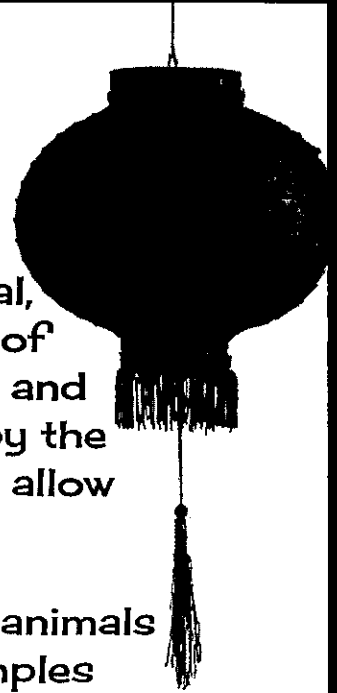


Halloween in China

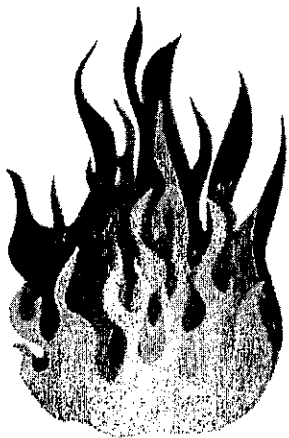
In China the Halloween festival is known as Teng Chie or the Lantern Festival. This celebration happens on the night of the full moon and marks the end of the Chinese New Year. During this festival, food and water are placed in front of photographs of relatives who have passed on. You will see bonfires and many lanterns during this time. The light given off by the lanterns is said both to attract heavenly spirits and allow the living to observe them.



Lanterns in the shapes of dragons, birds or other animals are hung in streets, placed in parks and outside temples and around homes. Short phrases are often written on them to ward off evil spirits. Some decorate their lantern with a riddle, offering a prize to the first person who solves it

Celebrations that are commonly observed include fireworks, folk dancing, and performances such as the dragon parade and lion dance. The special food associated with the festival is yuanxiao, a round, stuffed dumpling made with sticky rice flour that symbolizes family unity, completeness and happiness.

Another Hallowe'en festival is called The Hungry Ghosts Festival. In China the souls of the dead, particularly during the seventh lunar month, wander the earth in search of affection. They are known as the hungry ghosts because of their hunger for recognition and care.



The purpose of the Festival of the Hungry Ghosts, is to make spirits feel welcome and to satisfy their spiritual hunger. This will stop any possible anger they might have and gain their gratitude. You might see people tending roadside fires and burning faux money and other offerings for ghosts and ancestors to use in the afterlife. Food is also left out to curb the physical appetite of the hungry ghosts.