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## The Year of the Snake



Sherman Tai predicts not many lucky things will happen this year.

Martin van denHemel photo

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# Year of the Water Snake will slow things to a slither

*Fortune teller Sherman Tai says people need to be conservative as business figures to slow down*

by **Martin van den Hemel**  
Staff Reporter

Like in Western culture, snakes don't receive a lot of love in Chinese mythology.

Take one peek into the office of Richmond fortune teller and feng shui expert Sherman Tai, and you'll realize that's no exaggeration.

A year ago, at the start of the Year of the Water Dragon, Tai's office had posters galore of dragons, powerful and respected figures of Eastern astrology.

But Tai's office has none of that now.

According to Tai, anybody born after 7:48 a.m. on Feb. 4 on the 12-year-cycle of the Chinese horoscope (2013, 2001, 1989, 1977, 1965, 1953, 1941, 1929, 1917, 1905) takes on the characteristics linked to the Year of the Water Snake. They are very intelligent, flexible and can adapt to different environments, but are also self-centred, somewhat selfish, are quiet but can then be strikingly aggressive.

Chinese custom—or the "good old days," as Tai refers

to them—dictates the Year of the Snake begins on Feb. 4 and runs through Feb. 10.

But these days, the celebration is shifted somewhat and extended, with Feb. 9 being Chinese New Year's Eve, and festivities continuing for a solid two weeks commencing Feb. 10 until Feb. 25.

As is normally the case among Chinese households, efforts are made to toss out the old, and bring in the new, he said.

Households are decluttered, with "old and useless garbage" such as clothing and unused times, donated to charities. This symbolizes the elimination of unhappiness and dirt, while doing a good service to the local community.

Home are decorated, with new furniture or accessories added.

For families that are separated because of work, the Chinese New Year serves to reunify them.

Breadwinners who work in China and Hong Kong return to Canada to be with their children and families who are living here.

Many local Chinese restaurants are already fully booked for New Year-related dinners,

**"I don't think the market will be as exciting as before, especially in Richmond."**

— Sherman Tai

Tai observed.

So what does the Year of the Water Snake hold for residents?

Not many lucky things will happen this year, he said.

He said families "need to be conservative" and added that he believes the NDP will win the next provincial election "for sure."

From a business perspective, profit margins will dwindle, while unemployment rates will remain steady and the Canadian dollar will perform well.

In China, Tai said the government is also ramping down planned festivities.

2013 will be a slow year for businesses.

And the local real estate market will remain slow for the next 18 months.

"I don't think the market will be as exciting as before, especially in Richmond," he said.

If you want to sell your home in the next year, Tai believes homeowners will have to significantly discount their prices.

But he believes deep-pocketed land speculators from Asia will continue to hold on to their properties as they await the market to go back up.

In China, the commercial market will be "tough," he said, with higher levels of competition and relatively lower profit margins.

Overall, expect 2013 to be conservative in terms of living and buying habits, and for the NDP to win the provincial election in May, Tai said.

For more of his predictions, visit [shermantai.com](http://shermantai.com)

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