

LATEST TRIP TO SURINAME

I recently returned to Suriname in South America and I have to say that it felt just wonderful to be back. After five trips, I now feel familiar with many locations in Paramaribo and of course, know many people there, so it's always great to see these friends and to see how they and their families are progressing. Some now even have their first grandchildren!

However, this time my itinerary took me via Hong Kong and Amsterdam. It had been quite some time since I last visited Hong Kong and I was very keen to see just what had become of one of my favourite cities. Although the city was just as vibrant and exciting as ever, I was somewhat shocked at just how much of the harbour has been and continues to be reclaimed and filled-in.

I was fortunate enough to be able to organise meetings with several very well known feng shui masters in advance and two of them expressed their concern to me at the rate at which the breadth of the water in the harbour is being filled in. Particular concern was expressed at the rate at which very high buildings are now being built across the waterfronts of both Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula. The fear being that those established businesses now behind the new high rises are being crowded out and will no longer be able to see the water. Great lengths however, are still being taken in some cases to accommodate the feng shui as the picture below demonstrates. The hole in this building has been left to allow the dragon's of the Kowloon Peninsula to reach the waters of the harbour and drink from its *fragrant waters*.



Building in Hong Kong left open to allow the Dragons to come to water. As always when in Hong Kong, I was fascinated by

the huge array of excited holiday-snap taking tourists who in fact have no idea just what it is they are seeing; a case once again of looking but not seeing the feng shui all around them.

My next stop was Amsterdam. I was lucky enough to stay with friends, right in the very heart of the city, just a stone's throw from Central Station. With my friends to act as local guides around this wonderful old city, I had a fascinating time discovering the feng shui of one of Europe's richest trading centres. A day trip to Rotterdam and a tiki tour of Europe's biggest harbour began to confirm for me that the Netherlands' history of successful trade and wealth accumulation can be attributed in no small part to her wonderful waterways – much like that of Venice.

Built with its myriads of canals in patterns resembling a spider's web, one quickly notices that at no point from any of the very many waterways in Amsterdam can any view out to the open ocean be seen. This helps to *lock* in the water and with it, the positive water chi and the prosperity it brings.

On arrival in Paramaribo, a truly hectic schedule followed as many clients were waiting for my return. I was asked to give two evening talks and a half day lecture at the university to a group of architectural students. This turned out to be a very stimulating day for everyone involved and it is hoped more is to follow.

An overnight trip to the wonderful resort of Overbridge next, to where the original capital of Suriname was once located, was particularly enjoyable. Clients very kindly organised a boat trip to the very famous up-river site of Joden Savanne which from 1665 was the centre for settlement of several hundred Sephardic Jews who, having fled the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition in Europe, faced continued Catholic prejudice in Brazil. The then governor of the burgeoning colony of Suriname invited them to exercise their skills in international trade. Of course like the rest of the Americas at this stage, economic growth was made at the tragic expense of thousands of Africans stolen from Ghana and stolen into slavery. At one point in Joden Savanne's history a population of approximately 600 citizens owned 9,000 slaves.

Little now remains of the once thriving settlement, except two fascinating cemeteries and the brick foundations of the first synagogue in the Americas.



Joden Savanne gravestone dated late 1600's explains in pictographs the deceased's story who was a baker: (the loaves of bread in the first pictogram, that he died young (the angel chopping the tree of life indicates an early death) and that he was buried at this spot (skull and crossbones).

One highlight of the trip to Overbridge was watching the sun come up across the Suriname River as the howler monkeys roared their dawn choruses. I always love doing this when in Suriname.

QUOTE:

The character of a man is known from his conversations.

Unknown

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A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON AIR FRANCE FLIGHT 447

I was especially interested in this story as I flew along a parallel flight path just one day before when flying from Paramaribo back to Amsterdam.

Air France's Flight 447, with a four-year-old Airbus A330, left Rio on Sunday at 7:30pm local time (2230 GMT) with 216 passengers and 12 crew members on board. The plane left Brazil radar contact, past the Fernando de Noronha archipelago, about three hours later (10:48 Brazil time, 0148 GMT), indicating it was flying normally at 35,000 feet (10,670m) and travelling at 840km/h. About a half-hour after that, the plane sent an automatic signal indicating electrical problems while going through strong turbulence. The plane then "crossed through a thunderous zone with strong turbulence" at 0200 GMT Monday according to Air France and an automatic message was received 14 minutes later reporting electrical failure and a loss of cabin pressure. That was the last communication sent from the plane, at that stage it would have been about 100km south of the Cape Verde Islands, according to the Brazilian Air Force.

If we apply Five Element theory to the time frame of this tragic accident some interesting things come to light. This kind of analysis is normally done by considering the time frame of the event.

The current year is that of the Heavenly Stem of small earth sitting on top of the Ox (earth). In spite of the double earth element, this is considered to be a weak earth year (due to the weakness of the earth of

the Ox), and so is not good for the airline industry which belongs to the fire element. Without fire in the Year Pillar, it signals problems for the airline industry as a whole. *This was the same as last year in which we saw at least two airlines (Alitalia and Oasis) collapse and others, such as Qantas and American Airlines suffer significant maintenance and near-miss problems. One might also remember the issues surrounding the opening of Terminal 5 at Heathrow last year.*

Conversely, the Month Pillar is that of Yang Metal (an airplane) sitting on top of the Horse. In Five Element theory, fire is the conqueror of metal and since the horse is fire, we can imagine an airplane amidst fire – hardly a comforting thought.

The day Pillar was that of Yin Fire over the Ox (earth) – so the image is one of flickering flames over the earth. The Hour Pillar was that of Yang Fire (lightening) over the Horse which is also a fire sign. Combined we can see that these all combine to give some kind of explosion over the earth, involving an airplane.

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QUOTE:

“Tea and books: Mmmmm two of life's exquisite pleasures that together bring near-bliss.”

READER'S QUESTION:

Jim asks:

What is it about 'Lucky Bamboo' that's so special?

Answer:

Nothing; it's not the Lucky Bamboo that actually does the trick. It's the large glass vase of water that dissolves the metal of the 7's we place it in that counts. The addition of the 3 stems of 'Lucky Bamboo' simply *pulls* the water into a further productive cycle. This means that we should always keep the water level high in the vases. To expand: the reason we have three stems of the 'Lucky Bamboo' is that since the number 7 represents yin metal and 3 represents yang wood, this combination maintains a perfect balance not only between yin and yang but also between metal and its child – water - running into the third cycle of wood.

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