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Back to: [Malaysians Abroad](#)
Monday February 28, 2005

- [Attractions](#)
- [Interests](#)
- [Hotels](#)
- [Restaurants](#)
- [Transportation](#)
- [Msia My 2nd Home](#)
- [Travel Tips](#)
- [Services](#)
- [Shopping](#)
- [Travelogues](#)
- [Glossary](#)

Know M'sia

- [Faces of Malaysia](#)
- [Ethnicity & Religion](#)
- [Making a Difference](#)
- [Malaysians Abroad](#)
- [Culture & Arts](#)
- [The Arts](#)
- [Festivals](#)
- [Social Customs](#)
- [Malaysiana](#)
- [Health](#)
- [Community](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Government](#)
- Commerce M'sia
- [Opportunities](#)
- [Infrastructure](#)
- [Banking & Finance](#)
- [Biz Pointers](#)
- [Biz News](#)
- [Entrepreneurs](#)
- [Abroad](#)
- [Going Global](#)
- [Other Resources](#)
- Calendar
- [Events](#)
- [National Holidays](#)
- [State Holidays](#)
- [Postcards](#)

Feng shui to the fore

By CHARLES CHAN

Fact file

Name: Honey Lim Han Ni

Age: 29

Occupation: Web project manager, Sovereign Insurance Co
Education: Assunta Girls School, Petaling Jaya; University of Western Michigan

Current Base: Auckland, New Zealand

Hometown: Petaling Jaya

Years abroad: Seven years



Ask Honey Lim about feng shui and she has lots of interesting things to tell you.

Like the fact that she's a weekend practitioner of this ancient Chinese science in a land where the "dragons" are very *ong* (potent in Hokkien) in some places and where people perhaps know more about hobbits than how the elements of Earth, Metal, Wood, Wind and Fire affect their lives.

She'll tell you too how sorting out her feng shui problems enabled her to find her Mr Right.

A niece of renowned feng shui expert and best-selling author Lillian Too, this former student of Assunta Girls School in Petaling Jaya and business management graduate from the University of Western Michigan, United States, now lives in Auckland where she's employed as Web project manager in Sovereign Insurance, New Zealand's largest insurance company.

During the seven years she has been in New Zealand, Lim, 29, has also been actively involved in spreading greater Kiwi interest in feng shui through her website and by holding workshops in Auckland or Wellington "to clarify a lot of things".

Unlike Australia where it is already a very big thing, feng shui is still very young in New Zealand and a lot of people write in to her website asking questions.

"It is difficult to answer questions from so many people so it is easier to hold a workshop to clarify all the confusion."

"It's also more important (to have these workshops) here because of the Southern Hemisphere. There are books out here that say Southern Hemisphere feng shui is different when actually it is the same.

"There are quite a lot of confused practitioners in New Zealand who seem to feel that you have to flip the *paqua* (hexagram) and do all the things differently when you don't have to.

"These people who say the southern hemisphere feng shui has to change are using Western science to support their theory but feng shui is not a Western science. It is an Eastern science and the *paqua* is not a blueprint for the way the winds move or the way the sun rises.

"By coincidence in the Northern Hemisphere, the fire element is in the south because the southern part is warmer but that's not the reason that the fire element is in the south."

Clients who have benefited from her advice included New Zealanders, Chinese and some Indians who are drawn to feng shui because they have something similar called Vastu Sastra.

She tells of a Greek woman who lives in an apartment where the feng shui was not good for her husband who was having serious job problems.

"When she sent me the floor plan of her house, I immediately knew what was wrong because the kitchen was located in the north-west of the house."

Lim explains that the element metal is in the north-west and is good for the man of the house.

"If you have a kitchen there, it introduces the element of fire which destroys metal in the elemental cycle, and it actually destroys the luck of the man."

As the kitchen and bedroom were next to each other, she suggested a switch so that bedroom is relocated to face the north-west.

"She took my advice and changed the configuration of her apartment. Almost immediately after that, her husband was offered an amazing job and he became very famous and highly respected in his profession within a very short time."

In another case, she advised a woman whose husband was cheating on her to put some crystals under the bed. "She wrote to me that shortly after she had done this, her husband left his mistress and went back to her."

Getting her feng shui right helped Lim to meet her man.

"For all my life, I've lived in a house where the bathroom is in the south-west which depletes relationship luck. A lot of problems concerning marriage or women who can't find boyfriends can actually be attributed to south-west problems. I've seen many such cases.

"So it's just my karma that all my life until in my early 20s, I kept moving into houses that had this problem, and there's nothing I could do about it.



Lim, who is pregnant with her first child, finds the feng shui of Auckland with its undulating landscape and gentle winds very good.

ShIPLEY.

"He lives in New Zealand and he's Malaysian and I was then living in the United States. So the chances of us meeting were practically zero. But I was very good friends with his aunt. I had these free tickets to go to Hawaii. I wanted to take her along with me but she suggested I should go with her nephew whom I've never met.

"She said her nephew was visiting the United States and said I should arrange it with him. So I called him but he had no intention of coming to the United States at all – she was just having me on.

"But in that first conversation, we talked for a very long time, we got along very well, and over a few months, we e-mailed each other. Finally he decided to visit the United States to visit his auntie and that's how we met.

"After we met, things went very well, we carried on a long-distance relationship for two years. That was very silly because phone bills were very expensive. So I moved to New Zealand but in between I returned to Malaysia to help out with my aunt's company."

They got married in 2003 and now Lim is blissfully pregnant with their first child.

Lim says Patrick, 32, who now works in the Auckland City Council as economic planning strategist, became a believer in feng shui after meeting her.

Lim's interest in feng shui was stoked in the early 1990s when she read the first of many books written by her famous aunt. But long before that, she already had a deep interest in metaphysical things. "I was already into tarot reading, astrology, I-ching ... all these New Age things which I found very fascinating."

Lim says she would like to devote 100% of her time to feng shui "not just necessarily on consultation but to teach."

Her ultimate goal is to open in New Zealand one of her aunt's World of Feng Shui franchise shops of feng shui products.

"By 1998, after graduation and holding a job in the United States, I knew I had to do something. Oh dear, if I kept on living in these problem houses, I was never going to find somebody to marry. Like that, die-lah!" she says with a burst of laughter.

Her urgency was influenced by an astrologer who told her years ago that her marriage phase was between 1998 and 2004 and if she failed to find someone, the next marriage phase would be when she is in her 40s.

"I looked and looked for such an apartment and I could not find one within my price range and so I had to cough up more money to rent one in Michigan.

"I finally found one but had to pay more but it was worth it. This one had the main door facing my Wood direction, had no south-west problems, and I could activate my wealth sector."

Within a short period of moving into her apartment, Lim met Patrick Tay, then working as economic and financial planning advisor to former NZ Prime Minister Jenny

She is toying with the idea of writing a coffee table book on feng shui aspects of famous New Zealand buildings and landmarks.

“The contours of the land in Auckland are very gentle and undulating and the wind is very, very gentle. Auckland has very gentle, wizened dragons ... that’s very auspicious, very *ong*.

“The kind of dragons that are a bit more muscular, tightly fitted together, like those in Wellington, where the wind is very aggressive are also auspicious but not so auspicious as Auckland’s. In Christchurch, it’s all flat, in some cases there are very few mountains and not so much energy. The energy there is good but not so *ong*.

“Parliament has very good feng shui; that’s why New Zealand has such a powerful government and Opposition.”

Back to: [Malaysians Abroad](#)

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