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"Half of our 60 tables have been booked for dinner on Mid-Autumn Festival day. We have been receiving reservations and enquires since mid-July," said Gong Haibin, the manager of Shufu.

Gong said that most customers booked window seats so to enjoy the night views.

"We've also received telephone reservations from tourists from outside Shanghai who plan to visit the Expo Garden during the Mid-Autumn Festival with their families," Gong added.

Blissful Butterfly, the vegetarian restaurant on the same floor as Shufu, has been booked for a private Mid-Autumn Festival buffet dinner party on Sept 22.

About a month ago, the chef at 6SENS restaurant in the France Pavilion tried to make moon cakes the traditional Chinese way.

"Our chef made some classical flavors of moon cakes last month as he wanted to test a typical Chinese dish and try to improve on it, seeing it as a challenge," said Marion Bres, the spokesperson for 6SENS restaurant. "He will make some moon cakes again soon at Maison Pourcelet, our new restaurant."

The Malaysia Pavilion has imported the country's Haewaytian brand moon cake.

"Golden Starlight, the basic element of lotus paste enriched with pandan leaf essence and finely granulated green bean paste has a smooth and fragrant taste, as the paste is wrapped in a layer of bean paste coated in a thin layer of flour," said Shen Xiuqing, the manager of the local importer of Haewaytian moon cakes.

The small kiosk near the Malaysia Pavilion selling Haewaytian moon cakes has been crowded with customers since it was set up earlier this month.

Shen said Haewaytian has a traditional type of moon cake called Shanghai Moon Cake, with a single egg yolk and a crispy texture.

"I came to the Malaysia Pavilion to buy moon cakes as I prefer ones with a lighter flavor," said Liu Yamei from Jiangsu province, who bought two boxes. "I've been to Malaysia a few times and have grown fond of their moon cakes."

Together with moon cake eating, there are other customs from different parts of the country associated with the Mid-Autumn Festival. These include burning incense, planting trees, lighting lanterns and dragon dances.

Nowadays, the custom of playing under the moon is not as popular as it used to be, but people still enjoy doing it. During the Mid-Autumn Festival, people gather under the full moon with family and celebrate their good fortune and extend best wishes to friends and relatives far from home.

"The moon of 16th day of the eighth month in the lunar calendar is rounder than the 15th. Therefore, the best viewing period of the moon should be around 8 pm on Sept 23," said Zhao Junliang, the former head of the Shanghai Astronomical Observatory.

Zhao said the best places to observe the full moon are on top of pavilions where there are few lights and there are no tall buildings blocking the view.



Expo-themed moon cakes are on sale in the Expo Garden.



PHOTOS BY YONG KAI / FOR CHINA DAILY

## MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL IN THE EXPO GARDEN

**Taiwan Pavilion**

Multimedia performances of ancient stories about the Mid-Autumn Festival will be shown, along with the display of a huge LED ball symbolizing the full moon, for three nights during Mid-Autumn Festival.

**Korea Pavilion**

A series of Korean and Chinese cultural performances will take place at the Korea Pavilion on Sept 22.

**Macao Pavilion**

A series of Chinese traditional dance and vocal performances will be held, along with interactive activities during the day and in the evening. Mid-Autumn Festival souvenirs will be given out free to visitors.

**Ethnic Group Wedding Ceremony**

A hundred ethnic couples will be married during the Mid-Autumn Festival on Sept 22 in Expo Garden.

The event is themed "Love, Hope and Dreams". It will be held under a full moon and witnessed by visitors from all over the world.

**Mid-Autumn Festival Party at Red Hall, Expo Center**

A grand Mid-Autumn Festival evening party organized by the US Environmental Protection Agency will be held. There will also be a series of Expo low-carbon themed activities. From 7:30 pm-9:30 pm.