Tết Việt Nam

**Alice Dang**

The cold fresh breeze feels nice under the blooming cherry blossoms my mother planted this year. With the toasty smells of traditional Vietnamese foods for this year's Tết is going to be wonderful with family members I do not usually see all the time.

One of the best things about Tết is spending time with family, filling the house with paper lanterns, with all their golden patterns, brightly lit against the shadowy charcoal background, and the money our children receive from our elders.

The living room is filled with cherry blossoms hanging with lì xì. I wait until my other family members arrive for this wonderful event that only happens once a year. Making it more special and memorable, especially spending time with family you do not usually see on a daily basis.

I am eating traditional sticky rice cake, filled with delicious green bean paste and tendered pork meat. My taste buds are filled with the spice of tradition. My siblings are sitting in the background eating golden pears and others playing board games.

My mother is calling family members back from Vietnam and wishing them a good new year. My father is finishing setting up the hot pot we are going to have with our family. The nice warm lights from the red lanterns in the living room seem to glow brighter and dim down each second that comes. A ring comes from the door, jumping eagerly. I go to the door, checking the windows, and opening the door to check that it is my grandparents, uncles and aunties, cousins, and friends coming all over to spend time with us. As we feast on this year’s delicious hot pot, with my pockets filled with lì xì for good luck and surrounded by loved ones, the memorable things in our lives are just what makes life special. ◼