

Voice of Clear Light

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Tibetan New Year Begins Feb. 19

Ligmincha International Prepares for Losar, Year of the Wood Sheep



Losar, which in Tibetan means "new year," is celebrated widely by Tibetans and Tibetan Bon and Buddhist centers throughout the world. This time to reflect on the passing of the old year and face the possibilities of the new year will be celebrated by Ligmincha International centers worldwide.

Traditionally, the first day of Losar begins three days of celebration. Preparation for the new year, the Year of the Wood Sheep, will be held on Feb. 15, and celebration will take place Feb. 19–21, 2015.

For those who live near a gompā (meditation hall), the first day of Losar is when families go to the gompā to pay their respects to the lama, circumambulate the temple, offer prayer flags to the monastery, raise prayer flags at one's home and spend time with family. Often Tibetans will bring offerings to the gompā, such as flowers or butter lamps or cookies for tea with the lama, and receive blessings that all activities of the coming year will be successful.

Below is a suggested schedule for Ligmincha centers throughout the world with a resident lama, for other Ligmincha centers or practice groups, and for individual practitioners.

Suggested schedule for Ligmincha centers with a resident lama

Serenity Ridge (Geshe Tenzin Yangton), Ligmincha Mexico (Lama Kalsang Nyima and Lama Yungdrung Lodoe), Chamma Ling Poland (Geshe Yungdrung Gyatso), and Ligmincha Texas (Geshe Denma Gyaltsen), Ligmincha France (Geshe Lhundup Gyaltsen) and Lishu (Geshe Thupten Negi)

Sunday, Feb. 15, 2015:

- Sangha gets together to clean the gumpa, make any needed repairs and also to make kapse (special Tibetan cookies for Losar) if they wish. Complete any projects that have begun during the year so that everything is fresh and ready for the New Year with new energy.

Thursday, Feb. 19, 2015 (Losar):

- 9–10 a.m.: Lama's choice what to do; possibly sang chod (fire ritual).

Saturday, Feb. 21, 2015:

- 9–10 a.m.: Sang Chod (fire ritual) and replace main prayer flag(s) with new flags(s).
- 10–10:30 a.m.: Break for tea and dresil (Tibetan sweet rice.)
- 10:30–11:45 am: Each person offers a tea light in gumpa; followed by recitation of Nyame Sol Dep, in honor of Nyame Sherap Gyaltzen's anniversary birthday offering on the fifth day day of Tibetan New Year (Feb 24).
 - *Note: Place Nyame Sherap Gyaltzen statue or image on table near shrine to offer khata to image of Nyame Sherap Gyaltzen.*
 - Do khora (circumambulation) around gumpa or stupa while reciting Ma Tri mantra.
 - 12 noon (NY time): Watch live webcast message from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Ligmincha resident lamas worldwide.
 - Followed by tea or potluck lunch or dinner (depending on time zone).

Suggested schedule for all other Ligmincha centers or practice groups

Sunday, Feb. 15, 2015:

- Same as above.

Thursday, Feb. 19, 2015:

- Optional: Sang chod.

Saturday, Feb 21, 2015:

- Same as above, led by umdze.

Suggested schedule for individual sangha members who are unable to travel to a center or practice group

Sunday, February 15, 2015:

- Clean home, office, shrine, and make any needed repairs. Complete any projects that have begun during the year so that everything is fresh and ready for the new year with new energy.

Thursday, February 19, 2015:

- Morning practice of sang chod if you have received this teaching or any practice that you have received.

Saturday, February 21, 2015:

- Open shrine, offering water, candle, incense, flowers, tea and wine, cookies.
- With whatever prayers or practices you have learned, reflect on the upcoming year with positive energy for success for all that happens. You may practice Guru Yoga and a practice such as recitation of Three Heart Mantras, focusing their energy on the new year, with the support of the images of the deities and/or masters, to deepen your spiritual practice.
- Optional: Raise prayer flags.
- 12 noon (NY time): Watch live webcast message from Tenzin Wangyal Rinpoche and Ligmincha resident lamas worldwide.

