



Image caption: The traditional Lion Dance will open and close this year's CultureFest! Lunar New Year celebration at the Penn Museum. Photo: Eddy Marengo for the Penn Museum. Available for download [here](#). A folder of high-resolution images is available for download [here](#).

Year of the Snake: 44th Annual *CultureFest!* Lunar New Year at the Penn Museum Celebrates Asian Cultural Traditions

PHILADELPHIA, January 3, 2025—In collaboration with the [American Center for Asian Students](#) and the [Center for East Asian Studies](#) at the University of Pennsylvania, the Penn Museum winds into the Year of the Snake with its [44th annual CultureFest! Lunar New Year](#), Saturday, **January 25, 2025** from 10:00 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 communities of Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tibetan descent. Originally, it was a break from agricultural work to spend time with loved ones.

Today, Lunar New Year celebrations retain traditional customs such as feasts, gift exchanges, lantern lighting, and offers to deities and ancestors.

"This cherished event is a testament to our enduring partnership and our shared commitment to promoting cultural appreciation and understanding. Over the years, our collaboration has brought the richness of Asian heritage to diverse audiences, creating opportunities to learn, connect, and celebrate together," says Holly Meng, President and CEO of the American Center for Asian Students, who adds that the snake is a Chinese zodiac sign associated with wisdom, charm, elegance, and transformation. "Through these meaningful initiatives, we strengthen the bonds within our communities and inspire future generations to carry forward with the beauty and values of these traditions. We look forward to continuing this collaborative journey of cultural enrichment with the Penn Museum for years to come."

CultureFest! features **family-friendly activities, live music and dance performances, storytelling, art-making** (painting, calligraphy, and fan-making stations), an Asian zodiac scavenger hunt throughout the Museum, **plus a marketplace** in the Asia Galleries.

This year, both the opening ceremony and grand finale will showcase the traditional Lion Dance.

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

- Welcome remarks and **Lion Dance opening** in Harrison Auditorium (11:00 am-11:30 am)
- **Little Mulan Dance Troupe** in Harrison Auditorium (11:30 am-12:00 pm)
- **K-Pop dancers** in Widener Auditorium (12:30-12:45 pm)
- Chinese heritage show with a "face change" performance, martial arts demonstrations, Tai Chi fan dance, Dunhuang dance solo, and Professor [Yazhi Guo](#), the founding president of the [American Academy of World Music](#), will play the *suona*, a popular instrument in Chinese culture in Harrison Auditorium (1:00 pm-1:30 pm)
- **Tai Chi class** in Widener Auditorium (2:00 pm-2:20 pm)
- Korean fan dance and youth drummers in Harrison Auditorium (2:30 pm-2:45 pm)
- **Lion Dance outdoors in Warden Garden** (3:00 pm-3:15 pm).

"*CultureFest!* **Lunar New Year** has become one of the Museum's most popular events. Since 1981, we have been working alongside our community partners to share this important cultural

celebration, which incorporates diverse customs such as gift exchanges, lantern lighting, and offerings to deities," says Tena Thomason, Associate Director for Public Engagement at the Penn Museum.

All *CultureFest!* **Lunar New Year** activities are included with Penn Museum admission. Children ages 5 and under, teachers, U.S. military veterans with identification, Penn Museum members, PennCard holders, Penn Medicine patients/families, and Penn Medicine 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](#).

More information about *CultureFest!* **Lunar New Year** can be found [here](#).

#

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. On first Wednesdays of the month, it is open until 8:00 pm. The Café is open Tuesday–Thursday, 9:00 am–3:00 pm and Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am–2:00 pm. On Sundays, the Café is open 10:30 am–2:30 pm. For information, visit www.penn.museum, call [215.898.4000](tel:215.898.4000), or follow @PennMuseum on social media.