

Celestial blessing for Valentine's Day



A Korea-style wedding photo of Cao Xiaojun and her Korean husband.

Couples plan wedding ceremonies inside Expo Garden, **Li Xinzhu** reports.

A rare celestial union will take place in the sky above the Expo Garden on August 16, the day Chinese celebrate their Valentine's Day.

The stars, Altar and Vega, both integral components of China's Valentine's myth, will appear to meet in the sky, providing a perfect backdrop to the three mixed-marriage weddings taking place inside the Korea Corporate Pavilion.

Shanghai native Cao Xiaojun, 26, has still not held a wedding ceremony despite legally marrying her Korean husband last summer. She described Monday's Korean-style wedding, which includes complimentary photographs, make-up services and a honeymoon in Korea, as the perfect intersection of different worlds at the right place and the right time.



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CAO XIAOJUN

A SHANGHAI NATIVE WHO IS GOING TO HAVE A KOREA-STYLE WEDDING WITH HER KOREAN HUSBAND IN THE KOREA CORPORATE PAVILION

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Meanwhile, the Henan provincial pavilion plans to invite 2,000 newlyweds and 10 couples that have been married for over half a century to join a group wedding ceremony designed to celebrate the special day.

Organizers said they are hopeful of setting a new Guinness World Record for a large nonprofit group wedding.

Next door, the Shaanxi Pavilion is planning a concert based on a famous love story from the Tang Dynasty (618-907) for lovers. Down the road, the Sweden Pavilion has designed a chocolate gift set to let couples commemorate the day with a calorific high.

Although the three big dates on the Chinese calendar are Chinese New Year (*chunjie*), Tomb Sweeping Day (*qingmingjie*) and the Mid-Autumn Festival (*zhongqiujie*), Chinese get loved-up during their version of Valentine's Day on the seventh day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar, as do Korea and Japan.