

COLUMNS

Chinese New Year do's and don'ts for luxury brands and retailers

January 26, 2016



Chinese New Year celebrations

By [Renee Hartmann](#)

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

Officially kicking off on Feb. 8, Chinese New Year is just around the corner. Generally considered China's most important holiday, Chinese New Year marks a time when friends and family come together to celebrate and start a fresh new year.

2016 is the Year of the Monkey the "Red Fire Monkey," to be exact. In Chinese culture, monkeys are considered very clever and smart, and the red fire monkey is particularly strong and dominant, filled with passion and force. Lucky colors in the red fire monkey year are gold and blue, lucky numbers are 1, 7 and 8, and lucky flowers are chrysanthemums and alliums.

China has declared a national holiday this year from Feb. 7-13, which paves the way for the massive travel that corresponds to Chinese New Year, known as the 40-day Chunyun period. This is also the largest human migration in the world, with more than 3.7 billion trips made during the Chunyun period in 2015.

In recent years, Chinese New Year has been a time for a rapidly growing number of Chinese citizens to travel abroad, as more seek to take advantage of easier tourist visas and perhaps more importantly escape the crowds at home. Accordingly, more retailers, brands, tourist destinations, and cities have ramped up their Chinese New Year efforts worldwide to cater to this important traveling demographic.

Chinese New Year-themed products

Over the past decade, we have seen a growing number of luxury brands release limited-edition Chinese New Year-themed products often to mixed reception. This year is no exception, with brands such as Louis Vuitton, Prada, Kate Spade, Ferragamo, Tory Burch, Dior, Paul Frank, Rebecca Minkoff, UGG, Harry Winston, Armani, Godiva and many more releasing their own monkey-themed collections. ([Here is a useful round-up of Year of the Monkey products by Chinese blogger Mr. Bags.](#))

Overseas promotions and celebrations

The number and scale of Chinese New Year promotions and celebrations taking place outside of the Chinese mainland continues to grow exponentially.

Leading department stores and shopping centers worldwide such as Bergdorf Goodman, Bloomingdale's and Harrods have launched special Chinese New Year promotions, Chinese New Year-themed window displays, limited-

edition products, themed entertainment and other unique activations.

In 2015, the Beverly Center in Los Angeles hosted the popular NBA star, Jeremy Lin, to place a wish on its Lunar New Year Wishing tree, while Madrid-based El Corte Ingls invited Chinese actress Liu Yun to launch a jointly developed limited-edition jewelry line.



Renee Hartmann is co-founder of China Luxury Advisors

Perhaps the most elaborate Chinese New Year celebrations outside of China take place in Las Vegas, which has long been aware of the power of the Chinese New Year holiday. Every major casino features large-scale Chinese New Year decorations, special menus, promotions and live performances.

We are also seeing more entertainment-focused efforts to celebrate Chinese New Year, with the NBA recently releasing a fun video starring Mr. Lin, James Harden and Steph Curry, as well as Chinese team favorites Houston Rockets, Golden State Warriors and Washington Wizards hosting area events for the occasion and wearing uniforms featuring their teams' names in Chinese.

Chinese New Year do's and don'ts

As brands, destinations, and retailers seek to adapt their own Chinese New Year marketing and activations, it is important to keep these basic do's and don'ts in mind:

Chinese New Year do's:

Create an opportunity to connect with both local and overseas Chinese

Honor Chinese culture and Chinese New Year traditions

Look for compelling reasons for Chinese customers to engage with your experience

Seek to break through the increasingly cluttered Chinese New Year season

Find ways to add your own unique twist to Chinese New Year and share your brand values and local flavor

Use lots of red and gold

Use numbers with 8 in them for luck

Provide gifts to valued partners and customers

Seek local partners to enhance your offering

Ask for help for translation and cultural sensitivities

Chinese New Year don'ts:

Don't use white (symbol of death)

Don't use 4s

Don't use red writing

Don't exclude other customers or nationalities

Don't forget that Chinese New Year is just one travel window in the year summer is actually the highest volume for travel

Renee Hartmann is Los Angeles-based cofounder of [China Luxury Advisors](#). Reach her at renee@chinaluxuryadvisors.com. Reproduced with permission and adapted for style.

© 2020 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.