



SECTION 3

# THIRD LANGUAGE SECTION





Kuih Kapit

# The Chinese New Year Celebration in Malaysia

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Chinese New Year is also known as Lunar New Year or the Spring Festival. The celebration begins on Chinese New Year's Eve where all family members gather for a reunion dinner. Traditionally, the Chinese New Year lasts for 15 days, from the first day of the first lunar month to the fifteenth. People can visit relatives and friends or go to temples to pray for a safe and auspicious year. Parents or elders will give 'ang pau' to unmarried younger family members. Homes, streets and shopping malls are beautifully decorated. There are other activities that the Malaysian Chinese do to celebrate Chinese New Year, which could not be found in China or other overseas Chinese settlements. These activities include:

**1. Malaysia style new year biscuit**  
Malaysia is a multiracial country, and Chinese New Year biscuits are also influenced by other traditions. For example, 'Kuih Kapit', a crispy wafer pastry, is a must-have during the celebration. Initially, it was a traditional biscuit among the Malays and Nyonyas. Later, it was subtly integrated into the Chinese families and became an essential

food during the Chinese New Year.

**2. New Year Song**  
Listening to new year songs is a unique culture of Malaysian Chinese celebrating the new year. Without them, the celebration lacks festivity and something is a miss. Almost all Chinese television and radio stations will air their annual Lunar New Year music albums. For Malaysian Chinese, buying a new year song album is necessary.

**3. Mixing and Tossing Yee Sang**  
Another new year custom is mixing and tossing raw fish salad (yee sang) with chopsticks. Before tossing the salad, the ingredients and sauces are poured into a large plate. The colourful ingredients suggest good luck. When mixing and tossing the salad, celebrants will gather around the table, standing and waving their chopsticks, and raising the raw fish salad. They will keep wishing good wishes loudly hoping to be bestowed with more good luck in the new year such as a promotion in their careers.

**4. Blessing Tiangong on the Ninth Day of the Lunar New Year**  
The ninth day of the Lunar New Year is for

the Hokkiens to worship Tiangong and celebrate the new year. The worshipping ceremony begins early and is livelier and grander than New Year's Eve. The Hokkiens brought the custom of 'Bai tiangong' to Malaysia. In the past, it was the Hokkiens who prayed to Tiangong on the ninth day of the Lunar New Year. However, today many Chinese of other ethnicities also participate in this Spring Festival custom. Every year on the eighth day of the lunar new year, all family members will return home for a gathering, cook various dishes and eat together at night. After dinner, they will wait until midnight to burn firecrackers and pray to God and gain blessing in their lives. Of course, Malaysia's Chinese New Year celebrations are not limited to these. Other activities include eating 'Poon Choy' and watching lion dance. Click the link below to read more about "Poon Choy" and lion dance if you are interested:

<https://www.delightedcooking.com/what-is-poon-choi.htm>  
<https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/Chir>



Tossing Yee Sang



Tiangong Prayers