

Holiday Choices Made Easy With Feng Shui

The holiday season offers us many choices; "Attitude is a choice. Happiness is a choice. Optimism is a choice. Giving is a choice. Respect is a choice. Whatever choice you make makes you....choose wisely." Roy T. Bennett

This is a time to give of yourself, your spirit, your energy, your time and your talents. It's also a time of decorating and surrounding yourself with the beauty of the season. No need for holiday anxiety if you let Feng Shui guide you.

Feng Shui, the ancient Chinese art of using your environment to create peace and harmony in your life is based on the concept of creating space for Ch'i, the positive energy to flow in. This energy is what you need to help you "breathe" through the holiday season. By using Feng Shui principles in your decorating and gift giving you can relax and enjoy this special time.

Feng Shui Holiday Gift Advice

If you're like me, you have so many people to shop for; not only family and friends but also for hostesses, teachers, hairdressers, colleagues, neighbors etc... One suggestion for the latter is to start early, pick a few signature gifts and buy multiples of them. Wrap and place them in a festive pile ready for you to grab one and go.

Many of my clients give the gift of harmony to their friends and family members. A Feng Shui Consultation gift certificate is the gift that keeps on giving and can transform a person's life. Go to www.fengsuibymaria.com to contact me for this personal and very special gift.

Here are a few others of my favorite gifts which have positive meanings in Feng Shui and will help nourish the receiver with Feng Shui energy:

- Healthy Plants – Round leaf ones represent prosperity. Potted Amaryllis bulbs represent transformation and growth and put on a spectacular show all winter.
- Cocktail Napkins – Pretty cotton ones are associated with entertaining and caring for your guests
- Home Fragrances - Scented candles are associated with fire and warmth, while room fresheners such as Thymes enhance the senses and help clear energy
- Small Spoons, Forks or Cheese Spreaders – Associated with nourishment through food, family and friends
- Wallet with Money – Tucking a bill in a wallet represents abundance
- Wind Chimes - Hang by the front door to attract positive energy to any location
- Purse Hanger - Use one to keep your purse off the floor and respect your wealth
- Precious Stones - Select citrine to attract clients and increased income, or amethyst for balance
- Books - Give the gift of reading to open up the world

For family and friends I try to keep notes of what they like or need throughout the year. Otherwise I focus on consumables, like gourmet food baskets, bath products or having items personalized for them which in Feng Shui represents a special connection. My husband's family likes to pick one gift to give to all members, such as a comfy fleece jacket in all our sizes.

Gifts to Avoid:

- Sharp Object - Represents cutting a friendship (A traditional practice throughout Europe and Asia is of giving a coin in return for receiving a sharp object to keep the friendship intact. My Italian mother taught me this practice. Whenever I received a sharp object I would give the giver a penny with a big smile of gratitude. Give your friend a coin and enjoy your knives and your friendship!)
- Empty Wallet - Represents lack of prosperity
- Thorny Flower or Plant - Represents piercing a relationship
- Stunted Tree like Bonsai - Represents stunted growth
- Clock or Timepiece - Represents stealing time
- Handkerchief - Represents crying in the future

Whatever you give, give with love and gratitude. It will all come back to you!

Holiday Decorating Enhances Your Space

Whether you decorate with a Menorah or Christmas tree, the objects you bring in to your home for the holidays will represent energy. Menorahs add fire to any room, Christmas Trees represent growth, and all the bright colors, lights, garlands, and traditional objects make the home's energy flow easily and create an environment for family gatherings. As you decorate think about using the Feng Shui Bagua to help guide you in placement. You can use the Bagua on the whole house, or for the main room where you will be entertaining. Place the Bagua over the entry of the room and use the attributes of each area to guide you in altering that room's energy by selecting the areas where you place your decorations: Green

for family growth, red for action, pink for relationship, white or metal for intuition, purple for abundance, blue for knowledge and yellow for centering and good health.

The Bagua

The Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, is represented as a grid of nine sectors. The Bagua comes from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams”, with the center being for centering and grounding.



Career Area (Water Element)

*Items in black or very dark colors, glass/crystal items, water features

Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area (Wood Element)

*Items in wood, the colors of blues, greens, plants (great location for Christmas tree)

Friends/Family/Health Area (Wood Element)

*Floral arrangements or art depicting vibrant flowers, photos of family, friends health (gathering spot for family)

Wealth Area (Fire Element)

*Opulent items in the purple color spectrum, Healthy, round leaf plants (great location for presents)

Fame Area (Fire Element)

*The color red, items representing the fire element with candles and lighting

Love and Marriage Area (Fire Element)

*Pairs of items, art or photos depicting romance, reds, and pinks

Children and Creativity Area (Metal Element)

*Items in metal, colors of white and pastels, whimsical art, pictures of children

Helpful People and Travel Area (Metal Element)

*Art or figures pertaining to spiritual guides, angels, metal and colors of white, black or grey

Center Area

*Ceramics, the colors yellow, earth tones, and rectangle shapes

As you can imagine, your holiday decorations can fit easily in all these areas. Christmas trees work well in Knowledge, Family and Health, but because of all the colors, lights, garland and ornaments can represent all of the elements and act as five element displays wherever placed. Menorahs representing fire enhance any of the three fire areas, but like the Christmas tree, depending on the colors and what it is made of they can also hold all of the elements. You really can't go wrong with holiday decorations!

Important Feng Shui Tip

Clear the clutter from the room before you begin decorating, and keep it clutter free. This will help your calm, holiday energy flow and prevent your holiday communications from being “messy.”

Feng Shui at Work

A friend decorates for Christmas by bringing in a myriad of stuffed bears. She places most of them in her Knowledge and Self Cultivation area of the house where she has her Christmas tree and holiday decorations. Most of these bears are vintage, and hold many wonderful family memories. She liked the look so much that she kept some out for the rest of the year. They add a familiar coziness to her home.

A client moved into a new home where the Love Area was located in the back corner of the living room behind the couch. It became a storage area and location for the cat box. Her relationship with her significant other spiraled downhill. Their young children also contributed to the active chaos of the room and the stress escalated. She’s planning to declutter and decorate the area eventually, but for now she spent time decorating for Christmas. The Love Area now hosts a beautiful tree, with shining lights. The room is decluttered, and stockings, candles and a Christmas village adorn the fireplace in the Fame Area. She sent me pictures, and the shift in energy is palpable. The room is glowing, the children are happier and she is getting clarity in her relationship. Moving the Ch’i always creates change!

Affirmations:

Remember that in Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your home or business. All enhancements need to be made with intentionality; written or stated affirmations, expressed as if they are already happening are very important, *“I have many blessings this holiday season,”* *“Our relationship is strong and will guide us through this experience.”*

I wish you a holiday filled with goof choices including family, friends, harmony, happiness, food and festivity.

For questions or home consultations email at mtmccull@aol.com and put “Feng Shui” on the subject line, or visit my website at www.fengshuibymaria.com, (where you can read past columns), or Facebook “Feng Shui by Maria”, where I post pictures as examples to enhancements.

* **Check out my BLOG – Just go to the website and click on “Blog”:** You can view many pictures and, I will respond to your questions quickly.

Until then...Blessings!

Maria McCullough, a is the owner / founder of **Feng Shui by Maria** (www.fengshuibymaria.com) and is a speaker and educator with over 20 years of experience, specializing in residential, landscape and business consultations. She is a graduate of the Western School of Feng Shui and has personally trained with Terah Kathryn Collins, founder of the Western School of Feng Shui, specializing in Essential Feng Shui® and author of numerous books including “The Western Guide to Feng Shui.”