



When feng shui holds sway

Amanda Davey

FOR the uninitiated, feng shui remains a bit of a mystery and many tend to regard this ancient Chinese philosophy, with its enticing promises of harmony and balance, with scepticism that ranges from ignorance to derision and disbelief.

But to its practitioners and increasing numbers of followers, it's gospel.

Traditionally, feng shui (pronounced fong shway) is used to help choose a place to live and find an appropriate burial site. But to ensure their fair share of health, wealth and harmony, adherents nowadays tend to confine their practices to a bit of furniture redistribution and foliage realignment to achieve the positive energy, or Qi (pronounced chee).

While all this may sound a bit far-fetched and a confusing, the practice of feng shui is starting to take off among the savvy entrepreneur and interior designer set, who see it as an opportunity to augment their service offerings.

After all, who wouldn't want health, wealth and harmony along with their fair share of ying

and yang and a newly refurbished interior?

Proponents of feng shui stress the importance of adhering to its basic principles to ensure a harmonious environment but apparently domestic bliss can only be achieved if feng shui energies are expertly analysed each year.

And this is where clever feng shui consultancies come into the picture.

Founder of Feng Huang Consulting in Dee Why, Jane Dempster-Smith, says her business provides feng shui analysis for commercial and residential properties.

Her team will visit your home or workplace and check it out for things like paranormal activity – in which case it's best to then call a ghost buster – along with the current status of the energy flow.

"We are primarily brought in to ensure the energy is positive in the home or office," Ms Dempster-Smith said.

"While you'll never, ever get a perfect feng shui house, I can ensure you get the best from your environment."

Armed with her lou pan (Chinese compass) Ms Dempster-Smith will determine

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the "facing" of the building and then, by using special formulas and taking into account birth dates of residents and the age of the property, she claims she is able to ascertain which energies inhabit your home.

"The lou pan has 24 directions and I can find out what is wrong in the vicinity of the house as well as inside.

"For instance, I take note of the surrounding land forms and the houses on either side, and whether they are overpowering your house.

"If there is a lamp post or a sharp roof within five to 10 metres of the front door, then that is bad because it stops the good energy getting through your front door."



Founder of Feng Huang Consulting in Dee Why, Jane Dempster-Smith.

Once inside, Ms Dempster-Smith will move the furniture around if necessary to promote the positive Qi.

"You should have a lot of space at the front door so the energy can disperse throughout the house," she explained.

"If you have a narrow corridor then we look at placing something in the hallway to allow the Qi to meander."

Those in the process of moving house or buying land can also utilise the services of Ms Dempster-Smith and others like her to ensure their new home or prospective purchase is safe from any nasty energies.

"If you have the right environment outside, it's only a matter of fine tuning your home internally," she said.

The Feng Huang team will also work with architects in the preliminary design stage of a building to ensure each room is

placed appropriately to receive the most auspicious Qi.

Ms Dempster-Smith says homes designed by her will have good energy until 2043 "when the major energies change", although she did stress that each property should have an annual feng shui analysis in early February when the "annual energies change in each sector".

And if you are having trouble selling your home, feng shui-ing it just may be the answer – which, presumably, is the "wealth" benefit.

"Cutting back trees, adding a fountain or choosing the right day can create the right energy.

"You need the Qi in the environment to make the difference."

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