

THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON

We have entered into the 4710th year of the Chinese calendar and according to the Chinese Zodiac this is the Year of the Dragon. The Dragon is the fifth sign in the Chinese Zodiac and the only mythical creature in the zodiac, which consists of 12 animal signs including horses, rats and pigs.



Fear not, this is nothing like the British legend of St. George and his dragon, we most definitely want to keep this dragon alive as he brings optimism and hope for 2012!

In China the dragon is bold, fearless and strong. In ancient China the dragon was a symbol of the Emperor and as the Emperors was considered the sons of heaven so the dragon represented the power of heaven. Some historians say that probably as early as the Zhou dynasty (11th-3rd century BC) and particularly after 851AD, Chinese Emperors wore imperial robes with dragon symbols on them to symbolise, besides the power of heaven, adaptability because of the transformations they can perform. The Emperor's permission had to be given to other court members to wear dragons on their clothes and it was a capital offence for commoners to wear the dragon!

The most powerful dragon is the five-clawed dragon and it only appeared on the yellow imperial robes, restricted to royalty.



Imperial Robes
from the
Forbidden City

During the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) dragons were incorporated into architecture and could be seen everywhere on the roofs, doors, pillars, arches, and ceilings and even on common utensils in the Forbidden City. Towards the end of the Qing Dynasty the dragon was even adopted as the national flag.

Today, the dragon is the most auspicious and powerful of the zodiacs, signifying success, high energy and happiness. 2012 is an opportune time to act on your dreams as the dragon gives you the best chance to make them come true and make sure to aim high as a dragon would!



They are magical creatures that can attract whatever they want and achieve whatever they set their minds to and that power is said to be guiding us through 2012! Dragon years are said to be years of change, usually from bad to good, and this year is especially promising as it is the year of the water dragon which only occurs every 60 years. The colour of water in the 5 elements system is black, so it is also a Black Water Dragon. Water dragons have a slightly softer side with the water calming their fiery tempers, controlling their egos and tendency to dominate, meaning that the weak will be heard and better alliances and decisions will be made. Like water things will move, ideas will flow, creativity is plentiful, economies boom (we can but hope!), and love will blossom during this year. It is likely to be an exciting year, a year for starting businesses, taking that leap, getting engaged or married!



Many people throughout much of Asia will be doing what they can to ensure they are married, have a child or start a business during this year. Officials expect a baby boom, not only in China and Taiwan but also in other countries that follow the lunar calendar and zodiac. A poll in Hong Kong showed that 70 percent of couples there wanted children born under the dragon sign, while South Korea, Vietnam and China all report similar enthusiasm about dragon-year childbearing. The last dragon year was in 2000 and the birth rate in Taiwan increased to 1.7 children per Taiwanese women of childbearing age from 1.5 the year before.

So whatever your goals for this year it looks like the dragon may be the one to help you reach them!