

**Expeditions Fund Award Report**  
**By Duc Huy Peter Nguyen and Joy Ly**



This was our first time in China. The trip around 3 weeks and it was one of the greatest experiences in our lives.

The initial plan was to study Mandarin at our host university ECUST. However, we were very disappointed in the level of commitment and level of quality of their classes, we decided to spend our time more meaningfully throughout our stay in Shanghai. Despite we complained about the classes, and we did pay for them, we were not able to get refunded.



Nevertheless, that did not stop us from exploring Shanghai our own way. With the limited internet available to us, we planned our remaining days thoroughly, converting it from a disaster trip to a trip of a life time!

We spent our days exploring Shanghai, walking down unknown paths with only a sheet of paper stating our accommodation address as our saviour. We discovered many things in Shanghai which are different from the usual London lifestyle we were so used to.



An example is the police mobile which is small and handy enough to fit through traffic during peak times when congestion is at its worse throughout Nanjing Road - the shopping central of Shanghai.

Disney Land Shanghai, the newest addition to the Disney Land Resorts was a day trip to remember! We visited it when it was just about a month old, it was also our first visit ever. They were right when they say that you are never too old for Disney Land, as we enjoyed it very much, searching around the whole resort for the stamps to fill in our little Disney Passports!



The Bund is where you will have an amazing view of the city of Shanghai. Where you will see iconic buildings such as the Oriental Pearl Tower and the Bottle Opener. We frequently visited this spot as it was lovely and always has a cooling breeze to contrast the immense humidity of Shanghai.



The great thing about Shanghai is that other than the full blown tourist sites, there are many other places which we could enjoy ourselves away from the noise pollution. Shanghai offers many little museums which are as good as well funded museum! We visited the insect museum and it was incredibly fun! There were not many insects but many reptiles and had a bridge with large koi fish which we could feed!



Food is cheap and amazing - as long as you stick to what you know! There are many different sides to the Shanghai cuisine which is both flavourful and unique! I did not find a dish that we had to disagree with. But we must admit that we am very open to new flavourful experiences!



There are plenty of streets which are riddled with culture and markets for you to explore. For example, Tianzifang, an amazing street full of life is tucked into very tight alleyways right next to a well established shopping centre! Ironically, the alleyways are much more packed than the centre itself! In these alleyways you can find things ranging from food to souvenirs to clay masters who can make you into a mini clay model of yourself!



Of course, as much as Shanghai is riddled with tourism, it has many enlightening spots such as the Jade Buddha Temple. It is a holy place for Buddhists to pay their respects to great large golden idols. The area was serene and calming, the aura that filled the place cancelled out all the noise pollution despite being in the middle of an immensely busy city.

Overall, we enjoyed my stay in Shanghai, we have learnt much about it and over the 3 weeks we felt as though we were true Shanghai residents. Without the funding from the expedition fund we would never have had as many experiences as we did. These experiences helped us grow as humans. A part of us have been left in Shanghai and inside of us will always have a part of Shanghai.