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2013/12

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## CITY SCENE

**What's Happening:** The most important dates this month  
**Stat:** Spam Attack  
**Going Underground:** Xuanwumen, Lines 2 and 4  
**Scene & Heard:** Go on, take a look at yourselves, you beautiful people

06

## COVER FEATURE

Not everyone is going away for the end of the year, but home for the holidays here in Beijing can still have meaning. The city's top party planners shared their secrets for house party success.

12

## FOOD & DRINK

**What's New:** Chi, Isola, Mai, Sweet Tooth Bakery, Zeit Berlin, La Tavernita, Parnas, Entourage, The Garage  
**Dining Feature:** One-stop shopping for a holiday meal  
**Taste Test:** Microwavable Duck  
**Back For More:** Lan Na Thai, Face  
**Just Desserts:** Hot Chocolate, L'Atelier  
**Wikipedia:** R is for ... *roubing*, *rufu*, *ruan chao*  
**Last Orders:** Karl Long, Paddy O'Shea's  
**Alleyway Gourmet:** Fujian cuisine  
**Drinks Feature:** Holiday Cocktails  
**Cocktail Profiler:** Vincent of D&M Bar  
**Made in China:** Local vintages for gifting  
**Dining Q&A:** Hubert Keller, Burger Bar  
... plus what we've loved eating this month

20

## GO

**Inspect a Gadget:** Holiday gifts for techies  
**What's New Venues:** Ubi Gallery, Xiaoji Studio, Nice To Meat You  
**Get the Look:** Learn from this month's most stylish

54

## MEET

**Feature interview:** Sara Jane Ho  
**Feature interview:** The Cardigans  
**Feature interview:** Cat Power  
**Screentime:** Dayyan Eng  
**Uniformity:** Robin Koob  
**Feature interview:** Guillaume Gauvain, Bethel China

62

## ECOLOGY

**Feature:** The dark side of recycling

70

## EVENTS

What you shouldn't miss this month

73

## PEKING MAN

George gets a new perspective on the city

80

NEXT MONTH:  
ON ICE

JANUARY  
EVENTS  
DEADLINE:  
DECEMBER 9

This month's cover image was shot by SharpenStudio at Opera Bombana involving lots of kind people. See p12 for details.



The most important dates this month

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

**7** Bake-offs are taking over the world. Or at least reality TV. Why aren't we seeing more here in the capital? The Hutong takes the first step towards setting that right with its Cookie Monster Bake-off.

**8** US songbird Cat Power lights up the ThinkPad Space as part of this year's Modern Sky Festival. And she promises she won't be storming off the stage (see p. 65).



**14** SantaCon, the sloppiest Christmas-related pub crawl in the city, returns for another run from east to west. The route will be announced on the day, but don't worry, you'll be drunk by the time you reach your destination.

**4** Steve Aoki is back. Again. But we're always happy to see him. There'll be thrills and spills at Elements Club as the Grammy-nominated spinner brings his indie dance stylings back.

**6** A Beijing-flavored take on *The Wizard of Oz*. The interactive musical comedy can't promise flying monkeys or munchkins, but they do promise a zany twist on a classic story.

**20** Veritable jack-of-all-trades Goldie of the golden grill fame makes a return trip to Beijing to help The Syndicate crew with a drum and bass warm up for Christmas.

**25** Tricky Dickie Clayderman makes his yearly trip east to perform at the Great Hall of the People today. The Parisian has been bringing his easy listening repertoire to Beijing every holiday season for more than 20 years now.

**31** New Year knees ups will be ten a penny come the 31st, but the original and arguably the best, YEN Countdown, returns with another irreverent slink into the New Year. Bound to be as corruptious as ever, make sure you have the 1st off work. And maybe the 2nd.

**6** Who'd have thought Paddy's would see its sixth birthday with all the debauchery it's witnessed down the years? As it is inducted into the annals of the untouchables, the many-time Sports Bar of the Year award winner celebrates its birthday the only way it knows how. Drunk.

**31** It looked so good on the silver screen that every party planner in town thinks they could throw a Gatsby-themed bash as well as The Great himself. Atmosphere at China World Summit Wing has a better chance than most of actually pulling it off.

For more events, see p73.

Visit [www.thebeijinger.com](http://www.thebeijinger.com) for even more events and details.





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# CITY SCENE

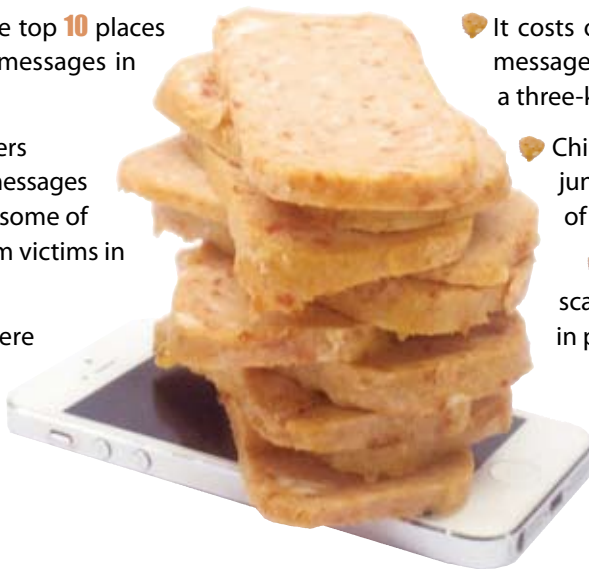
XUANWUMEN // NEWSBITES // SCENE & HEARD // JOKES

## SPAM ATTACK!

Beijing is one of the top **10** places creating junk text messages in China.

On average Beijingers receive **2** junk text messages per day, making us some of the hardest hit spam victims in the country.

These messages were likely sent illegally from a laptop in a parked car nearby.



It costs only RMB **1,000** to send these messages out to **100,000** phones within a three-kilometer radius.

Chinese users received **200 billion** junk text messages in the first half of 2013.

**1.5** percent of these were scams, resulting in RMB **30 million** in personal losses.



Sources: ifeng.com, xinhua.net

## LETTER FROM AN EDITOR

The holidays started early this year. After a flurry of Halloween parties that lasted an entire week, it seems that end-of-2013 celebrations actually kicked off with a double whammy on November 2: Chi Fan For Charity (which raised RMB 450,000) and the British Ball. It's been balls and galas and more ever since.

Big events are great, but especially for those of us who rely on our extended and adopted families here in Beijing, smaller get-togethers, especially at home, are more meaningful. Even if we'll be flying off to a home country for the actual holidays, it's good to remember and spend time with the people who make our daily lives in Beijing most enjoyable. Although there will be plenty of hotel tree lightings and big spreads at Western restaurants, the best times are most likely at private gatherings. For our cover feature, some of the city's top party planners let us in on their secrets for having a great time at home.

House parties aren't the only ones going on. The

Modern Sky Festival 2013 is bringing some top names to Beijing, including Cat Power and The Cardigans, who we talked to ahead of their upcoming appearances.

Still in the holiday spirit, Dining Editor Cat Nelson gives the lowdown on shopping for your holiday meal in one stop. Nightlife Editor Paul Ryding looks at a selection of seasonal cocktails. There's also etiquette and gadgets for gifting, and finally, George Ding finds a love of Beijing ... in Kyoto.

From all of us at *the Beijinger*, we wish you Happy Holidays, whichever holidays you happen to celebrate.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Schwankert".

Steven Schwankert  
Managing Editor



## GENERATION GAP



## TELL US A JOKE



**JAMIE O'NEILL**  
Musician

Two snowmen are in a field. One turned to the other and said, "Can you smell carrots?"

PHOTO: COURTESY OF ANNA RUDASHKO

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McDonald's rolled out the Spicy Pork McBite with surprisingly little fanfare. These lumps of piggy goodness are the pork version of the classic McNugget. Nice move, McDonald's; **China is, after all, the country that consumes more pork than any other in the world.** Our very own office guinea pig, given one word to describe them, plumped for "porkalicious." We think that means good, but we really need to start hiring smarter interns.

What does your vagina say? No, we're not kidding. The Beijing Foreign Studies University (BFSU) Gender Studies Group, in an effort to promote their new stage production, *The Vagina Monologues*, posted photos of female **students holding up a whiteboard** with their answers written on it. An interesting performance was certain to follow.

The wonder of a Home Plate pulled-pork sandwich, the meat perfectly tender, the bun stuffed with sauce and coleslaw, **just got within walking distance of**

**Sanlitun.** Their new branch in Sanlitun, which neighbors familiar names like The Local, Nanjie and The Bookworm, is set to open at some point in December. A trial run for the new outlet in the guise of a Hoedown garnered such a massive response that it sold out in a few days.

Boy, does China love its movies. **Everyday, ten new movie screens are built** to satisfy the insatiable appetite of Chinese audiences, which now make-up the world's second-largest film market.

Did you know that all domestically produced cosmetics must be tested on animals? Whoa, settle your inner activist; as of June 2014, the preceding statement will be rendered false, as **the government will no longer mandate animal testing** for some categories of domestically made cosmetics. "The world has long talked of China being open for business, but now, China is open to discussion," praised Animal Welfare Director Dave Neale. However, imported cosmetics will still require animal testing for now.

Toff teen heart-throb (or soppy doe-eyed warbling git) **James Blunt is set to return to Beijing** in the new year as part of his latest "Moon Landing" world tour. He'll be performing on January 4, with tickets ranging from RMB 280-980. MasterCard Center is the venue, but it should probably be renamed "Teenage Girl Magnet Center" for the day.

Godfather of Chinese rock Cui Jian might be planning to turn his hand to filmmaking on a more permanent basis following **his recent "special mention" at the Rome Film Festival.** The 52-year-old Beijing native was there with his debut feature *Blue Sky Bones*. The film made quite the splash for the venerable song writer, who walked the festival's red carpet along with renowned cinematographer **Christopher Doyle** and one of the film's stars, **Ni Hongjie.**

The bullets are about to start flying again. After shattering all of China's domestic box office records with *Let the Bullets Fly*, the second film in a planned trilogy has begun shooting. **Beijing's favorite son Jiang Wen is back for the latest installment, *Gone with the Bullets*, which is set in 1920s Shanghai** and revolves around a beauty pageant gone wrong. The film is set for release in December 2014.

**Follow us on Instagram** for your daily dose of the the interesting, and the downright weird of Beijing. Hashtag #thebeijinger for a chance of your photo to be re-grammed and featured on our website. Happy snapping!





## GOING UNDERGROUND

# XUANWUMEN, LINES 2 AND 4

### Selling Point

One of Beijing's oldest neighborhoods, Xuanwumen offers the visitor history and authentic Beijing eats. From the city's oldest Catholic church to its oldest mosque and a grand opera house, the RMB 2 ride to Xuanwumen is a wormhole into a cultural dimension.



### See

Even for the secular visitor, a Christmas Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception (more commonly known as the Southern Cathedral, *Nantang*) is an uplifting holiday activity. See *the Beijinger's* website for times and languages (usually Mandarin, Latin, and occasionally English).

Italian Jesuit Matteo Ricci built the original church here in 1605. Work on a cathedral at the present site began in 1650, under the supervision of German Jesuit Johann Adam Schall von Bell. After being razed in 1900, the current building was completed in 1904.

Nearby is the Niujie (Ox Street) Mosque, the oldest mosque in the capital. This house of worship dates to 996, and was rebuilt in 1443 after destruction by Genghis Khan's armies, and enlarged in 1696. Visitors should note that the main prayer hall is off-limits to non-Muslims and entrance to some areas of the mosque may be restricted around midday on Friday for Friday prayers.

### Eat

The presence of the Niujie Mosque means the Xuanwumen area can claim the city's best Muslim food, specifically Xinjiang food. The Kashgar Representative Office at 60 Pen'er Hutong (儿胡同60号) is perhaps the city's best-kept secret for this cuisine. The Noodle Diaries blogger Badr Benjelloun called it "the best Xinjiang food in town, bar none," and Eileen Wen Mooney, author of *Beijing Eats*, named it one of her top ten Beijing restaurants.

*Disclosure: Badr Benjelloun is the CTO of True Run Media, the Beijinger's parent company. Beijing Eats is published by True Run Media.*

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## SCENE & HEARD



### YEN Fetish Halloween

798 Space, Oct 25. Photo courtesy of YEN

### Fossil Opening Party

Fossil (Oriental Plaza Mall), Oct 21. Photo courtesy of Fossil



### Sustainability Fair

Hilton Beijing, Nov 9. Photo by Frank Yu



### Footprint Two Year Anniversary Party

Lantern, Nov 8. Photo courtesy of Footprint

### Día de los Muertos

Cantina Agave, Nov 1. Photos by Jack Soltysik



### Moonglow Burlesque: Russian Love Party

Modernista, Nov 8. Photo by Laurent Hou



### Drink and Draw

Modernista, Nov 12. Photo by Laurent Hou



### OysterFest

Hatsune Guanghua Lu, Oct 30. Photos by Kristen Lum



### Wouter Hamel

Pentahotel Beijing, Sep 22. Photo courtesy of Pentahotel





**Just for Tee Fashion Show**  
751 D Park, Oct 31. Photo by Frank Yu

**Halloween Subway Party**  
Line 2, Nov 2. Photo by Siren Song



**The Hub After-Party**  
Wuhao, Oct 25. Photo courtesy of The Hub



**Chi Fan for Charity After-Party**  
Hatsune, Nov 2. Photos by 1world1eye Productions



**The Haunted Graveyard Halloween**  
Fatface Dining, Oct 31. Photo by Frank Yu



**Great Leap Brewing Halloween**  
Great Leap, Oct 31. Photo by Liz Phung



**Lush Tenth Anniversary Party**  
Lush, Nov 9. Photos by Aaron Berkovich



**Barcamp**  
Microsoft Research Center, Nov 3. Photo by Frank Yu



**Mashup Halloween**  
4corners, Nov 1. Photo by Kristina Parchomchuk



# HOUSE PARTY FOR THE HOLIDAYS



By now, the decision is made. With airfares increasing and the number of available seats going down, if you don't have a holiday plane ticket in hand, then you're preparing for a festive period spent right here in Beijing. The good news is the colored lights and other decorations can stay up until after Spring Festival (January 31 next year) and absolutely no one will notice.

Although just about every international hotel and most Western restaurants will be serving holiday meals and holding themed parties (see *the Beijinger's* website for a full list of holiday events), many people prefer to be

in their own space, with their own food, own music, and most important, close friends. It may be party time, but this is the time of year to bring the party home.

How do you plan a party at your place where everyone has a good time, including you?

We spoke with some of the city's top event organizers to bring you the best tips for making your year-end house bash a night to remember.

"To maximize attendance (and fun), send out invitations eight to ten days before your party or event. For example, if your party's going to be on a weekend, send





out invitations mid-week the previous week. This will allow your potential guests to have your party in mind for the following weekend," says Hsu Li of Fatface Dining.

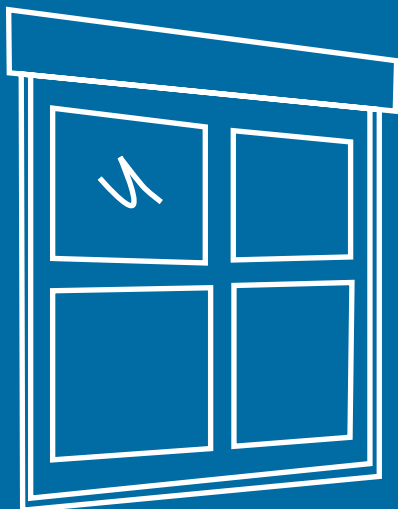
"Don't stress," advises Kristen Lum of LumDimSum. "There will always be things you forget to do and it's probably best to count on things not going according to plan. But no matter what happens, just remind yourself why you're throwing a party, why you're getting people together – to have a fabulous time! Plus, it's poor form and awkward for your guests if you're a stressed-out mess the entire time you're having people over," she says.

"In small group house-parties, the first half-hour often sets the tone for the rest of the night. Don't let people who arrive early sit around waiting for a critical mass of people to arrive – we all know that in Beijing prompt arrival extends up to a half hour after start time. Have a small group activity or game ready that is easy to add people as they arrive," suggests Alex Edmunds, founder of dating site Coucou8.com.

Whether a dignified gathering or full-on bender, *the Beijinger's* guide covers it from party prep to clean-up.

From left to right: Miao Wong (Dot Records), Elise Tomalty (Chin-Easecorp, Chi Fan for Charity), Joe Oliver (We Impact), Alan Wong (Hatsune), Catalina Calin (InterNations), Alex Edmunds (Coucou8.com), Kristen Lum (LumDimSum), DJ Chazie Ma (Bang Entertainment Producers), Danni Zheng (Split Works), Jerry Guo (3sums), Erin Henshaw (The Hutong), Hsu Li (Fatface Dining), Sophie McKinnon (Australia China Art Foundation)

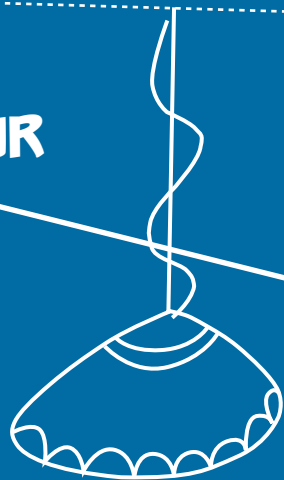
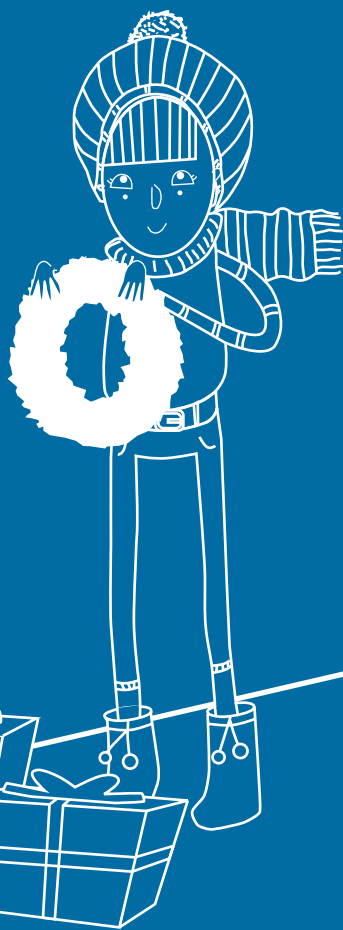
# THE DOS AND DON'TS FOR YOUR END-OF-YEAR BASH



## 1 GUEST LIST

"I put a lot of thought into which guests to invite because I try to create the right mix that will determine the chemistry of the evening. I never invite anybody rude or affected or obnoxious or loud to my home or dinner. These sorts of people vex the spirit," said Sara Jane Ho, founder of etiquette instruction firm Institute Sarita (see our full interview with Sara Jane Ho on p. 65).

"If you're running a guest list, stick to it. If your name's not on the list, you're a party crasher!" – DJ Chozie Ma, founder of Bang Entertainment Producers.



## 2 MENU PLANNING

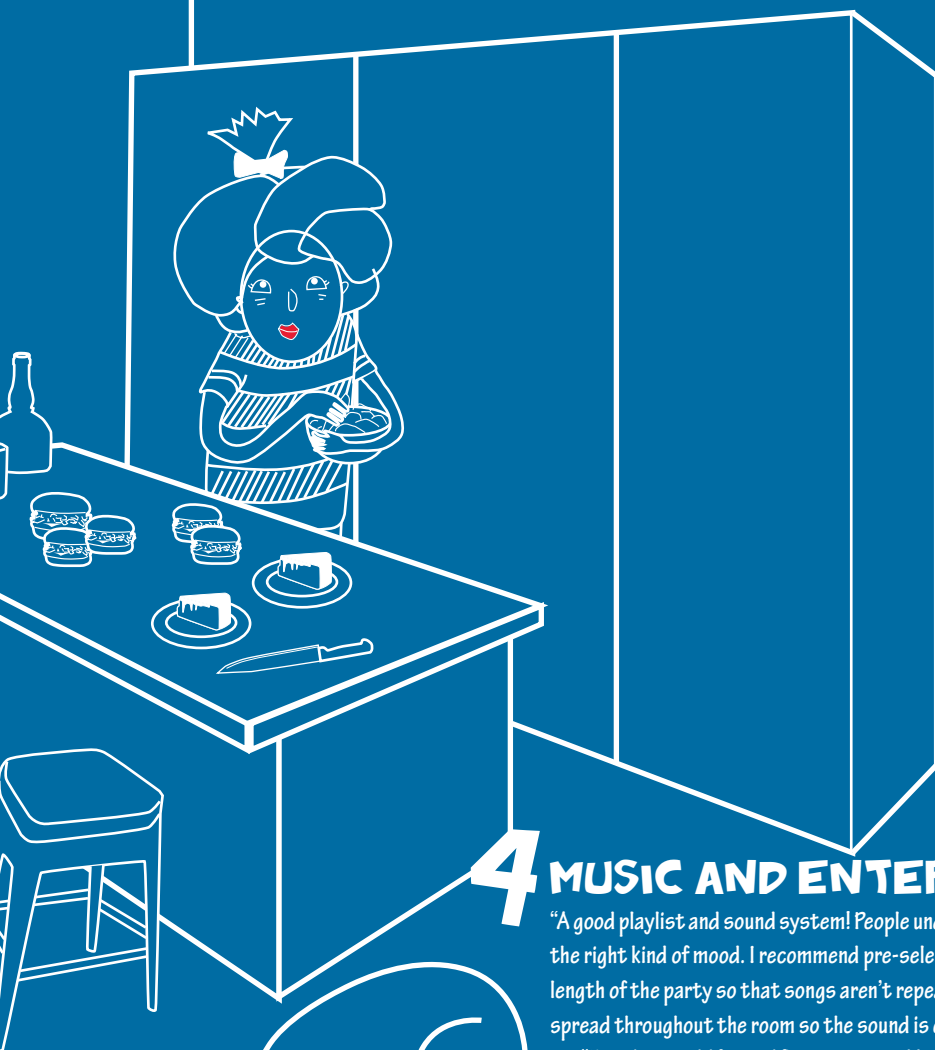
"Invite guests to bring food. International pot-lucks are the best," said Erin Henshaw, Corporate & Charity Events Manager at The Hutong.

Leading shops featuring imported goods such as Jenny Lou's and April Gourmet will offer seasonal products, of course at a premium (see our Dining Feature on p. for more tips). Consider making the menu Beijing-specific. Any *jiaozi* shop can fill an order placed in advanced, or try Green Bites (8590 0475) for delivery. Beijing's famous Quan Ju De duck restaurant does duck sets for takeaway, usually via a take-out window on the side of the main storefront. *Ma la xiao long xia* (spicy crayfish) could be messy fun.



### 3 DECORATIONS

Santa hats for everyone at the table could be quite nice, but don't bother with tinsel, it makes your front room look like the porridge restaurant around the corner that has had the same flimsy tinsel in the window since Christmas '05. To deck the halls properly, visit [Kookus.com](http://Kookus.com) for a full selection of Christmas decorations, from the traditional to the humorous.



### 4 MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT

"A good playlist and sound system! People underestimate the importance of music to set the right kind of mood. I recommend pre-selecting enough music to play on shuffle for the length of the party so that songs aren't repeated multiple times. The speakers should be spread throughout the room so the sound is even." – Kristen Lum

"Few things add fun and flare to a party like a supply of fake mustaches. It's great for the guys who just shaved off their Movember 'stache, but are still nostalgic for lip fur, and it's a proverbial party hat for girls. The top floor of Yashow has a great selection, as well as Tianyi Market on the west Second Ring Road near Gulou, and Silk Market." – Alex Edmunds

"Did you forget Twister?" – DJ Chozie

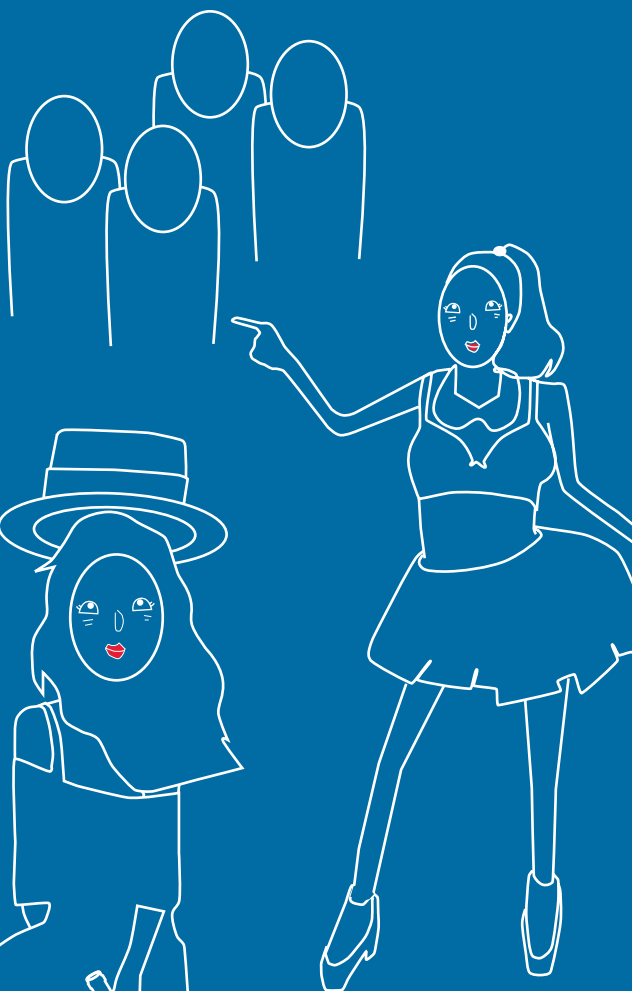
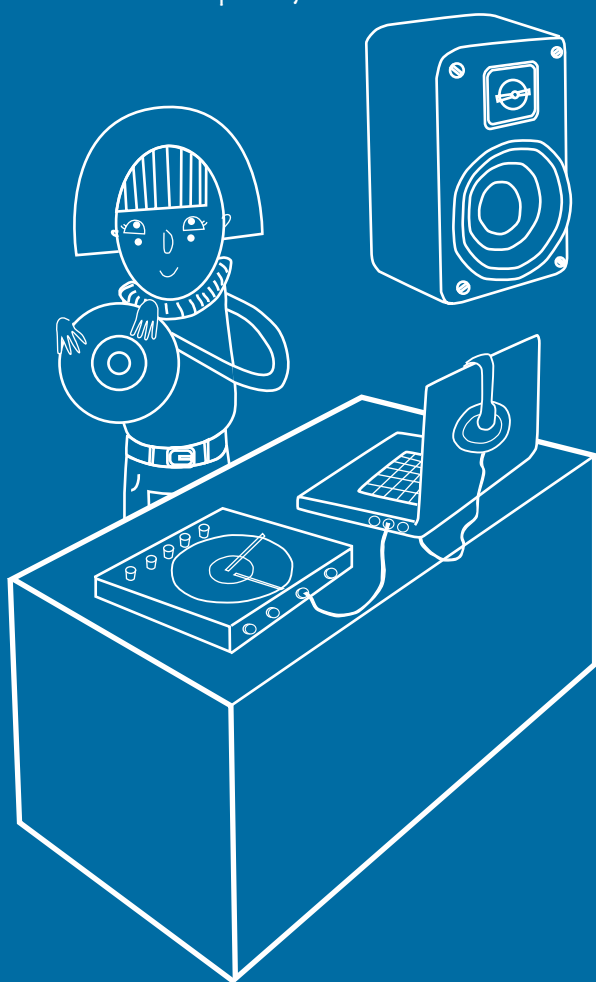


## 5 DRINKS

"I find people always run out of ice and mixers so best to stock up on everything as your party guests can get demanding. If you're a bring-your-own (BYO) type and not the host with the most then make sure you tell your guest to bring things and better to tell them what you want. And a party is not a party without tequila and plenty of it." – DJ Chozie

"Have enough glassware for everyone. It's awkward to drink wine or a cocktail out of a coffee mug or plastic cup." – Kristen Lum

Local favorites Jenny Lou's and April Gourmet will deliver groceries and ice, with some outlets open as late as midnight (see their listings on the Beijinger's website for phone numbers and hours of operation).



## 6 SECRET SANTA

It's that time of the party. Time to sit around and loudly dole out a series of "joke" gifts (up to but not exceeding RMB 100 in cash value). Avoid the sex shops – you won't be the only bright spark to have considered it, and spare them the Yashow T-shirt. Just get them a bottle of booze if you're that stuck for inspiration.

## 7 DANCING

"Playlist, people. Get your party journey right. That includes having get-the-f\*ck-out songs ready for the end of the night. Have extra slippers for the girls. You don't want unhappy, dirty feet as you might get lucky and have to rub them later." – DJ Chozie

## 8 NEIGHBORS

It's just a regular old Wednesday for your Chinese neighbors. A house full of revelers and your music cranked risks their ire, and they're so nice all year round. Best to try to keep them onside. A box of mandarin oranges ought to do it, but most importantly, let them know ahead of time – noise and large numbers of unexpected foreign visitors are a Saturday night surprise worth avoiding.



## 9 JELLO SHOTS

The buttress at the middle of any good party. It's the point where the party swings from a slightly stuffy and marginally tedious affair into a *bona fide* par-tay. Bring guests from different circles of friends into one big melting pot with some strong (but not too strong, or only the guys from the rugby club will drink them) jello shots. Get the measures right, make sure they get enough time in the fridge, and avoid the green jelly – it's foul. Localize the experience by using *baijiu*. Only problem? It tastes like *baijiu*.

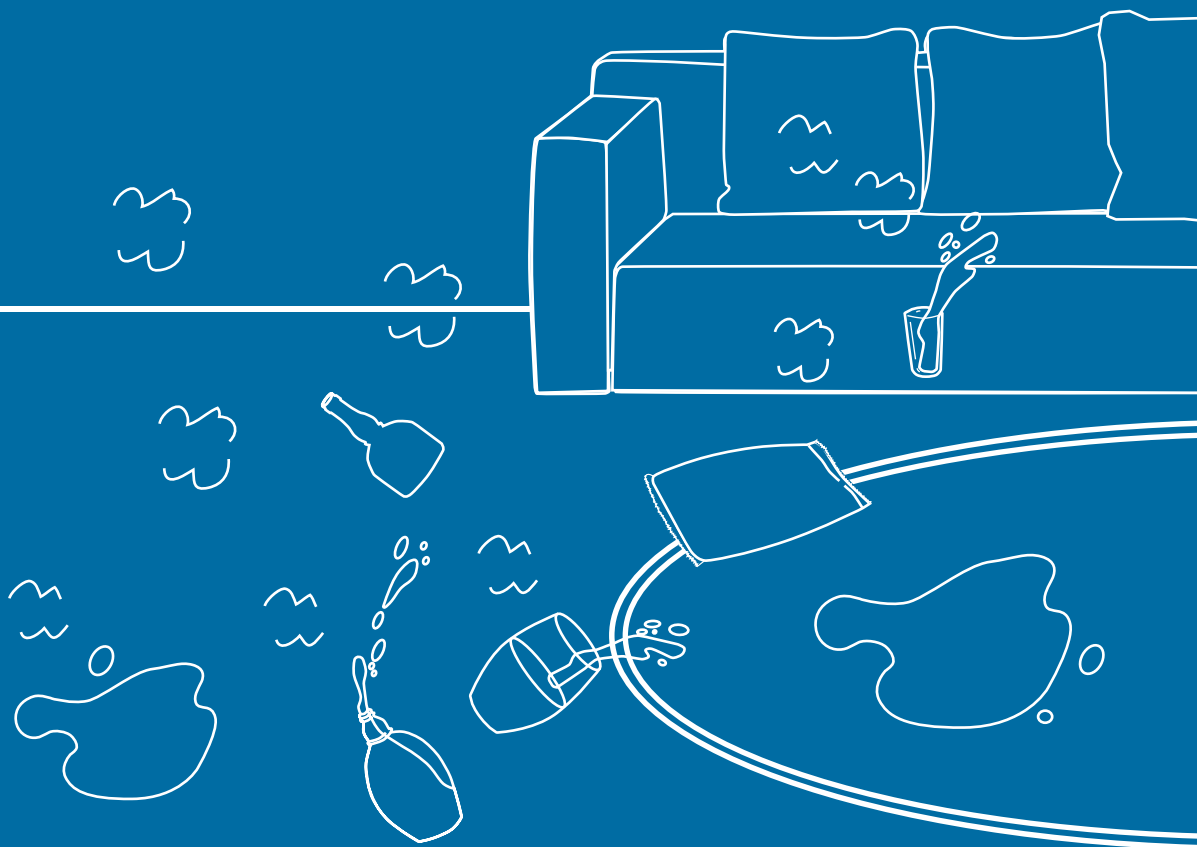


# 10 AFTERMATH

"It's best to have a helper on standby to clean while the party is going. You know you're going to be too wasted to clean in the morning. This way you can get really wild and wake up to a clean house. Also, have taxi or other drivers on call for your guests. You don't want people waiting out in the Beijing cold after a house bender."  
— DJ Chozie



Happy Holidays from the Beijinger!





Sip, nibble, gulp, chew, guzzle, savor, feast

# FOOD & DRINK

CARROT CAKE // THAI HOT POT // DRINKING CHOCOLATE // WINTER COCKTAILS



*Ring in the holidays Italian-style on Christmas Eve at Cepe.*



## NIBBLES AND SIPS

### NEW OPENINGS

In Lido near Frank's Place, well-regarded sushi purveyor **Yotsuba** has opened a second branch and has already received some high praise. It can't hurt that they're now across the street from a Japanese school.

A second **Salud** outlet has opened up in student sentry Wudaokou. We'll be along to check it out soon. Good news: they've transferred the infused rums out west.

There can never be enough pizza (or so we firmly believe). **Pizza Plus** is on the same tip and set up another shop near the south gate of Chaoyang Park just around the corner from April Gourmet and Jamaica Blue.

### HAPPENINGS

**The Local** is set to start brewing its own beer. They have the set-up in place and are working in partnership with the Beijing Homebrewing Society to get their own drop going.

If you haven't been to one of **Great Leap Brewery** and the Fairmont Beijing's Chef & The Brewer extravaganzas yet, now might be a good time to try it. On December 6, they'll be pairing beers with **The Cut's** cuisine, in addition to hosting an auction with holiday gift items just in time for the season.

### RENOVATIONS

The original **Great Leap Brewing** venue on Doujiao Hutong will be closed between December 1-24 for renovation work.

In Sanlitun, **The Stumble Inn** is still closed. Management assured us it was a short-term issue while they had some repair work done in the kitchen.

### CLOSURES

CBD night spot **Haze** unceremoniously closed its doors during its second year anniversary party last month. The official line was that dwindling returns meant it wasn't viable to continue, although more sinister stories emerged as matters developed.

After a very short-lived existence, **Gung Ho! Pizza** in Wangjing closed. If you had been one of their (apparently few) customers, turn back to their Lido location to satisfy your crust cravings.

## GANGES INDIAN RESTAURANT

[www.ganges-restaurant.com](http://www.ganges-restaurant.com)

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6262-7944

**Lido**  
5135-8353  
**CBD 'The Place'**  
6587-2999

**Dongzhimen**  
6417-0900


The image shows the interior of the CHI Restaurant, a modern dining space with a rustic, industrial aesthetic. The ceiling is made of exposed wooden beams and rafters, with several large, white, conical pendant lights hanging from it. The walls are a mix of textures, including peeling plaster and exposed brickwork. Large windows on the right side of the room provide natural light. The tables are white and rectangular, set with white plates, glasses, and cutlery. White metal chairs are used for seating. The overall atmosphere is warm and contemporary.

# A SELECT SET

## CHI RESTAURANT

Daily 9am-11pm. 67 Wudaoying Hutong,  
Dongcheng District (6445 7076)

东城区五道营胡同67号

 250m southeast of Andingmen station (Line 2)



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Chi is the apex of careful curation. The walls of its intimate space have been constructed of repurposed doors and windows frames, the produce and products meticulously sourced. Even its opening is well-timed: the sun pulled low by approaching winter, dappling the table with light.

Eating requires that you surrender to the kitchen. Its decree is “fresh, local, organic,” an admirable, challenging and increasingly popular aspiration. They’ve met success. Coffee (RMB 30) from local roaster Uncle Bean comes in small individual French presses. Others like Tavalin Bagels, Andy’s Craft Sausages, and the brewery 京A make appearances, too.

Offerings rotate depending on availability, and on one late morning the lunch offerings were two: a bagel with a smearing of avocado and paprika-dusted shrimp, and spaghetti with a delicate tomato sauce and mussels skirting the edges. On each dish (RMB 80), elegant spindly greens of one small fuchsia radish draped over an arugula salad. With these verdant young things in front of you, it was easy to ignore the pumpkin soup, a cousin closer to *zhou* (porridge) than what you might have hoped for.

Lunch encouraged us to return several hours later for the evening meal. The single menu (RMB 220) offers no luxury of choice, but you’ll find that this is a luxury unneeded. Lunch might have been a three-hour affair of basking in the sunlight over a bagel, but dinner requires a different pace for its seven courses.

Two ends of toasted farmer’s bread help transport the streak of red pepper dip from plate to mouth before quarters of fresh figs festooned in thin Serrano ham arrive. Lincolnshire sausages bed down in soft tomatoes and resilient white beans, which have survived boiling water and maintained their crispness. Scallops seem implausibly local in this landlocked city, but we aren’t ones to argue when they are seared and meltingly tender. The sweet corn puree beneath seems a more likely native – sweet and forthright like any of the hutong’s neighboring residents. An octopus dish raised questions for those accustomed to cephalopods that have been beaten on the Italian coast for eight hours until tender. Here, the tentacles are chewy, chopped with olives and oil.

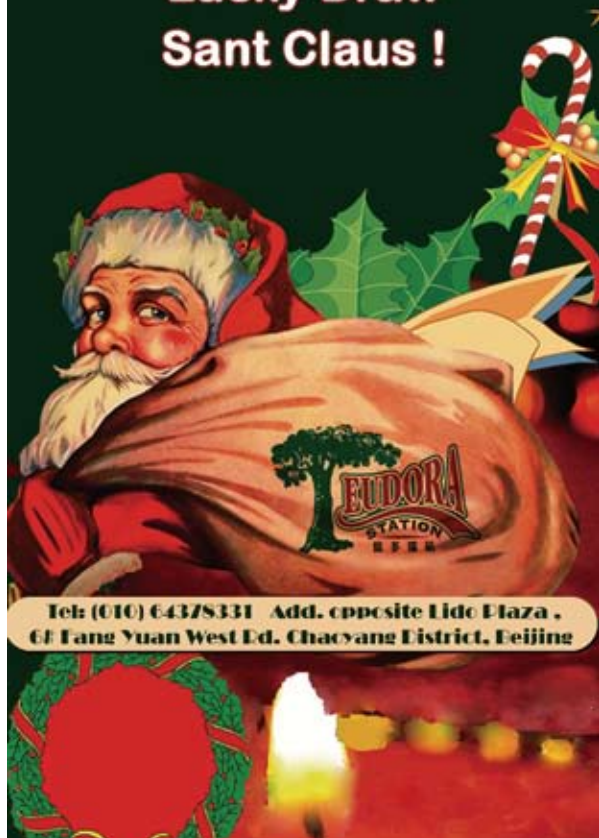
Finally, you might think you’ve tired of lamb – coated in cumin and served on the roadside – but let your love be revived by a different incarnation: two roasted lamb chops glistening against couscous and dainty spears of asparagus and carrot. *Cat Nelson*

**Also try:** The Vineleaf, Saffron

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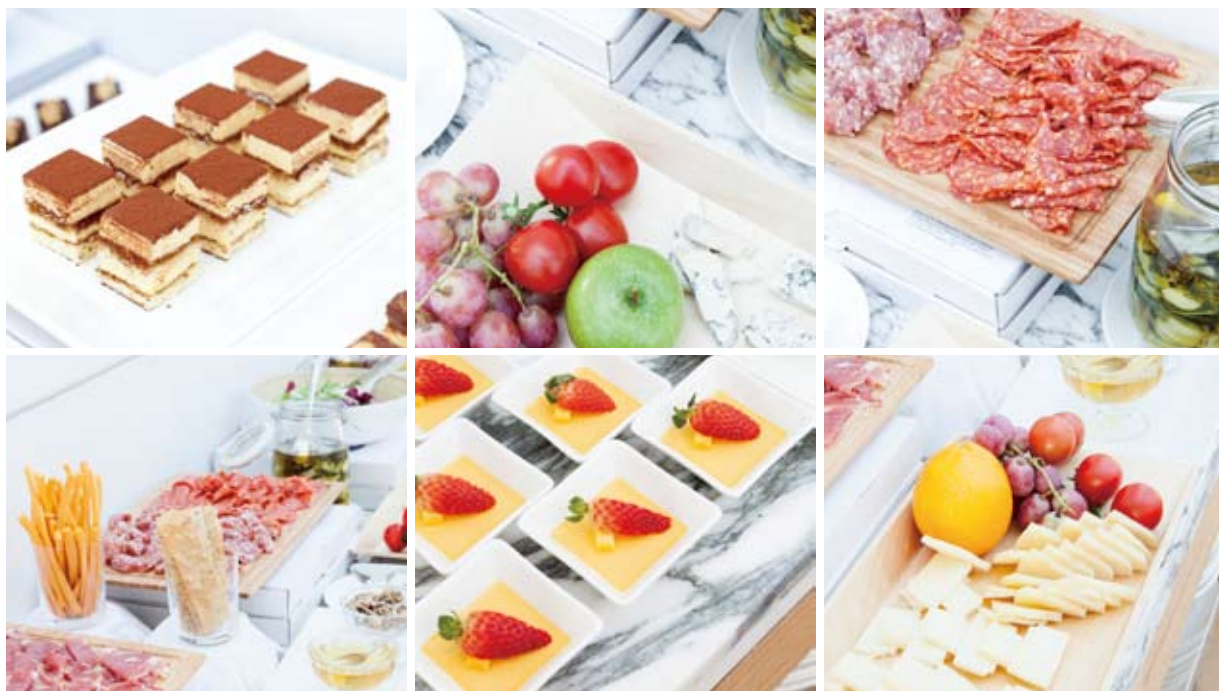
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## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS



# ISOLA DREAM

## ISOLA 意索娜意大利餐厅

Daily 11am-2.30pm (lunch), 6.30-11.30pm (dinner). N3-47, 3/F, Bldg 3,  
Taikoo Li Sanlitun North, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District (6416 3499)  
朝阳区三里屯路11号三里屯太古里北区3号楼3层N3-47号

🚶 800m northwest of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

As I sat down to the antipasti buffet lunch, I saw that Isola stretched out in all directions. This place is massive, on a scale rarely attempted in Beijing since Maison Boulud's original neighbors began dropping like high society flies.

At RMB 168 plus ten percent service charge (applied to all meals), the buffet lunch is at the high end of Sanlitun daytime dining. True, but you do get a main course and free run on a great antipasti selection, as well as a more conservative dessert buffet of tiramisu, chocolate cake and selection of sauces.

The buffet is laden with good produce: prosciutto, spicy, herby salami, jars of olives and tart sun-dried tomatoes soaked in olive oil. The cheese selection is less exciting, although I couldn't say no to a few slices of blue.

The lunch deal doesn't quite offer a "greatest hits" of the *a la carte* mains – margherita pizza rather than the "trifola" black truffle option (RMB 178 *a la carte*). However, it does

offer a solid sample of what you'd have for dinner at Isola. I ordered and enjoyed a thin piece of sirloin, medium-rare, flavored honestly and effectively with rock salt, shavings of Parmesan and a splash of olive oil, with a bitter crunch from a side of lettuce.

On the *a la carte* menu, the *fettucelle* with clam, shrimp and sea urchin in a spicy cherry tomato sauce (RMB 168) is excellent. When I visited for dinner I had a perfectly good piece of lamb with rosemary (RMB 288), but the black cod with breadcrumb pistachio crust with lentils in white wine broth (RMB 238) is what I'd go back to try.

Isola is suitably heavy on Italian wines, with glasses RMB 88-98 and bottles from RMB 380. Upstairs, five private rooms can fold into one single-function space. And while this is no time to be eating or drinking outdoors, the terrace will make for a lovely meal next summer.

Iain Shaw

**Also try:** Sureno, Tavola



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

# MAI OH MAI

### MAI 舞日本料理

Mon-Fri 11.30am-2pm (lunch), daily 5.30-10.30pm (dinner). 2/F, Westin Beijing Chaoyang, 7 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District (5922 8880) 朝阳区东三环北路7号金茂北京威斯汀大饭店2层

 100m north of Liangmaqiao station (Line 10)

Matching the fare of Grange Grill, with its behemoth cuts of meat, seems a formidable task but where there is the brute force of beef, what better way to counter it than with the sophisticated nuance of Japanese cuisine?

Glimmering in gold, Mai sits across from Grange Grill and brings the heat with its cold fish. An easy entry point to the tome of a menu is through one of the sashimi and sushi samplers. The smaller of the two arrives with three kinds of sashimi and seven types of sushi (RMB 360) of the chef's choosing – a long platter of pale yellowtail pink, deep tuna red, bright salmon orange and the burnt ochre of eel. We tailored it with our own favorites: sea urchin nigiri (RMB 78, two), tuna belly nigiri (RMB 178, two).

The menu encompasses the range of standard Japanese offerings with *teppanyaki*, if you prefer to eschew the raw, and a selection of noodles including a familiar udon (RMB 118), a more unusual green tea soba (RMB 78) and a rarer *inaniwa* (RMB 88), the slender variety of udon from Akita prefecture in northern Japan.

A seaweed and fresh greens salad (RMB 48) struck us as an odd pairing, but Mai does make some successful statements. The salmon roe with grated daikon (RMB 48) is divisive with its saline bite, an arguably pleasant diversion from the banality of standard hotel fare. *Cat Nelson*

**Also try:** Hagaki, Haru



PHOTO: SUI



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# ONE-STOP SHOPPING

EVERYTHING FOR A ROAST BIRD AND MORE

by Cat Nelson



PHOTO: JOEY GUO

On the far northern edge of Sanlitun lies a gem of a market unparalleled for those who take pleasure in planning a holiday feast – the bird or the roast, the potatoes and parsnips, the pies and the tartlets. Need a turkey? A butcher familiar with Western cuts? Fresh sage and salmon? Jenny Lou and April may have their small empires, but Sanyuanli Market prevails in the union of accessibility, variety and most of all, price.

Don't be afraid to work that charm – vendors are used to restaurants and may offer cheaper bulk prices and, sometimes, home-delivery.

## FRESH FRUIT

**Noteworthy:** *figs* (RMB 25), *avocados* (RMB 8 each), *blueberries* (RMB 18/4.4oz), *kiwis* (RMB 12 each)

**Stalls to try:** 07, 17

## DRIED FRUIT AND NUTS

**Noteworthy:** *hazelnuts* (RMB 50), *dates* (RMB 8), *pine nuts* (RMB 60-100), *figs* (RMB 30), *cranberries* (RMB 35)

**Stall to try:** 23

## DAIRY AND DRIED GOODS

**Noteworthy:** *Libby's canned pumpkin* (RMB 20/15oz), *Camp maple syrup* (RMB 99/250ml), *fillo dough* (RMB 45/375g), *President butter* (RMB 22/200g), *Philadelphia cream cheese* (RMB 25/250g), *Ocean Spray cranberry sauce* (RMB 15/14oz), *miso* (RMB 45/300g)

**Stalls to try:** 35/37, 38/40, 85, 82/84

## PORK, BEEF, AND LAMB

**Noteworthy:** *bacon* (RMB 28.5), *ribeye steak* (RMB 65), *New Zealand lamb leg* (RMB 30)

**Stall to try:** 31/32

## POULTRY

**Noteworthy:** *Norbest American turkey* (RMB 20), *goose* (RMB 18)

**Stalls to try:** 48, 45

## SEAFOOD

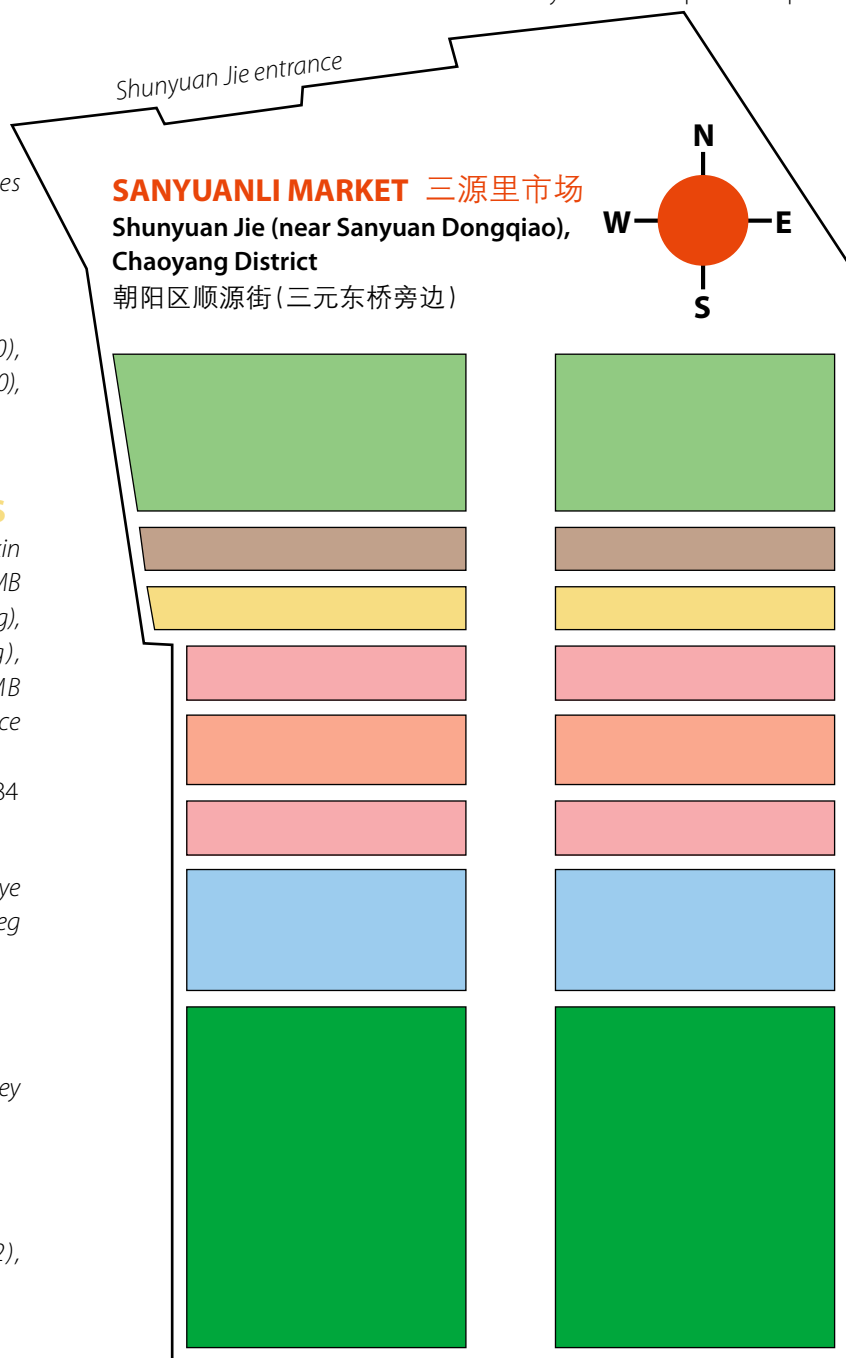
**Noteworthy:** *salmon* (RMB 42), *seabass* (RMB 13), *scallops* (RMB 30)

**Stalls to try:** 71, 74

## VEGETABLES

**Noteworthy:** *okra* (RMB 14), *fresh herbs* (RMB 5/packet), *arugula* (RMB 3), *Brussels sprouts* (RMB 15)

**Stalls to try:** 89, 95



All prices per *jin* unless otherwise noted.  
(1 *jin* = 500g = 1.102lb)  
Prices and availability vary daily and seasonally.



# FROSTED BITE

## SWEET TOOTH CAFÉ

Tue-Sun 11am-7pm. 18 Xinzhong Jie,  
Dongcheng District (150 1121 7173)  
东城区新中街18号

 350m northeast of Dongsishitiao station (Line 2)



CARROT CAKE

## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

We've all been deceived before – the chocolate filling that's actually red bean paste, the "sausage" with the color that definitely does not occur naturally, and the ever-disconcerting cotton candy that turns out to be pork floss. So many times Beijing punishes us for judging a baked good by its cover. However, the recently transformed delivery-service-turned-bakery Sweet Tooth Cafe offers confections so delicious that your mouth will water.

Australian owners Meilian Tan and George Braga have handpicked and personalized every brick, teacup, stool, and stainless steel gadget of the café to fit their aesthetic and in turn have created a cozy and familial environment. It's a true confectionery haven when the weather outside is frightful.

This perfectionism and attention to detail shines most brilliantly in their baked delights. From filling to frosting, Sweet Tooth does things the good old fashioned way. The red velvet cake (RMB 30 per slice) is electric in color and taste, and screams American South with every progressively rich bite, while the carrot cake (RMB 30 per slice) is spiced with care, moist and studded with plump raisins. Come for it all, but especially for the cheesecakes from which there are several to choose. The Tim Tam cheesecake (RMB 35 per slice) with bits of the famous wafer cookie in the batter and chocolate ganache topping is an intense and decadent treat.

Sweet Tooth is progressively expanding their menu to include sandwiches, salads, and bagels. Drinks from the espresso machine include that Australian favorite, the flat white (RMB 35), and Australian-imported T2 Teas are offered with flavors such as vanilla mint and crème brulee to get you started. *Marissa Kennedy*

**Also try:** Fat Bunny Bakery, Ahava Cafe



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WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

# FOR BETTER OR WURST

**ZEIT BERLIN** 柏林时光

Daily 11am-10pm. 1/F Royal Palace Hotel, 6 Xiaoyunli,  
Chaoyang District (6461 8842)  
朝阳区霄云里6号城宝饭店

 550m northeast of Sanyuanqiao station (Line 10)

## CURRYWURST

There are stories behind everything, and the one behind a certain sea green color on the Zeit Berlin menu lies in the rooftops of churches. Berlin's skyline is speckled with this hue – the copper roofs slowly oxidizing until they gain their particular patina. Fashioned by the passing of time, yet exceedingly contemporary and on trend, it's an enigma of a color.

Zeit Berlin is equally odd. First impressions invoked by an attractive menu are complicated by an obscure address on the first floor of an unremarkable hotel. The owners are Chinese natives who lived in Berlin since the early 1970s and now, returned to their home country, intend to bring Berlin specialties to a German restaurant scene of largely Bavarian fare.

The menu highlights notable dishes like *Schweinehaxen* (grilled pork knuckle, RMB 168), *Reiseneisbein* (RMB 168), and *Schweinebraten* (RMB 72), but also encompasses casual home-style cooking like casseroles (*auflauf*, RMB 78-88), pastas (RMB 68-98) and chicken and pork *schnitzel* (RMB 86-88). Zeit Berlin offers

a lunch buffet (RMB 68), but successful ones are a feat to achieve and until it gets busy enough for turnover, skip that in favor of ordering *a la carte*.

As you would hope for a German restaurant, the most notable items are the numerous variations of meat and potatoes. For the protein-starved, the *Schweinehaxen* will fix that. A massive boulder of thick, crisped skin and delicious pork, this will certainly feed two. The accompanying sauerkraut is remarkable – warm, well-balanced in acidity and flavor and studded with cloves. The baked potato with a grilled salmon fillet (RMB 88) came recommended, and it's easy to forget how satisfying simple fare can be. Expect a Germanic treatment of the salmon – no searing here, the fish is cooked through and through. For the curious or the homesick, the paragon of Berlin snack food, *currywurst* (RMB 78), appears with potential – though, as with the endeavor as a whole, there is certainly some room for growth. *Cat Nelson*

**Also try:** Schindler's Tankstelle, Schiller's



# WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

## HAM-MER TIME

### LA TAVERNITA

Daily 10.30am-midnight. 55-3 Xingfucun Zhonglu, Chaoyang District (6417 5598)  
朝阳区幸福村中路55-3号

 1km west of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

It's not often a restaurant's primary piece of artwork is a giant dry-cured ham leg. But we're not complaining, and in fact, we're pleased. With a melt-in-your-mouth interior, La Tavernita's Iberico ham is imported from Spain, along with the restaurant's managers and chefs.

In addition to Spanish favorites like the olive oil-flecked *gazpacho Andaluz* (RMB 35) and the salty and fresh *ensalada Valencia* (RMB 70), La Tavernita will make you say *ole!* with its tapas deal – three tapas for RMB 95 including a drink. The choices range from aubergine and red pepper with cod, to ham and cheese croquettes served with red romaine lettuce, to the endearingly named *patatas bravas* (brave potatoes) served with a spicy salsa puree and melted cheese.

But if you're having trouble picking from the list, remember the ham. It didn't come all the way from Valencia for nothing. The toasted ham with grated tomato (RMB 30) is a poster child for the balance between bright and savory, and the broken eggs with ham (RMB 50) takes the heavenly pairing of crispy ham and soft-baked eggs and puts them on a bed of sliced and spiced potatoes. Top it off with a *cortado* coffee (RMB 18) or *carajillo ron* (espresso with rum, RMB 40) and the meal will be deemed *perfecto*. *Marissa Kennedy*

**Also try:** Tapas Café, Carmen



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PHOTO: KEN



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# Duck and Cover

## SAMPLING MICROWAVABLE KAOYA

by Cat Nelson

Holiday season brings no shortage of roasted fowl in the West, and if that's any indication of celebration then given *kaoya* (Beijing roast duck), Beijing is partying all-year round. Trying to put a party in a bag seems like a questionable idea, but the

enchanting thing about this country is its unaffected attitude of "why not?" So, this month we suspended our disbelief and put hope in the industry's crazy idea that pre-cooked poultry in plastic might actually taste alright.



### Henghui (RMB 39.90, 800g)

"It had the potential to be a Quanjude duck – not the best, but tolerable, but then it got buried at the bottom of a lake in the filthy spill-off of a chemical plant."

"That's pretty good. I bet if I pulled all that meat off, pressed it, and fried it in a pan with the sauce and fresh bok choy, you'd say, 'this is delicious.'" "Then you are a wizard, sir."

"The best thing my grandparents would say about this – they're toothless old people – is 'oh, it falls off the bone, it's so tender. It's dripping off the bone.'"

"It almost tastes like the Hong Kong-style roast duck essence in the end. It's got a nice spicy finish to it."

### Quanjude (RMB 34.80, 500g)

"This is the Mister Universe of Peking duck – nicely tanned, well-toned."

"I've never eaten astringent duck before. Now I have."

"The skin is like the texture of something you'd get in the tongue of a running shoe."

"This one suffered, I think. It was panicked in the abattoir before it met its end."

"It had the duck version of post-traumatic stress syndrome. It witnessed its comrades getting slaughtered."



### Bianyifang (RMB 40, 500g)

"It's like a Trojan horse this one. It's a bone disguised as food."

"It really stinks. The smell and then the taste remind me of those Chinese canned eels, which are actually good. But this shouldn't taste like an eel."

"It very quickly just looks like a bowl of mush. There's nothing to prove that it was ever a duck."

"That's a noise you shouldn't make when you're eating meat."

"The skin is completely anonymous like a winter jacket that isn't warm enough to keep the cold out."



**Yueshengzhai**  
(RMB 53.80, 1kg)

"Is that for effect, that little bit of char?"

"I just touched the skin with my finger and licked it. It tastes like smoky bacon crisps. That's not a bad thing at all, but it's not duck."

"Look at this: a broken leg. This duck was hit by a tractor or it was the victim of a gangland hit. Every one of its bones was shattered and its organs ruptured, and then was force-fed salt. Cruellest *foie gras*-style assassination ever."

"Cured and salty – it's prepared for some kind of transatlantic sea voyage."



**VERDICT**

Out of a selection of directions that ranged from pan-frying to "pouring with oil," micro-waving seemed the most fitting. No surprise, then, that they were all flawed texturally.

In the end, it came down to taste. The Henghui bird triumphed with the high praise that tasters "wouldn't be appalled" if the it was served to them in a restaurant. That the fowl was reminiscent of a meal at all placed it above the competitors.

But nonetheless, at the end of the day, there were some very pleased and sated stray cats.

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# FRESH FACED

NEW THAI NIBBLES  
FOR THE WINTER



THAI HOT POT

PHOTO: SUI



## BACK FOR MORE

### LAN NA THAI

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Fri-Sat 5.30-11pm. 26 Dongcaoyuan (inside Face hotel),  
Gongti Nanlu, Chaoyang District (8516 2698)  
朝阳区工体南路东草园26号

 500m northwest of Dongdaqiao station (Line 6)

It can be hard for restaurants to attract a loyal following in Beijing. With shiny new kitchens opening at the rate of cars registering on Beijing roads, diners munch on the servings from one venue while contemplating which menu to open next.

Face is, by Beijing standards, one of the old-timers, here since 2006 – before the Olympics, before the Village (now Taikoo Li), and when some of the fiercest competition came from the likes of Sanlitun's then-seedy backstreets.

We recently made another visit to Lan Na Thai at Face to see how things were going, choosing their new hot pot (RMB 200-400 per person). What is a Thai hot pot and would it be any different from the usual bubbling cauldrons of chili on Gui Jie?

It was. From start to finish it was a much more formal and serene experience, being surrounded by dark wooden furniture and Thai decorations, and soundtracked by soft music rather than the usual hot pot cacophony and hollers for a *fuwuyuan*.

The menu is short and simple. Choose a broth – the spicy *tom yam goong* or crab, and then the style of platter – seafood, beef or vegetable – or one of the sets if you want a bit of everything, which we did.

Broth came in individual pots and had a delicate assembly of flavors and aromas, with whole pieces of crab shell adding to the complexity. Two sauces, one sweet and one spicy, were served ceremoniously from stone pots by elegant servers, who then brought out the beautifully-presented platters of ingredients, which for us was thinly sliced beef, vegetables, and seafood, including mussels, hairy crab, abalone, conch, scallops and shrimp.

It's not the heartiest of hot pots – a steak-and-two-veg lover might be left wanting – but it should please those who prefer a healthier, carb-free dinner. And with Beijing's temperatures now plummeting, its body-warming flavors are enough of a reason to revisit Face this winter. *Shannon Aitken*



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 450m southeast of Dongdaqiao station (Line 6)

I have never much liked hot chocolate. Or, that is, the American bastardization of a conceptually delicious thing. There are, I suppose, fond recollections of snowy afternoons spent in a cabin on the edge of a frozen lake in the California mountains, in which a watery Swiss Miss plays a prominent role. But that fondness comes less to the credit of the instant beverage and more to the tangled nature of memory and the senses during formative childhood years. A more exquisite impression on my young palate was the Mexican variation of the drink. Rough and gritty with granulated sugar, the wedges of chocolate were intended for heated milk and the blender, but most often found their way nicked by small paws straight from the striped package into greedy mouths. The liquid form never paralleled the pleasure of those bites.

Here in Beijing I have learned better. There are some who make a distinction between hot chocolate and drinking chocolate, and had I been raised with this nuanced view, I might think differently of the heated

chocolate beverage as a genre. Although the menu claims otherwise – “hot chocolate” (RMB 40) – what you will find at L’Atelier is decidedly “drinking chocolate.”

If there is a secret to the French and their total domination in the world of sweets, it is that they possess a fundamental rejection of gastronomic austerity. A slender glass carafe holds a primordial soup of melted chocolate – rich, perhaps not with the same organic compounds that could create life on earth but with a constellation of elements that encourage you to believe in this possibility. Three shallow dishes of whipped sweet cream, cinnamon sugar and a plainer vanilla sugar allow for fine-tuning should you care to sully the purity of the cocoa. (You might, and there is no shame in that.)

I hope you have friends, because if there is advice to be given in the face of this grand challenge of a beverage, it is not to decline, but to bring reinforcements. In an age of juice cleansing and during a season for soup, drinking your dessert is only right. *Cat Nelson*





## R IS FOR ...

### ... *roubing* 肉饼

A soft flatbread that sweats liquid lard as it fights to contain a rich meaty filling, the *roubing*, or meat pancake, is a common street food and staple on the northern Chinese dinner table. These savory pockets come in a variety of forms, the most famous of which is the Xiang He *roubing* (香河肉饼) which can be traced back to nomadic cultures that had plenty of beef and lamb, but little flour. A common way to treat guests was to make a very thin flour pancake layered with meat. This treat was passed along to the Hui ethnic group who brought it to Xiang He, just east of Beijing, during the Ming Dynasty. A restaurant owner who went by the name of Ha perfected the recipe – large, thin and served in slices – and gave them the name Xiang He *roubing*.

### ... *rufu* 乳腐

Chinese cheese would be the best way to describe this cooking item. The character *ru* (乳) literally refers to a mother's breast, but is also used in words associated with milk products. *Rufu* can be used to describe any type of fermented dairy curd, but the most common form of *rufu* is actually a soy product, *dou rufu*. This condiment's likeness to cheese – both in texture and flavor – is likely how it became associated with dairy products. Small cubes of tofu are mixed with rice wine, fermented red rice, salt and spices to taste, then jarred for months. Usually off-white or chili-red, the now-fermented tofu pieces are generally served at breakfast to flavor congee, rice and occasionally, stir-fries. *Dou rufu* has been compared to blue cheese, as it has an acquired taste – in other words: very stinky.

### ... *ruanchao* 软炒

This southern stir-frying method results in tender, soupy dishes. "Soft-frying" is an easy way to create comfort food for kids, the elderly, and over-worked, over-stressed individuals who are suffering from *shanghuo*, or internal heat, in Chinese medicine. The dish's main ingredient must be mashed into pulp and mixed with egg and starch before being fried in oil with extra ingredients for flavor. According to some, the trick to a good soft-frying lies in gradually raising the heat of the oil during cooking.

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# KARL LONG

OWNER OF PADDY O'SHEA'S

**E**ach month, we ask noteworthy Beijingers – leaving or not – to imagine their final meal before departing from the city for good.

Karl Long has been a Beijing bar scene stalwart for years and only recently left for the greener pastures of Anhui.

"Why leave?" we asked. His reply? "*Veni, vedi, vici!* Boom, I'm sure I'll be back, but it won't be because I'm hungry." Charming, isn't he?

### The venue

Well, I've always been a believer of as long as food is not completely sh\*t – I'll eat it. Also, it would have to be a place that while you're eating, the chef doesn't come over and start telling you that their burger is better than someone else's burger.



Most likely, we'd be in the private area to the left when you come in the door of White Knights. Reasons being there is not a lot of stuff that could be broken; I've had quite a few good meals; and the staff, although not the friendliest, get the job done and service is quick. Plus, they don't seem to mind a somewhat noisy crowd.

### The starters

I'd ask Avi in Biteapitta to send over some of his homemade pickles, as I'm guessing this meal of food would be more of a meal of vodka and these pickles provide excellent soakage. Also, some Sichuan *paocai* (small plate of pickled radishes – really salty and nice) from the small Sichuan restaurant opposite April Gourmet on Xingfucun Zhonglu. It does what every starter should probably do – starts making me hungrier.

### Main course

The main course would be a massive hot pot from Jingui Guijie Xiaoshancheng on the third floor opposite Paddy's on Dongzhimenwai Dajie. It's part of a chain that can be found on Ghost Street but this location means you don't have to walk through the puke-riddled street at night ... although it also means you don't get to see the paralytic man bag fights, either. It would be *yinyang* – half extremely spicy and half plain. No holds barred, everything in: frog, fish, mushrooms, meat, everything.

### Dish(es) from your own venue?

As everyone knows, Paddy's is famous for its quality cuisine, so I wouldn't know where to start. I'd insist on getting a butter chicken from Ganges on our second floor. Why? Because I like to eat it.

### The music

We would provide our own music and most of it would be in the form of '80s rap from True Run Media's former employee Iain Shaw. Or I'd ask Randy Abel Stable whom I first met over ten years ago in Harbin.

### Any other entertainment?

Slam poetry from a midget would be nice.

*Join Paddy O'Shea's for their sixth anniversary on Dec 6.*

## ALLEYWAY GOURMET



## CINNAMON SCENTS

**WUYISHAN NONGJIACAI 武夷山农家菜**

Daily 11am-2pm, 5-8.30pm. Maliandao Hutong, Guangwai Dajie, Xicheng District (131 2669 6251)  
西城区广外大街马连道胡同内

🚶 1.5km southeast of Liuliqiao East station (Line 9)

To taste Christmas, you might not believe that you should travel to the southwest of Beijing, where the tea market lies between the Third and Fourth Ring Roads. It may sound even more implausible that the restaurant that you should visit serves Fujian cuisine, so well-known for lighter flavors of the sea. But when the dish arrives, you will acquiesce.

The modest name, "beef and taro" (*niurou yuzi* 牛肉芋子, RMB 26), gives little indication of what is to come, although a first scent of warm cinnamon-perfumed cider should uncloak any mystery. And if you are generous with your vision, what could be a non-descript Chinese dish, in fact, glimmers a holiday palette – white taro, green scallions and brilliant red rounds of fresh chili pepper scattered amid the beef.

You will learn in this same meal that a vegetable (*hongcaitai* 红菜苔, RMB 15) with faint purple stalks exists that tastes like broccoli rabe, but better – so bitter and complex for such a plain-looking thing. You will discover that the meat just next to a cow's stomach (*dubianrou* 肚边肉, RMB 26) can be delightful. And finally, you will reassess your decision to move to the cold and arid north when you could be living on the coast eating an exceptional creation of squid and cauliflower (*suanlanyouyu* 酸辣鱿鱼, RMB 26). Cat Nelson

PHOTO: CAT NELSON



PARNAS

# PAR FOR THE COURSE

NALI NEWBIE FOLLOWS SUIT



## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

### PARNAS

Daily 11am-2pm. 1/F, Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Beilu, Chaoyang District (5288 7665)  
北京市朝阳区三里屯北路81号 那里花园一层

 900m northwest of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

If you were expecting the newest Nali Patio resident to be forged in the mold of its zany predecessor, Saddle Cantina, then you're going to be disappointed. It's an upgrade, no doubt, but it's also feels ever so slightly derivative. Yeah, it's chic and it offers the well-heeled an alternative to the regular glass elevator ride up to Migas, especially now that the terrace has closed. But it's hardly anything new to this corner of Sanlitun that seems to have developed into a sort of Mediterranean-style lounge cluster in recent times. The first floor makes up the main bar, polished but underwhelming with little setting it apart from the more established Nali residents. The second floor serves as a French-fusion restaurant, and in reality, Parnas might be better served with a return visit to the upper floor, but it wasn't open at the time of writing. One area where it bears no resemblance to the previous tenant: Parnas has certainly been attracting a more discerning crowd than its forebear did, and it shows in the price list. The RMB 40 region is where prices start for a beer, while mixed drinks and cocktails get going at RMB 50 and RMB 60, respectively, with nary a frozen margarita in sight.

The terrace area has undergone a truly grand makeover. The planking and functional wooden furniture of yore has been replaced with varnished wicker, vibrantly colored comfy sofas, and a slick long bar which can seat 12.

Parnas probably isn't what the Nali block was lacking with Migas, Fez and Apothecary already ingrained, especially during the warmer months. But now that the terraces are somewhat out of action, it should certainly pose a fresh challenge to the Nali collective. *Paul Ryding*

**Also try:** Fez, The Bar at Migas





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# ART HOUSE

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## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

### ENTOURAGE

Daily 5pm-1am. 102, Bldg 14, Central Park, 6 Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang District (6597 0544)  
朝阳区朝外大街6号新城国际公寓14号楼底商102

 800m west of Tuanjieshu station (Line 10)

"Oh, the place with the art." It was the same thing that three other people said when I mentioned I was going to be stopping by for a look-see. I started to think Entourage might not be the place to end a week-long abstention from beer. All I wanted was a belly-full of ale and to get a bit rowdy. But it's a fair and accurate wrap for the Central Park newbie. The art is what you remember most. It's high-concept, but it's one we've seen before – an art gallery/lounge bar in a neat neighborhood, designed around the express intention to exhibit art work in an innovative but relaxed way. It recently hosted a collection of SURGE art work, in each of its three "spaces" – the "Light Fall Room," the "Mirror Room" and the Dada Room." It's all very attractive, but feels like it edges more towards the art gallery than it does the lounge bar. Not many bars concern themselves with "an orchestrate disposition of embedded mirrors and paintings" as Entourage does. That's not to suggest they've wholly disregarded the basic tenets of a good lounge bar. Aside from the art, it's what you'd expect of an elegant Central Park bar. Tight, strong cocktails – in lieu of a beer, the Old Fashioned (RMB 60) was a delight, while the 'Entourage Inspiration' menu will run you RMB 80 a sample, but delivers. Fresh, tasty appetizers feature on the snack menu, try the Messe Plate (RMB 55) – and a handsome bar bill awaits on exit. It was a pleasant visit, but my self-imposed beer ban would have to continue; it's too vulgar to be drunk in an art gallery. *Paul Ryding*

**Also try:** Janes and Hooch, Crossover Club




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# WINTER WARMERS

## THE PICK OF THE CITY'S SEASONAL SIPS

by Paul Ryding

### CHOCWORK ORANGE

Available at The Brick

Dave Bob, manager at the Shuangjing favorite, is constantly updating his cocktail list – usually with the intention of getting his regulars sloppy as quickly as possible, but the Chocwork Orange option is a standout on his winter menu, and not just for the cool name. It sounds positively delicious until you get to the vodka part. But surprisingly, the bite of the vodka is tempered by the hot cocoa milk and tangy orange.

#### Ingredients

Vodka, cocoa, orange liqueur, milk

### WARM-HEARTED ENGLISHMAN

Available at Flamme

A steamy riff on the erstwhile

Paul Mathew's popular Passionate Englishman blend from their regular cocktail menu, this gin infusion with passion fruit and apple syrup provides a kick, and closely follows it up with a hug before it gets too unpleasant.

#### Ingredients

Gin, passion fruit, apple syrup, lemon juice, hot water

The snap has well and truly set in. But despite the chill outside, none of us will stop going to the pub, will we? Not in this lifetime. But we can adapt our palates ever so slightly to help us conquer the cold. Winter provides the excuse for us to mull as much as we can, but many of the city's bars are a step ahead and have added more creative hot drinks to their menus to keep your cockles warm throughout the winter.

We thought we'd look a bit deeper than the usual Hot Toddys, Buttered Rums, and Irish Coffees of Beijing, and see if our city's mixologists could throw up anything with a bit more sparkle this festive period. Here's a selection of steamy cocktails to stave off the chill. All are sweet, spicy and spiked, the best kind.

### **JUNIPER AND ORANGE SPICED APPLE CIDER**

**Available at The Local**

This one is fine for the kiddies, they tell us. But the jig on a regular wassail can be made grown-up with a nip of rum if that's your choosing. After going to great pains to obtain juniper berries, they make sure they bring out the piney flavor of the berry and have complemented it with spices including cinnamon and aniseed to nullify the berry's intense characteristics, warms the bones and clears the sinuses.

#### **Ingredients**

*Juniper infused gin, nutmeg,  
Xinxiang apple cider*

### **APOTHECARY HOT CHOCOLATE**

**Available at Apothecary**

Made with 70% cacao content Belgian dark chocolate, fruit peels, herbs, spices, brown sugar, whole milk and cream this is a serious hot chocolate. None of your powder and hot water nonsense here, no sir. Their cocoa powder comes from real chocolate bars and the hot chocolate base takes 24 hours to prepare. Topped with your choice of fortification from Chartreuse for a herbal twang, Grand Marnier for a zingier finish, or Havana Club rum for a big boy's backbone, it makes a deliciously decadent and potent warmer.

#### **Ingredients**

*Chocolate base, milk, cream  
Chartreuse, Grand Marnier, or Havana Club rum*

**HOT CANADIAN TODDY, AVAILABLE AT PLAN B**



# CHOPPER STOP

SHUNYI'S FIRST BIKER BAR




## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

### THE GARAGE

Mon-Thu 3pm-late, Fri-Sun noon-late. Houshayu Yuyang Lu (100m east of Capital Paradise South Gate), Shunyi County

顺义县后沙峪榆阳路 (名都园南门东行100米)

 500m south of China International Exhibition Center station (Line 15)

A biker bar has rolled into town, parking itself between the gated communities, golf courses, and prestigious international schools of Shunyi. There goes the neighborhood? We took a big gulp and endeavored to find out. But upon closer inspection, The Garage is more likely to attract teachers and their students' families than the local branch of Hell's Angels.

Owner Glenn Phelan's success with The Green Cap and Filling Station fueled the idea behind The Garage. The plan of attack is a simple one involving a strategic location, decent diner food, a camp theme and the broadcasting of sports' on gigantic plasma screens.

Harley-Davidson-themed orange and black booths overwhelm the large space. The deep-fried Cajun Chicken Wings (six for RMB 45) from the "Quick Fuel Filler" menu were seasoned well enough to reject the rack of sauces we were handed, while the Garage Sandwich (RMB 80) is a grain-fed Australian beef medallion on flaky ciabatta bread, and is more appetizing than its name suggests.

Beer from more than 10 countries is available, and the draft options are dispensed from engine pistons. The cocktail selection is limited to familiar classics, but we settled on a well-balanced Whiskey Sour and Lynchburg Lemonade (RMB 45).

The pool table, five big screen TVs, daily specials, and weekly events should be enough to draw an enthusiastic Shunyi presence, but a trip from the city does not seem worth it. Unless you're riding in on your motorcycle, of course.

*Reed Russell*

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## COCKTAIL PROFILER



**D**&M Bar in the Shuangjing's Fulicheng has been making waves since it opened with the outstanding quality of its cocktails. Manager Vincent and his crack team of well-dressed mix

masters have quickly established a loyal crowd of regulars. What better place then for a profiling? With each drink intricately prepared, we're now firmly of the opinion that the longer a cocktail takes to make, the better it will be.



### BLAKE

**Interesting fact:** Blake was once nominated for a Daytime Emmy award. But even he couldn't act like he enjoyed the rather girly offering

Vincent knocked up for him.

**The resulting drink:** Dream

#### Ingredients:

25ml dry gin  
25ml blue curaçao  
liqueur  
5ml fresh lemon juice  
Topped up with  
champagne

**Served:** Shaken into an icing sugar-rimmed champagne flute

*"It's a little feminine for my taste. I like my drink a little stronger, but the taste is great. Would I get this again? Erm, no."*

Every month we ask one of the city's expert mixologists to profile a selection of Beijingers based on a single snapshot and a brief factoid.

If you'd like to be in next month's Cocktail Profiler, email us a photo and an interesting fact about yourself to [do@thebeijinger.com](mailto:do@thebeijinger.com).



### KIDI

**Interesting fact:** Kidi once got lost in the red-light district of Amsterdam. She didn't care to disclose what she was looking for.

**The resulting drink:**  
Braveheart

**Ingredients:**

45ml white rum  
45ml plain yogurt  
15ml mango syrup  
5ml grenadine  
¼ fresh mango

**Served:** Blended into a cocktail saucer with a fresh mint garnish

*"I like anything fruity and colorful. This is pretty and my favorite flavor, mango."*



### EDWIN

**Interesting fact:** Edwin is a great fan of Japan and visits the country four times a year. He cannot speak Japanese but can sing Japanese KTV songs.

**The resulting drink:**  
Hot Passion

**Ingredients:**

45ml Campari  
45ml fresh pink grapefruit Juice  
10ml grapefruit syrup  
5ml Frangelico

**Served:** Shaken into a hurricane glass and garnished with grapefruit peel and fresh mint

*"Usually I like simple, basic cocktails. This is very interesting, though."*



### DWIGHT

**Interesting fact:** Dwight once spent time in a Curaçao prison. He did not elaborate further, and we thought it best not to ask any questions.

**The resulting drink:**  
Dwight Sunshine

**Ingredients:**

45ml smoky whiskey  
15ml Campari  
15ml Amaro Averna  
15ml sweet vermouth

**Served:** Stirred and strained into a sugar-rimmed champagne saucer

*"It's bitter and smoky. It's like the story behind my fact; sweet up front, bitter at the back!"*







# A PERFECT GIFT

## LOCAL VINTAGES AND STEMWARE

by Jim Boyce

Millions – or at least dozens – of people in Beijing face the same question annually when Chinese New Year, Christmas and other gift-giving dates approach: What can I get for my wine-loving friends, family members and business contacts?

The obvious answer? Wine.

One label getting good press is Domaine Helan Mountain, produced in Ningxia by drinks giant Pernod Ricard. Bottles start at less than RMB 100 at its Taobao store ([pernodricard.tmall.com](http://pernodricard.tmall.com)). And while this winery makes Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Pinot Noir, its refreshing 2011 “Special Reserve” Chardonnay is garnering attention. I’m told it will soon be added to the store for about RMB 250 per bottle.

Dependable blends of quality and value are also available at Everwines, which sells Grace Vineyard from

Shanxi and Silver Heights from Ningxia via its online site ([everwines.com](http://everwines.com)) and its shop on Xindong Lu. Heading home to Boston, Brisbane or Belgrade for Christmas and want a local product for a wine-guzzling aunt or uncle? Try Grace’s People’s Series Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay (both RMB 99) with labels based on Chinese propaganda posters.

If those are too politically sensitive, Grace’s entry-level reds and whites start at RMB 60 and rise to RMB 500 for the Cabernet-heavy Chairman’s Reserve. Silver Heights tends to be on the pricier side, from RMB 300 to RMB 500, although it provides greater complexity and is thus a good option for the wine-savvy relative.

Show even more generosity by pairing that bottle with glasses. While one can use everything from a paper cup to a pickle jar for wine, there are times when a classier

option – say, a vessel that didn't once contain Smucker's – shows you care. Riedel is the best-known name and offers unparalleled choice. By unparalleled, I mean it not only offers glasses for red and white wine but also for individual grape varieties, whether Pinot Noir, Syrah and Zinfandel or Riesling, Rheingau and Sauvignon Blanc.

The company's basic philosophy is: a) different grape varieties produce different kinds of wines; b) glass shape influences how you smell and taste those wines; thus c) enjoyment is maximized by creating a glass shape specifically for each grape variety. (They arguably take it too far by having one specifically for "mature" Bordeaux.) I've seen Riedel everywhere from Wal-Mart to The Wine Gallery in Taikoo Li North, with the latter having the best selection. Note: mouth-blown glasses are much more expensive than machine-made ones.

Beijing also has plenty of household goods stores and markets for those with time to shop. While it might not rule in terms of quantity, I like Laitai Flower Market. It has a half-dozen shops split between the knick-knack-filled basement and the main floor that houses the flower section. This makes Laitai a convenient place to not only grab a half-dozen glasses but also to tick that two-meter-high bronze antelope head, lacquered tree root fashioned into a tea table, and lemon tree fully loaded with ripe fruit off your shopping list. (Need a live parakeet for that tree? They sell them a few meters away.)

The small glass shop in the far left corner just inside the entrance is a good starting point. It has a decent selection of generic glasses from RMB 15 (pre-bargain) along with kitschy options featuring gold bands, solid black bowls, or shiny stars that might excite a dual *Harry Potter* and wine fan. You can also find pricier ware, with glasses at RMB 100 or more each, or sold in sets with decanters and elaborate stands. Expect every salesperson to ping each glass in an apparent belief that hearing a bell-like ring will have a kind of Pavlovian effect and make you pay full price.

Finally, you might want to package your bottle in something special. You can find traditional *qipao*-style cloth covers, decorative glossy paper bags and more in Beijing. One fun option is the sturdy cases sold at The Loop. These range from a single-bottle metallic case that looks like a *Mission Impossible* prop to a six-bottle, faux-leather carrier that says class – in a faux-leather sort of way. You could even mix things up with that last one. With those six slots in the case, you could insert a pair of bottles and four moderately sized glasses, and thus giving someone the gift of a mobile wine party.



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# ON THE BUN

HUBERT KELLER, OWNER, BURGER BAR

by Cat Nelson

**H**aving opened original locations in Las Vegas and San Francisco, fine dining chef Hubert Keller launched the first international location of Burger Bar in Beijing this summer. He talks to us about creating the most expensive burger in America and the iconic dish's universal appeal.

## What is your first memory of eating a burger?

Almost none. I'd probably had three or four burgers when I started the concept. We were literally on a crash course. We ate burgers everywhere. We sat there and watched people eating – how they open up the paper, the way they put on the ketchup, how they press it down, how they cut it, if they cut it. There was a whole ritual that we were observing.

I think the good part is that this is why the Burger Bar

is the way it is today: we didn't know anything about it and we started fresh with no rules to follow.

## How did the most expensive burger (The Rossini) come about?

Before I opened Burger Bar, I felt that I needed a couple of things that would make people talk about the place. I knew that Daniel Boulud had the most expensive burger, and I thought, "Well, I need to put the most expensive burger in Las Vegas."

Whenever I took a taxi I asked, "Do you have any restaurants to recommend – something with burgers?" The taxi driver would say, "Oh there's a place in Mandalay Bay. I don't know the name of it but I know they have the most expensive burger in the country." That was it. And then we actually started selling it.

## Why did you feel the time was right to do burgers in China?

A friend of mine in Shanghai who had a Greek restaurant showed me around. Next to his restaurant, there was a young American guy doing burgers, and I watched how things were going. The place was packed.

At first, my concern was if we are doing burgers, how much would we have to change? Then I realized that nothing needed to be changed. They really want it the way it's served [in America].

## What have you noticed about burgers in China?

For some reason, the proportion between the bun and the patty is more bread than you would serve [in America]. It seems like they love their bread.

## What is the universal appeal of the burger?

It's an interesting question: why and how, but I think it's one of those magical things that just works. You have a good bun, you have a good patty, and then you combine them with the simple stuff – lettuce, tomato, onion. You don't need much of an introduction.

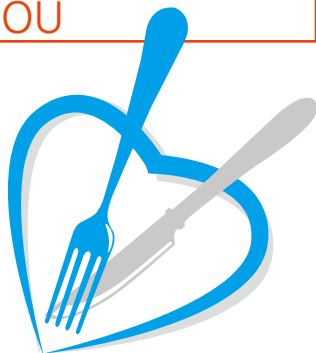
*Get a taste of Burger Bar's new regular menu and special Christmas and New Year's menus at the end of December.*



PHOTO: COURTESY OF BURGER BAR

## P.S. WE ATE YOU

Every month, we like to shine a spotlight on the most delicious dishes we've stumbled upon recently. Dig in!



### miso soup

#### Sake Manzo, RMB 15

The humble miso soup is often the least spectacular thing about a Japanese feast, but on a chilly winter night, it's a surprise standout at the highly-regarded Chaoyang Park Japanese. Rich and stocky, with a generous scattering of fresh scallions that maintained their crisp until the not unpleasantly bitter end.

### date cake

#### Zaogao Wang, RMB 7

What hits is the heavenly aroma, a mixture of brown sugar and maple syrup. As you wait in the ridiculous queue complaining about the cold, the scent reminds you of why you're putting yourself through it for seven-kuai-worth of cake. It comes out in a giant pan with seven or eight square pieces, each about the size of your fist. Go for the outermost slices as the buttery edges of the cake are particularly satisfying and offer a slightly crunchier bite.

### pesto shrimp spaghetti

#### Union Bar & Grille, RMB 98

A 2013 Burger Cup finalist finally wades into shrimpy waters with this fine dish. The pesto perfectly complements the other ingredients, neither overpowering them nor leaving the diner wanting more. The shrimp are grilled and then placed atop spaghetti, chosen for being lighter than the normal pesto pasta, fettuccine. A bit pricey, but a very tasty new menu item from this Sanlitun stalwart.

### maple with chopped peanuts donut

#### Daylight Donuts, RMB 8

Peer through the hole of a maple cake Daylight Donut, and you can practically see the US on the other side. It's Beijing's single best rendition of this breakfast-time indulgence, so much so that you would think they were from the corner bakery instead of Chaoyangmen's U-Town mall. All that's left to do after boxing a dozen is to find an equally delicious coffee to dunk them in. No need to share with colleagues.





Things to do, places to be, stuff to try

# GO



Where have the  
aliens landed? p59

TOY MEAT // BROOCHES // S.T.A.R.S. STYLE // GIFTS



***View sunsets like never before in The Temple Hotel's Skyspace.  
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PHOTO: COURTESY OF BEN MCILLIAN



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# Giftable Gadgetry

by Joey Guo

### SONY QX100 LENS-STYLE CAMERA

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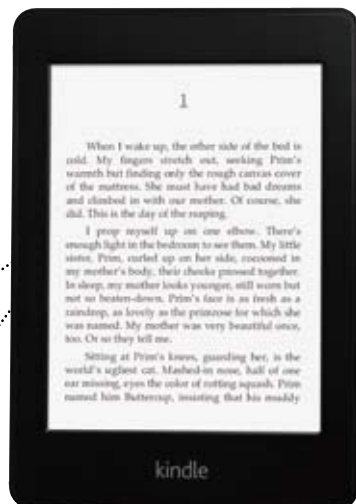
This ceramic Bluetooth speaker does more than stream music wirelessly from an iPhone or iPad. Its two top compartments let you hold plants or snacks, a nice gift for any desk-top or bedroom.

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# BROACHING AND BROOCHES

CONTEMPORARY JEWELRY AND CERAMICS







## WHAT'S NEW VENUES & SHOPS



# CAN'T PIGEONHOLE IT

### XIAOJI STUDIO

Wed-Mon noon-10pm. 60 Beiluogu Xiang, Dongcheng District  
东城区北锣鼓巷60号

 600m southwest of Andingmen station (Line 2)

Beijing is no stranger to the shop-plus-cafe-plus-other-stuff concept. So much so, that now, I downright expect to be able to sip a latte or eat a meal or, heck, get my bike repaired while simultaneously browsing designer clothes. Would I call myself spoiled? Maybe. Blame these ambitious entrepreneurs for their overzealousness. Can't anyone see the merit in doing just one thing extremely well?

Not Xiaoji Studio.

Branded as a shop that sells home decoration, furniture, tableware and fashion accessories, Xiaoji (pigeon) also declares they can do graphic design, branding, home decorating, video production and web design. Not to mention they love "life, peace, animals and plants," serve beer, coffee, cakes, and even Chinese food. Yikes.

To be fair, part of the reasoning behind this smorgasbord most certainly derives from the fact that Xiaoji is owned and operated by a handful of multi-talented editors at one of China's most well known interior decorating magazines, *Trendshome*. Using their connections at the publication, they created a space where customers

could easily access a wide range of bric-a-brac all in one place. What's especially nice is that with the exception of a few rebranded items from IKEA and local markets, the selection at Xiaoji is refreshing compared to the typical home décor offerings in Beijing. With the likes of ceramic and pearl kitchenware from Japan and the Philippines, handmade piggy banks from Germany, whimsical dream catchers and a selection of handmade dishes and accessories by shop owners and friends, there's enough brand diversity to set the boutique apart.

Once you're past the intensity of copious amounts of concepts in one, small place, you can appreciate Xiaoji's unique offerings, like a terrace enclosed by a garden of take-away plants, cacti and succulents, starting at RMB 10.

And just in case there's not enough already to draw you in, Xiaoji's storefront features cute felines for sale. After all, one more addition to the store mission can't hurt. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** Min, Kodo

## WHAT'S NEW VENUES & SHOPS

# KOBE BEEF

## NICE TO MEAT YOU

Mon-Fri 2-10pm, Sat-Sun noon-10pm. 235 Gulou

Dongdajie, Dongcheng District

东城区鼓楼东大街235号

 800m southeast of Gulou station (Lines 2 and 8)

Anyone who's been to Gulou Dongdajie has seen its meat-streaked streets. And then, at the street's northwest side, there are the squeeze toy steaks.

Held proudly in the air by three *Toy Story* squeeze-toy aliens, these trophies mark the entrance to Nice to Meat You, a shop that, oddly, has little to do with meat at all.

"We just love meat," owner Dennis Li from Hong Kong explained, who couldn't expound when asked for further explanation. In fact, he's so self-conscious of the obscurity of a boutique of handmade jewelry and cartoon collectibles christened with a carnivorous name, that he doesn't even sell the meat stickers that he's slapped on the to-go baggies. "No one will buy them," he said.

Still, one may find Dennis's collection to be rather meaty in the sense of variety. A section of his wall-to-floor shelving is devoted to Pixar and Disney paraphernalia for the serious collector, while another is reserved for what can only be described as party favors and hard-to-come-by Japanese candy. You'll also find replica vintage Kobe charms repurposed into necklaces, earrings and pins. Ever wanted to wear a fried-chicken leg on your earlobes? Now you can. Tiny *jiaozis*? Yep. Hayao Miyazaki's loveable cartoon princesses? You better believe it. AFor the simply meat-obsessed, Dennis is soon coming out with a new tote bag covered in the stuff. We can't wait to see it – it'll be perfect for carrying home vegetables. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** Murayama Meat Shop, Brand New China



PHOTO: MITCHELL PE MASILUN





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GET THE LOOK

# VENDORS IN VOGUE

by Jessica Rapp

Who better to call style savvy than those running Beijing's premier boutiques? Each month, we ask shop owners to brandish their personal looks.

**Michel Alarcon**  
Buyer and Art Director  
S.T.A.R.S. 丝头爱染色

**His style:** Mixing designer brands with classic accents, always with a touch of black.

**Style evolution:** "For more than ten years I wore black. After coming to Beijing, becoming a buyer for the shop, and seeing so many designers during fashion weeks, I really wanted to be more colorful."

**What he's wearing:** Eagle necklace, H&M; sweatpants, Uniqlo; Jeremy Scott hoodie, S.T.A.R.S., shoes, Adidas x Jeremy Scott; cap, Studio (HK); sunglasses, Ray-Ban.



## Echo Yilin and Hao Yimai

Owners

Nostalgia Vintage

**Their style:** Echo studies costume design for the stage and often finds herself making her own clothes or editing vintage looks. She and her boyfriend like to coordinate their styles, but Yimai describes his look as "sporty."

**Style evolution:** High school caught Echo in a transformation from "hip hop" to vintage.

**What they're wearing:** *Echo:* Sweaters, scarf, hat and bag, Nostalgia; skirt, Little White & Big White; sunglasses, Jack Willis; shoes, Dr. Martens. *Yimai:* Sweater, coat, and scarf, Nostalgia; jeans, Uniqlo; shoes, Redwing.





Introducing the people who matter

# MEET

"I NEVER INVITE ANYBODY RUDE OR AFFECTED" SEE P63

"WE ALL DRESS UP IN VINTAGE UNDERWEAR" SEE P64

"THEY HAD TO PUT ME IN A COMA TO SAVE MY LUNGS. I ALMOST DIED" SEE P65

"SCREWING WATERMELONS ON CAMERA, THAT'S NOT ART" SEE P66

THE CARDIGANS // CAT POWER // SARA JANE HO // DAYYAN ENG

## **THE TALENTED MR. GOLDIE**

**HIS DEBUT  
ALBUM HELPED  
POPULARIZE  
DRUM BASS AS  
A MAINSTREAM  
ART FORM**

**HE STARRED  
IN BRITISH  
SOAP OPERA  
EASTENDERS  
FOR A YEAR**

**HIS ARTWORK  
HAS BEEN  
DISPLAYED ON  
THE LONDON  
UNDERGROUND**

**HE STARRED IN JAMES  
BOND MOVIE THE WORLD  
IS NOT ENOUGH**

**HE WAS  
THE FIRST  
CELEBRITY TO  
BE EVICTED  
FROM THE BIG  
BROTHER HOUSE  
IN 2002**

See Goldie go back to his drum & bass roots at Dada on December 20.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ORGANIZERS

# SOCIAL GRACES

A LESSON FROM BEIJING'S MISS MANNERS

by Cat Nelson

**"M**ind your manners," our mothers often chided. You might have learned then, but now, it's easy enough to feel like a child again, thrust into a globalized world and plopped down clueless into the midst of another culture.

Sara Jane Ho has been tackling that beast with her newly founded Institute Sarita, a high-end finishing school for international etiquette. The etiquette expert explains the importance of introductions and how to avoid rude guests.

## **If you were to rate etiquette faux pas, what would rank number one?**

Introductions – for both Chinese and Westerners. If you are the common link standing between two people who do not know each other, then it is your responsibility to introduce them – whether or not you are the host! And when you introduce, don't simply state names. I always give a meaningful introduction that includes where the person is from, what brought them to Beijing, and how I met them. Also, I quickly think of things in common such as "John just returned from a trip to France – Mary studied abroad in France," so that they can easily strike up a conversation on their own!

## **What is the rudest guest you've had to deal with?**

I haven't had any. I put a lot of thought into which guests to invite because I try to create the right mix that will determine the chemistry of the evening. I never invite anybody rude or affected or obnoxious or loud to my home or dinner. These sorts of people vex the spirit.

## **Etiquette essentially reinforces and endorses conventional social norms. What have been the biggest, recent shifts in what is considered "proper etiquette"?**

Etiquette is a revisionist business. People think that etiquette is strict and unforgiving, taught by an old-fashioned, old lady with her hair in a bun. This is why I am trying to redefine etiquette because it is actually fresh and dynamic and situation-specific.

I think the biggest shift in what is considered "proper etiquette" has been regarding the role of women, as they move from the home to the workplace, from finishing

school to business school. These days we don't need to have chaperones on dates.

## **Is there a line of compromise and understanding between cultures regarding rules of etiquette and manners?**

Absolutely. Learning and practicing international etiquette is a statement of your openness and awareness of the fact that people you are with may see the world differently.

## **How do you feel when a man holds open a door for you? What if he doesn't?**

I am charmed! If he is a real gentleman he should hold open the door for whomever is following behind him, not just me. If he doesn't, I take notice too. I never say anything though. I only offer my thoughts on etiquette when asked – nothing is more annoying than a preacher.

*Improve your manners at Sara's Dinner at TRB, Ms. Ho's new monthly series of social dinners at Temple Restaurant Beijing beginning Dec 21.*







## CHEWING ON ROMEO + JULIET

THE CARDIGANS' FRONT WOMAN NIPS AWAY AT HER WHOLESOME POP IMAGE

by Kyle Mullin

"I have some in my mouth right now," front woman Nina Persson sheepishly admits of the addictively goeey vice that's all too common in her homeland of Sweden. Countless star-crossed lovers, who swooned and slow danced to "Lovefool" at their proms, may be shocked to learn the songstress hocked chewing tobacco into a spittoon between studio takes. But as a headliner of this year's Modern Sky Festival, Persson is far more dynamic and complex than the pop princess title she's been saddled with all these years. She tells us more about subverting those expectations – from compulsively

chomping nicotine, to becoming a burlesque singer and perfecting her Dolly Parton impression.

**A newspaper mentioned your chewing tobacco habit in a 2009 profile. Do you still chew?**

I'm really a junkie for it. I quit last summer, then I got stressed in the fall and started again.

**Stress brought on by your new reunion tour with The Cardigans after a five-year hiatus?**

No, we're actually enjoying playing shows without a record to promote. The cycle of putting out albums these days is a bit predictable.

**There's also your other band A Camp, your Dolly Parton cover group, and your 30-person cabaret troupe.**

I love to have these other little teams. The Dolly Parton project was just me and a bunch of Swedish girlfriends having fun, but it eventually turned into a tour and a documentary film. For the cabaret thing we all dress up in vintage underwear, showgirls' headdresses, fishnets and garters, until we look like a bunch of drunk people from the 1920s.

**Will The Cardigans record new music soon?**

We all have young kids right now, so it works better to only go on the road a bit here and there.

**Does your son prefer The Cardigans or A Camp?**

He's just three, and he's actually into his mom going solo because I've been working so much on my own record. He's just realizing I sing for a living. Recently he said his job someday is going to be making music. I don't know how I feel about that.

**Why not?**

We had weird huge success early on. When someone told us "Lovefool" would be in a movie, we were like, whatever. Then it took off like crazy, and people were talking about Leonardo DiCaprio with us. We didn't necessarily feel connected to that, but we got a crazy boost. Despite our success, I got tired of being called a pop diva. I'm not really a princess kind of person. But in retrospect, it gave us chances that were quite unique. So, I definitely came out on the right side of that.

*The Cardigans perform at ThinkPad Space on Dec 1. For more information, visit [Buy.modernsky.com](http://Buy.modernsky.com).*

# HEALING POWER

AMERICAN FOLK ROCKER COMES TO CHINA SEEKING ... TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

by Kyle Mullin

For years, Cat Power (née Chan Marshall) used a guitar pick to dig into her heartache, steadily strumming like a surgeon gauging out gangrene. Then the tenacious songstress had her maladies prodded with a finer instrument – an acupuncture needle. Below she tells us more about how that pin prick practice saved her life, why Traditional Chinese Medicine makes her December 8 Beijing debut all the more special, and how an alternative to her guitar saved her songs and her soul.

## Hello, Cat Power.

Ni hao.

## You're fluent in Mandarin already?

No, no I'm not fluent in anything. So far I've only learned *ni hao*, *xie xie* and *zai jian*. But I've wanted to come to China for years.

## Why did you say having your new backup band has "totally changed you?"

It freed me up to just sing at the microphone. And that was the first time I saw the audience. Before that, I had gotten used to just looking at my hand on the guitar or the piano. Finally confronting everyone was scary at first. But eventually it was relaxing.

## That sounds better than before, when you were infamous for storming offstage.

Yeah, but then I got really sick last year with this disease called angioedema.

I was still doing my job 120 percent, like I always had, but it was hard for me to hide my illness. It swelled up my throat. They had to put me in a coma to save my lungs. I almost died.

Eastern medicine, especially acupuncture, helped me overcome it. Western medicine just made me sicker. So I'm excited to come to China and try other herbs and techniques. Overcoming all that has given me a lot more pride and joy in being able to sing again.

## Plenty of fans say your music has healed them. How does that feel?

I think about that a lot. When I was 23, I was in Paris doing my first interview. I was depressed then, and didn't have much self-compassion. The reporter, who was a fan, asked me what was wrong, and I admitted I wanted to end my life. She burst out crying, and told me she'd just gotten out of the psych ward for suicide. She said: "You don't understand – if you give up, I give up." So now when I write or sing, I always hope that people can receive it and know they're not alone. I feel like it's all of our responsibility to empower the people we come in contact with.

## How did you try to empower listeners on your latest album, *Sun*?

One of its songs, "Manhattan," was inspired by jazz and the Civil Rights Movement. Young people today have that pulse of change, but I don't know if they have that kind of "jazz" yet. If they do, I hope that it's really loud. Because I'd like to hear it, too.

*Cat Power performs at ThinkPad Space on Dec 8. For more information, visit [Buy.modernsky.com](http://Buy.modernsky.com).*





# DAYYAN ENG

FILMMAKER

**Have you ever walked out of the movie theater? If so, which scene made you say “I can’t watch any more of this”?**

Rarely do I ever walk out, even with the worst movie, I usually give it a chance till the end. I know I’ve done it once or twice before, I just seriously can’t remember which movie. It was that bad that I wiped it from my memory.

**In the biopic of your life, which scene should be filmed in slow motion?**

Me being born, getting married, and my kid being born. I’m cheesy like that.

**In the biopic of your life, which scene should be filmed as a silent movie?**

Me making my movies. People should just see the final film, not the process.



**What’s the TV series or movie that you haven’t been able to find on DVD?**

You mean on pirated DVD? Because pretty much everything is available on DVD somewhere.

**What TV show or movie did you once love but now think is rubbish?**

I wouldn’t call it “rubbish,” but I recently saw *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* again and, man, that movie doesn’t hold up! Not sure why I liked it so much when it came out.

**What TV show or movie did you have to be coerced into watching but now readily admit that you love?**

I remember my mom forced me to go watch *Little Women* with her when I was in high school. That turned out to be a really good film. Plus I was really into Winona Ryder (pre-burglary days).

**What’s your favorite film musical?**

*Evita.*

**What movie are you sick of people saying to you: “What?! You haven’t seen it?”**

I’m usually the dude saying that.

**What is a slow-paced movie you still enjoy?**

*The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly.*

**What movie first made you say: “Wow, how did they do that?”**

*E.T.*

**What movie do you refuse to watch on principle?**

*120 Days of Sodom* was the worst piece of crap (pun intended) I’ve seen and refuse to watch ever again. Also, [Taiwan director] Tsai Ming-Liang’s *The Wayward Cloud* is another one I refuse to watch. The two films I mentioned are disgusting. I don’t care how “artistic” the artsy-fart festival community calls them – call me old fashioned, but to me, people pooing and screwing watermelons on camera, that’s not art.

*Catch Dayyan Eng’s films, including Inseparable with Kevin Spacey, on DVD. Because everything is available on DVD somewhere.*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAYYAN ENG

# ROBIN KOOB

VIOLINIST



## Which uniform was the most flattering?

I've gotten to wear ball gowns for some orchestra performances. The best was one my dad surprised me with when I was about to play my first big show with our university orchestra. Not very like him to buy his girls dresses on the sly, so I'll always remember it.

## Which uniform was the worst fit?

Lumiere, the candlestick. I was age 11, wearing a skin-tight gold- and black-striped spandex cat suit with giant foam carved hands and a head perilously spray-painted with gold sparkles. I spent five shows singing "Be Our Guest" and can-canning while inhaling the sparkly fumes.

## Did you ruin any of these uniforms? How?

I was an Ocean City beach tagger for two weeks and not a day more when I was 14. I dare anyone to comb the beaches of New Jersey for eight hours per day in July, telling topless middle-aged dudes to either pay five bucks or get out. We wore gray shirts with the city logo on them and had walkie-talkies (which *was* cool). By the end, I had second-degree burns on my shoulders and a whole new vocabulary.

## Which uniform do you feel most sentimental about? Why?

The same summer, I switched to a job in the Old Timey Photo Booth on the Ocean City Boardwalk. When things

were slow, we dressed up in the salt-air infused costumes and took photos of ourselves in ridiculous positions. There was one green half-dress (they all tied up at the back). I hid it in the back so that tourist girls wouldn't find it. Girls are weird at 14.

## Tell us a story about wearing a uniform somewhere where you felt out of place.

Eighteen, touring Europe with the American Youth Orchestra Burgundy Tour. We played the theme song to *Pirates of the Caribbean*. We were given bright red blazers, navy pencil skirts and white-collared shirts to wear and strolled down the beautiful streets of Salzburg and Vienna. At our last show, our conductor pulled out pirate hats for us all. America!

## Which uniform would be considered the least fashionable?

When I first came to Beijing, I worked at Wall Street English. Rumors about a mandatory teachers' uniform floated around the centers for ages. Then one day, we saw one. It was just a sample but it was pretty terrible. I left the company soon after. Thankfully those babies didn't get through.

*Catch Robin Koob, Remedios and the Harrodans on Dec 13 at Jiang Jin Jiu.*





# FRENCH BABA

## GUILLAUME GAUVAIN'S HELPING HAND TURNS TEN

by Nick Richards

For a decade Guillaume Gauvain has been working with disabled orphans in Beijing. Originally from France, he is the founder of Bethel China, which has helped countless disadvantaged children in China live more fulfilling lives. Bethel is celebrating their tenth anniversary this month and Gauvain was kind enough to answer a few questions, all while helping with Typhoon Haiyan relief in the Philippines at a therapy center on Cebu he is establishing there.

**Blind Chinese orphans. That's a scary issue to tackle. What was the spark, the one moment were you said to yourself, "Right, I'm going to do this?"**

When I got home with David, my adoptive son, I was overwhelmed with the feeling of how big of a difference it was to bring an orphan into a family. That was the spark that led to Bethel. For blind orphans specifically, we found that even though blindness is not a mental illness, they were treated as such with little hope of moving forward, so we decided to do something about it.

**How did you feel/react the first time you met these disabled children over here?**

I still remember coming back from the orphanage with the first three blind children in my van and looking at them and thinking, "what am I doing?"

**What was the first thing you had to learn when working with these kids?**

Determination, not so much because of the kids, but just to overcome each challenge such as, "Are you crazy? It can't be done; you think too big, no money, no government framework or legal framework, human resource issues, everything."

**What is the first thing you try to teach Bethel's children?**

The first thing we teach is, "You are beautiful, and you're worth it."

**What kind of environment are you hoping to create? How will this help them?**

An environment where everyone can learn and grow, no matter the speed. This will help them towards some degree of independence according to each child's capacity.

**Can you describe a day at Bethel's homes?**

Yes, it's like any other child. Wake up, clean up, breakfast, go to school, lunch, school, fun outside, dinner, play, then shower and bedtime.

**In ten years how many children has Bethel worked with and where did your organization take**

### them developmentally?

I believe over 140 in full-time care and education plus thousands reached through our training program. Each kid has their own education plan. They range from blind and very high functioning (who will be independent in society), to having other needs such as autism.

### Where do you hope these kids will end up? What kind of future is there for them?

Well, like any parent you want to kids to be the best they can be and achieve independence. But above all, I want them to feel good about themselves and have a fighting spirit since society will not make it easy on them.

### How did your nickname *Faguo Baba*, or “Father France,” start?

The kids started calling me this, and we like it because it's a little different from just “Papa and Mama.” They might get adopted later so we didn't want to take that place in their hearts.

### What are some of the differences between helping orphans in China and your previous job helping drug addicts in Canada?

Not that different. In the end, you just come alongside someone for a little while on their journey and try to show them that they have what it takes, that they are important and loved, so they can get on with their life.

### What were the main steps to get things started here? Any bureaucratic or official hurdles?

In the beginning, there were no steps. For foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs), everything is in the gray, no matter how many new so-called laws and regulations there are.

### What were Bethel's biggest milestones over the past ten years?

Opening our own school and moving to our own piece of land to design it the way we wanted.

### Right now you're helping to deal with the recent disaster in the Philippines. How would Bethel China react in that type of situation?

Like everything we do: We would think “children first.” Our staff is amazing and I know they would protect the children.

*Celebrate Bethel China's ten-year anniversary on Dec 14 at the Regent Beijing.*



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# ECOLOGY

"IT'S EASIER TO THROW THINGS AWAY THAN TO FIX THEM. WE CALL IT RECYCLING." - NEIL LABUTE



*Christmas lights are recycled for their copper and plastic.*

# RECYCLING'S SEEDY SIDE

ADAM MINTER UNVEILS THE NITTY-GRITTY DETAILS OF SCRAPYARDS

By Kyle Mullin

Christmas tree lights may dazzle us year after year, winking on and off like beacons of glad tidings. But one of our festive season's most familiar symbols is also a key example of rampant consumption - before it morphed into one of China's biggest green successes.

"Shijiao, a southern Chinese town, recycles 20 million pounds of Christmas tree lights from America every year," says Adam Minter of one of the many cities in his new book, *Junkyard Planet: Travels in the Billion-Dollar Trash Trade* (which hit bookshelves in November). Minter's first book comes after more than a decade of reporting on the Chinese recycling industry.

"China recycles more material than any country on the planet, and recyclables are the number one US and EU export to China by volume," Minter says, adding that Shijiao's recycled Christmas lights are an especially telling facet of this hulking, multi-billion dollar industry.

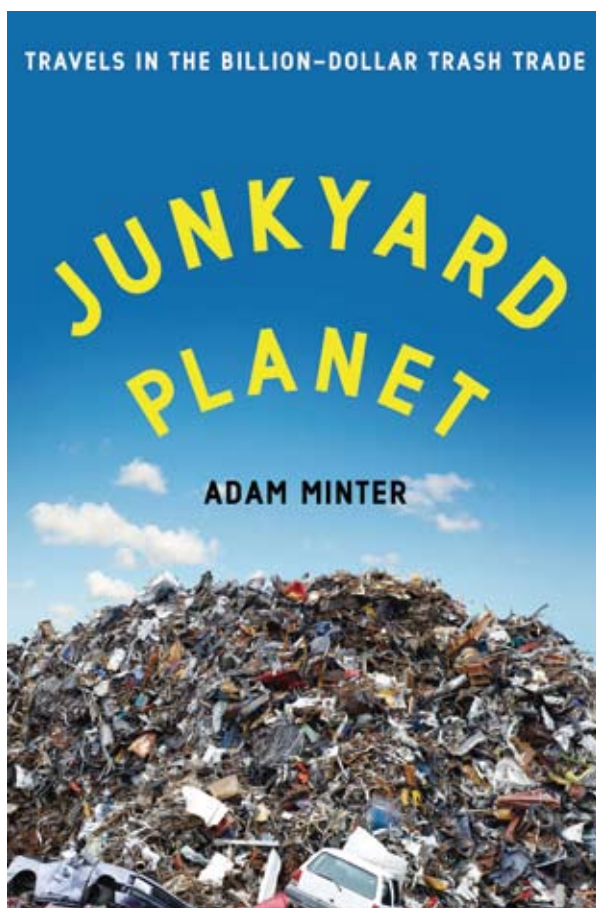
"Before, workers would put those tree lights in a pile, douse them in gas, and burn all the insulation off to recover the valuable copper inside," he says, adding that the ensuing air pollution would no doubt rattle most Westerners, who believed they were helping the environment by tossing those strands of lights in their recycling bins.

But Minter says all that changed in 2007. A hike in oil prices made virgin plastics more valuable, which in turn compelled scrap workers to recycle them as well. During a visit to one such workshop, Minter was impressed by the means workers used to separate that plastic from the wire it encased.

"They put the Christmas tree lights though what essentially was a glorified wood chipper," he says of the makeshift sorting device, adding that water was poured inside to turn the plastic to mush. "It worked a lot like a natural water bed, with a current running over it. But instead of small pebbles being lifted away from boulders, we had lighter plastic being washed off the heavier copper."

The result was far cleaner than the earlier tree light fires. But Minter says we would be naïve to put too much stock into those positive results.

"That market developed not out of someone's good intentions, but for economic reasons," he says, adding that most people miss other broad truths about the recycling industry. "Recycling is often seen as a green, sustainable, niche thing. But it's a much bigger industry than that. China is the world's biggest copper manufacturer, for instance, and half of that comes from recycled resources."







Minter says the public has even bigger misconceptions about the workers that are drawn in hordes to places like Shijiao.

"The first scrapyards I reported on was in Shanghai. I quickly learned that the workers had immigrated from Anhui villages, and they often didn't speak Mandarin or even Shanghaiese," he says, adding that the quintessentially Chinese scene gave him an odd sense of déjà vu. "It was much like my grandfather, who was a Russian Jew that came to America and, due to discrimination and other factors, didn't have many other options than picking rags up off the street."

But unlike his marginalized elder, or the Western stereotype of scavengers in the developing world, Minter says most Chinese scrap workers are surprisingly affluent.

"I don't want to excuse anything. None of the workers in a place like Guiyu, which is a notorious computer part recycling zone, are under any illusion that the air there is clean. But they go there because they make much better money than in a factory assembling tablet computers."

Minter was even more surprised to discover the sharp learning curve that comes with a recycling job.

"It may just look like they're picking through garbage, but it's actually quite skilled labor," he says, adding that the workers are often sorting and separating metals that are priced at a few dollars per pound. "To separate, by hand, chunks of aluminum or zinc from copper and steel is not easy, and to do

it efficiently is even harder. The best sorters can make upwards of RMB 5,000 per month. You can't make that kind of money at Foxconn."

But the author admits that those higher wages come at a steep price. One chapter, "Plastic Land," is dedicated to the worst recycling zone Minter ever visited: Hebei's Wen'an County. The 450-square-mile region was a repository for all of Beijing's plastic waste. Five thousand workshops were littered throughout the county, and they all used solvents to clean the plastics, before dumping those chemicals in nearby rivers. Before long the local farms became infertile, and scrap yard workers fell ill as the fumes harmed their lungs.

Minter says such examples comprise the ugly side of an industry that many Westerners assume to be thoroughly green.

"No one should be getting gold stars for recycling, all it does is keep the garbage man away a little longer," he says.

Recycled materials eventually break down, and become garbage anyway. He adds: "Recycling is the third-worst thing you can do. Reusing is better, and reducing is best, especially if we buy things that can be repaired and upgraded, so that manufacturers will make longer-lasting products. We won't get anywhere telling people to live like monks, but it would be good for people to learn how to become better consumers."

*Junkyard Planet: Travels in the Billion-Dollar Trash Trade is available at The Bookworm or visit Minter's website, [Shanghaishcrap.com](http://Shanghaishcrap.com).*

**RECYCLED MATERIALS  
EVENTUALLY BREAK DOWN  
AND BECOME GARBAGE ANYWAY**

What are you planning to do?

# EVENTS

OUR EDITORS PICK THE BEST OF THE MONTH

UPLOAD YOUR EVENTS AT [THEBEIJINGER.COM/EVENTS](http://THEBEIJINGER.COM/EVENTS)

FIND ALL VENUE INFO AT [THEBEIJINGER.COM/DIRECTORY](http://THEBEIJINGER.COM/DIRECTORY). PLEASE CALL VENUES AHEAD OF TIME TO CONFIRM DETAILS.



## AIR & STYLE BEIJING 2013

**DEC 7** – Snowboarding royalty descends on Beijing as the annual winter event returns to the Bird's Nest, as the best riders in the world battle it out for glory and World Snowboard Tour points. Price TBD. 4pm. Beijing National Stadium (Bird's Nest) (8437 2992/93)





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### 1. MUNCHKINIZED CHRISTMAS MUSICAL COMEDY: THE WIZARD OF OZ

**DEC 6** – *The Wizard of Oz*, and Christmas, as you've never experienced them before. This outrageous interactive comedy is guaranteed to deliver great holiday fun for children and parents. RMB 300. 7.30pm. The British School of Beijing in Shunyi (8047 3588)

### 2. ANOTHER SEASON

**ALL MONTH** – In his inaugural solo photography exhibition, Three Shadows photography award winner Zhang Jin presents 81 prints of ancient Silk Road landscapes in western China. Three Shadows (6432 2663)

### 3. THE GREAT STYLE LEAP

**DEC 14-19** – Beijing-based social media site P1 is showcasing a collection of photos that reveal the change in fashion trends on the streets of Beijing and around China in the past decade. Free. The Orange (6417 6110)

### 4. STEVE AOKI

**DEC 4** – Acrobatic US turntablist Steve Aoki returns to Beijing a year on from his last show. Expect crowd surfing, cake and probably his rubber dingy. RMB 200. 10pm. Elements Club (6552 6223)

### 5. WINTER MECHANIC COURSE

**DEC 1, 8, 15** – While you might not be planning to pedal far in the winter chill, this course will provide you with essential knowledge to get your bike finely tuned and set up for the spring. RMB 1,500. 11am-1pm. Serk (134 2647 4634)



5

## DON'T MISS

### NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

#### YEN COUNTDOWN 2013

**DEC 31** – Another year, another Countdown as the regular new year knees up returns. The lineup wasn't finalized at press time, but expect Beijing's best local DJs and VJs. RMB 180, RMB 120 (advance). 9pm. 798 Space (6438 4862, 6437 6248)

#### NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION

**DEC 31** – Xian Bar counts down to the new year with live music, guest DJs and plenty of bubbles. Price TBD. 5pm. Xian Bar, East (8414 9810)

#### GENESIS 2014 NYE PARTY

**DEC 31** – Shed the old and usher in a brand spanking New Year with Genesis at Lantern featuring futuristic techno grooves from top Beijing's DJs including Weng Weng and Ou Yang. RMB 100, RMB 70 (advance). Time TBD. Lantern (135 0134 8785)

#### THE GREAT GATSBY PARTY

**DEC 31** – There was always going to be at least one Gatsby-themed soiree. In fact we're surprised there aren't more. Atmosphere promises to do it properly, welcoming all sophisticated starlets and debonair dandies to party in the stars. RMB 300. 9pm. Atmosphere (8571 6459)

#### NEW YEAR'S EVE FEATURING HOTPOT

**DEC 31** – The Sanlitun stalwart welcomes in the new year with an old favorite as the Hotpot crew dish out the freshest cuts to help bump you into 2014. Price TBD. 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)

#### NEW YEAR'S EVE AT CAPITAL M

**DEC 31** – Dress festively (or black tie, if you're so inclined) and begin your New Year's Eve with champagne cocktails followed by a six-course menu. Give a toast on the terrace overlooking Tian'anmen at midnight. RMB 988. Capital M (6702 2727)

#### DINE OUT THE OLD, DRINK IN THE NEW

**DEC 31** – Treat yourself to a five-course supper to close out 2013, followed by bubbles and beats to usher in 2014. RMB 550. Mosto (5208 6030)

#### SKYFALL DRAMA

**DEC 31** – Party Bond-style and count down with Beijing's beautiful people to a live four-piece jazz band. Graze on a variety of tapas (6.30-8.30pm) and pick your poison: wine, champagne or martinis ... shaken or stirred? RMB 200 (includes one drink). 9pm-2am. Aria Bar (6505 2266)

#### NEW YEAR'S EVE COUNTDOWN PARTY

**DEC 31** – Get down at Zeta solo or in tandem. RMB 298 per person includes one glass of Champagne and free-flow house wine, spirits and local beer from 9pm till 1am. RMB 2,014 per couple includes a bottle of champagne, one-night stay in a King Executive room and a morning buffet at Elements on Jan 1. Zeta Bar (5865 5050)



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## EVENTS



### 1. VERSUS THE WORLD

**DEC 12** – Formed in the back of The Ataris own record store, California punk group Versus the World consists of Mike Davenport (The Ataris), Chris Flippin (Lagwagon), Donald Spence and Bryan Charleson (Crooks and Liars). RMB 80, RMB 60 (advance). 9pm. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

### 2. COOKIE MONSTER BAKE OFF

**DEC 7** – Beijing's cookie monsters compete and indulge in the city's best baking for charity. Come strut your own dough or just to taste 20 different kinds of cookies. RMB 100. 2-5pm. The Hutong (6404 3355)

### 3. THE LOOP

**DEC 6** – Beijing stalwart Eddie Lv returns with a fresh club night. The smoke-free event boasts "real skills on the decks, the finest liquor in your glass, and a literal breath of fresh air." RMB 50. 9pm. d lounge (6593 7710)

### 4. DID ANCIENT CHINESE EXPLORE AMERICA?

**DEC 11** – Charlotte Harris Resse will share her story of trying to find evidence of Chinese explorers who visited America over 2,000 years ago. As her and her husband traveled from Wyoming to Texas they made some astounding discoveries. RMB 50. 7.30pm. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

### 5. BIZET'S OPERA CARMEN

**DEC 20-23** – NCPA's own production of the 1874 opera based on Prosper Mérimée's novel. The tale of a wild gypsy girl, this opera has been one of the most popular in the world for over a century. RMB 160-880. 7.30pm. National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) (6655 0000)

## EVENTS

### 1. ICVS CHRISTMAS PARTY FOR PETS & THEIR PEOPLE

**DEC 14** – Santa comes for Sparky too. This Christmas party promises gifts and treats for animals and humans alike, plus raffles for great prizes. Free. 2-5pm. International Center for Veterinary Services (8456 1939)

### 2. HOUSING THE BAR FEATURING PETE HERBERT

**DEC 13** – One time co-proprietor of the infamous Atlas Records shop in Soho, London, Pete Herbert brings his record crate to Migas for a mixed night of disco, house, dub and funk. RMB 50 (Free before 11pm). 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)



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2013-12-25 ( Wednesday )	HK Games Of Snow
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2014-01-10 ( Friday )	The 12th Red Bull Nanshan Open TTR 5star
2014-01-11 ( Saturday )	
2014-01-25 ( Saturday )	The 2nd JBMC Method-Off
2014-02-08 ( Saturday )	The 4th Nanshan Mogul Slope Race Extremeness
2014-02-23 ( Sunday )	The 7th Nanshan Ski Mogul Slope Championship



## EVENTS



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### 1. CHRISTMAS FAYRE

**DEC 14** – Celebrate Christmas with everything from home-made jams, teas, cheeses, baked goods and chocolates to handmade handicrafts, photography and jewelry. Not to mention catching up with old friends over a cup of *vin brulé*. Free. 11am-3pm. The Hutong (6404 3355)

### 2. HAMLET

**DEC 3, 4** – The Beijing Dance Theater perform Shakespeare's classic as part of the first China International Ballet Season. RMB 100-1,280. 7.30pm. Tianqiao Theater (8315 6300)

### 3. RELEASE 2013: THE FOLLOWING

**DEC 20** – A raft of big-name DJs including Sander Kleinenberg, Leroy Styles, and Outsider as well as our own Weng Weng descend on UCCA as part of "a total electronic dance music experience set to shake Beijing," apparently. RMB 220, RMB 150 (advance). 9pm. Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) (5780 0200)

### 4. KODE 9

**DEC 6** – UK dubstep doyen and former Shanghai resident Kode 9 returns to the capital for another bone shaking night of dance floor disruption at Dada. RMB 80, RMB 60 (before 10.30pm). 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

## EVENTS



### 1. A TRIBUTE TO THE BEATLES

**DEC 7** – Thirty-three years after John Lennon was gunned down in New York City, bands pay tribute to John Lennon with The Beijing Beatles among four bands covering a selection of the Fab Four's classics. RMB 80, RMB 50 (advance). 8pm. MAO Livehouse (6402 5080)

### 2. MAYBE MARS CHRISTMAS EVE

**DEC 24** – The Maybe Mars stable celebrates the festive period with a show featuring four of their brood – Carsick Cars, AV Okubo, Duck Fight Goose and Birdstriking. RMB 100, RMB 80 (advance). 9.30pm. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)



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## EYES WIDE SHUT

by George Ding

**O**n my latest visa run, I found myself in the center of Kyoto, wandering the grounds of the old imperial palace. The day before I had visited Kiyomizu-dera, a temple set into the eastern hills and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

As I toured the gardens where countless emperors once held court, I thought how great it must be to live in a city where the past was still present, a city so storied that centuries-old buildings were scattered about like convenience stores.

I wondered, *What would it be like to live in a city like that?"*

It wasn't until I got back to the hostel that I realized I already knew the answer.

In Beijing, I work in a narrow hutong just east of the Drum Tower. Sometimes, on the way home, a co-worker drops me off at the Lama Temple so I can take the subway. When I used to live and work in Haidian, I would often ride the bus past the Old Summer Palace.

The more I thought about it, the crazier it seemed, like my life was a historical fanfic. I've ice skated in Houhai, the northern end of the Grand Canal; I've taken cabs past Ming Dynasty walls; I've gotten drunk repeatedly just north of the Temple of the Sun.

It turns out that China is home to 45 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, more than any country except Italy. Beijing alone has six: the Forbidden City, Summer Palace, Temple of Heaven, Ming Tombs, Peking Man Site at Zhoukoudian and the Great Wall.

Only a handful of cities in the world can claim that kind of cultural pedigree.

As a Beijinger, I am obligated to note that Shanghai has no World Heritage Sites and can only gaze longingly at the Classical Gardens of Suzhou in neighboring Jiangsu province to feel culturally good about itself.

I had been to all six places but it wasn't until I checked Wikipedia that I realized they were World Heritage Sites.

I had gone to the Ming Tombs on a company retreat; I had taken a day trip out to Zhoukoudian on a lark; I had frequently *gotten out* of going to the Great Wall when friends were in town. But now, with the knowledge that some bureaucratic organization had given these places its imprimatur, I absurdly cherished those memories more.

I suddenly felt ashamed of the insouciance with which I've treated not only Beijing but every city where I've lived. Because the place was familiar to me, somehow it meant less. I mean, if I lived here, how great could it be?

But taking a step back (and being out of the country) allowed me to remember what I already knew: Beijing is one of the most culturally significant cities in the world.

**I SUDDENLY FELT ASHAMED OF  
THE INSOUCIANCE WITH WHICH  
I'VE TREATED NOT ONLY BEIJING  
BUT EVERY CITY WHERE I'VE LIVED**

Now I would never argue for turning a blind eye to all of Beijing's problems – nor would I suggest that UNESCO World Heritage Sites are an objective measure of anything other than Shanghai's cultural bankruptcy – but Beijing is dangerously

close to being remembered for one thing and one thing only: its pollution. And I understand why – it's terrible, it's frustrating, it's dangerous, but most of all, it's easy to see.

What's harder to see is the culture we take for granted, the hundreds of historical monuments that dot the city. Sometimes it's because those monuments are shrouded in a blanket of particulate matter but more often it's because we've become numb to them. Like convenience stores, they have become too familiar.

Other times we're ignorant of the history we're walking past. Every area has its own story, every hutong its own tale. It's humbling to be reminded that almost every place in Beijing used to be something that used to be something else.

So the next time you feel down about the city and still have some time left on your visa, take a step back – try to see Beijing as a tourist would. Discover a new place. Revisit an old place. Try to see the city as you once did. After all, that's what led you here in the first place.

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