

## MEDIA INFO

### CHINESE NEW YEAR DELICACIES – *YEE SANG & NIAN GAO*

Food plays an important role during Chinese New Year as this is the time when family members from near and far gather for lavish dinners. Each of the food items consumed during the observance of this auspicious festival is particularly special, as each one possesses positive connotations.

For instance, fish (*yu*) represents “abundance”, abalone (*pao yu*) means “guaranteed luck or success”, and black moss seaweed (*fat choi*) sounds like the phrase “exceeding in wealth” in Chinese. Mandarin oranges are also must-have in the house as they signify gold and the abundance of wealth.

The Sticky Cake or *Nian Gao*, which literally means “year cake” is a must-have during Chinese New Year. The word *nian* sounds like “year” in Cantonese while the pronunciation of *gao* is similar to high or tall. Hence, eating *Nian Gao* symbolises that the person will keep on moving up the ladder in whatever he or she is doing.



*Nian Gao (left)* is made from glutinous rice flour and brown sugar which give it the intrinsic stickiness. In Malaysia, it is normally steamed in a short cylindrical container wrapped in bamboo leaves. A delicious way to eat *Nian Gao* is to cut it into squares or sandwiched with sweet potato or yam slices before dipping in beaten egg and flour for deep frying.

Another typical Chinese New Year dish is *Yee Sang (below)*, meaning “raw fish” in Cantonese, and the words can be literally translated as “to have plenty in life”. It is a colourful vegetable salad comprising several finely shredded ingredients including carrots, white radish, preserved winter melon, pickled cucumber, pomelo bits, fresh and pickled ginger, coriander leaf sprinkled with a generous topping of crispy crackers and roasted peanuts. It is then crowned with thin slices of raw fish. The dressing is made of sweet sour plum sauce, vegetable oil, lime juice and white pepper.

When all these ingredients are displayed on a large plate, everyone will circle the table, armed with individual pairs of chopsticks and toss the salad together while expressing their desire for prosperity and good fortune. It is believed that the higher the salad is tossed, the better the chances of success and prosperity for the person concerned.





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Through the Tourism NKEA (National Key Economic Area), collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, other Government agencies and the private sector have been enhanced to help secure Malaysia's position as a leading tourist destination and achieve the country's target of 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by 2020.

The targets set under the Tourism NKEA will be achieved through the implementation of twelve Entry Point Projects (EPPs) clustered under five themes: Affordable Luxury; Nature Adventure; Family Fun; Events, Entertainment, Spa and Sports; and Business Tourism.

**Press contact:**

**Media Relations Unit:**

Shukri Hanafiah, Senior Deputy Director, Corporate Communication Division

Tel: +603-8891 8767

Email: shukrihanafiah@tourism.gov.my

**Editorial Unit:**

Anis Rozalina Ramli (Ms), Senior Editor, Corporate Communication Division

Tel: +603-8891 8759

Email: anisramli@tourism.gov.my

**MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD**

(MINISTRY OF TOURISM & CULTURE, MALAYSIA)

No. 2, Tower 1, Jalan P5/6, Precinct 5, 62200 Putrajaya, Malaysia

Tel: +603 8891 8000; Official: malaysia.travel; Corporate: tourism.gov.my

Facebook: friendofmalaysia; Twitter: tourismmalaysia; Blog: blog.tourism.gov.my