

# The Traditional Spring Festival Folklore in Ningbo

The traditional Spring Festival holiday is only a month away, the Spring Festival, which falls on the 1st of January of Lunar Calendar, represent the most important traditional festival in China, the same in Ningbo.

People typically get up early in the morning and wear new clothes and shoes, adult and kids alike, as a way of bidding farewell to the old and ushering in the new. Men in family do the job of opening the door and setting off three firecrackers in the courtyard, an action known as Door Opening Firecrackers, with greater cracking sound presaging a more auspicious new year. Later, they put in place joss stick and candles, fruits and pictures of their forefathers for the sake of honoring their ancestors, the heaven and earth as whole. Sometimes the worshiping takes place in the ancestral hall, if there is one.

Younger members of a family pay a new year call to senior members, a ritual known as Baisui, and they cup one hand in another while meeting relatives and friends as token of a new year call, greeting them with Gongxi Gongxi or Xinnian Facai, auspicious greetings. Breakfast is traditionally served with stuffed lard and sweet fillings dump-



Residents hung lanterns for Spring Festival .  
Zhang Peijian/For Ningbo Evening News

plings. The dishes serve as a symbol of sweetness and family reunion. Red date soup and longan soup are also an option, signifying prosperity and family reunion. After the breakfast, juniors serve their parents and grandparents with Chinese olive and kumquat tea, or what is known as Yuanbao Tea. On the first day of Spring Festival, people re-

frain from paying visits, sweeping the floor, using knives or scissors of lighting lamp. Rather, they go to bed early after finishing dinner. On the second day, mutual visit and Bainian begin with liquor gifts, cakes, complements, among others. Each family treats guests with melon seeds, peanuts, sugar and fruits.

What is most interesting is to watch and engage in various cultural and recreational activities.

Among other activities, there are gong and drum performances, dragon dance and lion dance, horse race lamp, fireworks, juggling in city streets and parks, pastry supply , goods and new theatrical pieces and movies in theater, like Tiaojiaguan (Masked Dancing Pray Higher Rank) and Yingcaishen (Welcome God of Wealth). Some lantern theatrical troupes are organized on an hoc basis for lantern horse races from household to household in exchange for some items or cash. Some loafers, with festoons on their heads, act like they are sweeping the floor with brooms covered by colored ribbons when they reach a household. Saying out loud or singing auspicious words while doing the sweeping, they can win favor from home owners, who, in turn, distribute cash and rice cakes.

Spring Festival is over after the 5th day of January in Lunar calendar when employees return to work and businesses are open.

--,"The Culture of Ningbo: A Reader", (Zhejiang University Press).



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