

HAPPY RAT YEAR

Chinese in city gearing up for celebration

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Highlight: It's the Year of the Rat - and Jack Chen prepares by picking out Chinese Lunar New Year decorations from a shop on Main St. in Flushing, Queens, where several celebrations and parades are planned for the weekend, in addition to others around the city. Brittany Kriegstein/for New York Daily News

Body

Get ready to celebrate New York City's pizza rat and all his furry friends - this is their year!

New York will ring in the Year of the Rat this weekend to celebrate the Lunar New Year. Festivities will take place across the five boroughs, despite extra precautions and a ban on traveling from some parts of China amid fears of a pandemic from the coronavirus that has left hundreds sick and 26 dead.

An overnight fire Thursday in the heart of Chinatown at its busiest senior center put a further damper on spirits ahead of the lunar kick-off, but city officials said the fireworks, parades and other festivities will all go on as planned.

Here are a few things to do in the city - and, if you take the subway, keep an eye out for rats. After all, 2020 is all about them.

21st New Year Firecracker Ceremony and Cultural Festival

Firecrackers will light up the afternoon on Saturday from 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. in Chinatown's Sarah D. Roosevelt Park.

Greater Flushing Chamber of Commerce Lunar New Year Parade

March in a festive annual Lunar New Year Parade from 9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. Saturday at St. George's Church, 135-32 38th Avenue in Flushing. A reception with raffles and refreshments follows.

Brooklyn Chinese-American Association Parade

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The Chinese New Year Celebration Parade complete with fireworks, a lion dance and a kung-fu demonstration put on by the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association on Sunday.

Queens Botanical Garden Lunar New Year Celebration

Face-painting, mask-making and a lion dance performance takes center stage noon-4 p.m. Saturday at the Queens Botanical Garden in Flushing.

Brooklyn Children's Museum

March with the Chinatown Community Young Lions - and even make your own puppet - at the Brooklyn Children's Museum Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Tickets \$13.

Lunar New Year Tinker Festival

Science meets art at the tinker festival at the Lewis Latimer House Museum 2:30 p.m-5: 30 p.m. Saturday in Flushing. Be sure to RSVP in advance.

Shadow Theater Workshops: The Art of Chinese New Year

Chinese Theatre Works artists puts on a mystical display of shadow puppetry at the China Institute in America 2 p.m.-3:30 p.m. in Lower Manhattan. Tickets start at \$10.

Lion Dance at Industry City

Industry City will host a traditional lion dance Sunday 2 p.m.-4 p.m.

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