

Chinese New Year – the year of the dragon

A full programme of events is taking place in the capital to start off the Year of the Dragon and celebrate Chinese New Year 2024 which officially begins on 10 February.

The entertainment in Edinburgh runs from 3 to 13 February 2024 with the Official Chinese New Year Concert, dragon and lion dances, a bilingual ceilidh, tai chi sessions, calligraphy and tarot card reading.

The Dragon is a significant emblem in Chinese culture symbolising power, nobleness, honour, luck and success, so it is predicted that the new year will bring opportunities, changes and challenges. The festival is supported by Heriot-Watt University, and Hainan Airlines and coordinated by Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG). This forms a big part of the group's China Ready initiative.

Depute Lord Provost, Lezley Marion Cameron said: "Chinese New Year is just around the corner and preparations are well underway here in Edinburgh for this year's programme.

"Year on year our Chinese New Year celebrations in Edinburgh continue to grow, fostering cultural cooperation, learning, understanding and mutual respect between the people of Scotland and China. I'd encourage everyone in the Capital to get down and join in with the wide range of events and

activities that are on offer.

“2024 is the Year of the Dragon and the year I happen to have been born. The dragon represents power, nobleness, honour, luck, and success – and it is our hope that these admirable qualities will grace our city, and the citizens in our respective countries, throughout the year ahead.”

Rob Lang, Chair of the ETAG China Ready Initiative, said “We’re delighted to be working with businesses across the city to welcome The Year of the Dragon by creating a unique and inspiring celebration of Scottish and Chinese culture. Edinburgh’s Chinese New Year Festival creates an excellent opportunity to re-affirm Scotland’s capital city as an inspiring and welcoming destination for overseas visitors and with the new direct flights to China we are expecting significantly more Chinese visitors in 2024. The Celebrations also enable the people of the city to learn more about Chinese culture.”

Professor Ian Baxter of Heriot-Watt University said: “We are once again delighted to support the Chinese New Year celebrations which are for everyone to enjoy, enabling the sharing of cultural traditions, friendship and a chance to experience something different or new. As a University with an international outlook we want to enable everyone whether student, resident or visitor to have the opportunity to positively share diverse cultural and educational opportunities.”

Johnnie Walker Princes Street is putting on two special Journey of Flavour tours, hosted in Mandarin, on Friday 9 and Sunday 11 February.

Two Bilingual Ceilidhs welcome all-comers this year- the first hosted by the University of Edinburgh at the City Art Centre on Sunday 11 February and the second at St Cecilia’s Hall on Tuesday 13 February.

The Bilingual Ceilidhs bring the joy and breathless wonder of the traditional Scottish ceilidh with a Mandarin speaking ceilidh caller making the Strip the Willow, Gay Gordons and Dashing White Sergeant fully accessible to Mandarin-speaking visitors, students and residents.

The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh hosts a concert by musicians from Tianjin University of Finance & Economics on Friday 16 February.

4 February	Chinese New Year cultural and artistic display at the Mound Precinct outside the Scottish National Gallery. Entertainment includes lion dances, folk dances, Hanfu stories, the celebrated waist drums and the Long Fan Dance. Children's activities and aa ceilidh will complete the free celebrations.
9 February	Johnnie Walker Journey of Flavour tours hosted in Mandarin. (Also on 11 February)
10 February	Edinburgh Castle will light up red The Official Chinese New Year Concert takes place at the Usher Hall with Scottish and Chinese music and song, highland dancing, the show-stopping Peking Opera and Lion and Dragon dances outside the venue.
11 February	Bilingual Ceilidh at the City Art Centre.
13 February	Bilingual Ceilidh at St Cecilia's Hall. Mandarin speaking ceilidh caller making the dances seem easy.
16 February	Concert at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh with musicians from Tianjin University of Finance & Economics.

Other events in the programme include Lion Dances at St James Quarter, Chinese Calligraphy and Paper Cutting Artists at Strathberry on Multrees Walk, Tai Chi Taster Sessions at the Tai Chi Centre on Bryson Road and [Paper Cutting](#) and [Lantern](#)

[Making Workshops](#) and a [Family Trail](#) at St Cecilia's Hall.

Camera Obscura & World of Illusions will be lighting up and decorating some of their exhibits, and Harvey Nichols is hosting Lunar New Year Tarot Card Reading with Kalem, Scotland's leading palmist.

Shops and businesses around Edinburgh are participating in the Festival with a range of specially themed Year of the Dragon offers. Full details of all events, offers and activities can be found at www.chinesenewyear.scot



Ceilidh at St Cecilia's Hall



On the rooftop of the National Museum of Scotland, a mythical unicorn lantern light up the early morning sky alongside a Chinese dragon to mark the launch of the Chinese New Year Edinburgh festival. Pic caption: Performers from Edinburgh's Chinese New Year concert on the rooftop of National Museum Scotland. Neil Hanna Photography



On the rooftop of the National Museum of Scotland, a mythical unicorn lantern light up the early morning sky alongside a Chinese dragon to mark the launch of the Chinese New Year Edinburgh festival. Neil Hanna Photography