

Tales of powerful, threatening dragons and the heroes and heroines who battled them have been the subject of folklore since ancient times. From the epic clash of the eponymous hero of the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf* with the monster/dragon

Grendel, to Raphael's Renaissance painting of *St. George and the Dragon*—nearly every culture has some version of this mythical beast.

The legendary reptile has won a place in our hearts, our stories—and our decor. It's especially fitting

right now to show touches of dragon design, because 2012 marks the Year of the Dragon in the Chinese zodiac.

Many have developed fond feelings for Chinese astrological signs—maybe the result of

**| Ear No Evil**

Subtle elegance abounds with diamond and agate dragon drop earrings, \$1,650 from Daniela Swaebe. (maxandchloe.com)



**| Crouching Dragon**

A prime addition to a bookshelf, this dragon statue cast in resin looks like a hand-carved antique, \$24.99. (homegoods.com)



**| Fancy Feast**

Slay a dull table setting by adding Mottahedeh's "Blue Dragon," \$195 for 5-piece place setting. (mottahedeh.com)



**Our Designers Say...**

When given the challenge of being asked to decorate with an over-the-top dragon theme, designer **Kevin Isbell** insists he "would electrify one of those Chinese New Year's parade dragons and suspend it from the ceiling!" When asked to decorate with restraint, he says that one might see "the occasional foo dog here and there."

Designer **Alexa Hampton's** fascination with dragons started at a young age, "As a 10-year-old watching *Grease* in the movie theater, I fell in love with the dragon-decorated silk kimono that one of the pink ladies wore at the sleepover where they tried to pierce Sandy's ears. I've loved dragon motifs ever since." And her over-the-top spot to place a dragon design? "A powder room is always the best place for a folly!"

Candid and frank, designer **Celerie Kemble** says, "No," when asked about decorating based on a person's sign. "I have never really believed in astrology—Chinese or otherwise. According to my sign, I'm supposed to be a hairdresser, and I can barely work a believable ponytail. I'm for decorating the way people want—often that is the opposite of what they already have, or perhaps are, astrologically. For instance, a really frenetic dominant person may be desperate for a soothing, quiet home."

**| Perfectly Scaled**

Natori's expressive brass dragon candelabra sets a sassy mood atop a mantel or table, \$300. (natori.com)



**| Flower Power**

"Dragon Flower" hand-screened wallpaper from designer Sheila Bridges is available in four colorways, \$150 per roll. (studiofournyc.com)

