



The Chinese New Year

marks the beginning of the lunar new year, which is when there is the start of a new moon. The date therefore changes every year, but always falls between 21st January and 20th February. It's also known as the Spring Festival and is the most important celebration in the Chinese calendar. Each year is named after 1 of 12 animals and begins by people thoroughly cleaning their homes. On the day, no broom is picked up in case the good luck is swept out. Noodles are the traditional food to bring luck for the year ahead. Parades and performances take place. Fireworks are set off to scare away evil spirits. Adults give children red envelopes with money inside. The festivals last for two weeks - ending with a special lantern festival.

Diwali

is the Hindu festival of light but is also celebrated by Sikhs. It is usually celebrated sometime between October and November. Diwali means: "rows of lighted lamps". Houses, shops and public places are decorated with small oil lamps called 'divas'. Hindus celebrate the story of Rama and Sita. Fireworks and sweets are also part of the celebrations. People visit their relatives and have feasts. Lakshmi the Hindu goddess of wealth is worshipped.



Christmas

is celebrated on the 25th December to remember the birth of Jesus Christ. Christians believe Jesus is the Son of God. Christmas Day is considered the first day of Christmas and the festive season lasts for 12 days. Many Christians attend church on Christmas Day. Common customs include: giving and receiving gifts, putting up and decorating a tree, sending Christmas cards, singing Christmas carols.

