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# thebeijinger

2014/09

## Healthy Living Beijing



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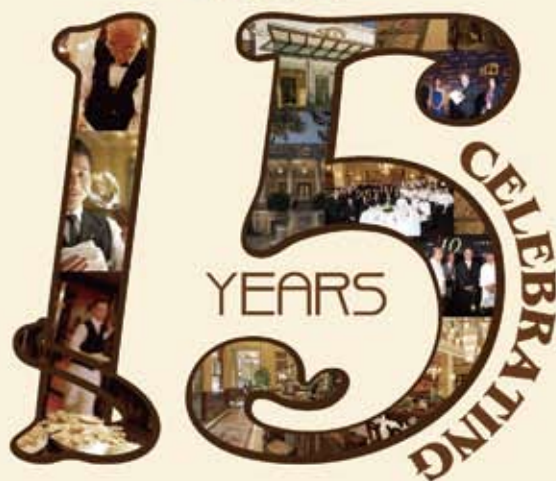


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This month's cover image was shot by Mitchell Pe Masilun at Little Donkey Farm in Shunyi. It features the farm's founder, Shi Yan.





2014.9.22 - 9.27


# A Bite of Spain

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## SEP 5



### **BRAWL ON THE WALL**

Brawl on the Wall returns for its third outing. Watch as a group of Beijing white collars swap their suits and ties for boxing gloves and a mouth guard, then pummel each other in the name of charity.

## SEP 12

### **AXEL BOMAN AND BENJI B**

Red Bull Music Academy and Dim Sum Disco take over Migas for an unprecedented night of original dance music, featuring the deep stylings of Axel Boman, BBC's Benji B, and some of your favorite local party heroes.



## SEP 19



### **NGUZUNGUZU**

Street Kids and Woozy present NguzuNguzu, an LA-based trip-hop/grime duo who will play their gut-blasting tunes live for Beijing's music hungry youth, then hop on the decks for a full evening of riding dirty.

## SEP 23

### **SHANE FILAN**

A regular visitor to the capital with his chart-topping band, Westlife, the singer returns solo to perform tracks from his album *You and Me*, with maybe a few classics thrown in to make sure everyone gets their Irish boy band fix.



Start as you mean to go on

# CITY SCENE

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH // BEST OF THE BLOG // SCENE & HEARD

## FOOD FRIGHTS

China is attempting to protect the public from the persistent food scares that have occurred in recent years. These are some of the cases that hit the headlines.



Human hair was discovered as an ingredient in exported soy sauce following a 2004 investigation. After a TV news report exposed the unsanitary condition of the hair, the government banned soy sauces containing hair.



Turbot was discovered to contain unsafe levels of productivity-enhancing drugs. Restaurants in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hong Kong stopped purchasing the fish when officials discovered high amounts of illegal antibiotics.



Diners at a restaurant in Beijing were served raw Amazonian snail meat and contracted a form of meningitis from the contaminated molluscs. Restaurants were subsequently banned from serving raw or half-cooked snails.



Sixteen diners were hospitalized after eating poisonous mushrooms at a Beijing restaurant in 2006. A hospital spokesman said one patient had slipped into a coma. Others suffered vomiting, nausea, and diarrhea.



Melamine-tainted powdered milk led to the death of six babies and the hospitalization of almost 52,000 suffering from kidney disease. It transpired the formula had been adulterated to increase the protein content



Gutter oil first hit the headlines in 2000, but the problem resurfaced in 2010 when it emerged restaurants were using the recycled oil in food preparation. The oil is highly toxic and causes diarrhea, abdominal pain and has been linked to liver cancer

Sources: People's Daily, CCTV, The Fish Site News, China.org.cn, Xinhua, NewsChina

## PEKING PICS



The recent demolition of some parts of Gulou led to an outpouring of sentiment for the hutongs, such an important part of Beijing culture

PHOTOS: @SMALL\_HORSE\_IN\_BIG\_CHINA



## LETTER FROM AN EDITOR

We were all given a wonderful opportunity to rethink our eating habits when the recent tainted meat scandal led to fish burgers being the only option at McDonald's. No one likes the fish burgers, so we had to locate something else for sustenance. But how many of us used it as a chance to go for a healthier option as opposed to tapping "Annie's" into the address book?

Let's get it out of the way now: Beijing is not the healthiest place in the world to live. Fact. There's no need for us to waste words describing the ways that our city can be detrimental to your health, so I won't. But perhaps it's the inability to affect some of the bigger environmental issues in Beijing that has led to a greater emphasis on what its inhabitants can control.

We're lucky to have a vibrant and dynamic community of individuals who are driven to make Beijing a healthier place to live, in spite of itself. That community has grown and matured over the years – improving its methods here, gaining recognised accreditation there – to become what it is today: a mechanism to make it possible to live healthily in Beijing.

We learnt a little more about healthy living in Beijing for this month's issue. With an emphasis on food, of course, we traipsed around farmer's markets, built symbiotic food resources, and met a pioneer of Beijing's burgeoning organic food industry.

Elsewhere, for this month's dining feature, Robynne Tindall tried to live like a vegan for a week and it proved a little tricky in a distinctly animal-unfriendly town. On a slightly less healthy note, Nightlife Editor Jessica Rapp called on the city's expert bartenders to divulge their secrets to recovering from a hangover.

We attempted to discover the best way to enjoy that oh-so-Beijing snack, hawthorn, tried to work out why there's so much fuss about Taco Bar, and in the spirit of self improvement, took a look around a cosmetic clinic and a health spa. With the next travel season just a little while away, we've also got a guide to some potential destinations for a getaway.



Paul Ryding  
Managing Editor

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Every month we tally the hits from thebeijinger.com to provide the five most viewed blogs from our website.



### 1. DRUM AND BELL TOWER AREA FACING DEMOLITION

After years of talk, the aging hutong areas surrounding the Drum and Bell Towers are finally being demolished to make way for new developments. Homes and restaurants were tacked with demolition notices marking a new era of uncertainty for many long time residents and businesses in the area.



### 2. RANDOM DRUG TESTS AT 2 KOLEGAS SEE 30 ARRESTED

A police raid at popular live music venue 2 Kolegas saw everyone on-site forced to provide urine samples. At the time it was reported that up to 30 suspects, including several foreigners, were arrested after returning samples positive for narcotic use. That figure was later revised down but the foreigners who tested positive were said to have been detained prior to immediate deportation.



### 3. BEIJING'S MODERN SKY FESTIVAL SET FOR US DEBUT IN OCTOBER

The Modern Sky Festival will bring Chinese indie rock bands to New York's Central Park October 4-5, when the Beijing-based festival makes its US debut, according to *The New York Times*. Among the local favorites that will be in attendance are veteran outfits Second Hand Rose, Tongue, and Queen Sea Big Shark.

### 4. CONDE NAST TRAVELER READERS NAME BEIJING ON UNFRIENDLIEST CITY LIST

*Conde Nast Traveler* released its list of "The 2014 Friendliest and Unfriendliest Cities in the World." The latest ranking has Beijing ranked the sixth-unfriendliest city behind Frankfurt at number seven, but more amiable than Marseilles at number five while Johannesburg was rated the unfriendliest city in the world.



### 5. PSB CRACKDOWN ON DUAL CITIZENSHIPS

Sina News reported that the Public Security Bureau will crack down on dual citizenships, namely "people who obtain citizenship in another country but try to keep their Chinese citizenship and *hukou*." The move is likely to affect mixed-nationality families, and could force many parents to renounce their children's Chinese citizenship.



# MIAO WONG

MANAGING DIRECTOR, ARP CREATIVE/DOT RECORDS

by Kipp Whittaker

As the promoter of Beijing's first minimal techno label Acupuncture Records, Miao Wong knows how to throw a bash and get it on the lips of every party animal in Beijing. Now, she is busier than ever developing a two-week consortium of electronic music and art called Beijing Sonic.



## EAT

Next we went to Xinjiang Jiashi Restaurant. She frequents this place because of the complex and unique flavors of Xinjiang cuisine that, even though she has a flair for cooking, she feels is impossible to reproduce. We first ordered these deliciously baked lamb *baozi* (RMB 4). I had never seen this before, and they were crispy on the outside with fragrant chewy lamb packed in the middle. Then came the main attraction, *nangbao* covered in lamb (RMB 48), blanketed in a deliciously spiced gravy, carrots, and green peppers. This was truly an exceptional rendering of the Xinjiang staple.

Working in collaboration with Tree Music and Shadowplay X Waveform, the festival begins on September 5 featuring performances by local and international musicians, and visual artists. She found time in her busy schedule to show us around her neighborhood of Xiaoxitian.

## WALK

We first took a little stroll around Xihai to build up our appetite for dinner. This relaxing lake and public area is a beautiful place to watch the sun setting in the west. It had just rained so the air was clean and the sky was a beautifully radiant peach color. She showed me the now defunct Obiwan, where her and her friends first promoted minimal techno in true party fashion. The lake was nice with couples walking dogs, men playing chess, and old-timers fishing. At the north end of the lake, you'll find the PLA theater, if the pageantry of military-themed ballet and opera is your thing.



## SHOP

We next passed through the bustling night market that lines Wenhuiyuan Lu. There was a huge selection of trinkets on offer with many tables set up all the way along the street selling everything from jewelry, discount clothing, and some delicious looking snacks. The tables are usually set up by 9pm every evening, weather permitting. It was more or less your standard fare, but on a good night, the street is packed with these independent vendors. We passed by the jewelry stand and looked at some of the rings and necklaces, laughing with the seller because for everything we touched, she would ring out with a "piao liang."



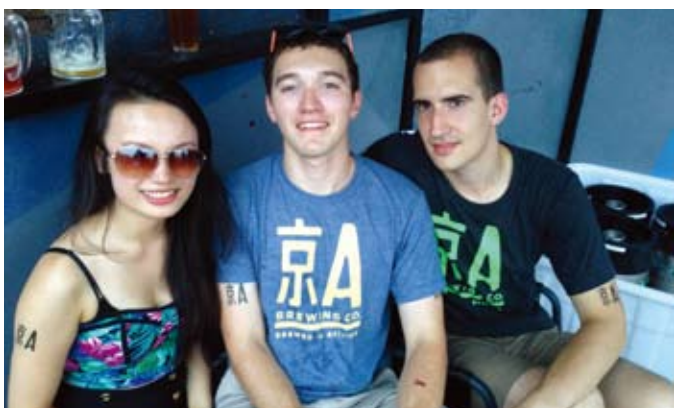
## SCENE & HEARD



**Aluba Livehouse Opening Party**  
Aluba Livehouse, Aug 2. Photos by  
Chris Meehan



**A Touch of Hawaii Summer Carnival**  
Club Suzie Wong, Aug 17.  
Photos courtesy of  
Club Suzie Wong



**Darling Club Launch Party**  
YIN on 12, Jul 30.  
Photos courtesy of  
YIN on 12



**Funky Fifth of July Party**  
The Bar at Migas, Jul 5.  
Photos courtesy of Jing A



### Color Water Gun Fight

Chaoyang Park, Aug 10. Photos courtesy of Parlor



### 8MM Club x Ellie Goulding Party

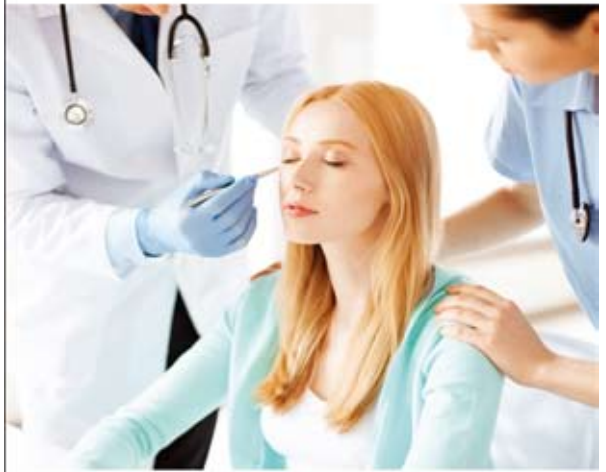
8MM Club, Aug 14.  
Photos courtesy of 8MM Club



### Peng Label's 8th Anniversary Party

The Bar at Migas, Aug 2. Photos by Ken

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# YOUR FARMERS' MARKET GUIDE

STOCK UP AT THESE SPOTS AND SUPPORT HEALTHY PRACTICES

by Jessica Rapp

Food markets are everywhere in Beijing, from designated tents to the footpath in front of your home. But when you go to grab for that vegetable, how do you know where it comes from? Here's a guide of where to shop around town. There are

plenty of online options for local and organic produce too, but we say there's something more satisfying about going in person – you can see the vegetables for yourself and ask questions. The next step suggested by organizers? Pay a visit to the farms.



Below: Vegans can buy organic tofu-based meat lookalikes from San Hao Factory



## VEG\*N BASH

For the organizers of this monthly market, environmental awareness is no joke – they insist you bring your own take-away containers and cutlery for getting in on the vegan and vegetarian food provided by farmers, restaurants and small business owners. If you forget, they have biodegradable, one-use utensils and containers for sale, or you just may need to wait until you get home to chow down. Aside from food, this market features green clothes and accessories, and household goods.

**Number of vendors:** 15

**We recommend:** If you're hankering for an exceptionally nutritious salad, try Western-style kale from the Hao Ge Farm in Tongzhou District.

**Contact:** Check out their Weibo blog at [blog.sina.com.cn/u/3314895873](http://blog.sina.com.cn/u/3314895873) for more information.

Canadian International School of Beijing,  
38 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District  
(136 8128 0119)

朝阳区亮马桥路38号





## BEIJING ORGANIC FARMERS' MARKET (COUNTRY FAIR)

The Country Fair is the longest running and largest farmers' market in Beijing, and while it's probably best known for its stint in Nali Patio, it pops up in different locations. While "organic" is in their name, the majority of the independent farmers aren't certified by national or international standards because of the high costs. However, organizers emphasize that the growers they work with use only trusted practices (no antibiotics in meat, little or no conventional pesticides, etc.).

The ratio of fruits and vegetables to other food and gift items is one that favors those making artisanal jams and spreads, honey, skincare products, tea and even meats and cheese. Expect new vendors often. They can sometimes be difficult to pin down, so for those who like to count on regular produce availability they can check out Country Fair's newest endeavor, a community market in Sanyuanqiao's Phoenix City (see opposite).

**Number of vendors:** 40+

**We recommend:** Homemade pesto by De Run Wu, a family-run organic farm in Changping District. They use their own basil, which has been praised by World Health Store as "bursting with flavor."

**Contact:** Join their mailing list at [farmersmarketbj@gmail.com](mailto:farmersmarketbj@gmail.com) to find out their next location.



Top left: Honey from Zhuopufang Farm in Fangshan County



Jam by Les Confitures de Laetitia and grain by Ground Green Union







Community Market stocks cleaning products that are safe for the environment



Below: Chen Yanhong provides organic eggs from her farm in Shunyi



## COMMUNITY MARKET

A traveling farmers' market may mean you're always one step behind the vegetables, so those behind the Country Fair (opposite) decided to solve that problem by opening a community center and grocery store in Sanyuan-qiao's Phoenix City. Not only can you find most of the items on sale at the traveling market, but they host corporate and public events such as a speaker series, organized farm visits, and children's activities aimed at raising awareness of sustainability.

**Number of vendors:** 40+

**We recommend:** If you thought cheese was difficult to come by in Beijing, think again. Liu Yang, the French artisanal cheese maker behind Le Fromager de Pekin, sells his latest dairy endeavors that are hard to pass up when there are fresh organic grapes just a few stalls away.

**Contact:** See opposite.

Daily 10am-9pm. N33 Phoenix City Shopping Street, Shuguang Xili, Chaoyang District (5742 8210)  
朝阳门曙光西里甲5字幕凤凰城的商业街N33号





## FARM TO NEIGHBORS

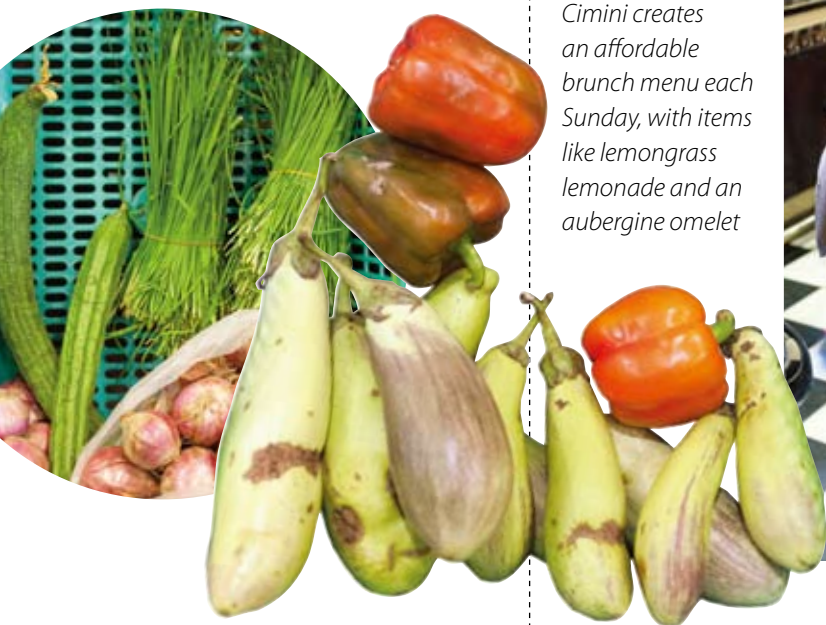
The newest market to hit the city to date, Farm to Neighbors is the effort of Vice's Creator's Project editor Erica Huang, whose own qualms with food allergies and safe production methods motivated her to start seeking out local farmers who follow organic and eco-friendly practices. While it's currently an intimate venture, the number of farmers and food makers Huang is cooperating with is growing. You'll see a steady participant or two, including Choonisang Vegetables, who host the only "organic" stall at Sanyuanli Market. Huang's market uses Modernista's space, so guests don't have to wait until they get home to try the food as Modernista's chefs will prepare healthy brunch items with a selection of the produce on stock.

**Number of vendors:** 5+

**We recommend:** Charlie's Bacon by the Kitchen Collective, made with free-range pork belly and hickory-smoked in a hutong courtyard. Ask about availability ahead of time as vendors change.

**Contact:** For more info, friend "farm2neighbors" on WeChat.

*Sundays Noon-6pm. Modernista. 44 Baochao Hutong, Gulou Dongdajie, Dongcheng District (136 9142 5744)*  
东城区鼓楼东大街宝钞胡同44号



*Mumu's Home Farm supplies peaches, while Delle Valley Farm provides a variety of sweet grapes*



*Chef Nuria Cimini creates an affordable brunch menu each Sunday, with items like lemongrass lemonade and an aubergine omelet*





# DIRECTORY

## YOUR GUIDE TO WHERE TO SOURCE WHOLESOME PRODUCTS

### HEALTH AND ORGANIC FOOD STORES

*The best spots around town and online to restock your organic cupboards.*

#### World Health Store

World Health Store focuses on imported health and wellness products such as vitamins and sports supplements.

Daily 10am-8.30pm. 2152, North Tower, Shangdu Soho, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District (5900 2209)  
维卫生: 朝阳区东大桥路尚都Soho北塔2152室

#### Lohao City

Lohao City has several locations across the city, stocked with hard-to-find health products, many of which are also organic.

Shuangjing Store: Daily 9am-10pm. 10A, 1/F, Bldg 5, 76 Baiziwang Nanerlu, Chaoyang District (8772 4132)

乐活城双井店: 朝阳区百子湾南二路76号院5号楼1层10A

#### Tootoo Organic Farm online shop

Order online from Tootoo and get vegetables from their farm in Pinggu, along with other organic daily necessities from cereal to shampoo, delivered free within the Sixth Ring Road.

Website: [shop.tootoo.cn](http://shop.tootoo.cn)

#### One-off event: Conrad Farmer's Barbecue

Stock up on organic produce to take home or relax and let the Conrad Hotel's chefs transform your

selections into gourmet dishes.

Sep 13, 11.30am-4pm. Conrad Hotel, 29 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District (6584 6256 or [farmersbbq@sownolutions.com](mailto:farmersbbq@sownolutions.com))  
朝阳区东三环北路29号

#### ORGANIC FARMS

*Get up close and personal with your produce by visiting an organic farm. Many will allow you to get involved with the farm's upkeep.*

#### Little Donkey Farm

Little Donkey Farm was one of the first in Beijing to use the community-supported agriculture model (CSA). Visit their farm in Haidian to buy fresh vegetables.

Houshajian West Village, Sujiatuo, Haidian District (6246 0686)

小毛驴市民农园: 海淀区苏家坨镇后沙涧村西

#### Moon River Farm

Moon River grows its own organic produce and also rents out land to those who prefer to get their hands dirty.

1 Shougang Donglu, Liqiao, Shunyi District

月牙河农场: 顺义区李桥首钢东路1号

#### Green Cow Farm

Started by Lejen Chen, owner of Mrs. Shanen's Restaurant, Green Cow also follows the CSA model. Donggezhuang Village North, Houshayu, Shunyi District (6435 9561)

顺义区后沙峪董各庄 (See [greencowfarm.com](http://greencowfarm.com) for details)

### VEGAN/VEGETARIAN RESTAURANTS

*Beijing has a surprisingly large selection of dedicated vegetarian restaurants, both Western and Chinese. These are some of our favorites.*

#### The Veggie Table

The Veggie Table offers home-style dishes like pasta and chilli in a cozy hutong setting.

Daily 11.30am-11.30pm. 19a Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng District (6446 2073)

吃素的: 东城区五道营胡同甲19号

#### Tianchu Miaoxiang Vegetarian Restaurant

The Chaowai Soho branch of this vegetarian restaurant is popular with office workers looking for a healthy lunch.

Daily 11.00am-9.30pm. 2/F, Tower D, Chaowai Soho, 6 Chaoyangmen Waidajie, Chaoyang District (5900 1288)

天厨妙香素食馆: 朝阳区朝阳门外大街乙6号朝外Soho大厦D座2楼

#### Baihe/Lily's Vegetarian

Lily's specializes in mock meat dishes, including a fairly convincing lamb *chuan'r*.

Daily 10am-10.30pm. 23a Caoyuan Hutong, Dongzhimen Beixiaojie, Dongcheng District (6405 2082)

百合素食: 东城区东直门北小街草原胡同甲23号



# SOMETHING FISHY GOING ON

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN  
AQUAPONIC GARDEN

by Robynne Tindall





Since its unveiling in May, Spoonful of Sugar's lush rooftop garden has become one of our favorite places in the city to kick back with a coffee and a slice of homemade cake. What is the secret behind the prolific greenery? The answer: aquaponic gardening. Aquaponics combines aquaculture (growing fish) with hydroponics (growing plants in water). In essence, water from the fish tanks is fed into a system of pipes, where bacteria converts the waste products in the water to nitrites and nitrates, which are then used as nutrients by the plants. Any remaining water filters back into the system.

Where it is possible to install one, a good aquaponic system has several advantages over conventional growing methods: it reduces water loss and the extra nutrients allow plants to grow up to four times faster, to name but a few.

#### You will need:

*Fish tank* (Ikea clear plastic storage box)

*Grow bed* (Ikea clear plastic desk organizer)

*Water pump*

*Tubing*

*Fish*

*Plants*

The major components for your DIY aquaponics system can all be sourced from flower markets around Beijing such as Laitai and Liangma Flower Market. Liz also recommends Jia Shifu (贾师傅, 136 5103 7629), who has a small stall in Rundeli Market (润德立菜市场) off Deshengmen Neidajie.

1  
STEP

Begin by drilling a couple of holes in the bottom of the grow bed to allow the water to drain back into the tank below. Fill the grow bed with clay beads. The porous beads easily absorb and retain water.

2  
STEP

You need a small pump that can handle approximately three meters of water. Fit the pump to the tank so that it will be fully submerged in the water, and then attach a length of plastic tubing to the pump and bring it up through the grow bed so that the water falls onto the clay beads. Ideally, plug the pump into a timer and set it for 15 minutes every hour.

3  
STEP

Once the system is assembled, fill the tank with water (Liz suggests a 1:1 ratio of tap to bottled water) to approximately three inches below the grow bed. Turn on the pump. Once the clay beads are moist, you can add plants. Small, green-leaved plants work best (basically, anything that doesn't have a deep root system). If you are growing from seed, allow them to first sprout and develop roots in seed beds, before rinsing off and transferring to the grow bed.

4  
STEP

Allow the system to run without the fish for a week or two. You may want to apply some fertilizer in the first week to help the seedlings on their way. Once you're confident that the system is running smoothly, it's time to add the fish. For a tank this size, add no more than three or four small fish; goldfish are your best option, since they're hardy and can cope with water and temperature changes.

*Liz Ashforth runs regular DIY aquaponics sessions at The Bookworm. Sessions have finished for the summer, but you can contact her on [lizbob100@hotmail.com](mailto:lizbob100@hotmail.com) for more information on next year's sessions.*





# ORGANIC GROWTH

## HOW AN IT COMPANY BECAME A LEADING FRESH FOOD RETAILER

by Steven Schwankert

**H**ow does a technology company become one of China's leading organic food producers and retailers? With a scandal.

Following the 2008 Olympics, the next major news story to emerge from China was the discovery of melamine in some baby formulas in order to artificially boost protein content. Over 50,000 infants were hospitalized and six died as a result of melamine consumption. One person who was shocked by the horrific news was Dong Min, co-founder and senior vice president of Ninetowns Internet Technology Group, parent company of Tootoo, now one of China's largest retailers of organic food products.

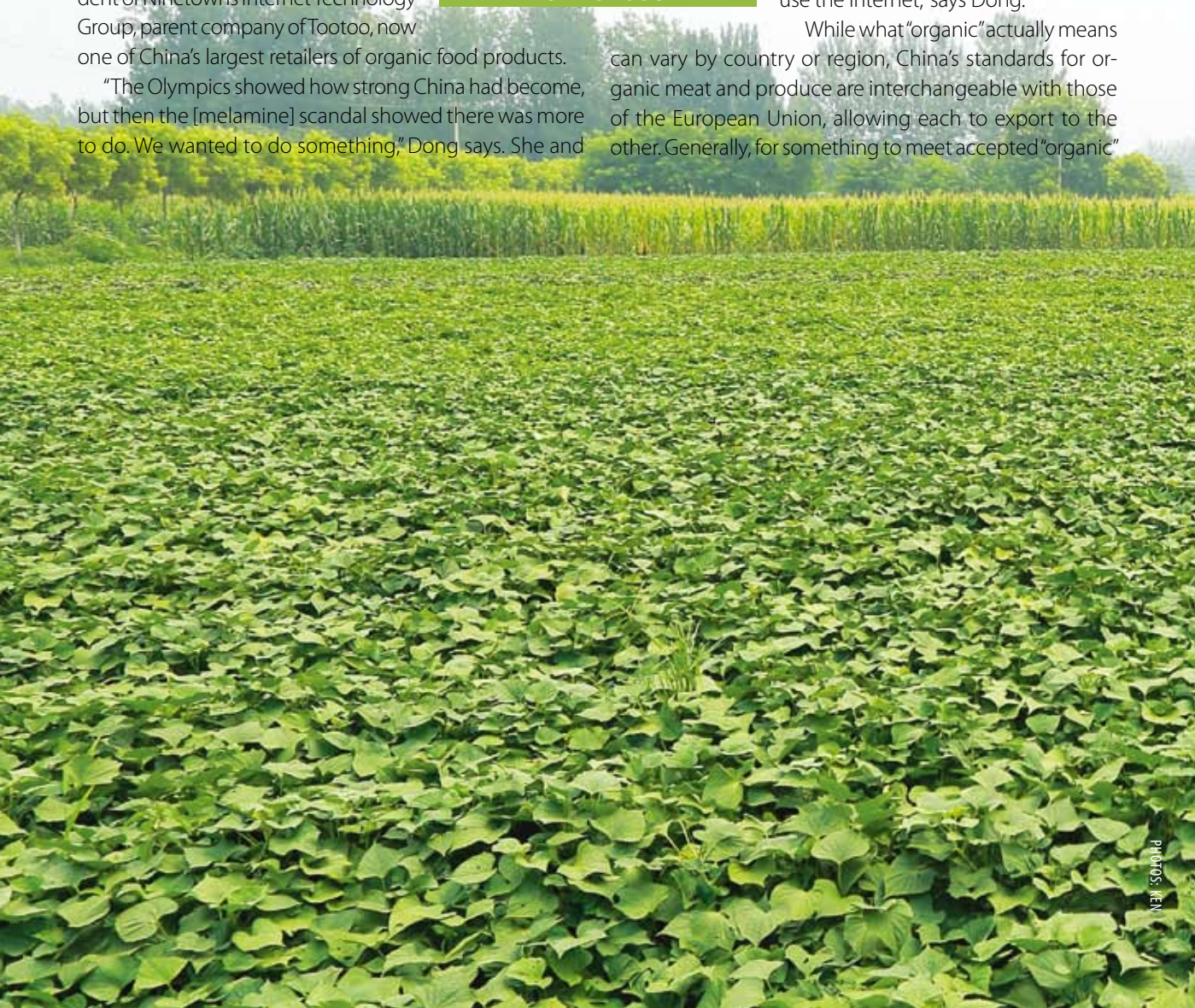
"The Olympics showed how strong China had become, but then the [melamine] scandal showed there was more to do. We wanted to do something," Dong says. She and

the rest of the company spent the following six months thinking about opportunities to do something proactive. Ninetowns knew real estate and technology, having spent eight years listed on NASDAQ before going private in 2012, but it didn't know much about farming.

The company decided to tap into a growing grassroots demand in China for healthier and safer food, to use its knowledge of both real estate and technology to begin providing organic food via the internet. "We thought about opening stores and supermarkets, but our customers found it convenient to use the internet," says Dong.

While what "organic" actually means can vary by country or region, China's standards for organic meat and produce are interchangeable with those of the European Union, allowing each to export to the other. Generally, for something to meet accepted "organic"

THEY ARE MUCH CALMER  
THAN OTHER CHILDREN, AND  
WHEN THEY REST, THEY ARE  
ABLE TO REST SOUNDLY





standards, the field where it is grown must first lie fallow for five years to allow any previously used chemicals to be diminished or eliminated. Produce is then grown without chemical fertilizers, hormones, or insecticides.

"It was much more difficult than we expected," Dong says of the initial stages of setting up Tootoo. "While generally tasting better and being healthier than non-organic food, the restrictions on chemical use means that organically-grown crops are more subject to blights and insect infestation, and because of that, the products don't always look as nice as their mass-produced counterparts."

Dong says the differences are obvious. Aside from the peace of mind of serving chemical-free fruit, meat, and vegetables to her family, Dong says that her skin is healthier and that she looks younger than friends her age who haven't gone organic. It's also apparent in her children who consume mostly organic food. "They are much calmer than other children, and when they rest, they are able to rest soundly," she says.

On the company's farm in Pinggu County, about as far northeast as one can go in Beijing Municipality before crossing into Hebei province, the company's principles are in action. Tootoo owns the 70 hectares here and this is where it grows much of what it sells. Although the smell of animal waste being recycled as fertilizer is apparent,

even on a hot August day, it's not overpowering.

The farm is a mix of greenhouses used year-round to provide temperature control for crops including chilli peppers, eggplant, and winter melon; open fields for items like corn and soybeans; and livestock areas for chickens and pigs.

Environment monitors relay information about temperature and humidity directly to Tootoo managers who remotely ensure conditions are right for growing. Flypaper – the organic farmer's alternative to insecticide – hangs throughout, but the difference in this growing area is that items can be picked and eaten straight from the plant.

At Tootoo's members-only restaurant, the proof arrives in the final product. Rich yellow eggs, naturally sweet tomatoes and tender winter melon arrive on the table picked earlier that day. Lower yields and greater threats to organic crops mean prices are normally double those of non-organic foods, but it seems a price worth paying.

*Order from Tootoo's website, [shop.tootoo.cn](http://shop.tootoo.cn)*





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

# FOOD & DRINK

TACOS // VEGAN FOOD // PEKING DUCK // HAWTHORN



*Eschew traditional mooncakes in favor of the Four Seasons' chocolate mooncakes, made with Or Noir chocolate. Creative flavors include five spice, ginger, and mango and orange.*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE FOUR SEASONS BEIJING



## NIBBLES AND SIPS

### OPENINGS

**Pinotage's** Sanlitun branch has relocated from Sanlitun Soho to the north end of Sanlitun Bar Street. The new space will keep the same menu and award-winning wine list, but with a revamped interior.

Xiao Ming of Hidden House and Revolution has another cocktail spot to add to his growing Sanlitun empire, **Miles**. Its imposing, gray brick façade has replaced the short-lived Friend and boasts a hefty signature cocktail and spirit selection at competitive prices.

**Black Sesame Kitchen** has resumed operations in The Orchid. It is still reservation only and mostly caters to larger groups, but it is holding communal dinners every Tuesday and Friday night. A ten-course menu, plus 2.5 hours of wine and beer costs RMB 300 per person. Email [reservations@blacksesamekitchen.com](mailto:reservations@blacksesamekitchen.com).

**Jing A** are known for scooting about town in their notorious Keg Egg, but their latest endeavor has them a bit more stationary. The craft brewers will launch a pop-up taproom for four months in the space formerly occupied by Bar Veloce, located in the 1949 compound in south Sanlitun. This 60-seater venue will feature a creative menu of sharable bites and main courses that pair with their beers, along with a host of appropriately boozy events.

Look for a new café concept from Brasserie Flo, aptly named **Café Flo**, to open in Parkview Green around the end of September.

### HAPPENINGS

**Restaurant Week** is back for its fifth edition with an extra long eleven day run this September. From September 4-14, some of Beijing's best restaurants will be offering great value set lunches (RMB 78-128) and dinners (RMB 168-258). New additions this year include **Matta**, **Morton's**, **Via Roma** and **Tiantan Kitchen**.

**Mooncake season** is in full swing (Mid-Autumn Festival falls on September 8) with the usual galaxy of flavors and styles, from the traditional to the unusual. Some of our favorites this year include the **Four Seasons'** chocolate mooncakes, **Sweet Spot's** mousse mooncakes and **Sofitel Wanda's** creative packaging options. Find more information about mooncake promotions on the events section of our website.



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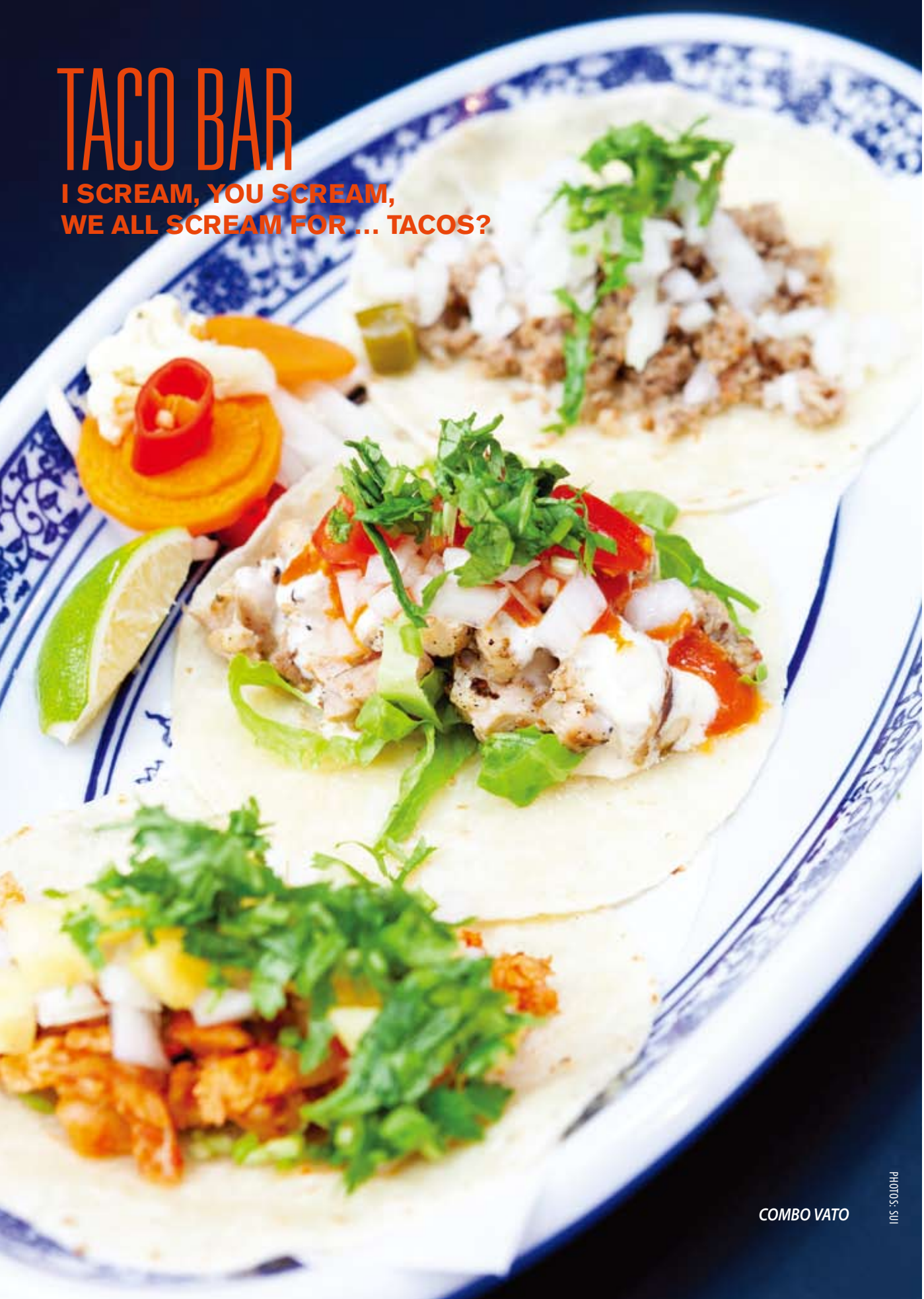
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# TACO BAR

I SCREAM, YOU SCREAM,  
WE ALL SCREAM FOR ... TACOS?



COMBO VATO

PHOTOS: SUI



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Tue-Thu 5.30pm-1am, Fri-Sat 5.30pm-2.30am, Sat-Sun noon-3pm Courtyard 4, Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District (6501 6026)

朝阳区工体北路4号院北京机电院内

 500m west of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

There is always a danger with hyped up new restaurants that people will try to knock them down before they're even off the ground. "The food just isn't quite there," they will claim, or "I preferred the original." Luckily, despite the fervent excitement ricocheting around Beijing's in-the-know foodies before it opened, Taco Bar meets expectations and then some.

The long, narrow room seems designed with revelry in mind: whitewashed walls, long tables for groups, and the requisite write-on blackboard walls in the bathroom. Kick back and sip a potent on-the-rocks margarita (RMB 40) while the speakers play the kind of tunes that cool, hipster friend you have plays at house parties.

Taco Bar serves messy, delicious food that makes you roll up your sleeves and forget you're in (supposedly) polite company. That being said, this is not your standard Tex Mex joint; the food is more refined, more authentic. Rocky's *queso fundido* (RMB 40) is essentially a Mexican fondue with chorizo, all the better to drip down your chin as you overload it onto the accompanying crisp tortilla chips. But of course, the star of the show is the tacos (RMB 45 for three), which are petite yet generously filled. Our favorite, the tempura-battered tilapia, comes loaded with crispy fillets, topped with a heap of slaw and garlic aioli. A selection of powerful salsas is available if the heat isn't enough for you.

With its easy-going concept and authentic Mexican flavors, Taco Bar has hit on a winning formula. *Robynne Tindall*

**Also try:** Q Mex, Palms L.A. Kitchen



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## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS



# 8 QI NIAN

## LUCKY NUMBER EIGHT

Daily 11.30am-2.30pm, 5.30-10.30pm. 2/F, Beijing New World Hotel, 8 Qnian Dajie, Chongwenmen, Dongcheng District (5960 8822)

祈年八号：东城区崇文门祈年大街8号北京新世界酒店二层

 700m west of Chongwenmen station (Lines 2 and 5)

Cantonese food has always held a special place in my heart; it was the first “real” Chinese food I was exposed to when I visited Hong Kong at the tender age of ten. I was fascinated with the tanks of wriggling sea creatures and exotic ingredients back then, but as my palette has matured, I have learned to appreciate the cuisine for its ability to capture and preserve the best of fresh ingredients. Even so, a good Cantonese meal is surprisingly difficult to come across in the northern capital.

Although 8 Qi Nian serves dishes from all over southern China, Hunan and Sichuan included, the restaurant really comes into its own with its modern Cantonese dishes. We start with a plate of tiny chilled tomatoes flavored with lemon and honey (RMB 38), so delicate they make me feel bad for whoever had to peel the skins. A dish of stir-fried beef with crispy garlic and black pepper (RMB 198) tastes

like the version they serve at your local Cantonese take out place – but if the chef had studied at the Cordon Bleu.

The rhythm of the meal briefly falters on the deep-fried shrimps with avocado and crispy rice (RMB 148), where huge, competently fried prawns are hidden beneath a cloyingly sweet avocado sauce. Thankfully, a double-boiled soup of *matsutake* mushroom, *conpoy* (dried scallop) and Chinese ham (RMB 98 per person) restores the balance, as a good Cantonese soup should.

If you steer clear of dishes containing big-name ingredients, 8 Qi Nian is surprisingly keenly priced for a hotel restaurant, especially considering they don't add service charge. Combined with the delicious dishes and graceful, courteous staff, we can think of few better reasons to venture over to Chongwenmen. *Robynne Tindall*

**Also try:** Cai Yi Xuan, Huang Ting



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

# MINOODLE

### GOOD IN SPITE OF FRANCO

Daily 11-1am. Unit 1, Bldg 38, Sanlitun South, Chaoyang District (150m west of Sanlitun Police Station) (130 1114 3108)

北京市朝阳区三里屯南38号楼1单元(三里屯派出所向西150米路南)

🚶 1km northwest of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

James Franco was the worst thing about my visit to Minoodle. In truth, I didn't expect to have to see him on the evening I stopped by for a quick dinner, but there he was, on the TV, swearing his way through my meal. Admittedly I could have taken my dinner in the neat sheltered outdoor seating area, but it was a muggy one and I was going to need the air-con. I endeavored to enjoy my *zhajiangmian* (RMB 26), *xihongshi jiandan mian* (RMB 18), and Wasabi Prawns (RMB 28) and ignore Franco's potty mouth. I focused instead on the sound of satisfied noodle slurpers, of which there were many.

The soy bean paste dish was tasty with crunchy vegetables, although a little warm for my liking. The egg tomato noodles came in a delicious rich broth, and the seafood had the gratifying nasal bite requisite of any good dish containing the condiment. I washed it all down with an imported Hey Song Sarsaparilla (RMB 12), and in spite of Franco's best efforts, and the awkward seating – the tables are sturdy chests, which leave no space for long legs – I left contented. *Paul Ryding*

**Also try:** Big Bowl Small Plate, Huanghe Shui Shaanxi Mianguan



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ZHAJIANGMIAN



### A WEEK OF ANIMAL-FRIENDLY EATING IN BEIJING

by Robynne Tindall

I am a self-proclaimed meat lover. It could be a cultural thing, it could be that I grew up near a couple of great farms, or it could be because bacon and chicken wings are just really bloody delicious. So it was with trepidation that I undertook the challenge to go vegan for a week.

The health and environmental benefits of a vegan diet have been frequently reported on. With the ever-growing number of food scandals we face in China, many of which are related to fake or spoiled meat, veganism seems like an increasingly wise choice. But for a dyed-in-the-wool carnivore like me is eating vegan in Beijing achievable?

#### DAY ONE

I kick off the week with a trip to Sanyuanli market, which is as much of a Mecca for vegans as it is for omnivores. First stop is stall 62, where the affable middle-aged proprietress peers out from a veritable Aladdin's cave of grains and pulses, from black beans to basmati. Further along, the vegetable stalls are home to a dazzling array of produce both Western and Chinese (the selection is wider than anywhere else in Beijing), but be warned that looks sometimes outstrip flavor. The spoils of the shop go into a dish of curried eggplant stuffed with coconut and cashews. "This vegan thing isn't difficult at all," I think to myself.

#### DAY TWO

When you rely on plants and grains for the majority of your nutrition, it is worth considering their provenance. I head to Lohao, one of Beijing's biggest retailers of organic grains (including quinoa) and other products. One of the difficulties of being vegan in Beijing is that many of the products recommended by vegan food blogs in the UK and US – different types of non-dairy milk, nutritional yeast, coconut ice cream – are simply not available here. While Lohao does not fulfill all these requirements, it does stock a number of imported products and hard-to-find nutritional supplements.

#### DAY THREE

I confidently knock together a cold noodle salad with smoked tofu and a sauce bought from Lohao, before realizing that the noodles contain powdered egg. My smugness from earlier in the week pales; I feel like animal products are lurking behind every food label just waiting to trip me up.



## DAY FOUR

Thankfully day four gets off to a better start. I meet up with Slow Boat Brewery Taproom manager, and long-term vegan, Michael Dobrowolski, who takes me to a shop specializing in vegan products just south of Xidan. The small shop is filled with all manner of exotic vegan food substitutes, from the more usual textured vegetable protein to whole fish made out of soy. I buy a pack of vegan “eggs”, ready-shaped “sunny-side up.” The texture is extremely off-putting and I’m left wondering, ‘why emulate the thing you are trying to avoid?’

## DAY FIVE

My roommate has a friend in town, so naturally we are summoned for the usual Peking duck meal. I am apprehensive about finding enough vegan-friendly dishes to make a satisfying meal, but the waitresses are surprisingly accommodating, offering to leave meat out of the *mapo* tofu. Good vegan options on your everyday Chinese restaurant menu include spinach and peanut salad (果仁菠菜) and cold-tossed shredded tofu (凉拌豆腐丝). However, this does involve an element of compromise in that the dishes may well have been prepared with the same cooking implements as meat dishes. Other vegans I chat to reveal this is something they have come to accept since moving to Beijing if they want to have any chance of eating out with others.

## DAY SIX

On day six, I fail. I sit down for a work-related event and pop a canapé into my mouth, before realizing that it is topped with a rosy swirl of jamón. I put this down to the fact that I am not used to having to pick and choose what I eat, rather than the fact that I am craving pork products.

## DAY SEVEN

It being the weekend (and this being Beijing), I awake with a pounding hangover and immediately curse the fact that I can’t eat eggs. A look through the cupboards reveals that I am pretty much out of anything remotely vegan than isn’t a raw cashew nut or a slightly black banana. This reveals a key flaw in my whole vegan eating scheme: preparation. It’s much more difficult to just pick something up and eat it, since few processed products are completely vegan and labeling in China is less than transparent. I decide to go back to bed instead.

## LOOKING BACK

I will admit that before I started this project I had considered making it a humorous paean to dairy and how much I missed it. However, over the course of my week of veganism and the research I conducted preceding it, I discovered there was more to it than simply saying no to steak. Choosing to be vegan is a commitment to a lifestyle that goes beyond food to a general awareness of the ingredients and processes that go into products, edible or otherwise. Just a few days into the week, I felt I had more energy and, as a keen cook, I relished the challenge of coming up with tasty vegan dishes. Being vegan in Beijing is not only achievable – it is enjoyable.



*Acknowledgement: Thanks to Michael Dobrowolski (Instagram: @veganpunx) and for their excellent contributions and advice*

## YOUR VEGAN EATING DIRECTORY

### TRIBE

Tribe has a wide range of creative vegan options that are clearly marked on the illustrative menu. Read more in our review on p31.

China View 2-102, Gongti Donglu, Chaoyang District (8587 1899)

朝阳区工体东路中国红街一层

### KING'S JOY

King's Joy is unfailingly popular and with good reason – it is one of the few restaurants in Beijing serving up creative vegetarian food that doesn't rely on mock meat.

2 Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng District (8404 9191)

京兆尹：东城区五道营胡同2号

### ZHENG LONG ZHAI

This small shop just south of Xidan sells a mind-boggling range of fake meat products, from chicken nuggets to whole lobsters. They also have a good range of vegan sauces and seasonings.

3 Xinwenhua Jie, Xicheng District (6603 1051)

正隆斋善素食店：西城区新文化街3号

### LOHAO

Lohao is one of Beijing's biggest organic and health food chains, with five stores across Chaoyang and Shunyi. The flagship store near Jintai Lu is well located.

1/F, 5 Vanke Park, Tianshui Xiyuan, Chaoyang District (6599 6287)

乐活城：朝阳区甜水西园万科公园5号一层

# TRIBE

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## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Daily 10.30am-10.30pm. China View, 2-102, Gongti Donglu, Chaoyang District (8587 1899)  
朝阳区工体东路2号中国红街大厦1层

 1km east of Dongsishitiao station (Line 2)

It is an unfortunate truth that Beijing is synonymous with greasy late night hot pot adventures and stomach-searing Sichuan. It takes hefty willpower to eat healthy. Vegetables can barely make it to the plate without getting doused in oil.

Enter Tribe, whose owners work with local organic farmers like Tootoo to lay the groundwork for fresh, healthy eating. The interior reminds us of Moka Bro's, thanks to designers who also like to use that trendy bold typography in their windows. But we're more interested in the food: Tribe's team is clearly concerned with providing variety and creativity alongside those B vitamins.

Start off your Tribe experience with Greek yogurt. We hear that Greek yogurt has a godly status among foodies, and you can spoon in that goodness with small piles of muesli and fruit for a reasonable RMB 38. For greens, the Tribe salad with kale and pistachio is nearly there, save for its salty chilli citrus vinaigrette, but the grilled salmon sandwich with asparagus, egg and olives (RMB 78) majorly makes up for it.

When we saw mushroom and kale grilled cheese (RMB 45) on the menu, we were ecstatic. Finally, a "healthy" grilled cheese! It turned out that healthy grilled cheese is a mouthful of sprouted seven grain bread that has smothered the cheese into oblivion. Disappointing. Those sprouted grains do debut on all the sandwiches, though, and are said to be the way to go if you're sensitive to gluten. In fact, Tribe's entire menu is coded to help you make informed eating choices – GF for "gluten free" and VV for "very vegan" among them. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** Moka Bros, Spoonful of Sugar



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS



# PEK-SG KOO KEE RESTAURANT

## CHICKEN RICE FOR THE SOUL

Daily 11am-11pm. 5 Vanke Park, Tianshui Xiyuan, Chaoyang District (157 1885 7479)

北京新加坡高记餐厅：朝阳区甜水西园万科公园5号底商

 100m north of Jintai Lu station (Line 6)

When you think of Singapore, your mind is likely to center on the vibrancy of the mixture of Chinese, Indian and Malay cultures, which makes the city state one of the world's best spots for food tourism, or focus on the strict adherence to rules that makes Singapore so safe, if ultimately a tad dull.

Dull is certainly what you might think on entering Koo Kee. The dim lighting left the fairly drab décor (and pictures highlighting its parent brand's storied history in Singapore) to fight a losing battle with the colorful menus and your reason for being there.

Anyone who has lived in Singapore seems to become obsessed with its national dishes – *Laksa*, curry chicken, *Bak Kut Teh*, Hainan chicken and chilli crab – and misses them terribly. Those people will be delighted to find all of those dishes with the exception of our delicious ten-legged friends.

We opted for the more Chinese-influenced side of

the menu, choosing curry chicken (RMB 48), *Bak Kut Teh* (RMB 58) and Hainan chicken (RMB 38), plus a braised egg (RMB 5).

The Hainan chicken is worth the subway ride alone. The meat was succulent, the skin a chilled counterpoint brought to life by the ground chilli and ginger sauces. It's safe to say that the Singapore Tourism Board recommendation of the dish on the menu was not artistic license.

The curry chicken could have been stewed for longer but the *Bak Kut Teh* slipped off the rib, living up to its name of meat bone tea. We chose not to add other options – of which there were many – to the simmering of herbs and spices, but we had no complaints.

All in all, Koo Kee is a breath of fresh air in a city lacking Singaporean options. *Jonathan White*

**Also try:** Lau Pa Sak, Nyonya Kitchen



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

# UMASSIF

## MASSIVE BREADS, MASSIVE FLAVOR

Daily 7.30am-9.30pm. 2105, 1/F, Shangdu Soho North Tower, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District (5869 9400)

朝阳区东大桥路8号尚都Soho北塔一层2105

 600m south of Dongdaqiao station (Line 6)

Located in Shangdu Soho, new bakery Umassif plays to the cosmopolitan tastes of the well-heeled CBD crowd with a dazzling array of breads combining global flavors. Although Umassif initially seems more in the style of a Chinese bakery – you select the breads yourself, piling them high on a tray, before taking them to the counter to be packaged – the sleek modern-industrial décor and hardwood tables give away their global ambitions.

What Umassif peddles is not your average loaf of sliced white; these are breads with something to say. The piquant Hollandaise Sauce, Mustard and Bacon Roll (RMB 22) is just begging to be served with a Bloody Mary at your next brunch. The Honey Multigrain Pineapple Roll (RMB 28), with its secret swirl of cream cheese filling, is the voice in your ear convincing you to cancel your plans and curl up on the couch on Sunday afternoon with a cup of tea and a good book.

The flavors may not be what you're used to (although you can pick up a plain baguette as well), but step out of your comfort zone and you will be rewarded with a feast of carbs worth the extra hours on the treadmill.

*Robynne Tindall*

**Also try:** Bread Talk, Pekotan

HONEY MULTIGRAIN PINEAPPLE ROLL








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# GANGES

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6417-0900



BACK FOR MORE

# HUA'S RESTAURANT

## COURTYARD COMFORTS

Daily 10.30-4.30am. 235 Dongzhimen Neidajie, Dongcheng District (5128 3315)

花家怡园：东城区簋街东直门内大街235号

🚶 100m east of Beixinqiao station (Line 5)

As a long-time resident of Beixinqiao, I have often bemoaned raucous, oil-slicked street Guijie, with its over-zealous sales people and cookie cutter crayfish restaurants. Hua's Restaurant is here to prove me wrong. The flagship courtyard branch of Hua's Restaurant on the north side of Guijie is a warren of spacious *siheyuan* and stately private rooms, staffed by courteous, silken-costumed staff. However, for all that potential pomp and circumstance, Hua's still manages to retain the feeling of a local restaurant.

Hua's proudly serves "new-style Beijing cuisine," the essence of which is written across many of the dishes. The signature Baye Roast Duck (RMB 168 for a whole duck), whose succulent meat and crisp skin is a match for any of Beijing's best, is served with sticks of hawthorn jelly and cantaloupe alongside the usual cucumber and spring onions. The Sautéed Crisp Prawn in Savory Sauce

(RMB 168), which thankfully comes with more than one prawn, displays a similar level of attention to detail.

Despite my remonstrations, it would be remiss to visit Guijie and not order at least a few ruby-red crayfish. At Hua's they come in five flavors – boiled, garlic, dry-fried, thirteen spices and the ever-popular *mala*. Our constitutions not being made of stronger stuff, we plump for the garlic crayfish (RMB 8 each) and are rewarded with a steaming bowlful topped with a heaping mound of fried garlic. The garlic is unexpectedly mellow and dipping the peeled crayfish tails in the accompanying gravy yields a flavor not unlike garlic butter.

Hua's Restaurant could have fallen into the same trap as other Guijie restaurants, choosing a rowdy, crowd-pleasing atmosphere over quality, but instead they have created a refined dining experience that will keep you going back again and again. *Robynne Tindall*



BAYE ROAST DUCK

PHOTO: KEN



# ALESSIA FRISINA

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, DININGCITY.CN

**A**fter five years in Beijing, Alessia Frisina, business development manager of Beijing Restaurant Week organizer [diningcity.cn](http://diningcity.cn), is moving back to Europe. With Beijing Restaurant Week set to get underway in early September, as her final act before she heads home we asked her where a foodie that shuns most meats would eat (and drink and entertain) after working with some of the city's best establishments.

## The venue

I'd have to opt for **Capital M**. I've been there just once but it's seriously one of the nicest restaurants with a view in Beijing. I have worked in the food and beverage industry for two years, but only dined at Capital M last month when I went on a date with my current boyfriend. It was there that we decided that we'd move back to Europe together.

## The starters

Any choice of mushrooms at **Middle 8**, especially the stir-fried wild *matsutake*. I have been pescetarian for 20 years, therefore I struggle with Beijing cuisine. Yunnan cuisine, on the other hand, is much more interesting for its vegetarian choices. I'd add the shredded dried tofu with sesame oil at the New World Hotel's **8 Qi Nian** restaurant and their double-boiled Yunnan *matsutake* soup with mushroom essence.

## Main course

I'd probably go for the vegetarian noodle soup at **Luga's**. I have been to many fancy restaurants in Beijing but that soup carries at least four years of memories and it's still one of my favorites. I tried it for the first time when I was still a student at Tsinghua University – it was an economic and tasty choice for my palate. To this day I have a craving for it at least once a month and I suggest it to all my girlfriends. I don't know of one single person who doesn't like it. I'm all about soups, even in 40-degree summer heat. I would also order the fried shrimps with goat cheese at **Middle 8** and the falafel sandwich at **Biteapitta**.

## Dessert?

I don't eat Chinese desserts so I'd make a chocolate cake or get the delicious tiramisu at **Opera Bombana**.

## Entertainment?

I'd invite Adriel, who has been my best friend and guitar player for the past five years (yes, I have been part of a band for the past five years in Beijing) to play his mix of progressive jazz and traditional African sounds from Cape Verde, and I'd sing along.

## Any other entertainment?

I love Salsa. I am actually a salsa dance instructor and I have studied dancing in New York City. I would definitely love to play some salsa tunes and have everybody dancing to it. I would make sure everybody has enough alcohol, get everybody drunk, chat with friends, and play charades.

*Try some of these restaurants during Beijing Restaurant Week, Sep 4-14, [restaurantweek.cn](http://restaurantweek.cn).*



# THE ART OF HOSPITALITY

JUI KRETZU, GENERAL MANAGER, GRACE BEIJING

by Robynne Tindall

**W**ith a global background that covers Taiwan, Brazil, the US and now Beijing, Grace Beijing's General Manager Jui Kretzu is well placed to understand the needs of international guests. She talks to us about luxury, art and what makes a great boutique hotel.

## What differentiates a boutique hotel from a chain hotel?

In a chain hotel, the employee structure is much more complex, so as a manager you really don't get a chance

to talk to all your employees or take a personal interest in different areas of the hotel. In the same vein, I get to interact directly with the customers and show them that we really care. For me, that is true hospitality.

## How does luxury translate to a boutique hotel?

When I was working in a big, luxury hotel we often used to do an exercise where people would describe what luxury meant to them. No matter what your personal preferences, at the end of the exercise we always came to the same conclusion: Luxury is a sense of well being, having someone anticipate your needs. Since we only have 30 rooms here, we really are able to do that for all our guests.

## What sets Grace Beijing apart from other "art hotels" in Beijing?

I always tell people, this is not just an art hotel because we have art on the walls, rather it is a hotel for artists. Due to our location, our clientele are mostly related to the art and design industries so they themselves bring something extra to the hotel.

## How do you maintain an international standard in Beijing?

Everybody is aware of issues like food safety and air quality in Beijing. The biggest challenge for us is facing these issues, and maintaining good quality and service, without passing on the extra costs to consumers. You've to know your suppliers and know that they are committed to upholding the same standards as you.

## Where are your favourite places to eat out in Beijing?

When I get chance, I prefer to cook for myself. I grew up in Brazil so I like to cook Brazilian dishes – I make a mean *fei-joadá* [a stew of beans and pork]. Otherwise I tend to visit other Latin-inspired restaurants, like Agua and Carmen.

*Call by Grace Hotel's airy ground floor bistro to sample the daily changing set lunch, a steal at RMB 118 for two courses or RMB 138 for three courses (plus 15 percent service charge).*



PHOTO: KEN



## A IS FOR...

... **abalone** 鲍鱼

Non-Asian diners may never have encountered abalone (*baoyu*), the gastropod with the shiny shell. It's definitely an acquired taste: anyone sensitive to texture may find this among the chewiest items they've ever put in their mouth, especially if it's served whole in all of its gray-brown glory. Unlike its frequent menu neighbor, shark fin soup, some species of abalone are considered sustainable, and due to market demand, many types are farmed in China, Australia, Mexico, and the United States. If it's served to you at a banquet, eat it because your hosts spent quite a lot of money on it.

... **almond** 杏仁

Native to western Asia, the almond (*xingren*) hasn't replaced the peanut as China's most popular nut yet. While it's not processed into cooking oil the way peanuts are (almonds in China are far too expensive for that), it does come in a delicious form here not common in the West: almond milk. Served at restaurants in cans and at swankier convenience store outlets in elegant box form, it's a sweet treat.

... **apple** 苹果

The humble apple (*pingguo*) isn't native here, but China now produces about half of the world's supply. It's not the apple itself that is significant in Chinese cuisine, but how it is used. One Chinese dessert favorite is *basi pingguo* where sliced apples are stir-fried in caramelized sugar long enough to coat them, and are then served quickly along with a bowl of cool water. It's then a race to eat the napalm-hot treat before the cooling sugar fuses the apples to the plate permanently. By the way, the best apples you'll ever eat are organic ones from Xinjiang. Look for them at markets in mid-autumn.

... **apricot** 杏

China is one the few places where this small, sweet fruit can be cultivated. It's actively grown in the Beijing area with apricot (*xing*) trees providing flowers, fruit, and shade on streets, in backyards, and around courtyards. The fruit can be enjoyed both when it's green and the size of a fingernail (a sour treat) or when it's around racquetball-size, yellow, and very sweet. Provided they haven't been sprayed with chemicals or pesticides, eat them right off the tree.

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## TASTE TEST

# WHICH

### HOW ABOUT THEM APPLES?

by Kipp Whittaker

**H**awthorn apples are found in many forms. Sometimes in naturally dried cuts, sometimes jellied, and occasionally covered in crystalline sugar. We checked out the good, the bad and the sickly.

# HAW



#### ORCHARD FARMER, HAW JELLY STRIPS (RMB 10.50)

"Tastes like a solidified form of cranberry sauce."

"I once saw an old lady feeding these to her blind dog."

"Like old haw-flavored shoe lining. It's been rotting for years till it has the consistency of haw jelly."

#### SHANGZHEN, CANDY HAW STRIPS (RMB 9)

"This would be a great tool for bribing children."

"The closest thing to sour shoelaces I've tried in China."

"Expect accelerated tooth decay and manic gum licking for an hour or so after consumption."

#### YIDA, PRESERVED FRUIT OF HAW (RMB 6.5)

"I guess these are really popular with athletic women."

"Reminds me of a homemade Fruit Roll Up without many additives, but bland."

"I'm not sure how much fruit is used, but it tastes okay."

PHOTO: SUI



# T O G N A W

## VERDICT

The definite favorite at the sweet end of things was the Shangzhen candy haw strips. These have the feel of something you could enjoy during the movies and/or tie your shoes with if you don't mind a little sugar between the toes. But if you're looking for something that could possibly help you out with constipation, then go for the dried haw strips.



### AIZI RAN, DRIED HAW STRIPS (RMB 23.50)

"Great for digestion."

"A nice, dried, fruity snack that would be perfect in a bowl of granola or some trail mix."

"Looks like something that has been lost in your grandma's pantry for 20 years, but still tastes okay."

### XIAO YAZI, HAW MONEY (RMB 10.5)

"These are like communion wafers made with Flintstone Vitamins."

"The packaging is really cute, but the little cartoon girl is winking at you because she knows they taste an awful lot like like Care Bear sh\*t."

### YUAN GUANGHAO, SLICED HAWTHORN (RMB 3.8)

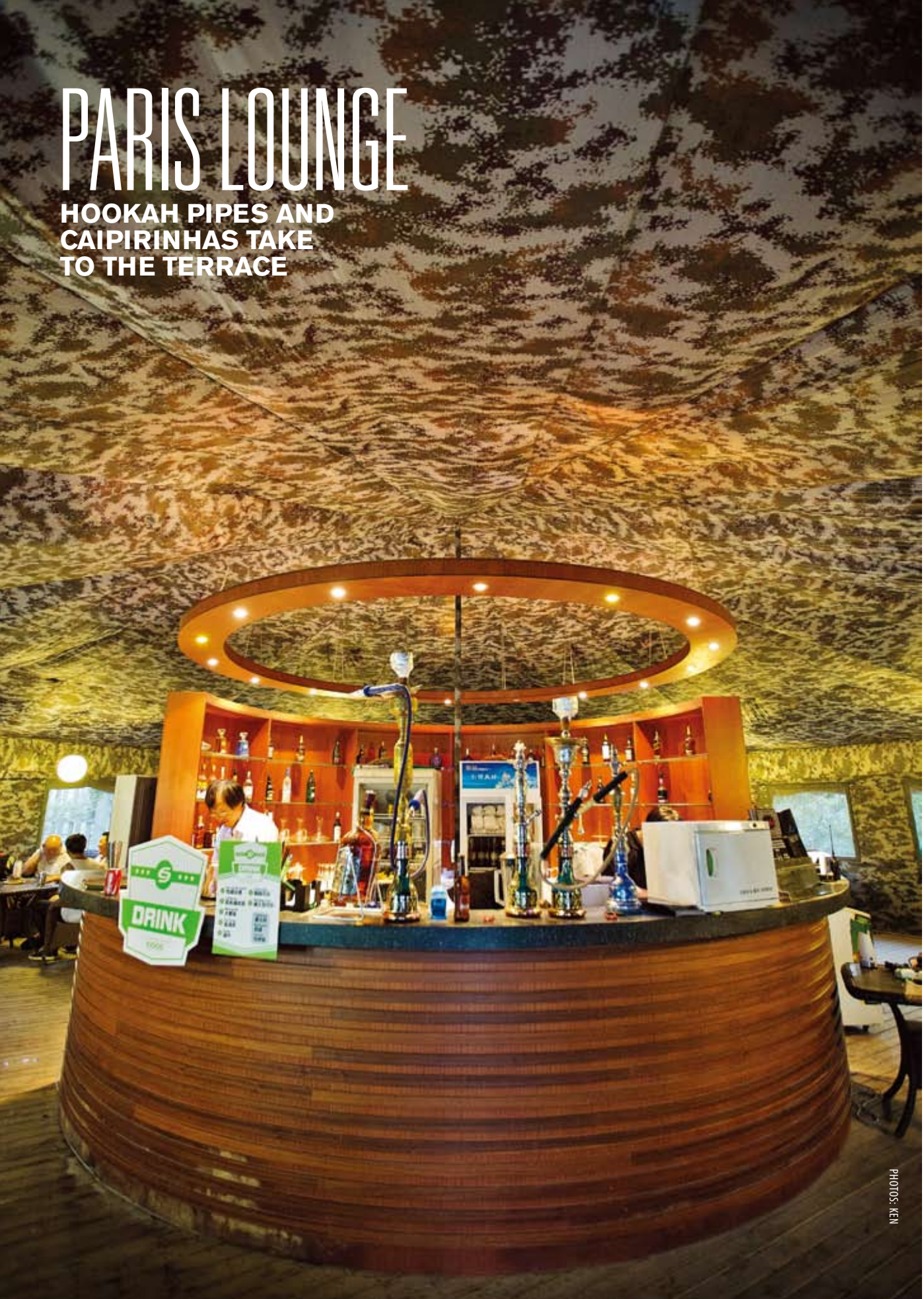
"Has a very small resemblance to hawthorn that's been blasted with sugar."

"If it says high quality on the packaging, I instantly don't believe it."  
"This tastes like a sugar-flavored eraser."



# PARIS LOUNGE

HOOKAH PIPES AND  
CAIPIRINHAS TAKE  
TO THE TERRACE





## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

Daily 4pm-late. 5/F Trends Building, 9 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District (6589 5559)

朝阳区北京市朝阳区光华路9号世贸天阶时尚大厦5层

🚶 900m south of Dongdaqiao station (Line 6)

A Paris lounge brings to mind warm lights, fancy *plats du jour*, high fashion, and conversations between famous authors and artists. It does not, however, evoke a yurt, a hookah, and a patio on the rooftop of The Place.

This Paris Lounge is a partnership between a KTV owner, a DJ, and an American television host/party animal. It was the party animal who led me along the rooftop, through a bamboo forest, past an ivy-covered wall, and around the fabulous progeny of Beijing's nouveau riche to the bar. It's sheltered under a camouflaged yurt, pitched over an oasis of top-shelf spirits and old bar hands of the Chaoyang Park nightclubs.

If a mojito has a standard, these bartenders met it, but their Caipirinha was outstanding. The sugarcane base of the cachaça is charmed into a tart cocktail when spliced with lime halves and rock sugar. It goes great with an umbrella and a summer breeze passing through the surrounding towers. If you're a beer type of person, though, they promise to have the best deals in the area.

Then there's the view. To the north, one notices the acute tip of Parkview Green; to the west, the tops of the trees lining embassy row; to the east, some of the most expensive real estate in Beijing. And to the south you are eye level with the third largest LED screen in the world.

The three owners each have their own idea of a night out, which so far delivers confusing, although entertaining, results. We can't wait to see what other plans they have for this lounge, but with September's weather, location might be all that matters. *Reed Russell*

**Also try:** Spark, Melo Lounge



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# HANG UP ON THE HANGOVER

BEIJING'S BARTENDERS SPILL ON  
THEIR MORNING-AFTER REMEDIES

by Jessica Rapp



**W**e've all been there. A late night binge that seemed like a great idea at the time ends up slugged across your bathroom floor. All those cheap Tsingtaos translate to spending the daylight hours married to your mattress. If you're to survive the Beijing nightlife scene, you'll need a trusted method for preventing those raging headaches the morning after. Scientists (who, no doubt, have had to cure a hangover or two themselves) have been hard at work getting to the bottom of what causes those nasty after-effects of alcohol. And while there is a lot of advice out there, even some of the most recent research suggests experts can't

come to a consensus on the exact culprit of the pain. Dehydration and acetaldehyde (that toxin that's produced when ethanol dissolves in your blood stream) seem to be factors, but it's still uncertain as to which one is the most important or if there's any evidence at all that they cause significant imbalances in your body. That can mean a dark and uncertain world for the party hounds.

So, when determining that ultimate hangover cure, we decided to start from scratch. We went straight to the local drinking experts: Beijing's bartenders. They told us their hangover cure secrets so that if you choose to trust them, you may be all the wiser next time those cocktails call.



## WHAT THE BARTENDERS SAY

"Know your body, know your alcohol, drink water and high-quality products. The better the quality, the less chance you'll have a terrible hangover."

*Thierry de Dobbeleer, Beer Mania*

"In Baofeng in Henan province, my hometown, most people who get drunk on *baijiu* drink warm water to prevent a hangover. It's also helpful to drink vinegar to alleviate any nausea. The next morning, people will have mut-ton or haggis soup with vinegar and a lot of pepper – it seems to wake people up instantly!"

*Pigeon, Mao Mao Chong*

"In China, we always drink tea to cure a hangover. Green tea is especially good because it cleans your stomach."

*Ella Chen, Slow Boat Brewery*

"I go for a swim in Houhai."

*Richard Ammerman, Jing A*

"The biggest part of a hangover is dehydration, so for every two drinks I have, I chug a glass of water. The trick is remembering. That's definitely the hard part."

*Rich Akers, Lush*

"A Bloody Mary during lunch with friends whom I went out with the night before is the only and the best way to cure a hangover. After a few, I'm totally fine. Of course, liters of water are also needed."

*Ivan Maksimovic, Ink*

"Beer." *Xiao Shuai, El Nido*

"My hangover cures depend on the hangover. If I'm feeling fancy with my hangover, anything with carrot juice helps, like a carrot juice cocktail with champagne. Also, anything with pickle juice is good, like a super dope Bloody Mary with pickle juice and a bunch of bacon." *Dave Bob Gaspar, Home Plate Bar-B-Que, Sanlitun*

"Sleep, fried eggs in butter, coffee, a fresh smoothie, sleep, swimming and sauna." *Andreas Röhl, Dreikronen 1308 Brewhouse*

"Pre-drinking: Drink good-quality alcohol and balance sugar intake with water. Post-drinking: 45ml ethanol on empty stomach."

*Isaac Dunn, Flamme*

"My hangover cure is '80s pop music. I play it loud and shamelessly. If it doesn't make you happy, it makes you vomit – job done." *Michael Ohlsson, Dada*

"I wholly believe that the best cures are administered before or during drinking. Before drinking, OD on Vitamin B and C. I use the tabs that dissolve in water. Also, don't use a freaking alarm clock. If you can, let yourself sleep until your body is ready to go again. If that doesn't work, then drink coffee." *Kenn Bermel, The Local*

## THAT DIDN'T WORK? BEAT IT WITH THESE BITES

Red Rice Crunch Power Bowl with steak, paired with a large green smoothie with extra ginger

*Moka Bros*

Cookies and Cream Milkshake

*The Local*



## HAIRS OF THE DOG

**Corpse Reviver #2:** Gin, Cointreau, Lillet Blanc, lemon juice, dash of absinthe, and ice cubes. Shake all ingredients in a shaker, strain into a chilled glass and garnish with an orange peel

*Apothecary*



**Bloody Derby:** Bacon-infused bourbon, tomato juice, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, Tabasco sauce, horse radish, and black pepper. Garnish with crispy bacon and celery and jalapeno stuffed olives

*Quinn Johnson, 5F/BBC*



## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS



# BBG

## BELGIAN BEER AND THEN SUM

Daily 10-2am. E108, Bldg 8, World City, 8-9 Jinhui Lu, Chaoyang District (2590 6364)

朝阳区金汇路8-9号世界城商业街8号楼E108

 1km south of Dongdaqiao station (Line 6)

What do you get when you mix dim sum with Vandergeeten? A Belgian beer bar, of course. Not what you were expecting? BBG, or Belgium, Bar & Bistro, had us stumped too.

Its location is well placed for those looking to kick back with a few after a day at a CBD office, and its thoughtfully-decorated interior is one that unmistakably emulates a love for beer, dogs, and the King of Pop. Just across from Michael Jackson's shiny silver record replica is a large projector screen which is hooked up to satellite TV so that you can catch your favorite sports.

The real draw, no doubt, is the Belgian bottled brews. To drink these and leave BBG with cash still in your pocket takes some strategizing – for instance, we noted the Hoegaarden Forbidden Fruit is an 8.5% howitzer that will cost you RMB 10 less than getting a large glass of the regular stuff on draft. Beer cocktails are on special every

afternoon for RMB 40. We also liked seeing Stassen Rose Cider (RMB 45) on the menu, a raspberry refresher we have yet to see in Beijing.

Then there's the dim sum. BBG's owner hails from Guangdong, which is why you'll find a selection of durian cakes, pork rolls, and custard tarts in a oddly placed, albeit cute, country fair-style food cart on the patio instead of the usual pub grease pool that defines most sports bars. A few of these familiar items – chicken wings, a burger and fries – are hidden among the listings of Chinese food and two or three dishes questionably tagged as "Belgian" (an educated guess tells us the Belgian fries are actually simply French fries), but the pictures and prices made us pause. Never was there a better excuse to skip the dessert and go beer all the way. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** Beer Mania, Fire Wings



## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

### LINE BAR

#### QUALITY COCKTAILS AND SERVICE ON XINZHONG JIE

Daily 7pm-1am. 18 Xinzhong Jie (in the alleyway to the right of the Golden Pineapple International Hostel), Dongcheng District (158 0122 5611)

东城区新中街18号

🚶 700m northeast of Dongsishitiao station (Line 2)

The interior of Line Bar is a bit like one of those classy opium dens of yore, with a mix of traditionally styled Chinese furniture that can be a little awkward with your knees constantly bumping underneath.

There are already so many places in this area that create crafty signature drinks, and it can be hard to outdo many of the more established joints like Hidden House with similar prices and quality.

We first ordered up the Line Special (RMB 70), which is a mixture of vodka, passion fruit, pineapple, and lemon, and turned out to be a refreshing choice on a muggy day. The presentation was nice, served in a metal mug and garnished with pineapple leaves and a halved passion fruit spewing its delicious innards on a bed of ice. After this, we gave the Bloody Mary a whirl (RMB 70). It was bloody and tasty but also a tad too strained and lacking in the obligatory vegetable and pepper debris.

Check out this bar if you live in the area or if you just want a serene place to drink and work. In this increasingly competitive market of classy places to get sloshed, we can't think of much that sets this place apart from the crowd, but they do provide quality drinks at a standard price and great service in a relaxing environment, and that's half the battle. *Kipp Whittaker*

**Also try:** Ming Bar, Hidden House



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## IRON BARTENDER



Three bar masters. Three “secret” ingredients. One judge. Would Beijing’s cocksure mixologists fumble when faced with an unusual condiment or unfamiliar fruit? Or can they concoct a drink to

impress one tough taster? In the spirit of Iron Chef, we put our bartenders to the test by announcing a secret ingredient, giving them ten minutes to conceive of and create a mix, and finding out just how creative a cocktail can get.

### THE CONTESTANTS



**SEAN WANG**  
**Mado Bar**

Sean has been bartending for one year, but he has been collecting absinthe for ten. Thus, more than thirty rare bottles cover the shelves in his hutong bar, while another fifty unopened varieties from his trips to underground distilleries around the world remain in his personal collection. When he’s not bartending, he performs in an indie rock outfit called Zakka.



**STEVEN YANG**  
**Mosto**

Four years have seen Steven pouring reds and signature cocktails behind Mosto’s bar, so it’s no surprise he gets creative in the kitchen, pulling fresh fruit and veg for his cocktail recipes. From 6-7pm every day he’s hard at work doling out buy-one-get-one-free drinks for guests, so when he has the chance to get off his feet, he likes to relax with a bottle of Penfolds Australian wine.



**JEFF ZHAO**  
**Club Suzie Wong**

If there’s anything Jeff has learned from his five years of service at Suzie Wong’s, it’s that he has to move fast. Weekend parties can sometimes demand four or five Long Island Iced Teas for just one person, and he can whip one up in less than two minutes. Previously, he worked in the forestry industry, but his sister, a fellow bartender, convinced him to make the switch.

### THE JUDGE



**JACK ZHANG**  
**Vivid, Conrad Hotel**

Jack has nearly ten years of experience at hotels in and around Beijing to give his new Vivid menu plenty of street cred. We’re puckering at his twist on a Cosmopolitan, which he plans to serve with a dish of raspberries for topping or enjoying on their own. Every Wednesday from 9pm-midnight he’s busy satisfying the ladies with free-flow house pours.



# ROUND 1

Sean



White rum, Bols Blue Curaçao, lime juice, and milk

Steven



Vodka, Bailey's, Kahlúa, and milk, with a coffee bean garnish

Jeff



Vodka, Midori, Malibu, pineapple juice, and milk

## SECRET INGREDIENT

### WANG ZAI MILK



**Verdict:** All three bartenders inevitably produced dessert cocktails, Sean's going so far as to taste like ice cream. Jack was sold, however, when he sipped Steven's balanced, saccharine coffee martini.

# ROUND 2

Sean



Disaronno, tequila, lime juice, jelly, cherries, and lemon peel

Steven



Canadian Club whiskey, Drambuie, and jelly, blended and garnished with lemon peel

Jeff



Myer's rum, Grand Marnier, Chambord black raspberry liqueur, apple juice, and jelly

## SECRET INGREDIENT

### GRASS JELLY



**Verdict:** It's not uncommon to see grass jelly cubes floating in a milk tea, and Sean used this approach when incorporating the dessert into his drink. In the end, Jack had a tough time choosing his favorite.

# ROUND 3

Sean



Grapefruit juice, vodka, passion fruit juice, topped with a drizzle of fish sauce

Steven



Vodka, gin, lemon juice, sugar water, and fish sauce

Jeff



Gin, campari, Martini Rosso, and fish sauce

## SECRET INGREDIENT

### THAI FISH SAUCE



**Verdict:** Masking the fish sauce with passion fruit and a summery color won out. However, Jeff's aperitif received an honorable mention for the subtle combination of the salty sauce with gin and citrus.

# LET'S GET DIGITAL

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Download it free for your iPad at [thebeijinger.com](http://thebeijinger.com)



## P.S. WE ATE YOU

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



### *beastie baos*

#### **Bao House, RMB 48**

Check out this new lunch haunt set up outside the Opposite House. We ordered this fatty little sandwich made with *mantou* and filled with deliciously chewy pork belly, pickled vegetables, cilantro, peanuts, and served with sweet chilli sauce. It's a pricey place for the kind of food they offer, but it's a nice atmosphere for these fusion Chinese delicacies.

### *fried okra*

#### **Home Plate Bar-B-Q, RMB 25**

Fried okra brings us back to those gritty, road-side all-you-can-eat buffets that fuel America's obesity problem. These are deliciously fried to a golden brown, with a little fresh green color showing through. These little nuggets are crunchy and flavorful, and come stacked high with a side of chilli mayo for dipping.

### *baked mashed potato*

#### **Ippudo, RMB 32**

This dish comes served on a hot plate with a generous dollop of cheese and an egg cracked on top. Mash it up quick while the egg is still runny to maximize the textures. As if the dish isn't satisfying enough, there's the wonderful job of scraping toothsome eggy potato hardened onto the edges of the cast iron plate to look forward to.

### *traditional Beijing bean paste*

#### **Hua's Restaurant, RMB 32**

Don't let the English name fool you, this traditional Beijing cold dish is actually cubes of toothsome pork jelly studded with green and yellow soy beans. Dip it in the accompanying dish of piquant vinegar-soy sauce. If you manage not to drop it with your chopsticks, you're more skilled than we are.

### *chilli dog*

#### **Stuff'd, RMB 75**

This almost foot-long ground beef sausage covered in chilli, cheese, and sour cream was truly a delight. Though it takes a little maneuvering getting the wide baguette into your mouth, this juicy dog was delicious, and it came with a side order of twice fried French fries and a healthy stack of wild greens.



Things to do, places to be, stuff to try

All you need  
to keep fit?  
P53



# GO

LAST-MINUTE TRAVEL // CONFUCIUS // INDIAN ADVENTURE // ATHLETIC APPARATUS



***Experience the cream of the LA contemporary art scene, exhibited for the first time in China at UCCA Sep 13-Nov 9. It features work from Ryan Trecartin, Kathryn Andrews, Aaron Curry, and Alex Israel.***

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ORGANIZERS



# FREELIFE

## MEDICAL COSMETIC & HEALTH MANAGEMENT CLINIC

By appointment only. 8A Dongtucheng Lu, Chaoyang District (137 1861 1820, English 135 2169 1669, Chinese)  
朝阳区 东土城路8A号

 200m south of Liufang station (Line 13)

Beijing is no stranger to cosmetic surgery services, being just a short plane ride away from countries that have worldwide reputations for nips and tucks. FreeLife is one of the city's longtime institutions, but the facility has recently received a facelift of its own. After formerly practicing more traditional methods, FreeLife has expanded its scope to include services that are fairly new to China.

A network of cosmetic operating and recovery rooms are located just a garden bridge and gurgling fountains away from the front doors overlooking the main street. It's a detail one might not anticipate when embarking on a consultation, but FreeLife is a place of patient comfort, bringing them into a safe and quiet environment worlds away from a hectic city.

More important, though, is dedication to service. Here, they not only apportion professional staff, but a network of experienced and trusted doctors at hospitals in Thailand and Japan. This way, patients can

undergo treatment programs in a series of stages that start with preliminary tests and approval in Beijing, before surgery in a partnering hospital abroad, and finally, follow-up care back at FreeLife. It's all an alternative to the popular, agent-sponsored medical tours that may force clients to run the risk of not receiving necessary post-surgery treatment.

For patients looking for non-surgical cosmetic care, FreeLife offers an anti-aging and skincare management program called micro-circulation reconstruction (MCR). It's a treatment that has been practiced in the US and other countries for more than 30 years and is designed to tackle the origin of a variety of skin problems by helping to lay the foundation for healthy skin. This is no spa facial, and successful patients should see significant improvements over time. Prices are competitive and vary depending on the procedure. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** EverCare, Beijing Hengsheng Hospital



# THE EMPEROR SPA

## WHY EAT ROAST DUCK WHEN YOU COULD GET A MASSAGE?

Daily Noon-11 pm. Emperor Hotel Qianmen, 87 Xianyukou Hutong, Dongcheng District (6701 7790)

东城区鲜鱼口胡同87号

 400m west of Qianmen station (Line 2)

Even a short trek through Qianmen's wide, but cluttered streets warrants a spa excursion. It's only appropriate then that a former Han Dynasty bathhouse is nestled between the throngs of roast duck stalls and silk scarf hawkers. Buried under the imposing, pale building is a 1,000sqm oasis, lined with cooling slate walls and filled with the roar of a prided curtain of water that descends on a collection of luxurious pools. It's a spa that's yet another stunning addition to the boutique Emperor Hotel Qianmen's contemporary facilities, and it's open to the public.

For first impressions, The Emperor Spa is unlike the usual lavish, warm setting amassed at the average lobby of a hotel spa. Entering The Emperor Spa is like crawling into a soothing lagoon or a damp riverside cave overlooking cold springs – minus the bats. It's a different interpretation of relaxation, but not a bad one. The entire space is low lit and the massage rooms are cozy and bare, with only a brown tea set cutting into

the cream-colored décor.

The spa treatments range from the usual full body oil massage down to a rather focused go at the hand muscles. They're completed with products by French brand, L'Occitane, whose health and beauty lotions are available for sale at their first flagship location in China, located in the lobby of The Emperor Spa. We suggest starting off by nursing tired feet with a sole nurturing, pedi-focused treatment overlooking the indoor waterfall. After a relaxing, fragrance-filled massage from professionally trained masseuses, take a swim in one of the themed aromatic pools, including a mineral bath, a rose petal bath, and separate hot and cold water pools. When we went, even the showers in the changing room mimicked cold springs (and not in a good way), but we trust that they'll have their water temperature control up and ready in no time. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** Dragonfly Therapeutic Retreat, Kocoon Spa

# QUFU

WHERE CONFUCIUS LIVES ON

by Steven Schwankert

Imagine Beijing's top imperial sites, but without the tourist throngs. In the offseason, you can almost have some sites entirely to yourself, a lone visitor in a centuries-old temple – a shrine to education and filial piety that was a pilgrimage site for China's emperors.

Once an overnight, nine-hour train ride from Beijing, the birthplace of Kong Fu Zi, or Confucius as we know him, Qufu in central Shandong province is now a two-hour blaze from the capital on high-speed rail. There's no airport nearby (the Kong family, Confucius' descendants, have seen to that), so riding the rails is the way to go.

## SEE

Qufu is a walled city first settled about 2,500 years ago. Part of that city wall has been restored, and walking along it, alongside the river is a good place for a scene-setting start to your visit.

As can be imagined, many of the attractions in Qufu relate to Confucius. Primary among them is the Kong Miao, the Confucius Temple. Beijingers will notice its similarity to the Confucius Temple near Yonghegong, except that this one is much larger, and is the biggest such shrine to the Master anywhere in the world. Named a UNESCO World Heritage site and built on the site of his former home, it has been destroyed, rebuilt, and expanded over the years to its current form. Its resemblance to the Forbidden City

is not coincidental; the temple was renovated by Ming Dynasty emperors after the completion of their Beijing palace complex, using some of the same designers, and wishing to give Confucius similar honor to themselves.

The Confucius Forest enshrouds the Cemetery of Confucius, where he and many of his family members are buried. It's a pleasant area if you don't mind passing gravestones during a nature walk.

## STAY

Shangri-La now operates the Shangri-La Hotel Qufu, overlooking the Yi River, and offering first-class accommodation. The hotel features a spa and both local and Cantonese cuisine for those looking for a bit more out of their Qufu visit than just Confucius. Rooms start at RMB 600 per night.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is the Qufu International Youth Hostel, pleasant and near the center of town. Beds can be had for as little as RMB 45 (rooms for RMB 118) per night.

## NEARBY

Tai'an, home to Tai Shan, one of China's holiest mountains (certainly its most climbed), is about an hour away by train or car. The mountain's 6,000 steps can be climbed in half a day, and there's a cable car that can assist in either direction.



PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA



**ARMOUR39**

Under Armour's revolutionary new monitor comes with an optional "compression shirt" fitted with electronic sensors. It features a Tony Stark-style removable center piece, which can be hooked up to your computer to provide details on your jumping, running, heart and breathing rates. Recently employed at the NFL Combine.

**Under Armour**  
**Price TBD**

**FITBIT ARIA WIFI SMART SCALE**

Get rid of those scabby-looking scales you picked up at Carrefour and upgrade to this thing of beauty. The Fitbit Aria can track the weight loss (or gain), the body fat percentage and body mass index readings for up to seven people.

**jd.com**  
**RMB 1,198**



# Athletic Apparatus

by Paul Ryding

*Every month the Beijinger reviews new gadgets so you don't have to. This month we turn our attentions to making your body the temple it was always supposed to be.*

**FITBIT ZIP**

This low-cost fitness tracker is waterproof and slips snugly onto the zip of your hoodie on your morning run. It measures steps as well as calories and syncs easily to your PC or smartphone.

**amazon.cn**  
**RMB 498**

**LUMO LIFT**

Remember your mam always telling you to stand up straight and stop slouching? While she's back home, the Lumo Lift has her back, and yours. This little blighter improves your posture by giving you a zap every time you slouch. How many gold medals did the Hunchback of Notre Dame win? That's right, none.

**taobao.com**  
**RMB 699**

**JAWBONE UP**

The latest incarnation of the best selling body monitor is tricked out with the latest features including monitors that track your sleeping routine, workout activity, and even your eating habits. Before long, your wristband will know more about you than you do.

**dangdang.com**  
**RMB 1,198**



# PAUL FRENCH'S STATE OF PARANOIA, AND BETRAYAL IN PARIS

by Steven Schwankert



How do you follow up a Beijing-based, *New York Times* bestselling true crime book? A sequel? Another mystery? If you're Paul French, neither. Instead, you crank out two books, one about North Korea and the other about China's role in World War I.

For his next full-length work he chose not to return to those streets around Beijing's Dongbianmen and Chongwenmen, but instead revisited North Korea, on which French is an expert and about which he had previously written *North Korea: The Paranoid Peninsula, A Modern History*. His new book on the subject is *North Korea: State of Paranoia*.

"The day starts early in Pyongyang, the city described by the government as the 'Capital of Revolution.' North Koreans emerge from bed at around 6am, dress and head off to work, where many arrive by 7:30. Most Pyongyang residents (the city's name means 'level ground') live in high-rise buildings, hastily erected over the 60 years since the end of the Korean War. The blocks are lined up along the city's wide boulevards and house most of Pyongyang's 2.5 million-plus population," writes French at the beginning of this series of snapshots of life in North Korea, with a particular focus on the post-Kim Jong-Il era. It is a telescope for anyone interested in peering farther into the so-called "Hermit Kingdom."

On DPRK, French says: "It's an ever-fascinating subject – the end must come for the DPRK and the Kim clan at some point and I suppose I'll just go on revising and updating until I can return to Pyongyang and sit by the Taedong [River] in a Starbucks and watch people go to the first Carrefour supermarket!"

Since writing another book about North Korea wasn't enough to keep French busy as he waits for *Midnight in*

*Peking* to become a television mini-series, he also cranked out *Betrayal in Paris: How the Treaty of Versailles Led to China's Long Revolution*. A Penguin Specials title and part of its six-book series on China's role in World War I, *Betrayal* looks at China's hopes that territorial disputes with both Japan and Western nations would be settled thanks to its support for the Allies during the war, and how those hopes were dashed.

"Though not involved in the actual fighting, around 100,000 Chinese men had traveled to Europe, Mesopotamia and German East Africa as part of the non-combatant Chinese Labor Corps, and many of

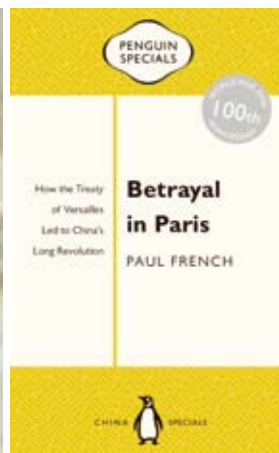
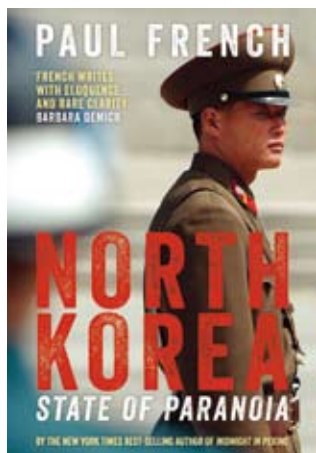
them had died in torpedo attacks on their ships as well as from disease, shellfire, and accidents. That Peking, China's capital, should erupt in celebration at the end of the slaughter in Europe was nonetheless more to do with its collective hopes for the future than with its sons' return home," he writes.

French says of the Versailles Treaty: "[It] was supposed to right all the wrongs – at least China believed it might. They

had a clear case I believe, but were ignored, as expected, by the great European Great Powers and tragically let down by Wilson and the Americans who had promised Peking much."

*Betrayal* is a fascinating look at a little-known aspect of World War I history that had a significant impact on Chinese political developments in the twentieth century. It's a brisk 81-page read, but in both books, French's love of history and depth of knowledge permeate each page, leaving the reader better informed and entertained.

*North Korea: State of Paranoia* and *Betrayal in Paris: How the Treaty of Versailles Led to China's Long Revolution* are both available at *The Bookworm* and online retailers.

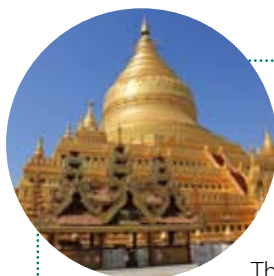




# THE LAST-MINUTE GUIDE TO OCTOBER HOLIDAY TRAVEL

by Steven Schwankert

China's biggest non-cultural holiday, October 1, is now less than a month away. By now, flights and hotels for the most popular destinations are filling up or full, and travelers who still think they can book their vacation just before they plan to head off are going to be disappointed. But fear not: here are four destinations with tickets still available and worthwhile, two that require a border crossing and two that are little more than a flight away.



## MYANMAR

A hot travel spot in Asia right now, it's been called "Thailand 30 years ago," with all the implied road-less-traveled experiences.

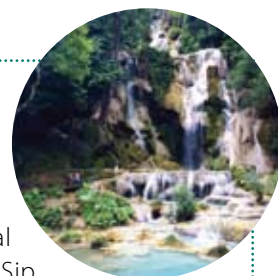
The capital Yangon's Buddhist sites are integral to the country's history, including the city's centerpiece, the Shwedagon Pagoda. The visa process takes time, so be sure to apply early. Read anything George Orwell wrote about his time there as a bit of scholarly travel literature.

*Air China flies to Yangon from Beijing Sundays and Wednesdays, or connect via Bangkok on Thai Airways or Hong Kong on Cathay Pacific.*

## LAOS

Southeast Asia's only landlocked nation offers all the Buddhist charm of Myanmar, and amazing archaeological sites like the Valley of Jars. Sip strong Lao coffee and watch boats chug by on the Mekong River. It's an active destination, with outdoor pursuits like kayaking on the Mekong River, rock climbing, and boat trips through the caves. For spectacular natural beauty, the Kuang Si Falls near Luang Prabang provide refreshment, with shallower pools open to swimmers.

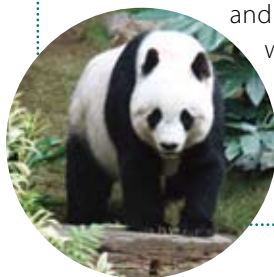
*Fly to Vientiane via Kunming on China Eastern Airlines.*



## CHENGDU

The Sichuan provincial capital seems never to fade as a popular destination. Authentic Sichuan cuisine, pandas, and the convenience of a big city that isn't quite as big as Beijing are doubtless reasons why. Chengdu is designed using Beijing's square grid pattern making the city easy to navigate for seasoned Beijingers. The Bookworm has an active outlet there, and the Grandma's Kitchen chain was started in Chengdu. Sample one of the many tea houses for which Chengdu is famous.

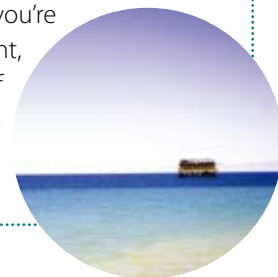
*China's major airlines all fly from Beijing to Chengdu.*



## XINING

No travel permit is required for Qinghai province and there is as much Buddhist culture (and Muslim culture) as you care to explore, though the altitude will still slow you down the first few days. China's largest lake is about a two-hour, yak-filled drive away. The peak summer season will be past, and Qinghai Lake's deep blue waters and snow-capped scenery are far better with fewer people. If you're looking for someplace different, Qinghai is the place none of your friends are going to.

*There are eight flights per day from Beijing to Xining.*



*There's a final option that might require a tad more money but not much planning: Pack a bag and head to the airport or train station. Ask what's available, buy a ticket, and go. It'll be one of the best trips of your life.*

A full-page photograph of Emma Sun, a young woman with long dark hair, smiling and sitting on a bright red, tufted leather sofa. She is wearing a black sleeveless dress with a large white graphic on the front that says 'ATM' inside a shield-like shape with horizontal stripes. She is also wearing black boots and a necklace. The background is dark with a large, abstract, golden-yellow circular shape.

GET THE LOOK

# STAND OUT

by Jessica Rapp

Fitting in is not a number one priority for two hip stylites in Beijing's club scene.

## EMMA SUN

**Marketing Manager,  
Dada**

**Her style:** "This is one of my favorite shirts. It sums up my sexuality. I bought it before I graduated from college, but I only started wearing it after graduation because it was a bit much to wear on campus."

**Favorite place to shop:**

Taobao. When Sun spent a year in Rome for a Beijing Language and Culture University exchange program, the clothes there were too expensive, so she made sure to hit Taobao as soon as she was back in Beijing so that she could bring back her wares ... and sell them. "A broke girl's gotta do what a broke girl's gotta do."

**Favorite designer:**

She likes Guangdong designer, Vock, but she has many more shop secrets. "I have been Taobao-ing since I was 12. I know how it works. I even used to organize a Taobao shopping lesson in college."

**What she's wearing:**

Shirt dress by Gia Wang, Italian boots, Marc by Marc Jacobs necklace and earrings





**LUCIFER (LI YAN)**  
**Manager of Hot Cat**  
**Club and Lead Singer of**  
**Rustic**

**His style:** "I always want to dress up to satisfy myself. I want people to see my spirit and my attitude. Some people dress for comfort, but if I compromise my style to do that, I'll feel uncomfortable because I don't feel like it's me. I always want to wear something new and break the rules."

**Favorite place to shop:** "There aren't many unique clothes in Beijing right now. Whenever I go shopping, I always pick up very few things because most of the clothes look normal and people wouldn't notice them. Most of the time, I like to get clothes made with material I find."

**Favorite color pairing:** Red and green

**What he's wearing:** Leather jacket from Camden Market in London, Lee jeans, leather shoes bought on Sixth Street in Austin, Texas, socks and hat from Zara.





# ARRESTING INDIA

by Hong Mei. Photos by Tom Carter

Author Hong Mei and photographer Tom Carter spent a year travelling across India. Their journey turned into the adventure of a lifetime and led Hong to write a book charting the experience. The following extract is translated from her new book *The Farther I Walk, The Closer I Get To Me*, and describes a particularly perilous episode when the two had a run-in with the local police.

Like a caravan of camels, the motorcade of police cars and wagons snakes slowly through the meandering alleys of Dharavi, the world's largest slum. Tom and I are in the back of one of the wagons, staring forlornly out of the barred window. Locals peer in at us to catch a glimpse of the captives. We are on our way to Indian jail.

Days earlier we arrive in Mumbai in good spirits. We come up by train from the white-hot beaches of neighboring Goa along the coast of West India. From the palace-like Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus we hop a bus to Colaba district.

We check in to the Salvation Army, the cheapest accommodation in Mumbai (600 rupees per night). There are other guest houses, but they are terribly small and filthy. The only other options are expensive five-star hotels.



We spend our days wandering Mumbai, taking photos. At dusk we sit on the front steps of the Salvation Army, sipping ice cold Slice and reading *White Tiger*. Touts approach us. "Hey man," a cool Indian guy in reflective glasses says. "You want to be in a Bollywood movie?" He has our attention, but knowing touts we proceed cautiously.

The next morning at the meeting spot there are fifty other foreigners also waiting to be Bollywood stars. Turns out we are all just extras. They bus us out to DY Patil Stadium. We expected singing and dancing and glamour,

PHOTOS: TOM CARTER





car. I'm right in front of him! My heart thumps. I steal a snapshot and the director yells at me. When we see the commercial online later, there's Tom but only the top of my head; I'm too short.

With the 500-rupee payment from our Bollywood debut we book a "reality" tour in Dharavi slum, where *Slumdog Millionaire* was filmed. No photos are allowed. But now that we know how to get here by train, we go back to the slum the next day, unescorted. Tom insists on photographing the patchwork of corrugated metal rooftops from a high vantage point. We walk into the grounds of the highest nearby apartment complex. I wait in the stairwell while Tom walks up to the top.

A man approaches and then interrogates me. "What are you doing here?" he shouts. "Who are you with?" "Where is Tom?" I wonder increasingly distressed. Tom finally comes back downstairs. A group of men lock the gates of the front door and won't let us leave the building. They accuse us of trespassing. They are all shouting at us. "Pay us or we will call the police," they say. We won't pay.

The police come. Not one, but an entire convoy of cars and wagons. Sirens and lights fill the slums of Dharavi. Is this real? Are we in a Bollywood movie again? We don't know if the police are arresting us or saving us! "I'm so sorry," Tom says. "This is my fault." They bring us to the police station and request our passports, then start filing out paperwork. I'm Chinese. For the first time in India this concerns me. I could be deported ...

*Hong Mei and Tom Carter will discuss their experiences in India when they host a book launch at Capital M called India Through Chinese Eyes on Sep 6. Contact 6702 2727 to reserve a place.*

but it's a movie about cricket, India's favorite sport.

Nine blonde backpacker boys from our hostel are chosen as cricket players. Tom is not blonde and actually passes for Indian because of his Goa tan. But he is the tallest and is selected as the tenth player and given a cricket uniform. Me and the remaining extras are sent high up into the empty stadium seats. In post-production they will digitally multiply us into 60,000 spectators.

Beneath the scalding sun we watch from the distance as the "team" films and re-films a single scene of the fake cricket game. The film's star, Shahid Kapur, dives to catch a ball and wins the game. Tom and the other extras run to embrace their hero. The vainglorious Mr. Kapur stops the shooting to fix his hair. He does this every five minutes. This is not an exaggeration. Months later, in Delhi, we watch *Dil Bole Hadippa!*. Tom's appearance is mere fractions of a second. Shahid Kapur's hair looks fabulous.

The next day the touts find us again. We fall for it and meet at the Gate of India for our next Bollywood acting gig. It's for a Samsung cell phone commercial. No dancing. The star is Aamir Khan, we've seen him on posters all across India for *Ghajini* and, later, *3 Idiots*. Tom and I are relegated to playing tourists in the background. In the afternoon we are sent to a studio. The extras are directed to stand around Mr. Khan in a prop subway

Introducing the people who matter

# MEET

"PARTYING, REGRET, LOSSES AND GAINS" SEE P61

"GENRES ARE FOR RECORD STORES AND CRITICS" SEE P62

"ALL ALONG I WAS LYING THROUGH MY TEETH AND LOVING IT" SEE P63

"LIFE DOESN'T GIVE YOU WHAT YOU WANT, BUT WHAT YOU NEED" SEE P64

JONATHAN HEETER // THE YOURS // BOB BLUNT // JIM KROFT



***His angelic vocals made legions of teenage girls swoon. Now, former Westlife front man Shane Filan is back with a new solo album ready to conquer hearts at the Workers' Gymnasium again on Sep 23.***

PHOTO: BASILDON.GOV.UK



# JONATHAN HEETER

FENDER MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS CHINA

## What song has the most plays on your iTunes?

"Play, Pause & Stop" by the Benevento Russo Duo. That song has everything: a killer melody, a massive groove and it's happily sad. It's the best 6am song ever written.

## Can you play any instruments? If so, what?

I'm a bassist but the real answer is I play music, not an instrument. An instrument is just a way to communicate the music inside you. If you focus on the instrument, it's easy to get trapped.

## Who do you wish you can sing like?

Tom Waits, when he's in the shower.

## What was the first record you downloaded?

E2 E4 by Manuel Gottsching. I wanted to buy a physical copy but I could never find it. I liked having the real artifact but I've given up. Soon we'll be streaming everything and having files will seem dumb. But, I'm a hoarder. I have 250-plus gigabytes of music.

## Name a song or record for your time in Beijing.

"All My Friends" by LCD Soundsystem. Partying, regret, losses and gains. I'll cheat and say "Hotel California" too. You can check out any time you want but you can never leave.

## What do you think is the song you've listened to most in your life?

By choice, probably "Box of Rain" by the Grateful Dead. By compulsion, definitely a tie between "Laoshu Ai Dami" and



"Take Me to Your Heart." I lived in Harbin in 2004, which explains a lot.

## What do you think is the saddest song, and why?

All of *Blood on the Tracks* by Bob Dylan, but if forced to pick I'd go with "If You See Her Say Hello." Why? Listen to it!

## Who is the best songwriter in your opinion?

Three-way tie: Bob Dylan, Johann Sebastian Bach, and Robert Johnson. That's the foundation for modern music. All the secrets are in there.

*Catch Jonathan playing bass in the Liu Yusi Band.*

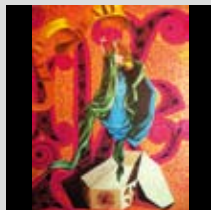
## JONATHAN'S FIVE-SONG PLAYLIST



**"Play, Pause & Stop"** by Benevento Russo Duo



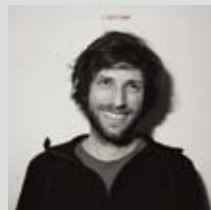
**"E2 E4"** by Manuel Gottsching



**"Dark Star"** by The Grateful Dead



**"All My Friends"** by LCD Soundsystem



**"Wherever You Go I Go Too"** by Lindstrom



## TEEN WAVE

THE YOURS, CHAOS IN A CUTE PACKAGE

by Kipp Whittaker

**T**hese Hong Kong natives just signed to Beijing-based label Maybe Mars and are gearing up for an extensive tour of the rest of China. We had a little chat about recording their new album, *Teengarten*, with Yang Haisong, and the upcoming tour.

**How was it recording the new album, *Teengarten*, with Yang Haisong? Did he have any Phil Spector moments?**

It was a rock 'n' roll experience. Guitars straight into amplifiers, instruments were all recorded live, not much overdubbing or special effects involved. We all loved Yang Haisong's approach and that's exactly what we wanted. Making a heavily processed album on which every beat is perfect is not a very perfect thing to us.

**You guys have a secret song at the end of "Pink Snoopy". Can you tell us a little about this track?**

The hidden track's got a name. It's called "We Will All Be Dinosaurs Tomorrow". We came up with this song right before the recording and thought it'd be nice to have a quiet, subtle song as a contrast to the album. It's weird to put it anywhere else so the most ideal option was to make it a hidden track.

**What are some Hong Kong bands, old or new, that more people should know about?**

We'd say Alok, who's the producer of our debut album

and EP. We've known him for years. He is a sound artist and DJ, and back in the '90s he was in a shoegaze band called Hezi, which we thought was pretty great.

**There are so many genre names for music nowadays that just seem to be made up. If you had to invent a name for your genre what would it be and why?**

We've been very much about youth culture since the very beginning. So if you ask what kind of music we play, no, we don't play post punk or shoegaze. To us, genres are for record stores and critics. They are terms that describe a particular scene during a certain period. If we have to come up with one, we'd say we play teenage music, simple as that. Our music is for teenagers and people who wanna be teenagers.

**What are some things you are looking forward to on your upcoming tour?**

We've done shows in China before, but nothing like this. This is gonna be our very first legit tour, a real deal, there's nothing more exciting than that! And we're very excited and honored about joining Maybe Mars. We know that the audience in China may not know very much about bands from Hong Kong, so there's a lot of expectations. We have a lot of expectations ourselves as well, so no doubt we're gonna turn it up a notch or two!

Check out *The Yours* at XP on Sep 19.



# BOB BLUNT

NOVELIST

**The book that has most sentimental value to me** is *A Little Book of Language* by David Crystal. It was a great gift sent here from my old man. After years of receiving socks and underwear, he finally nailed it. Expect intricate and quirky tales in what is an insightful and often witty read.

**I'd most like to sneak a peek** at Zhang Lijia's bookshelf. Anyone who can write a coming of age book, like *Socialism is Great* in troubled times, in such a readable and determined fashion does it for me. I can only wonder what kind of tomes I would find on her bookshelves.

**If you only ever read one book about China,** make it *River Town* by Peter Hessler. It was the first book I read when I arrived in Beijing in early 2008. Sure, I may not have arrived at a rural backwater on the Yangtze River, but I could empathize with some of the familiar conundrums and revelations a newbie can experience.

**A book I pretend to have read, but haven't** is *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoyevsky. This big mother of a book was excessively hip in the '80s with inner Sydney hipsters, but because of its size I knew I'd never read it. I pretended I had at dinner parties, launches, and art

exhibitions, yet all along I was lying through my teeth and loving it.

**A book I'm saving for old age** is *War and Peace*, because I should have an abundance of time, plus Tolstoy is an absolute god in Russia, I hear, and I want to go there again.

**A character in a book that I'd really like to meet** is the anti-hero Henry Chinaski in *Post Office* by Charles Bukowski. A guy who works a shitty, thankless job, brilliantly depicting the sad environment for what it is, menial and unforgiving. Not sure if I could keep up with his hedonism though.

**The best beginning to a book I ever read** was in *Neuromancer* by William Gibson. For a self-confessed slow reader this hauled me off my ass and before I knew it I was on a Red Bull book high. I was hooked by the first line "The sky above the port was the color of television, turned to a dead channel."

*Bob Blunt's new book, The Year My Hair Fell Out, is available at The Bookworm.*



PHOTO: KEN

# RESIDENT UPHEAVAL

JIM KROFT'S EXTENDED STAY AT JIANGHU

by Kyle Mullin



England. Germany. China. The stamps on Jim Kroft's passport keep accumulating, but the singer-songwriter has covered far more emotional ground. Kroft tells us about that journey, ahead of the start of his September residency at Gulou's Jianghu Bar.

## How do you keep things fresh night after night during a residency?

I did it in Berlin, and I'm looking forward to doing it again. I have a bunch of unreleased songs that I'll perform. And I'll write and play new songs in Beijing. Touring is incredible, but you're often just passing through. With a residency, you get to know a city.

## Tell us more about your stint in Berlin

We arrived in 2007 without organizing anything, squatting in a venue called Arts House Tacheles. They were incredibly supportive, putting my band up onstage night after night. It became an intermittent, two-year residency.

Before that I was in London, gigging very regularly with my old band. We recorded in a studio next door to the Black Eyed Peas, and The Libertines were down the hall. But it was so saturated there. Our rehearsal room cost 600 Euros a month. In Berlin, it was free. If you play a headline show in London, the bookers stipulate that you can't play

for several weeks beforehand, to whet people's appetites. Berlin was more *laissez-faire*.

## Then you had a mainstream breakthrough

I got a solo deal at EMI last year. It was like a dream, to be on this huge label. But almost a week after my record came out, Universal took over. The first thing they did was kick off all the newcomers.

New things have opened up since then. Major label albums, with huge budgets, have so many sound engineers. My drummer had to be in perfect synch with the synthesizers. It was a huge ordeal.

Now I'm going to release a series of EP's called *Journeys*. I hope to do some writing and recording in Beijing for the next installment, and take it to my next residency in Zanzibar, Tanzania. I hope to do more residencies into 2015.

## Being dropped from a label can't be easy

Yeah, especially at first. But even if I was EMI's biggest artist, I'd never be able to do a residency in Beijing. I'd be doing a festival, then leaving. I've learned time and again that life doesn't give you what you want, but what you need.

*Catch Jim nightly during his residency at Jianghu Bar from Sep 1-12.*

PHOTOS: JIM KROFT



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.



## MOONFACE

**SEP 17** – Join Spencer Krug as he lures Beijing into a rare serenity with his inspired instrumentals and deep experimentation, which expand on ideas developed collaboratively with his previous projects Wolf Parade and Sunset Rubdown. RMB 80, RMB 60 (advance). 8pm. Yugong Yishan (8408 4637)



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### 1. BLUE HAWAII

**SEP 5** – This up-and-coming Montreal-based duo plays live trip-hop. Check out their recent *Boiler Room* set to get a better idea of what this dynamic electronic act is all about. RMB 50. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

### 2. BRAWL ON THE WALL

**SEP 5** – Beijing's original white collar boxing event returns, featuring some of Beijing's bravest and brightest unleashing their rage on each other in charitable combat. RMB 8,000-14,000 (per table of ten). 7.30pm. The Park Hyatt (134 8885 3779)

### 3. CARNIVORES CLUB DINNER WITH GUEST CHEF ANDREW AHN

**SEP 5** – Feast's Chef Rob Cunningham is teaming up with Chef Andrew from Ssam to bring Beijing another edition of the Carnivores Club, this time featuring beef with a Korean twist. For one night only, Feast will be serving up a one-of-a-kind four-course menu created with carnivores in mind. RMB 198. 5.30pm. Feast (8414 9820)

### 4. OPENING REN BO SOLO EXHIBITION

**SEP 6** – Video artist Ren Bo rearranges bits and pixels, iron and steel, cardboard and plexiglass in a way that escapes both scripted mathematic and cybernetic codes to present a body of work that exists beyond aesthetics, invoking a new vernacular of digital ideas for an analog world. Free. 5pm. Jiali Gallery (8402 5613)

### 5. SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE TOURNAMENT

**SEP 6-8** – 8-Bit will be hosting their first Super Smash Bros. melee tournament on the game cube console. There will be liquid prizes for second and third place and something very special for first place. Sign up before 10pm. RMB 15. 8-Bit (134 8878 3848)



## DON'T MISS

### BEIJING SONIC ELECTRONIC MUSIC & ART FESTIVAL

#### WE LOVE BASS NIGHT

**SEP 5** – A long list of talent will provide and shake the foundation of this two-week long festival celebrating the mystery and magic of electronic music. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 9pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### THE VOGUE & WAACK BALL WORKSHOP

**SEP 6** – Learn about voguing culture from this very talented group from the Parisian underground. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### WAREIKA

**SEP 6** – Join Wareika for an evening of deep improvised techno from these contemporary German masters. They will be supported by the electronic shredding skills of Nik Patrick and Ben Huang. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### STREET ART WORKSHOP: PARIS VS BEIJING

**SEP 7** – Experience an afternoon of this side by side exhibition of contemporary street art from two of the most vibrant communities on the planet. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 3pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### THIS IS MONA: THE VOGUE & WAACK BALL

**SEP 7** – Put those voguing skills to use with this full-on soirée of body moving decadence. Tunes will be provided by local disco freak DJ Boflex, French house legend Nick V, and Beijing stalwart ZhiQi. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 9pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### WORKSHOP: VINYL STORY

**SEP 11** – Check out this roundtable discussion about the history and future of those black shiny discs from which the phenomena of mixing music all began. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 3pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### WE LOVE BASS NIGHT #2

**SEP 12** – Celebrate the low end of the spectrum with this spectacular group of local and international purveyors of stomach vibrating frequencies. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 9pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### WORKSHOP: CDR X ABLETON SOUND CREATION

**SEP 13** – Tony of CDR and Jesse Abayomi from Ableton take you on an informative journey of the contemporary processes of DJing. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 3pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### CDR SOUND CREATION PARTY

**SEP 13** – Tony of CDR and Jessie Abayomi will put their different skill sets to the test with a live showdown on their various mix-making tools. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 9pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)

#### WRECKA SPINNAZZ CLUB

**SEP 13** – If you want the funk, these guys will bring it in its most extreme and evolved incantation. Considered the heart of the French techno scene, this group is making waves with their unique genre blending style. They will be supported by the likes of Prosumer and Yangbing. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance). 9pm. Post Mountain (8400 4774)



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## EVENTS



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### 1. YOGA IN THE PARK

**SEP 7** – Moka Bro's has teamed up with Yoga Yard for late-summer outdoors yoga in the park with a playful and challenging two-hour sequence, followed by a discounted Sunday brunch at Moka Bro's in Solana. Free. 9.30am. Chaoyang Park North Gate (152 0169 3836)

### 3. NOVA HEART & THE CAIROS

**SEP 7** – For the 6th Electric City, Beijing's own Nova Heart and Australia's The Cairos embark on a journey of cinematic electronica, with a live performance that seems like a collection of disjointed pop memories of the past, mixed into the visual language of a David Lynch character. RMB 100, RMB 70 (advance) 9pm. Yugong Yishan (8408 4637)

### 2. SUBS 1+1+10+11

**SEP 7** – SUBS give a special performance to officially release their new album and a new compilation of European bands covering SUBS songs to commemorate ten summers, and to look forward to a US tour in the winter. RMB 0-100 (sliding scale). 9pm. Yugong Yishan (8408 4637)

### 4. TRADITIONAL OKTOBERFEST

**SEP 10-16** – The city's sizable German contingent won't be the only ones celebrating the return of the beer-drinking festival with the misleading misnomer. Christmas comes early for booze hounds with a penchant for bratwurst and pork knuckle. RMB 398 (plus 15 percent). 6-11pm. Crowne Plaza Beijing Sun Palace (6429 8888)



## EVENTS

### 1. WE ARE WOLVES + THEESATISFACTION

**SEP 16** – Split Works presents a double-bill as Seattle alt hip-hop duo THEESatisfaction share the stage with Montreal dance punks We Are Wolves at the city's newest live music spot, DDC. RMB 80. 9pm. DDC (Dusk Dawn Club) (186 1173 0692)

### 2. DINING CITY RESTAURANT WEEK

**SEP 4-14** – Restaurant Week is back again for an extended run of 11 days. The event offers hard-up diners a chance to dine at some of Beijing's finest restaurants at bargain prices. Returning favorites such as Mosto and The Cut are joined by new blood including Morton's of Chicago and Matta. Visit [restaurantweek.cn](http://restaurantweek.cn) for more information and booking.



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### 1. BEIJING TINGDONG MUSIC FESTIVAL

**SEP 13** – Dirty South, Denizkoyu, Jason Taylor and Kryoman (pictured) are among the foreign names spinning at this year's TingDong Festival. The electronic dance event was a hit last year and returns to provide a further boost to the city's burgeoning EDM scene. RMB 480, RMB 280 (advanced). Noon. Workers' Stadium (400 610 3721)

### 3. LUSH RUSH FALL 2014

**SEP 15-21** – Let the hazing begin at Wudaokou's most infamous dance floor. You can expect plenty of drink specials and all of the public humiliation and fraternal team building you can handle during this six-day event. RMB 50. 10pm. Lush (8286 3566)

### 2. GRAHAM ELWOOD

**SEP 4** – Comedy Club China brings US comedian Graham Elwood to the hutongs for a night of laughs at 4corners. He's more used to entertaining US military troops in Afghanistan, so it will be a change of pace for the funny man as he makes his Beijing debut. RMB 100. 8pm. 4corners (6401 7797)

### 4. BAPTISTE TROTIGNON

**SEP 17-18** – The world renowned jazz pianist will be gracing the capital stage for two exclusive shows in Yue Fu. It's not very often that we have the opportunity to welcome a jazz musician of this caliber to our city so make sure to check out his amazing ivory tickling skills. RMB 150, RMB 100 (advance, student). 8pm. Yue Fu (131 4145 8793)



### 1. PAUL CREASY

**SEP 13** – Comedy Club China presents headliner Paul Creasy to provide chuckle junkies with a full-on assault of linguistically suave comedy. Also featuring Nigel Tu, Colin Hanna, Byron Murphy, and host Riley Hageman. RMB 50. 8pm. Cheers Gulou. (400 005 5500)

### 2. THE BIBLIORIUM

**SEP 26-OCT 3** – Embracing the origins of book production, collection, retail, and display, The Bibliorium will engage local audiences with one week of programming, including a three-day symposium, curated library, magazine archive, site-

inspired bookshelf, reading room, and café. Free. 10am-6pm. Cha'er Hutong #3 (138 7717 9331)

### 3. A TALK WITH TIGER & WOODS, BRUNA AND TELENOIKA

**SEP 28** – Migas & M.A.D. present this group of creatives as they present their particular approach to their multi-disciplinary skill sets. Developed in cooperation with the Red Bull Academy and Beijing Design week, this informative consortium will illuminate some of challenges of being an artist in the digital age. Free. 4pm. The Bar at Migas (1108 0818)



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# MEAT ME HALFWAY



HOW GEORGE LEARNED TO LIKE VEGETABLES

by George Ding

I was born a carnivore. Not an omnivore, mind you – a carnivore. Growing up, I'd go out of my way to avoid vegetables, picking them out of dishes or picking around them to get at the good stuff.

I wondered why anyone would eat vegetables when there existed a better, meatier form of food. Like, why drink Diet Coke when there's regular Coke? To me, vegetables were a last resort, to be consumed only if meat were somehow unavailable. The very existence of salad puzzled me.

My first year in China did nothing to change my way of thinking. Instead, my relatives – enablers that they are – pushed me to eat meat.

"You're too skinny, eat more."

"Don't fill up on rice, eat meat."

And, if I reached for a vegetable out of curiosity: "Eat fewer vegetables; eat more meat!"

You could call that Phase 1 of my Chinese culinary experience: eating as much meat as possible.

I became infatuated with *kungpao* chicken (宫保鸡丁), even though I'd never liked it in the States. I ate it morning, noon and night.

This gave way to an unbalanced diet of *yuxiang* pork strips (鱼香肉丝), three meals a day of twice-cooked pork (回锅肉), followed by an obsession with meat pancakes (肉饼) and subsequently pork and scallion *jiaozi* (猪肉大葱饺子).

In Phase 1, eating with strict vegetarians was worse than eating alone. Watching dishes get decarnified, leeched of all their fat and flavor – "Can you make *mapo doufu* (麻婆豆腐) without the meat?" – was like watching a hate crime. Don't even get me started on vegans.

But eventually my meat purist attitude began to change. Maybe eating red-cooked pork (红烧肉) every

night got old, or maybe I feared I was one diced chicken with chilli (辣子鸡丁) away from a coronary. Either way, Chinese cuisine had so much more to offer.

In Phase 2, I allowed myself certain vegetables, like potatoes and bamboo shoots, but only if they were mixed with meat, as in braised beef with potatoes (土豆烧牛肉) and dry pot potatoes (干锅土豆片). Like mashing medicine into apple sauce, the meat helped the vegetables go down.

Some people don't consider potatoes a vegetable because they "aren't green" – which is racist – but Phase 2 also saw the introduction of green beans and mushrooms, which are undeniably vegetable-esque.

For a long time, vegetable to me just meant "non-meat." I considered stir-fried tomato and eggs (西红柿炒鸡蛋) a vegetarian dish because it contained no recognizable form of meat.

Eventually these gateway vegetables led to a full-blown acceptance of this strangely endearing food group. I had entered Phase 3.

Today, I'm happy with a meal of smashed cucumbers with garlic (拍黄瓜), stir-fried broccoli with garlic (蒜蓉西兰花) and dry-fried green beans (干煸四季豆). I'll break bread with vegetarians. I'll let them be picky. I've even survived an excursion to a vegan restaurant.

Not to put too fine a point on it, but for me to accept eating a meal consisting of only vegetables is like Jesus becoming an atheist.

But I wonder if this conversion would have happened without the variety of Chinese cuisine and sweet, sweet MSG. I don't know if all the Façon, kale and avocado in Western cooking could have gotten me to where I am today – a place where I'm open to all kinds of vegetables.

Except eggplant. Eggplant is f\*cking disgusting.

**SOME PEOPLE DON'T  
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VEGETABLE BECAUSE  
THEY "AREN'T GREEN"  
– WHICH IS RACIST**



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