



January 12, 2012

## **Welcome The Dragon – Chinese New Year 2012 begins January 23**

### **HSBC Chinese New Year, hosted by the Valley Chamber of Commerce**

The question is always the same with a dragon: *will he talk with you or will he eat you?*  
If you can count on his doing the former, and not doing the latter, why then you're a dragonlord.  
*The Tombs of Atuan, Ursula LeGuin*

After 59 years the Chinese Water Dragon is back!

On January 23, Chinese New Year officially begins and will continue, as is tradition, over a 15 day period, and all eyes will be on Chinatown in Fortitude Valley as it creates a cacophony of colour, culture and ceremony, with dragons leading the charge!

Chinese Celebrations will start a little earlier in Brisbane – from Friday night 20 January through to 5pm Sunday 22 January, Brisbane City Council's The Faces of Chinatown will light up Chinatown buildings by night, and the Chinese Information Centre will be open to the public in TCB, hosted by Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Celebrated all over the world, Chinese New Year is a time to welcome longevity, wealth and prosperity and to eliminate any negative chi from the past. It begins with the New Moon on the first day of the New Year and ends on the full moon 15<sup>th</sup> days later; in 2012 Chinese New Year will be celebrated on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2012 through until 6<sup>th</sup> February.

2012 is The Year of the Water Dragon, *the mightiest of signs*. The last time he was honored was 59 years ago, between 27 January 1952 and 13 February 1953.

HSBC Chinese New Year, hosted by the Valley Chamber of Commerce in Brisbane's Chinatown will see more than 20 Chinese restaurants host a range of dinners and special ceremonies, as well as displays, dancing, music, blessings and a series of major corporate and social events take place with the public and business welcome to attend.

### **HSBC Chinese New Year, hosted by the Valley Chamber of Commerce**

#### **Monday Jan 23: Chinese New Year's Day**

More than 20 restaurants in Chinatown are taking part including Happy Chef; Superbowl; Hiraneki; Silver Charm; King of Kings; Kings Diner; Dragon Inn; Chinahouse; Kim Lan; Thai Chiva; Burlington Butcher; Burlington; Supermarket; Burlington BBQ; Phob; Wagaya; Venice Gelato; Thai Wi Rat; Hunan; Golden Palace; LL Arts Décor (Tea House); Beijing Ren Tong; Green Tea; Chingu; Yuens Supermarket; Red Lotus; Enjoy Inn; Asian House; Yong Central; Wing Sing; Golden BBQ; Asian Fusion; Valley Corner Restaurant; Tar Thai; The Vietnamese Restaurant; Yee Fong BBQ; Kuan Yin; and Cyber City.

#### **Thursday February 2: HSBC Chinese New Year Business Lunch : 12.30pm to 2pm**

Over 100 business leaders, cultural identities, political representatives, visitors and friends of the Chinese community will share lunch at Cloudland on Tuesday February 2, to mark the importance of the Chinese New Year, and the diversity, strength and importance of the Chinese community in Brisbane and greater Queensland.

Guest speakers include: Qld State Treasurer Andrew Fraser MP and Mr Paul Bloxham Chief Economist from the HSBC World Bank.



**Thursday Night February 2: HSBC Chinese New Year Social Cocktail Party : 6pm to 8pm**

Hosted atop the Skybridge overlooking the new-look Chinatown Mall Fortitude Valley at sunset, this celebratory event will see leaders from the Chinese community come together to toast the New Year with live entertainment and Lion Dancing. (Invitation Only). Catering will be by the multi-award-winning Enjoy Inn, established in Chinatown some 30 years. Minister for Transport and Multicultural Affairs, The Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk MP will lead the VIP charge.

**Friday Night February 3: HSBC Chinese New Year Celebration Banquet : 7pm to 10pm**

Let the banqueting begin!! Masterchef style chefs and menus will showcase the very best in Chinese foods and dishes over 10-courses, in a night of celebration; a noisy, fun, joyous welcoming to the Chinese New Year. The event will be held at the iconic Golden Palace Chinese Restaurant – cnr Ann and Duncan Street, Chinatown Mall. Brisbane's Lord Mayor Graham Quirk and the Qld State Member Grace Grace MP will attend this event with VIP guests including the Chinese Consulate office & Chamber President Charlie Apostolos, members of the Chinese community and broader community.

For more information [www.valleychamber.com.au](http://www.valleychamber.com.au)

**Friday 20 January to Sunday 19 February:**

Chinatown celebrates Chinese New Year 2012 – for the first time a Chinese Information Centre hosted by the Valley Chamber of Commerce with the owners of the TCB building will be open. This centre will provide information about Chinese New Year, Chinatown, the many Chinese organisations based in Brisbane, and the myriad restaurants, as well as the very important God of Wealth and the Lion Dancing.

**Friday January 20 & Saturday January 21: FACES OF CHINATOWN**

Faces of Chinatown is a night projection of photographic images of the daily faces people see around Brisbane's Chinatown Mall – local traders, police officers, local community leaders, performers, chefs... the people and the colour of Chinatown. The photos have been taken and put together by Councillor David Hinchcliffe and Chiu-Hing Chan (Chairman of Chinatown Committee).

**Friday January 20 to Sunday January 22: Brisbane City Council Chinese New Year Celebrations**

[www.chinesenewyear.com.au](http://www.chinesenewyear.com.au)

HSBC Chinese New Year, hosted by the Valley Chamber of Commerce is sponsored by both the HSBC and the Lend Lease and Showground Hill. Lend Lease Project Director for Showground Hill, Glen Steedman, said the sponsorship recognises the strong bond that exists between all parties.

"The Valley Chamber of Commerce and Brisbane's Chinese community are part of the fabric of Queensland society and play an important role in our ongoing success. We recognise that status and we consider ourselves neighbours and partners in the future growth of this critical part of inner Brisbane."

"Queensland's Chinese community has embraced Showground Hill's first residential release, The Green. With China Town and Fortitude Valley so close to this ground breaking development we expect the high level of engagement will continue. We want you to join us on the journey as we transform this historic site into a vibrant new \$2.9 billion business, retail and residential hub for Queensland."

**Brisbane's Chinatown**

Brisbane's Chinese community is one of Australia's largest. Brisbane's Chinatown was officially opened by the Lord Mayor of Brisbane Sallyanne Atkinson on January 29, 1987 – the first day of Chinese New Year of the Rabbit. Designed by three Chinese architects and three engineers from Guangzhou in China's Guangdong province and reflecting China's ancient Tang Dynasty, Chinatown Mall was regarded as the most authentic in Australia.

Although Chinatown officially started off as a mall between Wickham and Ann Streets, it now stretches from Alfred Street to McLachlan Street, and Gipps Street to Constance St; a precinct of wonderful colour, tastes and sounds. An area of constant growth, Chinatown continues to welcome new businesses and restaurants



each year, a trend increasing with the infrastructure investment underway in the area, bringing commercial office buildings and corporate relocations.

It is home to over 42 Chinese & Asian fusion restaurants as well as the famous supermarkets Yuen's Supermarket and Burlington Supermarket. In late March this year a new large 600 seat Chinese restaurant will open, adding to the flavour that is Chinatown

\*In 1996, the mall was used in a scene in the movie Jackie Chan's First Strike - a car chase through a shopping mall resulting in an elaborate stunt where by a car smashed through a second floor window into the pagoda thus resulting in a massive explosion. The destroyed pagoda was subsequently rebuilt and remains a feature.

## Traditional Chinese New Year Food

The Chinese New Year is a time for families to reunite, not only to welcome in the new lunar year, but also to feast together and wish each other good fortune. Many New Year dishes are served "whole"; such as whole fish, whole chicken or duck, this is because the action of slicing and cutting carries bad connotations, like severing family ties. A special emphasis is placed on the symbols represented by different kinds of food...

- Bamboo shoots: Well and safe (Is a term which sounds like "wishing that everything would be well")
- Black moss seaweed: Wealth (Is a homonym for exceeding in wealth)
- Chicken: Represents happiness and prosperity. (The chicken must be presented with a head, tail and feet to symbolize completeness)
- Dried Bean Curd: Wealth and happiness (Is another homonym for fulfilment of wealth and happiness)
- Ginkgo nut: Represents silver ingots
- Mushroom: Represents ancient Chinese coins
- Lotus seed: Signify having many male offspring
- Eggs: Fertility
- Egg Rolls: Wealth
- Fish: Prosperity and togetherness (Whole fish is served, as the Chinese adage 'Nian Nian You Yu' in Mandarin or 'Neen Neen Yau Yu' in Cantonese, which translates as 'May you have abundance every year')
- Chinese garlic chives: Everlasting, a long life
- Lychee nuts: Close family ties
- Noodles: Represent a long life (It should be uncut, as it represents long life)
- Oranges: Wealth (Because of its gold colour)
- Peanuts: A long life
- Pomelo: Abundance, prosperity, having children
- Seeds, e.g. Lotus or watermelon seeds: Having a large number of children
- Tangerines: Good luck and good wealth

## 2012: The Year of the Water Dragon

As with the Western Zodiac, the Chinese have 12 signs, however name the actual year after one of twelve animal signs the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, sheep, monkey, rooster, dog and pig. Similar to western Astrology, every Chinese Birth Sign has a particular character and qualities. People born in a specific year are believed to take on the character and qualities of the animal after which the year is named.

The Dragon is the fifth sign in the Chinese Horoscope and signifies luck and the Dragon's colour is gold. In addition to naming their years after one of 12 animals, every year in the Chinese Zodiac also has an attribute of either water, wood, fire, earth or metal. 2012 is the Year of the Water Dragon.

In 2012, the Dragon is welcomed back after the 2011 year of the Rabbit. While the Year of the Rabbit was characterized by calm and tranquility, the Year of the Dragon will be marked by excitement, unpredictability,



exhilaration and intensity. People respond to the spirit of the Dragon with energy, vitality and unbridled enthusiasm, often throwing all caution to the wind – which can also be an unwise move: The Dragon is all about drama.

### **The Dragon's Personality**

People born under the Dragon are passionate, brave and self-assured. At their best they are pioneering spirits; at their worst, they epitomize the old adage: *Fools rush in where angels fear to tread*. Dragons are generous with their resources, a tendency that at its most negative can reflect a foolhardy attitude towards money. But Dragons in general are blessed with good fortune. They are smart, enterprising and have a wicked sense of humor. They have a natural flair for fashion.

### **The Dragon People**

Dragon people were born in 1904, 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000 and 2012.

Famous people born in the Year of the Dragon include Joan of Arc, Julius Caesar, Sandra Bullock, Bruce Lee, Liam Neeson, Keanu Reeves, Reese Witherspoon, Ringo Starr, John Lennon, Martin Luther King Jr., Charles Darwin, Christopher Reeve, Woodrow Wilson

### **God of Wealth – God of Money**

As a god that can bring in wealth and riches, the God of Wealth is worshiped by most Chinese particularly during Chinese New Year.

The 5<sup>th</sup> lunar day of the Chinese New Year is the Welcome Day for the God of Wealth. Many families worship the God of Wealth in the early morning. In old days, after the ceremony, people explode firecrackers to invite the God of Wealth to enter the house.

Some store owners put a table in the front of company's main entry. They prepare fruit, flower, candy, tea, candles and animal sacrifices on the table to worship the God of Wealth. Some even invite the lion dance team to celebrate the opening ceremony. The mascot of the God of Wealth will appear and enter the store. The store owner will give the mascot a "red envelope" with money reward inside.