

Good News – It's the Year of the Earth Ox!

According to the Chinese lunar calendar, January 26, 2009, marks the beginning of the Year of the Ox, the second sign in the twelve-year Chinese zodiac. Like the Rat of 2008, the Ox signifies starting over, but as the Rat cleared the stage with its quick, shrewd, sometimes tumultuous efforts, the Ox brings its slow but sure energy to the scene. Where Rat cleared the land like a prairie fire, the steadfast Ox will plow the field with its strength and determination, readying it for the seeds of success and abundance to grow and eventually be harvested by those of us who are willing to roll up our sleeves and get things done.

The Ox is considered to be the most responsible and persevering of the twelve animal signs. And for the first time in 60 years we are welcoming an Earth Ox, which means more stability, peace and harmony ahead. The Chinese symbol for this year is a beautiful garden – a place to rest and meditate, to replenish our energy, and to reflect on the past while planning for the future. This will be a year for healing and rebuilding, seeking peaceful solutions, and caring more for the planet earth. It is also a time to be cautious, yet determined, spend wisely, save for a rainy day and be more charitable. Interestingly, President, Barack Obama is an Ox.

Traditionally, Chinese New Year celebrations last for two weeks, ending with the Lantern Festival on February 9th. Feng shui master Marina Lighthouse advises to start by cleaning your house, making minor repairs where needed, like replacing broken light bulbs and polishing your mirrors. Brighten up your home with fresh flowers and bowls of fruit. Oranges symbolize wealth, apples bring health and safety, and pineapples represent fame and promotion. Plan parties with friends and family with lots of good food and leftovers, which symbolizes money to spare in the New Year. Hand out red envelopes with money inside to your children, and if something should fall to the floor and break say, "Fall to the floor and burst into bloom!" In other words, celebrate with happiness and anticipation for an abundant, joyful year ahead.

Gung Hay Fat Choy! Happy New Year!

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