

AT



Sherman Tai will be telling fortunes during Chinese New Year at River Rock Casino Resort.

Mark Patrick photo

Chinese New Year

Year will bring change, for better or for worse

*Heroes can rise out
of times of change,
says fortune teller*

by Matthew Hoekstra

Staff Reporter

Sherman Tai has a few words to live by in the Year of the Rat: be careful.

The local fortune teller and feng shui master, whose reputation for predicting the year's prospects under the Chinese zodiac spans the Pacific, said there is good and bad in the year ahead.

"The good thing is tourism, trading and the general economical situation will be still exciting. But relatively, it will slow down compared with 2006, 2007."

That means the fire of the real estate market will die down a bit this year.

"There will be more and more people speculating the property market, especially for the high-rise [apartments]."

But he said that shouldn't turn people off from buying an apartment in Richmond for the long-term.

"There will be more traffic accidents this year, and the crime rate will increase."

- Sherman Tai

"Richmond is still a really good feng shui city. But don't treat it as a short-term investment."

The Year of the Rat is ushered in during Chinese New Year, the most important of traditional Chinese holidays. While celebrations begin Feb. 7, Tai says the year of the Rat begins precisely at 7:03 p.m. on Feb. 4—based on his calculation of the relationship between the earth, moon and sun.

Tai is predicting an increase in calamity this year—perhaps enough to deter a few Rats from leaving the house.

"There will be more traffic accidents this year, and the crime rate will increase," he said.

According to Tai, Canada will experience a rise in "large scale gun violence, traffic accidents, home invasions and youth crimes," and disasters involving water (floods, landslides) will also be more frequent. So too will be the risk crazy weather and communicable diseases from animals.

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Chinese New Year



Sherman Tai's prospects for the Year of the Rat

- Mind your own business and be aware of the many temptations of the opposite sex.
- Don't stray from a righteous path and succumb to greed, things that harm people or participate in illegal activities to earn quick money.
- The year may offer travel opportunities, for pleasure or for work.
- This is a good year to change jobs or start a new business, but change must be carefully considered.
- This is not a year for the Rat to seek fame and benefits.
- This is not a good year for the Rat to be investing, nor should the Rat lend money or be a guarantor, or else suffer great losses.
- The Rat must work hard this year to earn money. Careers where speech is important will fare better: politics, performing arts, teaching, law, finances, real estate and trading.
- Because this is a year of losing fortune easily, be very careful of loss of possessions due to theft.
- Relationships for the Rat will come and go, so don't let them interfere with work and career.
- There will be risk of injury from metal objects and motor vehicle accidents. Be mindful of respiratory, as well as gastrointestinal problems, so be more vigilant about food safety.
- For education, those who are applying to schools, writing examinations or licensing will have good luck this year.

Don't be too greedy in the Year of the Rat

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Tai's detailed predictions for 2008, which he posts on his website, aren't all bad. He says the Year of the Rat is relatively good. It just comes with more change than usual.

And heroes, he says, can rise out of times of change.

"Therefore, change may not be necessarily bad, especially if you are one to persevere, work hard, willing to improve self value, be competitive, has good judgment in knowing when to stop or proceed, then the change can give you opportunities to become successful.

"Now, because there is a lot of change, it is important that people are not too greedy and be able to prepare for the worse in times of good, as well as being adaptable to the changes," he writes.

Globally, Tai is predicting more infectious diseases and

illnesses, including flu, fire hazards, explosions and traffic accidents—but not as serious as the SARS outbreak of 2003 or 9/11 of 2001.

Economically, Tai says the Canadian dollar and the economy will continue to do well in the Year of the Rat. He predicts stocks that will do well include telecommunications, crude oil, mining, precious metals and diamonds. But he cautioned it will be like a "roller coaster."

Politically, Tai's predictions have a record of success. He previously predicted in 2005 that the Canadian government will change in 2006. That happened. In 2008, Tai is predicting another federal election. If the election happens early—in the spring or summer—the Conservatives will win again with a minority government. If the election is held later in the year, a majority is within reach, he says.

The Year of the Rat corresponds with "fan Tai Sui," or "in opposition to the Deity of the Year."

That may leave some fearing a year of bad luck. But according to Tai, that's mere superstition.

The alignment mostly means change—good or bad. But be warned, if you're already fearing bad luck from the year of fan Tai Siu, the path to an eventful year has already begun.

Luck for the Rat in the Year of the Rat isn't bad, according to Tai. If you are able to keep a righteous path, and not be too greedy seeking fame or fortune, or be "tempted by flesh," then the year could be a good one.

Sherman Tai will be telling fortunes by donation at River Rock Casino Resort, Feb. 8 through 10, from 6 to 11 p.m. Every dollar donated will go to charity (recipient not yet finalized).

Change may not be necessarily bad, especially if you are one to persevere, work hard, willing to improve self value, be competitive, has good judgment in knowing when to stop or proceed, then the change can give you opportunities to become successful.

- Sherman Tai