

2019/10/1

Greetings!

It is my honor to be here with you today representing the Department of Information and Tourism, Taipei City Government. I extend a sincere invitation for you and your esteemed organization to take part in the 2020 Taipei Lantern Festival, which is fast approaching.

The Lantern Festival is a traditional celebration over a thousand years old. Its many ageless customs include carrying handheld lanterns and painted-lantern displays. The festival marks the traditional end of the weeks-long Chinese New Year holidays. In recent years the Lantern Festival has featured a fusion of high-tech light shows with the traditional festive atmosphere. This has made it Taiwan's most popular New Year carnival-style event, attracting both great public attention and great numbers of revelers.

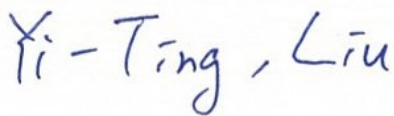
The first Taipei Lantern Festival was in 1997. The theme for the festive lanterns on display was the Chinese zodiac animal for the year. This was the first time in Taiwan a Lantern Festival was held in the large-scale form so popular now. This Department has been in charge of the event since 2017, and for the past three years this traditional event has been held amongst the commercial cluster and heritage architecture of Ximending, one of Taipei's oldest commercial districts. This has created more interaction between the Lantern Festival, citizens, and the city streetscape. International performance artists, Pikachu the Pokemon, and Tokyo Disneyland have been invited to take part, better aligning Taipei with international standards, bringing more energy to the West District commercial area, and successfully flipping the West District's trajectory. The crowds of visitors include families, young people, and tourists from around the world. The Taipei Lantern Festival has been transformed from a traditional folk activity into a tourism-promotion showcase, attracting tourists from near and far, an internationalized event that promotes Taipei marketing. This year, 300,000 people streamed in for the opening day, and over the course of the nine-day event upwards of 4 million attended. The Taipei Lantern Festival is more than just the creation of a rich festival of lights – it is about adding luster to the image of the city's old West District, and creating a famous new brand among important public events.

In 2020 the main venue for the Taipei Lantern Festival will continue to be the old-city West District. It is hoped that the experience of the past three years, with the Taipei Lantern Festival helping to push forward the West District Gateway Project focused on urban renewal and commercial development, will also help revitalize the popularity of areas around the

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Nangang venue. Through interlinking of the west and east venues exhibit space is expanded, creating an even more marvelous experience for friends who come to Taipei for travel, gaining richer understanding of the city.

In each of the past three years the festival has included an international friendship exchange area. 12 countries and cities have joined up, each adding their part to event promotion overseas, far and wide. The 2020 Taipei Lantern Festival is scheduled to run from 8 to 16, Feb. in Taipei's West District and Nangang District. The festival theme will continue to be the Chinese zodiac animal for the year, and this Department invites all countries and sister cities to take part. If your county/city would like to participate in the lantern display, parade (including performance troupes), or lantern float elements of the festival, this Department will provide 1 gratis 3m booth (for use distributing special print materials, gift and memento items, travel information, etc.), one lantern-display base, as well as Taipei Lantern Festival official website promotion, the hosting of an official lantern-lighting press conference, and other support. I am very honored to invite you to join us as participants in 2020 Taipei Lantern festival activities, working together to create new festival highlights. I also wish you good tidings and good health throughout the year, with everything "as you wish"!



Commissioner
Department of Information and Tourism
Taipei City Government