

# Festive feng shui

**Tamra Mercieca** chats to Feng Shui practitioner **Letina Wong Russell** to find out how to minimise eruptions between long-lost relatives, and create a harmonious atmosphere

**W**e all want Christmas and New Year to be as smooth and fun-filled as possible. That's where Feng Shui can help. Employing simple principles can protect the family home from other people's holiday stress while fashioning a beautiful environment. Let's face it, the festive season can be an emotional time!

Feng Shui is an ancient Chinese philosophy, which when translated, relates to the wind and water or the natural forces of the universe. It is said that Feng Shui manipulates the flow of 'chi' or energy, therefore bringing luck, prosperity and happiness into people's lives.

Wong Russell says energy cannot be seen, but we feel it, and utilise it everyday. "The sun's rays, although we cannot see them, feel fabulous when they shine on us, however too much can burn us. Currents of electricity and radio waves cannot be seen, but are useful and harmful at the same time.

"In the same way, the chi of the earth can be harnessed to maximise the helpful energy available to us, and reduce the harmful energies that exist. Getting the 'feng shui right,' is about balancing the energies that are present, and understanding how to best maintain this balance," says Wong Russell.

## How to get chi flowing

The first step to creating a beautiful environment is to clear out all the clutter. Try to keep a handle of what enters your home so you avoid living in Santa's grotto and feeling totally overwhelmed by the experience. "Energy flows in an environment that is clear, clean and clutter free. It becomes stagnant in dusty, cluttered places," says Wong Russell.

Christmas can bring with it a whole new opportunity for clutter to surreptitiously enter your home in the guise of gift paper, cards, party invites, decorations, unwanted gifts – the list goes on and on. Clear out the home before Christmas to allow space to welcome in friends, family and opportunities in the New Year.

Once you have cleared the space, Wong Russell advises to cleanse it with a clearing spray. "You can make your own with pure essential oils in a water spritzer. Light some natural beeswax or soy candles. The flickering flame is very yin, and creates a reflective mood. It also assists in maintaining the yin yang balance through what is often an extremely busy and hectic day."

She says the entrance, as the mouth of the home, is where the majority of chi enters. "A clean front porch with a Christmas wreath on the door symbolises an open, accepting and welcoming family. Ensure all cobwebs and dust

are swept away promoting a readiness to move forward in a positive direction."

Burning incense sticks before your guests arrive will also alter the energy of the home and those who enter it. Smoke has always been a great purifier, which is why you'll see large urns full of incense at the entrance of a Buddhist temple. People will stop to breathe in the smoke as a way of purifying their souls before entering the temple.

## Prime positioning for the Christmas tree

A pine tree is a traditional Chinese symbol for longevity! Interestingly, this is the tree that is the central focus of the Christmas season. Placing the tree in an area where the family often come together will help promote family harmony and abundance. If you're standing at the main entrance to the room, the best positioning is along the left side of the room, either centre left or far left corner.

Wong Russell says the tree needs to be safe, stable and secure, while being easily accessible and touchable. "The children will be rummaging underneath so there needs to be ample air and space around it. Remember to keep the glass balls and breakable decorations up a little higher if children are involved."

"The sight of a brightly lit Christmas tree through a window is evocative, but walking into a home, seeing and smelling a freshly cut tree creates a sensory delight and anticipation of what's to come. Positioning the tree so it's sighted as you walk into a home is ideal," says Wong Russell.

## Eat in harmony

Christmas meals should be enjoyed at a round or oval dining table as opposed to a rectangle one. A circular shape is symbolic of eternal unity, promoting harmony and equality with everyone seeing eye-to-eye. If a round table arrangement is not possible, be sure to set an even number of chairs.

A red tablecloth will stimulate appetite, but avoid putting spiky leaves on table decorations as they create a feeling of fear and aggressiveness. "Remove sharp knives from being on show in the kitchen. By placing them out of sight you symbolically diminish the scope for irritability and family arguments," says Wong Russell.

"High candles in the middle of a table can impair eye contact between guests, contributing to difficulties with communication. If possible, have a separate serving table to prevent overcrowding at the dinner table. The feeling of personal space between guests promotes comfort and ensures communication flow throughout the meal."

## Cheerful colourings

Colour plays an important role in determining your general mood and state of mind. Consider introducing strong Yang colours such as purple to create Feng Shui harmony in the home. Purple is a very powerful colour associated with the earth element and helps with balancing and grounding. That said, it is best to keep it away from the dinner table.

Wong Russell says the colour of your decorations help create festive cheer as well. "Use

white, metallic, gold and silver, especially in the northern area of the home. Black and deep dark navy blues are also a good choice. A pure metal wind chime with six or seven rods can also be hung to promote positive energy."

### Getting in the festive spirit

Wong Russell says anticipating the day will be full of tension will ensure a day full of tension. "Instead, spend a few moments every day from now, picturing the most fabulous Christmas day where everyone enjoys themselves, the company is fantastic, the food is tasty and everything flows smoothly. Visualise it coming together for you perfectly."

"On Christmas Eve when you climb into bed, set your intention to sleep soundly and wake up refreshed on Christmas morning. When you awake, take three to five minutes before you climb out of bed to notice positive aspects surrounding you. This will help align you with your most positive vibration so you're receptive to wonderful experiences that day," says Wong Russell. \*



## TIPS FOR CREATING MORE FESTIVE CHEER

### Do's

- Create a nativity scene. The symbology can draw the children in on Christmas Day.
- Place sofas and seating in your living room in a circular or octagonal shape: this aids favourable communication.
- Indulge the senses. Aromas such as pine or cinnamon add to the festive feeling.
- Burn candles in the North-East of the home. This will help avert danger, anger and arguments.

### Don'ts

- Avoid sitting guests with their backs to each other as this hinders the flow of communication.
- Avoid the use of mirrors – they can scatter energy and create a feeling of unease.
- Avoid L-shaped arrangements in the living area – it can cause imbalance or one family member to feel cut off from the rest.
- Avoid placing a large coffee table in the centre of your living room. Leave the space clear to free up chi flow.
- Don't put candles or a water feature in the west of the home – this will attract sickness.

