

# LIVERPOOL CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS 2019

利物浦華埠新年慶祝活動  
豬年

8-10 FEBRUARY

[CULTURELIVERPOOL.CO.UK/CNY](http://CULTURELIVERPOOL.CO.UK/CNY)

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## CHINESE NEW YEAR

Chinese New Year is the annual Chinese festival that celebrates the beginning of a new year on the traditional Chinese calendar. The festival – which is one of the most celebrated events across the world – is usually referred to as the Spring Festival in modern China, and is one of several Lunar New Years in Asia. The first day of Chinese New Year begins on the new moon that appears between January 21 and February 20. In 2018, the first day of the Lunar New Year was on Friday 16 February, initiating the Year of the Dog.

In 2019, the Lunar New Year will be Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> February, beginning the Year of the Pig. 2019 is also prominent for Liverpool as it will celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Twinning of Liverpool & Shanghai – which also includes the gifting of the Chinese Arch to Liverpool, from Shanghai, the largest Chinese arch outside of China.

There are many regional traditions across China and beyond regarding the celebration of Chinese New Year. The evening preceding Chinese New Year's Day is frequently regarded as an occasion for Chinese families to gather for the annual reunion dinner. It is also traditional for every family to thoroughly clean their house, in order to sweep away any ill-fortune and to make way for incoming good luck. Another custom is the decoration of windows and doors with red paper-cut artwork and couplets, a type of 2 line poem. Popular themes among these paper-cuts and couplets include that of good fortune or happiness, wealth, and longevity. Other activities include lighting firecrackers and giving money in red paper envelopes. For the northern regions of China, dumplings feature prominently in meals celebrating the festival.

### The Great Race

The twelve animals that make up the 12 animals of the Chinese Zodiac and hence the name of each year come from The Great Race, the story of a race organised by the Jade Emperor. He invited all the animals to compete in a race – and rewarded the first twelve to cross the finish line by becoming the Chinese Zodiac animals. The rat was first to cross the line and the pig was last.

The story: <https://blog.pachamama.org/chinese-new-years-blog>

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrKQmI4vSwa>

Race positions and animal characteristics:

1. **Rat** quick-witted, smart, charming, and persuasive
2. **Ox** patient, kind, stubborn, and conservative
3. **Tiger** authoritative, emotional, courageous, and intense
4. **Rabbit** popular, compassionate, and sincere
5. **Dragon** energetic, fearless, warm-hearted, and charismatic
6. **Snake** charming, gregarious, introverted, generous, and smart
7. **Horse** energetic, independent, impatient, and enjoy traveling
8. **Sheep** mild-mannered, shy, kind, and peace-loving
9. **Monkey** fun, energetic, and active
10. **Rooster** independent, practical, hard-working, and observant
11. **Dog** patient, diligent, generous, faithful, and kind
12. **Pig** loving, tolerant, honest, and appreciative of luxury

The years rotate from top to bottom, before returning to the top again.

People born in each of the years are said to have certain characteristics associated with the animal of the year they were born.

**Activity – Learn the calligraphy of the Chinese symbols for these animals and create your own zodiac grid.**

**Look up your year of birth and research your associated characteristics.**

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## Year of the Pig – 2019

The pig is the twelfth of the zodiac cycle – after finishing twelfth in the Jade Emperor’s Great Race. The pig is nicknamed the Lazy Pig – as during the race it stopped off for a snack before falling asleep. There are five types of pigs named after the Chinese elements: Metal, Water, Wood, Fire & Earth. The pig is said to be compatible with other pigs, rabbits & goats. People born in the Year of the Pig are said to be loving, tolerant, honest, and appreciative of luxury.

## Shanghai 20



2019 is a special Chinese New Year– it also celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Twinning of Liverpool and Shanghai – including the gifting of the Chinese Arch in Liverpool.

The arch, which stands at an impressive 13.5 metres tall, is the tallest Chinese arch in Europe, and the second largest outside of China. The arch features 200 hand-carved dragons, of which twelve are pregnant. This is said to

symbolise good fortune between Liverpool and Shanghai. Construction of the arch began in 1999 and continued into 2000 – the arch was officially unveiled at the Chinese New Year celebrations in 2000. If you visit the arch at dusk, you will see it illuminated, following the addition of lights to the arch in 2010. The arch sits at the front of Liverpool’s China Town, home to the oldest Chinese community in Europe. The area is filled with Chinese restaurants, supermarkets and cultural organisations and associations.

**Activity:** Visit the arch with your class, identify the architecture, shops, culture and area. Can you find all 200 dragons? Make notes on this, compare it to area of home/ school, or visit the Albert Dock on the same day to notice similarities and differences.

## Similarities of Shanghai and Liverpool

- Distinct waterfronts – both Liverpool & Shanghai have an iconic waterfront. In fact, The Bund in Shanghai was modelled on our Waterfront and the Three Graces.
- Port cities – Shanghai’s waterfront is said to operate today in the same way that our waterfront would have hundreds of years ago – when the Cunard Building was used as the terminal building.
- Both cities are situated on rivers – the River Mersey and the Huangpu River.
- Unique Arches – Liverpool’s unique Chinese arch is equally as beautiful as Shanghai’s Arch (which is 143m tall!)
- Collaboration of Universities – In 2006, Xi’an Jiaotong University partnered with University of Liverpool to open a joint campus. By 2012, the University had 2200 students and continues to grow – the University have plans to open a new South Campus at the University.



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Research task: Can you find any other similarities in the two cities?

### GET INVOLVED – Active Opportunities

**Pagoda Arts** are a local organisation who introduce and celebrate Chinese Culture to Merseyside and beyond. This year, Pagoda Arts are creating a huge Pigsy – to celebrate the year of the pig. They have 50,000 red money envelopes recycled and shipped from Hong Kong's 2018 New Year celebrations. Pagoda Arts are inviting schools to be a part of this creation – all while learning the art of paper folding. There are five different items to be made: Lantern, Dog, Fish (two types) & a Pig.

All guides are available via Pagoda Arts youtube: [www.youtube.com/pagodaarts](http://www.youtube.com/pagodaarts)

To get involved, please contact Zilan: [Zilan@pagodaarts.org.uk](mailto:Zilan@pagodaarts.org.uk)

Additional to schools, anyone who wants can attend a community paper folding workshop:  
-Every Saturday 10am - 5pm and Sunday 12noon – 5pm, Pagoda Arts, Henry St. until 27.1.19.

### VIP Puppets – The Legend of the Chinese Zodiac Show

Aimed at Key Stages 1 and 2, this ten-minute shadow puppet show is an epic representation of how the Legend of the Chinese Zodiac was born. This accessible, cultural show engages children of all ages in the Story of Chinese New Year and the Great Race, in Vibrant Shadow Puppet form.

How did the Great Emperor choose which animal would be first to represent the Chinese calendar? Watch the thirteen animals (including the cat) race across mountains and rivers; running, hopping, leaping, swimming and plotting their way to victory. All the while learning about their individual personalities and character traits, and how they relate to your own!

Audience members step inside a magical world where a storyteller narrates this ancient and epic, traditional tale in just ten minutes, to the backdrop of a magnificent, live shadow puppetry performance, performed live, by three professional puppeteers.

Trailer: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=VWVKkeAcdAU>

Audience Size: Perfect for one class: Up to 35 children per show

Offers available on full day or half day packages, depending on the number of classes within the school.

Half Day Package: (Timings) Up to 8 shows £500 - Up to 280 Children  
(If classes contain 35 Children, the cost is under £1.80 per child)

Full Day Package: Up to 16 shows £900 - Up to 560 Children  
(If classes contain 35 Children, the cost is about £1.60 per child)

For booking info, contact Rowan: [vippuppets@gmail.com](mailto:vippuppets@gmail.com)

### **Annual Culture Liverpool Chinese New Year celebrations**

2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2019 – Chinese New Year Pre-Parade event

8<sup>th</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2019 – Chinese New Year celebrations and events

### Reading

-The Journey to the West (4 part novel series) – Anthony C. Yu

-The Great Race: The Story of the Chinese Zodiac – Various versions: Dawn Casey, Emily Hiles, Christopher Corr

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