



May in the Far East

Asian Culture Club
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China

May 1 Labor Day

劳动节

Láodòng jié

Labor Day



China has several public holidays of national character. These holidays include 1 May - Labor Day. Until 2008, this holiday was celebrated for seven days, however later the Chinese government decided to reduce the number of off-days to three in favor of other traditional Chinese holidays.

The history of International Workers' Day in China started in 1919, when the intelligentsia initiated insurgencies in Shanghai. Later, in 1920, Beijing and Shanghai held the first-ever demonstration in honor of all workers. Officially, this holiday was established and approved by the Chinese government in 1949.

During the “cultural revolution” May Day in China was considered, almost the most important holiday in the country. Amplitudinous rallies and demonstrations across China were organized to celebrate this Day. The holiday was more of a political character. However, at the end of XX century, the situation changed dramatically.

Today Labor Day in China is a sort of a cheerful family holiday. During these three days of holidays, the Chinese go to the country, meet friends, and attend solemn events. Many people visit theaters and exhibitions. The streets of the Chinese cities hold demonstrations and performances.

May Day holidays is the best time to visit China, because at this period of year, the government gives permission for discounts. Not only can you visit the main attractions of the country at discounted prices, but also to go shopping.

May 4 Youth Day

In the People's Republic of China, Youth Day celebrated on May 4. It was established in December 1949 by the Government Administration Council to commemorate the patriotic May Fourth Movement in 1919, in which many young intellectuals protested against imperialists.^[4] Since the establishment of Youth Day on March 29. Note: This is mainland China.

What about the Republic of China? Taiwan.

May 4 has been known as Literary Day (文藝節) in Taiwan after fleeing mainland China in 1949, as the May Fourth Movement is part of a broader New Culture Movement.

Their Youth Day (青年节/青年節) has been celebrated on March 29^[3] since 1954. It commemorates the Huanghuagang Uprising of 1911, during which 72 young revolutionaries sacrificed their lives to overthrow the Qing Dynasty. The Uprising took place on April 27 (the 29th day of the 3rd month in Chinese Calendar), 1911 and is subsequently known as 3.29 Guangzhou Uprising. This event also marked the last unsuccessful attempt to overthrow the Qing before the Wuchang Uprising overturned millennia of dynastic rule in China to establish the Republic of China.



May 9 Mother's Day

Due to its long tradition of Confucian filial piety, some may argue that every **day** is **Mother's Day** in **China**. But since the 1980s, the country has taken a cue from its Western neighbors and **celebrated** moms every second Sunday in May, often with bouquets of red carnations.

May 20 Valentine's Day

Unlike other Valentine's Day origins filled with legend stories, China's 20th day of May celebration, which originated from the internet, is all based on the pronunciation of "5·20" (wǔ èr líng) that sounds pretty close to the word "I love you" in Chinese (wǒ ài nǐ). And with this gimmick, the day has become a perfect day to be brave and to express love.





In Northern China, spring is at its best in May. The natural scenery is green and filled with flowers, and the weather is moderate. Although it is cool at night, the daytime temperature is comfortable enough to do outdoor activities.

May is one of the best times to visit Beijing. From March to May and from September to October. These temperate seasons provide the best climate, not to mention colorful scenery. In contrast, summer brings sweltering heat, and winter ushers in cold temps and sometimes snow.

This is also true for Shanghai, and in the spring the weather and beautiful flowers make it one of the best times to visit.



Guilin

Guilin is a city in southern China known for its dramatic landscape of limestone karst hills. At its center are 2 lakes, Shanhu (Cedar) and Ronghu (Banyan), remaining from a medieval-era moat that once surrounded the city. Boats travel through these and other lakes via connected rivers. On Shanhu Lake's shore, twin pagodas, the Sun and Moon, light up the sky at night.



In May, summer has come to Guilin, but the weather isn't hot at all due to the frequent rain. Normally, the temperature stays between 20-27C (64-77F), very comfortable for outdoor activities. The weather records show that this month is usually the most humid month of the year, with the most rainy days and the highest rainfall. The abundant rain makes the air very fresh, and there is every chance that you will see a clear blue sky should you be lucky enough to visit on a fine day.

May in Japan

Golden Week or Ōgon Shūkan is a week from the 29th of April to May 5 containing a number of Japanese holidays. It is also known as Ōgata Renkyū.

Many Japanese nationals take paid time off during this holiday, and some companies are closed down completely and give their employees time off. Golden Week is the longest vacation period of the year for many Japanese workers. (Two other Japanese holidays are observed for most or all of a week: Japanese New Year in January and Obon Festival in August.)

The word "**Golden Week**" was first used by movie companies to get people to take advantage of the "**golden**" opportunity to go see a film.

Golden Week is a popular time for holiday travel. Despite significantly higher rates, flights, trains, and hotels are often fully booked.



JAPAN GOLDEN WEEK



April 29 Showa Day

Showa Day is a day for remembering the Showa Era (1926 to 1989), when the Japanese people worked hard to rebuild the country, and for wishing for a bright future. Until 1988, April 29 was celebrated as the birthday of Emperor Showa (Hirohito).

Shō means “shining” or “bright”, and wa means “peace”, signifying the "enlightened peace" that citizens receive.

Activities on this **day** tend to take on a gentler nature from admiring the cherry blossoms to having picnics or visiting shrines. For instance, one way people choose to honour the **day** is by paying a visit to the Musashino Imperial Mausoleum in Tokyo where Emperor **Showa** is buried.

The Musashino Imperial Mausoleum

In the lower photo, Princess Kako is visiting the shrine. Princess Kako of Akishino is the second daughter of Prince Fumihito and Princess Kiko, and a member of the Japanese Imperial Family. She is the niece of Emperor Naruhito and the second-eldest grandchild of Emperor Emeritus Akihito and Empress Emerita Michiko. She is 26.

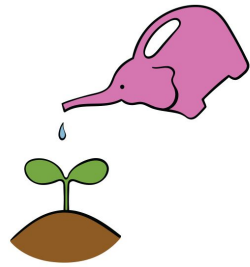


May 3 Constitution Day

After the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the Showa Emperor announced unconditional surrender to allied forces. Over the next two years, Japan and U.S. General Douglas MacArthur cooperated in drafting the new constitution, which was ratified by the House of Representatives on August 24, 1946, by the House of Peers on October 6, and by the Privy Council on October 29, then promulgated by the Emperor on November 3, 1946, the Emperor Meiji's birthday, and came into effect on May 3, 1947.

Kempo Kinenbi, Constitution Memorial Day, is a time to reminisce the events of Japan's history. The National Diet opens to the public on 3 May every year, for tours of the building. Constitution Memorial Day in Japan is a part of Golden Week. In 2019 a one-off Platinum Week was held, with extra events and a longer duration, to commemorate the inauguration of the new emperor, Naruhito.





みどりの日
Greenery Day
COTO



May 4 Greenery Day

Originally, the 4th of May was a holiday called the "National Holiday". Prior to 2007, Greenery Day was on the 29th of April, which is the birthday of Emperor Showa, but from 2007 thereafter, the 29th of April became Showa Day, while Greenery Day has been moved to the 4th May. Officially, as its name suggests, it is a day to commune with nature and to be thankful for blessings. The day was renamed to "Greenery Day" to acknowledge the controversial wartime emperor's love for plants without directly mentioning his name. However, in practice it is seen as just another day that expands the Japanese Golden Week vacation.

The temperate weather of Golden Week, where it's not scorching hot nor spine-tingling cold, makes it a great time to be outdoors. Therefore, one of the most common practices during Greenery Day is to go out, whether travel to one's home province for the holidays or start another planting season.

If you like green tea, now is the best time to get the tastiest picking of green tea leaves. Ichibancha, or the first flush tea, happens at this period and has the reputation and rating as a top-quality tea.

May 5 Children's Day

こどもの日, or *Kodomo no Hi*, is a Japanese national holiday which takes place annually on May 5 and is the final celebration in Golden Week. It is a day set aside to respect children's personalities and to celebrate their happiness. It was designated a national holiday by the Japanese government in 1948. It has been a day of celebration in Japan since ancient times.



Prior to 1948, Children's Day was known as Boys' Day (also known as Feast of Banners), celebrating boys and recognizing fathers, as the counterpart to Hinamatsuri, or "Girl's Day" on March 3. In 1948, the name was changed to Children's Day to include both male and female children, as well as recognizing mothers along with fathers and family qualities of unity.

Families raise the *koinobori*, which are carp-shaped windsocks. In Chinese legend a carp that swims upstream becomes a dragon and flies to Heaven, and the way the windsocks blow in the wind looks like they are swimming. There is a black carp for the father, a red or pink for the mother, and one carp (usually blue, and sometimes additionally green and orange) for each child. Traditionally, when celebrated as Boys' Day, the red *koinobori* was for the eldest son with blue and additional colors for younger brothers. Families may also display a samurai doll, sometimes riding on a large carp (often representing the Japanese folk heroes Kintarō or Momotarō), and/or the traditional Japanese military helmet, *kabuto*, due to their tradition as symbols of strength and vitality.

Kashiwa mochi (sticky rice cakes filled with red bean jam and wrapped in oak leaves) and *chimaki* (sticky sweet rice wrapped in an iris or bamboo leaf) are traditionally served on this day.



May 9 Mother's Day

Mother's Day is celebrated throughout Japan today. It was celebrated prior to WW2, originally in March 6, the birthday of Empress Kojun, wife of Emperor Hirohito, but stopped as being a foreign holiday. After WW2 it was revived. Mother's Day (母の日 / ha no hi) is celebrated on the second Sunday in May each year. As not many people work on this day, it's saved for celebrating with family members. The second kanji for Mother's Day (日) is the same as the second kanji for the word Japan.

If you wish to follow Japanese customs to the letter (or to the *kanji*, you might say), you should rise early and greet your mother with the words *Okaasan haha no hi omedetou* (happy Mother's Day!), together with a big bunch of flowers to show your love and appreciation. Red carnations are the most popular choice in Japan, as they symbolise a mothers' purity, sweetness and endurance. Although not native to Japan, Mother's Day has been adapted to suit Japanese culture and society.



South Korea

May 1 Labor Day

Labor Day or Workers' Day (1 May) is not an official public holiday in South Korea. However, according to the Labor Day Act, employers can stipulate that 1 May be made an official holiday within the company's rules of employment. For instance, banking institutions and most commercial business are closed that day.

May 5 Children' Day

May 19 Buddha's Birthday

Golden Week

There is a Korean version of Golden Week. They refer to Golden Week as a time when multiple holidays run consecutively, and in 2020 it ran from April 30 until May 5 including a weekend. However, May 1 is up to employers and is widely observed. May 5 is the recognized public holiday.





May 5 Children's Day

This date, 5/5, has a certain symmetry to it and is therefore easy for people to remember. Although many countries worldwide have a day designated as "Children's Day," the dates vary from country to country.

Children's Day actually started on May 1, 1922 through the hard work of the popular children's book author Bang Jeong-hwan (방정환). His purpose for the holiday was to promote love, care and respect for the youth because they are the future of the country. In 1946, it was pushed to May 5 and was officially registered as a holiday in 1961.

As parents often don't have much time to see their children due to overtime or working on the weekend, many families make an extra effort to do something special on Children's Day. Parents will often take their children somewhere special and treat them to snacks or ice cream on Children's Day. Places like amusement parks, zoos and having a picnic in the park are especially popular. Children of all ages are celebrated during Children's Day and the entire community is involved in the festivity. Traditional games, such as yut are played.



May 8 Parents' Day

Three days after Children's Day, on May 8, is Parents' Day (어버이날). The day was originally designated as Mother's Day, but as there was not a Father's Day, the two days were combined to make Parents' Day. However, this day is not a public holiday. Traditionally, children give their parents carnations on Parents' Day. As a result, many convenience stores and shops will have special displays so that children can easily buy flowers or other small gifts for their parents.





Everland

Everland is South Korea's largest theme park. Located at the Everland Resort in Yongin, a city in Gyeonggi-do, it receives 5,85 million visitors annually^[2] and was ranked nineteenth in the world for amusement park attendance in 2018.^[2] As of 2010, Everland is measured to be approximately 1,200,000 yards in size.^[4] Along with its main attractions, Everland includes a zoo and water park known as Caribbean Bay. Everland is operated by Samsung C&T Corporation (formerly known as Samsung Everland, Cheil Industries), which is a subsidiary of the Samsung Group.^[5]

This park was formerly called "Jayeon Nongwon" which roughly translates to "natural farm."^[6] Its former English name was "Yongin Farmland".

Lotte World

Lotte World is a major recreation complex in Seoul, South Korea. It consists of the world's largest indoor theme park, an outdoor amusement park called "Magic Island", an artificial island inside a lake linked by monorail, shopping malls, a luxury hotel, a Korean folk museum, sports facilities, and movie theaters.

As with the Universal and Disney theme parks, Lotte World is owned and operated by a huge conglomerate: Lotte Co., Ltd., a company founded in Japan and currently based in both that country and South Korea.



May 19 Buddha's Birthday

In South Korea, this national holiday is also known as 'Seokga tansinil'. In Korea, the date of the birthday of Buddha is determined by the Lunisolar calendar. It takes place on the 8th day of the 4th month of the Lunar calendar, which means it usually falls in late April or early May.

Buddha's birthday has been a public holiday in South Korea since 1975, with the number of followers of Buddhism in South Korea estimated at 10 Million.

The holiday is marked with lantern festivals and temples open their doors offering visitors free tea and a meal of rice and vegetables called bibimbab. People also hang lotus lanterns in their homes and streets as well as covering the temples with lanterns during the holy month.

In Seoul, there is an evening parade from Tapgol Park to Jogyesa on the Sunday prior to the actual holiday.



North Korea

May 1 International Workers Day

On 1 May every year, thousands of North Koreans celebrate International Workers Day. Pyongyang is awash in a sea of flags as waves of workers, bouquets in hand, line up in front of the statues of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il on Mansudae Hill to pay their respects. The Rodong Sinmun, official mouthpiece of the Worker's Party, tells of workers across the country participating in sports matches and picnics organised by their state employer. It is 1 May, celebrated in North Korea as International Worker's Day.



A picture release by KCNA on 02 May 2014 shows North Korean workers attend a rally in Pyongyang, to celebrate the May Day holiday.

Lotus Lantern Festival

Yeondeunghoe (연등회) is a lantern-lighting festival in Korea celebrating the Buddha's Birthday.^[1] It is inscribed in UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage List from 2020 and enlisted as South Korean Intangible Cultural Property from 2012.^[2]

The word, Yeondeunghoe, is composed of two words, *Yeondeung* and *Hoe*, which mean lotus lantern and festival respectively.

Yeondeunghoe is celebrated across the country every year but one in Jongno District of Seoul Capital where Jogyesa, the chief temple of the biggest Korean Buddhist Jogye Order resides, is best known.

In 2020, Yeondeunghoe was cancelled due to Coronavirus pandemic despite revising its plans and reducing its participants.



Lotus Lantern

This is what we are making!

We will start with our paper lantern, set its support brace in place.

We will take individual pieces of paper, shape the short edges to form the petals, and glue these petals over the paper lantern.

There are pink petals for the flower, and green for the leaves at its base.

We will hang a little LED light inside to light our lantern!

