

Five things you need to know today

It is now Chinese New Year or Lunar New Year, and there are many events planned in the capital so we are devoting a few of our five things to saying “Gung hei fat choi” – Congratulations and may you be prosperous.

This is now the Year of the Snake and many people have been celebrating and will be celebrating more this weekend – here are some suggestions:

At the Mound and elsewhere on Saturday



Calligraphy & Paper Cutting Workshop – Create your own ‘Fu’ character and Spring Festival couplets to bring blessings, joy, and prosperity to your home in the new year at a [Calligraphy & Paper Cutting Workshop](#). All materials provided.

25 January 2025.

The Mound Chinese New Year Celebration for Scotland from noon until 2pm at the Mound precinct, adjacent to the Scottish National Gallery. Free and open to the public. Experience cultural and artistic displays themed on traditional Chinese New Year celebrations at the free-to-attend [Mound Chinese New Year Celebration of Scotland 2025](#).

- **Camera Obscura & World of Illusions** – Enjoy Chinese New Year themed decorations and the red building at night at [Year of the Snake at Camera Obscura & World of Illusions](#).

From 27 January to 07 February 2025.

- **Chinese New Year Celebration** – Performed by the Edinburgh Symphony Orchestra on the prestigious stage of the Usher Hall, the [Chinese New Year Celebration](#) heralds the most important festival in the Chinese calendar with

a ground-breaking collaboration of Scottish and Chinese music and song. Don't miss the lion and dragon dance outside at 6.30 pm.

▪ **1 February 2025**

- **Chinese Lunar New Year Market** – The first Chinese cultural market in Edinburgh. Immerse yourself in Chinese culture with unique art pieces and traditional food at the free to attend [Chinese Lunar New Year Market](#) at the Out of the Blue Drill Hall.

01 February 2025

- **The Empress and Me Chinese New Year 2025 Performance** – Supported by Heriot-Watt University, in collaboration with the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, and presented by Grist to the Mill and Red Dragonfly Productions, [The Empress and Me Chinese New Year 2025 Performance](#) is a highlight of the city's cultural calendar and a cherished tradition of its Chinese New Year celebrations

08 February 2025.

- **Chinese Calligraphy Experience at Strathberry, Multrees Walk** – To celebrate the Year of the Snake, customers will receive a complimentary Charlotte Purse with any purchase over £300 on **1 February 2025** at the Multrees Walk store. At the [Chinese Calligraphy Experience at Strathberry, Multrees Walk](#), guests will be able to make it their own with the in-store calligraphy artist, who will emboss a Chinese word on the back of the purse, or they can receive a personalisation on the Strathberry gift box.

At St James Quarter

On Saturday 1 February, St James Quarter will host a range of Lunar New Year-themed activities including a traditional Lion Dance procession, which will make its way through the Galleria in an eye-catching and colourful display.

The dance will be performed by the team at Yee's Hung Ga Kung Fu Edinburgh, the Lion Dance is commonly performed during Lunar New Year to bring good luck and guests will be able to enjoy two performances throughout the day at 12pm and 1pm.

St James Quarter will also be taking part in the traditional act of gift giving that is associated with Lunar New Year. Between 12pm – 4pm on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 February, lucky shoppers will have the chance to get their hands on a limited number of red envelopes including gift cards – symbolising good wishes and luck for the year ahead. These will be handed out by the Guest Services team on Level 1 and can be redeemed at retailers within The Quarter.

Brands including New Balance and Coach, will be showcasing Chinese New Year inspired limited-edition items. If you're looking to celebrate by indulging in traditional Asian cuisine, Thai Express Kitchen will be red envelop give-aways of complimentary appetisers and discount vouchers until the 5th February, while Gordon Ramsay Street Burger will feature the Lunar Burger served with Koffmann's fries for £18 until the end of January.

Anne Ledgerwood, Estate Director at St James Quarter, said: "Edinburgh is the multicultural hub for Scotland, and Lunar New Year is a great opportunity to experience the different cultures and traditions that we have here in the city.

"We hope that as many of our guests as possible will get involved in the Lunar New Year celebrations at St James Quarter on Saturday and we look forward to welcoming guests to The Quarter to celebrate the Year of the Snake with us".

<https://stjamesquarter.com/event/lunar-new-year>



Chinese textiles at the Great Tapestry of Scotland

Never before seen outside of Asia, a highly acclaimed textile exhibit celebrating part of China's's intangible cultural heritage will make its UK debut when it goes on display at a leading Scottish visitor attraction from 17 January until 22 March 2025. Its opening at the award-winning Great Tapestry Scotland visitor centre in one of Scotland's historic textile heartlands, will be marked with a vibrant programme of events and workshops celebrating the cultural ties between Scotland and China in the lead up to Chinese New Year 2025.

Reflecting the countries' shared interest in textiles, *From Home Weaving to the World's Wardrobes: The Journey of Songjiang's Cotton Textiles* has been brought to Scotland in partnership with the University of Edinburgh, the Confucius Institute for Scotland and the Edinburgh College of Art. Through a collection of textiles and garments chosen by

artist Dong Ye, the *The Journey of Songjiang's Cotton Textiles* tells the story of an ancient cloth weaving technique which has been preserved for over 700 years in the millennium-old Songjiang district of Shanghai, often referred to as the 'Root of Shanghai'. Much like Scotland's iconic fabrics, the Songjiang textiles are widely recognised for their cultural importance to China, with its intricate weaving techniques, beautiful patterns, and ancient historical relevance to the Ming and Yuan Dynasties.

For more information, including opening times and ticket prices, and more information about *From Home Weaving to the World's Wardrobes: The Journey of Songjiang's Cotton Textiles* visit greattapestryofscotland.com



At the Great Tapestry of Scotland
From Home Weaving to the World's Wardrobes: The Journey of Songjiang's Cotton Textiles has been brought to Scotland in partnership with the University of Edinburgh. Artist Dong Ye pictured at the opening of today's exhibition as the collection of garments and textiles go on display for the first time

outside Asia.

Pic Phil Wilkinson / Great Tapestry of Scotland

Creative Scotland funding

Creative Scotland finally announced their multi-year funding for many organisations in the country. Not all were successful of course, but many in Edinburgh were including Summerhall and The Edinburgh International Festival.

[Read more here.](#)



Nicola Benedetti, CBE

Botanics fundraiser

After the named storm last Friday the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh has launched a fundraiser to help with the damage.

A spokesperson said: "Storm Éowyn has caused devastating damage across all four of our Gardens. Though we are still

assessing the damage, we know it has been severe and that recovery is going to take some time, and significant cost. We need your help.

“Please support us to restore our Gardens and our living collections by donating today to our appeal. All your donations, no matter the size will be directly used across our four Gardens on vital restoration.”

[Donate here.](#)



Damage in the Botanics where the tallest tree perished in the storm