



*Image caption: The annual CultureFest! Lunar New Year celebration culminates with a traditional Lion Dance.
Photo: Eddy Marengo for the Penn Museum. Available for download [here](#).*

Marking the Year of the Dragon with the 43rd Annual *CultureFest!* Lunar New Year at the Penn Museum

PHILADELPHIA, November 27, 2023—In partnership with the [American Center for Asian Students](#) and the [National Association for Korean Schools](#), the Penn Museum soars into the Year of the Dragon with its [43rd annual CultureFest! Lunar New Year](#), on Saturday, January 27, 2024 from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Beginning with the first new moon and ending 15 days later on the first full moon, Lunar New Year is an important festival observed by various communities, including those of Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tibetan descent.

"Celebrating Lunar New Year at the Penn Museum is an exhilarating blend of tradition and discovery," says Holly Meng, President and CEO of the American Center for Asian Students, who adds that the dragon is a Chinese zodiac sign representing power, success, honor, and luck. "The vibrant tapestry of history and culture unfolds before us, offering a unique opportunity to immerse ourselves in the rich heritage that the Lunar New Year represents. It's not just a celebration, it's a journey through time and across continents—a chance to connect with the past and embrace the universal spirit of renewal and hope that the Lunar New Year brings."

Designed for anyone looking to expand awareness about diverse Asian cultural traditions, *CultureFest!* features family-friendly activities, live music and dance performances, storytelling, art-making, an Asian zodiac scavenger hunt throughout the Museum, and a vendor-filled marketplace in the Asia Galleries. The grand finale will be a traditional Lion Dance.

The lineup for *CultureFest! Lunar New Year* includes:

- Welcome in Harrison Auditorium from 11:00-11:30 am
- Little Mulan Dance Troupe in Harrison Auditorium from 11:30 am-12:00 pm
- Penn K Beats (K-Pop performance) in Rainey Auditorium from 12:30-1:00 pm
- Traditional Chinese dance and music in Harrison Auditorium from 1:00-1:30 pm, featuring a Water Sleeve Solo dance by WeiWei Ma; Peking Opera singing; and *bian lian* (face-changing) performance, along with a live calligraphy demonstration by Song Fiehong
- Martial Arts and Tai Qi demonstrations with Master Matt Zhang from Great Dragon Tai Chi-Kung Fu Academy in Special Exhibition Gallery 52 at 2:00 pm
- Korean Fan Dance in Harrison Auditorium at 2:30 pm
- Storytelling in Widener Lecture Hall from 3:00-3:15 pm
- Discussion about similarities and differences in Lunar New Year celebrations across different countries in Widener Lecture Hall from 3:20-3:45 pm.
- Lion Dance in Warden Garden at 3:50 pm.

"Since 1981, *CultureFest! Lunar New Year* has become one of the Museum's most popular events," says Tena Thomason, Associate Director of Public Engagement at the Penn Museum. "We are excited to work alongside our community partners to highlight this important cultural celebration, which incorporates diverse customs such as gift exchanges, lantern lighting, and offerings to deities."

All *CultureFest!* **Lunar New Year** activities are included with Museum admission. Children ages five and under, teachers, U.S. military veterans with identification, Penn Museum Members, PennCard holders, Penn Medicine patients/families, and staff visit for free.

As a welcome gift for *CultureFest!* attendees, each visiting group or family will receive a lucky red envelope—a Lunar New Year tradition—containing a special offer from the Museum Shop.

The entire lineup can be found [here](#).

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ABOUT THE PENN MUSEUM

The Penn Museum's mission is to be a center for inquiry and the ongoing exploration of humanity for our University of Pennsylvania, regional, national, and global communities, following ethical standards and practices.

Through conducting research, stewarding collections, creating learning opportunities, sharing stories, and creating experiences that expand access to archaeology and anthropology, the Museum builds empathy and connections across diverse cultures.

The Penn Museum is open Tuesday-Sunday, 10:00 am-5:00 pm. The Café is open Tuesday-Thursday, 9:00 am-3:00 pm and Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am-2:00 pm. It is open until 8:00 pm on first Wednesdays of the month through March. For information, visit www.penn.museum, call [215.898.4000](tel:215.898.4000), or follow @PennMuseum on social media.