

Facts About Chinese New Year (Part 1)

(Story words: family, January, February, round, noodles)

In the United States, people travel to be with family near Thanksgiving Day, which makes the dates around Thanksgiving the most traveled days in the U.S. In China, people want to reunite with family for Chinese New Year, and so the days near the Chinese New Year are the most popular travel days.

Chinese New Year is based on a lunar calendar, a much older calendar than the modern calendar. Chinese New Year occurs at the end of January or the beginning of February. The holiday is more than 3,000 years old. The theme of the holiday is new beginnings and fresh starts. Long ago, people hoped for a good spring planting season and a plentiful harvest.

Today, people think of the family prospering in all of their efforts. People have festive dinners and lunches. They decorate their homes and light firecrackers. They may go to public parks where there are spectacular firework displays.

They also prepare and eat dishes that are related to the holiday, like dumplings and noodles. Some people say that round dumplings represent the hope for family being together. Some say long, uncut noodles represent the hope for long life.