

2021 Chinese Almanac

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1. What is a Chinese Almanac?

The Chinese Almanac通勝, or Tong Sheng, or the Book of Myriad Things, has been the most popular guide for the farmers and fishermen to refer to in various aspects of life since ancient China. It is, nowadays, still always consulted by many Chinese before selecting the suitable dates for important and major events.

Tong Sheng is also known as Tong Shu, yet the word "Shu"(meaning "a book" in Chinese) rhymes with the word "lose" in Chinese. And "Tong Shu" together suggests the meaning of "total loss". For the sake of good luck, especially that of the gamblers, people replaced the word "Shu" with "Sheng" which means "win" in Chinese, and we all call it "Tong Sheng" today.

The first official Tong Sheng was edited and published more than 200 years ago by the government of Qing Dynasty. It was a comprehensive overview of the life of farmers who represented the majority of the general populace. Tong Sheng was then a unique planning tool for agricultural activities, such as sowing, planting crops, harvesting, resting, and so on.

The Chinese Almanac not only incorporates the interpretations of constellations, the concept of Yin and Yang, and the Chinese calendar, but also points to auspicious days of the year and periods associated with good fortunes. Over the centuries, it has made its way into almost every Chinese household. Even modern Chinese are still using it as a source to consult on suitable dates for critical activities, such as wedding, Caesarean birth, renovations and burial of the deceased, etc.

2. The Spring Ox Diagram for the Year of Metal Ox



The Spring Ox diagram is indispensable in a Chinese Almanac. Always appears on the first page of the Chinese Almanac, the Spring Ox diagram foretells the overall weather in the coming year. As the weather is the most important part of a farmer's life, the diagram was always the first information to be referred to.

The Spring Ox was originally a clay or ceramic bull for ceremonial purpose. In the ancient time, royal officials would whip the Spring Ox to signify the kick-start of the agricultural activities in the New Year on "The Beginning of Spring"立春. Another important part of the ritual was "The God of Arista" or "The Spring God"芒神, which is a statue displayed during the ceremony. There was a set of customary rules concerning the color, size and outfits of the Spring Ox and "The God of Arista" in the ceremony.

The Beginning of Spring falls on 3rd, 4th or 5th February every year in the Western calendar.

Spring Ox

- Height of the Ox: 4 Chi (a unit of length), representing the four seasons; length of the Ox: 8 Chi, representing eight seasonal nodes; length of tail: 1.2 Chi, corresponding to the twelve months of a year.

- The color of the Ox's head depends on the Heavenly Stem of the year: white for a Metal year, black for a Water year, green for a Wood year, red for a Fire year, and yellow for an Earth year.

- The color of the Ox's body depends on the Earthly Branch of the year: white for the Year of Monkey / Rooster, black for the Year of Rat / Pig, green for the Year of Tiger / Rabbit, red for the Year of Snake / Horse, and yellow for the Year of Ox / Dragon / Goat / Dog.

- The color of the Ox's abdomen depends on the Na Yin納音 Element (hidden Element) of the year: white for a Metal year, black for a Water year, green for a Wood year, red for a Fire year, and yellow for an Earth year.

- The color of the Ox's horns, ears and tail depends on the Heavenly Stem of the day of ceremony (i.e. the Beginning of Spring): white for a Metal day, black for a Water day, green for a Wood day, red for a Fire day, and yellow for an Earth day.

- The color of the Ox's shins depends on the Earthly Branch of the day of the Beginning of Spring: black for the day of Rat / Pig, green for the day of Tiger / Rabbit, red for the day of Snake / Horse, white for the day of Monkey / Rooster, and yellow for the day of Ox / Dragon / Goat / Dog.

- The color of the Ox's hooves depends on the Na Yin Element of the day of the Beginning of Spring: white for a Metal day, black for a Water day, green for a Wood day, red for a Fire day, and yellow for an Earth day.

- The side to which the Ox's tail bends depends on the Yin or Yang nature

of the year: right for a Yin year, left for a Yang year.

- The Ox's mouth is shut for a Yin year, and open for a Yang year.

- The texture / color of the strap rein depends on the Heavenly Stem and Earthly Branch of the day of the Beginning of Spring: the strap rein should be made of hemp for a Rat / Rabbit / Horse / Rooster day, silk for an Ox / Dragon / Goat / Dog day, and linen for a Tiger / Snake / Monkey / Pig day; the color of the strap rein should be orange for a Metal day, yellow for a Water day, white for a Wood day, black for a Fire Day, and green for an Earth day.

The God of Arista (the Spring God)

- The God of Arista is 3.65 Chi tall, representing the 365 days of a year.

- Whether the God of Arista has the face of a child, a young man or an old man depends on the Earthly Branch of the year: the God looks like a child for a Rat / Rabbit / Horse / Rooster year, a young man for an Ox / Dragon / Goat / Dog year, and an old man for a Tiger / Snake / Monkey / Pig year.

- The colors of the God of Arista's clothes and belt depend on the Earthly Branch of the day of the Beginning of Spring: yellow clothes with a green belt for a Rat / Pig day, green clothes with a white belt for an Ox / Dragon / Goat / Dog day, white clothes with a red belt for a Tiger / Rabbit day, black clothes with a yellow belt for a Snake / Horse day, and red clothes with a black belt for a Monkey / Rooster day.

- The position of the God of Arista's buns depends on the Na Yin Element of the day of the Beginning of Spring: they are in front of the ears on a Metal day, behind the ears on a Wood day, the left bun in front and the right bun behind the ears on a Water day, the right bun in front and the left bun behind the ears on a Fire day, both buns would be above the ears on an Earth day.

- Whether the God of Arista wears shoes, stockings or pants depends on the Na Yin Element of the day of the Beginning of Spring: on a Metal day, he

3. Centenary Diagram

should wear pants and shoes, with the left stocking dangling from the waist; on a Wood day, he should wear pants and shoes, with the right stocking dangling from the waist; on a Water day, he should wear them all; on a Fire day, he should wear none of them; on an Earth day, he should wear only pants but not the shoes or stocking.

- The God of Arista uses a willow branch as a whip. The length of the willow branch should be about 2.4 Chi, representing the 24 solar terms of a year. The material of the string on the whip depends on the Earthly Branch of the day of the Beginning of Spring: hemp for a Rat / Rabbit / Horse / Rooster day, silk for an Ox / Dragon / Goat / Dog day, and linen for a Tiger / Snake / Monkey / Pig day.

- If the Beginning of Spring is less than five days ahead of / behind the Lunar New Year's Day, the God of Arista stands side by side with the Spring Ox; if it is more than five days ahead of / behind the Lunar New Year's Day, he stands in front of / behind the Spring Ox respectively.

- If it is a Yin year, the God of Arista stands on the right of the Spring Ox. If it is a Yang year, he stands on the left.

According to the above rules, we can well predict the various details of the Spring Ox and the God of Arista in the coming year.

Year	Element / Animal Sign	* Age
2021	Metal Ox 辛丑	1
2020	Metal Rat 庚子	2
2019	Earth Pig 己亥	3
2018	Earth Dog 戊戌	4
2017	Fire Rooster 丁酉	5
2016	Fire Monkey 丙申	6
2015	Wood Goat 乙未	7
2014	Wood Horse 甲午	8
2013	Water Snake 癸巳	9
2012	Water Dragon 壬辰	10
2011	Metal Rabbit 辛卯	11
2010	Metal Tiger 庚寅	12
2009	Earth Ox 己丑	13
2008	Earth Rat 戊子	14
2007	Fire Pig 丁亥	15
2006	Fire Dog 丙戌	16
2005	Wood Rooster 乙酉	17
2004	Wood Monkey 甲申	18
2003	Water Goat 癸未	19
2002	Water Horse 壬午	20
2001	Metal Snake 辛巳	21
2000	Metal Dragon 庚辰	22
1999	Earth Rabbit 己卯	23
1998	Earth Tiger 戊寅	24
1997	Fire Ox 丁丑	25
1996	Fire Rat 丙子	26
1995	Wood Pig 乙亥	27

5. General Forecast on 2021

Land Luck of Hong Kong by Four Pillars of Destiny and Investment Strategy



Four Pillars of Destiny in 2021

Metal Ox 辛丑 Metal Tiger 庚寅 Water Horse 壬午 Water Rat 壬子	Lunar January — Earth Ox 己丑
	Lunar February — Earth Rat 戊子
	Lunar March — Fire Pig 丁亥
	Lunar April — Fire Dog 丙戌
	Lunar May — Wood Rooster 乙酉
	Lunar June — Wood Monkey 甲申
	Lunar July — Water Goat 癸未
	Lunar August — Water Horse 壬午
	Lunar September — Metal Snake 辛巳
	Lunar October — Metal Dragon 庚辰
	Lunar November — Earth Rabbit 己卯
	Lunar December — Earth Tiger 戊寅

This is the last year of strong Water dominance and the last year of an active economic cycle. Thus, you should brace yourself when it comes to investment as the stock market may face sudden and drastic reversals. Thus, it makes sense to realize any profits you make and hold cash instead. Do not blindly invest in an overvalued market.

The investment market is likely to soar first and nosedive later in 2021. If you shop for some stocks in spring, you may have to hold them till autumn before you can generate any gain. Besides, by looking at the Four Pillars of Destiny of the Beginning of Spring this year, you'd see the day and the hour are in conflicts with each other. I'm afraid the investment market would get more volatile in autumn and winter this year. Just be prepared.

The strongest and the weakest among the Five Elements

Regarding the Five Elements, Water is the strongest, followed by Fire, Wood, Metal and Earth in this particular order.

Water – The strongest sector, referring to banking, finance, aviation, freight forwarding, retail, etc.

Fire – The second strongest sector, referring to trades such as electronics, fuel and natural gas, power generation, etc.

Wood – A mediocre sector, referring to trades like papermaking, garment, herbal medicine, fabric, etc.

Metal – A weak sector, referring to trades such as precious metals, metal parts, machine manufacturing, steelmaking, etc.

Earth – The weakest sector, referring to construction, infrastructure, cement making, construction materials, etc.

Finance and Stock Market

In 2021, the stock market tends to soar at first and plummet later. If you buy in spring, wait till autumn to reap any return. On top of that, according to the Four Pillars of Destiny of the Beginning of Spring, the day and the hour are in conflicts. That means the stock market is likely to be volatile in autumn and winter in 2021.

Property Market

Real estate prices are still at their all-time high. I'm afraid it's not easy to make much profit if you buy real property as an investment option. Even if you're buying for your own use, you should beware of the unfavourable factors that may surface in autumn or winter this year.

Land Luck of the World by Feng Shui



The Flying Star diagram
of Land Luck #8:

	S			
	VII	III	V	
E	VI	VIII	I	W
	II	IV	IX	
	N			

The Flying Star diagram of
the Year of the Ox 2021

	S			
	5	1	3	
E	4	6	8	W
	9	2	7	
	N			

21. Festivals

~Chinese New Year



Chinese (Lunar) New Year is the most important festival in the Chinese calendar. The celebrations of Chinese New Year can be traced back to the ancient reign of Yao and Shun, the two legendary sage rulers who lived around the 23th century B.C.

The Origin of Chinese New Year

According to a Chinese legend, in ancient times, there was a fierce monster called "Nian" (the Chinese word for "Year"). "Nian" slept the whole year, except on every New Year's Eve when it would wake up and roamed around the villages where it would devour livestock and harm humans.

One year, "Nian" appeared again and was about to wreck havoc among the village houses. However, it was startled by a piece of red cloth hung on the front door of a house, and frightened by a sudden sound of exploding firecrackers from the house. It shivered all over and ran away and never returned again.

Since then, the traditions of sticking red banners and setting off firecrackers on the New Year's Eve have developed.

Customs of the New Year

There are many customs around the Chinese New Year and the most typical ones are as follows:

1. Thank-you dinner to the Kitchen God on 24th Lunar December — The Kitchen God is assigned by Yu Huang, the Emperor of Heaven, to record what every family does throughout the year. He has to return to Heaven to report duty annually before the New Year. People think they will "bribe" him with sweet treats so that he won't say anything bad about their families. At the Thank-you dinner, they will offer sweet glutinous rice balls served in sugary soup and brown sugar bars to the Kitchen God.

2. Opening of the flower market on 26th Lunar December — The flower fair in Hong Kong not only sells flowers, but also covers different commodities ranging from food to toys. Children with poor academic results will be taken to walk around the flower market. This is a custom called "Mai Lan" (getting rid of sloth and laziness) and people believe that the children will become more hard working and attentive in the New Year.

3. "Sweeping" on 28th Lunar December — People will give their home a thorough cleaning on that day. They believe that it will wash away the misfortunes. Spring couplets will be posted on the doors and windows. Yet, people never post four couplets as the number "four" rhymes with "death" in Chinese. On the contrary, the number "eight" is considered lucky, as it sounds like the word "wealth" in Chinese. The most popular couplet is the single Chinese character "Fu" (luck 福). Many people will choose to post it upside down as "upside down" (dao倒) and "arrive" (dao到) are homonymic in Chinese. By putting the character upside down, they believe the luck will arrive at their families.

4. Family Dinner on New Year's Eve — It is a time for family reunion and thanksgiving and the year-end worship starts in the afternoon that day. Offerings are made to the gods and ancestors who have blessed and protected the family in the past year. In the evening, the whole family sits together at a round table to enjoy a grand feast which must include a fish dish. It is customary to leave some fish

21. Festivals

~The Lantern Festival (Yuan Xiao)

on the plate, because the word for "fish" in Chinese is "Yu" which sounds like the word for "surplus" in Chinese. By having some leftover of fish, it symbolizes that there will be more than enough for the family to enjoy in the coming year. On New Year's Eve, people try to stay up until as late as they can. This custom signifies the longevity of parents and the well-being of children. As the clock strikes twelve at midnight, firecrackers are set off to celebrate the onset of the New Year.

5. New Year's Day — Many festive celebrations follow all day long. Worshipping the ancestors is an important ritual of the day and ceremonial offerings to gods and ancestors usually include dates, candied peanuts and fruit. People then call on relatives and friends to wish them a happy new year. Married couples will give red packets filled with lucky money to kids and unmarried adults. There are a few taboos on the New Year's Day though. For example, people try not to break dishes because that brings bad luck. Getting rid of trash means sweeping away the good fortune. Scolding the children, crying and saying inauspicious words are also signs of bad luck. Some people still believe sweeping the floor or washing hair on that day would bring bad luck to the family.

6. 2nd Lunar January — Married daughters return to their natal families to visit their parents. They will give presents to them and red packets to the unmarried brothers and sisters.

7. 3rd Lunar January — Quarrels, disputes, or dissent are likely to arise if people meet relatives and friends on that day. Staying at home to play cards or mahjong with family is the best policy.

8. 5th Lunar January — Shops open again for the first time in the New Year. Bosses will give red packets filled with lucky money to the staff. As the holidays are over, things get back to normal course from this day onwards.

9. 7th Lunar January — Rice congee or "mixed meat congee" is served. It is because "congee" in Cantonese rhymes with "suffice". People wish they will have more than enough to spare in the coming year.



The Lantern Festival falls on the 15th day of Lunar January, marking the end of the Chinese New Year celebrations.

In ancient times, there was a strict curfew requiring the single young girls from respectable family to stay at home at all time. Yet, the Lantern Festival was one of the few nights that they were allowed to go to the streets, in hopes of finding their own love. This explains why the Festival has become the Chinese equivalent to the Western St. Valentine's Day.













Traditional celebration activities:













Popular festive activities include eating "tang yuan", sweet glutinous rice balls served in sugary soup symbolizing the full moon and family union, watching lantern parades, guessing lantern riddles, as well as watching lion and dragon dances.

Riddle-solving contests were traditionally held in Buddhist temples, where different styles of lanterns were displayed. The abbots hosted the contests and people were to solve the riddles which often conveyed messages of love.

The Chinese dragon is not associated with the evil as it is in the West.

24. The Diagram of Incompatible Food and Poisoning

<p>egg/plum</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: purified underground water</p>	<p>snail/noodles</p>  <p>disease caused: stomachache, vomiting</p> <p>remedies: just allow the toxin to be egested</p>	<p>eel/beef liver</p>  <p>disease caused: choking by wind</p> <p>remedies: black beans and liquorice</p>
<p>pumpkin/mitten crab</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: purified underground water</p>	<p>mitten crab/tangerine</p>  <p>disease caused: soft abscess</p> <p>remedies: garlic juice</p>	<p>game meat/plum</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: dried chicken droppings</p>
<p>snail/sweet corn</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: purified underground water</p>	<p>octopus/persimmon</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: purified underground water</p>	<p>ice/mitten crab</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: lotus roots</p>
<p>mackerel/plum</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: wax gourd juice</p>	<p>game meat/animal liver</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: breast milk & soy sauce</p>	<p>beef/catfish</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: green beans</p>

<p>bee honey/mitten crab</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: purified underground water</p>	<p>brown sugar/uncooked oyster</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: green beans</p>	<p>pumpkin/dried bonito</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: black beans and liquorice</p>
<p>chicken meat/plum</p>  <p>disease caused: diarrhea</p> <p>remedies: dried chicken droppings</p>	<p>persimmon/mitten crab</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: lotus roots</p>	<p>beef/Chinese chive</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: breast milk and soy sauce</p>
<p>uncooked peanut/mitten crab</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: purified underground water</p>	<p>burnt mulberry twig/boiled eel</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: purified underground water</p>	<p>eggplant/mitten crab</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: lotus roots</p>
<p>spinach/cow milk</p>  <p>disease caused: diarrhea</p> <p>remedies: green beans</p>	<p>melon/mitten crab</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: citrus peel</p>	<p>Chinese celery/turtle</p>  <p>disease caused: poisoning</p> <p>remedies: olive juice</p>