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ENTER THE ENTERPRISING DRAGON – EXPECT BIG THINGS

龙腾虎跃 · 天翻地覆 long teng hu yue, tian fan di fu

There is nothing like a dragon year – action aplenty, abundant opportunities and no time to waste in this luckiest of all years. Dragons bring prosperity.

The soothsayers caution though: don't debate – take action. But is anyone in the EU listening?

Dragon years bring discoveries, innovation and new technologies (Apple and Wikipedia both arose in Dragon years).

In Chinese astrology the dragon is the only animal of the Chinese zodiac that is not real. He is revered – a deliverer of good fortune and a master of authority. He holds special significance for the Chinese people as according to tradition the Dragon brings in the Four Blessings of wealth, virtue, harmony and longevity – what more could one want!

This year is the Water Dragon variant and as such the likelihood of positive developments to reduce global warming. On the other hand, Dragon years can also bring extreme weather.

ARE YOU A DRAGON?

People born in Dragon years are to be honoured and respected. Find out what sign you are: <http://www.chincommunications.com.au/chinesenewyear/chinese-astrology.php> (The Snake slithers into view on 9 February 2013).

More than 4,000 years ago in China there were many tribes. They had animals as emblems. The tribes unified and became 'China' and chose the dragon as their symbol. The Chinese still call themselves the descendants of the Dragon (龙的传人).

You will have seen many sculptures and carvings of dragons. Even today, the Chinese associate the dragon with power and wisdom, so in Chinese astrology a dragon person is special. Born in a Chinese Year of the Dragon they stand out and command attention and respect. Expect big things in a dragon year!

So what might we see in a Dragon Year? Incentives coming into play in many countries as economies are stimulated and jobs created. More Arab Springs could bring about monumental changes – like Eastern Europe in the 1988 Dragon Year – look towards Russia and North Korea.

Hoping one's son will become a dragon (望子成龙). Chinese hospitals will be overflowing with prospective parents hoping for a little dragon.

The last Year of the Dragon, which occurred in 2000, had us excited about the millennium, but fearful about Y2K. By contrast, the Year of the Water Dragon (1952 and 2012) is noted for its calm, visionary intelligence – a balance of creativity and logic. All things going as predicted it should be a better year for the economy with an upturn in markets.

BUSINESS PROFITABLE IN CHASING THE DRAGON

Dragon years are always considered to be good for business. But dragons are spendthrifts too so take care to put something aside.

New beginnings are lucky too. So this means that effort can be put into launching new ideas and ventures because the energy of the dragon year should ensure success.

Characteristics - "Come not between the dragon and his wrath," wrote Shakespeare.

Dragons dominate: imaginative and intelligent, ambitious and honest, elegant and proud, brave yet quick tempered. Confidence abounds and consequently they always succeed and usually make it to the top - colourful and magnificent but megalomaniacs are also in their ranks.

All that enthusiasm and action can wear them out though. Burning the candle at both ends means one's health can suffer. Meditation or Tai Chi will help.

As that well-known Snake JK Rowling wrote: "You can't tame dragons, it's dangerous." Dragons don't like being tamed, or taking orders for that matter. They seek thrills and take risks and they have the knack of recovering from set-backs quickly. They can also find solutions where others meet a brick wall.

Dragons can lack sensitivity and even though they'll give you the shirts off their backs, they may not provide the best shoulder to cry on and while it might seem that they are the life and soul of the party – in fact they can be isolated and lonely.

Famous Dragon People: Deng Xiaoping, Vladimir Putin, Lee Hsien Loong, Charles Darwin, Christian Dior, Florence Nightingale, Martin Luther King, Sigmund Freud, Sandra Bullock, Jeffrey Archer, Bing Crosby, Neil Diamond, Placido Domingo, Kirk and Michael Douglas, Marlene Dietrich, Tom Jones, John Lennon, Al Pacino, Gregory Peck, Cliff Richard, Martin Sheen, Ringo Starr, Shirley Temple, Jane Goodall, Benjamin Franklin, Shirley MacLaine, George Bernard Shaw.

Cricketers: Phillip Hughes and Brett Lee.

In tennis: Marin Cilic, Alexandr Dolgoplov, Jimmy Connors and Australians Mark Philippoussis and Wendy Turnbull.

Pollies: Laurie Ferguson, Harry Jenkins, Craig Thompson, Ken Wyatt, Ron Boswell and Gough Whitlam – Gough surely is the epitome of the dragon.

Dragon Careers

Dragons are skilled specialists and have strong opinions and think they know best. Their innate aggression and competitiveness can sometimes lead a company into dangerous waters, so keep an eye on their work.

Computer analysts, inventors, engineers, architects, lawyers, philosophers, managing directors, advertising executives, film producers and stars, prime ministers and presidents, astronauts, artists, war correspondents, politicians.

Compatibility

The dragon has many admirers, but doesn't like to settle – a dragon can carry on many love affairs at the same time and is always in pursuit of new and exciting romances.

Dragons will get on well with Rats, Monkeys and Snakes; should avoid Oxen and Dogs.

Hua long dian jing 画龙点睛 – paint the eye of the dragon

In the Liang Dynasty (about 4 – 6 AD), there lived a very famous painter Zhang Sengyou whose artistic skills were exquisite. So much so that the Emperor at that time always asked him to paint for the Buddhist temples he built.

One year, it is said, he was invited to paint at the Andong Temple in today's Nanjing – his mission to paint four dragons on the walls. He agreed and it took only three days to finish. They were so life-like and they attracted a large audience every day which couldn't believe how good they were.

But when people got close they found a fatal flaw blighting this otherwise perfection – none of them had eyes. The people pressed the painter to return and complete the dragons. Painter Zhang explained that it wasn't difficult to paint eyes, but if he did they would fly away. Huh! How could that be, the people mused, how absurd that dragons on a wall could fly away. Painter Zhang was a liar!

So Painter Zhang, rather than being called a liar, fronted up to "dian jing" – paint in the eyes. On this day a large crowd milled around. The painter raised his brush and gently painted the eyes into the first two dragons. Then something marvellous happened – as soon as he had finished, clouds rolled in and the sky became overcast with thunder and lightning. The next thing people saw were the two dragons breaking free of the wall and flying into the sky. The crowd was dumbstruck. Only two dragons remained.

Hence arose the saying – *hua long dian jing* – to make something vivid or pivotal or strong – you put a cherry on the top, or the icing on the cake.

A Look Back to Past Dragon Years – Highs and Lows

2000

- ▲ The peak of the Dot-com bubble, the Dow Jones Industrial closed at 11,722 (yes the year was 2000!) The Dot Com Bubble Bursts – the low was 9571 also in 2000
- ▲ Y2K

- ▲ Dragon Vladimir Putin elected President of Russia
- ▲ Sydney Olympics

1988

- ▲ Lockerbie Pan Am 747 blown up
- ▲ Hubble telescope went into operation in deep space
- ▲ Australia's new Parliament House was opened

1976

- ▲ Tang Shan Earthquake killed over 650,000 in China
- ▲ First Concorde flight
- ▲ Chairman Mao died

1964

- ▲ China exploded its first nuclear bomb
- ▲ 1952 London smog killed 4000
- ▲ 1928 Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin

This Dragon Year

- ▲ International Year of Cooperatives and the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All
- ▲ Diamond Jubilee for Queen Elizabeth
- ▲ London Olympics
- ▲ China will launch the Kuafu space project – a space weather forecasting system
- ▲ 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China to 'elect' the next president
- ▲ Australia and China will celebrate 40 years of Diplomatic Relations, established by that well-known Dragon, Gough Whitlam, with Chairman Mao.



Our resident Dragon, Julia, bringing us all good luck in 2012

* For any languages in addition to Chinese.
Offer ends 29 February 2012.

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