



**Suzhou's Signature Holiday Celebration Comes to Instagram Live**  
*Hanshan Temple Bell Ringing Festival, one of China's oldest and largest New Year's festivals, will be shared on [@VisitSuzhou](#) December 31*

**NEW YORK, N.Y. (December 21, 2020)** – For the first time ever, the Suzhou Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism will share one of China's oldest and largest celebrations of the New Year with the world via Instagram Live at [@VisitSuzhou](#). The [Hanshan Temple Bell Ringing Festival](#), held on the grounds of one of Suzhou's most sacred ancient sites dating back more than 1,500 years, is a must-see experience for anyone interested in Suzhou's unique local culture and Chinese Buddhist traditions.

On the evening of December 31, the Hanshan Temple grounds will come alive with cultural performances such as Kunqu Opera, a locally created performing artform that has been recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO. Many visitors will take the opportunity to pray for good fortune for themselves, family, and friends heading into the new year by making wishes as they burn incense, light auspicious red candles, and write their desires on red ribbons before tossing them onto the branches of designated trees. (If your ribbon stays hanging, legend says your wish will be granted.) At the stroke of midnight, thousands of revelers pause to listen as monks ring Hanshan Temple's giant bell 108 times. According to Buddhist legend, there are 108 types of annoyances that can affect a person each year, and each toll of the bell can help dispel one of these annoyances.

People around the world can view the festivities on Instagram Live starting at approximately 9:30 p.m. Chinese Standard Time (8:30 a.m. EST / 1:30 p.m. GMT) and video will be archived for viewing on the platform for 24 hours. Suzhou is also inviting social media users to share their prayers and wishes for loved ones in 2021 on the [@VisitSuzhou](#) Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram channels in the days leading up to New Year's Eve. Finally, an exclusive New Year's Eve-themed sweepstakes has launched at [www.traveltosuzhou.com](#) where consumers can enter to win a \$1,000 American Express gift card that can be used for future travel to Suzhou, along with a Feng Shui bell to bring luck to the winner's home year-round.

These online activities are part of "Suzhou, The City of Culture & Arts," a recently launched integrated marketing campaign designed to bring the destination's fascinating cultural heritage to life for English-speaking travelers in North America and Europe.

## **About Suzhou**

For more than 2,500 years, Suzhou has been known as a center of arts and culture. Intellectuals, artists, and high profile public figures have long been drawn to the city's romantic canals and stunning classical gardens, nine of which have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Performing arts including the Kunqu Opera and Pingtan storytelling originated in Suzhou, and the city is also important to the design and fashion worlds as a center for silk making and embroidery. In addition to its arts and culture, Suzhou is home to plentiful natural areas that allow for boundless outdoor activities. Visitors seeking Suzhou's modern side will find five-star hotels, the iconic Lake Jinji, limitless shopping, and China's largest overwater Ferris Wheel in the upscale and contemporary SIP District. Each year, millions of tourists travel to Suzhou to experience the destination's more than 400 attractions, ranging from pagodas and temples to historical districts and world-class museums.

Suzhou is located in the center of the Yangtze River Delta, approximately 60 miles west of Shanghai. Suzhou is easily accessible via direct air service from North America and Europe to Shanghai Pudong International Airport (PVG.) and is well connected with nearby cities including Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Nanjing by frequent high speed trains.

For more information on Suzhou, visit [TravelToSuzhou.com](http://TravelToSuzhou.com), and follow the destination on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#).

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