

A Time of Ice and Snow

Are you looking for something to do in the winter? Maybe you should join the 18 million people who travel to Harbin, China. From December to February, Harbin hosts the biggest ice and snow festival in the world.

Harbin is located in northeast China. It is cooled by winter winds from Siberia. The winds keep Harbin around zero degrees all winter long.

This climate is perfect for the two major exhibits that make up the festival. The first, Sun Island, includes a display of huge snow sculptures. The second, Ice and Snow World, is constructed of full-size buildings made from blocks of ice.

To create the sculptures and buildings, people use swing saws to take ice blocks from the frozen surface of the Songhua River. Then they use chisels and ice picks to carve shapes into the ice. Artists spend months designing their sculptures. They produce plans for sculpted animals, people, ice slides, lanterns, and a range of building types.

Once the sculptures are made, people use lights to give them color. They also use a special technique with deionized water to make transparent panes of ice glass. The decorated sculptures combine to create an enchanted wonderland.

The Harbin Ice and Snow Festival started in 1963. It began as a traditional ice lantern show and grew into a garden party. The festival stopped during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. It started again in 1985.

In 2019, the festival celebrated its 35th anniversary. Ice and Snow World was made from 110,000 cubic meters of ice and 120,000 cubic meters of snow. Artists from twelve different countries entered the competition. What was once a small, regional party has become an international attraction.

What is used to make transparent panes of ice glass?

- A. Water
- B. Swing Saws
- C. Chisels
- D. Ice picks

When did the Ice and Snow Festival start?

- A. 1835
- B. 1963
- C. 1985
- D. 2019

Where would an ice replica of the Eifel Tower be displayed?

- A. Sun Island
- B. Siberia
- C. Songhua River
- D. Ice and Snow World

Why does the festival take place from December to February?

- A. Because of the Cultural Revolution
- B. Because it is around zero degrees
- C. Because it is windy
- D. Because it is an international attraction

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