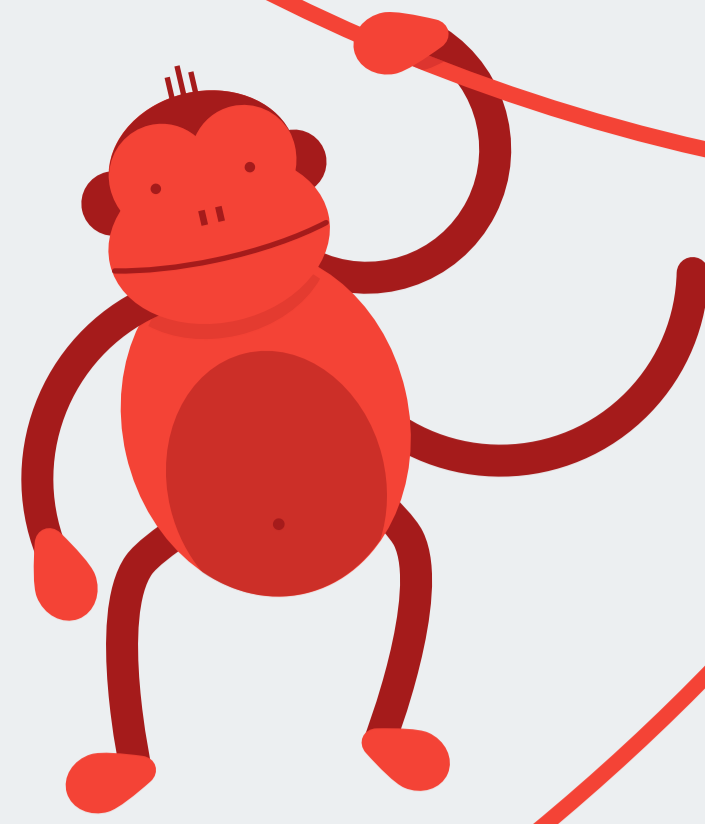


HAPPY CHINESE NEW YEAR!

# How Tradition and Trends Intersect Across APAC



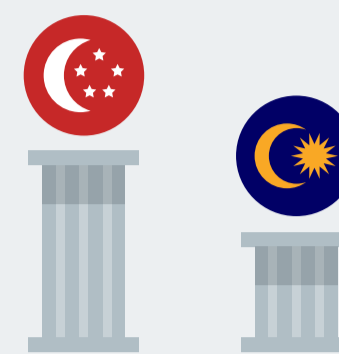
Legend has it that the lunar calendar was established as early as **2300 BC**. Back then, the scholars must've studied the moon over a long period of time to figure out a calendar. Too bad they couldn't just park their self-driving sedans by the curb and grab their smartphones to search for lunar patterns.

To uncover how technology has shifted our **Chinese New Year habits** and added some dimensions to age-old traditions, we looked to Google Trends. As you explore traditions old and new, the key question is: Is your brand present amid the celebrations?

## WAY BACK WHEN...

**Emperor Wu** (157 BC–87 BC) of the Han Dynasty established the day of the New Year based on the **lunar calendar**.

Despite having the smallest population in Asia, **Singapore** searches for "chinese new year" the most.



**Malaysia comes in second** with only half the volume of searches.

**Tết, the lunar new year in Vietnam**, may be the biggest holiday of the year, but **searches for "tết"** only surpassed searches for "christmas" in 2009. In 2015, volume for "tết" had about **5X the volume of "christmas"** at its peak.

## EVERYBODY, LET'S EAT!

The reunion dinner menu isn't built on cravings—it's about dishes that symbolize **prosperity, luck, health, wealth, or good fortune** for the year to come. One glance around the table and you'll see:

- chicken** (family unity)
- fish** (surplus)
- noodles** (longevity)
- oysters** (good fortune)

Recent traditions like **"lo hei"** and **"yu sheng,"** mainly popular in Singapore and Malaysia, have **tripled and doubled**, respectively, in search volume.

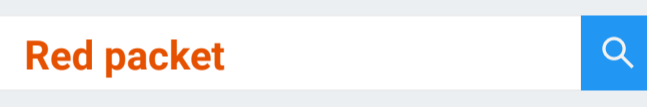
**"Nian gao"** (year cake) is the third most-searched term.

## "YOU SAY 'HONGBAO,' I SAY 'ANGBAO.'"

**"Angbao,"** the tradition of gifting money in red envelopes, dates back to the **Sung Dynasty**, when an orphan boy **defeated a huge evil demon** and the villagers rewarded him with a red pouch filled with money.

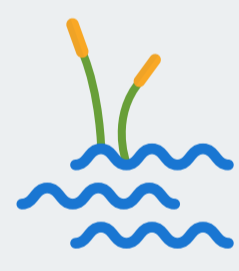


Searches for **"Angpao"** have grown **12.5X YoY** and is today one of the **most red-packet-related** search terms. Search volume for the Mandarin version, "Hongbao," has tripled in the same period.



remains the **most popular term** throughout the year while search volume for the Cantonese term "lai see" has barely grown at all. Will all the Canto speakers please stand up?

## THE YEAR OF THE WHAT?



Legend has it that the **twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac** were selected by a race across a swiftly flowing river.

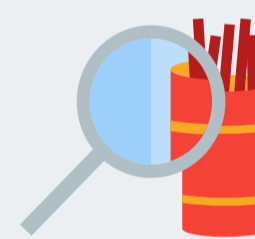


The **cat and the rat** hated each other, but as the worst swimmers in the animal kingdom, they knew that the fastest way was to cross the river together, **atop the ox**.



The two frenemies agreed to wake each other up early on the day of the race, but **the rat left without the cat**. (Figures.) The ox carried the rat on his back, but as they approached the opposite bank, the rat leapt in front of the ox at the last minute and came in first. Hence the order of the animals in the zodiac: rat before ox.

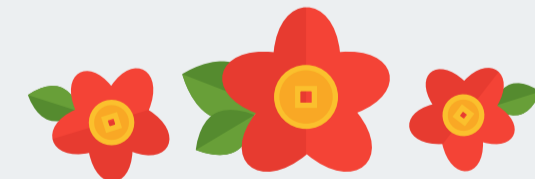
Around the turn of the new lunar year, **the Philippines** has the highest search queries for **"Chinese zodiac"**.



**Singapore**, on the other hand, ranks highest when it comes to year-round **Chinese zodiac queries**.

## THE CELEBRATION

Guests doing their round of Chinese New Year visits? You'd better get a-sweepin', but make sure it happens before New Year's Day, or you'll risk sweeping out all the good luck.



**Flowers** are also important; new buds can usher in a new year of **wealth and prosperity**.

And if you're a **business** owner, you certainly can't forget to invite:



the **lion** to come dance and cast away ill omens



or the **dragon** to bring in good luck.

**Gong Xi Fa Cai!** To get ready for the big day, people searched for the greeting, you guessed it, **"gong xi fa cai"** the most. As a catch-all phrase that wishes everyone **prosperity and wealth**, it's no wonder queries have doubled in the last few years.

## FESTIVITIES FROM WALL-TO-WALL

From friendly mahjong and card games to watching the fireworks and paying respects at the temple, the **15 days of Chinese New Year** are jam-packed with celebrations.



Hong Kongers watch **10.5M hours of YouTube** a week—and that jumps up 10% during Chinese New Year week, with **52% of views coming from mobile**.<sup>1</sup>

Source: 1 Google Internal data, 2015.