

## Duanwu Festival

duānwǔ  
端午



**Duanwu Festival** (端午节), also known as Dragon Boat Festival (龙舟节), is a traditional and statutory holiday associated with Chinese and other East Asian and Southeast Asian societies. It is a public holiday in mainland China since 2008. The festival occurs on the 5th day of the 5th month of the lunar calendar on which the Chinese calendar is based. This is the source of the alternative name of Double Fifth. The focus of the celebrations

includes eating rice dumplings (粽子), drinking realgar wine (雄黄酒), and racing dragon boats.

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端午

五月五，是端阳。门插艾，香满堂。  
吃粽子，洒白糖。龙舟下水喜洋洋。

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### Origins

The Duanwu Festival is believed to have originated in ancient China. A number of theories exist about its origins as a number of folk traditions and explanatory myths are connected to its observance. Today the best known of these relates to the suicide in 278 BC of Qu Yuan, poet and statesman of the Chu kingdom during the Warring States period.

### Qu Yuan

The best-known traditional story holds that the festival commemorates the death of poet Qu Yuan . 340 BC – BC) from the ancient state of Chu, in the Warring States Period of the Zhou Dynasty. A descendant of Chu Royal House, Qu served in high offices. However,



278

the  
when

the King decided to ally with the increasingly powerful state of Qin, Qu was banished for opposing the alliance. Qu Yuan was accused of treason. During his exile, Qu Yuan wrote a great deal of poetry, for which he is now remembered. Twenty-eight years later, Qin conquered the capital of Chu. In despair, Qu Yuan committed suicide by drowning himself in the Miluo River on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month.

It is said that the local people, who admired him, threw lumps of rice into the river to feed the fish so that they would not eat Qu Yuan's body. This is said to be the origin of zongzi. The local people were also said to have paddled out on boats, either to scare the fish away or to retrieve his body. This is said to be the origin of dragon boat racing.

duānwǔ

端午

wǔyuè 五月	wǔ 五	,	shì 是	duānyáng 端 阳	。		
May	5th	,	is	Duanwu festival	.		
5 <sup>th</sup> May is Duanwu festival.							
mén 门	chā 插	ài 艾	,	xiāng 香	mǎn 满	táng 堂	。
Door	Insert	Asiatic wormwood	,	Fragrance	Be filled with	Room	.
Put Asiatic wormwood on the doors and filling the room with fragrance.							
chī 吃	zòngzi 粽子	,	sǎ 洒	báitáng 白 糖	。		
Eat	Rice dumplings	,	Sprinkle	White sugar	.		
Eat rice dumplings, sprinkle white sugar.							
lóngzhōu 龙 舟	xiàshuǐ 下 水		xǐyángyáng 喜 洋 洋	。			
Dragon boat	To put (a boat) into the water		With joy	.			
Put the dragon boat into the water with joy.							