
the LINK
February, 2016



Contents

1	From the President
2	WCI's New President Elect
4	International Conference
22	Post Conference Trip
24	Broward International Women's Club
26	International Women of Istanbul
30	Anglo-German International Women's Club
32	International Women's Day
34	WCI Women Who Make a Difference
38	The Power of Friendship
40	Reflecting on Cultural Traditions
42	Traditions - Chinese New Year
46	Traditions - Oktoberfest
52	The Internet - Empowering Women
54	Where are the Women in Tech?
56	Where Men see White, Women see Ecru
57	The Color Consequent



the LINK

February, 2016

A publication of
Welcome Clubs International
www.wciclubs.org

Editor

Lise McCartney

Welcome To Washington
International Club

Meet WCI's new
President Elect,
2016-2018

Maria Fernanda Arduino

page 2

WCI

14th Biennial

International Conference

Prague, Czech Republic

May 18 - 21, 2016

see Pages **4 - 21**

Cover Photo

Astronomical Clock - Prague

From the President



Pam Bansbach

Welcome to Colorado International Club

Dear Women of the World,

I address you as such because of your commitment to cross-cultural education, which promotes friendship and understanding throughout the world. That is truly the best way to encourage peace between the various countries and their cultures. Throughout the ages people have attempted to expose, and have even gone so far as to force their religion and culture upon people from other countries. The entirely different goals of WCI are for our members to gain knowledge of other cultures and religions and thus promote acceptance of all, regardless of creed or color. We celebrate our diversity.

Every 2 years Welcome Clubs International invites all members of the individual clubs to attend a conference. This year the conference will be in Prague of the Czech Republic. In this issue of the LINK, you are introduced to Prague, a fascinating city. To date, over 80 women and their guests have registered. Those women will be able to renew friendships made at previous gatherings and establish new friendships with people from the International Community. We learn much through conversations with members from other clubs.

We extend a special thanks to Lise McCartney, who worked tirelessly to put together this issue of the LINK. It is a beautiful, informative magazine which makes us all proud. While this is sent to you electronically, we hope to print the magazine for all the attendees of the conference. The cost of mailing the magazine to all

President's Letter cotinued page 3

The Power of Friendship

WCI

WELCOME CLUBS INTERNATIONAL

MEET WCI's NEW PRESIDENT ELECT 2016-2018



Maria Fernanda Arduino de Obiglio

International Women's Club of Porto Alegre.
Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil

I was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Throughout my life I have lived in England, the United States, Brazil, Jamaica, and I have stayed for long periods of time in both Turkey and in India. Each one of my moves represented a time of upheaval, a time of pain, a time of possibilities, a time of hope. Above all, moves have been a way to know different people and different cultures. The whole process of moves has been an exquisite balance between preserving my self- identity and self- worth while adopting some new habits and beliefs that have broadened my perception skills and deepened my awareness. I first participated in the International Conference in San Diego, California, in 2008. I was then member of the Associacão Beneficente International Women's Club Porto Alegre, and I travelled as part of this thriving club. By then, I had already moved back to Buenos Aires, and after some time, became non- resident member of the IWCPOA.

In 2010, I travelled to Porto Alegre and participated of the International Conference. Julia Banks assumed the Presidency of WCI-2010-2012-, and invited me to be Chair of Mexico, South America and Central America as part of the Executive Committee.

As Chair, I participated of a few events held by the International Women's Clubs in Brazil. One of them was the Meeting of the Confederacão of Women's Clubs in São Paulo.

During my time as Chair of Mexico, South and Central America, I lived for some time in Kingston, Jamaica, and the Latin American Ladies in Kingston joined WCI. During the months of December, January and February, I participated of their meetings, and when back in Buenos Aires, I contributed with articles for their online Newsletter. I was able to develop a close relationship with them.

S 2012, due to personal and professional reasons, I could not pursue my job as Chair, and Caroline Dimmers- WCI President 2012- 2014- invited me to remain part of the Executive Committee as Consultant to Mexico, South and Central America, which has been my job to today.

To me Welcome Clubs International is about cultural sensitivity and human compassion, and in this way, to help create a harmonious, peaceful world.

Maria Fernanda Arduino

Academic Background

- Doctorate of Education. Majors: Organizational Leadership and Human Services Administration. Abraham S. Fischler School of Education. Nova Southeastern University. Miami, FL. United States of America
- Master of Arts in Human Development. Salve Regina University. Newport. RI. United States of America
- Bachelor in Family Sciences. Universidad Austral. Buenos Aires. Argentina
- Bachelor in English Language and English Literature. Teaching Degree. Lenguas Vivas Teacher Training College. Buenos Aires. Argentina

Work Experience

- Lecturer on Linguistics at several Teacher Training Colleges in Argentina
- Online Instructor for Graduate Courses on Family Sciences. Universidad Austral
- Board Member in International Schools. Chair of Education Committee
- President of Associação Beneficente International Women's Club Porto Alegre, Brazil
- Chair to Mexico, South and Central America. Executive Committee Member. Welcome Clubs International

President's Letter cotinued from page 1

club members is quite costly so we hope that you can share the issue electronically with all members of your club. In closing, I would like to encourage you to enjoy your club and each and every friend you have made as a result of this association. Memories created by your attendance and efforts are wonderful things to have.

And we hope to see many of you in Prague.

In friendship,
Pamela Bansbach
President, Welcome Clubs International

Editor's Note:

Welcome to the new LINK - we hope you enjoy our new "look".

As an E-magazine, we now can make our LINK more accessible to all our members.

Of course, this issue features our upcoming 2016 International Conference in Prague. In keeping with WCI's mission of "....cross- cultural education and friendship", the LINK highlights some of the history and culture of Prague and the Czech Republic.

We are very grateful for articles about some of the wonderful women in our member clubs. We hope to see more of these member profiles in the future – our sisters are amazing women and it is fascinating to learn about them. We encourage more clubs to participate in this endeavor.

We ask members to contribute additional articles of interest, especially articles about culture, traditions, travel experiences, and what membership in their club means to them. The LINK looks for general articles about women's issues – health, education, art, music, business, recreation and entertainment, and others.

Suggestions and submittals from our members are essential to make our LINK the "magazine to read!"

Lise McCartney
Editor, The LINK

WCI thanks our new sponsor for their support of The LINK.



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL



WCI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Prague, Czech Republic May 18- 21, 2016

All members of WCI Clubs and Associate Clubs are invited to attend (*with spouses/guests*).

Conference Schedule and Registration Forms can be found on the WCI Website

www.wciclubs.org

Log on with your club's password and go to Events - Conferences.

Meet up with old friends and make new friends.

Praha

One of the most beautiful cities in the world, Prague has been a political, cultural, and economic centre of central Europe during its 1,100-year existence. Prague was founded in the late 9th century during the Romanesque era, Around 880, the Prague Castle was founded by prince Bořivoj, the first of the Přemyslid princes. The Prague bishopric was founded in 973. The Czech lands had a high economic, cultural, and political status during the Přemyslid rule, which was further strengthened by Vratislav II being granted the royal crown and becoming the first Czech king in 1085 - so far remaining subordinate to the Holy Roman Empire and the German king, with the royal title being made hereditary in 1212 by the Golden Sicilian Bull.

In the meantime, Prague was growing rapidly thanks to its position at the crossroads of several trade routes.. During the reign of Přemysl Otakar II in mid-13th century, the Czech kingdom briefly expanded all the way to the Mediterranean Sea. The Přemyslid dynasty ended with the death of its last member, Wenceslas III, in 1306. Prague became the seat of Bohemian kings, some of whom ruled as emperors of the Holy Roman Empire (*thus also becoming the capital of the Holy Roman Empire*). It was an important city to the Hapsburg Monarchy and its Austro-Hungarian Empire and after World War I became the capital of Czechoslovakia. The city played major roles in the Protestant Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, and in 20th-century history, during both World Wars and the post-war Communist era. After 1989 many foreigners, especially young people, moved to Prague. In 1992, its historic centre was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In 1993, Czechoslovakia split into two countries and Prague became capital city of the new Czech Republic.

Often referred to as “Golden Prague” and “City of a Hundred Spires”, Prague has become one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. This magical city of bridges, cathedrals, gold-tipped towers and church domes has been mirrored in the surface of the swan-filled Vltava River for more than ten centuries. Prague suffered considerably less damage during World War II than some other major cities in the region, allowing most of its historic architecture to stay true to form. It contains one of the world's most pristine and varied collections of architecture, from Romanesque to Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo, Neo-Renaissance, New-Gothic, Art Nouveau, Cubist, Neo-Classical and ultra-modern. Home to about 1.2 million people, Prague is also a modern and vibrant city full of energy, music, culture, art, fine dining and events.



WCI International Conference Hosted by the members of The International Women's Association of Prague

WCI 14th Biennial

International Conference



Hosted by the members of the

International Women's Association of Prague

This year IWAP celebrates the 25th anniversary of the gathering of a group of like-minded women to form a fantastic community for support.

In 1991, a group of women, from 10 different nationalities, formed the International Women's Club of Prague (IWCP) and females from all different countries were invited to join. The demand for a non-Czech speaking support group was clear.

In November 1997, due to changes in legal requirements, a new organization called the International Women's Association of Prague (IWAP) was created, with new bylaws and operating guidelines. IWAP began to take a more active role in integrating its members in the local community, by raising funds for local charities and flood victims, for example. These efforts raised donations for an impressive list of charities, in particular, organizations dedicated to child welfare. IWAP acquired many more Czech members, and Czech language classes were offered. Over the years the principles of IWAP have not changed:

- Promote friendship
- Enhance cultural understanding
- Assist local charities and build bridges between members and the local community

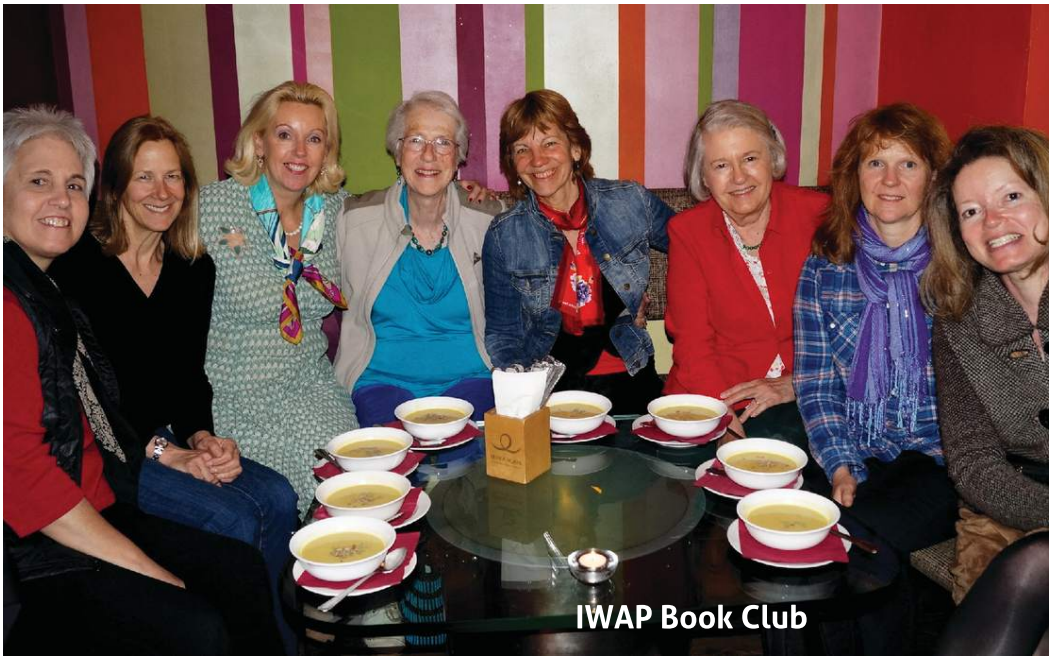
No wonder that a bridge over a river was chosen for the logo!



IWAP Annual Charity Christmas Market

IWAP FACTS:

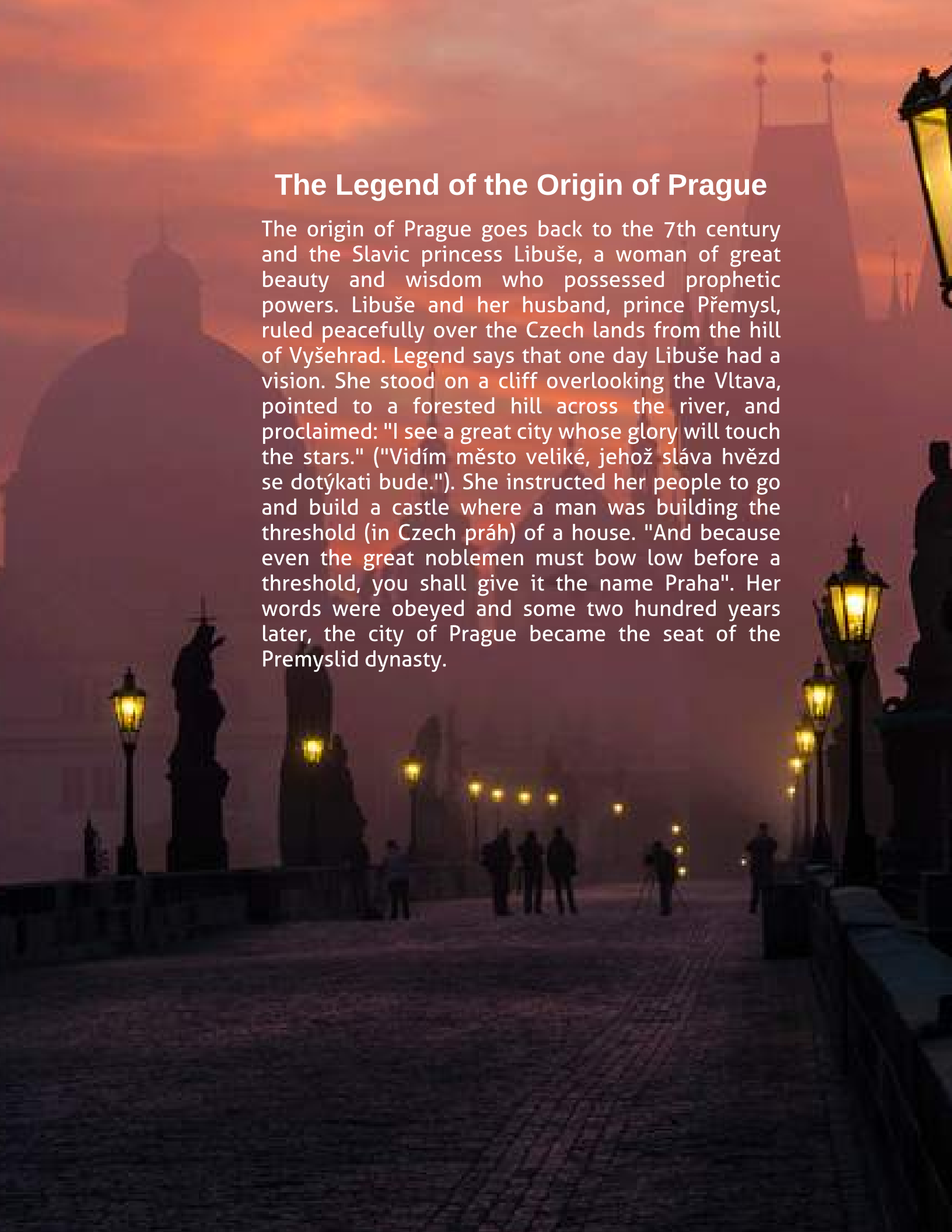
- IWAP officially started on 11th of January 1991.
- At the end of the first year the club had 310 members from 53 countries.
- In the 1990s, the agendas and minutes from meetings were all handwritten.
- Many of the first IWCP Interest Groups still exist, such as bridge, golf and Czech conversation.
- In 1999, President Václav Havel gave official recognition to IWAP for outstanding efforts of the organization.



IWAP Book Club

In recent years IWAP has participated in events such as the annual Rotary Dragon Boat Race and the Avon Walk for Life.

Membership has decreased over the last few years due to the expat community becoming dramatically smaller however, the club still has ladies from around 30 countries and 30 regular Interest Groups.



The Legend of the Origin of Prague

The origin of Prague goes back to the 7th century and the Slavic princess Libuše, a woman of great beauty and wisdom who possessed prophetic powers. Libuše and her husband, prince Přemysl, ruled peacefully over the Czech lands from the hill of Vyšehrad. Legend says that one day Libuše had a vision. She stood on a cliff overlooking the Vltava, pointed to a forested hill across the river, and proclaimed: "I see a great city whose glory will touch the stars." ("Vidím město veliké, jehož sláva hvězd se dotýkati bude."). She instructed her people to go and build a castle where a man was building the threshold (in Czech práh) of a house. "And because even the great noblemen must bow low before a threshold, you shall give it the name Praha". Her words were obeyed and some two hundred years later, the city of Prague became the seat of the Premyslid dynasty.



The Official Hotel of the WCI International Conference in Prague



Hotel Modrá Růže

(The Blue Rose)

Rytířská 16, Prague 1

phone: +420 224 404 100

fax: +420 224 226 106

A block of rooms has been reserved for the WCI International Conference until March 17th, 2016.



Make your reservations directly with the hotel at

hotel@hotelmodraruze.cz

This family- friendly Prague hotel is located in the historical district, just steps from Havelská Market and Estates Theatre. Old Town Square and Astronomical Clock are also within 5 minutes.

High-speed Wi-Fi throughout the hotel free of charge.



The hotel will gladly arrange easy and comfortable transportation from the Václav Havel Airport, the Main Railway Station and its surroundings. Driver will wait for you in the arrivals hall upon arrival at the Prague airport. For more information, please contact our reception via email:

hotel@hotelmodraruze.cz.



Prague

The Old Town Astronomical Clock

Known as the Orloj, It is probably the best preserved medieval astronomical clock in the world. It was installed on the tower of the Old Town Hall in 1410. Its creator, Jan Ondřejův (1375–1454), was an outstanding medieval astronomer, mathematician and physician. The clockwork itself was made by Mikuláš of Kadaň.

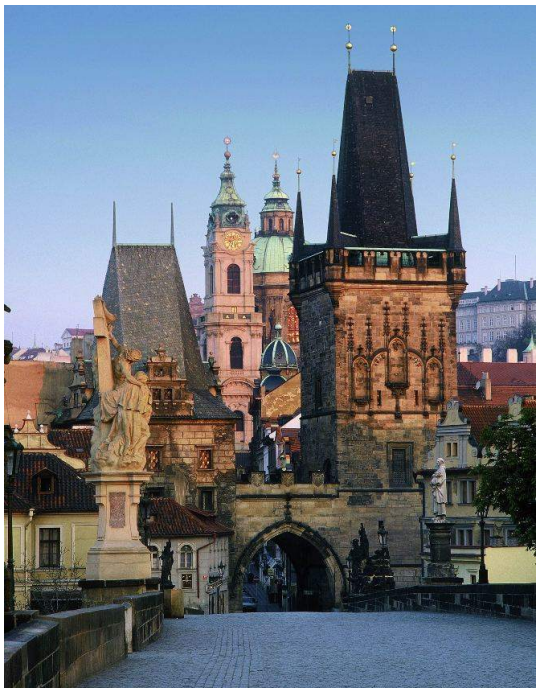
The medieval heart of the clock, the gears which ensure the movement of the hands for the Sun, Moon and Zodiac, have been preserved and are still functional. At the end of the 15th century a calendar was added, and it was replaced in 1866 with a new one painted by the artist Josef Mánes.

The Orloj is actually an astrolabe – a sort of universal analogue computer based on a mechanical principle. It shows the apparent position of celestial bodies in the sky. It is possible to read which zodiac sign the Sun is currently in, and tells the Sun's distance above the horizon, the time of its rise and set, the days of solstices and equinoxes, and more. The hand with a small golden star shows astral time. The sophisticated technical apparatus was enhanced in the 18th century with moving figures of the twelve Apostles, which parade by in the upper part of the clock at the top of the hour.

According to legend, the functioning of the clock is also linked with the fate of the Czech lands. As long as it is working, everything is more or less fine, but should it stop, things may go badly. The last such event occurred in 2001, shortly before midnight on New Year's Eve, a small problem caused the clock to stop running – and in August 2002 Prague was hit with a disastrous flood.

Prague - Architecture

Architecture is Prague's biggest draw card. Thanks to a stint in the 14th century as the de facto capital of what remained of the Holy Roman Empire and the good fortune of having mostly avoided destruction in countless wars over the centuries, Prague is a living laboratory of 1000 years of European architecture. Fans of Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque, neoclassical and art nouveau will all find plenty to gawk at. Gothic marvels such as the Charles Bridge and St Vitus Cathedral rival the best in Europe. More eclectic 20th-century styles like cubism, functionalism and even 'communism' are represented as well, creating an entrancing labyrinth of contrasting styles that complete a remarkably cohesive whole.





Did You Know. . .

The soft contact lens was invented in Czechoslovakia.

The word "robot" comes from the Czech language.

The origin of the sugar cube can be traced to the Czech town of Dačice.

The Czech Republic It is one of the top 10 countries worldwide in terms of the fastest average internet speed.

There are over 2,000 castles, keeps and castle ruins in the Czech Republic. It is regarded as the castle capital of the world.

The Czech Republic is famous for its crystal fine art, lace, wooden toys, garnets, hand-knit shawls, handmade tablecloths and puppets, painted eggs, china and antiques.





TRADITIONAL DRESS

A legacy of the Bohemian and Moravian cultures, Czech national dress also carries the influences of the Christian and Pagan traditions. Generally the traditional outfits in the country are beautifully crafted and embellished with exquisite embroidery. There are variations in the designs and patterns of the traditional dresses as the Czech Republic is divided into a number of ethnographic regions. The Czech national costume can be divided into two basic groups: western and eastern: the western regions are Bohemia and Middle Moravia, and the Eastern region includes the remainder of Moravia and Silesea.

Czechs wear their traditional costumes for special events and celebrations. The most prominent of which are the annual Christmas eve, Easter festivities, New Year and the Feast of Three Kings.

Modern Czech youth rarely wear the traditional folk dresses, but many elderly people have kept the custom alive.

In the eastern parts of the Czech Republic, the people prefer to wear the homemade and hand-stitched garbs including skirts, aprons and other outer garments. In the western parts, the traditional dress is more adorned with gorgeous headwear and other brilliant accessories. In some families, costumes are handed down from generation to generation as they wish to preserve the tradition.

The Kroje is a specialty of the Czech Republic and its colors and materials vary from region to region. It normally consists of skirt, blouse, vest, apron and hat for the women. The bonnets or caps are typically worn by the married women while the single girl keeps flowers in her hair. For men, a typical costume would include long breeches and a loose jacket. The Czech nation's favorite cloth was wool. Sheep skin coats have been a staple worn for ages across the Czech lands.



Traditions

The Burning of the Witches, April 30 - On the evening of April 30th, Czechs gather to build a bonfire and prepare an effigy of the witch that kept winter around so long. Czechs used to believe that the power of witches would weaken as the weather got warmer. So they thought that if they made something that looked like a witch and burned it, they could finally get rid of the cold weather. First, they tie two large sticks together to form a cross. Then they stuff old shirts, pants and socks with straw and place a pointed hat on the top of the stack. The witch is tied to a broomstick and set aside until darkness falls. When the fire is roaring, people roast sausages on sticks, strum guitars, and sing their favorite songs. Everyone looks forward to nightfall, when they will face the spirits of the witches. As soon as it's dark, the effigy of the witch is brought out and held up for all to see. Then, with a heave of the arm, it is thrown on top of the bonfire. As the witch burns, so does the last of winter's chill.



May 1st, the Time of Love

On May 1st, couples gather at the statue of Karel Hynek Mácha, the Czech Romantic "poet of love", in Prague's Petřín Park where they lay flowers and spend a few moments. The park is a particularly romantic place in May when its cherry trees are in bloom. Since May 1st is a national holiday in the Czech Republic, lots of people come to Petřín for a stroll if the weather is nice.

Karel Hynek Mácha (1810 - 1836) was a great Czech Romantic poet and author of the epic poem *Máj* (May). The poem, written in a remarkably beautiful style, tells about the tragic love of two young people and has become a poetic masterpiece of the Czech Romantic period and Czech literature in general.

Magical Powers of Plants and Foods

Apples: If an apple is given to goats on Christmas Eve, it is believed that their milk will be sweet.

Garlic: Garlic is rarely missing from any Christmas dinner as it is believed to provide strength and protection.

Honey: A pot of honey is usually placed on the dinner table, believed to guard against evil.

Mushrooms: Thought to give health and strength, are used in a traditional meal called kuba, prepared from dried mushrooms, barley, garlic, onions, and spices.

Sheaf of Grain: A bundle of grain, dipped in holy water, is often used to sprinkle the house to prevent it from catching fire in the coming year.

Poppy Seeds, Peas, Wheat, and Barley: These grains are fed to hens on Christmas Eve to promote abundant eggs in the coming year.

Vánočka or Christmas Bread: If fed to family cattle on Christmas Eve, it is believed that there will be ample milk in the new year. Putting a few vánočka crumbs in front of bee hives will promote abundant honey.

St. Martin's Day, November 11th - At 11 AM sharp on November 11th, almost every winery and restaurant in the Czech Republic opens the first wines that are produced that year. These are the young wines. This celebration is very similar to the one in France called the French Beaujolais Noveau. However, the Czech ritual has been in existence much longer than the one in France. St. Martin's wine is the first wine from the autumn harvest. This celebration which dates back to Emperor Joseph II, symbolizes the end of the harvest, or the beginning of winter. The trademark " Svatomartinské vino", or St. Martin's wine was registered in 1995. The young wine is low in alcohol content and is light and fresh tasting.





A Tradition of Music

Of all the performing arts, Czechs have arguably made their greatest contribution in music. It was here where Mozart chose to premiere his opera, Don Giovanni, fearing Viennese audiences at the time wouldn't understand such a demanding piece of music.

The traditional music of Bohemia and Moravia has been well documented and has become world famous through the compositions of composers like Leoš Janáček, Antonín Dvořák, Bedřich Smetana, Bohuslav Martinů. and other Czech composers. The most famous classical music pieces from Czech Republic include The *New World Symphony* from Dvořák, *Má Vlast* from Smetana and *Sinfonietta* from Janáček. Some pieces of classical music have actually been made more famous than the composer himself, for example "*Entrance of the Gladiators*" by Julius Fučík, better known just as "the circus music". Through the centuries, Czech composers were usually heavily influenced by traditional music from their country, which can be seen especially when listening to Smetana. Although the most popular classical music from Czech Republic comes from the Romantic era, Classical and Baroque composers should not be overlooked. These composers include Adam Michna, Heinrich Biber, Jan Dismas Zelenka, Johann Wenzel Stamitz and Johann Ladislaus Dussek.

Today, the commitment to classical and opera continues in the form of the Prague Spring music festival in May, and at venues like the Rudolfinum and National Theatre.

Czechs have always loved music, and Prague has welcomed with open arms all the great musicians who have ever visited here.

"My Praguers understand me."

"My orchestra is in Prague "

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart expressed these sentiments about the Czech capital and its inhabitants .

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky, appreciated that Praguers recognized his brilliant talent during his lifetime. He did not hesitate to declare the Czechs as the most musical nation in the world, and he later recalled Prague, where he conducted *Eugene Onegin*, as a place which gave him *"a moment of absolute happiness"*.

Bohemian Garnets



In 1762 the Empress Marie Terezie issued a ban on the export of Bohemian garnets from the country. Hereby she protected the domestic monopoly on the mining and working of the garnet .

The Czech national renaissance established the Bohemian garnet as the mineralogical symbol of Bohemia. It became an attribute of Czech patriots .

Blood-red Garnets - The official Czech National Gem, and the ones that you can buy here are among the world's finest, as well as one of the country's top exports. The Czech Republic has many garnet mines and the stones are used in making all kinds jewelry. Garnets are usually a deep red color but the ones from the Czech Republic are known to have a brighter pinkish tone.

The traditional hand-crafted Bohemian design places great emphasis on the arrangement of the garnets which dominate over the metal in each individual piece of jewelry. The brilliant sparkle of the Bohemian Garnets is due to their excellent clarity, transparency and high refraction of light. Beauty, elegance, durability and value assures the continued admiration and demand for the Bohemian Garnet.

Bohemian Garnets from the former Kingdom of Bohemia are famous to this day. Emperor Rudolf II, ruler of the Holy Roman Empire, was a great admirer of Bohemian Garnets and had many unique pieces in his collection. Bohemian Garnets Jewels are known to have adorned the elegant dresses of Russian Tsarinas at the Vienna Congress after the fall of Napoleon in 1815. This beautiful gemstone has left its mark on history.

Garnets are one of the largest families of gemstones. There are about a dozen varieties of garnets found world wide; they come in all colors except blue. The name 'Garnet' stems from the Greek word for pomegranate, a fruit with clusters of fiery red seeds. The Czech Republic in Europe is one of the few places in the world where the 'Pyrope' variety of garnets can be found. The pyrope has the deepest fiery red color of the entire garnet family. This unique garnet is world reknown as the famous Bohemian Garnet and has been mined from the mountains of Bohemia for over 600 years.





Bohemian Crystal

Fine crystal has been produced in the Bohemian countryside since the 13th century. Known as Bohemian crystal, it is produced in the regions of Bohemia and Silesia. It has a centuries long history of being internationally recognized for its high quality, craftsmanship, beauty and often innovative designs. In the 17th and 18th centuries. Czech glassware became as prestigious as jewellery and was sought-after by the wealthy and the aristocracy of the time. Czech crystal chandeliers could be found in the palaces of the French king Louis XV, Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria, and Elizabeth of Russia.

Bohemia turned out expert craftsmen who artfully worked with crystal. Bohemian crystal became famous for its excellent cut and engraving. They became skilled teachers of glass-making in neighbouring and distant countries. By the middle of the 19th century, a technical glass-making school system was created that encouraged traditional and innovative techniques as well as thorough technical preparation.

Today, Czech crystal chandeliers hang, for example, in Milan's La Scala, in Rome's Teatro dell'Opera, in Versailles, in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg or in the royal palace in Riyadh. Various sorts of glassware, art glass, ornaments, figurines, costume jewellery, beads and others also remain internationally valued.

There are plenty of glass shops in Prague, but the classic Moser Glass main store (Na Příkopě 12) is worth a visit just to look around. They have another, a smaller store located on Malé Naměsti 12 (just off Old Town Square) which sometimes offers discounts. Moser is one of the most collected of 20th century decorative glass and has been used everywhere from palaces to local restaurants. From its beginnings in 1857, as a polishing and engraving workshop, it developed into a lead-free glass manufacturer. The slogan ***King of Glass, Glass of Kings*** is associated with the company because of its famous clientele.

When buying Bohemian crystal (cut glass with intricate patterns) be sure to look for a sign of authenticity - an oval label, which reads "Bohemia Crystal, Made in the Czech Republic".





Prague . . .

known as the puppet capital of the world

Puppetry is one of the traditional forms of theatre in the Czech lands. Marionette puppet theatre has a very long history in entertainment in Prague, and elsewhere in the Czech Republic. It can be traced deep into the early part of the Middle Ages. Marionettes first appeared around the time of the Thirty Years' War.

The art of Czech marionette and puppet making goes back to the 18th century. They are traditionally hand-carved from wood or made from plaster. They represent all kinds of characters from devils, witches and wizards to clowns, kings and princesses, and even Czech "celebrities." Many of these beautiful, elaborately carved Czech marionettes are works of art. It takes a great artist to turn pieces of wood into nimble puppets. If you wish to take home a unique piece of Czech art, consider buying a puppet/marionette. You can barely wander down a street without encountering wooden stringed puppets beckoning you to watch them dance or take them home as souvenir. These marionettes, waiting to be brought to life at nearly every corner, also add to the visitor's sense that Prague is a fairy tale come to life, with its castles, romantic bridges, cobblestoned streets

Marionette operas and theater are a prominent part of Prague's contemporary arts and culture scene, but they are also rooted in a long tradition going back to the 12th century, when marionettes were used in religious ceremonies and folk customs. An important puppet organization is the National Marionette Theatre in Prague. Its repertoire mainly features a marionette production of Mozart's famous Don Giovanni. The production has period costumes and a beautifully designed 18th-century setting. There are also numerous other companies.



Czech Cuisine

Prague can boast of the first Michelin star restaurant in the post-Communist part of Central Europe. As of 2012 there are two Michelin-star restaurants in Prague.

Over the course of the centuries, Czech cuisine has been exposed to influences from its neighboring countries. As a result, the Austrian, Hungarian, Czech and German cuisines feature a number of common dishes. These include, for example, goulash, Wiener schnitzel and gnocchi.

Traditional Czech cuisine is distinguished by a large variety of dishes, and an impressive array of flavors. It also features the wide use of lean and fat-streaked pork, along with a rich choice of meals and side dishes prepared from flour. A most prominent dish made from flour is dumplings, a unique phenomenon of Czech cuisine. In addition, Czech creativity has contributed to the development of a variety of dishes prepared from potatoes. Sauces play quite a role in Czech cooking, especially in combination with meat and dumplings. Another characteristic feature of Czech cuisine is the widespread use of cabbage (sauerkraut). Prepared in several ways, cabbage is served warm as a side dish to a large number of meals.

Soups, which are served primarily as the first course, form a traditional and indispensable part of the luncheon menu. Lunch is traditionally the main meal in Prague. Restaurants will usually offer two or three kinds of soup which appear on the menu under the category called "Polévky",

Game is ranked very highly as a delicacy of Czech and Moravian cuisines. Game meat has a distinctive flavor and specific aroma derived from aromatic plants from which the wild animals feed. Game meat is boiled, steamed, or roasted. It is served with piquant sauces and a variety of garnishes. Roast leg of venison or shoulder (pecená srncí kýta or hrbet) can be with or without a cream sauce.

Fresh water fish are among the specialty dishes of the southern parts of Bohemia and Moravia. In modern restaurants, you will most probably find carp (kapr), a fresh water fish which has earned fame abroad for south Bohemian lakes as long ago as the Middle Ages. Carp is also a vital part of the traditional Christmas Eve dinner, being served as fried fillets, or with a sweet, spicy black sauce.

Street Food - In a world being taken over by the McDonalds, Pizza Hut and other junk food it is nice to see little street vendors or fast foods with traditional Czech specialities. Ask for a smazeny syr and enjoy a parek, a kind



of sausage unknown elsewhere. It is a great sausage and people say that, if you have not tried klobasa, you were not in Prague! You should also try another specialty - roasted cheese! It's great!

Pubs - ("hospoda") abound throughout Prague, and indeed are an important part of local culture. A Prague specialty is without a doubt the local pubs, taverns, tap-rooms and beer-drinking establishments of all kinds.

Prague is home to many breweries. Since the invention of Pilsner Urquell in 1842, the Czechs have been famous for producing some of the world's finest brews. But the internationally famous brand names – Urquell, Staropramen and Budvar – have been equaled, and even surpassed, by a regional Czech beers and microbreweries that are catering to a renewed interest in traditional brewing. Never before have Prague's pubs offered such a wide range of ales – names you'll now have to get your head around include Kout na Šumavě, Svijanský Rytíř and Velkopopovický Kozel.

Leave your diets and calorie counters at home -There is a long tradition of sweet shops, or cukrárny, in Prague, and there's no shortage of places to forget your calorie-counting and indulge in a taste of the local culture as well as find excellent versions of your favorite sweet craving.

Language

The official language in the Czech Republic is Czech. It belongs to the group of West Slavic languages, like Slovak or Polish. Czech has a very rich vocabulary, many special grammatical features and some unusual sounds. At present, it is one of the official languages of the European Union. Other languages can be heard here, particularly Slovak, German, Polish and Romany.

In tourist places - hotels, restaurants, monuments, museums, galleries, but also in a number of shops and services it is possible to make oneself understood in English or German,

Even though you do not speak the language, everyone is pleased when they hear a foreigner trying to communicate in the language of the country they are visiting. Learning a few common words or phrases is always a good idea.

Hello (Good day!) = Dobrý den

Hi = Ahoj!

Good morning = Dobré ráno

Good night = Dobrou noc

Good bye = Na shledanou

Bye! See you = Ahoj!/Čau

See you later = Na shledanou později

Please = Prosím

Excuse me = S dovolením

I' m sorry = Promiňte

Thank you = Děkuji

Thanks = Dík(y)

You are welcome = Prosím./Není zač

Yes = Ano

No = Ne

Entrance = Vchod

Exit = Východ

Open = Otevřeno

Closed = Zavřeno

No smoking = Zákaz kouření./Kouření zakázáno

Czech always places the emphasis on the first syllable of the word.

Shopping

Shopping in Prague still feels like an adventure. Around one corner, you'll find a crumbling shop front and a glimpse of a stooped jeweler hard at work restoring an ancient pocket watch, around the next, a cutting-edge fashion boutique. But traditional pleasures still abound. Enduring traditional crafts are available on every cobble-stoned street. Each region of the Czech Republic has its own specialty, and many are represented in Prague. Intricate, world-renowned hand-blown glassware, wooden toys, puppets and carvings, ceramic dishes and delicate lace all make perfect "I got it in Prague" gifts. A box of beautiful hand-painted Easter eggs is a nice Czech souvenir that can come in especially handy at Easter. Many of them are true works of art! You can find Czech Easter eggs at many Prague markets and souvenir shops year round.

The Czechs are also masterful herbalists, and put plants to good use in fragrant soaps and bath products made on local farms.





Prague Airport:

Václav Havel Airport is located 10 kilometres (6 mi) west of the city centre. It takes approximately 25 - 30 minutes (40 minutes in heavy traffic) to reach the center by car and about 30 minutes on public transport (bus + subway).

Prague Airport has two main passenger terminals, two general aviation terminals, as well as a cargo facility. Most flights arrive and depart Prague Airport from the North Terminals (Terminal 1 and 2). When going back to the airport, remember to look up the terminal number so that you can arrive at the correct one.

There is free Wi-Fi coverage all around the building (limited to 15 minutes free usage).

There are smokers' lounges near many gates.

At arrival, it is possible to exchange currency before leaving the baggage drop area, but you will get much better rates in the city. Another option is regular ATMs at Terminal 2 which can be found after exiting baggage claims. The ATMs will have more favorable rates compared to the Travelex ones in the baggage claim.

After you get off your flight in Prague, you will have several options of arriving at your destination: public transportation, taxi, a shuttle company, or a pickup previously arranged with your hotel.

Note: The Official Conference Hotel – Hotel Modra Ruze – will arrange transportation from the Airport. Driver will await you in the arrivals hall at the Prague Airport. Make arrangements directly with the Hotel via email: hotel@hotelmodraruze.cz. Get your price confirmed in advance, and you will probably be able to have the airport transfer charge added to your hotel bill.

Taking a Taxi in Prague

Unfortunately for Prague, its taxi drivers have a reputation for overcharging and dishonesty. There are however a number of reputable Prague taxi companies that you can rely on for good service and fair rates. It is not advisable to pick up a taxi on the street or a taxi stand. Here are some tips that might save you headaches and a few hundred crowns:

Don't get into a taxi that is parked in front of the train station or at a tourist site. These are often waiting for unsuspecting tourists and are known to charge rates several times higher.

If you need to catch a taxi on the street, make sure it is a real, registered taxi. The yellow roof lamp must





be permanently installed and must say TAXI in black letters on both sides. The driver's name, license number and rates should be printed on both front doors.

Try to find out beforehand how much your ride should cost. If you're stopping a taxi on the street, you can ask the driver before getting in and even pay in advance if the amount sounds reasonable. If you're ordering a taxi by phone, which is always a good idea, you can get a price estimate or even the exact fare from the dispatcher.

Once in the car, make sure that the rate on the taximeter corresponds to the price list posted in the car. If it doesn't, bring it to the driver's attention or have him stop the car, so you can get off.

The driver should offer a printed receipt. If he doesn't, you have the right to request one or refuse to pay the fare.

Be smart and order a taxi by phone from one of these reliable and courteous taxi companies:

AAA Radiotaxi - tel. 14 0 14 or 222 333 222, www.aaa-taxi.cz

City Taxi - tel. 257 257 257, www.citytaxi.cz

Profi Taxi - tel. 14 0 15, www.profitaxi.cz

Halotaxi - tel. 2 4411 4411, www.halotaxi.cz

Sedop - tel. 777 666 333, www.sedop.cz

Document Requirements:

Travelers are advised to contact the embassy to check visa and entry requirements for the Czech Republic.

Generally, for non-EU nationals, a passport valid for three months beyond the length of stay and issued within the past 10 years is required. Visas may be required for non-EU nationals. Nationals of Australia, Canada and the USA can visit the Czech Republic visa-free for stays of up to 90 days.

All foreigners must have their passport with them at all times. Original Passport for foreign nationals is only official recognized identification (not EU citizens). The law in all three countries requires visitors to carry their passports; a photocopy of the passport is not a valid substitute. If your passport is stolen you will need to obtain a police report before a replacement can be issued. Make photocopy of your passport and keep separate from your passport to facilitate police report and replacement.

All foreigners must also carry proof of a medical insurance policy. A health insurance card or an internationally recognized credit card with health insurance included, it will generally be accepted as proof of insurance. (Full travel insurance is advised for all travelers.)

Useful Information

Currency: Although The Czech Republic is a member of the EU, they use the CZK Czech Koruna - Kč (Fractional Unit – Haléř). Heller coins have not been in use as of September 1, 2008, but hellers are still incorporated into merchandise prices. The final price is always rounded off to the nearest crown value.

As the official currency, the Czech Koruna is the best and often the only currency to use when paying. Although the Czech Republic is part of the European Union, the euro is not widely accepted here yet. Some stores, restaurants and hotels accept payments in Euros but the exchange rate may not be very good.

Currency Exchange: Credit and debit cards can be used to withdraw money from ATMs, which are reliable and widely available throughout the country.

Always exchange currency at a currency exchange office or bank, never on the street as this money is often counterfeit, used bank notes that are no longer valid but which are still in circulation.

Exchange rates and commissions can differ from exchange office or bank to another.

It is extremely useful to carry cash, because not every place will take cards. However, the museums and most sizable restaurants do accept credit cards, and that is probably the best way to get a fair exchange rate. Many Tourist spots do accept Euros, however they will likely give you change in Czech Koruna – you should ask for Euros in change.

Weather – Average temperatures for May: 18°C (67°F) low: 8°C (46°F)

Clothing Tips: Bring comfortable walking shoes. It is wise to dress in layers - temperatures can be cooler at night and in the early mornings, while being much warmer during the day. Spring is unfortunately the rainy season – bring a light-weight raincoat/jacket and/or a small collapsible umbrella.

Electric: Electric power in The Czech Republic is 230V, 50HZ.

Tipping: Restaurants - social norms encourage that tips are given – up to 5% - 10% of total bill (excluding tax). Some restaurants do add a small service charge to the bill, but is it still common to leave an additional tip (if the service charge is on the bill or you include one on your credit card, you server may never receive it.). Typically, it's better to hand the tip to the waiter when you're paying your bill. Do not leave it on the table. Servers prefer to be tipped in cash even if you pay with your credit card - in many cases, there isn't even a line on the credit-card receipt for a tip.

Hotels - Bellhops $1-2 per bag, cleaning staff $3-5 per day

Tour Guides/Drivers – $3-5 dollars per person per day.

Taxi Drivers - $3-5 dollars.

Be Prepared

BE PREPARED - Unfortunately, bag snatching and pick-pocketing are common, especially in major tourist areas. Pick-pocketing is a very old crime but is as popular today as in the time of Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist. A few common sense precautions:

Make photocopies of key documents — your passport, travel documents, credit cards, prescriptions (for eyewear and/or medicine), to bring along and put in a different location from the originals. For a backup, leave a copy with someone at home, in case you lose your copy and need to have one faxed to you. You could also bring a couple of extra passport pictures. Keep a List of Credit cards numbers so you can report their loss immediately.

- Leave your fancy jewelry at home.
- Wear a money belt or a money pouch which can be worn around the neck under clothing - should be large enough to carry cash, credit cards and passport. Do not put valuables in outside pockets, in backpacks or shoulder-carried tote bags.
- Do not leave a bag, purse, parcel, computer or anything next to you in a public place that is not protected.
- Make sure purses, backpacks, fanny-packs, etc. have secure closures (Not just closed with a magnet or Velcro). Wear fanny-packs in front rather than in back. Cross body shoulder straps are advised for purses.
- Do not keep valuables in accessible pockets, back pockets or backpacks.
- Keep items in front of you for more visibility and control. Do not not leave items unattended.





Post-Conference Trip

May 21 - 25, 2016

An exciting five days traveling from Prague to Budapest, with many fascinating stops along the way allowing everyone to experience the rich culture and heritage of the region.

This trip is arranged through "TOP TRAVEL & TOURS" and is independent of the WCI conference. Price is based on a group of 30, otherwise subject to change. Welcome Club International and International Women's Association of Prague assume no responsibility for this trip:

Price for the 5 day post conference trip as planned

- EURO 688,- / per person in double room
- EURO 843,- / per person in single room

Post trip package price includes the services and benefits according to program. Reservations and payment included on Conference Registration Form.

Saturday 21.5.

Depart for South Moravia, visit to Chateau Lednice park, Lunch: Valtice

Afternoon – Chateau Valtice visit and wine tasting in Valtice
Dinner: in a family restaurant

Overnight: Lednice 4* hotel



An absolutely unique park, The Lednice- Valtice Complex is known as the Garden of Europe to this very day. It is listed on the UNESCO heritage list.

Sunday 22.5.

Depart for Bratislava in Slovakia, guided tour of the town Lunch: typical Slovakian restaurant

Dinner: in KOGO restaurant Bratislava

Overnight: Bratislava 4* hotel



The capital of Slovakia, Bratislava lies on the beautiful blue Danube, arguably the most important river in central Europe. Slovakia's largest city, is also the country's most visited city.

Monday 23.5.

Depart for Budapest through scenic route by the Donau river, visit of cathedral in Ostrihom, stop at Vysegrad, visit of art town of Szentendre

Evening – dinner in Budapest





Ostrihom (Czech) or Esztergom cathedral, Esztergom Basilica is the largest church in Hungary.

Vysegrad (Czech) or Visegrád is famous for the remains of the Early Renaissance summer palace of King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary and the medieval citadel.

Szentendre is known for its museums (most notably the Open-Air Ethnographic Museum), galleries, and artists.

Tuesday 24.5.

Half day sightseeing with guide, visit to Buda Hill, visit to the cathedral, walk through the center

Afternoon – free program

Evening – boat trip with dinner



Budapest is the capital and the largest city of Hungary and one of the largest cities in the European Union. Cited as one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, much of Budapest is a World Heritage Site

Wednesday 25.5.

Return to Prague or transfer to Budapest airport

For more details on the post-conference trip destinations, see the Post-Conference Trip brochure at the WCI website, www.wciclubs.org. Log on with your club's password and go to Events - Conferences.



Board of Directors

MEET OUR NEW CLUB

BIWC Broward International Women's Club



The Broward International Women's Club in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida is a unique social non profit organization of women from all over the world living in South Florida, to make new friends and learn about different cultures and customs. Our members are an interesting mix of accomplished women from over 40 countries.

Changing the World One Woman at a Time

The Broward International Women's Club was founded in 1975 for the purpose of assisting the then Mayor of Fort Lauderdale, Clay Shaw, in his plans to hold special international business events for the upcoming U.S. Bicentennial. Mayor Shaw wanted to promote Port Everglades as a deep-water port suitable for cruise lines, as tall ships from all over the world were coming to the port for the celebration. Mayor Shaw approached Olga Ortiz, who was the Honorary Consul of Ecuador at the time, and asked her to organize a group of international ladies to be the official hostesses of Fort Lauderdale, and be in charge of the arrangements of the various business meetings that would be taking place, with top business organizations, the Chamber of Commerce, as well as dignitaries and business people who would be visiting.

The Broward International Woman's Club was born with 6 founding members and Ms Ortiz as the founding president. As part of the program that would be taking place they engaged students from Broward Community College as volunteers, which lead to the idea of scholarship funds.

Over the years the organization has continued to grow and attract new international members. We share the values of friendship, education and giving back.

Our programs include:

Membership Meetings – We hold 3 membership meetings throughout the season. Prospective members can attend.

Night Of All Nations Dinner & Dance - Our signature fund-raising event takes place in November.

Holiday Luncheon - Taking place in December. Funds are raised through raffles and a silent auction, which contributes to meet our fund-raising goals.

A Taste of The World – Luncheons hosted by our members to showcase their country's traditional foods and culture.

Membership Luncheons - An informal monthly lunch where members bring their friends, and anyone who's interested in joining can come to get a feel for our group.

Our Cause

Over the years, we have seen many of the students come from countries where their careers of choice are not available, therefore not being possible for them to study in their homelands, which means an even bigger positive impact in their communities upon their return.

Because of the international nature of the organization, it only seemed fitting to help international students, especially since they are not eligible to receive any kind of aid, or have a job to help support them. Originally donations went to a different high education institution, but only for a short while, since it was soon decided to benefit students through Nova Southeastern University's international student program, and assist female students from overseas to complete their studies. We feel that we are also helping our local economy, since these students provide many jobs in our area.

The Club's Board is directly responsible for selecting the students who will be awarded with scholarship grants, making our fund-raising efforts a very meaningful and rewarding experience. At our events throughout the year, members have an opportunity to meet these students personally, and hear their stories, learn where they come from, and how this money helps them achieve their goals. We have granted scholarships to over 160 deserving students from Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Central & South America.







IWI Chairwoman Stephanie Machoi introduces the IWI Board at annual opening meeting.

Meet our New Club

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN OF ISTANBUL
IWI

International Women of Istanbul

We welcome all international women who are living in Istanbul as any group like this is only as strong as its members. If we have a diverse, engaged and interesting membership base then we have a group that helps make life in Istanbul that much more interesting.

IWI is a non-profit social organization made up of over 600 international women from more than 50 different countries.

We have a common vision to give something back. Our aim is to provide a friendly platform for international women to share, collaborate, network and learn across borders.

- We make new friends and enhance friendship between international women.
- Widen our (personal/business) network
- Build up a new business (self-employed women)
- Entertain in various ways by offering events and gatherings.
- Support with information and recommendations whenever needed to ease relocation
- Raise money for charity organizations in Istanbul/Turkey to make a change - to contribute something while living in Turkey/Istanbul

It is hard to pinpoint the exact age of the IWI but we have minutes from the coffee morning held at the house of the American Ambassador and hosted by his wife approximately 40 years ago. The group has always been a social organization bringing together international women.

The IWI board is elected each year and meets monthly. Everyone is a volunteer.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN OF ISTANBUL

IPWIN

PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

International Professional Women of Istanbul Network (IPWIN) is the professional component of IWI. Founded in 2008, IPWIN provides an opportunity for international women (Foreigners and Turkish) to network in a business-oriented environment.

The group focuses on the exchange of business ideas and encourages sharing of knowledge among our members. Monthly events are held for our members on business relevant topics. Additionally, we organize special networking events throughout the year for our IWPIN members.



Photo Club - The photo club is a group of international members whose skill levels vary from the very basic to semi- professional, but who all share the desire to capture the world in a photograph and to explore Istanbul while doing so. Every month we host workshops that have a specific theme led either by one of the group with expertise in that field or by someone outside the club. We also feature a "Meet the Photographer"™ series with talks and sessions from various local and foreign professional photographers.

The club also features a monthly photo trek somewhere in Istanbul. Some of our previous trek destinations have been Balat, the glass factory, Santral Istanbul, the Yahya Efendi cemetery, Miniaturk, Rumeli Kavağı, Emirgan Park, Kuzguncuk, and even a two- day trek to Iznik. The photo club also has held several photo exhibitions over the years at both Java Studio in Sultanahmet and the Arnavutköy Art Gallery.

Other Activities include:

Newcomers Meetings

Neighborhood Coffee Mornings

Charities

Mums 'n Kids

Book Club

Bridge Group

Tennis Club



Editor's Note:

IWI publishes a bi-monthly magazine, "***Lale***". In addition to club news and activities, ***Lale*** includes interesting articles about Istanbul and Turkey, people, fashion, music, interviews and travel, just to name a few. It is a wonderful insight into IWI and its members. A copy of the Current issue of ***Lale*** can be viewed on WCI's website, www.wciclubs.org. Sign in with your club's password and go to Clubs. You will find it under the listing for IWI.







Last summer, IWI hosted a number of cruises along the Bosphorus. IWI members enjoyed sightseeing, swimming and a delicious lunch on board.

IWI hosted a fabulous 15-course Anatolian food tasting menu at Alancha restaurant in Maçka.





Meet our New Club

Anglo-German International Women's Association

Our Club was founded in 1966 as the "Anglo-German Women's Association" by a group of British and German ladies under the leadership of Mrs. Jill Oakeshott, the wife of the British Consul General in Hamburg at that time.

In 1972 membership was extended to women of every nationality and the Club was renamed "Anglo- German International Women's Association". AGIWA is a non-denominational, non-political and non-profit-making organization. We have approximately 150 members, of which about 60 % are Internationals from over 30 nationalities.

Our aim is to promote and strengthen friendship between women of all nationalities through joint activities such as social and charitable work, cultural visits, lectures, discussions groups, etc.

Our regular activities include: monthly Afternoon Teas, newcomer coffee mornings, Book group, Bridge and Mahjong group, Language Conversation Circle, Museum Group, Cookery Group, seasonal walking tours and many more.

We publish a bi- monthly Newsletter to inform members about the AGIWA visits—such as local exhibitions, guided tours of places of interest and a Calendar of Events.

In June each year we hold an all- day outing to a place of special interest outside Hamburg. In December a festive Christmas luncheon is held. AGIWA supports charities.









International Women's Day

March 8, 2016



International Women's Day is annually held on March 8 to celebrate women's achievements throughout history and across nations. It is also known as the United Nations (UN) Day for Women's Rights and International Peace.

In1910 an International Conference of Working Women was held in Copenhagen. Clara Zetkin of Germany proposed that every year in every country there should be a celebration on the same day - a *Women's Day* - to press for their demands. The conference of over 100 women from 17 countries, and including the first three women elected to the Finnish parliament, greeted Zetkin's suggestion with unanimous approval and thus International Women's Day was the result.

Following the decision in Copenhagen in 1911, International Women's Day (IWD) was honored the first time in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland on 19 March. More than one million women and men attended IWD rallies campaigning for women's rights to work, vote, be trained, to hold public office and end discrimination. In 1913 following discussions, International Women's Day was changed to 8 March and this has remains the global date for International Women's Day. Since then great improvements have been made. We have female astronauts and prime ministers, school girls are welcomed into university, women can work and have a family, women have real choices. And so the tone and nature of IWD has, for the past few years, moved from being a reminder about the negatives to a celebration of the positives

Annually on 8 March, thousands of events are held throughout the world to inspire women and celebrate achievements. A global web of rich and diverse local activity connects women from all around the world ranging from political rallies, business conferences, government activities and networking events through to local women's craft markets, theatric performances, fashion parades and more.

So make a difference, think globally and act locally!! Make everyday International Women's Day. Do your bit to ensure that the future for girls is bright, equal, safe and rewarding.

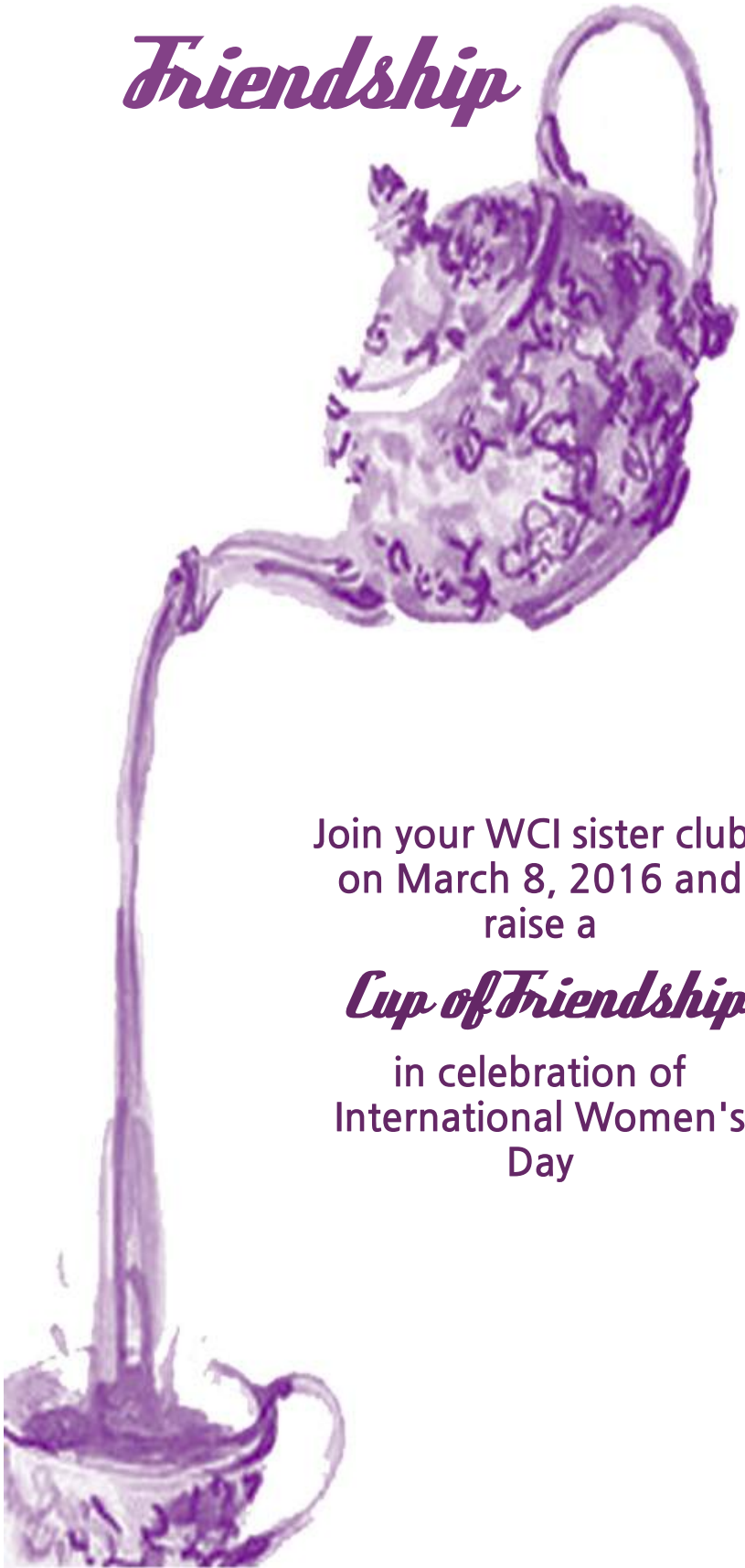
2016 Theme

Pledge for Parity

Let's all celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievement of women. But let's also be aware that progress towards gender parity has actually slowed in many places around the world, so urgent concrete action is needed to accelerate gender parity.

International Women's Day

A Cup of Friendship



Join your WCI sister clubs on March 8, 2016 and raise a

Cup of Friendship

in celebration of International Women's Day

International Women's Day

is now an official holiday in:

Afghanistan
Armenia
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Burkina Faso
Cambodia
China (for women only)
Cuba
Georgia
Guinea-Bissau
Eritrea
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Laos
Madagascar (for women only)
Moldova
Mongolia
Montenegro
Nepal (for women only)
Russia
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
Uzbekistan
Vietnam
Zambia

WCI Women who Make a Difference



Dr. Kamala Anandam
Broward International Women's Club

Dr. Kamala Anandam is a native of India and grew up on a farm with her mother and eight siblings. It was her mother who instilled in her the joy and fulfillment of voluntary service to others. Her mother's oft quoted words were: "you'll be blessed if you help another in need." Accordingly, Kamala had helped children of neighboring farm families to read and write. Even when she went away to the city for her college education, she helped the fishermen families to read and write. For this voluntary service, she received the Medal of Service from her college. While teaching at a University in India, she was selected to come to the US as an exchange student to advance her education. She earned her Master's and doctorate degree at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She taught two years at Maryville College in Tennessee and two years at Bethune Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida. She then joined Miami-Dade College as the researcher for its Open College and retired as the Associate Dean of Educational Technologies. She always paid equal attention to her employees' progress and promotion as to the progress of projects. Empowering the faculty and staff was her motto. She never lost a moment or left a stone unturned to ensure that her employees got the recognition and promotion they deserved. In a country-wide research study, she was selected as one of the best administrators. While at Miami-Dade, she was chosen by IBM to be its Consulting Scholar to spread the word about educational technology in Colleges and universities across the country.

The years after her retirement are the shining years of her volunteerism. Kamala doesn't count the time or the cost when it comes to helping and empowering other women and girls. For the past 4 years, Kamala has been volunteering as a mentor for high school girls under the Women of Tomorrow Mentoring and Scholarship program. Before that she volunteered for the Listen to Children program in elementary schools for 3 years. She started the Weston Branch of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in 2007. AAUW Weston offers an annual conference on Leadership for high school girls; honors women and girls at its annual celebration of International Women's Day, organizes public meetings to increase the awareness of the public on topics like human trafficking and gender pay gap. She took extraordinary time to highlight the services of a team of eleven women in an assisted living facility; she interviewed each of them, took photos and put those together in a PowerPoint presentation. Their project was "Dolls for Peace" and the dolls they made were sent to children in war- torn countries like Darfur. The PowerPoint presentation was shown at one of the International Women's Day celebration and received a standing ovation. In 2006, Kamala received the Woman of Merit award from Broward International Women's Club. She was inducted to Dr. Nan S. Hutchison Broward County Senior Hall of Fame in 2007 and to Broward County Women's Hall of Fame in 2010. In 2011, she received the Florida Achievement Award from Florida Commission on Status of Women.

Meet some of the remarkable women in our sister clubs.



Isin Ramadan Cemil
Welcome to Turkish Cyprus Club

Isin Ramadan Cemil has made a big impact in her community. She has a big heart and a helping hand and is always available to help and actively support projects and events aimed at helping those who are less fortunate than us. She is also active in projects that support the community in general. A recent example is aid for shelter for abused women. Soon after hearing of their need she organized purchase and donation of essential bedding. All this is while she is working tirelessly running her family business and finding time for private social life and being there for family and friends.

Işın Ramadan Cemil was born in Limassol – Cyprus. After completing her elementary and middle schooling, she was sent to Istanbul – Turkey and graduated from the American Robert College with high honors. She continued her undergraduate studies at Ankara University, Political Science Faculty, Diplomacy Department also with high honors degrees, followed by post graduate studies at La Sorbonne – Paris. In July 1974, after the inevitable partition of the Island, she had to return to North Cyprus to join her family that had been displaced from Limassol to Kyrenia. In October 1974, she was appointed as the first female diplomatic staff at the Vice Presidency, Ministry of Defense and Foreign Affairs of the then Turkish Cypriot Autonomous Administrative Region. Following the sudden death of her father in January 1976, she resigned from her job and together with brother Hasan she joined the management of Ramadan Cemil Enterprises that her father initially had founded in 1943 in Limassol and restarted in North Cyprus following the internal migration.

Although she withdrew from the business following the birth of her daughter Ayşen Perihan in 1978 and her son Ramadan Cemil in 1979, she remained very active in charitable programs which supported the community. Some of these included founder membership of Nicosia Tennis Club, presidency of Kyrenia Girls Guide Committee, together with overseeing and supervising the remodelling of family business workplaces.

While she lived in Marseille, France as the spouse of the Consul General of Republic of Turkey, between 1990 and 1995, as she was a member of Marseille Accueil (Welcome to Marseille) she also actively supported many projects promoting Turkey and North Cyprus. Chief among these activities were honorary presidency of Franco Turk Association, giving private Turkish language lessons to French residents and organizing exhibitions displaying the best of Turkish and Turkish Cypriot paintings, art and embroidery.

Upon her return to North Cyprus 1997 she was appointed to the Board of Cyprus Turkish Airlines while it was being nationalized. Following the untimely death of her brother Hasan in 1999, she took over as the Director of Ramadan Cemil Enterprises which is now one of the largest private sector firms in TRNC providing employment opportunities to several hundred people. However, she continues to be one of the key supporters of social and charitable organizations in the island. Some of these include membership of Turkish Cypriot Women's Society, honorary member of the founding committee of the Organization of Turkish Cypriot Women in Business, member of Society of Diplomats and Spouses, founding member of Foundation for Environmental Protection, Besparmak Think Tank, The Kyrenia Initiative Society, Book Reading Club,... etc. Other activities with international, cultural, social and charitable dimensions include membership of Kyrenia Innerwheel Club, Turkish Cypriot Education Foundation which was initiated by her family, and membership and/or support to many other clubs and societies like first Wheelchair Basketball Team and other sports teams that either her family or she herself initiated.

Since December 2014, she has been the active president of the Welcome to Turkish Cyprus Club.

She is known as a good mother, grandmother, friend and a peace lover. Her life motto is "liberty, equality, fraternity".



Benigna Chilla
Berkshire International Club

Benigna Chilla, a member of our BIC (Berkshire International Club) and the KIWC (Kolkata International Women's Club), is a visual artist and art educator. She was born and educated in Germany and immigrated to the US in 1969.

Benigna retired from Berkshire Community College in 2011 after 32 years as Professor of Visual Arts. She now splits her time between Chatham, New York and Kolkata, India. She has held artist residencies at Yaddo, the Djerassi Foundation, the Atlantic Center for the Arts, and the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown. She has had over 40 solo exhibitions both nationally and internationally. Her latest exhibitions of large- scale paintings were at the Tibet House in New York City and at the Rochester Institute of Technology. This series of works was inspired by motifs found in architecture, textile and nature during her travels in India and her teaching sojourns in Bhutan.

Since 2011 she conducted workshops in places where art is not part of the educational curriculum. She taught two contemporary art workshops in Thimphu, Bhutan and will conduct a third one in Bumthang valley this spring. Thirty Bhutanese students in their 20s with some, little or no art training learned drawing, collaging, and various printmaking methods without a press in addition to the fundamentals or 2 and 3- dimensional design.



Exhibition at Tibet House in New York City



Contemporary Art Workshop - Thimphu, Bhutan



Students working on their Exhibition



Art Workshop - West Bengal

During critique sessions of student work, Benigna also introduces relevant works by contemporary artists around the world. At the conclusion of each workshop, the students curate an exhibition of their works which is open to the public.

In 2014, Benigna conceptualized an art and nature workshop, which was piloted in a village that has no electricity in the Sunderban mangroves in West Bengal. Over 40 students and their teachers from regional high schools came together to participate in the workshop.

In all these workshops, Benigna's objectives are to work with inexpensive, locally available and/or recycled materials, such as leaves, branches, as well as donated materials.

Benigna states that she always learns as much from her students as they learn from her.

"Volunteers are not paid:

not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless!"

Umknown



The Power of Friendship

UCLA Study On Friendship Among Women; An alternative to fight or flight.

A landmark UCLA study suggests friendships between women are special. They shape who we are and who we are yet to be. They soothe our tumultuous inner world, fill the emotional gaps in our marriage, and help us remember who we really are. By the way, they may do even more.

Scientists now suspect that hanging out with our friends can actually counteract the kind of stomach-quivering stress most of us experience on a daily basis. A landmark UCLA study suggests that women respond to stress with a cascade of brain chemicals that cause us to make and maintain friendships with other women. It's a stunning find that has turned five decades of stress research - most of it on men - upside down. Until this study was published, scientists generally believed that when people experience stress, they trigger a hormonal cascade that revs the body to either stand and fight or flee as fast as possible, explains Laura Cousin Klein, Ph.D., now an Assistant Professor of Biobehavioral Health at Penn State University and one of the study's authors. It's an ancient survival mechanism left over from the time we were chased across the planet by saber-toothed tigers.

Now the researchers suspect that women have a larger behavioral repertoire than just fight or flight; In fact, says Dr. Klein, it seems that when the hormone oxytocin is release as part of the stress responses in a woman, it buffers the fight or flight response and encourages her to tend children and gather with other women instead. When she actually engages in this tending or befriending, studies suggest that more oxytocin is released, which further counters stress and produces a calming effect. This calming response does not occur in men, says Dr. Klein, because testosterone---which men produce in high levels when they're under stress---seems to reduce the effects of oxytocin. Estrogen, she adds, seems to enhance it.

The discovery that women respond to stress differently than men was made in a classic "aha" moment shared by two women scientists who were talking one day in a lab at UCLA.

There was this joke that when the women who worked in the lab were stressed, they came in, cleaned the lab, had coffee, and bonded, says Dr. Klein. When the men were stressed, they holed up somewhere on their own. I commented one day to fellow researcher Shelley Taylor that nearly 90% of the stress research is on males. I showed her the data from my lab, and the two of us knew instantly that we were onto something.

The women cleared their schedules and started meeting with one scientist after another from various research specialties. Very quickly, Drs. Klein and Taylor discovered that by not including women in stress research, scientists had made a huge mistake: The fact that women respond to stress differently than men has significant implications for our health.

It may take some time for new studies to reveal all the ways that oxytocin encourages us to care for children and hang out with other women, but the "tend and befriend" notion developed by Drs. Klein and Taylor may explain why women consistently outlive men. Study after study has found that social ties reduce our risk of disease by lowering blood pressure, heart rate, and cholesterol. There's no doubt, says Dr. Klein, that friends are helping us live longer.

In one study, for example, researchers found that people who had no friends increased their risk of death over a 6-month period. In another study, those who had the most friends over a 9-year period cut their risk of death by more than 60%.

Friends are also helping us live better. The famed Nurses' Health Study from Harvard Medical School found that the more friends women had, the less likely they were to develop physical impairments as they aged, and the more likely they were to be leading a joyful life. In fact, the results were so significant, the researchers concluded, that not having close friends or confidants was as detrimental to your health as smoking or carrying extra weight. And that's not all. When the researchers looked at how well the women functioned after the death of their spouse, they found that even in the face of this biggest stressor of all, those women who had a close friend and confidante were more likely to survive the experience without any new physical impairments or permanent loss of vitality. Those without friends were not always so fortunate. Yet if friends counter the stress that seems to swallow up so much of our life these days, if they keep us healthy and even add years to our life, why is it so hard to find time to be with them? That's a question that also troubles researcher Ruthellen Josselson, Ph.D., co- author of Best Friends: The Pleasures and Perils of Girls' and Women's Friendships (Three Rivers Press, 1998). The following paragraph is, in my opinion, very, very true and something all women should be aware of and NOT put our female friends on the back burners.

"Every time we get overly busy with work and family, the first thing we do is let go of friendships with other women," explains Dr. Josselson. *"We push them right to the back burner. That's really a mistake because women are such a source of strength to each other. We nurture one another. And we need to have unpressured space in which we can do the special kind of talk that women do when they're with other women. It's a very healing experience."*

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Reflecting Upon Cultural Traditions

By

Dr. Maria Fernanda Arduino

International Women's Club of Porto Alegre

While in India, my husband and I read the local newspaper and prepared a folder with articles that helped us learn about the local culture, and consequently, better comprehend and appreciate it. The desire to remain unique is a human need. Culture has to do with who a person is and how this person reacts to the various stimuli. Culture then becomes an answer to understanding differences and to the unquestioned assumptions existing in societies. It is through the understanding of similarities and differences that universal human nature can be understood (Dantas, 2007). Families transmit their own rituals and through them, certain values. These traditions very often shape who a person becomes. Even when a person questions these rituals and makes a different choice of a lifestyle, traditions will still be a part of the self. In this way, every culture is unique, and therefore, every person is unique as well.

For example, the extract from the newspaper article, "Ritualistic by Choice" (Shobhaa De, 2013), very well exemplifies how cultural traditions transmitted by families are a beautiful way to shape a person's identity and to consequently, provide coherence throughout the many changes any life involves.

> *Over the **Diwali** weekend, countless Hindu families in India and overseas observed two significant rituals- **Bhaiduj** and **Padwa** (more relevant to Maharashtrians). In our family, we observe both with due ceremony and great enthusiasm. The men love this time of the year the most! They get pampered beyond belief, receive fabulous gifts and are honoured with **aartis** as younger female members touch the feet of their brothers and father and seek their blessings. I do the same with my husband. And also anoint him with fragrant oils and herbal **utnay** before the ritual **Diwali** bath (please note each gesture is mutual and duly reciprocated). As females outnumber the males in our family, the poor guys weakly complain that **Diwali** turns out to be a really expensive affair, given that nobody receives an **aarti** for free! Not even the gods! Once the men are done shelling out cash or distributing gifts, it is time to feast and enjoy the mood of the festive season. (Shobhaa De, 2013).*

(Please see a description of the terms at the end of the article).

Interestingly, the writer describes how she has introduced many changes to the Diwali celebrations. She is a woman of her own times; she works, travels, and has many obligations her mother probably did not have to face. The place and time a person lives in, very much shapes behaviour and decisions. As an adult, a person chooses what aspects of their cultural roots to maintain, as well as what changes to adopt that best suit the current reality.

> *I grew up watching my mother prepare for **Diwali**. My daughters have seen me do the same. With several compromises and concessions, I sheepishly confess: Unlike my mother and grandmother, who jointly prepared the traditional sweets and savouries in our kitchen, I order mine from a favourite supplier whose wife supervises the annual preparations with a kitchen staff of ten assistants. And unlike my mother, I do not wake up the family for pre- dawn bath on the first day of **Diwali**. (Shobhaa De, 2013).*

However, family traditions and values will still remain a precious part of a person, even though these rituals portray a very different perspective to the modern world. To live these traditions is a graceful way to keep alive the memories of the nuclear and extended family, and through them, to remember who a person is.

> *Other than that, every other formality is scrupulously followed. And that includes touching my husband's feet! We have some rather distorted notions of what it actually means to be a "modern" woman. It certainly does not imply we turn our backs on whatever it is that speaks to our hearts. It certainly does not imply we turn ourbacks on whatever it is that speaks to our hearts. These sweet and touching traditions mean a lot to me. I grew up respecting them. They are an intrinsic pare of my*

memories and sentiments. Should I abandon them because they appear politically incorrect and out of sync with today's changed perceptions? Certainly not! Especially if the rituals give me so much joy. I choose to continue these age-old traditions my mother instilled in us (Shobhaa De, 2013).

The rituals of **Diwali** remind the modern world that delicate gestures of love and respect can develop over some time and cannot be rushed. The final objective is to show family members that they are appreciated- a lofty objective. **Diwali** is a beautiful reminder of love and Indian culture. In spite of the fact that an adult will know different realities which will support questioning some of the family traditions, there is usually a strong desire to maintain the own identity. These psychocultural commitments guide people through life passages by providing them with some guidelines to behave (Hemmings, 2006).

The idea is to generate goodwill and spread harmony within the family. Starting the New Year (Padwa) on a positive note is well worth the small gesture of showing love and respect for your partner. Sisters doing the same for brothers during Bhaiduj (Bhau Beej in Maharashtra) also reinforce the sanctity of the relationship.

*Given the stress-filled times we live in, these are but a few golden moments when we can suspend turmoil, and practice much-needed grace. I can tell you from personal experience, the men reciprocate with an equal amount of respect and love-honour begets honour. There is nothing quite as moving as looking into the eyes of loved ones through the flickering flames of a **diya**....(Shobhaa De, 2013).*

In all, it seems cultural traditions provide human beings with an identity and an intrinsic dignity of the self. From a global perspective, cultural rituals and values enrich the world with that which makes each culture and each person unique. We all grow from sharing that uniqueness.

Glossary of Terms

Aartis - a Hindu religious ritual of worship in which light is offered to one or more deities. It also refers to the songs sung in praise of the deities when lamps are being offered.

Bhaiduj or Bhau Beej - a festival celebrated on the last day of the five- day ***Diwali*** festival. Sisters pray for a long and happy life for their brothers by performing the ***Tika*** ceremony. Sisters invite their brothers for a sumptuous meal, often their favourite dishes, and apply a ***Tika*** of seven colours on their forehead, signifying the sisters' prayers. In return, the brothers bless their sisters and give them gifts or cash.

Dija - an oil lamp, usually made from clay, with a cotton wick usually dipped in vegetable oils.

Diwali - the festival of light, an ancient Hindu festival, celebrated in autumn in the northern hemisphere, or spring in the southern hemisphere. The festival spiritually signifies the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, good over evil, and hope over despair. The celebrations include millions of lights shining on housetops, outside doors and windows, around temples and other buildings. The festival preparations and rituals typically extend over a period of five days.

Padwa marks the beginning of the New Year.

Utnay is an herbal body scrub that leaves the skin glowing.

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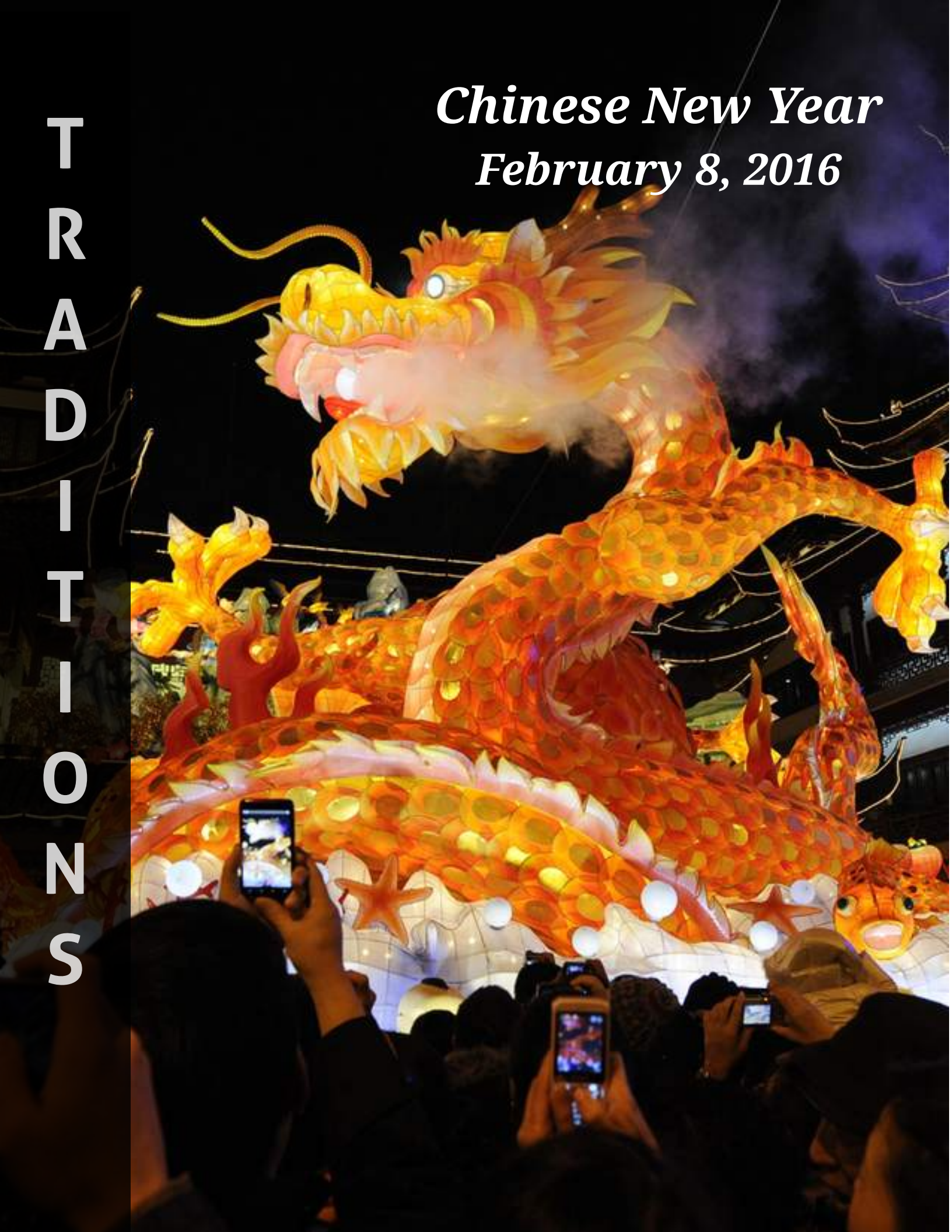
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TRADITIONS

Chinese New Year

February 8, 2016





2016 Year of the Male Fire Monkey

The Chinese New Year or Spring Festival falls on February 8. 2016 is the 4713th Chinese Year and The Chinese name for 2016 in the Chinese Horoscope calendar is Male Fire Monkey.

It comes on the first day of the lunar calendar and lasts for almost half of a month. But in folk custom, this traditional holiday lasts from the 23rd day of the twelfth month to the 15th day of the first month (Lantern Festival) in the lunar calendar. Among these days, the Eve and the first day Spring Festival holiday is the peak time. The exact days are different in every year according to the lunar calendar.

Origin and History

The Chinese New Year, also called Spring Festival, has more than 4,000 years of history. Being one of the traditional Chinese festivals, it is the grandest and the most important festival for Chinese people. It is also the time for whole families to get together, which is similar with Christmas Day to the westerners. Originating during the Shang Dynasty (between 17th - 11th century BC), it celebrates family reunion and hopes. It is said that the custom of Chinese New Year started when people offered sacrifice to ancestors in the last month of the lunar calendar. At that time, people prepared the sacrifice by doing thorough cleaning, having baths and so on. Later, people began to worship different deities as well on that day. It is the time that almost all the farm work was done and people have free time. The sacrificing time changed according to the farming schedule and was not fixed until the Han Dynasty (202BC - 220AD). The customs of worshipping deities and ancestors remains. It is also the advent of spring.

Legend Story

There are many legends about the Spring Festival. In folk culture, it is also called "guonian" (meaning "passing a year"). It is said that the "nian" (year) was a strong monster which was fierce and cruel and ate one kind of animal including human being a day. Human beings were scared about it and had to hide on the evening when the "nian" came out. Later, people found that "nian" was very scared about the red color and fireworks. So after that, people use red color and fireworks or firecrackers to drive away "nian". As a result, the custom of using red color and setting off fireworks remains.

Festival Couplets

Spring Festival Couplets, Chunlian in Chinese, is also known as Spring Couplets or Chinese New Year Couplets. It is the most common and important custom when celebrating Chinese New Year .

Spring Festival Couplets are written with black or golden characters on red paper, Spring Festival Couplets are composed of a pair of poetry lines vertically pasted on both sides of the front door and a four-character horizontal scroll affixed above the doorframe. Pasting couplets expresses people's delight in the festival and wishes for a better life in the coming year.

The first line (upper scroll) and the second line (lower scroll) have parallel structures and antithetical meanings. The two lines should have an equal number of characters, while their meaning must be related and antithetical. There must be a one-to-one correspondence between the two lines. The tone pattern is emphasized but rhythm is not important. The horizontal scroll is a four-character phrase, which sums up the two lines' meaning.



Legend and History

Spring Couplets originated from Taofu, an inscription on boards made from peach trees in the Zhou Dynasty (1046 - 256 BC). According to the legend, in the ghost world, a rooster perching in a big peach tree will crow at dawn to call all the traveling ghosts back. In front of the entrance of the dark world, there are two guards named Shentu and Yulei. If the ghosts harm any people at night, the guards will kill them as the tiger's breakfast. People believed that peach trees can scare and subdue evil things, so they hung peach boards in front of the doors with the guards' names written or inscribed on them.

During the Song Dynasty (960 - 1279 AD), the wood board was replaced by paper, and people focused more on bright wishes for the future. The custom became popular in Ming Dynasty (1368 - 1644 AD). When the Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang traveled for inspection, he found those pairs of scrolls interesting. In order to advocate and promote this cultural activity, he ordered all household to paste the scrolls during the Chinese New Year. This tradition continues today.



The Male Fire Monkey

Chinese apply 5 Elements (Metal, Water, Wood, Fire and Earth) into the Chinese calendar. Male Fire is in the Fire group. The color of Fire is connected to Red. Monkey is the calendar character corresponding to Monkey. Therefore, 2016 is the male Fire Monkey year.

According to Chinese 5 Elements Horoscopes, Monkey contains Metal and Water. Metal is connected to gold. Water is connected to wisdom and danger. Therefore, we will deal with more financial events in the year of the Monkey. Monkey is a smart, naughty, wily and vigilant animal. If you want to have good return for your money investment, then you need to outsmart the Monkey. Metal is also connected to the Wind. That implies the status of events will be changing very quickly. Think twice before you leap when making changes for your finance, career, business relationships and personal relationships.

Every family does a thorough house cleaning and purchases enough food, including fish, meat, roasted nuts and seeds, all kinds of candies and fruits, etc, for the festival period. Also, new clothes must be bought, especially for children. Red scrolls with complementary poetic couplets, one line on each side of the gate, are pasted at every gate. The Chinese character 'Fu' (Happiness) is pasted on the center of the door and paper-cut pictures adorn windows. People will also give red envelopes to kids and elders to share the blessing.

Red Envelope:

Red envelope, also known as lucky money, is prepared for children by adults and the elderly and given after the reunion dinner. In folk culture, the children will live safe and sound for the whole year if they get lucky money. This custom still remains and the amount of money is increasing. Children use their money to buy books or other school supplies. Some families also save the money for future use or use it to help cultivate in their children the habit of saving.

According to the legend, there was a monster named Sui coming out to hurt children on the New Year's Eve. If kids in sleep were touched by the monster, they would get a fever and become idiots. People heard that God would send eight guards disguising themselves as coins to protect the kids when they pray sincerely. So people threaded eight coins with a red string, and placed it under the kids' pillow. The monster Sui then dared not to get close and the custom was kept. As the Chinese Character Year (岁suì) has the same pronunciation with the monster's name (祟suì), so people also call the money Ya Sui Qian, meaning lucky money suppressing the evil spirit. Over time, the paper notes replaced the coins and the envelope replaced the thread.

Lantern Festival

The Lantern Festival marks the end of the festival. Lanterns in different shapes are displayed on the evening of Jan. 15th of lunar month. In ancient times, these lanterns were made of paper or silk with candles placed inside. Now the materials have changed and the candles have replaced by bulbs or LEDs. In many cities, organizations or local government decorate the gardens and other places with lanterns so you can enjoy their beauty.



TRADITIONS

Oktoberfest

Sept. 17 – Oct. 3 , 2016





Horse race at the Oktoberfest in Munich 1823 by Heinrich Adam (1787-1862) German Painter and Engraver.

Oktoberfest is an important part of Bavarian culture, having been held since 1810.

Oktoberfest, the world's largest Volksfest (beer festival and travelling funfair), is held annually in Munich, Bavaria, Germany. It is a 16-day folk festival running from mid or late September to the first weekend in October, with more than 6 million people from around the world attending the event every year.

Contrary to what everybody thinks, the Oktoberfest was not born as a Beer Festival, but as a celebration of the marriage of Ludwig I, Prince of Bavaria to Therese of Saxe-Hildburghausen (October 12, 1810). The citizens of Munich were invited to attend the festivities held on the fields in front of the city gates and celebrate the happy Royal event. To end the celebrations from the royal wedding on October 17, horse races were held in honor of the newlyweds. The decision to repeat the horse races in the subsequent year gave rise to the tradition of the Oktoberfest.

The anniversary was celebrated annually, but without even a drop of beer!

Things changed when, in 1819, the traditional parade of horses was replaced by that of Brewers.

Locally, Oktoberfest is simply called "Wiesn" after the colloquial name of the fairgrounds (Theresienwiese), the field where the marriage took place. The fairground outside the city was chosen due to its natural suitability. The Sendlinger hill (today Theresienhohe) was used as a grandstand for 40,000 race spectators. The festival grounds remained undeveloped except for the king's tent. Before the race started, a performance was held in homage of the bridegroom and of the royal family in the form of a train of 16 pairs of children dressed in Wittelsbach costumes, and costumes from the then nine Bavarian townships and other regions. This was followed by the punishing race with 30 horses on a 11,200-foot (3,400 meters) long racetrack, and concluded with the singing of a student choir. (The horse races ended in 1960.)

In 1811, a show was added to promote Bavarian agriculture. In 1813, the festival was canceled due to the involvement of Bavaria in the Napoleonic Wars, after which the Oktoberfest grew from year to year. The horse races were accompanied by tree climbing, bowling alleys, and swings and other attractions. In 1818, carnival booths appeared; the main prizes awarded were of silver, porcelain, and jewelry.

The city fathers of Munich assumed responsibility for festival management in 1819 and decided that Oktoberfest be made an annual event. Later, it was lengthened and the date pushed forward because days are longer and warmer at the end of September. The horse race continued until 1960, and the agricultural show still exists today and is held every four years in the southern part of the festival grounds.

In honor of the silver wedding anniversary of King Ludwig I of Bavaria and Princess Therese, a traditional costume parade took place in 1835 for the first time. In 1895, the Bavarian novelist Maximilian Schmidt organized another parade with 1,400 participants in 150 traditional costume groups. Since 1950, this parade is organized annually and has become one of the highlights of the Oktoberfest and one of the world's largest parades of its kind. On the first festival Sunday, 8000 participants march in the parade in their historic festival costumes from the Maximilianeum on a seven kilometer stretch to the festival grounds This parade is also led by the Münchner Kindl; followed by notables of the city council and the city administration and the state of Bavaria, usually the minister-president and his wife, traditional costume and rifle clubs, musical bands, marching bands, flag- wavers and about 40 carriages with decorated horses and carts. The clubs and groups come mostly out of Bavaria, but also from other German states, Austria, Switzerland, Northern Italy and other European countries.









Beginning in 1950, the festival has always been opened with the same traditional procedure. After the parade of the restaurateurs on carriages from downtown to the festival grounds, the first keg of Oktoberfest beer is tapped at 12:00 p.m. by the incumbent Mayor of Munich with the proclamation "O'zapft is!" ("It's tapped!" in the Austro-Bavarian dialect). This officially opens the Oktoberfest. The Mayor then gives the first litre of beer to the Minister-President of the State of Bavaria. Twelve gunshots are then fired on the stairway of Ruhmeshalle. This is the signal for the other restaurateurs to start with the serving of beer. Every year, visitors eagerly await to see how many strokes the mayor needs to use before the first beer flows. Bets are even made.



In 1910, the 100th anniversary of the Oktoberfest was celebrated, and an estimated 120,000 litres of beer were consumed. Three years later, the "Bräurosl" was founded, which at that time was the largest pavilion to have ever been built, accommodating approximately 12,000 people.





Oktoberfest Beers

Only beer conforming to the Reinheitsgebot, and brewed within the city limits of Munich, can be served at the Munich Oktoberfest. Beers meeting these criteria are designated Oktoberfest Beer. The beer of the Oktoberfest is stronger than the usual beers. The Oktoberfestbier is served in the Maß, the classic mug of 1 liter, and has a average alcoholic proof of 6.5%. Oktoberfest Beer is a registered trademark by the Club of Munich Brewers, which consists of six breweries.

Augustiner-Bräu

Hacker-Pschorr-Bräu

Löwenbräu

Paulaner

Spatenbräu

Staatliches Hofbräu-München

Veteran bartenders take a mere 1.5 seconds to fill up a litre stein



In 1880, electric light illuminated more than 400 booths and tents.

In 1881, booths selling bratwurst opened and the first beer was served in glass mugs in 1892.

During the Oktoberfest, the locals wear Bavarian hats (Tirolerhüte), which contain a tuft of chamois hair (Gamsbart). Historically, in Bavaria chamois hair was highly valued and prized. The more tufts of chamois hair on one's hat, the wealthier one was considered to be. Due to modern technology, this tradition has declined with the appearance of chamois hair imitations on the market.

Letters which are placed in the Oktoberfest mailboxes receive a special stamp from the post office.

One attraction, which does not exist at other festivals, is the flea circus. It has been an attraction at the Wiesn since 1948 and a "team" of about 60 fleas provide for the entertainment, especially for the children.





In 1901,

Albert Einstein

was a laborer in the construction of the Wiesn. As an assistant in the family-owned electrical company Elektrotechnische Fabrik J. Einstein & Cie, he mounted the bulbs in the Schottenhamel marquee.



Empowerment -

representing an accomplished state of self-responsibility and self-determination.

-The Internet – Empowering Women

Most of us have heard this idea already: if you educate a girl or a woman, you educate a family, and maybe even a community. But as ICTs (information and communications technologies) and media become increasingly available around the globe, when you educate a girl or a woman, you may also educate a region, or even a country.

Did you know that 200 million more men than women have access to the Internet worldwide? In developing countries, the gender divide is particularly broad. In parts of West Africa and South Asia, women make up 25 percent or less of the online population, according to statistics compiled by World Pulse, a global media network

Women face a variety of barriers to full and equal access, including cost, lack of digital literacy, lack of awareness of the Internet's potential, and entrenched cultural and gender norms that limit them from forming independent connections outside their home or community. In one international survey, 85 percent of women with Internet access said it provides "more freedom." Equal access is also in the broader public interest: Bringing 600 million more women online could boost annual GDPs across 144 developing countries by an estimated $13 to $18 billion, the survey concluded.

The growing access of the web in the late 20th century, has allowed women to empower themselves by using various tools on the Internet. With the introduction of the World Wide Web, women have begun to use social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to start online activism. Through online activism, women are able to empower themselves by organizing campaigns and voicing their opinions for equality rights without feeling oppressed by members of society. For example, on May 29, 2013, an online campaign started by 100 female advocates forced the leading social networking website, Facebook, to take down various pages that spread hatred about women. In recent years, blogging has also become a powerful tool for the educational empowerment of women.

With the easy accessibility and affordability of e-learning (electronic learning), women can now study from the comfort of their home anywhere, anytime. By empowering themselves educationally through new technologies like e-learning, women are also learning new skills that will come in handy in today's advancing globalized world.

Entire nations, businesses, communities, and groups can benefit from the implementation of programs and policies that adopt the notion of women em- powerment. Empowerment is one of the main procedural concerns when addressing human rights and development. The Human Development & Capabilities Approach, The Millennium Development Goals, and other credible approaches point to empowerment and participation as necessary steps if a country is to overcome the obstacles associated with poverty and development.

Most women across the globe rely on the informal work sector for an income. If women are empowered to do more and be more, the possibility for economic growth becomes apparent. Empowering women in developing countries is essential to reduce global poverty since women represent most of the world's poor population. Eliminating a significant part of a nation's work force on the sole basis of gender can have detrimental effects on the economy of that nation. In addition, female participation in counsels, groups, and businesses is seen to increase efficiency.

For a general idea on how an empowered women can impact a situation monetarily, a study found that of Fortune 500 companies, "those with more women board directors had significantly higher financial returns, including 53 percent higher returns on equity, 24 percent higher returns on sales and 67 percent higher returns on invested capital (OECD, 2008)." This study shows the impact women can have on the overall economic benefits of a company. If implemented on a global scale, the inclusion of women in the formal workforce (like a Fortune 500 company) can increase the economic output of a nation. Therefore, women can also help businesses grow and economies prosper if they have, and if they are able to use, the right knowledge and skills in their employment.



The term empowerment originates from American community psychology and is associated with the social scientist Julian Rappaport (1981).

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Where are the missing women in tech?

By Donald Armbrecht

freelance writer and social media producer

posted on World Economic Forum

Dec 30 2015

You know Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates and Steve Jobs. So why haven't you ever heard of Elsie Shutt, Stephanie Shirley or Dina St Johnston?

In 1958, Elsie Shutt founded one of the first software businesses in the US, CompInc, when Bill Gates and Steve Jobs were both only three years old. Mark Zuckerberg wouldn't be born for another three decades. A year later, Dina St Johnston founded the first British software company. Stephanie Shirley, another pioneer, started her business in 1962.

Many of the pioneers of computer programming were women. Through the post-war decades women were making key contributions to the birth of a new industry and more and more were choosing to study the subject at university. Then, suddenly, they stopped. What happened?

A woman was the first computer

As men went off to fight in WWII, women were recruited into the workforce. One part of the war effort was calculating trajectories and balistic tables for soldiers in the field and bombardiers in the air. This was done by female mathematicians – or "computers", as they were called – in secret. The story of these women is the subject of a recent documentary, Top Secret Rosies: The Female Computers of WWII.

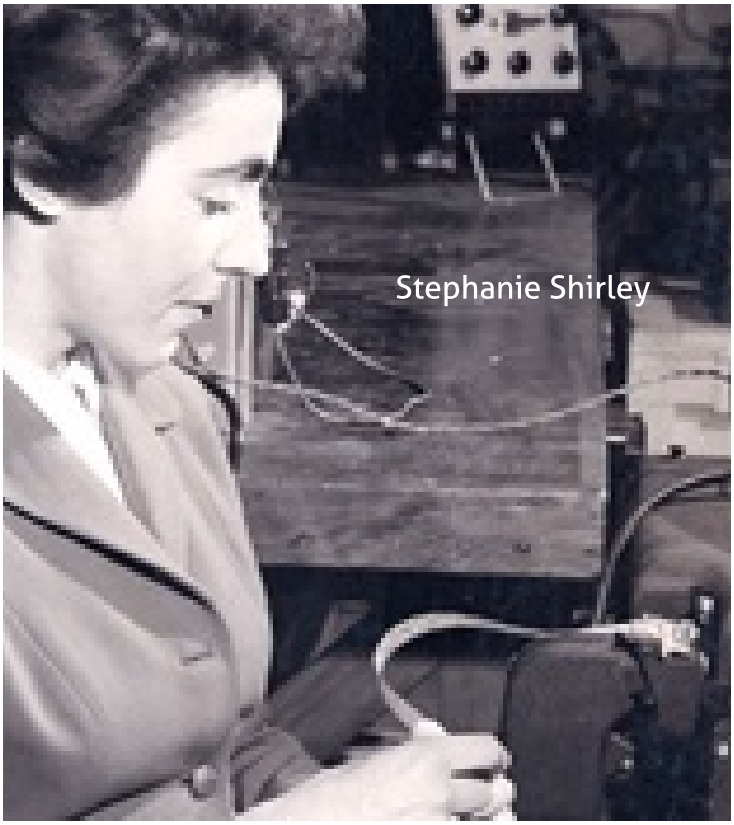
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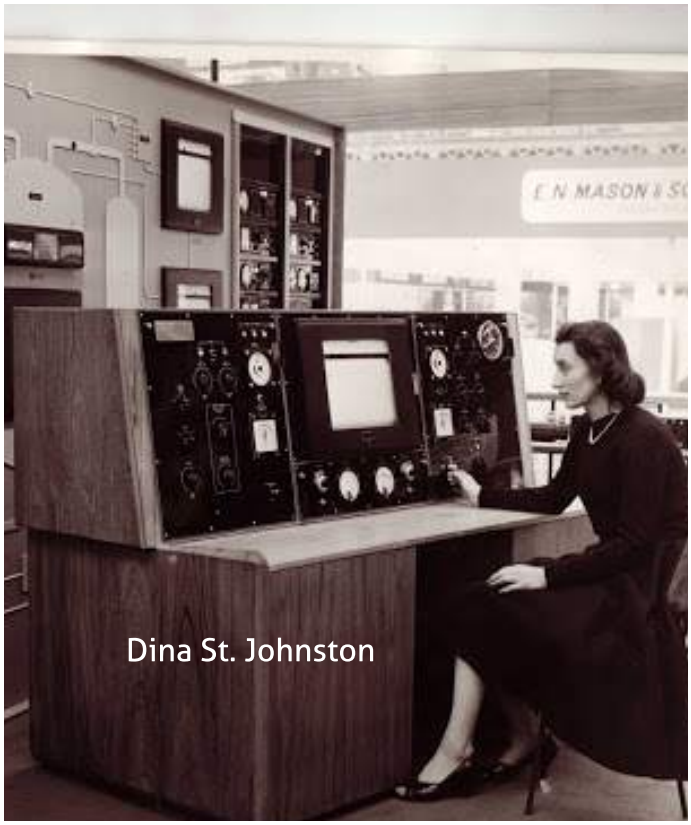
Even after the war, it was still an industry very much dominated by women. When Shutt founded CompInc. in 1958, all her programmers were women: "The thing that I say that surprises everyone is that I thought it was a woman's field at first, and I do think it was." In 1967, Cosmopolitan Magazine ran an article called The Computer Girls, which proclaimed: "Now have come the big, dazzling computers – and a whole new kind of work for women: programming."

By the 1980s, computer programming seemed to be an exciting job opportunity for women. It had surpassed both law and physical sciences as women's choice for studies. Then, in 1984, it all came to an abrupt end.



Elsie Shutt founded one of the first software businesses in the U.S. in 1958 and the programmers were all women.


Stephanie Shirley


Dina St. Johnston

Patricia Ordóñez, assistant professor of computer science at the University of Puerto Rico, was a student at Johns Hopkins University at the time. In an interview with NPR, she explained: "I remember this one time I asked a question and the professor stopped and looked at me and said: You should know that by now. And I thought: I am never going to excel."

The reason that Patricia did not receive the kind of support she would have enjoyed from professors only a decade before was that the narrative of what a computer was, and who was using it, had changed.

Toys for boys

Throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, technology had progressed enough that personal computers were then both available and affordable to the general public. Nevertheless, these primitive machines were little more than toys. As with any product, especially toys, that meant they needed to be advertised, and marketers saw computers as a "boy's toy". Advertisements focused on the narrative that computers were both fun and educational for boys.

Around the same time, movies like Tron (1982), War Games (1983) and Weird Science (1985), featuring male computer hacker heroes, almost certainly contributed to this "boy's toys" narrative. The result was that by the time young men arrived at university, they had already been exposed to computers and computer programming, while women were often starting from scratch. The uneven playing field left many women discouraged. Female enrollment rates in computer science programmes plummeted. At its 1984 peak, 37% of computer programmers were women. By 2011, it was only 12%.

A return to normal?

When asked why she thought so few women were programmers, Shutt explained: "I think if there have been fewer women than men in computing, it's because they've been discouraged back at the education level from majoring in math, or engineering, or computer science."

Numbers are increasing, but more needs to be done to encourage girls to study STEM subjects. Programmes like Rails Girls, a global non-profit which began in Finland, are popping up to get more girls into the field.

The role models do exist but they are not getting exposure. When asked what advice she has for young women contemplating computing careers, Shutt had this to say: "Go after it! Don't be afraid to major in something in college that will lead you to this."



illustration by Adam McCauley

Where Men See White, Women See Ecru

By Libby Copeland
Smithsonian Magazine March 2013

If you've ever found yourself at a paint store with a member of the opposite sex trying to decide between, say, "laguna blue" and "blue macaw," chances are you've disagreed over which hue is lighter or looks more turquoise.

Take comfort in the fact that the real blame lies with physiology: Neuroscientists have discovered that women are better at distinguishing among subtle distinctions in color, while men appear more sensitive to objects moving across their field of vision.

Scientists have long maintained that the sexes see colors differently. But much of the evidence has been indirect, such as the linguistic research showing that women possess a larger vocabulary than men for describing colors. Experimental evidence for the vision thing has been rare.

That's why Israel Abramov, a psychologist and behavioral neuroscientist at CUNY's Brooklyn College, gave a group of men and women a battery of visual tests. Abramov has spent 50 years studying human vision—how our eyes and brain translate light into a representation of the world. He's curious about the neural mechanisms that determine how we perceive colors.

In one study, Abramov and his research team showed subjects light and dark bars of different widths and degrees of contrast flickering on a computer screen. The effect was akin to how we might view a car moving in the distance. Men

Neuroscientists prove what we always suspected:

the two sexes see the world differently.

were better than women at seeing the bars, and their advantage increased as the bars became narrower and less distinct.

But when the researchers tested color vision in one of two ways—by projecting colors onto frosted glass or beaming them into their subjects' eyes— women proved slightly better at discriminating among subtle gradations in the middle of the color spectrum, where yellow and green reside. They detected tiny differences between yellows that looked the same to men. The researchers also found that men require a slightly longer wavelength to see the same hue as women; an object that women experience as orange will look slightly more yellowish to men, while green will look more blue-green to men. This last part doesn't confer an advantage on either sex, but it does demonstrate, Abramov says, that "the nervous system that deals with color cannot be wired in the exact same way in males as in females." He believes the answer lies in testosterone and other androgens. Evidence from animal studies suggests that male sex hormones can alter development in the visual cortex.

While Abramov has an explanation for how the sexes see differently, he's less certain about why. One possibility—which he cautions is highly speculative—is that it's an evolutionary adaptation that benefited hunter-gatherer societies: Males needed to see distant, moving objects, like bison, while females had to be better judges of color when scouring for edible plants.

Someday, further studies could reveal whether these traits could have implications for how men and women perform in fields such as the arts or athletics. At the very least, Abramov says, women probably have an edge nabbing the ripest banana on the shelf.

"Men and women, Women and men. It will never work."

– Erica Jong



Color has a huge effect on us psychologically and emotionally – how we interact with others – how we perceive our surroundings – how and what we remember.

The human eye can see approximately one million colors. Certain colors and color relationships can be eye irritants, cause headaches, and wreak havoc with human vision. Other colors and color combinations are soothing. Consequently, the appropriate use of color can maximize productivity, minimize visual fatigue, and relax the whole body.

Color increases memory - If a picture is worth a thousand words, a picture with natural colors may be worth a million, memory- wise. Psychologists have documented that "living color" does more than appeal to the senses. It also boosts memory for scenes in the natural world. Color helps us to process and store images more efficiently than colorless (black and white) scenes, and as a result to remember them better, too.

Color conveys meanings in two primary ways - natural associations and psychological symbolism. Understandably, we are more comfortable when colors remind us of similar things. For example, a soft shade of blue triggers associations with the sky and a psychological sense of calm.

Natural Associations - Occurrences of colors in nature are universal and timeless. For example, the fact that green is the color of vegetation and that blue is the color of the sky and water has been a reality since the dawn of humanity. These color associations are common to all people. Therefore, this symbolism is both timeless and universal.

Psychological or Cultural Associations - Color generates another level of meaning in the mind. This symbolism arises from cultural and contemporary contexts. As such, it is not universal and may be unrelated to its natural associations.

Color and the Senses - Although the olfactory sense was a human being's most important source of input in the pre- historic era, sight became our most important means of survival. In our current state of evolution, vision is the primary source for all our experiences. (Current marketing research has reported that approximately 80% of what we assimilate through the senses, is visual.

The meaning of colors can vary depending on culture and circumstances. Color is a form of non verbal communication. Color has both positive and negative symbolism. Color symbolism in art and anthropology refers to the use of color as a symbol in various cultures. There is great diversity in the use of colors and their associations between cultures and even within the same culture in different time periods. The same color may have very different associations within the same culture at any time.

Symbolic representations of religious concepts or articles may include a specific color with which the concept or object is associated. There is evidence to suggest that colors have been used for this purpose as early as 90,000 BC.

Color psychology is the study of hues as a determinant of human behavior. Color influences perceptions that are not obvious, such as the taste of food. Colors can also work as placebos: pills are certain colors to influence how a person feels after taking them. For example, red or orange pills are generally used as stimulants. Another way in which colors have been used to influence behavior was, in 2000, when the company Glasgow installed blue street lights in certain neighborhoods which resulted in a reduced crime rate. It is important to remember that influence of color differ between people. Factors such as gender, age, and culture can influence how an individual perceives color. For example, males reported that red colored outfits made women seem more attractive, while women answered that the color of a male's outfit did not affect his attractiveness.

Reactions to specific colors can also be impacted when viewed in close proximity to another contrasting color.

Color psychology is also widely used in marketing and branding. Many marketers see color as an important part of marketing because color can be used to influence consumers' emotions and perceptions of goods and services. Research shows that warm colors tend to attract spontaneous purchasers, despite cool colors being more favorable.

Carl Jung is most prominently associated with the pioneering stages of color psychology. Jung was most interested in colors' properties and meanings, as well as in art's potential as a tool for psychotherapy. His studies and writings on color symbolism cover a broad range of topics. His work has historically informed the modern field of color psychology.

Colors play a very important role in our lives, whether we realize it or not. They have the ability to affect our emotions and moods in a way that few other things can. The world around us is drenched with color. It influences how we respond physically and psychologically to what we see.

Color is a very powerful tool for communicating and can be used to indicate an action, affect the mood and cause reactions in peoples mind. Some colors can actually raise your blood pressure and increase metabolism. They have even been known to cause eyestrain, if looked on long enough.

Your own feelings about colors can of course also be very personal. Color meanings may have something to do with your past, your experiences or your culture. Every color has a unique effect on individuals and stimulates various responses.

Color surrounds us. Color is everywhere.

Without color, what would our world be?

How the eye sees colors

Basically, the retina has three color detecting cones – blue, green and red – each detecting about 100 different gradations of color. The brain combines these variations exponentially, allowing the average person to distinguish about one million hues.

There are a very few rare individuals among us who possess the ability to see as many as one hundred million colors. Scientists believe this condition, called tetrachromacy, is found **only in women**. (Tetrachromacy is demonstrated among several species of birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles and insects but rarely in humans.) These women have a fourth cone somewhere in the orange range, increasing their color detecting ability to over one hundred million variations.

Conversely, people who are color-blind suffer from the loss or limited function of one or more of the three cones. Color-Blindness is more predominant in men – approximately 8% of men and only 0.5% of women.

What do you associate with colors?

YELLOW *pure bright lemon yellow is the most irritating of the color spectrum. More light is reflected by bright colors, resulting in excessive stimulation of the eyes. Therefore, yellow is an eye irritant. Being the lightest hue of the spectrum, yellow is the most visible color of the spectrum. The human eye processes yellow first.*

On the other hand, yellow is uplifting and illuminating, offering hope, happiness, cheerfulness and fun. It is the color of the mind and intellect, it relates to acquired knowledge. It resonates with the left or logic side of the brain stimulating our mental faculties and creating mental agility and perception.

Positive: optimism, cheerfulness, enthusiasm, fun, good- humored, confidence, originality, creativity, challenging, academic and analytical, wisdom and logic.

Negative: being critical and judgmental, being overly analytical, being impatient and impulsive, being egotistical, pessimistic, an inferiority complex, spiteful, cowardly, deceitful, non- emotional and lacking compassion.

RED *is the color of extremes. It's the color of passionate love, seduction, violence, danger, anger, and adventure. Our prehistoric ancestors saw red as the color of fire and blood – energy and primal life forces. Red is also a magical and religious color. It symbolized super- human heroism to the Greeks. This color is a warm and positive color associated with our most physical needs and our will to survive.*

Being surrounded by too much of the color red can cause us to become irritated, agitated and ultimately angry. Too little and we become cautious, manipulative and fearful.

Positive: action, energy and speed, attention-getting, assertive and confident, energizing, stimulating, exciting, powerful, passionate, stimulating and driven, courageous and strong, spontaneous and determined.

Negative: aggressive and domineering, over-bearing, tiring, angry and quick- tempered, ruthless, fearful and intolerant, rebellious and obstinate, resentful, violent and brutal.

BLUE *is a safe color - the most universally liked color of all. It's nature's color for water and sky. Blue is embraced as the color of heaven and authority.*

Blue has more complex and contradictory meanings than any other color. Blue is the color of trust and peace. It can suggest loyalty and integrity as well as conservatism and frigidity. Blue is the color of the spirit, devotion and religious study.

It reduces stress, creating a sense of calmness, relaxation and order. It slows the metabolism. The paler the blue the more freedom we feel.

Positive: loyalty, trust and integrity, tactful, reliability and responsibility, conservatism and perseverance, caring and concern, idealistic and orderly, authority, devotion and contemplation, peaceful and calm.

Negative: being rigid, deceitful and spiteful, depressed and sad, too passive, self-righteous, superstitious conservative, old- fashioned, predictable, weak, unforgiving, aloof and frigid.

The right shade of blue can be worth $80 million – at least that's what they say about Bing's blue link color. Microsoft's research team found that blue engaged people the most and they tested various shades of blue in user groups. First, they determined that their previous shade of blue (a paler hue) lacked confidence. Finally, they wound up with a shade of blue quite similar to the one used by Google. Based on user feedback, the team estimated the best blue color could generate $80 million to $90 million in ad sales.

GREEN *is no longer just a color. It's now the symbol of ecology and a verb.*

Since the beginning of time, green has signified growth, rebirth, and fertility. In pagan times, there was the "Green Man" - a symbol of fertility. In Muslim countries, it is a holy color and in Ireland, a lucky color. It was the color of the heavens in the Ming Dynasty.

There are more shades of green than that of any other color.

Positive: growth and vitality, renewal and restoration, self-reliance, reliability and dependability, being tactful, emotionally balanced and calm, nature lover and family oriented, practical and down to earth, sympathetic, compassionate and nurturing, generous, kind and loyal with a high moral sense.

Negative: being possessive and materialistic, indifferent and over- cautious, envious, selfish, greedy and miserly, devious with money, inconsiderate, inexperienced, a hypochondriac and a do-gooder.

PURPLE *is the most powerful wavelength of the rainbow – and purple is the hardest color for the eye to discriminate. It is a rarity in nature and the expense of creating the color linked purple to royalty and the supernatural for centuries.*

Today, science has revealed much more about purple. Purple is the most powerful visible wavelength of electromagnetic energy. It's just a few steps away from x- rays and gamma rays. Perhaps this explains why purple is associated with supernatural energy and the cosmos more than with the physical world as we know it.

Positive: unusual and individual, creative and inventive, psychic and intuitive, humanitarian, selfless and unlimited, mystery, fantasy and the future.

Negative: immaturity, being impractical, cynical and aloof, pompous and arrogant, fraudulent and corrupt, delusions of grandeur and the social climber.

ORANGE *is vibrant. It's hot, healthy, fruity and engaging – but it can be abrasive and crass. It's a polarizing color. People either love it or detest it. Orange is probably the most rejected and underused color of our time. However, studies show the children and young people respond well to it. Orange symbolizes energy, vitality, cheer, excitement, adventure, warmth, and good health. However, it may also suggest a lack of serious intellectual values and bad taste.*

Orange is also stimulating to the appetite. Many restaurants use pastel versions of orange, such as apricot or peach or terracotta, for their décor as they are more subtle than red, yet still increase the appetite and promote conversation and social interaction.

Positive: sociable, optimistic, enthusiastic, cheerful, self-confident, independent, flamboyant, extroverted and uninhibited, adventurous, the risk-taker, creative flair, warm-hearted, agreeable and informal.

Negative: superficial and insincere, dependent, overbearing, self- indulgent, the exhibitionist, pessimistic, inexpensive, unsociable, and overly proud.

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