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Shanghai Experience

By Wong Yee Lee

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Shanghai experience

Recently I had a chance to spend four days in Shanghai. It was a wonderful experience and I was not at all surprised to see that Shanghai is really a city which is developing itself prosperously and positively.

I was staying in a three-star hotel in which you can see as many foreign visitors as you can in a HK hotel. When I had the chances to go shopping in one of the busiest shopping streets, I found that things sold in HK can also almost all be found there, except that if you were expecting things to be there cheaper, then you would be absolutely disappointed.

All the meals I had were served in Shanghainese style – 8 cold appetizers followed my 8 hot dishes. All were very delicious. One would notice that Shanghai people are not the meat-eaters in HK. They tend to serve quite a few vegetarian dishes, except that they are able to think of many different styles of frying them in different sauces like cabbage in black bean sauce, stir fry green beans, various mushrooms fried in oyster sauce, etc. Do ask for more chopsticks and spoons if you want to be more hygienic since it seems that they do not have the practice as in HK of using a pair of shared chopsticks for everyone.

They seem to like serving dessert in the middle of each meal and a soup would come at the end. Tea is not served in the same way as in HK. Tea would be served but if you want a refill, you will have to ask for it and so this only can make the waitress busy enough.

We were a bit surprised to see that we were not served any meat buns in baskets which is one of the most famous food in Shanghai. Interesting enough we were told that these meat buns are not classy enough to be served to guests. At the end, we decided to go to the most famous place which serves these buns on our own in Yu Garden – Nan Cheong Man Tou Dian. Remember one thing, do not just go to the second floor because it only serves the typical meat buns at a price of 15RMB for 16 buns. Go to the third floor then you can experience the real crab meat buns which serves 6 buns at a price of

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40RMB. A huge difference!

At the end of our trip, we took a chance to take the Transrapid System which took us to the airport from the city in just 8 minutes. It is the fastest rail system in commercial operation in the world. At its top speed of 430km/h, it really gave us a thrilling experience and made the 50RMB worth the cost!

However, one strong disappointment hit us when we got to the airport. Knowing that we still had more than an hour before the departure gate closed, we hoped to enjoy a cup of coffee. Inside the restricted area, we failed to find any proper cafes and the only place we found offered proper coffee at a price of 48RMB and instant coffee at a price of 28RMB. Considering that the area was not particularly well-kept, coffee at such a price was obviously not worthwhile.

All in all, the experience was a very good one. I am sure that Shanghai will continue to set as a good model for many other cities to follow in China and we are proud of home country.

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China – Shanghai, Bustling Boom Town

By John Riley

Like many international metropolises composed of immigrants, Shanghai is a bustling boom town. Rapidly becoming a world economic powerhouse, there is more construction occurring in Shanghai than anywhere else on Earth.

For the traveler there is also a variety of things to do. Situated on the banks of the Yangtze River delta and being one of the largest cargo ports in the world, there are trips down that mammoth waterway daily.

Once largely a den of thieves and prostitutes and the center of China's opium trade, business in the 'City on the Sea' has evolved. It now hosts the country's stock market alongside thousands of other businesses. Home to some of the finest restaurants, one of the world's largest hotels and high rise buildings, Shanghai has moved well beyond its grimy past.

The Bund (Wai Tan) is one of the more popular tourist destinations in Shanghai. Despite the German sounding name, the area retains its international flavor.

Neo-classical buildings and a waterfront promenade attract thousands daily. Tourists jostle with the local street vendors while admiring the 1925 Nissin Kisen Kaisha Shipping building. The restaurant on the seventh floor is a local favorite.

Others prefer the roof terrace restaurant at the 1916 Union Assurance building. From here, visitors can

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enjoy a spectacular view of Pudong, the center of Shanghai's resurgence as a major world city.

High-priced boutiques offer shopping that even a Parisian or Manhattanite will envy. Louis Vuitton, Christian Dior, Ralph Lauren and dozens of others now have stores here.

After 400 years in existence, the Yu Yuan Gardens retain their reputation as one of the city's most sought out tourist destinations. The botanical treasure trove offers five acres of Chinese creativity in horticulture.

Xintiandi is another of Shanghai's many refurbished areas. It's now home to elegant restaurants and upscale clubs, yet retains many features of its 19th century architecture.

The Ten Thousand-Flower Pavilion, Grand Rockery, Hall of Jade Magnificence and other sections will each offer sights and aromas to anyone looking for an oasis in the busy metropolis.

One of the newer additions to Shanghai's burgeoning list of attractions is the Shanghai Museum. Opened in 1996, it features 11 modern galleries that display both ancient and contemporary artifacts.

Be sure to allow at least a week to see Shanghai properly. Even at that, you'll find that – like visiting Manhattan – there will still be more to see on a second trip.

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