



The Spring Festival is the most important festival for the Chinese people and is when all family members get together, just like Christmas in the West. The Spring Festival falls on the 1st day of the 1st lunar month, often one month later than the Gregorian calendar. It originated in the Shang Dynasty (c. 1600 BC-c. 1100 BC) from the people's sacrifice to gods and ancestors at the end of an old year and the beginning of a new one.

Chinese New Year Greetings and Traditions



春联 (chun lian) Spring Festival couplets: People decorate their rooms featuring an atmosphere of rejoicing and festivity. All the door panels will be pasted with Spring Festival couplets, highlighting Chinese calligraphy with black characters on red paper. The content varies from house owners' wishes for a bright future to good luck for the New Year. Also, pictures of the aod of doors and wealth will be posted on front doors



饺子 (jiaozi): People in northern China will eat jiaozi, or dumplings, for breakfast, as they think "jiaozi" in sound means "bidding farewell to the old and ushering in the new". Also, the shape of the dumpling is like gold ingot from ancient China. So people eat them and wish for money and treasure.

年糕 (niangao): Southern Chinese eat niangao (New Year cake made of glutinous rice flour) on this occasion, because as a homophone, niangao means "higher and higher, one year after another." The first five days after the Spring Festival are a good time for relatives, friends, and classmates as well as colleagues to exchange greetings, gifts and chat leisurely.



放鞭炮 (Burning fireworks): Burning fireworks are the most typical custom on the Spring Festival. People thought the spluttering sound could help drive away evil spirits. Besides, Chinese New Year is celebrated with Chinese dragon dances and lion dances.

