
The year of the fire pig

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Too hung over to think about resolutions in the early days of January? The Chinese New Year, or Lunar New Year, gives us each a chance at renewal. Usually beginning late January to mid-February, this year we entered the new year on February 18.

The University of Waterloo Alliance of Asian Student Clubs (UWAASC) will be celebrating Lunar Festival on the 27 and 28 of this month. Tuesday will feature booths in the SLC basement selling food and more. Wednesday the 28 DJ Silver will be spinning in Federation Hall along with performances and a fashion show.

Celebrated internationally anywhere there are large populations of ethnic Chinese, the Lunar New Year is the most important of the traditional Chinese holidays. Starting on the first day of the lunar month, which fell on February 18 this year, the holiday is celebrated for the following 14 days culminating with the Lantern Festival on the 15th day.

The calendar follows a sexagenary cycle representing the 60 combinations which result from the two root cycles — the heavenly stems and the earthly branches. The heavenly stems are represented by five elements, and the 12 branches represented by the 12 Chinese zodiac signs.

According to ancient Chinese legend, the Nian, a man eating beast that lived in the mountains came down every 12 months to prey on human flesh. The monster was believed to be afraid of loud noises and the colour red. As a result, many of the festivities would include lighting fireworks and liberal use of the colour red.

February 18, 2007 to February 6, 2008 — The year of the pig and of fire. I like to refer to this particular combination of animal and element as the year of the luau.

This, the last year in the 12 year earthly branch sub-cycle, corresponds to Hai — more commonly known as the year of the pig. In Japanese, the Chinese character translates specifically to a wild boar. Western cultures likewise refer to it as the year of the boar because the image of a pig generally has negative connotations. The pig is associated with fertility and virility in Chinese culture.

Honest, straightforward and patient, the type of person born in this year will generally make poor Fed's candidates. They are reserved with new people, which can give the misconception of aloofness. Those who do gain confidence with a pig will find a lovely, warm-hearted person, or a dick. I guess it depends on the person.

Pigs aren't, by nature, ones to take revenge or be confrontational in general. If by chance someone tries to screw them over, they will usually withdraw and reflect. Woody Allen is a famous pig. Think Woody. Once they have taken the time to think a social problem over (and perhaps discuss it with their therapist) they can find a practical response.

Conservative creatures of habit, they dislike having their routine disturbed or being made to travel far from a familiar place. On road trips, they would likely ask for bathroom stops more than anyone else, and probably complain that the air conditioning is either too high, or that it's too hot in the car. Just sit there quietly, pig, I'm not turning this car around. Plus, we're going out to the countryside. As a pig, you love nature.

Being born in the year of pig is indicative of a wide circle of friends and acquaintances. In other words they never turn down a friend request on Facebook even when they don't know the person. They will still, however, have a few close friends who really understand them enough to share the really deep stuff. Pigs are a trustworthy bunch; they are not the type to let you down. They just want to do everything right and adhere to social norms. In short, they are the lamest people you know.