

## China's Forbidden City opens to the general public at night for the first time in 94 years

Beijing's Forbidden City—traditionally **off-limits** at night for anyone except emperors, ghosts and visiting **dignitaries**—was lit up with lanterns and **gasps** after dark Tuesday as China celebrated the end of the Lunar New Year holiday.

off-limit 禁止的

dignitary 高官；高位的

gasp 喘气；渴望

The palace complex, home to Chinese emperors for five centuries, usually closes by 5 p.m. though VIPs have been taken in after dark on occasion. It was opened at night for the first time since its **reincarnation** as the Palace Museum 94 years ago. And it opened with a dazzling spectacle for **the Lantern Festival**, marked on the 15th day of the new year.

reincarnation 再生；转世

the Lantern Festival 元宵节

The palace walls were **illuminated** with red lanterns—designed to recreate the feeling of the royal court of old—and a light show lit up the complex while the China National Traditional Orchestra and the Peking Opera performed. An image of a treasured **scroll** called "A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains" was **beamed** onto the palace roof.

illuminate 照亮

scroll 卷轴；画卷

There was a virtual **stampede** to get tickets, which were free, for the rare night-time opening. They were snapped up within minutes of becoming available online Sunday, but the website still collapsed under the **strain** as hopefuls continued to **flock to** it.

beam 横梁；光线；照射

stampede 蜂拥；逃窜

strain 张力；负担

flock to 聚集到

"Creativity makes the 600-year-old palace younger and draws traditional culture closer to the public," said the People's Daily. The Palace Museum is now on a campaign to attract even more visitors.