

Peacock and Dragon (Gallery 4)



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What's the story?

The dragon in design was inspired by Chinese art; and the peacock may have been inspired by a phoenix or Islamic Simurgh (an enormous colourful bird with a wonderful tail). There is not a specific story associated with this design, but it may have been inspired by Chinese myths such as this one:

Long ago, Jade Dragon lived in a cave and Golden Phoenix in a nearby forest. One day they found a shiny pebble and carved it into a pearl shape. Golden Phoenix gathered dewdrops

from a sacred mountain and Jade Dragon collected clear water from Celestial River. When they washed the pebble with this it turned into a pearl. They were enchanted with the pearl's beauty.

When Goddess of the Earth found out about the pearl she wanted it and sent her guards to steal it when Jade Dragon and Golden Phoenix were asleep. When they awoke they looked for the pearl but could not find it. The Goddess of Earth had locked it away to hide its light. On her birthday she took it out to show it to the other gods and goddesses. Its light shone down to earth and Golden Phoenix saw it. Jade Dragon and Golden Phoenix flew towards the pearl and fought with the Earth Goddess to try to get it back.

In the struggle the pearl fell to earth where it formed a clear green lake. Jade Dragon and Golden Phoenix could not bear to be parted from the pearl, so they transformed themselves into mountains beside the lake where they are to this day –East Lake in Western China.