

New Year's Eve in Pakistan

/By Parshant Kumar/

In Pakistan, New Year's Eve celebrations have become quite popular. It is influenced by the Western world, but traditions have become a bit unique as Pakistani culture is mixed with it. Except for students, most of the people are busy during the day, but many companies are offering New Year's Eve as a holiday. During the day, sweets and fireworks shops are extremely busy, but the real fun begins during night. Most of the people come together with their family during dinner and eat special kinds of foods. Dinner includes cake, biryani with dal, chana chaat, nihari, and many other snacks also, like cookies or samosas. It is usually eaten between 8-9 pm, after which most of the people decide to go out to concerts or famous places. There are many places which host fireworks and make a good scenery to end the year with. Many people usually buy fireworks themselves to enjoy and, at midnight, people eat a special sweet called kaju katli to welcome the New Year. (see below for food descriptions)



Image: Google Maps



Foods mentioned above (also see photo)

- A. **Biryani**--a type of rice seasoned with tumeric.
- B. **Chana Chaat**--a chickpea salad spiced with masala.
- C. **Nihari**--stew of lamb, beef, or chicken flavored with black pepper
- D. **Kaju Katli**--a flat, soft, diamond-shaped treat with a distinctive milky-sweet taste, a texture similar to fudge, and usually has tiny shavings of silver (the precious metal) on top. This sweet is often eaten in combination with cashews.
- E. **Samosa**--a pastry stuffed with spiced vegetables like spinach, potatoes, peas, and onion, and sometimes meat as well.
- F. **Dal** -- A legume stew eaten with biryani

Thai Food

/By Chatrapee (P) Uthairat/

1. Tom Yum Goong

Tom yum goong is a central Thai food type of tom yum soup, which is popular to eat in every region in Thailand. It is a food eaten with rice and is mainly sour and spicy, mixed with salty and slightly sweet, divided into two types, namely tom yum clear soup and tom yum thick soup.



2. Pad Thai

Pad thai is a popular dish that is well known to both Thais and foreigners. It is assumed that the original pad thai came from China. And

later, various seasonings have been modified to have a taste for Thai people's tastes.

3. Papaya Salad

Papaya salad is a salad made from papaya. In Laos it is called tam mak hung and made more sour. It is cooked by pounding the raw papaya that has been chopped, sliced or grated into strips mainly in a mortar. The papaya is mixed with other ingredients like small tomatoes, sita eggplant, brinjal, fresh or dried chili, yard long beans, and garlic and then seasoned with palm sugar fish sauce and lemon.



Osechi Ryori: Japanese New Year's Meal

/By Ryusuke Shimizu/

What is Osechi Ryori ?

Osechi Ryori are the traditional foods enjoyed on New Year's day in Japan. They come in an assortment of colorful dishes packed together in special boxes called "Jubako", which resemble bento boxes (lunchboxes) . Every dish of these traditional foods has special meaning in welcoming the New Year.

Why are the stacked boxes used for Osechi?

Jubako, or tiered boxes, are traditionally used to display fancy celebration meals most commonly used for osechi, or New Years food. Jubako is used for Osechi. The stacked boxes symbolize the hope that, so happiness and blessing will be stacked as well.

How many boxes can you stack for osechi?

Today, while jubako boxes often consist of three or four tiers, they originally comprised five tiers, where the first four boxes contained food and the fifth was left empty to "pack good fortune." The contents of the boxes vary greatly depending on the region and the family, but the following are some of the food items most commonly seen in osechi.

What's inside?

The first box is filled with three celebration dishes, such as black beans, herring roe, and tazukuri (dried and caramelized juvenile anchovies) in addition to sweet-flavored dishes such as datemaki (sweet rolled omelette) and kurikinton (sweetened chestnuts with mashed sweet potato). The second box mainly contains grilled seafood such as Japanese sea bream, yellowtail, and shrimps. Vinegared dishes are packed into the third box. The fourth box typically features simmered vegetables such as carrots, bamboo shoots, lotus roots, and shiitake mushrooms.

