

The Year of the OX

A hard year of change

Tai offers predictions on buying stocks and real estate in the face of economy

by Matthew Hoekstra
Staff Reporter

If the mysteries of 2009 are too much to bear, look no further than Richmond's own fortune teller, Sherman Tai.

The professional palm reader and feng shui master, whose services are sought after around the globe, has cautious words for all of us as the Year of the Ox begins Feb. 4.

"This is a hard year of change. All over the world, there is an atmosphere of disarray and disputes."

The key to success in the lunar new year is to work hard, grab opportunities when they present themselves and to not give up.

"For the first half of the year, stocks all over the world will continue to hit rock bottom and (here) will be dark economic times. But we can work together and help each other perhaps good

Fortunes by Sherman Tai

• Sherman Tai will again be offering his fortune telling services to individuals by donation, with all cash going toward charity. Last year, together with host River Rock Casino Resort, he raised \$18,000 for the Variety Club.

• This year Tai will be at Crystal Mall in Burnaby, Boulevard Casino in Coquitlam and River Rock in Richmond, 8811 River Rd.

• Tai's River Rock schedule: Jan. 25 from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m.; Jan. 26 from 6 to 10 p.m.; Jan. 27 from 8 p.m. to midnight; Jan. 30 from 6 to 10 p.m.; Jan. 31 from 5 p.m. to midnight; and Feb. 1 from 4 to 10 p.m.

results can come in time from the fruits of our efforts."

Tai noted Canada's economy and real estate market will be negatively impacted by the spiralling economy of the U.S., but we'll fare better than our southern neighbours.

He predicts global oil prices will drop, so will the price of precious metals and other resources—cracking the Canadian economy in 2009.

Real estate values will suffer a "serious decline" in Ontario and B.C.—up to 20 per cent drop in

major cities—only made worse by political instability, he says. Also on the decline: the Canadian dollar, gross domestic product, employment, retail vehicle sales, the construction industry and the stock market.

"I suggest that investments should be made after autumn to avoid being someone else's dim sum," he says.

On the Canadian political scene, he predicts more political power struggles.

"Amongst the backdrop of economic recession, this political unrest will only serve to worsen the situation more than it should."

Despite the gloom, there are a few bright spots for Richmond. Excitement will build for the Olympics with the opening of the Canada Line. That will bring new people to Richmond's borders.

That's good news for local retailers, but according to the laws of chi, everything must be in balance, so expect the crime rate to increase.

The local real estate market will continue to be unstable. The market will settle down by fall, which could offer a chance to buy a principle residence—but not an investment property.

"I don't think the Year of the Ox is a good year for investment."

See Page B6



Mark Patrick photo
Fortune teller and feng shui master Sherman Tai is predicting a new year worse than 2008—but there are some bright spots.

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The Year of the **OX**

'You need to work hard. You cannot just stand there eating grass'

From Page B5

Tai is again predicting instability in the weather for the new year. While 2008 dealt the ill-equipped city heavy snow, this year it could be intense heat.

This is Tai's 20th year of making predictions for Canada, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the U.S., and Tai stands by his predictions of major events.

In 1992, he predicted the wave of immigration from Hong Kong—and that many would return home by 2007.

In 2000 he predicted the slowing of immigration from Hong Kong and Taiwan, and in 1997, he predicted a financial crisis.

In 2001, he predicted there would be a major fire disaster on the Eastern U.S. Coast—which was realized with the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center.

In 2003, Tai also predicted the spread of a major communicable disease, which turned out to be SARS.

The Year of the Ox corresponds with "fan Tai Sui," or in opposition to the Deity of the Year. Does that mean bad luck and trouble on the horizon? Not necessarily, Tai said.

"Fan Tai Sui really just means there is a significant amount of change in your life this year and neither does it mean that it will be terrible or good; it just means

change," according to Tai. "If you don't have change, how can you improve?"

If you were born in the Year of the Ox, learn to mind your own business, Tai suggests, and be aware of the many temptations of the opposite sex, otherwise the Ox will risk harm to his reputation.

Avoid succumbing to greed and things that harm people or participate in illegal activities to earn quick and easy money.

The Ox can always see opportunities, and this year, self-confidence is required to take advantage of them.

"You need to work hard. You cannot just stand there eating grass."

The Year of the Ox: A primer

Ox nuts and bolts

•Ox years, according to lunar calendar: 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009

•Actual year begins Feb. 4 at 12:52 a.m.

•Zodiac signs to associate with: rat, snake, horse, rooster

•Zodiac signs to avoid: monkey, pig, goat

•Lucky colours: yellow, black, brown, red, purple

•Unlucky colours: green, white, grey, blue

•Lucky numbers: 2, 5, 8

•Unlucky numbers: 1, 3, 4, 7

•Lucky gemstones: cat's eye and red coral to improve luck with people and health

•Feng shui placement: In the southern corner of home or office, place a ceramic or jade rooster and place a picture of flowers and birds, and beneath the picture, place two human figures (one male and one female) to bring in more good fortune and neutralize some of the effects of "fan Tai Sui."

If you're an Ox

- Be dynamic, not static
- The year may offer travel opportunities
- Participate in events and celebrations with

friends and family to improve luck and mentality

•Keep a righteous path, don't be greedy in seeking fame or fortune, or be tempted by flesh

•This is a good year to change jobs or start a new business

•This is not a good year to seek fame and benefits or to invest and lend money

•Be careful with opposite sex or you may lose money and love

•Be watchful for thieves

•Manage money particularly well this year

•Avoid gossip; shut up and mind your own business

•Avoid illegal activities if you want to avoid jail

•Don't push people to extremes

•Avoid power struggles with superiors

•This year offers opportunities to pursue a mate, but don't be too pushy about marriage

•There is a risk of injury from metal objects and motor vehicle accidents

•Be vigilant about food safety

•Good luck will come to those applying to schools, writing exams or licensing

Source: Sherman Tai (www.shermantai.com)

—compiled by Matthew Hoekstra

The Year of the Ox



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