)

