



**THE YEAR OF THE RABBIT –
CHINESE HOROSCOPES FOR 2011**
(in the order of the Chinese Zodiac)

Introduction

Chinese New Year is a time of red and gold, of flowers and colourful decorations, of family feasting and traditional customs. Around this time, many Hong Kong people of all generations visit an astrologer (often more than one) for a glimpse of what lies in store for the next 12 months. Internet and television have turned some of Hong Kong's most popular fortune tellers into major celebrities with an eager following for their radio and TV chat shows, their books and columns in local newspapers and magazines.

In some parts of the world the month of your birth governs your horoscope. But for Chinese fortune tellers the animal of your birth year is the crucial starting point. The 12 animals of the Chinese calendar follow a time-honoured sequence. The system is so old that no one can be certain how or when it originated, but archaeologists say it was already in common use 2,500 years back. According to one popular legend the mythical Jade Emperor, who supposedly ruled the Universe hundreds of thousands of years ago, invited all the earthly animals to a celebration. However, only 12 guests actually made it and to this day the sequence follows the order in which they arrived.

Another story recounts how the Jade Emperor selected 12 animals and challenged them to a race to decide where they should rank in the hierarchy of the Chinese calendar. Details of the route have blurred with constant re-telling over countless generations, but the full version of the race makes a modern day decathlon sound like the proverbial walk in the park by comparison. The animals had to find their way through forests, over mountains, and across vast plains and deserts before coming to the final stage which involved traversing a river and a vast lake. Some creatures were slower than might have been expected. The dog for instance occupies the 11th place: he explained that, although he was a champion swimmer, it took him

more than a few minutes to wash his travel-stained coat to be ready to meet the emperor. Given the dragon's superhuman powers and ability to fly, it might seem surprising to find him in fifth place rather than at the head of the line. He apologised to the Jade Emperor explaining that he paused en route to create rain for the benefit of everyone else on the earth. And then he was delayed still longer when he stopped to assist the rabbit who could not swim.

If your birthday falls early in the Gregorian calendar year, remember that the Chinese follow the lunar calendar when establishing their birth animal. Check the date of the Chinese New Year in the year you were born before you identify your sign.

Rabbit (or Hare): 1927, 1939, 1951,1963,1975,1987 or 1999

In the lead up to February 3 (Chinese New Year's Day) rabbits are popping up everywhere from folk-art toys and paper-cuts to gold coins and mobile phone charms. If you were born in the Year of the Rabbit this is your year and you can expect it to be enjoyable although relatively calm and quiet. You will discover new reserves of diplomacy within yourself that will enable you to keep family relationships on an even keel. Friendships will become more meaningful and, if you are still unattached, the right partner will be waiting in the wings around September or October if you know how to recognise him or her. Outside the home, environmental issues will demand your attention. This is a year of intense creative endeavour on all sides with many innovative works of art demanding your attention.

Dragon: 1928, 1940, 1952,1964,1976,1988 or 2000

Professionally and personally, dragons will find this a year for consolidation in anticipation of many exciting new personal and professional opportunities in "their" year just around the corner. This is certainly not a year for dragons to mark time, however, as smart dragons will be working methodically towards promotion or at least acquiring new skills that will make work more satisfying. Romance is around the corner for single dragons who should take every opportunity to socialise in anticipation of meeting their partner for life. Travel is an important feature of the year for dragons as for most other people during the Year of the Rabbit and even a short break in new surroundings will be a memorable experience, probably in July or December. This is the year to take your hobbies seriously: a creative or sporting interest will enrich your life and open new avenues for you.

Snake: 1929, 1941, 1953,1965,1977,1989 or 2001

Like most people, snakes will take this year as a chance to recharge their mental and emotional batteries after the roller coaster ride of the Year of the Tiger. This does not mean a boring year ahead – far from it as most snakes will find themselves happily and profitably occupied throughout the next 12 months. Job satisfaction is vital for snakes to flourish as they should. Snakes who feel less than fulfilled in their current working environment should

seize the chance to make a change when the opening appears, most likely in the early months of the year, or possibly in October. Like most good things in life, however, the best opportunities require considerable input to make them happen. Financial prospects are sound this year, with plenty of scope for some shrewd investments. Friendships will flourish whether in large gatherings related to your job or in more intimate settings with relatives and a few long-time close friends.

Horse: 1930, 1942, 1954,1966,1978,1990 or 2002

Plodders and race-horses alike, people born in the Year of the Horse will need all the quadruped's speed to make the most of all the opportunities in store for them during the Year of the Rabbit. Their generally extrovert natures and impulsive personality make horses very good if occasionally unpredictable companions. They do not suffer fools gladly, but for those who win their respect horses are among the most loyal of friends and partners. Like most others this year, the horse will be paying more attention to health and fitness, making this the year for a significant change and an end to some bad habits. Those in a permanent relationship will find their partners particularly supportive in efforts to make beneficial lifestyle changes. Horses seeking true love should relax in the knowledge that this might be the year that they find someone with whom they can make a lasting commitment.

Goat (or Sheep): 1931, 1943, 1955,1967,1979,1991 or 2003

This looks set to be a particularly happy year for those born in the year of the goat. By contrast with their laid-back and generally upbeat natures, goats are also among the most inscrutable individuals. They appreciate encouragement as they sometimes lack staying power in the face of even a minor challenge. All the signs suggest a great start to the year especially for anyone seeking a new job. The goat's skill at networking means that new and more lucrative career opportunities are likely to arise as the result of a chance encounter. Outside work new friends will widen the goat's horizons and introduce him or her to new creative and artistic hobbies while at the same these new friends will be good companions in the social activities that the goat really enjoys.

Monkey: 1932, 1944, 1956,1968,1980,1992 or 2004

Like their animal namesakes, monkey people tend to be lively and clever with a keen sense of humour. In general monkeys can expect a year without exhilarating peaks or daunting troughs. But those who are more proactive can expect satisfying career boosts. Forget the monkey's reputation for playfulness when it comes to work or investments which they take as seriously as everyone else. Outside work the monkey's social life will blossom early in the year as his or her interests bring contact with likeminded individuals. If you are still single you can look forward to meeting someone very special through your new friends. Don't be too pushy but don't be afraid to show your light-hearted side to Ms or Mr Right. If you find no responsive chord, be prepared to move on without regrets.

Rooster: 1933, 1945, 1957,1969,1981,1993 or 2005

Early in the year you should beware of being considered meddlesome if you show too much interest in the lives of your friends and relatives. Surprisingly, by autumn some of the well-intentioned advice that you gave early in the year will most likely be followed, although you should not expect anyone to thank you for your suggestions. Loyalty is the Rooster's most endearing trait. But this is a good year to cultivate some other characteristics like patience, tact and discretion. The rooster is often too flamboyant to be a natural team player. It will stand you in good stead to do some soul-searching in this area and make a more conscious effort to set things to rights. If training opportunities arise, seize them and commit yourself wholeheartedly to making this the year for upgrading your skills in anticipation of increasing demands ahead once the Dragon arrives.

Dog: 1934, 1946, 1958,1970,1982,1994 or 2006

After a challenging couple of years, those born in the year of the Dog will appreciate the more relaxed pace of this year. Make the most of it as the tempo will most likely be stepped up once again in the Year of the Dragon. Your professional life will probably remain stable during the coming year although if you are looking to change or upgrade your job, May, June or October should bring some interesting new opportunities. Outside the workplace, this will be a year of deepening personal relationships. If you are unattached, look for true love before high summer, although it might take you a while to recognise what you have found. For those who already have a partner, make more effort to bring increased happiness to your significant other, which in turn will add meaning to your life.

Pig (or Boar): 1935, 1947, 1959,1971,1983,1995 or 2007

Chinese tradition has no negative connotations concerning someone being a pig. On the contrary the animal is regarded as unusually lucky and highly intelligent. This promises to be a socially active year for those born in the Year of the Pig, but life holds more than an endless round of parties: networking is important for professional reasons. At work March and September should bring some exciting opportunities for any pig prepared to move fast. Family life is important for pigs this year, with news of an engagement or perhaps a new baby by mid-year. For single pigs, this is likely to be the year of true romance. At social gatherings in mid-year pay extra attention to those around you to be sure that you are not overlooking Mr or Ms Right.

Rat: 1936, 1948, 1960,1972,1984,1996 or 2008

Elegant and charming, rats are popular and always blessed with many friends. However, the relentless pace of the Year of the Tiger has left many rats feeling jaded, so the more relaxed tempo of the coming year will be welcome. Rats will not stand still professionally, although they will probably feel less driven in their struggle for advancement. This year allows rats to



concentrate more energy on their personal life and the nurturing of their creative talents. Family life is particularly important for rats and this year is likely to bring a succession of celebrations with family or close friends who will get together on such joyous occasions as an engagement, a wedding or the birth of a child.

Ox (or Water Buffalo): 1937, 1949, 1961,1973,1985,1997 or 2009

This will be something of a watershed year for the Ox. A career change or a major shift in professional direction are strong possibilities in the first and third quarters of the year. Summer is an important season for singletons who can look forward to meeting someone special and forming a lasting and loving relationship. Loyalty is a major characteristic of the Ox and people born under this sign make great friends and family stalwarts. While not a social butterfly, the Ox is gregarious by nature and great company. Health can be an issue for oxen who should be sure to find time to relax, watch that they eat a healthy diet and make sure that they get enough exercise and fresh air.

Tiger: 1926,1938,1950,1962,1974,1986,1998 or 2010

As the Year of the Tiger draws to a close people born under this sign can relax as they look back on what might have been a year of almost too much excitement. The Year of the Rabbit promises to be less frenetic. Tiger people are flamboyant, generous, entertaining and occasionally indecisive. But there will be no indecision when it comes to affairs of the heart this year. Those who are single can look forward to marriage or at least important commitment to a significant other in the third quarter of the year. Those who are already settled should be prepared to move house, perhaps even into a home of your own. Tigers are adventurous and late summer could find you embarking on the journey of your dreams especially if you have an unexpected windfall or promotion with accompanying pay rise.

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