

迎亲习俗：家乡婚礼的第一幕

我的家乡坐落在江南水乡，那里的人们依旧保留着颇具仪式感的婚礼传统。迎亲，是整个婚礼仪式的第一幕，承载着对新人、两家人乃至整个村落的祝福和期待。

清晨，新娘在家中梳妆打扮，红盖头下，静待迎亲队伍的到来。迎亲车队往往用红绸缎装饰，锣鼓声响起，亲朋好友簇拥而至。新郎和伴郎哼唱着乡间小调，走过熟悉的巷道来到新娘家门前。

敲门礼是迎亲过程中的关键一环。新郎站在新娘家门外，手中往往捧着一篮象征吉祥的小礼物——如糖果、红枣、栗子。女方亲友会提出“考题”：例如“请说出新郎新娘相识的时间”“请唱一段乡歌”。这是为了调动气氛，也象征男方对女方家庭的尊重与诚意。

敲门成功后，新郎进入屋内迎接新娘。此刻，新娘家长微笑致意，亲友齐声祝福。随后进入敬茶环节：新人分别向双方父母奉上一杯热茶，茶杯装饰红色，寓意吉庆。父母喝茶后回份为红包，抑或鼓励新人结婚后的责任与担当。这一礼仪，既是对长辈的敬意，也是新人承诺家庭的宣言。

茶礼结束后，别具一格的“闹新房”环节应运而生。亲友团会在新房门前设置小游戏：捉迷藏、问答谜题、新郎要通过“考验”才能进入。新娘则坐在被祝福满布的花轿中。此时的闹房虽带着调皮与笑声，却也满载着祝福，希望新人在生活中如游戏般配合默契、快乐无忧。

看到迎亲这一整个流程，我仿佛看见古老而温柔的礼仪正在与我们同在。从最初的敲门到最后的新房闹剧，每一个细节都刻录着人与人之间的情感、人与家乡之间的纽带。这不只是两个家庭合并的仪式，更是家乡人情味的集中体现。

在现代社会，迎亲仪式也发生了变化：有的家庭简化流程、提高效率，有的新郎自驾、迎亲车换成旅游车。但无论形式如何改变，那份“新郎进女家”“敬茶”“众人闹新房”所代表的情感意涵，都在持续被继承。家乡婚礼的迎亲习俗，是我们对故乡文化的热爱，也是我们对亲情与友情的珍视。

这第一幕，承载了礼仪与温度，传统与当下，以及我们对文化的记忆与敬意。

The Bridal Procession: First Act of Hometown Wedding Traditions

My hometown lies in the water-bound region of Jiangnan, where people still preserve wedding traditions full of ritual and warmth. The bridal procession marks the first act of the wedding, carrying blessings and expectations for the couple, their families, and even the whole village.

At dawn, the bride is escorted in her home, adorned with a red veil, waiting quietly for the arrival of the procession. The bridal cortege is often decorated with

red ribbons, the sound of gongs and drums fills the air, and relatives and friends gather. The groom and his groomsmen hum local folk songs as they walk down familiar lanes toward the bride' s house.

The door-knocking ritual is a key part of the procession. The groom stands outside the bride' s door, holding a basket of auspicious small gifts—like candies, red dates, and chestnuts. The bride' s friends and family pose “tests” : for example “When did the bride and groom meet?” or “Sing a verse of a village song.” It' s meant to enliven the atmosphere and symbolize the groom' s respect and sincerity toward the bride' s family.

When the door-knocking is successful, the groom enters and greets the bride. At that moment, the bride' s parents smile and the guests offer blessings. Then comes the tea ceremony: the couple each offer a cup of hot tea to their parents. The teacups are decorated in red, symbolizing happiness. After drinking the tea, the parents respond with red envelopes, or with words encouraging the couple' s responsibilities and commitment after marriage. This ritual is both a sign of respect to elders and a declaration of the couple' s promise to build a family.

After the tea ritual, a playful “new-room teasing” takes place. Friends and relatives set games in front of the bridal chamber: hide-and-seek, quiz riddles, the groom undergoing “tests” to enter. The bride sits in the wedding sedan chair decorated with well-wishes. Although the teasing is full of laughs, it is loaded with blessings—hoping the new couple will cooperate like a game, joyful and carefree in life.

Watching the entire procession, I seem to see an ancient and tender ritual living alongside us. From the door-knock to the final new-room jests, every detail records the feelings between people, the bond with our hometown. It is not merely a union of two families, but the concentrated expression of hometown warmth.

In modern society, the bridal procession has changed too: some families simplify the process for efficiency, some grooms drive themselves, the wedding car becomes a tourist van. But no matter how the form changes, the emotional meaning represented by “the groom enters the bride' s house,” “tea ceremony,” “teasing the bridal room” continues to be passed on. The procession in a hometown wedding is our love for our native culture, and our regard for kinship and friendship.

This first act carries ritual and warmth, tradition and the present, and our memory and reverence for culture.

节日庆典：贴春联到元宵灯谜的年味记忆

每逢春节，我的家乡便进入一种热闹而期待的状态。从腊月二十三的小年开始，街巷里挂起了红灯笼，门楣贴上了春联，空气中弥漫着甜香的年味。

贴春联是一项传统却被每个人珍视的仪式。大年三十前，家家户户在门外贴上红色对联。上联通常写“迎春纳福”，下联写“富贵安康”；横批则是“福满人间”或“喜迎八方”。贴春联并不是一句简单的文字游戏，而是将对新一年美好生活的期盼贴在家门口，一家人一起参与，表达对幸福生活的共同祝愿。

除夕夜，家人围坐餐桌前，品味年夜饭——一道道传统佳肴从厨房搬上桌：红烧鱼象征年年有余，饺子象征团圆。饭后，全家一同守岁，聊天、看春晚、偶尔出门放鞭炮。漫天的烟火为夜色增色，也象征新的开始。

到了正月十五，便是元宵节。傍晚时分，村里的广场会点起花灯，彩绸绕灯杆，灯谜卡片挂满灯笼。大家挑灯笼、提灯笼，孩子们奔跑嬉闹，长辈们微笑聊天。一边猜谜一边喝元宵——那种甜糯的口感配上清冷的夜风，带来一种温润的乡情。

灯谜有趣又富含文化：谜底往往与历史典故、诗词歌赋、乡音俚语相关。有时候是“天上七星一条龙”，有时是“前山后水两相望”。解开谜底的人获得一小红包，喜悦在灯光中散开。灯谜其实是文化传承的一种形式，它让年轻一代在游戏中接触传统，在欢笑中理解意义。

另外值得一提的还有清明扫墓习俗。虽说不属于春节庆典，却是我们家乡在节日序列中不可或缺的一环。到清明那日，家人一同前往祖坟，修整墓碑、献上鲜花、焚香并朗读先人的名字。这个简单的仪式，承载的是对根与源的敬意，也是家乡人对时间流逝和生命延续的深思。

在城市化、现代化的背景下，这些节日礼仪当然也有改变：贴春联也许变成打印好的电子对联；元宵猜灯谜可能在社区活动室开幕。但核心不变：贴起红联、点起花灯、围坐元宵、扫墓祭祖，这些仪式让我们记住自己来自何处，也提醒我们要珍视传统与亲情。

节日是家乡文化的一面镜子，让人折射出乡愁与温暖。在那个贴春联、猜灯谜的夜晚，我似乎又回到了儿时的身影，听见爷爷的话语，看见炉边的暖光。那份年味，正是在这些传统礼仪中缓缓燃起，照亮我们对家乡的热爱与思考。

Festival Celebrations: From Spring Couplets to Lantern Riddles, the Memories of the New Year

Whenever the Spring Festival approaches, my hometown enters a state of bustle and expectation. From Xiaonian on the 23rd day of the twelfth lunar month, red lanterns hang in the alleys, couplets are pasted on door frames, and the air fills with the sweet fragrance of the new year.

Putting up spring couplets is a tradition cherished by everyone. Before Lunar New Year's Eve, every household pastes red couplets outside the door. The upper couplet often reads "Welcoming Spring and Receiving Good Fortune," the lower reads "Wealth and Health," and the horizontal inscription may say "Fortune fills the world" or "Joy welcomes all directions." Pasting the couplets isn't merely about words—it places our hope for a better year at the threshold of the house, a family-wide act of shared blessing.

On New Year's Eve, the family gathers round the table for the reunion dinner—dishes laden with symbolism: braised fish stands for "surplus every year," dumplings stand for reunion. After dinner, the family may stay up together: chatting, watching the Spring Festival Gala, perhaps stepping out to set off firecrackers. The fireworks across the sky brighten the night and symbolize a fresh start.

When the fifteenth of the first lunar month arrives, it's the Lantern Festival. At dusk, the village plaza lights up with lanterns, ribbons swirling around lamp poles, cards with riddles hung from lanterns. People pick lanterns, hold lanterns, children run and laugh, elders chat with gentle smiles. While guessing riddles, everyone basks in the warm glow—and eats yuanxiao sweet dumplings. The chewy sweetness and the cool night breeze bring a gentle hometown feeling.

The riddle-games are fun yet cultural: the answers often link to historical tales, classical poetry, or local dialect phrases. Sometimes a riddle says "Seven stars in heaven draw a dragon," other times "Front hill and back water gaze at each other." If you solve a riddle, you might get a small red envelope; that moment of joy spreads in the lantern-glow. The riddles are a form of cultural inheritance—they let the young engage tradition through play, laugh while learning meaning.

Another ceremony worth mentioning is the Qingming tomb-sweeping. Though it doesn't belong to the Spring Festival cycle, in our hometown it's still an indispensable ritual. On Qingming Day, family members jointly visit ancestral graves: clean the tombstone, offer fresh flowers, burn incense, and recite names of ancestors. The simple act carries respect for roots and origins, and reflects our contemplations on time passing and lives continuing.

In the backdrop of urbanization and modernization, of course these festival rituals have changed: spring couplets may be printed electronically; lantern riddle clubs may happen in community centers. But the core remains: affixing red couplets, lighting lanterns, gathering for yuanxiao, sweeping the tombs—these rituals help us remember where we come from and remind us to cherish tradition and family.

Festivals are like a mirror of hometown culture, reflecting homesickness and warmth. On those nights when we pasted couplets and guessed lantern riddles, I seemed to re-visit my childhood figure, heard my grandfather's voice, saw the glow by the

stove. That flavor of the year—rising gently in those traditional ceremonies—lights up our love and reflection for our hometown.

婚俗服饰与饮食：从礼服华装到喜宴中的味道

在家乡的传统婚礼中，服饰与饮食是两大重要组成部分。它们不仅构成婚礼的视觉与味觉盛宴，也承载着丰富的文化象征与时代变迁。

首先讲讲服饰：过去，新娘穿的是深红色的凤冠霞帔，脚穿绣花鞋。袖口、裙摆常绣有“鸳鸯”“凤凰”“双喜”字样，象征夫妻和睦、吉祥美满；新郎则身穿长衫马褂，头戴长寿帽。整衣以红色为基调，意寓新婚吉庆。

现代婚礼中，许多年轻人选择了白纱礼服，甚至西装礼服为主。但家乡婚礼依然保留了部分传统元素：例如在敬茶环节，新娘仍可能换上绣凤裙；婚礼合影中，长辈也会要求新人穿上红色礼服拍摄。这样一来，旧与新、传统与时尚在婚礼中交汇。

饮食方面，喜宴象征的是“从满桌菜肴看好运”。桌上最先上来的通常是红烧大虾，虾红像火，象征红红火火；紧接着是富贵双拼——比如干烧明虾配栗子鸡；再有年糕、长寿面、汤圆等，寓意新婚如意、白头偕老、团圆甜蜜。

亲友们举杯祝酒，新人敬酒周转，掌声笑声连连。宴席中的小点心如花生、瓜子、开心果，寓意“花开富贵”“子孙满堂”。这些饮食细节虽普遍，却饱含乡土温情和文化意味。

随着时代发展，婚宴逐渐加入了更多现代元素：自助餐形式、主题灯光、互动游戏。但在家乡，宴席的开场仍常用传统礼节：主持人为新人宣读“稚子鞠躬辞礼”“同心同德天地合”等祝词，伴随着鞭炮和掌声。这一刻，饮食不再只是口腹之欲，而成为连接过去、现在与未来的仪式。

服饰、饮食，是婚礼的两个维度，前者是视觉的文化符号，后者是味觉的祝福。每当我看到那身红衣新娘、听到祝酒词、闻到浓香油爆菜的蒸腾，我便知道，那是我家乡的婚礼，是我们这片土地上流淌的仪式血脉。

这种婚俗的延续，让我们感受到文化的温度、亲情的厚度与传统的力量。即使未来婚礼形式更轻、流程更短，那件凤冠霞帔、那桌红烧大虾，仍会被记住、仍会带来触动。

Wedding Attire and Cuisine: From Ceremonial Dress to the Flavor of the Banquet

In the traditional weddings of my hometown, attire and cuisine are two major components. They not only provide a visual and gustatory feast for the ceremony, but

also carry deep cultural symbolism and reflections of generational change.

Let's first talk about attire: in the old days, the bride would wear a deep-red phoenix crown and a richly embroidered robe (tiaobei), stepping into embroidered shoes. The cuffs and hems bore motifs of "mandarin ducks," "phoenixes," and the "double-happiness" character, all signifying marital harmony and auspiciousness. The groom would wear a long robe and a mandarin coat (magua), crowned with a longevity cap. Red was the dominant color, expressing good fortune at the new marriage.

In modern weddings, many young couples choose white bridal gowns or Western-style suits. But in hometown ceremonies, some traditional elements are still kept: for example, during the tea ceremony, the bride may still change into an embroidered phoenix-skirt; for the photo session with elders, the couple may don red ceremonial attire. In this way, old and new converge, tradition and fashion entwine.

On the cuisine side, the banquet represents "seeing good fortune across the laden tables." The first dish is often braised large prawns—bright red like fire—symbolizing a flourishing life. Then comes a "double prosperity" platter—say braised prawns with roasted chestnut chicken. Also served are rice cakes, longevity noodles, and sweet dumplings (tangyuan), signifying good wishes for married life, white-headed togetherness, and sweet reunion.

Guests raise their glasses in toasts, the couple circulates to thank them—applause and laughter fill the air. Small snacks like peanuts, sunflower seeds, pistachios carry meanings of "blossoming prosperity" and "descendants in abundance." While these culinary details are commonplace, they brim with hometown warmth and cultural nuance.

As times move on, wedding banquets increasingly incorporate modern features: buffet style, themed lighting, interactive games. Yet in our hometown, the banquet still often begins with traditional rituals: the host recites formal blessing lines like "the little ones bow in greeting, the hearts in accord, heaven and earth united," accompanied by firecrackers and applause. In that moment, the feast becomes a ritual linking past, present, and future.

Attire and cuisine are the two dimensions of a wedding: the former is a visual symbol of culture, the latter a gustatory blessing. Whenever I see the bride in her red robe, hear the toast, smell the rich aroma of the sizzling dishes, I know it is my hometown wedding, the ritual lifeblood flowing in this land.

The continuation of these wedding customs allows us to feel the warmth of culture, the weight of kinship, and the strength of tradition. Even if future weddings become lighter and shorter in process, that phoenix crown, that red-braised

传统与变迁：家乡礼仪在现代社会中的传承

小时候，我总是好奇大年初一新娘为什么要穿红、新郎为什么要敲门。长大后我回到家乡，看见迎亲队伍中多了数码摄像、新人自驾而来、朋友圈直播婚礼现场。我意识到，时代在推进，传统在流转，而礼仪依然负载文化的使命。

在婚礼仪式方面，传统的“迎亲”“敬茶”“闹洞房”仪式曾经是必须且耗时的。如今，有的新人将迎亲简化为“车队到酒店”拍照，新人敬茶改成提前在家录视频寄给长辈。但我发现，在家乡很多家庭，仍坚持提前到女方家敲门、敬茶、敬酒。这不仅仅是形式，而是一种尊敬与仪式感，传达出“我们还在做这件事”的态度。

节日庆典方面，贴春联、元宵点灯猜谜的热闹也在发生变化。社区主办的大型灯谜会取代了往昔里巷道中的提灯游玩。虽然现代化方便了参与，但我更觉得那种“提着灯笼绕村走”“父母和孩子一边猜谜一边笑”的感觉渐渐淡去。然而，每当夜晚燃起红灯笼、老人拿出笔来写谜语、孩子们载歌载舞，我便知道传统还在续航。

礼仪服饰与饮食也在更新：传统凤冠霞帔可能让位于白纱礼服，婚宴菜式也变成西式自助。但我家乡婚礼中仍有长辈坚持：“敬茶的时候，新娘换回凤裙一刻不能省。”喜宴的结束也常以“敬一杯百年好合”作为压轴。这些细节虽小，却像隐秘的文化密码，将过去与现在锁在一起。

城市化、网络化让生活节奏加快，但礼仪传承的主心骨仍在：那份尊重、那份亲情、那份对根与源的眷恋。记忆中的婚礼，记忆中的节日，不仅仅因为一串程序而存在，而因为我们在仪式中看见了自己、看见了家乡、看见了归属。

我常思考：在未来，我们如何让下一代也愿意参与这些仪式？答案可能并不复杂：让它更贴近现代生活而不失本质。比如，婚礼中加入视频敬茶、新郎闯关换成趣味互动；元宵灯谜不仅在现场，也可通过手机小游戏实现。但核心必须保留：人聚在一起、提灯猜谜、倒茶鞠躬、敬长辈。那不是“老规矩”，而是文化的根。

在这个变迁剧场里，传统并非死物，而是有机体。它会更新、会适应，却不应消失。每当我回乡，在新房门前听那敲门礼声，在元宵夜看那提灯人影，我就在告诉自己：我们还在守护，还在纪念，那片浇灌我们成长的土地，还在为我们奏响仪式的乐章。

Tradition and Change: The Inheritance of Hometown

Rituals in Modern Society

When I was young, I always wondered why the bride wore red on the first of the lunar year, and why the groom had to knock on the door. As I grew up and returned home, I saw more digital cameras in the bridal procession, couples driving themselves, wedding livestreams on social media. I realized that as times move on and tradition flows, rituals still carry the mission of culture.

In wedding ceremonies, the traditional “bridal procession,” “tea ceremony,” and “new-room teasing” used to be mandatory and time-consuming. Today, some couples simplify the procession to “arrive at a hotel by car,” and record the tea ceremony video in advance for the elders. But I found that in many homes in my hometown, they still insist: knock at the bride’s house, perform the tea ritual, toast the elders. It’s not just formality—it’s a gesture of respect and a sense of ritual, expressing “we are still doing this.”

As for festival celebrations, the lively activities of past couplet-pasting, lantern riddles during the Lantern Festival are changing too. Large community-held lantern-riddle events replace the old walking-around-the-lantern style. Although modernization makes participation more convenient, I feel the sense of “carrying a lantern around the village, parents and children guessing riddles and laughing together” is gradually fading. Yet whenever red lanterns are lit at night, an elder takes out a pen to write riddles, children sing and dance—I know the tradition is still ongoing.

Attire and cuisine of rituals are also updating: the phoenix crown and embroidered robe may give way to a white bridal gown; wedding banquets evolve into Western-style buffets. But in my hometown’s weddings, some elders still insist: “At the tea ceremony, the bride must change back into the phoenix robe at least momentarily.” And the banquet finale often ends with the toast “a hundred years of harmony.” These small details, though minor, act like hidden cultural codes that lock past and present together.

Urbanization and internetization have accelerated life’s pace, but the core of ritual transmission remains: that respect, that kinship, that longing for roots and sources. The weddings I remember and the festivals I recall exist not just because of a set of procedures, but because in the rituals we see ourselves, our hometown, our belonging.

I often think: in the future, how can we get the next generation willing to take part in these rituals? The answer may not be complicated: make it closer to modern life without losing essence. For example, incorporate video greeting in weddings, convert the groom’s “trial” into interactive fun; lantern riddles during the

festival may be played as mobile games too. But we must keep the core: people gathering, lanterns raised, riddles guessed, tea poured, bows made to elders. It's not "old rules," it's the root of culture.

In this theatre of change, tradition is not a dead thing—it's an organism. It will update, it will adapt, but it should not disappear. Whenever I return home, hear the door-knocking in front of the new room, see people carrying lanterns on a Lantern Festival night—I tell myself: we are still guarding, still commemorating, that land which nurtured our growth is still playing the symphony of rituals for us.