New Year's feast of festivities unveiled

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By Lia Zhu in San Francisco |   
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Dozens of cultural events, including variety shows, concerts and parades and exhibitions were among the events announced Thursday by the Chinese Consulate General in San Francisco to celebrate the coming Spring Festival, which falls on Feb 16.  
The events will be held from Feb to March in the San Francisco Bay Area, Seattle, Portland, Las Vegas and Anchorage.  
"The cultural exchange between the Chinese and American people is the foundation of the relationship between the two countries," said Zha Liyou, deputy Chinese consul general in San Francisco.  
The Spring Festival events have been held in each state of the consular areas for several years and the Chinese holiday has also become an international festival in the Western US, he said.  
The series of events, called Happy Spring Festival, has been committed to attracting Americans to share in the festivities of the Chinese New Year since it was first introduced by China's Ministry of Culture in the US in 2010.  
Zha said the Happy Spring events have engaged an increasing number of local artists and arts groups as well as mainstream cultural organizations in the past few years.  
This year, the San Francisco Symphony will hold its 18th annual Chinese New Year concert, and the Seattle Symphony will give its 10th annual Celebrate Asia concert. Photofairs San Francisco will also join the festival this year by presenting Chinese art works.  
Other events include a Chinese New Year Celebration during an NBA game between the Golden State Warriors and the Oklahoma City Thunder, an art exhibition of Ming Dynasty treasures at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, and a Desert Spring Festival in Las Vegas.  
The Happy Spring Festival brand also looks to integrate with overseas Chinese celebrations, said Zha. Heilongjiang Arts Troupe will join the San Francisco Chinese New Year Parade, and Tianjin Art Troupe will put on variety shows in Las Vegas, Portland and Anchorage in February.  
The events also focus on the American public and young people, said Zha. Art groups will bring their tradition-packed performances to local elementary schools and museums.  
Last year, China hosted more than 2,000 Happy Spring Festival events in over 500 cities in more than 140 countries, according to Zha.

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