

**Open Road Driver**  
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**Customer Profile**

# Sherman Tai

FORGET WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT FENG SHUI

Wrapped in mystery and misconception, the practice of feng shui is one of the oldest and perhaps best known secrets of the ancient Orient. It might also be one of the most misunderstood.

Interview by Ben Hudson  
Photos by Dean Sanderson

**T**HE WORLD, IT SEEMS, is a brutal and unjust place. How is it that one man can drown in money while another can die of thirst? As humans we are constantly questioning ourselves, the meaning of life and our destiny. And, for centuries, we've been hard at work scripting answers in the form of religion, philosophy, war and politics.

The Chinese have been equally diligent in their search for answers. According to ancient Chinese philosophy, one's life is affected by the date and time of their birth and the nature of the environment in which they live. In other words, the feng shui of their home. Destiny and luck also play a major role as do philanthropy, and education. Unravelling a person's fortune requires an in depth study of these elements, their astrological sign, geographical location, and the presence or absence of the life energy elements of "qi" (metal, wood, water, fire, and earth). When all these factors are taken into consideration with

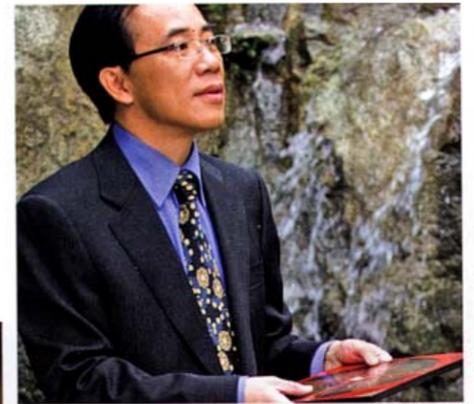
their relationship to feng shui a highly trained fortune teller or feng shui master, like Richmond's Sherman Tai, can accurately predict a person's fate. And when we say accurately we mean accurately. Mr. Tai claims to be more than 90% accurate in his predictions.

Obviously an article of this size cannot possibly decode the mystery of feng shui. Needless to say, many people deeply believe that feng shui can have a profound affect on their destiny. Having said that, it is also important to remember that good feng shui is always relative to the individual in question. So, a building cannot simply be created to have good feng shui for everybody, all the time. Just as people who share birthdates and neighbourhoods do not share the same destiny, the feng shui of a building will affect different people in different ways.

The best home is created with feng shui complementing the occupants. Arguably a home with good feng shui can bring the occupants wealth, prosperity, and health. However, it is here that the

line between feng shui and superstition draw dangerously near. Feng shui is not superstition, or an aesthetic, nor is it a design discipline. It is a philosophy of harmony between the natural world and the individual. A relationship that can have a direct and, according to Sherman Tai, measurable affect on a person's destiny.

But this is not as straight forward as we had hoped. So, in order to help us gain a better understanding about the real meaning of feng shui, we caught up with Sherman Tai. Sherman is possibly one of the most famous Feng Shui Masters in the world and certainly the most famous in British Columbia. →



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## Sherman Tai

Sherman, thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me. I feel very privileged to be sitting here and speaking with you today.

### What does it mean to be a Feng Shui Master?

I prefer not to call myself a master. "Master" is really a Chinese term of respect taken from ancient times. People think of a Master as a monk or a wise old man living in the mountains with some type of special powers. I prefer to see myself as a coach, like a football coach. I can provide guidance and advice. I can help you see the relationship between different elements in your life but it is up to the individual to take action.

When you were 6 years old your family chose to send you to live with a monk, a man who then became your master, to me this sounds like destiny.

Yes, it is karma.

### So did you embrace this path from childhood?

No, I was very rebellious as a young man. I tried to convince myself that this was all just superstition. I resisted for years. I went away to university and became a Mechanical Engineer.

### Was becoming a mechanical engineer part of your resistance?

It is possible. But you must remember that being a mechanical engineer in Hong Kong is a very good occupation. I

knew that as an engineer I would be in a stable professional job with good pay. If I could do this, I felt it would not be necessary for me to accept my destiny as a feng shui master. But I found that feng shui and Mechanical Engineering are not so different. They both operate under a set of unique principles that can only be put into practice when all the external elements and relationships are accounted for and understood. And just as luck has no role in engineering, superstition is not part of feng shui.

### The interplay of the supernatural and superstition must be one of the most common misconceptions about feng shui.

Yes, I think many people allow elements



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of religion, superstition, and the supernatural to interfere with a true understanding of feng shui. I can think of so many things... for example hanging mirrors to reflect bad energy, or placing a statue of a lion in front of your house, this is not feng shui, this is superstition.

**You have a very impressive client list and you've consulted on some very big projects. What project are you most proud of?**

Undoubtedly the new Olympic Oval. (Pulls documents out of his desk and shows me his name, on the official list of consultants.) See, here it says "Fortune Teller & Associates" and Sherman Tai, feng shui. As far as I know, this is the first time that this type of work has been officially applied to and recognized by a western organization like the Olympics. The first time.

**When you are approached by a client, big or small, how do you explain what you can do for them?**

Nearly all my clients come to me through referral so they already understand what I do. I always explain that feng shui and fortune telling is not magic and it is not 100% accurate. Although, I must admit I am very accurate. But, as I said before, I am a coach, not a magician. I can give clear direction and guidance. I can help you achieve more out of life. Much more than if you act alone.

**So how do you tell somebody that they are not going to be successful?**

This has only happened once, a very long time ago. I believe there is always opportunity for success. The potential for every



individual to get the most out of life always exists.

**Helping people get the most out of life, is that the most satisfying thing about your job?**

Yes, I truly really enjoy helping people achieve more in their lives and helping them to improve. People trust me to give them good advice, to improve their thinking, and their actions. I see this as my mission.

**And how many other Feng Shui Masters are there in the world that share your skill set?**

Not many. Yes, there are many people who are highly educated, extremely well

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trained, but don't forget I have been learning this since I was 7 years old. I have had people offer me \$1 million to teach them what I know. But I cannot. There is no book. The knowledge I possess has taken me decades to acquire and understand. Very few share my experiences, my background.

**Okay this is a car magazine so I have to ask you ... what kind of car do you drive? And did feng shui play a role in your selection?**

I drive a Lexus, RX 330. (Laughing) Of course. There are several reasons I chose the Lexus. It is four wheel drive and there is plenty of room for my German Shepards. And, of course, the colour I chose and the name Lexus matches me personally.

**Not to mention, that four German Shepards don't fit well in a Ferrari...**

No, not so well.

**Years ago, in an interview you said for many people surprises bring happiness, but that you have no surprises in your life. Do you still believe that there are no surprises in your life?**

Yes of course. But this does not mean there is no happiness in my life. For me, my philosophy teaches me that there is no certainty in life...

**So in turn, there are no surprises.**

Exactly. ■