什么是中秋节

What is Mid-Autumn Festival?

To the Chinese, Mid-Autumn Festival means family reunion and peace. The festival is celebrated when the moon is believed to be the biggest and fullest. To the Chinese, a full moon is a symbol of prosperity, happiness, and family reunion.

How the Chinese Celebrate Mid-Autumn？

Many traditional and meaningful celebrations are held in most households in China, and China's neighboring countries. The main traditions and celebrations include eating moon cakes, having dinner with family, gazing at and worshiping the moon, and lighting lanterns.

Why Mid-Autumn Festival is Celebrated and How it Started？

Mid-Autumn Festival has a history of over 3,000 years, dating back to moon worship in the Shang Dynasty (1600–1046 BC). It’s such an important festival that many poems were written about it, stories and legends about the festival are widespread, and its origins have been guessed at and explained by generations of Chinese.

The term "Mid-Autumn" first appeared in the book Rites of Zhou (周礼), written in the Warring States Period (475–221 BC). But the term only related to the time and season; the festival didn't exist at that point.

In the Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD), it was popular to appreciate the moon. Many poets liked to create poems related to the moon when appreciating it. There is a legend that Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty visited the Moon Palace in his dream and heard a wonderful song.

In the Northern Song Dynasty (960–1127 AD), the 15th day of the 8th lunar month was established as the "Mid-Autumn Festival". From then on, sacrificing to the moon was very popular, and has become a custom ever since.

Why Mid-Autumn Festival is Celebrated and How it Started？

The Mid-Autumn Festival falls on the 15th day of the 8th lunar month，usually in early September to early October of the Gregorian calendar with full moon at night. It is a time for family members and loved ones to congregate and enjoy the full moon - an auspicious symbol of abundance，harmony and luck. Adults will usually indulge in fragrant moon cakes of many varieties with a good cup of piping hot Chinese tea，while the little ones run around with their brightly-lit lanterns.

The festival has a long history. In ancient China，emperors followed the rite of offering sacrifices to the sun in spring and to the moon in autumn. Historical books of the Zhou Dynasty had had the word "Mid-Autumn". Later aristocrats and literary figures helped expand the ceremony to common people. They enjoyed the full， bright moon on that day， worshipped it and expressed their thoughts and feelings under it. By the Tang Dynasty (618-907)， the Mid-Autumn Festival had been fixed， which became even grander in the Song Dynasty (960-1279). In the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties， it grew to be a major festival of China.

中秋节有悠久的历史，和其它传统节日一样，也是慢慢发展形成的，古代帝王有春天祭日，秋天祭月的礼制，早在《周礼》一书中，已有“中秋”一词的记载。后来贵族和文人学士也仿效起来，在中秋时节，对着天上又亮又圆一轮皓月，观赏祭拜，寄托情怀，这种习俗就这样传到民间，形成一个传统的活动，一直到了唐代，这种祭月的风俗更为人们重视，中秋节才成为固定的节日，《唐书·太宗记》记载有“八月十五中秋节”，这个节日盛行于宋朝，至明清时，已与元旦齐名，成为我国的主要节日之一。

The Mid-Autumn Festival probably began as a harvest festival. The festival was later given a mythological flavour with legends of Chang-E， the beautiful lady in the moon.

中秋节最早可能是一个庆祝丰收的节日。后来，月宫里美丽的仙女嫦娥的神话故事赋予了它神话色彩。

What are the customs of the Mid Autumn Festival

赏月 admire the full moon /watch the full moon to celebrate the festival

玩花灯play with lanterns / scaldfish

祭月offering sacrifice to the moon

月饼是中秋节的代表性食物。

Moon cakes are the representative food of Mid-Autumn Festival.

那天晚上，家家户户都边吃月饼 边赏月，当天是圆月，月饼便做成圆的，看上去像满月。

On Mid-autumn Day, families eat moon cakes and enjoy the glorious full moon; the moon cake is round and looks like the full moon.

对于月饼，每个人都有自己的喜好，并且在庆祝活动到来的时候，我们已经享尽了 各种各样的月饼。

As for moon cakes, everyone has their own favorites. And we've already stuffed our faces with plenty kinds of moon cakes by the time the festivities arrive