

Lunar New Year flowers bring luck for the whole year

Fresh blooms and fruit a cherished way of ushering in good tidings
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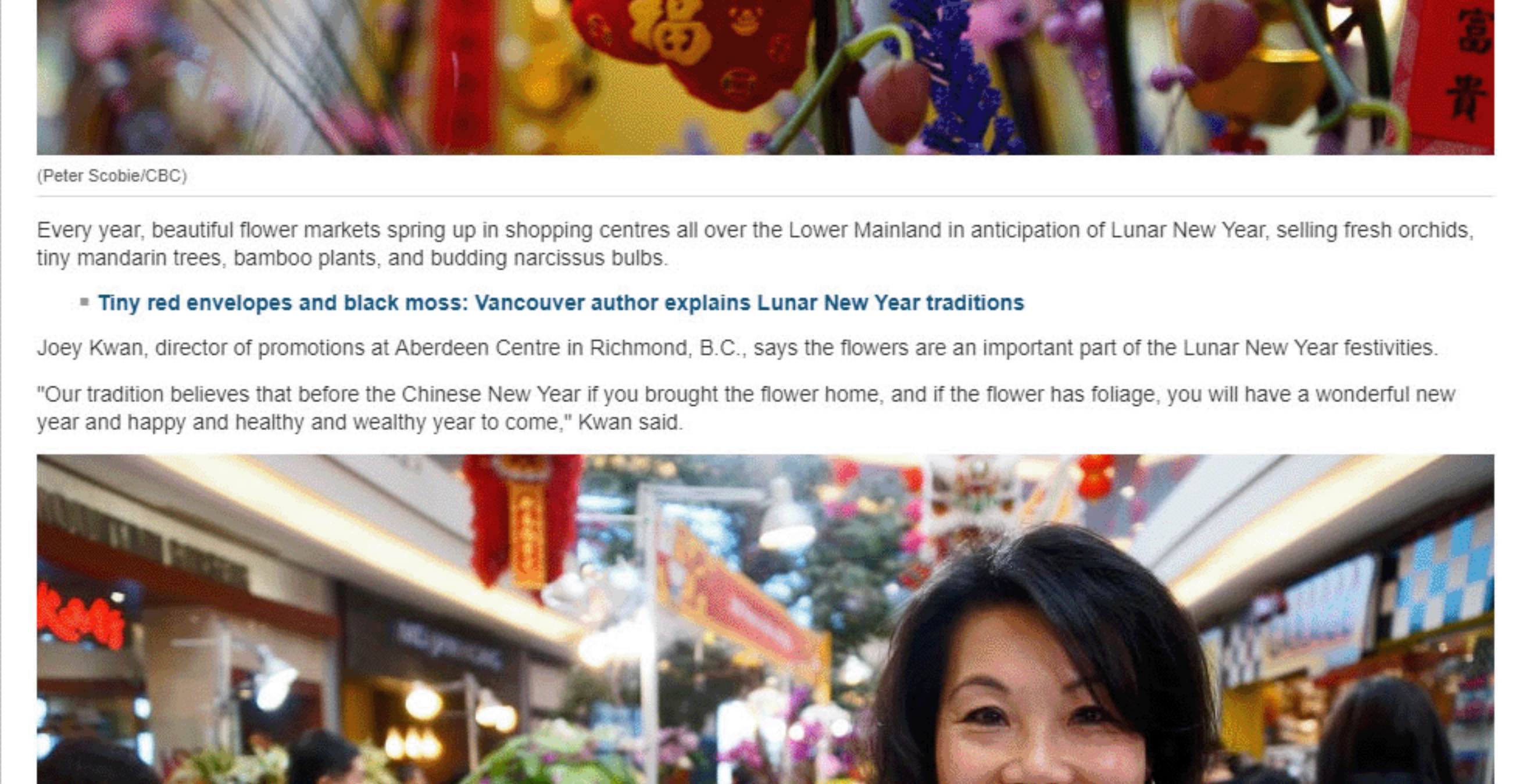
(Peter Scobie/CBC)

Every year, beautiful flower markets spring up in shopping centres all over the Lower Mainland in anticipation of Lunar New Year, selling fresh orchids, tiny mandarin trees, bamboo plants, and budding narcissus bulbs.

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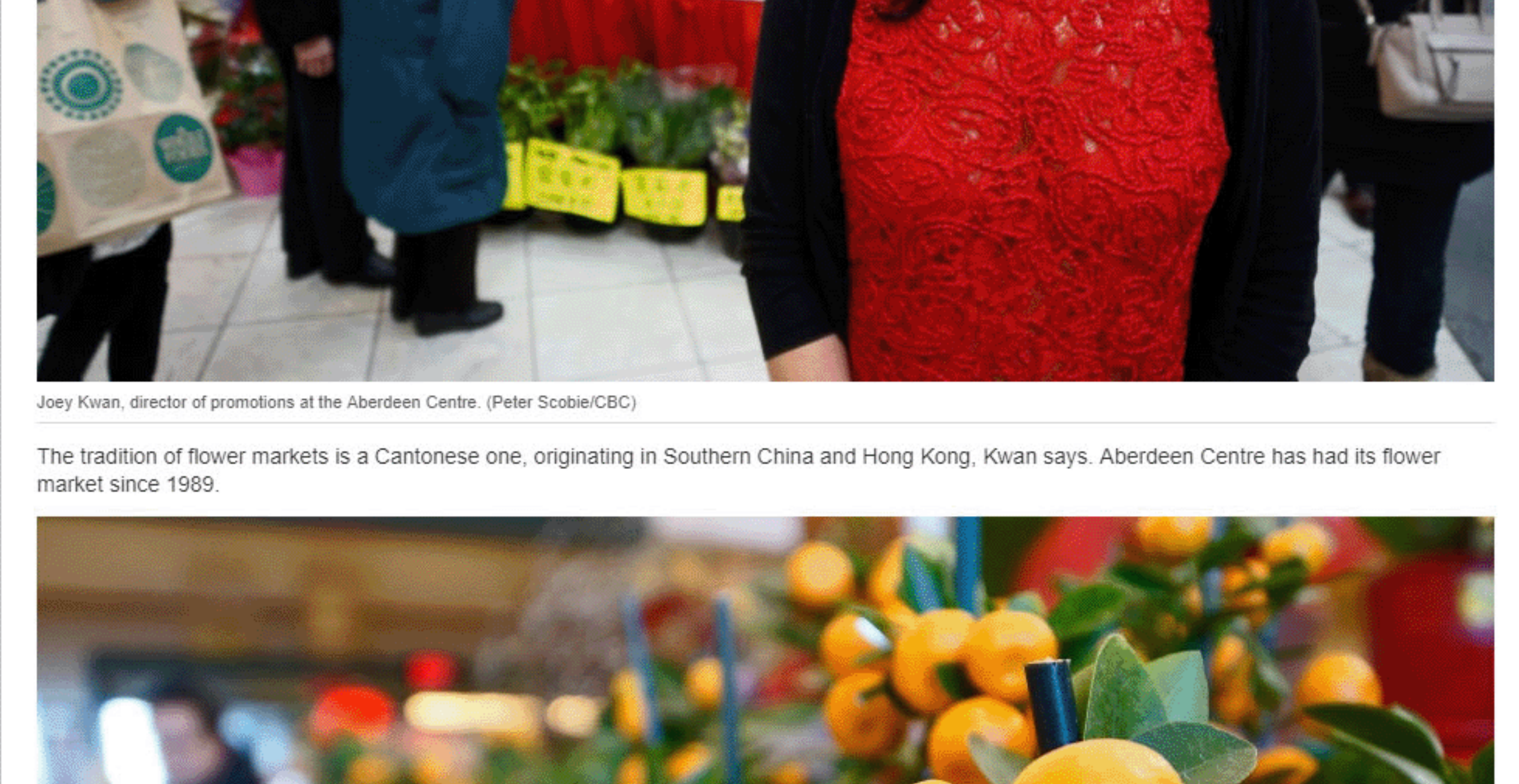
Joey Kwan, director of promotions at Aberdeen Centre in Richmond, B.C., says the flowers are an important part of the Lunar New Year festivities.

"Our tradition believes that before the Chinese New Year if you brought the flower home, and if the flower has foliage, you will have a wonderful new year and happy and healthy and wealthy year to come," Kwan said.



Joey Kwan, director of promotions at the Aberdeen Centre. (Peter Scobie/CBC)

The tradition of flower markets is a Cantonese one, originating in Southern China and Hong Kong, Kwan says. Aberdeen Centre has had its flower market since 1989.

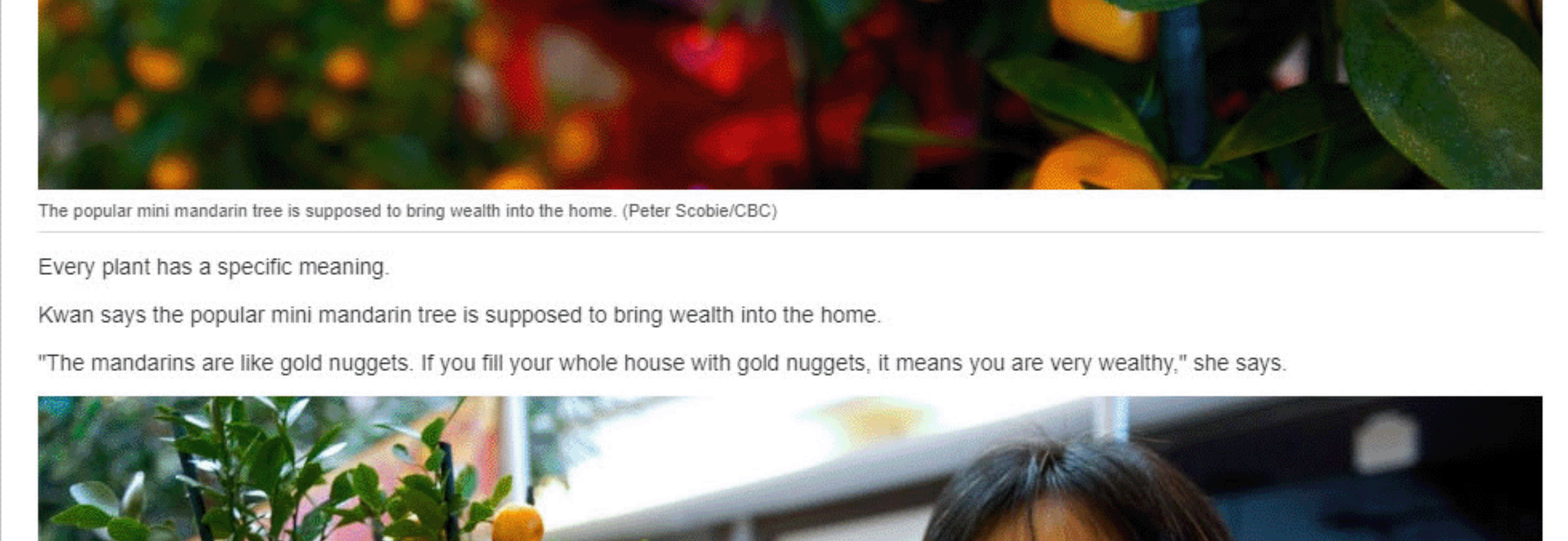


The popular mini mandarin tree is supposed to bring wealth into the home. (Peter Scobie/CBC)

Every plant has a specific meaning.

Kwan says the popular mini mandarin tree is supposed to bring wealth into the home.

"The mandarins are like gold nuggets. If you fill your whole house with gold nuggets, it means you are very wealthy," she says.

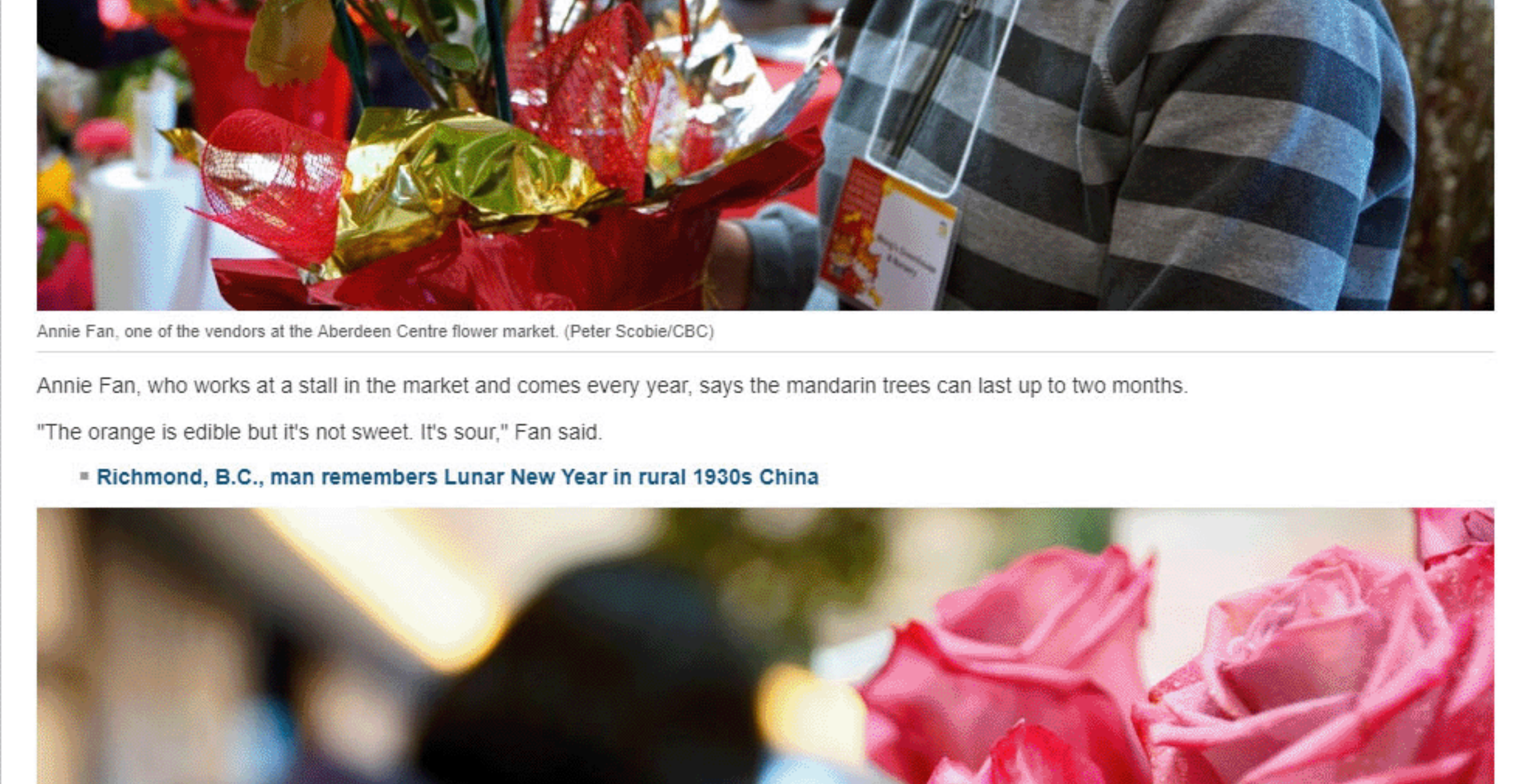


Annie Fan, one of the vendors at the Aberdeen Centre flower market. (Peter Scobie/CBC)

Annie Fan, who works at a stall in the market and comes every year, says the mandarin trees can last up to two months.

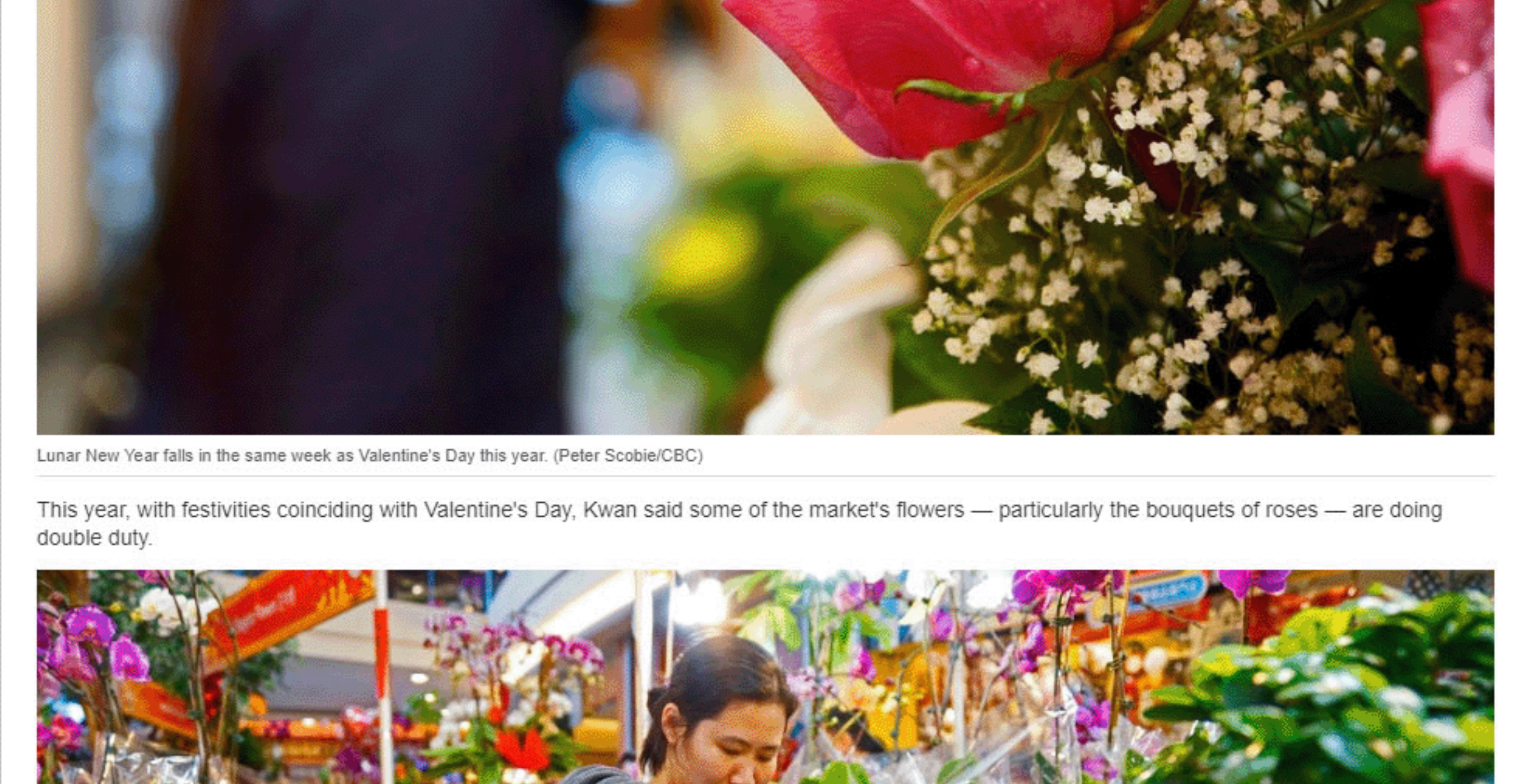
"The orange is edible but it's not sweet. It's sour," Fan said.

Richmond, B.C., man remembers Lunar New Year in rural 1930s China



Lunar New Year falls in the same week as Valentine's Day this year. (Peter Scobie/CBC)

This year, with festivities coinciding with Valentine's Day, Kwan said some of the market's flowers — particularly the bouquets of roses — are doing double duty.

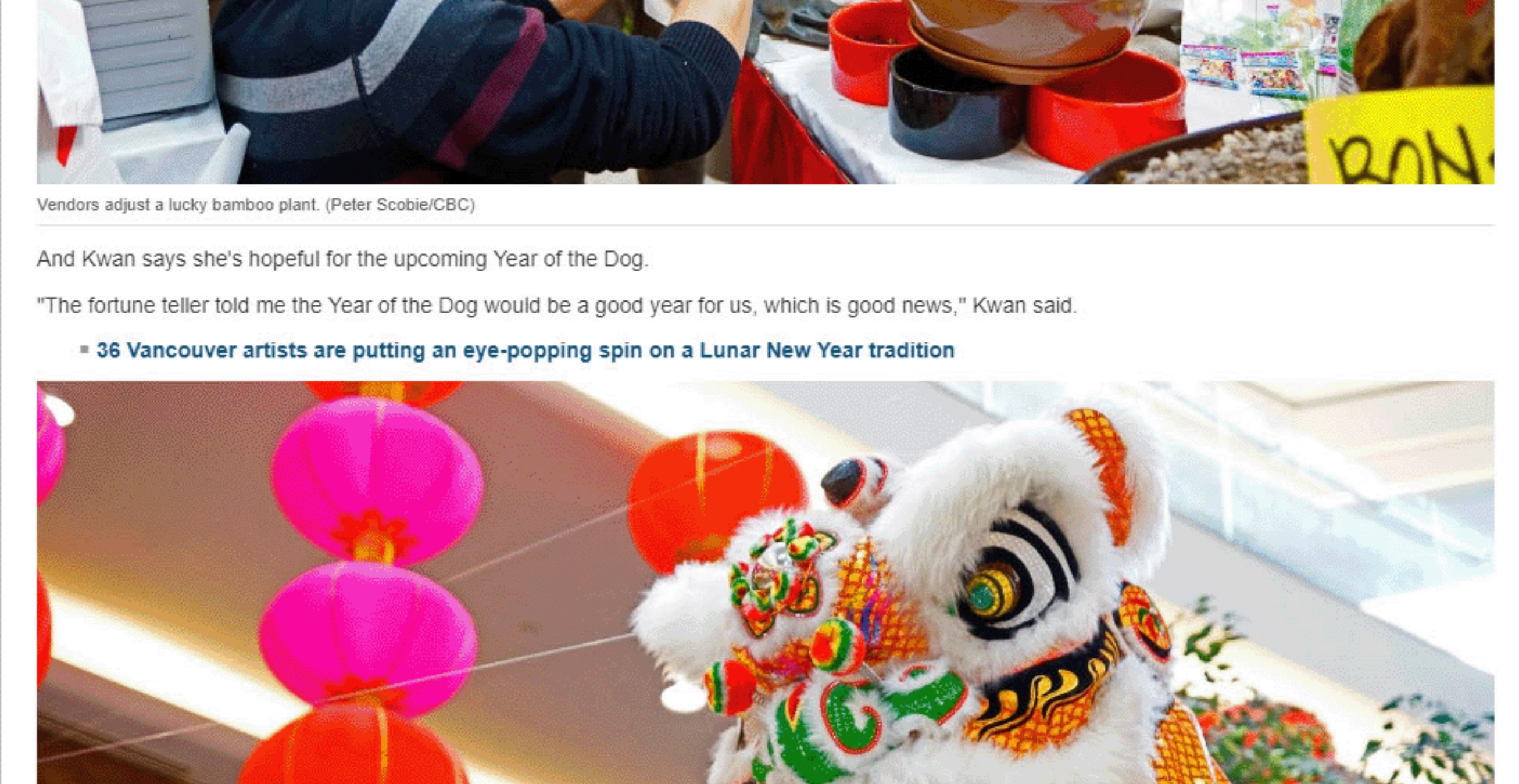


Vendors adjust a lucky bamboo plant. (Peter Scobie/CBC)

And Kwan says she's hopeful for the upcoming Year of the Dog.

"The fortune teller told me the Year of the Dog would be a good year for us, which is good news," Kwan said.

36 Vancouver artists are putting an eye-popping spin on a Lunar New Year tradition

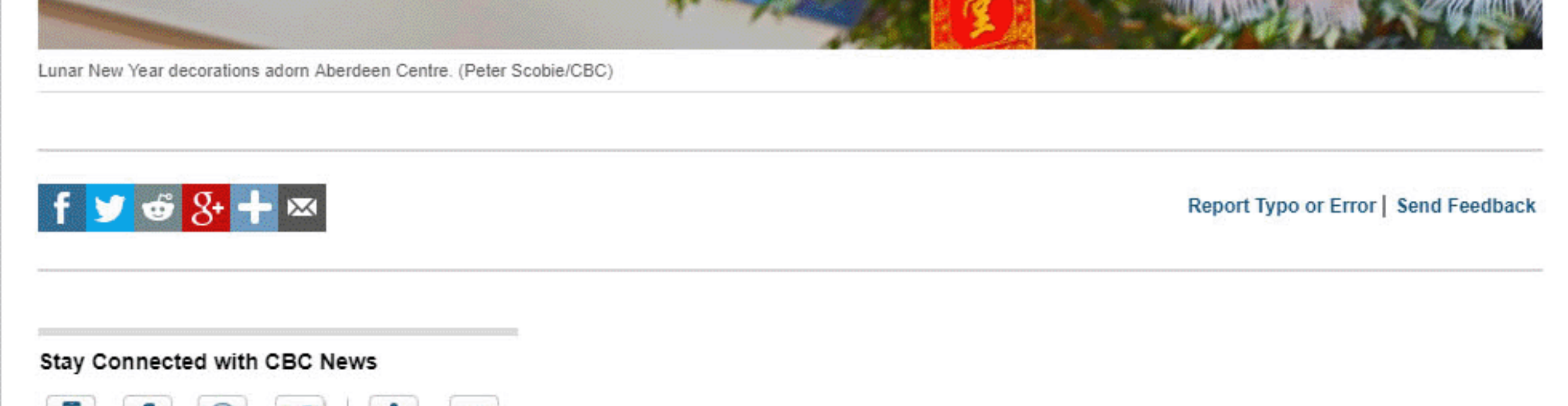


Lunar New Year decorations adorn Aberdeen Centre. (Peter Scobie/CBC)

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