

Asian Profile Series: Vietnamese Community

Culture



Tết, short for Tết Nguyên Đán, is the Spring Festival, Lunar New Year, or Vietnamese Lunar New Year in Vietnamese culture. Based on the lunisolar calendar, Tết is celebrated annually through the preparation of cooking special holiday food – such as bánh tét and bánh chưng – and doing house and family shrine cleaning. The celebration can range from 3 days and continue up to a week. This year it starts on February 1, 2022. On the first day of Tết, it is typically reserved for the nuclear family and celebrations on the street to make loud noises with firecrackers and gongs to ward off evil spirits. There are other traditions practiced that can include ancestor worship, giving money in red envelopes, visiting friends, relatives, and neighbors, and more!

Health

The initial wave of Vietnamese refugees was shortly before the fall of Saigon, which included South Vietnamese military officers, government officials, professionals, business leaders, and their families. A second wave followed the fall of Saigon and included those who fled Vietnam by boat and ship, seeking refuge from persecution. A third wave followed 1979, when the United Nations sponsored the Orderly Departure Program (ODP) to provide safe and legal departure for Vietnamese refugees. As a result of the traumatic experiences during the Vietnam War, close to 50% of older adult refugees suffer major depression and show high levels of depression anxiety, and post-traumatic stress (Hinton et al., 1993). The primary leading cause of death for Vietnamese of both genders in the U.S. is cancer (Hoyert & Kung, 1997). Both genders have the highest incidence of lung and liver cancer among AAPIs.





Center for Asian Health Equity (CAHE)

Spotlights

Community Partner

Vietnamese American Cancer Foundation

In 1988, the Vietnamese American Cancer Foundation (VACF) was created by a group of cancer survivors and local physicians to address the social and financial barriers in health care that hinder Vietnamese Americans from accessing quality cancer screening, care, and treatment. VACF serves as a central location to provide culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate service, support, and education to the Vietnamese American community in the Southern Counties of California with a focus on its low-income, underserved population. VACF is currently a partner in the Asian Engagement & Recruitment Core (ARC) under our All of Us Research Program.



CAHE Staff

Jeremy Chia serves as the Director of Development and Innovation at CAHE. Born in Singapore, Jeremy is a first generation Chinese-Canadian-American immigrant, who was raised in Toronto and moved to Chicago in 2000. Singaporean cuisine is as ethnically diverse as its people, blending Malay, Chinese, Indonesian, and Indian influences. Among his favorite dishes include: Hainanese chicken rice (flavor and aroma rich steamed chicken served with chicken stock rice); Laksa (rice noodles in spicy coconut curry soup with egg, shrimp, vegetables, and fish cakes); Hokkien prawn mee (stir-fried noodles with prawns, chicken, squid and fish cakes in a rich spicy broth); and Bak-kut-teh (pork rib soup infused with Chinese herbs, spices, and seasoned with dark soy sauce). Bon Appetit!

