

# Colorful Bun Festival returns to Hong Kong after 3 years

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The Associated Press

**H**ONG KONG — Hong Kong’s colorful Bun Festival is back after three years of COVID-19 restrictions.

Visitors packed the tiny island of Cheung Chau to watch children parade in costumes and to eat buns stamped with the Chinese characters for “peace” and “safety.”

The festival’s highlight is a midnight “bun-scrambling” competition in which climbers race up a tower covered with plastic buns, trying to grab as many as possible. It was suspended for decades after an accident in 1978 when a collapse injured many, and only restarted in 2005.

The bun scramble has now returned, after the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. For this year, it was limited to one smaller tower.

The festival’s comeback is a sign that normal life is returning to Hong Kong after tight pandemic restrictions.

During the parade, children dressed as legendary deities or historic characters were carried on stands above the heads of the crowd through the island’s narrow lanes.

Some wore firefighter costumes to pay tribute to the Hong Kong rescue crews who helped search for earthquake survivors



**PEACE & SAFETY.** Visitors packed the tiny island of Cheung Chau last month to celebrate Hong Kong’s colorful Bun Festival. Pictured are worshippers burning incense at a temple (top left photo), “Ping On” buns (bottom left photo), and the midnight “bun-scrambling” competition (right photo), in which climbers race up a tower covered with plastic buns, trying to grab as many as possible. (AP Photos/ Louise Delmotte)

Hoi-kiu. “The performers are having a hard day. They started the day’s preparation early. I’m sure it’s tough and so we are here to watch and support them.”

There were long lines outside shops selling steam buns and stores stocked with bun-themed souvenirs.

Kwok Siu-kan, owner of the Kwok Kam Kee Cake Shop, said she hopes the buns will bring people prosperity.

“If you eat the buns, you will have even more peace and

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in Turkey in February. staged performances in a bamboo Cantonese opera artists also theater.

“Everyone is so happy,” said Cheung Chau resident Chow



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