



## Chinese Winter Festival

### What is the Chinese Winter Festival:

The Chinese Winter Festival, or Dongzhi Festival, is a traditional celebration of winter's arrival.

The festival takes place on the winter solstice, which occurs between December 21-23. The winter solstice is the day with the fewest hours of daylight.

Families celebrate by gathering together and cooking special foods, making lanterns, or going ice skating. Different regions of China celebrate the holiday differently. In Northern China, it is popular to make dumplings (jiaozi). In Southern China, rice balls (tang yuan) are popular.

The winter solstice festival is also celebrated in Taiwan, Japan, Korea, & Vietnam.

### History:

The Chinese Winter Festival has a long history. It is believed that the festival was first celebrated in 771 BCE--which is over 1,250 years ago!

The festival is connected to the ancient Chinese philosophy of yin and yang. Yin is associated with fall and winter and yang with spring and summer. Just as it takes both cooler and warmer seasons for nature to go through a full growing cycle, the concept of yin and yang is about the balance between different forces.

Eating warming foods and making lanterns are ways that families try to find balance during the colder and darker winter days.

### Question:

Do you celebrate the Chinese Winter Festival? If not, does the Chinese Winter Festival remind you of any holidays that you and your family celebrate?