

Happy Chinese New Year to you!

A wide events programme in Edinburgh is connecting local audiences and businesses with Chinese visitors and performers in Edinburgh for a brand new festival this month.

Scotland's largest ever celebration of Chinese New Year is now on until 17 February 2019.

For the first time ever, a co-ordinated programme of special events and initiatives will take place across Scotland's capital as locals and visitors celebrate the Year of the Pig together.

Recognising the steady growth of individual Chinese events in the capital, mostly aimed at the local Chinese community, the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group has partnered with Scottish Confucius Institute for Business & Communication at Heriot-Watt University to develop, amplify and broaden the reach of Chinese New Year celebrations in the capital. Featuring events for all ages across the city Chinese New Year Edinburgh is set to reinforce Edinburgh's position as the UK's most China Friendly destination.

With showcase events at the Usher Hall, National Museum of Scotland, Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh and Edinburgh Zoo, locals and visitors alike are invited to enjoy world class performance in music and dance, visit spectacular exhibitions and take part in everything from taster sessions in Chinese brush painting to the first ever bilingual Chinese / Scots ceilidh.

Landmark buildings across the capital were lit up in red to mark the occasion and local businesses in the city will welcome visitors with everything from traditional red envelopes to bespoke cocktails.







Landmarks in red include; Edinburgh Castle, Balmoral Hotel, The Outlook Tower at Camera Obscura, Jenners Department Store, Harvey Nichols, The Scotch Whisky Experience and Edinburgh Airport. Full festival programme at www.chinesenewyear.scot

National Museum of Scotland will open its new Exploring East Asia Galleries later this week and as part of Chinese New Year Edinburgh are running a special programme of events for all ages. Visitors to the museum can dress up in traditional costumes, try their hands at calligraphy, paper and flower crafts, enjoy music and dance performances and a host of fun

family activities.

In addition on Saturday 16th February, the Grand Gallery will be brought to life as internationally renowned Shanghai Theatre Academy Performance Group present a selection of beautiful and dynamic dances from their UK tour.

The Usher Hall will host the official Chinese New Year Concert this Saturday 9 February 2019. Presented by the Asian Association of Commerce and Culture in Europe, the concert will feature the Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra, the Edinburgh Singers, and many outstanding artists and soloists from China and Scotland including a never before heard rendition of *Auld Lang Syne*.

Chinese New Year Edinburgh will be the final opportunity to see the Giant Lanterns of China at Edinburgh Zoo where 200 artisans from China have created a world of folktales and fantasy told with over 450 stunning lanterns. Blending Scottish and Chinese folklore this colorful trail is Scotland's only Chinese lantern festival and runs until 17 February.

National Gallery of Scotland will invite visitors to take part in Chinese brush painting taster sessions this weekend on 9 February, National Library of Scotland hosted the launch of *The Chinese in Britain* a new book by Barclay Price just yesterday and also St Cecilia's Hall & Music Museum hosted a bilingual ceilidh to make the joy and breathless wonder of the traditional Scottish ceilidh accessible to visitors and residents from China. (And it looks as though they had a good time!)

Top fun tonight [@StCeciliashall](#) first ever [#Scots](#) / [#Chinese](#) [#bilingual](#) ceilidh celebrating [#CNY](#) with a terrific group of young [#visitors](#) from [#China](#) [@ChinaScotLink](#) [@ChinaBritain](#) [@ETAG_UK](#) [@thelistmagazine](#) [@EdinUniLocal](#) [@MuseumsGalScot](#) [#heritage](#) [#culture](#) [#SpringFestival](#) pic.twitter.com/xXbMnyFm7r

– Ruthanne Baxter (@ruthannebaxter) [February 4, 2019](#)

These are just a selection of events taking place as part of Chinese New Year Edinburgh. A full programme is available to view online at www.chinesenewyear.scot and in brochures distributed across the capital in partnership with The List Magazine.



The Giant Lanterns of China at Edinburgh Zoo

Speaking at the launch of Chinese New Year Edinburgh, Lord Provost Frank Ross said: “Chinese New Year Edinburgh is a wonderful opportunity to build on the feel good festival momentum generated at Hogmanay. The rich programme of events will not only give the people of Edinburgh a chance to join in the celebrations and learn more about Chinese culture but also provide a warm welcome to visitors that this festival city has become renowned for.”

Consul General Mr Pan Xinchun added to the Lord Provost’s comments saying; “I’m excited to welcome this celebratory programme of events to Edinburgh and learn of the cross cultural partnerships it has developed across the city. Chinese New Year is a time to celebrate relationships and it is wonderful to see Edinburgh building on its relationship with China in a way that brings locals, visitors and the Chinese community in the city together.



Rob Lang, Chair of ETAG's China Ready Initiative said; "We're incredibly pleased with the support for Chinese New Year Edinburgh from so many local businesses who have done everything from creating special menus to giving out gifts in traditional red envelopes to customers. The openness and enthusiasm with which they have embraced this new festival will be a boost to the city during a normally quiet time for visitors."

Professor Ian Baxter, Director of the Scottish Confucius Institute for Business & Communication at Heriot-Watt University commented; "We are delighted to be working collaboratively with ETAG to support the tourism sector to become China-ready. This partnership is an important part of our wider activities which build cross-cultural understanding and business links between China and Scotland. Chinese New Year Edinburgh demonstrates the University's commitment to practical business impact in the city, and will also bring new learning and engagement opportunities for the public. I'm particularly pleased also that students studying on Heriot-Watt's postgraduate MSc Tourism and Heritage Management will be closely involved in the practical delivery and evaluation of the festival's success."

Many people are excited at the prospect of Chinese New Year

events in Edinburgh which take place from 2-17 February. This includes [@LordProvostEdin](#) who has visited China many times. pic.twitter.com/8yaLpLEbXW

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [January 14, 2019](#)

Chinese New Year is a celebration of the new year according to the lunar calendar, sharing many similarities with Scotland's own Christmas and Hogmanay traditions. Each year is attributed to an animal from 12 year cycles of the Chinese Zodiac; and on Mon 4 Feb, one in six people across the world will count down to midnight to see in the Year of the Pig, which begins on Tue 5 Feb.

Listings Information

Chinese New Year Edinburgh

Various venues across Edinburgh

2 – 17 February

www.chinesenewyear.scot

PHOTOS OF EDINBURGH LIT UP FOR CHINESE NEW YEAR BY NEIL HANNA.