

Celebrate the Year of the
Monkey with The Wing!



GLOSSARY

“bánh chưng” and “Bánh tét”	Sweet rice cake
“Chúc Mừng Năm Mới”	Happy New Year!
“Lì xì”	Lucky money
“bầu cua cá cộ”	Squash, crab, fish, tiger dice game
“Tết”	Shortened from “Tết Nguyên Đán”, another name for the Lunar New Year



Bao lì xì with money inside!

Journey with Newspapers In Education and Wing Luke Museum to learn how different Asian Americans celebrate the New Year.



Squash-crab-fish-tiger game dice. Photo courtesy of Alabastro Photography

Kumquat (cay quât) fruits are displayed for prosperity. And the small yellow mai flowers (hoa mai) are for longevity.

A traditional North Vietnamese dish is a square sweet rice cake called ‘bánh chưng’. In central and southern Vietnam, there is a cylindrical sweet rice cake called ‘bánh tét’ that is made specifically for Tết. “bánh chưng” and “Bánh tét” are both made with sweet rice on the outside with bean paste and pork belly slices in the middle, though they come in different shapes.

An altar can be set up to pay respects for ancestors that includes flowers, incense, candles, fruits, and many dishes of food. At midnight, the grown-ups and older kids pray for a good year for the family. Younger kids get to stay up until midnight too, but they have to wait until morning to get new clothes and get in line to honor their grandparents and parents in front of the altar.

As children visit their older relatives, the seniors give them advice on being honest and doing good actions. The kids wish their elders good fortune, good health and longevity. Then the seniors give the kids red envelopes, “bao lì xì”, with money inside to spend any way they want. Everyone wishes each other “Chúc Mừng Năm Mới!” which means “Happy new year!”

A popular game to play during Tết is “bầu cua cá cộ”, which translates to squash-crab-fish-tiger. It is a gambling game that kids can play with their “lì xì” money. There are three 6-sided dice that have six images on each of them. The images correspond to pictures on a game board. A player chooses which image(s) will come up on the rolled dice. If the images match, the player can win money.

TẾT IN AMERICA

Most of the time, Tết is in the middle of the week, when parents work and children go to school, so many families go to Buddhist temples during the weekend or go to a local Tết fair or festival.

This article is geared for grades K-5. The Teacher’s Guide includes extension plans for these articles and lesson plans for grades 4-9 (based on past NIE Asian New Year articles printed in 2013).

One of the most important holidays for Asian Americans is the New Year. The Vietnamese New Year (commonly called Tết) is based on the lunar calendar, which follows the phases of the moon. Vietnamese New Year falls on the second new moon after the winter solstice and typically occurs between mid-January to mid-February. This year, Tết is on Monday, Feb. 8, 2016.

Like the Chinese zodiac, there is a Vietnamese zodiac of 12 animals. However, where the Chinese zodiac has the year of the rabbit, the Vietnamese zodiac has the year of the cat. 2016 is the Year of the Monkey!

NEW YEAR TRADITIONS

Vietnamese New Year is a time of reflection and preparation for the coming year. The whole house is cleaned and flowers are put up to invite good spirits. Chrysanthemums (hoa cúc) help bring in good fortune.



Traditional Vietnamese dress courtesy of Thao-Vy Nguyen

**LUNAR NEW YEAR
OPENING CELEBRATION**
Wing Luke Museum
8th Ave S. and S. King St.
wingluke.org/2016newyear

**Saturday, Feb. 6
11 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

Featuring lion dance (11 a.m.) and family-friendly activities including story-time, stuffed animal petting zoo, face painting, and a kids’ scavenger hunt with prizes! *Children and students (with ID) are FREE. Sponsored by The National Committee on United States-China Relations.*

**SEATTLE CHINATOWN—INTERNATIONAL
DISTRICT ANNUAL LUNAR NEW YEAR FESTIVAL**
Hing Hay Park
Maynard Ave S. and S. King St.
cidbia.org/events

**Saturday, Feb. 13
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

Learn more about The Wing’s current New Years All Year Round tour featuring Japanese, Vietnamese and Hmong New Year celebrations; an interactive and fun experience for Pre-K through 5th grade. For more information, including other tour options for all ages, email tours@wingluke.org.