

KIRITAKA English Journal Vol.41

~Stay Independent, Stay as ONE TEAM~ January 31st, 2025



Kiwi Corner



Happy New Year for 2025! I hope this coming year brings you health and happiness!

Welcome back to Kiritaka, everyone! I hope you had a wonderful and relaxing winter holiday, and you're ready to start the last school term for this year. During the winter break, I went back to my homeland, New Zealand, in order to spend time with my family. I hadn't been back for a summer Christmas in six years! For this month's Kiwi Corner, I'd like to share some of the places I visited while I was there.

First stop, of course, was my hometown, **Tauranga**. I've shared many pictures over the years, but please let me share one more that I took while there. I couldn't go back to New Zealand in summer without going to the beach! This flag is placed to tell you where it's safe to swim.



Swim between the flags!



The famous cable car in Wellington.

Next was my university town, **Wellington**, which is also the capital of New Zealand. It's a beautiful city with steep hills and a beautiful waterfront. Unfortunately, the weather wasn't as nice as in Tauranga, but I still had a wonderful time walking around.

After Wellington, I went down to the South Island, which is famous for its incredible scenery. One of the first places I

visited was **Queenstown**, a hotspot for tourists that is beautiful all year round. The mountain range in the background is called "The Remarkables,"



The beautiful town of Queenstown.



Milford Sound – a famous fiord.

and they truly live up to their name.

Another place I visited in the South Island was **Milford Sound**. It was judged the world's top travel destination in 2008, and is acclaimed as New Zealand's most famous tourist destination. In the picture to the left you can see a cruise ship – this shows just how vast and incredibly steep the cliffs are on either side.

The last place I'd like to introduce from my travels is Lake Tekapo. This area was designated in 2012 as the Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve - the largest dark-sky reserve in the southern hemisphere. The dark-sky reserve accreditation recognises that the night skies in the area of the reserve are almost completely free of light pollution and ideal for star-gazing.



The night sky and an old church in Tekapo.

This month I'd like to introduce a famous Kiwi song. It's a classic that reached No.2 on the US Billboard Hot 100 in 1987. You can listen to it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9gKyRmic20>

(Liam Campbell)

Tea Time with Choy

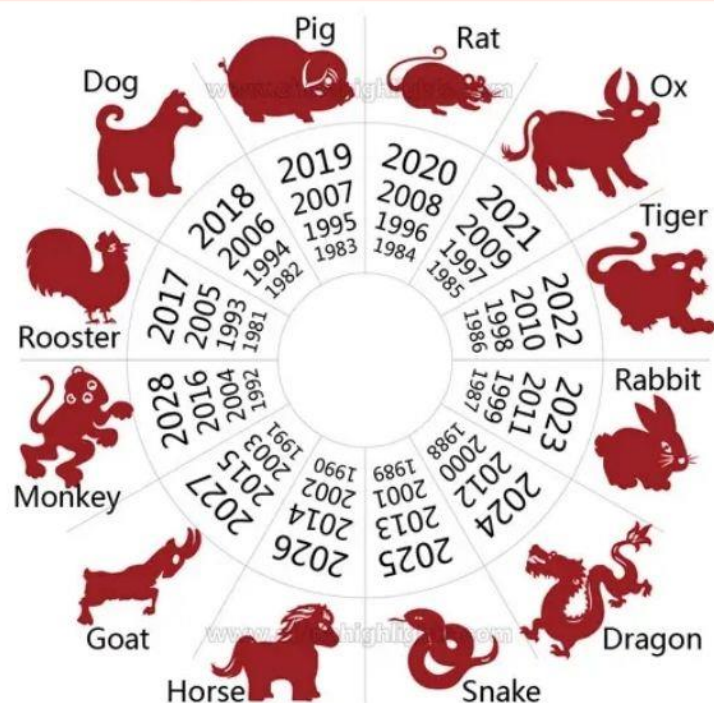


Happy New Year everyone! This month, we're celebrating Chinese New Year, a festival of family, food, and fresh beginnings. From fireworks and red envelopes to dumplings and the legendary Nian, we'll explore the traditions that make this holiday special. Grab a cup of tea and let's welcome the Year of the Snake!

Chinese New Year, also called the Spring Festival, is like the ultimate family reunion... but with firecrackers! It's one of the biggest celebrations in Chinese culture, marking the start of a new lunar year. This isn't just a one-night party like January 1st — **it lasts 15 days!** Each year is linked to an animal from the **Chinese zodiac**, so if you're a Pig, Dragon, or Rabbit, this might be your special year.

Before the holiday begins, families clean their homes from top to bottom to **get rid of bad luck** from the past year. Imagine a mix of spring cleaning and superstition! After that, they decorate with red because it brings good fortune and scares away evil spirits (plus, it looks great in photos).

The most important part is New Year's Eve dinner, **a huge family feast** with dumplings, fish, and rice cakes. Each food has a special meaning — **dumplings for wealth, fish for abundance, and rice cakes for success**. After dinner, children receive **red envelopes (hongbao)** filled with money — like Christmas gifts, but no need to wrap them!



The celebrations continue with lion and dragon dances, fireworks, and temple visits. Fireworks are important because they scare away a mythical monster called "Nian" (who really doesn't like loud noises).

The festival ends with the **Lantern Festival** on the 15th day. Families light beautiful lanterns and send them into the sky or onto rivers, **wishing for a bright and lucky year**. It's a magical sight — unless you're the one who has to clean up the lanterns later!

"Gong Hei Fat Choy! Sun Nin Fai Lok!"
(恭喜發財, 新年快樂)

This means "Wishing you prosperity and a Happy New Year!"

Try saying it to your friends — it will surely bring a smile!

For this month's song, here's a fun one all about Chinese New Year!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYGuqpJuxho&ab_channel=SesameStreet