

## Episode Nine Moon Festival

Cooper: Next week will be the Moon Festival, a day where people reunite and celebrate together.

May: Yup! Moon Festival is a very important day for us Chinese.

Nana: There's yet another important holiday? How come I missed it last year?

Andy: Oh, because last year this time we were so busy taking photos of you that we forgot to tell you about it.

Nana: So what's special about the Moon Festival?

May: The air during the eighth month always feels fresh and calming. The moonlight is especially attractive as well.

Cooper: Families gather and appreciate the full moon, while children listen to the story of Chang O flying to the moon.

Nana: Wow, I just realized that I've gone through every single special holiday of Taiwan for the whole time I've been here!

May: The beautiful memories of my childhood consist of spending time with family.

Dean: Hey May, isn't it September now? How come you keep saying it's the eighth month of the year?

May: Oh, I was referring to the eighth month of the Lunar Calendar.

Dean: Oh, right! Of course! That would be around September on our calendars right?

Nana: So Taiwanese holidays are all based on the waxing and waning of the moon. Is that correct?

May: Perhaps, I guess. What do you mean, Nana?

Nana: What I'm trying to say is, the Chinese use the Lunar Calendar, while Westerners use a solar calendar. I mean, look at the Chinese Valentine's Day and the

Western Valentine's Day, isn't that a good example?

Dean: You have given a very good example, Nana. Come to think of it, the sun god Apollo has been idolized since ancient Greco-Roman times.

May: Hey, you're talking about myths and legends. I haven't told you the origins of the moon cake yet.

Nana: Oh yes, all holidays in Taiwan have something to do with food!

May: Anyway, the tradition of eating moon cakes started during the Yuan Dynasty. In an attempt to overthrow the Yuan Dynasty, Zhu Yuan Zhang, who later became the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty, hid secret messages inside moon cakes to coordinate his revolution. Since then, eating moon cakes on the Moon Festival has become a tradition.

Dean: To be honest, I've been in Taiwan for years, but this is the first time that I'll celebrate Moon Festival.

Andy: Whether it is myths and legend, or commercialization of the moon cakes or even sun cakes, I accept them all.

Dean: Ah, I think you simply love to eat, don't you?

Andy: No, not at all. Speaking of which, the sun cakes of Taichung were probably made to honor Apollo!