



# GET LUCKY

## FORTUNATE FOODS FOR CHINESE NEW YEAR

**W**hen I moved to Shanghai, I lived across the hall from a very superstitious man. Red cardboard cutouts of horses decorated his doorway, red underwear hung from his balcony, and it seemed he had enough fireworks to launch a full-scale pyrotechnics show for even the tiniest occasion. But I had no idea what any of it meant. That is, until Chinese New Year rolled around.

During the weeks leading to the holiday, I was gifted with oranges and tangerines, offered a giant, glittering cardboard sheep for my door and advised to deep-clean my apartment (as he peered over my shoulder, through the newly decorated doorframe). I was also instructed to not to cry, wash my hair and to settle any debts. This was all important, this man said, in order to receive good fortune in the year to come. But even more important than this, he said, I would need to watch what I ate. Thankfully, this did not mean scaling back on calories.

Eating “lucky foods” is a very important part of Chinese New Year celebration, playing not only into superstitions, but also tradition. And since it may or may not have been the reason for my lucky year (yes, I

even got myself into a relationship), I’m going to make the following foods part of my own traditions:

**Yú (鱼):** Since the Chinese word for fish sounds the same as the word for “abundance,” eating it whole allows for a surplus of all things good. If you don’t mind spice, the Hunan-style perch at Hunan Country Cuisine isn’t just tasty but also a pretty good deal at ¥60.

**Dànjiǎo (蛋饺):** Apparently egg dumplings look a bit like the old Chinese currency. But I’m sure they taste way better. Do yourself a favor and eat the pork-filled treasures in Elixir Health Pot’s savory, crack-like broth.

**Bābǎo fàn (八宝饭):** Translated to “eight treasure rice,” this sweet mound of sticky rice mixed with dried fruits and nuts symbolizes the reunion of family. Pick one up at Wang Jia Sha on Nanjing Xi Lu for ¥15 and share it with your loved ones for a sweet year ahead.

**Chūnjuǎn (春卷):** Spring rolls remind people that spring is coming, which makes people happy. They also slightly resemble gold bars, which also makes people happy. Try the yellow croaker spring rolls at Jian Guo 328 and you’ll be downright delirious.

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Jennifer Stevens  
AdventurousAppetite.com



## READER RECS

### FRENCH PARADOX

winner

**niko84:** “I would recommend it to anyone. The food is amazing and the staff is friendly and professional. They serve traditional French cuisine and have seasonal items like raclette.”

**Find it:** 483 Guyang Lu (near Yaohong Lu) 古羊路483号(近伊犁路). Tel: 5175-3090

### WINE BAR LE VERRE A VIN

**gknb:** “Small and cozy place perfect for a cold winter night. The staff was friendly and responsive. Food was good but I wish the portions were bigger.”

**Find it:** 1221 Changle Lu (near Huashan Lu) 长乐路1221号(近华山路). Tel: 5403-4278

### CHINESE SICHUAN CITIZEN

**narsfwassels:** “The cumin ribs and the kungpao shrimp were amazing. However, they bumbled my drink—ordered a vodka martini with a twist and got a gin martini with olives.”

**Find it:** 30 Donghu Lu (near Hualai Lu) 东湖路30号(近淮海中路). Tel: 5404-1235

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