

New Western Cuisine.



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享食怡夏

Open Air Gourmet

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2012 is a year that has witnessed considerable global change and that is continuing to show the world that far greater change is inevitable....and not all for the good.

The Haves in the west and the developed nations continue to be attached to their dwindling resources; the growing aspirational middle classes in the east and the developing countries around the world reach for the things that they believe will insure them middle class status and the western experience, but combined with their eastern or developing country values and ideals....while the growing number of desperate Have Nots struggle for survival each day, trapped in extreme poverty...not hoping for the good life, but just to graduate to a life of poverty, rather than extreme poverty, that their suffering will be slightly less severe. And the earth is warming.

At the same time the empires and rulers who have dominated the global scene for the past twenty-five to fifty years and more are being succeeded by new centers of power, wealth and ambition. The powers that are quickly losing influence are in denial and struggle to maintain their dominance and influence. The new powers-that-be are flexing their muscles to show the world that they are now on the rise and that one day the world must deal with them on their terms. And so, it goes: The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; The Sun Never Sets on the British Empire; and now, The Decline and Fall of the American empire. But unless global warming is addressed on a far greater scale and the nations of the world convert to sustainable sources of energy from fossil fuels, the future of life on the planet as we know it is in doubt and with far more severe consequences for the poor than the rich.

Among the increasing centers of influence is the Muslim world, whose commanding presence is returning as in centuries past when their empires spanned much of the known world. But it is the Muslim terrorists and extremists, those determined to drive all aspects of western influence from the Middle East and Asia Pacific, using violence to achieve their goals that should be of the greatest concern for all freedom loving people. Unfortunately, I see them gaining influence and succeeding in some of their goals. The threat that one or more of these terrorist organizations will secure a dirty bomb or nuclear device and detonate it in a high population area of one or more western cities is increasingly a grave possibility. These are very challenging times and 2012 is and will continue to be a year of dramatic change in every way imaginable.

But the most acute global issues are clearly poverty, disease, slavery & human trafficking and global warming. These global problems can only be addressed successfully by first narrowing the growing schism between those who have wealth and those who have little or nothing. The United Nations and all governments the world over must join hands to protect all who would be trafficked; and truly abolish slavery from the face of the earth, not simply enacting laws that go unenforced. These good works are now more possible than ever, because of today's hi-

tech innovation and the globalization of communications and transportation. Too many of the wealthy and comfortable middle classes around the world have closed their hearts to the plight of the poor; they do not admit their connection with all others; they think that what has become theirs is not to be shared outside their immediate or extended families. They reason that the suffering of the world is not their responsibility; but if it is not the responsibility of all others, whose responsibility are the poor? The governments in most countries are the people or alternately, governments by the few manipulating the many, directing their country's natural resources to fund their absolute control and to bankroll lavish, ostentatious spending on themselves, their relatives, cronies and supporters at the expense of those less fortunate.

If there was no poverty and every person had access to clean drinking water, good nutrition, adequate housing, clothing in which they may take a minimum of pride, protection from disease, good schools, access to affordable and efficient, modern mass transportation, employment and government safety nets for universal, quality health care and adequate pensions for the elderly; then the forces of evil would find few supporters wishing to overthrow governments and carry-out terrorist missions.

2012 Be it a Year of Sharing

Sound like "too perfect" a world to be possible? Of course it is possible: The world already has the resources to make it a reality; it is just that those with the power hoard most of the world's wealth and resources to allow themselves to live better quality lives at the expense of the poor: Or to be blunt, "On the backs of the poor". Since the beginning of time, man has fought over the bounty of the land and enslaved those who lack the ability to defend themselves. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Time will tell if the changes on the horizon will come about peacefully or as a result of bloodshed; or a mix thereof. But if history is any measure of what is to come, change will come, but at a very high price. Lives will be lost, weapons of mass destruction will be employed by all sides and it will be known as the final confrontation between good and evil; rich and poor; those who would enslave and those who seek freedom from slavery.

When it is clear that this final, global confrontation has begun, it will be for each of us to decide who to support. Let your conscience be as clear as the White Light that awaits us all on leaving this reality, this dimension: Give yourself without reservation to those determined to make this world a healthy, happy place for all people, regardless of their race, creed, color or nationality and dedicated to insuring that everyone shares some of what is theirs with all others in need. The people of the world are One: It is simply for each of us to recognize our connection to all others; to honor and celebrate this connection with an open heart and the most sincere of good intentions that all living beings be able to benefit equally from Mother Earth's bountiful resources and live in dignity, peace and harmony. I am **Red Owl**, Ever Vigilant, over & out.

