

## HOROSCOPE

**ARIES**  
(MAR. 21-APRIL 20)

Don't let your partner spend too much. Put down the effort if you really want something. Don't neglect your duties. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

**TAURUS**  
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Your colourful conversation will make you very attractive. Deception is likely. Opportunities will arise from organisational events. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

**GEMINI**  
(MAY 22-JUNE 21)

Difficulties with your partner may lead to isolation. Get your priorities straight. Don't count your chickens before they hatch. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

**CANCER**  
(JUNE 22-JULY 22)

Ask a close friend for advice. Existing problems must be dealt with. Sudden visitors could bring problems with your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

**LEO**  
(JULY 23-AUG 22)

Don't believe everything you hear. Put your emotional energy into passion. Your intellectual charm will win hearts. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

**VRGO**  
(AUG. 23-SEPT. 23)

Lay all your cards on the table. Don't go looking for revenge. Hard work will not go unnoticed. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

**LIBRA**  
(SEPT. 24-OCT. 23)

Be good to loved ones this week. Put your energy into self-improvement programs. Hide your cards and learn to say no. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

**SCORPIO**  
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Take centre stage at organisational functions. Someone may not have your best interests at heart. Check your motives. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Listen to the complaints of others. Avoid disputes with family. Don't jump to conclusions regarding your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

**CAPRICORN**  
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

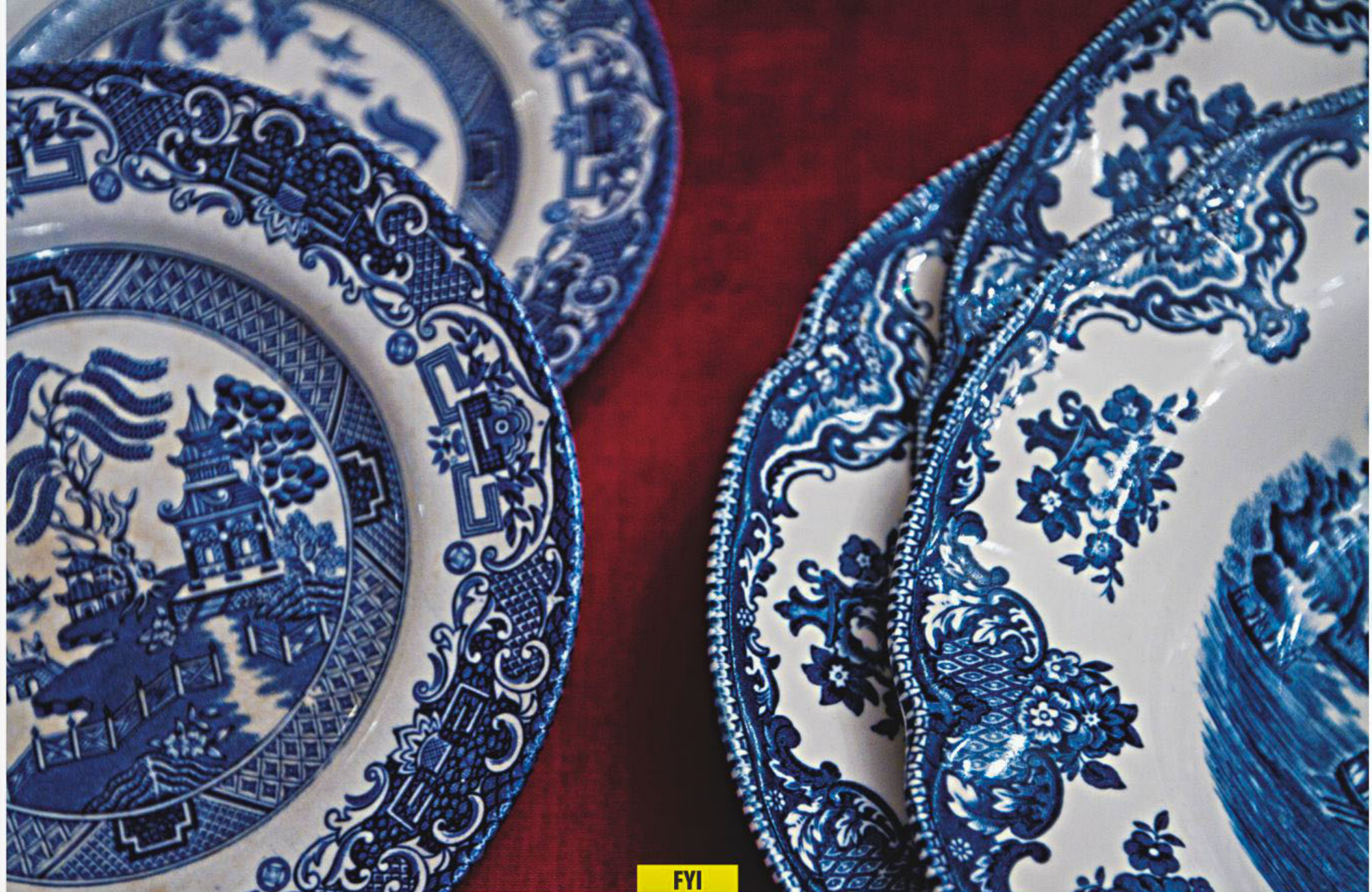
Try not to make enemies. Travel will be costly. Make drastic changes in your professional direction. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

**AQUARIUS**  
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Organise your day if you wish to accomplish everything. Family outings will strengthen ties. Visit loved ones who aren't well. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

**PISCES**  
(FEB. 20-MARCH. 20)

Travel will be in your best interest. Loved ones could be unreasonable. Lovers will be less than accommodating. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



FYI

# A blue glazed in white

Home decor magazines may have their blazing trends that burn off last season's peak, but there is one that never leaves the pages- the eternal blue-white porcelain. From the tiniest floral or animal shaped palm-sized pieces to gargantuan vases that top over an adult's head and all that is in between- this time defining colour style is immensely popular among the pottery lovers of the world.

It is next to impossible to visualise porcelain without the blue and white. Modern day connoisseurs can get their hands on any style from just about anywhere. Whether it is gaping Chinese dragons, the hand-painted intricately patterned Turkish geometric flower designs, the windmills in Dutch Delftware, or even the mass produced transfer printed ceramics like Chintzware- you can have it all!

Call it the most advanced technique in ceramic making or argue if it is the best there is in designs- there is no denying that you hold a piece of history, even a civilisation, when you are showing off your porcelain collection!

## WINDING BACK THE CLOCKS

From the cradle of civilisations, we find blue (derived from cobalt and copper pigments) being used extensively from the ancient Egyptian times in various ceramic figurines and utensils. However, blue was almost unknown until the 5th century as a colour for vase painting. And it was not until the 9th century that blue emerged as an essential ornamentation in glazed ceramic pottery in the Middle East, specifically in Iraq, as findings indicate. It was not until the 13th century that the form was perfected in China. By then, the blue-white pottery had become well-known throughout Asia. It is interesting to note how porcelain went from one end of Asia to the other, and in-between, gathered more to its development instead of being compressed into mere utensils! A seasoned curator can, just from

the softness and flow of the porcelain's glaze, pinpoint a piece back to which era it came from, even without looking at the tell-tale seal of the maker placed at the bottom of a piece.

Antique masterpieces and archaeological markers aside, admirers of this particular work finally were able to give this wondrous work a place in their homes as mass production started, thanks to porcelain transfer printing in the 18th century in Europe.

Whatever the place of origin, the blue-white porcelain continues to enchant eyes and homes. It is of little doubt that this is one of the finest and most enduring techniques in porcelain adornment.

Be it trade or business, this form still continues to thrive in its many varied forms.

## MAKING THE BEST USE OF BLUE-WHITE PORCELAIN

There is a saying that a well-placed turquoise porcelain vase in the right place can easily outshine diamonds on a beautiful woman. But sadly, a vase of such grandeur is as rare as the said diamond and its wearer!

If you have, at your hand, even a small selection of blue-white porcelain bought from a local store, you are already set. To create accents in a simple room, place your pieces in singles next to elements you want to draw attention to, like the photo of your family or an interesting work of art. In a room where a lot of elements are involved, consider clustering the small pieces together to make a soothing presence.

If you have a well-behaved household, large vases can double-time as plant holders on the floor while making a standout statement in a room.

The dinnerware, while an exceptional presentation for your guests, may also be utilised as excellent occasional show pieces.



## A surprise from THE NILE

While we hop across time and continents for the most awe-inspiring of blue and white, there is a very special blue that has to be mentioned. Egyptian faience is often overlooked from pottery as this technique does not include any clay, but figurines and utensils made by this technique boast a vibrant blue. Out of the many discoveries, the blue faience hippopotamus figurines are the most recognised. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York even named a figurine in their collection William and made it their mascot!

Photo: Collected

Don't think a porcelain jar is too good to use as a make-up brush holder or as the container of your hidden stash of candy, it is through these everyday use that these pieces become a special part of the user.

By Iris Farina  
Photo: LS Archive