

# A CHINESE NEW YEAR

The Chinese New Year is one of those celebrations steeped in tradition yet shaped with modernity. Today often called the Spring Festival, CNY draws together loved ones during (as the name suggests) spring. Local Chinese journalist **Apple Mandy** explores some of the nuances of the holiday's history, considering everything from the colour red to the importance of cleanliness. She also checks in with leading luxury brands to explore just what they're doing to celebrate the region and the approaching Year of the Goat

IMAGES: CORBIS





**HISTORY**

Originating during the Shang Dynasty between 17th and 11th century BC, the Chinese New Year (CNY) holiday centres on people spending time with families and loved ones. Traditionally, during CNY entire households stopped other business. Instead, families focused on cleaning homes to rid them of ‘inauspicious breaths’ that might have amassed during the old year. Elders gave money to children, while ritual sacrifices of paper and food were offered to gods and ancestors. On New Year’s Eve, the entire family would join together for the most important part of the celebration: feasting.

In 1912, when China adopted the Western calendar, the Chinese joined in the celebration of January 1st as New Year’s Day. Yet China continues to embrace the CNY, only in a slightly shorter version. The name also changed, altering to the Spring Festival.

**FIREWORKS**

Firecrackers in mainland China are generally set off at midnight, while firework displays in Hong Kong are set off on the second day to mark the beginning of the week-long celebration. In some provinces, firecrackers are set off again on the fourth day, known as the welcoming of the fortune gods, to ensure an abundant wealth in the coming year.

**WRAPPED IN RED**

Chinese New Year is full of traditions and customs based on ancient legends. A popular one is for the elderly and married couples to give out a single note in red envelopes, or hongbao, to their children and single friends as a means to send their blessings and wishes. Temple visits in the early hours of the New Year are one of the solemn duties to bring luck for the year ahead.

**CLEANING**

In the preceding days, cleaning every corner of the house is believed to drive bad luck away. Moreover, the character fu, meaning good fortune or happiness, in visually enticing red paper-cuts or Chinese knots are displayed to express good wishes and yearning for the future.

**FLOWERS**

Flowers are also a sight for sore eyes. It signifies life, fortune and the advent of spring, and it also symbolises harmony. In Hong Kong, the Flower Market Road in Mongkok gets crowded in the Eve with elders buying them. The plum blossoms and white narcissus are two most popular types that symbolise prosperity.

**THE YEAR OF THE GOAT**

While 2014 was ruled by the horse, 2015 is the year of the goat. A symbol of peace, harmonious co-existence and tranquility, the year is forecast to be a good one.

Jumeirah Group has announced three new management agreements to operate luxury hotels and resorts across China. The Jumeirah Haikou Resort is set in an exclusive golf community on a 136 hectare private island in Hainan; the Jumeirah Wuhan has a prime city centre location near to Hankou; and Jumeirah Nanjing is set in the Hexi new business district. The hotels will open starting from 2016.

# Indulgent luxuries in the New Year



**BEGÜM KHAN'S GOAT CUFFLINKS**

Founded by Istanbul-born designer Begum Kiroglu, the brand specialises in handcrafted cufflinks inspired by history and craftsmanship of Old World cultures, as well as the vibrant style of modern day Istanbul and Shanghai. Blending the Ottoman and the Oriental, Khan’s latest goat cufflink collection is a great addition to any wardrobe.

**MÉTIERS D'ART THE LEGEND OF THE CHINESE ZODIAC - GOAT**

Vacheron Constatine’s Year of the Goat model comes with a special Grand Feu enameling, a technique invented in Geneva. The mechanical self-winding movement is equipped with a 22-carat gold oscillating weight adorned with a dynamic geometrical motif, inspired by the shape of the Maltese Cross, the historical Horse emblem.



**CHOPARD'S L.U.C XP URUSHI - YEAR OF THE GOAT**

The ancestral Japanese lacquerwork, Urushi, is combined with Swiss horological refinement in this unique timepiece. As traditionally represented in the Chinese zodiac, the goat is a peaceful creature, even if it cannot bear injustice, which it's always keen to oppose.

**CHARLOTTE OLYMPIA SHANGHAI EXPRESS**

Inspired by ancient dynasties with an abundance of colour, texture, and tradition, Charlotte Olympia’s latest collection is influenced by China. Particularly striking are these red heels.

