

Moon Festival

The Moon Festival is on August 15th of the Chinese Lunar Calendar. It is one of the most important festivals in Taiwan. People celebrate the holiday with moon cakes, pomelos, fireworks and barbecues at scenic spots.

People in Chiayi celebrate the Moon Festival in a special way. Chiayi is a place with a lot of high quality tea products. Tea farmers grow tea plants in the mountains and the hills. People here not only enjoy all kinds of food, but also prepare and drink tea to add flavor to the holiday. It is fun to experience all these activities, but do you know how the festival began? Here is the story.

Hou Yi (后羿) was an archer. He lived with farmers in a remote village. He was very skillful with his bow and arrows. He could shoot down a fierce animal with only one shot. He often protected the villagers from thieves and monster-like animals. Everyone saw him as a hero. He had a girlfriend named Chang-E(嫦娥). She was kind and graceful. Finally, Hou-Yi (后羿) and Chang-E(嫦娥) got married. They lived a happy and peaceful life together.

There were ten suns in the sky. They took turns shining on the earth. The light was gentle and warm. Farmers always had a big harvest in the autumn. One day, the ten suns came out together in the sky. Their heat dried up the rivers, burned the plants, and destroyed the crops. Animals died of thirst because they couldn't find any water to drink. People started starving and hoped someone could save them from their trouble. Finally, they looked to Hou Yi (后羿) for help.

Hou-Yi (后羿) answered their request. He took out his bow and arrows, aimed at the suns, and started shooting them one by one. Before Hou Yi (后羿) shot down the last sun, an old man stopped him. The old man said, "Please leave the last sun to light up the sky or our earth will be covered in darkness forever." With only one sun in the sky, the weather was gentle and warm again. In order to thank him, the people asked Hou Yi (后羿) to be their king. A priest even gave Hou Yi (后羿) a pill which could make him live forever. Hou

Yi (后羿) put the pill away in a safe place and did not want to take it until he needed it. He only told Chang-E(嫦娥) where the pill was.

With the power he held, Hou Yi (后羿) became a very cruel person. He was not kind and friendly to his people any more. Sometimes he beat his people like animals. People cried for help and wished they could undo this disaster. Chang-E(嫦娥) felt sorry for the people. She could not stand her husband's bad behavior toward the people, but there was nothing she could do. One day, she had an idea: she wanted to take the pill. This was the only thing she could do to stop her husband from living forever. She swallowed the pill and floated up into the sky. She flew all the way to the moon and became a fairy there. Hou Yi (后羿) tried to shoot her down, but his arrows were not as powerful as before. The date Chang-E(嫦娥) flew to the moon was August 15th. People celebrate it in honor of Chang-E's(嫦娥) sacrifice.