

# Happy New Year's!

Part of the fun of celebrating New Year's is the noise and light.

The worldwide tradition of clanging and horn-blowing your way into January 1st is historically rooted in the belief that noise would keep bad luck and evil spirits away :

- In ancient Thailand, guns were fired to frighten off demons.
- In China, firecrackers replaced burning dry bamboo, to keep away the monster, Nian, that was said to eat people and destroy homes on New Year's Eve.
- In Denmark, they throw plates and glasses against each others' front doors to banish bad spirits.
- In Ecuador, traditionally they would burn effigies (scarecrows) of famous people to destroy bad "juju" from the past year and evoke a start fresh for the next.
- In the early American colonies, the sound of pistol shots rang through the air, though today, in the United States, many watch the ball drop in New York's Times Square.
- In other countries, many folks wait for the church bells or the chimes of clock towers to ring out.

