

Chinese valentine's day



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Chinese Valentines Day (Qi Qiao Jie) has been celebrated since Han Dynasty (206BC-220AD), and is celebrated on the seventh day of the seventh month.

Chinese Valentines Day finds its beginnings in the traditional love story of Niulang and Zhinu.

Zhinu, the seventh daughter of the Emperor of Heaven and a weaving girl, fell in love with Niulang who was a farmer and mere mortal. They met at the river when Zhinu flew down from the heavens and Niulang hid her clothes until she agreed to marry him. Chinese religious law forbids relationships between mortals and immortals and when the Lady Queen Mother found out about their love she forced Zhinu to return to heaven and never see Niulang again.

Zhinu and Niulang stay separated for 364 days of the year except on Chinese Valentine's Day when the Lady Queen Mother lets them be together. On this day she sends a flock of magpies to bridge the gap between the lovers and reunite them. Today in China it is said that you cannot find magpies on Valentines Day and if it rains on the evening of the seventh day of the seventh month people say it is the tears of Zhinu and Niulang.

It was customary on Valentines Day for Chinese girls and women to display their sewing skills, make candles, and show blossoms in the hopes that Zhinu may see them and bless them with a good husband. The festival was also called the 'Begging for Needlecrafts Festival' and the 'Daughters' Festival.'

" To celebrate the love story, Chinese people still have a tradition of sitting outdoors to observe the two stars on that day. Girls may prepare fruits, melons and incense as offerings to Zhinu, the weaving maiden, praying to acquire her high skills in needlecraft, as well as hoping to find satisfactory husbands." (China Peoples Daily. 2007).

Today people are still very influenced by the Valentine Story. According to the Beijing Times " The Civil affairs offices in Haidian District, North-western Beijing, saw 400 couples register for nuptials Tuesday, Valentines Day, which is five times the number the office usually handles in a day. (Beijing Times, Xinhua News Agency 2007).

If I were celebrating this day with my significant other I am not sure I would go to such extremes. However, I would celebrate in a traditional way and would make romantic gestures inspired by the love story. I would make a special dish of dumplings and like in Chinese culture I would put into three dumplings a needle, a copper coin, and a red date, to represent blessings, needlework skills, and a happy marriage. I would sew the names Zhinu and Niulang on the napkins as a prayer to Zhinu and I would prepare the table with candles to represent the heavens and flowers to represent the earth. I would make a pathway of candles for my partner to follow which would represent the bridge that joins Zhinu and Niulang on that evening. After dinner I would go star-gazing with my partner and look for the Star Vega, the home of Zhinu and the star Altair, the home of Niulang.

The Valentines Day love story is about a man and a woman which means I wouldn't choose to celebrate this day with friends. However, people in China now celebrate the day with their friends and send text messages and E-cards to wish each other blessings and luck in love. If I was in China I would go with my partner to the Temple of Matchmaker to pray for our love and marriage as is traditional on Valentines Day. I would maybe go to the temple with my single friends while they also pray to find love. I would perhaps send texts to my friends to wish them blessings.

Chinese Valentines Day is about romantic love, seeking blessings and good

<https://assignbuster.com/chinese-valentines-day/>

fortune. Valentines Day in China is a special day for couples as it is in the West.

Bibliography

Beijing Times. Xinhua News Agency. .(16/10/07).

China Peoples Daily. . (16/10/07).