



Chinese New Year Wall and Door Scrolls

The Chinese people have always been noted for their unique traditions, belief systems, and grand festivals. Chinese New Year is the most important of the all the holiday traditions in China. Millions of Chinese families around the world celebrate it each year. Chinese New Year, also known as Spring Festival, is no doubt the biggest holiday of the year for Chinese people. Chinese New Year falls either in January or February. The date varies every year with the celebration lasting fifteen days. For centuries, Chinese New Year has been surrounded by various traditions, one of which is the hanging of special wall and door scrolls and other decors that mark the arrival of spring. They include Nian hua, spring scrolls and decorative cutouts.

Nian hua, a special type of painting, is used to decorate homes in preparation for the Chinese New Year Festival. People hang Nian hua or Chinese New Year pictures to reflect wishes for the new year. This tradition dates back to the Pre-Qin Period 221 B.C. Back then, Nian hua were popular house decorations and were especially common during Chinese New Year. The ancient Chinese were into posting images of their "gods" on the front doors. These "gods" were their protectors and ushers of good fortune. They are also believed to ward off evil spirits.

Spring good luck poems or spring poetic couplets are also common to see. These writings in black ink on red paper or scrolls convey special messages. They are commonly put on the walls or gates of stores for everyone to see. They express wishes for prosperity, happiness, protection and luck. Hanging them on the storefront also means you are saying goodbye to the past and are ready to welcome the year. Chinese idioms are also traditionally written on red spring scrolls and are displayed in most homes. These banners either wish people "good luck" or display simple greetings. Gong xi fa cai and Kung hsi fa tsai are some of the most common greetings for the holiday.

Another popular red poster to see during [Chinese New Year](#) is the diamond-shaped paper with the most popular character for luck, 'Fu'. The character 'Fu' sounds like the Chinese word for "bat". Bats are considered lucky in China. In Chinese, the upside down "Fu" means good luck came; hence, the poster is traditionally hung upside down.

Aside from wall and door scrolls, Chinese families also decorate their homes with flower and animal cutouts. People usually hang cutouts of the animals of the Chinese zodiac or fish. All the 12 animals are considered lucky while fish yu (fish) sounds like the Chinese word for 'surplus' which is why it's also considered lucky.

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