

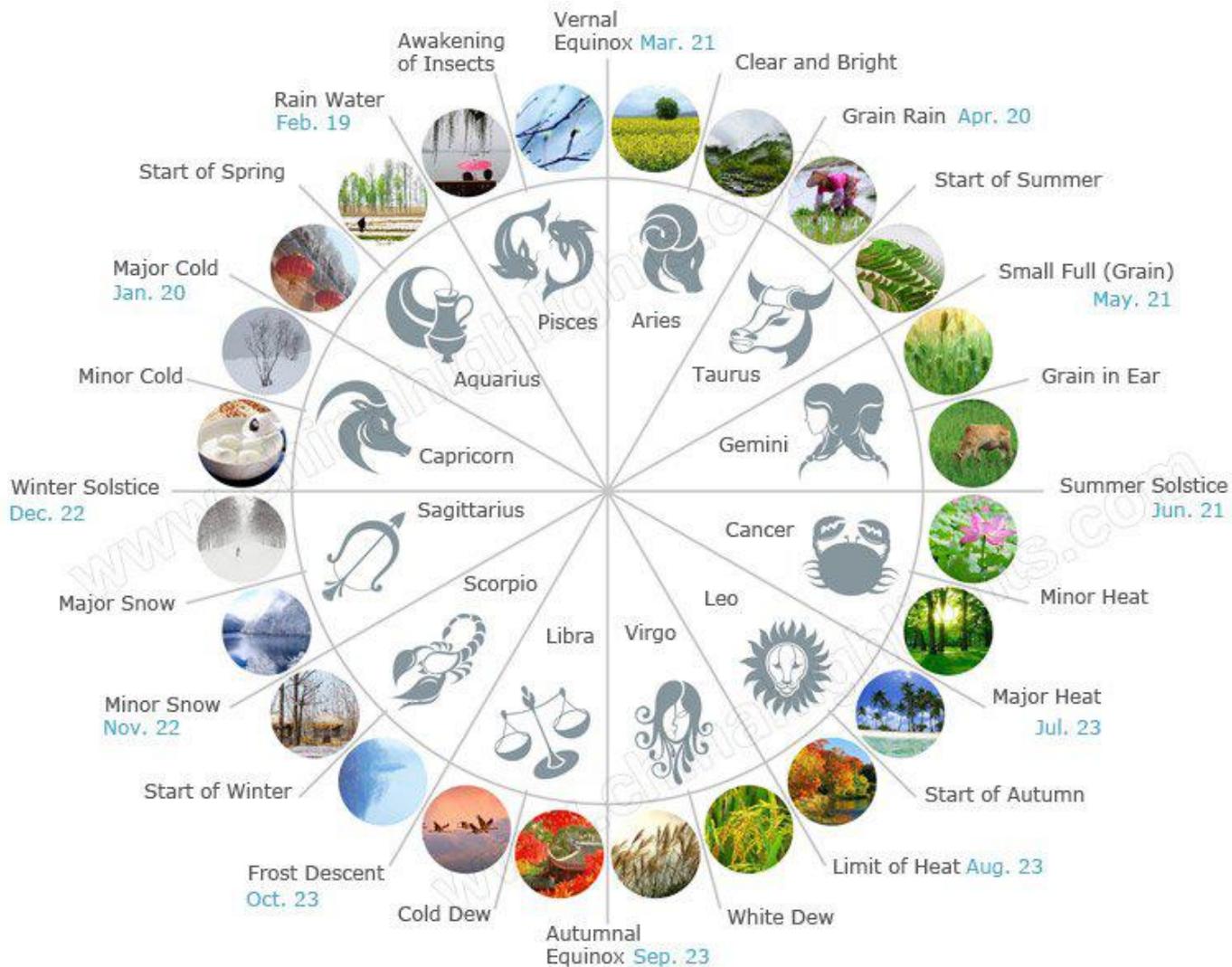
The traditional Chinese lunar calendar divides the year into 24 solar terms. The Beginning of Winter, (Chinese: 立冬^{lì dōng}), is the 19th solar term of the year, begins this year on Nov 8 and ends on Nov 22. The beginning means a start, and the season of winter begins from this day. Winter means an end, when the crops are harvested and preserved. It's also the time when we harvest and offer sacrifices to gods or ancestors, so there're some traditional customs, such as Winter Clothing Festival, Harvest Festival.



The most ancient and traditional custom is that we eat dumpling/jiao zi on this day. Why do we do like this? There is an interesting saying that jiao zi (dumpling) has the similar pronunciation with “交子”^{jiāo zǐ} (it means a turn between two things.)



The approaching cold winter withers grass and trees. Insects start dormancy. All things on earth tend to rest. As to human beings, we don't hibernate but we need energy in cold season. That's why we have the "eating-tonic" custom in the Beginning of Winter. Eat less raw and cold foods, and nourish yin for suppressing hyperactive yang. It's appropriate to have more warm and tonic foods in cold days. Not only can it improve our health, but also help endure cold.



Western Zodiac signs begin and solar terms begin within two days of the dates shown.