

# A dance with dragons

The Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival returns for a multicultural weekend of Asian folklore and global fun.

**AT THE 26TH** annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival, ancient Chinese lore honoring a fisherman who lived in 278 B.C. continues on in a breakneck race between dragons. Queens' Flushing Meadows-Corona Park is home to the weekend-long cultural fete showcasing custom-made teak boats, vibrantly decked out with dragon heads and tails, that race each other for prizes. More than 200 teams hit the lake Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 (9am to 5pm), with the U.S. Dragon Boat Open Championship Race taking place Sunday (11:30am and 5pm) and a boatload of activities in between. Throughout the event, artists teach skills like calligraphy and kite making, storyteller Jonathan Kruk brings to life pieces from his series *Dragon Tales*, and the international food court tempts you with dumplings, bao and seafood. Here's a closer look at what the weekend's revelry holds.

## Saturday 6

The sporting event kicks off with the Chinese Music Ensemble of New York (10:15am) and the opening ceremony by the Wan Chi Ming Hung Gar Institute Dragon and Lion Dance Team (11:30am).



Afterward, guitarist Simon Yu's band r.O.T.i. blends jazz and rock with sounds from his native Hong Kong (1pm), the New York Chinese Cultural Center's dance company presents traditional dances (2pm), and warrior monks from the Shaolin Temple Kung Fu Center New York demonstrate sweet martial arts moves (Saturday 6 at 3pm and Sunday 7 at 3:30pm).

## Sunday 7

The event is rooted in Chinese history but also highlights influences from around the globe. After a Chinese traditional ribbon dance (10:15am), Mariachi Aguila y Plata gets feet moving with traditional Mexican music (10:30am), the CASYM Steel Orchestra marches in with its steel drum beats (11:30am), musical collective 45 Riots fuses classical sounds with modern (12:30pm), and flamenco group American Bolero Dance Company

is set to be an expressive treat (2:30pm). Finally, comedian Rob Lok's interactive show proves that laughter transcends all language barriers (1:30pm). You don't have to be a *Game of Thrones* fan to be a queen of dragons here. ■ *Dorkys Ramos*

→ The Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival is at Meadow Lake in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park Sat 6 and Sun 7 (hkdbf-ny.org). Free.



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