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2015/04

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Stat: Beijing plans to limit population growth to 23 million
@Chinabuzz: The best WeChat stickers and their appropriate uses
Best of the Blog: The most popular stories from *theBeijinger.com*
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COVER FEATURE

For this month's cover feature we gathered Beijing's most prolific and knowledgeable diners and asked them to recommend their favorite off-the-radar dining spots; we also spoke to expats from Peru to Singapore about where they go when they are hankering for a taste of home. And our full Reader Restaurant Awards results.

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APRIL 13

Cover concept and
design by Susu Luo.



The most important dates this month

WHAT'S HAPPENING



APR 3

Paddy O'Ladies

The first Friday of every month Paddy O'Shea's celebrates ladies between 8pm and midnight with RMB 100 open bar on beers, cocktails, wine, sparkling drinks, ciders, and mixed drinks. Live music and a special playlist all night long.

APR 5

Easter Sunday Brunch

Zarah is organizing a relatively affordable Easter brunch buffet downstairs with a prosecco and wine option, and children's activities upstairs for a relaxing Easter Sunday.



APR 17

TZUSING

Shanghai-based DJ and producer TZUSING will wow Beijing with his second 12-inch for underground-heavy Brooklyn label L.I.E.S. with his dark, abrasive, metallic techno tracks.

APR 30

FakeLoveMusic Showcase @ SOTX

Yugong Yishan hosts the Sounds of the Xity FakeLoveMusic Showcase with Nova Heart's first Beijing show of the year, Chinese heavyweights WHAI, Juveniles, Clarens, and Farewell Dear Ghost. What better way to round off April?



Visit thebeijinger.com for even more events and details.

For more events, see p64.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It's trophy time again. You, our readers, have once again cast your ballots in favor of your favorite restaurants in Beijing, and now we are most pleased to bring you the results and more.

Some of the most decorated venues of years past raked in even more accolades in 2015, with TRB, Annie's, Element Fresh, and Home Plate Bar-B-Que all ringing up multiple awards on the foreign cuisine side. On the Chinese side, favorites Haidilao, Da Dong Roast Duck, Din Tai Fung, and Dali Courtyard all once again netted multiple wins.

But it has been a great year for newcomers, as well as some changes at the top of key categories. Making the biggest splash of the rookie class was Tribe, which netted five awards, including Best Vegetarian and Best "Green" Restaurant, as well as Outstanding nods in the Best New Restaurant, Best Salads, and Best Sandwiches categories.

The Taco Bar in its rookie year topped the Best Mexican and the Best New Restaurant polls, while the Rosewood Hotel's Bistrot B snagged awards for Best New Hotel Restaurant as well as Outstanding French (Casual Dining). Meanwhile, Sanlitun newcomer Jing-A Taproom was recognized by readers as one of the Outstanding venues in the Best Place for a Celebration (Casual Dining) and the Best New Restaurant categories. Korean/Mexican fusion master Palms L.A. Kitchen was also among the rookie class that netted multiple awards, one for Outstanding Korean and another for Outstanding New Restaurant.

There's a whole new crop of restaurants to try in three massive Best New Restaurant categories. Other new ones our readers loved this year include Taste of Da Dong, Soup Kitchen, Spirited Away, and Dalong Jiuge Chongqing Hot Pot in the Chinese categories.


Our food obsession continues with our panel of experts, local food entrepreneurs, bloggers, and columnists who mention a whole lot of restaurants this editor has never heard of – which just goes to show how much there is to try in Beijing. We also look at where expatriates from less-represented countries go for a taste of home.

Elsewhere in the issue, we talk to Nevin Domer, proprietor of Genjing Records, Beijing's vinyl-only record label. There's also our new art column because, arty.

We hope you enjoy the April issue of the Beijinger. Congratulations to all of our 2015 Reader Restaurant Awards winners!

Schwankert
Steven Schwankert
Executive Editor

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CITY SCENE

STAT // CHINABUZZ // BEST OF THE BLOG // SCENE & HEARD



23 MILLION

In 2014, Beijing's population grew by only a few hundred thousand. If the municipal government has its way, it will hold that growth rate for the next five years.

Beijing has the stated goal of limiting population growth to 23 million, from a current 21.5 million, by 2020, with the city still struggling to address pollution and traffic issues, along with "a severe water shortage," Reuters reported.

Although Beijing began receiving water via the South-North Water Diversion Project in late 2014, that will only help offset one-third of the city's 1.5 billion cubic meter shortfall, Vice Mayor Li Shixiang said.

However, the goal of 23 million is a revised one – in 2005, Beijing set a goal of a total population of 18 million

for 2020.

"Li said the city would work harder to relocate industry to areas outside the capital and also build new schools and hospitals to reduce the flow of some 700,000 non-Beijing residents seeking medical treatment in the capital every day," Reuters reported. That many people seek medical treatment in Beijing every day?

As we noted previously, Beijing's plan to limit growth appears muddled. One of the main tenets of that plan is moving wholesale markets outside of the city, where they will fail to function as markets for anyone who wants their goods; we're still a bit mystified about how this will reduce Beijing's population.

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA

THE BEST WECHAT STICKERS AND THEIR USES

Although many WeChat stickers generate a laugh, they never get used again. And a lot of the time stickers get used in the wrong context. However, with this handy guide these might! Check out our top 10 stickers and their most appropriate for these situations (PC-ish situations, for non-PC situations you'll have to figure it out yourselves).

1. 'Que?' cat

Occasion: When you are confused, when someone has typed something in Chinese in an English-only group chat, when you suspect that someone typed their message into the wrong conversation, when someone's drunk so much tequila that they've lost the ability to communicate in any meaningful way.

2. Kim Kardashian getting thrown into a toilet

Occasion: When the other person has said something absolutely ludicrous, such as "I'm not drinking tonight," or "It's just one casual drink, yeah?" Or when someone talks about adding your boss into the group chat.

3. Tiny dancing cat with hat (glow sticks and disco lights optional)

Occasion: When you're happy or something good has happened. For example, when you find a RMB 100+ taxi fapiao, when your Chinese class is canceled unexpectedly, or when you discover that your phone still works even though you were convinced that you had no credit.

4. Mind blown

Occasion: Pretty self-explanatory – when you're mind is blown about something that just shouldn't be, like when the taxi driver actually understood your destination, or when the taxi doesn't smell like bum.

5. Butt flip cup twerk

Occasion: When you're feeling bored, so basically this is a generally acceptable sticker to send all of the time. It is best sent when planning house parties though, preferably to a large group so that everyone can see how excited you are about seeing them flipping cups with their butts.

For more on WeChat GIFs, see Margaux Schreurs' original post here: www.thebeijinger.com/blog/2015/03/12/ten-best-wechat-stickers-and-their-most-appropriate-usages.

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Clean Air in Style

Every month we tally the hits from theBeijinger.com and bring you the most viewed blog posts from our website.



1. Where to Watch an English-Subtitled version of Chai Jing's Pollution Documentary *Under the Dome*

Described as China's version of *An Inconvenient Truth*, former China Central Television (CCTV) reporter Chai Jing's documentary went viral on the Internet less than a week later. The one-hour-and-45-minute look at air pollution in China sparked new debate about health and the environment.



2. Beijing to Build the World's Largest Air Passenger Terminal

Being second-biggest and second-busiest just isn't enough for Beijing. ADPI and Zaha Hadid Architects have designed the world's largest passenger terminal for the new Beijing airport that is being built in Daxing. It will handle 45 million passengers per year and look a little bit like a space station.



3. Premier Li Keqiang: We Need More Foreigners

Premier Li Keqiang met with foreign experts recently, not only to wish them a happy new year, but also promise them that it will be made easier for them to work here. Li said that China needs foreigners in order to keep growing, and that they are looking forward to welcoming more foreigners.

4. Vacationing Beijing Drivers Cause Havoc on New Zealand Roads

Vacationing Beijingers are taking their bad driving skills with them to New Zealand. A Beijing family of five had their rental car keys confiscated by a vigilante citizen because they were driving across New Zealand's South Island so erratically.



5. Tumen Tourism Region Gains Russian and North Korean Cooperation

China is planning to create an international visa-free tourism zone along its northeastern border region with Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The zone is dubbed "Tumen River Delta International Tourism Area," and will include shopping facilities as well as other entertainment.

For these stories and more, check out thebeijinger.com/blog



6. Thai Temple to Establish Segregated Toilets Due to Allegedly Unhygienic Chinese Tour Groups

Chinese tourists are getting a bad reputation in Thailand after reports emerged that a temple in northern Thailand would set up separate toilets for Chinese due to the mess left behind by Chinese tour groups.



7. Shanghai Gets Katy Perry and Lenny Kravitz, We Get Pitbull

A fine mix of international acts has once again decided to skip Beijing in their China tour. Katy Perry plays in Shanghai and Guangzhou this April, but skips Beijing. Her Super Bowl companion Lenny Kravitz also took on Shanghai in March, but decided to skip Beijing.



8. Lessons to be Learned from Cautionary Tale of Expat Teen Jailed After Bar Fight

A *Wall Street Journal* article about an expat's month-long jail stay is a reminder to those partying in Beijing bars and clubs: drink in moderation, do not get involved in bar fights, and use caution when checking personal items into cloak rooms.

9. Six Flags to Open in Tianjin by 2018?

There was some confusion over whether or not amusement park builders Six Flags are planning to open an amusement park in Tianjin. A *Los Angeles Times* article indicated that they would open in 2018, but after receiving a brief note from Six Flags it appears that they may in fact not.



SCENE & HEARD



El Asador Saturday brunch launch at Migas, March 14.
Photos by Location Hunter, Laurent Hou



2015.02.14 PENG - PARTY LOVERS@MIGAS
Photo by lao xiang



Hutong Cookie Monster Charity Bake-Off
@The Hutong, March 14
 Photos by Uni

BEYOND THE AWARDS

BEIJING'S DINING EXPERTS REVEAL THEIR FAVORITE LOCAL RESTAURANTS

by Robynne Tindall

Every year *the Beijinger's* Reader Restaurant Awards honor the best Beijing's dining venues. But what about the restaurants that don't make it onto the ballot? We know that there is more to dining in our fair city than the Sanlitun stalwarts, so we gathered a panel of Beijing's most prolific and knowledgeable diners and asked them to reveal the hidden gems and underappreciated stars that keep them going back again and again.



Kristen Lum

Independent PR consultant, event planner, and all-around super girl Kristen has been blogging about all aspects of Beijing food and lifestyle on her blog lumdimsum.com since 2009.



TJ Kim

Blogger, chef and song-writer TJ (musicchef.com) originates from Korea. After growing up in the US, he eventually landed in Beijing and is currently writing a food guide to Seoul for Chinese visitors.



Irwin Wang

Irwin runs Chinese language travel website yougee.cn and the public WeChat account Go Beijing ([gobeijing](http://gobeijing.com)), which recommends the best dining deals and news ... all in his spare time.



Emily Yang

One of Beijing's most knowledgeable diners, Emily started her food career as associate food editor for *the Beijinger*. She is now dining editor for Chinese language website dailyvitamin.cn.



Vincent Tung

Originally hailing from Taiwan, top food blogger Vincent (aka 蛋蛋 IN 北京) has made a thorough exploration of the Beijing dining scene, gaining more than 150,000 followers on Weibo.

PHOTOS: KEN AND COURTESY OF EMILY YANG



TBJ: You've all been dining out in Beijing for many years. What is your take on the food and restaurant market in Beijing right now?

Emily: The biggest thing for me recently has been "downsizing," as a result of the government's anti-graft campaign. So we've seen a lot of high-end restaurant brands come out with cheaper, more accessible sub-brands, for example Da Dong has Taste of Dadong, Xinrongji has Rongxiaoguan, Xiao Nanguo has Nanxiaoguan.

Kristen: Beijing is a city of trends. Something will catch on and then so much will come out from that. I've seen the cupcake trend come and go, and also the health food trend with the opening of MOKA Bros' and Tribe, and right now pizza.

Emily: Recently, the other thing has been the rise of "private kitchens," where you can only book through Weibo or WeChat. A lot of people are doing this in their spare time now.

Kristen: Yes! I went to Stone's Kitchen in Wangjing, they have a sort of organic, farm-to-table concept and the food is great value at RMB 150 a head.

TBJ: Let's get into the real restaurant recommendations. For example, people are always asking me for hot pot recommendations. Where are your favorite places?

Vincent: For hotpot there are three main types, Yunnan mushroom hot pot, traditional Beijing-style hot pot (shuan yangrou) or Sichuan hotpot.

Emily: People who like hotpot are usually really picky about it. For example, Sichuan hotpot should be spicy but not so spicy that it covers the flavor of the other spices and ingredients.

Vincent: My friends from Sichuan say that you can tell whether or not a hotpot place is going to be good as soon as you walk in the door, due to the quality of the spices.

Irwin: I like Hi-La Hot Pot. They have a branch on Xiang'er Hutong and one in Chaoyang Joy City, completely different styles. People go there just to eat their Hi-La

spicy fish.

Kristen: A lot of people I spoke to before this said that Xiangtianxia is their favorite for Sichuan hotpot. Their flagship branch is at Tuanjiehu just off the Third Ring Road.

Vincent: Personally, I still like Nanmen (traditional Beijing hot pot) the best, particularly the branch near the south gate of the Temple of Heaven.

TBJ: Speaking of Nanmen, what about traditional Beijing-style restaurants?

Emily: Beijing is different from places like Taiwan or Hong Kong. In Beijing's smaller restaurants, the food might be good but the owners don't care as much about the ingredients or the atmosphere.

Ken (TBJ's photographer and Beijinger): It's to do with culture. Beijing is an imperial city, the residents have seen so many rulers and dynasties come and go that they are much more laid back about small details like food quality. A lot of Beijing restaurateurs would say "If you don't like it, then you don't have to eat it!" They're not rude, just straightforward.

Vincent: Also, it's hard to say exactly what Beijing food is. Is it *lao* Beijing snacks? Manchurian-style food? Imperial cuisine? Beijing cuisine has adopted so many influences over the years.

Ken: The thing most people would associate with Beijing food is just snacks, *shaobing*, *zhajiangmian*, those kinds of things.

Emily: If I was going to recommend just one place it would be Shaguoju (*Editor's note: specializing in boiled pork slices – better than it sounds*). First-time visitors to Beijing always go there.

TBJ: Where would you go for a big celebration?

TJ: Madame Zhu's Kitchen is a favorite of mine. Every time I go the food is consistent and clean and I like that the private rooms are named after different Beijing streets.

Kristen: I agree, the food is so good! The only problem is





T-BAZAAR

that it's in the Vantone Center!

TBJ: I will add Transit. It's handy because they are happy to create menus that are served course-by-course rather than traditional family-style.

TJ: Also Culiang Renjia, the Communist-themed Shandong restaurant.

Irwin: I quite often take people to T-Bazaar in the Trader's Hotel, if only for the *jianbing*! They actually have a lot of traditional Beijing snacks like *majiang tangbing* (sesame cakes) plus international dishes like *bak kut teh*.

TBJ: Where do you go for everyday cheap eats?

Irwin: Ziguangyuan, near Dongdaqiao, is incredibly popular. They have a lot of cheap local snacks and dishes, including really cheap *jianbing* (RMB 4).

Emily: The first article I ever wrote for the Beijinger was about all the different brands of *tanghuoshao* in Beijing (*Editor's note: Look it up online, it's an excellent article*). I tried more than 20, but one of my favorites was Lifayuan at Niujie.

Vincent: I like to go to this place near the south Third Ring Road, called Yingchun Noodles. They serve Zhejiang and Fujian style rice noodles or noodles with seafood. It's hard to get good fresh seafood in Beijing but they do a good job there.

TBJ: TJ, we have to ask, can you recommend any good Korean restaurants?

TJ: Of course, I came prepared (*laughs*). My

recommendations are very different from the Reader Restaurant Awards nominees! Firstly, Benjia, which is a real authentic chain restaurant from Korea – the taste is exactly the same as you would get in Korea. I would also recommend, Zixiamen. My Korean friends and I always go to these places.

Vincent: I second Zixiamen!

TBJ: Vincent, how about Taiwanese food?

Vincent: I could only recommend Shin Yeh. It's an old Taiwanese brand with branches around Asia. Other than that, there's not really much good Taiwanese food in Beijing.



NAN XIAOGUAN

DIRECTORY

Private Kitchens

Stone's Kitchen

A5-153, Wangjing Youlehu, Guangshun Nandajie, Chaoyang District (18611006642)

石头食堂: 朝阳区广顺南大街望京悠乐汇A5-153

Haidilao Hotpot Alternatives

Hi-La Hot Pot

Daily 10.30am-midnight. 112 Xiang'er Hutong, Dongcheng District (5717 1110)

Hi辣火锅: 东城区香饵胡同112号

Xiang Tian Xia

Daily 11am-11pm. 23 Baijiazhuang Dongli, Chaoyang District (6501 0666)

四川香天下火锅: 朝阳区白家庄东里23号

Nanmen Hot Pot (Tiantan branch)

Daily 11am-10pm. 1-2, Bldg 13, Yongnei Dongjie Dongli, Dongcheng District (6701 7030)

南门涮肉(天坛店): 东城区他、永内东街东里13号1-2号

Best for a Celebration

Madame Zhu's Kitchen

Daily 11am-10pm. B1, Bldg D, Vantone Center, 6A Chaoyangmen Waidajie, Chaoyang District (5907 1625)

汉舍中国菜馆: 朝阳区朝阳门外大街甲6号万通中心D座B1楼

Transit

Daily noon-2pm, 5.30-10pm. N4-36, Taikoo Li North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District (6417 9090)

渡金湖: 朝阳区三里屯路19号太古里北区3层N4-36

Culiang Renjia

Daily 11am-5am. 5 Dongzhimen Neidajie, Dongcheng District (5129 0123-5)

粗粮人家: 东城区东直门内大街5号

T-Bazaar

Daily 6am-11pm. 1/F, Traders Hotel Beijing, 1 Jianguomen Waidajie, Chaoyang District (6505 2277 ext. 35)

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紫光园: 朝阳区东大桥2号楼 (近朝阳门外大街)

Lifayuan

1 Niujie, Xuanwu District (inside Niujie Muslim Supermarket) (6355 6687)

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Korean Restaurants

Benjia (Shuangjing branch)

Daily 11am-2pm, 5-10pm. 1/F, Hesheng Guoji, Area 3, Shuanghuayuan Nanli, Chaoyang District (8776 4746)

本家韩国料理: 朝阳区双井双花园南里3区合生国际底商

Zixiamen

Daily 11am-10pm. 501, Bldg 5, Zhongfu Baihuo, 201 Nanhu Dongyuan, Huguang Beijie, Chaoyang District (8478 2323)

紫霞门韩国料理: 湖光北街南湖东园201号楼中福百货501室

Taiwanese Restaurants

Shin Yeh

Daily 11am-10pm. 4/F Xinzhongguan Shopping Center, 19 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District (8248 6288)

欣叶: 海淀区中关村大街19号新中关村购物中心4层

HANKERING FOR HOME

FROM PERUVIAN TO SINGAPOREAN, BEIJING EXPATS
STRUGGLE TO FIND FAMILIAR FARE

by Kyle Mullin



FROM LEFT, CELINE SEY, KIM-CHI GUYON, AND ANAIS DAVID

For many Beijing expats, homesickness is linked to hunger pains.

At least that's the case for Kim-Chi Guyon, a Parisian who has only resided in China for a few months, but already misses her homeland's pre-eminent pastries.

"Whenever I'm feeling homesick, I'll go to the market and buy a croissant," she says.

Upon hearing the word, her tablemates sigh wistfully and repeat, in unison: "Ah, croissants."

Those *deux amis* are Anais David and Celine Sey, who have accompanied Guyon to O'Steak in Sanlitun for a bite of familiar fare. The trio insists that this restaurant is one of Beijing's few authentic French eateries. Guyon opted for raw steak tartare, while David and Sey ordered more generous 220g medium rare steaks (Sey's coated with blue cheese).

"You can't go wrong with steak at a French restaurant," David says, adding that Francophones "love meat, so steak is always a classic for us. I'll always order some wine with it, because they complement each other so well, and because I prefer drinking to eating, as much as I love food."

With that, David takes a long sip from her glass as her friends laugh. Sey then begins to describe how much of her culture shock in China revolved around bottles of wine: "It is so important in French cuisine. But here in

Beijing wine is so overpriced, sometimes triple what you'd pay in Paris. Beaujolais, for instance, is EUR 3-4 back home. But at the markets here you'd have to pay at least EUR 12, or RMB 80. And it's not even real wine! It's so low grade, more for ambience than anything."

Guyon agrees, adding that she and her friends struggle with the high prices of, and restricted access to, many products that they grew up with. They say that even the cheapest types of French cheese, like brie and camembert, are very expensive in Beijing. Guyon says that this is one of the many challenges that she and her friends face when trying ready a home-cooked meal here, saying: "Ovens are really random in China. I'll put something in the little toaster oven I bought, hoping to cook it well. And when I take it out, my God, it'll be super burned on the sides, and not cooked at all in the middle!"

The trio giggles about those quandaries, but Guyon adds that she and Sey may not struggle with it as much, because they are of Asian ancestry and were raised on Far Eastern fare as much as French dishes. Meanwhile, the pricey pilgrimage to Beijing's small number French outlets is always worthwhile for David, who explains: "If I'm depressed or feeling culture shocked, the easiest thing for me is to go to Comptoirs de France and get a baguette. After that, I feel much better."

PHOTOS: UNI

Bread is also the first choice for Dikran Gullekian whenever he craves a taste of home. But unlike his Parisian counterparts, the Lebanese expat struggles to find such a starchy staple food from his homeland.

"I have trouble finding bulgur crushed wheat here," Gullekian says of the key ingredient used in Lebanese flat bread. That deficit has prompted him, time and again, to visit Alameen Restaurant because the Lebanese eatery imports many of its ingredients, including bulgur for its flatbread. Other dishes, like the restaurant's *lahme bi ajeen* (Lebanese meat pizzas), prompt Gullekian to frequent Alameen at least once a week. "I really don't think there are other restaurants in Beijing that make such authentic Lebanese food ... you can taste the love and care that's put into it here," he says.

And while that restaurant may be his little Lebanese oasis in Beijing, Gullekian still complains about China's poor meat quality, noting that Alameen's meat is its only local product. The chef here does very well with Lebanese spices and meat preparation. But the quality of Chinese meat is so poor compared to home, or what's imported from Australia and New Zealand, which is almost double the price," Gullekian adds.

Despite such gripes, he still enjoys many of Alameen's meat dishes – especially the beef kebabs, and the larger lamb platters when he visits with famished friends. When Gullekian doesn't feel like dining out, he can still find several familiar ingredients and spices at Sanyuanli



market or Qi Yuan Indian Grocery. The latter focuses on Indian items, but also has many Middle Eastern spices. He often purchases tahine and canned chickpeas to make hummus, and parsley for tabbouleh salad, at Sanyuanli. These outlets – and their growing number of Lebanese options – are often more than enough to quell Gullekian's homeland hankerings.



EDDIE WAZEN (LEFT) AND DIKRAN GULLEKIAN



DAVID (LEFT) AND GONZALO EGUILUZ

While Beijing may have a plethora of foreign products today – especially compared to the limited choices of a few short years ago – many expats still struggle to find their homeland’s most basic ingredients. This is certainly the case for David and Gonzalo Eguiluz, two Peruvian brothers who live in Liudaokou.

“Back home, we have so many kinds of chili, delicious green and yellow varieties. Here I can only find red,” says David with a laugh, adding that lack of options isn’t so much an annoyance as a chance to improvise. When readying *ceviche*, one of his county’s signature cold dishes, David never gripes about the lack of chili varieties in Beijing, opting instead for the hottest red peppers he can find.

While his Peruvian ingredient choices may be somewhat limited, David says his restaurant options are practically nonexistent. He concedes that Beijing boasts a few South American eateries, but none that specialize in his homeland’s flag dishes. This leaves him and his brother to cook at home, and experiment with what ingredients they can find.

Aside from the *ceviche*, the Eguiluz brothers also make *lomo saltado* and *arroz con pollo*. Gonzalo says the *lomo saltado* is much easier to prepare in China, because it has a surprising Far East connection. “Peru was one of the first South American countries that Chinese people came to. Both our cultures have a long history, and there are quite a few people of Asian descent in Peru.” He says this transcontinental connection birthed *lomo saltado*, which is essentially a stir-fry that Chinese immigrants made while

settling into their new Peruvian home. The dish is now a staple menu item at many Peruvian restaurants, and David says he sees many Chinese beef dishes in Beijing that remind him of *lomo saltado*. When he prepares it, David always uses onions, tomato and coriander, and explains that he saves the dish for very special occasions: “I love to make *lomo saltado* on date nights, because it’s so dashing – you have the fire, and the ingredients flying up as you’re stir frying it. Trust me, it’s very impressive.”

The *arroz con pollo* is less dazzling and more intriguing for many who sample David’s cooking. The simple rice and chicken dish features coriander, once again, but this time in such generous portions that it coats the other ingredients in a bright emerald hue. “My girlfriend calls it ‘zombie rice,’ because it’s so green,” David says.

The Eguiluz brothers also like to impress guests with Pisco, a flavorful Peruvian spirit used in shooters and cocktails (and which can be found at a growing number of Beijing supermarkets). More often than not, the brothers find themselves mixing the spirit with leftover lemony *ceviche* sauce for a shooter called “tiger milk,” because drinking it from those smaller glasses can be similar to *baijiu* binges. David always finds himself savoring the flavor of such moments, adding: “Every culture thinks its food and drink are so special. But there are always overlaps.” From shooting Pisco and *baijiu* to eating *lomo saltado* and other stir fries, the Eguiluz brothers have discovered many ways to find a taste of home with their Chinese friends in Beijing.

Indeed, finding familiar flavors may be challenging for Beijing's South American, European, and Middle Eastern expats. But this is even true for foreigners from nearer locales. Poh Soon Guan and Tng Leng Nah, a young couple from Singapore, realize Western expats may assume that Southeast Asian cuisine is readily available in Beijing. And while the pair acknowledges that there are many local Thai options, the same can't be said for Singaporean fare. Poh says Lau Pa Sak and Koo Kee are Beijing's best Singaporean restaurants (he has yet to try My Humble House), but he says that our city sorely lacks other options.

"There's been a few other Singaporean restaurants spring up over the years, but they often close quickly," he says. Poh adds that Koo Kee might be his favorite Singaporean eatery in Beijing. Today, while visiting the chain's Tianshui Xiyuan location (near Chaoyang Park) with Tng, he begins by ordering two wholesome bowls of *bak kut teh* pork soup (*rougucha* in Mandarin), along with two servings of the spicy *galiji* curry chicken soup, and two orders of gingery boiled Hainan chicken rice (Poh says there are many crossovers between Hainan and Singaporean cuisine, because the latter is home to many Hainan immigrants).



"The *galiji* is very popular in muggy Asian places like Singapore because it's spicy, and most of us believe that the spice makes us sweat out the moisture and cool off," he says.

Tng adds: "Beijing gets so cold at times, compared to Singapore. We're mostly used to it, after being here for eight years. But having some spicy Singaporean food once in a while definitely helps, especially when I'm feeling homesick."



POH SOON GUAN (LEFT) AND TNG LENG NAH



thebeijinger 2015 READER

Restaurant of the Year (Non-Chinese Fine Dining)

Temple Restaurant Beijing
Outstanding
Capital M
Brasserie FLO

Restaurant of the Year (Non-Chinese Casual Dining)

Annie's
Outstanding
Element Fresh
Home Plate Bar-B-Que

Restaurant of the Year (Chinese)

Haidilao
Outstanding
Da Dong Roast
Din Tai Fung
Duck de Chine

Best New (Non-Chinese)

Restaurant
The Taco Bar
Outstanding
Tribe
Jing-A Taproom
Palms L.A. Kitchen

Best New Chinese Restaurant

Taste of Da Dong
Outstanding
Soup Kitchen
Spirited Away
Dalong Jiuge Chongqing
Hot Pot

Best New Hotel Restaurant

Bistrot B, Rosewood Hotel
Beijing
Outstanding
Craft, Crowne Plaza
Beijing Lido
Yen, W Hotel
Country Kitchen,
Rosewood Beijing

Best American

Home Plate Bar-B-Que
Outstanding
blue frog bar & grill
Element Fresh

Best Beijing Duck (Fine Dining)

Da Dong Roast Duck
Outstanding
Duck de Chine
Quanjude

Best Beijing Duck (Casual Dining)

Bianyifang
Outstanding
Da Ya Li
Jing Zun
Xihe Yayuan

Best Bread

Kempi Deli, Kempinski
Hotel Beijing
Outstanding
South German Bakery
Comptoirs de France

Best Brunch (Non-Hotel)

The Rug
Outstanding
Capital M
Agua

Best Brunch (Hotel)

Feast (Food by EAST),
EAST Beijing Hotel
Outstanding
Bubbalicious, Seasonal
Tastes, Westin Beijing
Chaoyang
Kerry's Kitchen, Kerry
Hotel Beijing

Best Business Lunch

Hatsune
Outstanding
Feast (Food by EAST),
EAST Beijing Hotel
Brasserie FLO

Best Café

Moka Bros
Outstanding
Maan Coffee
Comptoirs de France

Best Cakes, Cookies and Pastries

Kempi Deli, Kempinski

Hotel Beijing Outstanding

Comptoirs de France
Sweet Tooth

Best for a Celebration (Fine Dining)

Temple Restaurant Beijing
Outstanding
Capital M
Mio, Four Seasons Hotel
Beijing

Best for a Celebration (Casual Dining)

Home Plate Bar-B-Que
Outstanding
Great Leap Brewing
Jing-A Taproom

Best Chef

Daniel Urdaneta (Mosto)
Outstanding
Jordi Valles (Agua)
Rob Cunningham (Feast
(Food by EAST), EAST
Beijing Hotel)

Best Delivery

Annie's
Outstanding
Gung Ho! Pizza
Haidilao

Best Desserts

S.T.A.Y, Shangri-La Hotel,
Beijing
Outstanding
Temple Restaurant
Beijing
Capital M

Best Dim Sum

Jin Ding Xuan
Outstanding
Lei Garden
Jing Yaa Tang, The
Opposite House

Food Entrepreneur of the Year

Andy Horowitz (Andy's
Craft Sausages)
Erica Huang (Farm to

Neighbors Outstanding

Jonathan Ellis (Big
Bear Cookies)

Best French (Fine Dining)

Temple Restaurant
Beijing
Outstanding
Brasserie FLO
S.T.A.Y, Shangri-La Hotel

Best French (Casual Dining)

Café FLO
Outstanding
O'Steak
Bistrot B, Rosewood Hotel
Beijing
Café de la Poste

Best German

Paulaner Brauhaus
Outstanding
Schindler's Tankstelle
Schiller's
Cafe Konstanz

Best "Green" Restaurant

Tribe
Outstanding
Moka Bros
Gung Ho! Pizza
The Rug

Best for Impressing Visitors

Haidilao
Outstanding
Da Dong Roast Duck
Dali Courtyard

Best Italian (Fine Dining)

Opera Bombana
Outstanding
Mio, Four Seasons Hotel
Beijing
Tavola

Best Italian (Casual Dining)

Annie's
Outstanding
Mercante
La Pizza

RESTAURANT AWARDS RESULTS

Best Japanese

Hatsune

Outstanding

Tairyo Teppanyaki
Yotsuba

Best Japanese Ramen

Ippudo

Outstanding

Ajisen
Invincible Ramen

Best Korean

Huoluhuo

Outstanding

Iki
Palms L.A. Kitchen

Best Manager

Ignace Lecleir (Temple
Restaurant Beijing)

Outstanding

Dave Bob Gaspar (Home
Plate Bar-B-Que)
Alex Molina (Mosto)
Francesco Brusa
(Morton's of Chicago,
The Steak House)

Best Mexican

The Taco Bar

Outstanding

Luga's Villa
Cantina Agave
Q Mex Bar & Grill

Best Middle Eastern

Biteapitta

Outstanding

1001 Nights
RUMI

Best Outdoor Dining

Capital M

Outstanding

Element Fresh
Dali Courtyard

Best Overseas Import (Fine Dining)

Din Tai Fung

Outstanding

Brasserie FLO

Morton's of Chicago, The
Steak House

Best Overseas Import (Casual Dining)

Ippudo

Outstanding

Burger King
Fatburger

Restaurant Personality of the Year

Da Dong (Da Dong Roast
Duck)

Outstanding

Ignace Lecleir (Temple
Restaurant Beijing)
Dave Bob Gaspar (Home
Plate Bar-B-Que)

Best for a Romantic Dinner

Temple Restaurant
Beijing

Outstanding

Capital M
Sureño, The Opposite
House
Dali Courtyard

Best Russian

Traktir Pushkin

Outstanding

Dacha
White Nights

Best Salads

Element Fresh

Outstanding

Annie's
Moka Bros
Tribe
Gung Ho! Pizza

Best Sandwiches

Element Fresh

Outstanding

Wagas
Tribe

Best Service (Non-Chinese)

Annie's

Outstanding

Temple Restaurant Beijing
Gung Ho! Pizza

Best Service (Chinese)

Haidilao

Outstanding

Din Tai
Da Dong Roast Duck

Best Shunyi

The Orchard

Outstanding

Mrs. Shanen's
The English Tearoom

Best Sichuan

Meizhou Dongpo

Outstanding

Chuan Ban
Zhang Mama

Best South Asian

Ganges

Outstanding

Taj Pavillion
Indian Kitchen

Best Southeast Asian

Nyonya Kitchen

Outstanding

My Humble House
Cafe Sambal

Best Spanish

Migas

Outstanding

Agua
Carmen

Best Steak (Fine Dining)

Morton's of Chicago, The
Steak House

Outstanding

CRU Steakhouse, JW
Marriott Hotel Beijing
Grange Grill, Westin
Beijing Chaoyang

Best Steak (Casual Dining)

O'Steak

Outstanding

FLAMME
Mosto

Best Thai

Purple Haze

Outstanding

Lime Cafe
Pak Pak Thai Kitchen

Best Value

Annie's

Outstanding

Home Plate Bar-B-Que
Great Leap Brewing
Biteapitta

Best Vegetarian

Tribe

Outstanding

Pure Lotus
King's Joy

Best Vietnamese

Susu

Outstanding

Muse
Le Little Saigon

Best Western Breakfast

Element Fresh

Outstanding

Grandma's Kitchen
Vineyard Café

Best Wings

blue frog bar & grill

Outstanding

Home Plate Bar-B-Que
Great Leap Brewing

Best Wine List

Temple Restaurant
Beijing

Outstanding

Brasserie FLO
Capital M

Best Yunnan

Middle 8th

Outstanding

In & Out
Lost Heaven

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

FOOD & DRINK

SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD // COOKIE BAKE-OFF // LAOZHAI // BAIJIU INFUSIONS



The St. Regis Beijing is just one of many hotels holding special Easter brunches, Easter egg hunts and more on Sunday, April 5. Check Don't Miss on page 65 for more Easter events.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ST. REGIS BEIJING

NIBBLES AND SIPS

Openings & Closings

New restaurant **The Southern Fish** (渔芙南) in Dashilan serves homestyle Hunan dishes in a setting quite unlike any homestyle Chinese restaurant we've ever been to: whitewashed walls, Eames chairs, and modern light fixtures. Expect a full review in the next issue.

New Belgian beer house **De Refter** has opened in the space next to Janes and Hooch in Courtyard 4. The small, cozy space has a number of beers of tap, as well as a good selection of recognizable bottled Belgian brews.

The Peninsula is undergoing some pretty big changes starting this month, as much of the hotel closes for a major renovation. The lobby and public areas will be closed until the end of 2015, while Huang Ting will remain open until the autumn before closing for minor renovations. Jing restaurant will be completely transformed into a new concept Western restaurant.

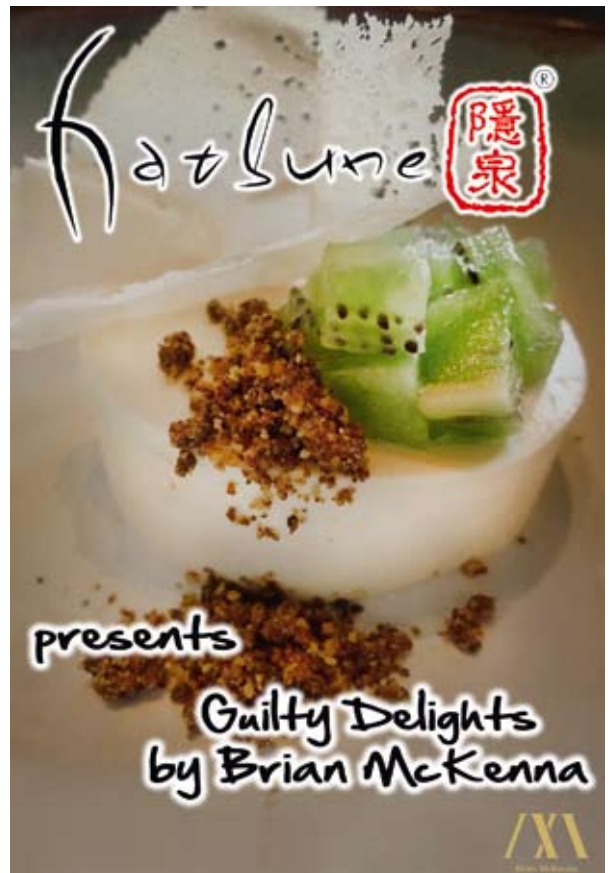
Happenings

Following in the footsteps of sister restaurant Hatsune, **Karaiya Spice House** has introduced a menu of great value set lunches. Starting at RMB 68, the sets feature a Hunan-style main dish, such as spicy pork stir-fry or salt and pepper prawns, accompanied by an appetizer, stir-fried vegetables, rice, soup, and fruit. A healthy and filling way to get through the week.

Love lobster? Get yourself over to **V-Continent Beijing Parkview Wuzhou Hotel** (bit of a mouthful itself that) for their free-flow lobster buffet, also including free-flow wine and local beer (RMB 388 plus 15 percent service charge). Should you tire of lobster, you can also stock your plate with sashimi, steak, barbecue, desserts, and much more.

Qingming festival is coming up on April 4, so make the most of the corresponding day off on April 6 by getting out of town. Stay at **The Brickyard Inn** and take a bracing hike up to the Great Wall, before coming back and tucking into a special set lunch (RMB 128) at their onsite noodle restaurant, **Xiaolumian**.

Don't forget **Great Leap Brewing's Back Alley Chili Cook-Off** on April 11. It's too late to enter your own chili recipe but for RMB 150 you can quaff two beers and sample all 15 chilies (and vote for your favorite).





CAN SEAFOOD BE SUSTAINABLE?

MAYBE NOT ALL KINDS, BUT BUYING LOCALLY IS THE KEY

by Steven Schwankert



Fish is considered a healthy alternative to red meat, and some who otherwise consider themselves vegetarian – known as pescetarians – eat fish for its perceived health benefits. Fresh, deep ocean fish and an otherwise low-fat diet is credited with giving residents of Okinawa their world-beating longevity, where five times more people live to be 100 than the global average.

However, the impact on the world's oceans as people eat more seafood has been overwhelming. Stocks of cod in the Atlantic Ocean have collapsed; eight to 25 percent of all fish caught by ocean-going fishing vessels is unwanted by-catch that is discarded; and an estimated 300,000 whales, dolphins, and porpoises drown in fishing nets every year, including discarded or lost "ghost nets" that continue catching even when no longer in use.

The most controversial consumption of seafood in China has been in the form of shark fin soup. Ten years ago, talking about reducing the consumption of shark fin was a fool's errand. Sharks were man-eaters, they should be eradicated anyway, and besides, there were lots of them out there. The soup had health benefits, it was claimed. Serving it at weddings and banquets was a Chinese tradition.

As many as 73 million sharks are killed each year, with China representing the biggest market. The sharks are usually caught on long lines, and then hauled onto fishing boats, where their dorsal (back), pectoral (side), and tail fins are cut off. Because the rest of the fish is not harvested or used, mutilated sharks are then usually thrown back into the ocean to drown, unable to swim or otherwise move, to save space on the boats for more fins. After drying, the fins are sold to distributors or directly to restaurants, who then make it into soup. The chewy, crunchy fin matter has no flavor, and the soup itself is usually chicken broth. Although viewed by some practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine as a cancer cure, no value in cancer treatment has been proven scientifically.

The tide of public opinion on shark fin consumption turned when NBA star Yao Ming appeared in a public service announcement in both Chinese and English on behalf of anti-wildlife product trafficking organization WildAid. In the 30-second spot, diners in a restaurant see a shark in an aquarium bleeding from where its fins had been cut off.

"I've been opposing the consumption of shark fin since 2006, and we've made good progress, you can see that the numbers have come down. The next step is to expand

that to other areas, like elephants and ivory, and hopefully we'll have similar success there," Yao told *the Beijinger* in a 2014 interview.

Yao's public entrance into the debate made it acceptable to discuss the issue openly, and take action. Instead of automatically serving shark fin at weddings, young people began to make other menu choices, ones their peers would accept, although perhaps not their grandparents.

Freshwater vs. Saltwater Chinese cuisine distinguishes between fish, 鱼 *yu*, and seafood, 海鲜 *haixian* (literally "sea fresh"), which more often than not refers to shellfish, although non-crustaceans are also popular. Large, pelagic fish like tuna and salmon are not common on Chinese menus. That demand continues to climb: in February, the Associated Press reported that one lobster wholesaler in was shipping 50,000 kilograms of live lobster per week to China for Spring Festival celebrations.

The fish, either freshwater or saltwater, that ends up on the average dinner table in China, is for the most part farmed. The giant carp that are often the centerpiece of a meal are raised in lakes, ponds, and reservoirs, making them subject to environmental conditions – including local pollution. Similarly, most shrimp are farm-raised, which makes them plentiful and less expensive, although shrimp farms themselves present their own issues.

The guidelines for buying sustainable seafood are similar to those for other foods. Whenever possible, buy locally. Not only does it support local producers, but those people are likely to be more concerned about their local customers' health than people who live hundreds or thousands of kilometers away. It's also more likely to be fresh, reducing the carbon footprint of transport, and diminishing the need to add preservatives or other unnecessary chemicals.

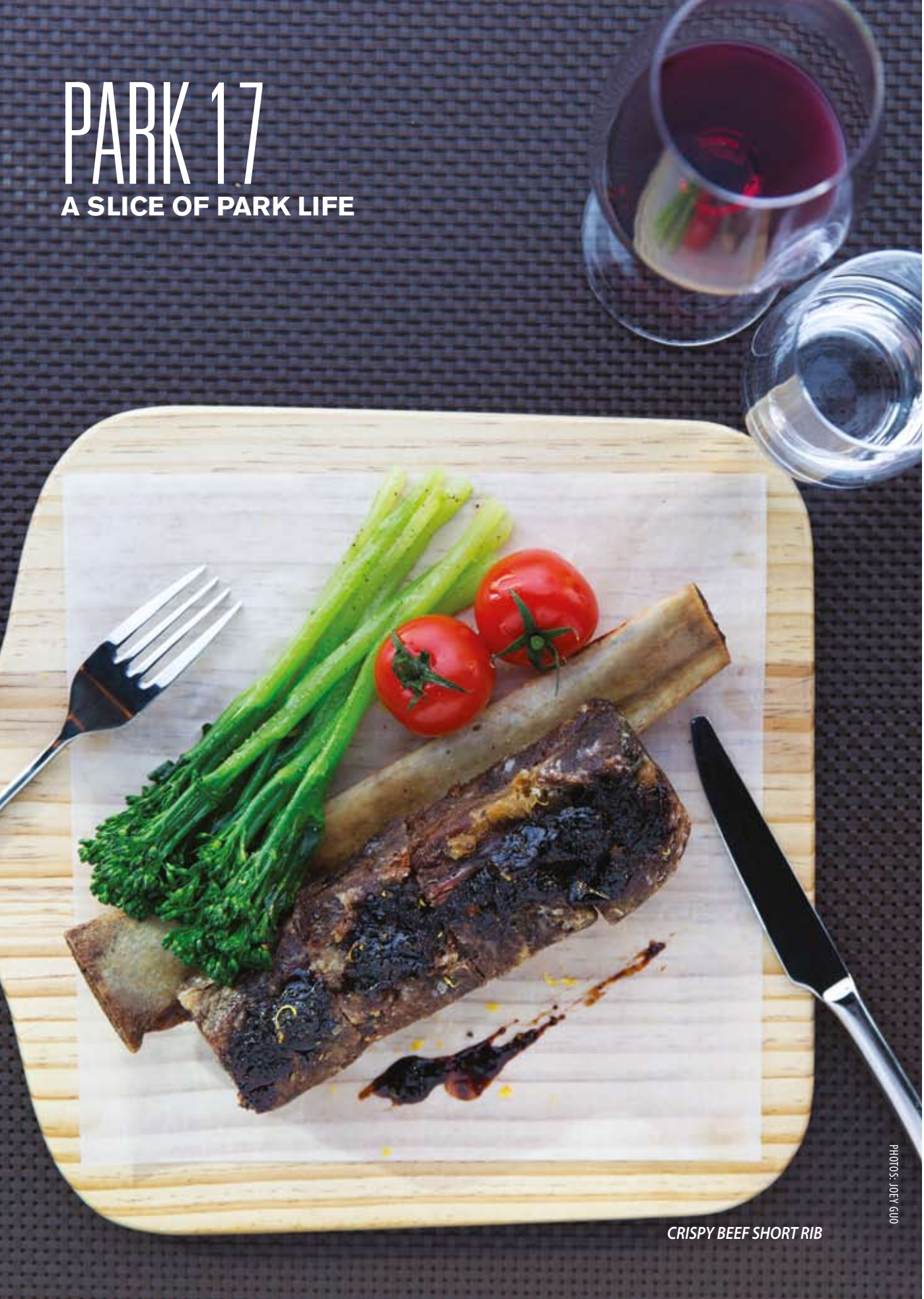
Buy species of fish that are local and in season. As some fish migrate, they may only appear in an area at certain times of year. Imported seafood means significant goes against the guidelines mentioned above. Locally-farmed fish are generally better, but not always.

Avoid endangered and threatened species. Using a list like the one available from Seafood Watch or its helpful app can show quickly whether a particular kind of fish is suitable for consumption.

Download Seafood Watch's latest list at www.seafoodwatch.com, or get their app for free at www.seafoodwatch.org/seafood-recommendations/our-app.

PARK 17

A SLICE OF PARK LIFE



CRISPY BEEF SHORT RIB

PHOTOS: JOEY GUO

WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Daily 11am-10pm. Courtyard 4, Gongti Beilu,
Chaoyang District (next to The Local) (6586 1889)
朝阳区工体北路4号院机电院内

🚶 500m west of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

Park 17 is a fusion restaurant, but not in the 1990s nouvelle cuisine sense of the word. The logo on their table cards merges a Peking opera mask with a traditional Venetian masquerade mask, revealing the true form of their fusion: bringing together high-end Italian food with Chinese dining habits.

Taking this into consideration, the initially breath-taking prices seem much more reasonable – dishes are meant to be shared, family style. This casual dining focus spills over into the décor, which eschews the white table cloths expected at this level of dining in favor of industrial-chic bare walls, blond wood and au courant filament bulbs. The owner tells us they are keen to demystify western fine dining for the Chinese consumer.

We had high expectations for the food, not only because of the prices, but also because we had heard that the chef used to work in one of Jean-Georges Vongerichten's restaurants. Thankfully a four cheese white pizza with prosciutto and arugula (RMB 168) did not disappoint, the base a little thin for our tastes but just on the right side of charred. Pastas (RMB 88-198) come beautifully presented, standing out from the crowd with interesting touches such as the addition of smoked chili to a standard tomato ragu. However, the dish that caught our eye the most was the crispy beef short rib (RMB 348), the braising and subsequent frying more reminiscent of Chinese cooking, but brought back over to the western side of things with a tart chili-Chianti jam.

There are still a few details to be ironed out – the uninspiring wine list and the lack of desserts – but we admire Park 17 for bringing a touch of fine dining to this otherwise casual corner of Beijing. *Robynne Tindall*



WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS



MAMA DE WEIDAO

JUST LIKE MAMA USED TO MAKE

Daily 11.30am-2pm, 5.30-9.30pm. 110, Bldg 6, China View, 2 Gongti Donglu, Chaoyang District (8587 1822)

妈妈的味道：朝阳区工体东路2号中国红街6号楼110室

 700m west of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

It's difficult to stand out from the crowd as a restaurant serving *jiachang cai*, or family-style food. Not only are there thousands of restaurants serving it, it's also the kind of cuisine where someone at the table is bound to say that their grandmother's version of a dish was better. It's quick, it's cheap, and it's not usually very fancy. Enter Mama de Weidao, offering a modern, design-oriented take on the cuisine. Where many *jiachang cai* restaurants are white-collapsible-tables-on-white-tiles kind of establishments, Mama De Weidao feels more like you're eating inside a Muji store.

The two young owners are an active presence in the restaurant, running around in their track pants and fluorescent sneakers, doing everything from directing wait staff to fastidiously cleaning tables. The clientele are young Chinese, and there is an energy to the place that is simultaneously frenetic and friendly.

As to be expected, the menu (Chinese only) features all your favorite classic dishes. Prices are reasonable, although higher than those of your usual local eatery, ranging from RMB 22-88. We chose the *cong hua doufu* (fresh tofu with scallops, RMB 26), the *xihongshi chao jidan* (stir-fried egg and tomato, RMB 22), the *hongshaorou* (red-cooked pork, RMB 58) and the *donggua wanzi tang* (winter melon and meatball soup, RMB 38). The dishes were definitely satisfying, but I found it impossible not to compare them with renditions I had had elsewhere: The egg and tomato is good, but I like it when you get bigger pieces of egg... The *hongshaorou* is tasty but I prefer chunkier pieces of meat and a redder glaze... And so on.

Mama de Weidao runs the risk of tight comparison, but we respect somewhere that is trying to give *jiachang cai* a bit of a makeover. *Shannon Aitken*

PHOTO: JOEY GUO

WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

SATAN'S HOT DOG

YOU'LL BE DAMNED IF YOU DON'T

Daily 11am-9pm. 6-116, 1F, Bldg 6, Sanlitun SOHO, 8 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District (5785 3813)

工体北路8号三里屯SOHO6号商场一层6-116商铺

 1km southwest of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

The Devil went down to Beijing, he was looking for a bite to eat. His stomach was churning and his wallet was burning, hunger pangs grinding his teeth. Then he came across in SOHO Sanlitun a sign that made him stop. It said Satan's Hotdog and he thought "let's see what this dog has got!"

While it's certainly no Georgia, this small hotdog joint has added a bit of quirky personality to Sanlitun. From ironically poetic 'half a dog goes to Heaven' coat hangers, to a portrait of a glamorously grey suited Lucifer on the wall, you'll be looking around in devilish glee while cheerful assistants ensure your order is fulfilled with zero trident prodding.

If China's frequent food safety scandals have become your own personal hell, then this 100 percent preservative free, non-processed, all natural environment could just be your savior. The stripped-back menu features locally sourced whole wheat bread and luscious homemade sausages, by far and away the highlight of the experience. The premium Satan hotdog starts at a measly RMB 29, getting you almost a foot of bread and meat to drizzle with ketchup, mustard, and Heinz relish. You are also free to up the ante with add-ons like sour cucumbers (aka pickles, RMB 3), cheese (RMB 5), and the mysteriously named, yet never officially identified, "meat sauce" (RMB 3).

While the bread is in need of a few more tweaks to save the dry texture, it didn't stop us from chowing down on our hot dogs like it was our last meal on Earth. Forgo swanky Taikooli across the road and cross over to this side, you'll be damned to find a better deal elsewhere. *Erin Strong*



PHOTO: KEN



FATBURGER BEIJING



www.fatburger.com
Fatburger

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No.1 LB01, Liangmaqiao Diplomatic Compound No.19 East Dongfang Rd, Chaoyang Tel: +86-10-85321878

CHINA WORLD STORE
2nd Units 01-03, China World Office Tower 2
Tel: +86-10-6505 8422

GEMDALE PLAZA STORE
B105A Basement 1, Tower C
Gemdale Plaza, No.91 Jianguo Rd, Chaoyang Tel: +86-10-85712797

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Flavour Promise 36

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Tel: 6584-3358 Openhour: 9:30~23:00

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🚶 1km southwest of Andingmen (Line 2)

Why mess with success? This certainly seems to have been the thought process behind Green Shade. Established by a former manager of Dali Courtyard, and just around the corner from said restaurant, the newcomer replicates the veteran restaurant's successful changing set menu formula. Here the menu will cost you RMB 120 per person regardless of group size, so we suggest going with a group of at least four or five to allow you to experience as many dishes as possible and get the best value out of the meal.

Frequent visitors to Dali Courtyard will recognize many of the dishes on offer, although there are innovations here as well. On the night I visited, we started on a high note with some toothsome beef jerky, hiding beneath a formidable pile of crisp dried chili peppers. The meal stumbled briefly over some bland home-style stir-fried tofu, but regained its stride with a dish of papaya chicken, the tender (and boneless) meat coated in a piquant sauce that had us asking for extra helpings of rice. Most importantly of all, for yours truly at least, the pan-fried Yunnan goat's cheese was perfectly executed, served crisp from the pan and seasoned with salt and a hint of Sichuan pepper.

The space owes much to the design of the hutong-based Yunnan restaurants that have come before it: think a wall set with giant rice wine containers, hand-woven wicker lampshades, and lots of bare brick and stone. Whether or not this will be enough to attract punters to yet another Gulou-based Yunnan restaurant, only time will tell. *Robynne Tindall*

WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

MR SHI'S NOODLES

A FAMILIAR SLURP

Daily 9am-10pm. 81 Baochao Hutong, Dongcheng District (8405 0399)

东城区宝钞胡同81号

🚶 650m northeast of Shichahai (Line 8)

At first glance, Mr Shi's Noodles looks like a sweet little spot. The menu has six different noodle choices, of which we tried the Eggplant and Pork Noodle Soup (RMB 20) and the Egg and Tomato Noodle Soup (RMB 20). In both options the noodles were hand pulled and chewy, the toppings tasty: not over-salted and achieving the optimal balance between steamy broth and noodles. The portions are on the small side but you can further satisfy your hunger with a fat side of fried dumplings from Mr Shi's original joint. In that sense, the noodle restaurant acts as a spillover as well as a chilled alternative.

We have to say the drinks menu was extensive, offering coffee, tea, imported beers, and even cider, which we particularly thrilled to see – you can't get cider just anywhere, you know. If you're particularly reminiscent of your backpacking days you can sign your name on the wall – the place certainly has a "we are featured in *Lonely Planet*" feel.

A good choice if you're nearby, but we can't help but feel you would be better off exploring some of the cheaper, tastier and more authentic noodle shops nestled in the surrounding hutongs. *Margaux Schreurs*



PHOTOS: KEN

RECIPES FOR COOKIE MONSTERS

BAKE THE WINNING RECIPE FROM THE HUTONG'S COOKIE
MONSTER CHARITY BAKE-OFF

By Robynne Tindall

People's Choice Winner: Cracker Jack Cookies, Kinsey Morrow and Cara Gleeson

First make your Cracker Jacks...

½ cup unpopped corn kernels (~10 cups popped)

Enough vegetable oil to coat bottom of pan

¾ cup unsalted butter

1 cup packed brown sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

½ tsp kosher salt

¼ tsp baking soda

½ cup roasted and shelled peanuts, slightly chopped

1. Pop popcorn over the stove or in microwave.
2. Melt butter over medium heat. When completely melted, stir in brown sugar. Allow the mixture to boil for around three to four minutes.
3. Remove pot from heat and add vanilla. Once incorporated, stir in baking soda and salt.
4. Immediately pour half of the caramel sauce over the popcorn and stir until evenly coated. Toss in the peanuts and then stir in remainder of caramel.
5. Pour caramel corn onto wax paper to cool. Place batches in oven at 200C for 20 minutes, stirring after 10 minutes. Baking it will help keep it crunchy!



1 large egg

1 large egg yolk

3 ½-4 cups of cracker jacks

1 cup white chocolate chips

Coarse sea salt for sprinkling

1. Combine flour, salt and baking soda. Set aside.
2. Brown 1/2 cup butter in a medium skillet. Swirl (don't stir) the pan every other minute, and keep an eye and your nose on the melted butter. When you smell warm nuts, it's time to quickly take it off the heat. Pour the browned butter into a bowl and allow to cool for 20 minutes.
3. Cream together remaining room temperature butter and brown sugar. Cream with a hand mixer until light and fluffy, about three to five minutes. Add the vanilla extract and maple syrup and beat until incorporated.
4. Once the brown butter has cooled, pour the butter (brown bits and all) into the creamed butter and sugar mixture. Add the granulated sugar and cream for two minutes, then add the egg and egg yolk and beat for one minute more.
5. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture and stir with a wooden spoon and until everything is just incorporated. Then gently fold in chocolate chunks and cracker jacks.
6. Cover dough and place in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.
7. Use spoons to shape and drop two to three inch cookies onto parchment paper. Sprinkle a small pinch of sea salt over the cookies.
8. Bake in the oven for approximately 10 minutes at 180C (or until the edges are brown). The brown will differ depending on what type on brown sugar you use.

...then bake your Cracker Jack Cookies

2 ¼ cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp salt

1 tsp baking soda

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature

1 cup packed brown sugar

2 ½ tsp vanilla extract

2 tsp maple syrup

½ cup granulated sugar



Chef Jordan Silva from Eudora Station in Lido took home the Judges' Choice Award for his Chewy Choco-holic Cookies, featuring four types of chocolate. Find his recipe on thebeijinger.com/blog.



PEKING DUCK

TOP TEN LAOZIHAO

REINVENTING TRADITION FOR MODERN BEIJING

By Margaux Schreurs

China's *laozihao*, or "time-honored brands," are shops, restaurants, and other brands with a special government distinction marking their established history. Most of the original *laozihao* were family-run businesses, becoming state-run during the Cultural Revolution. Although the majority remains state-owned today, and many are chains, some were given back to the original families. The requirements are that the business was created before 1956, is profitable, and provides products with unique characteristics. As such, most of the food-related *laozihao* are located in Qianmen and other older quarters of the city. Below are our top picks for a taste of old Beijing.

DONGLAISHUN

Having opened its first branch over 100 years ago, Donglaishun is the oldest restaurant serving Hui minority cuisine in Beijing. Donglaishun is revered for its *shuan*

yangrou: thinly sliced mutton dipped in broth served in distinctive bubbling copper pots over burning charcoal.

DOUYICHU

With an alleged history of more than 260 years, Douyichu specializes in *shaomai*, a northern steamed pork dumpling distinct from its southern Chinese dim sum cousin. Allegedly the founder, surnamed Wang, was from Shanxi province and started off serving boiled peanuts, rose jujube, and pickled vegetables.

BIANYIFANG

Bianyifang has a 600-year long history of roasting up Peking ducks, making it the oldest duck restaurant in Beijing. Their specialty is Crispy Peking Roast Duck with Flower Fragrance (RMB 198 for a whole duck, RMB 108 for a half duck), and their many years of experience certainly shines through.

GOUBULI

Although originally a Tianjin time-honored brand, Goubuli is well established in Beijing. The first branch was opened in 1858, and their specialty is stuffed *baozi*, each with exactly 18 wrinkles. In anticipation of the Summer Olympics in 2008, the store adopted an English name: "Go Believe."

HUNDUNHOU

Hundunhou is a truly local *laozihao*, its Gulou branch drawing a constant stream of people throughout the day. The options do not end at their satisfying wonton (*hundun*) soup (shrimp and pork wonton soup, RMB 14), branching out to other types of dumplings and noodle soup.

SHAGUOJU

Shaguoju has been serving boiled streaky pork, or *baizhurou*, since 1741, a simple dish that features fresh broth, lashings of pepper, and minimal other seasonings. Simple it may be, but this dish actually stems from the highest of imperial dining traditions.

ZHENGYANG LOU

Zhengyanglou Fanzhuang specializes in Shandong cuisine. With a history of over 150 years it is considered one of Beijing's "eight great restaurants," founded by Manchurians during the late Qing Dynasty. The restaurant is located in

the iconic Qianmen area, and is recognized for its steamed crab and soy sauce quail.

LIUBIJU

Although technically not a restaurant but a shop, Liubiju is the oldest of all that is old and *laozihao*. It has been providing Beijing with preserved vegetables and soy sauce since 1530. Their pickles are fermented in traditional white and blue ceramic jars, giving a true old Beijing feel.

KAOROUJI

Kaorouji serves exactly what its name suggests: roast meat. It has been open since 1848, when it was a small stall, and is now a beautiful traditional multi-story building. Their best-known food is fresh lamb, simply cooked on a large grill. Although in the past customers would cook by themselves using elongated chopsticks, the chefs now prepare the food so that you can focus on enjoying the tender lamb without manual labor, but with sesame buns.

LIUQUANJU

Liuquanju is little more than a window in Gulou, but a window with a line nonetheless. People line up around the corner for their specialty: *doushabao*, or red bean paste buns. After choosing your filling, original (RMB 10 for 460 grams, or eight buns) or *songren*, pine nut kernel (RMB 12), you'll need to steam them at home for the best taste.



SHAOMAI

THE BAR-B-Q

MORE THAN MEAT



BARBECUE MEAT COMBO PLATTER

PHOTOS: JOEY GUO

WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Daily 5pm-late. 2/F, Youyi Youth Hostel
43 Bei Sanlitun Nan, Chaoyang District (6415 9954)
朝阳区北三里屯南43号友谊青年酒店2层

🚶 800m northwest of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

It seems like a strange side effect of globalization that it would take moving to Beijing for a humble Brit like myself to fall in love with American barbecue. For us, proper low 'n' slow barbecue is the stuff of legend and Guy Fieri series and it was only at the original Home Plate at Xiaoyun Lu that I experienced brisket and pulled pork for the first time. I may not fully understand it, but I know that I want to eat it.

Fellow barbecue fans now have one more place to get their meat fix in the form of The Bar-B-Q, a new project in the former By the Tree space managed by the owners of The Bar upstairs. The chef is a Home Plate alumnus and their smoker was built with the help of a Texan friend. So far, so authentic. An All-Meat Combo platter (RMB 195) shows off what both the chef and smoker can do. The chopped brisket and pork ribs are good and smoky, although a touch on the dry side. Thankfully this can be remedied with one of their homemade barbecue sauces, such as the sweet and lightly spicy Memphis. Sides like fries and wings are average.

The owners' experience at The Bar shows through in the brief cocktail list (well-priced during the daily happy hour, 5-9pm), including a delicious peach bourbon julep that made us come over all Southern belle. With solid food and drinks The Bar-B-Q is likely to quickly become a favorite Sanlitun haunt. *Robynne Tindall*



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KERRY'S KITCHEN

KEEPING THINGS FRESH

Daily 6am-midnight. 1/F, Kerry Hotel Beijing, 1 Guanhua Lu, Chaoyang District (6561 8833 ext. 40)

嘉品：朝阳区光华路1号北京嘉里大酒店

 500m southwest of Jintaixizhao (Line 10)

Keeping things fresh when you've been open for years is surely one of the biggest challenges for any restaurant, particularly hotel restaurants, which are often a harder sell in the first place. At Kerry's Kitchen they have come up with a pretty effective solution to the problem – serving a different cuisine every night. The Dining Adventures promotion features seven different daily deals, so for example, on Mondays you can tuck into a hearty portion of traditional fish and chips, while on Thursdays you can slurp up a big bowl of your choice of noodles.

We visited on a Tuesday Steak Night (prices starting from RMB 288) and ordered up juicy 200g sirloin steaks, which arrived cooked to perfection on sizzling iron plates with a side of rich pepper sauce. The accompanying green salad, with its crispy lotus root topping, made for an all-

round healthy and delicious meal. Kerry's Kitchen does suffer from the unfortunate handicap of feeling exactly like a hotel restaurant – even on the busiest nights it lacks atmosphere. However, being located in a hotel has its advantages too: the staff speak impeccable English, dishes come out of the kitchen promptly and the quality of the food is undeniably high. We are always more impressed by the atmosphere at their popular weekend brunch, where the free-flowing Champagne and separate Adventure Zone keeps both kids and big kids happy.

Kerry is one of our favorite dining destinations and if their restaurants keep coming out with interesting promotions like this (on top of the Dining Adventures promotion, recent pop-up events have celebrated Malaysian, Peruvian, and Vietnamese food) it seems they will remain that way for some time. *Robynne Tindall*



PHOTO COURTESY OF KERRY'S KITCHEN



CHARCOAL

SPITS, PITS, AND BREWS

Daily 11am-midnight. West end of Xinyuan Sanjie, Houshayu, Shunyi District (6040 8911)

顺义区后沙峪馨园三街西口

 4km southwest of Hualikan (Line 15)

To most of us inner city barflies the idea of a brewery-restaurant combo like Charcoal, beyond the Fifth Ring Road, is like a tree falling in the forest. No matter how loud or big the tree is, you'll never find the time or incentive to travel an hour on a subway then grab a black taxi to check it out. But to those looking for more in Shunyi this will be a godsend.

This is an area filled with families and salaried workers who most likely prefer the spatial comforts of suburban life. The lofty thing that Charcoal is doing though is bringing desirable elements of the downtown bar and food scene away from the city sludge to the suburbs where folks, until now, have been sadly deprived of such delicacies.

Sitting on top of a BMW dealership, it is a sight to behold: a concrete ziggurat filled with smoked meats and craft beer. The place has a classy industrial vibe, surrounding a 12,000L brewing facility fermenting up delicious

liquid gold around the clock. We recommend starting off with the Longbow Men English Session Ale (RMB 30).

The food menu focuses on house-cured meats, slow pit roasted barbecue, and a good selection of vegetarian dishes. We started off with the Macho Nachos (RMB 68). This delivered in a very big way, piled up high and capped at the peak with hummus. The jerk chicken was deliciously charred from hours on the pit. We followed this with massive amounts of their Four Cheese Macaroni (RMB 45), which is definitely worth checking out.

All in all, it's a cozy spot that will definitely blow up and make some noise over the summer months with live music and massive amounts of meat consumption. But most likely it won't draw too many of us from our comfortable zones in Dongcheng or Chaoyang because we have the same service a hop away in Sanlitun or Gulou.

Kipp Whittaker

A FRESH START

ALAN ANG, GENERAL MANAGER, HOTEL JEN UPPER EAST BEIJING

by Robynne Tindall

Originally from Singapore, Alan Ang studied hospitality in Switzerland before embarking on a 10-year career with Shangri-La Hotel Group. After joining the hotel in August 2014, he has overseen its rebranding from Traders Hotel to the first Hotel Jen in China outside of Hong Kong.

The Traders Hotel brand was recently rebranded Hotel Jen. Can you tell us the reasons behind the rebranding?

The Traders brand has a 25-year history of success in generating solid business, carving out a niche amidst a highly competitive industry, and building a loyal base of customers. However, looking to the future we are recognizing and responding to the needs of a new generation of travelers. Therefore, millennial travelers are the focus market for this new brand.

The Hotel Jen brand delivers what is most important for these travelers. They demand quality, comfort and value, together with honest, authentic service; and want privacy and efficiency without unnecessary fuss or intrusion.

What does the rebranding mean for your hotel, and for the brand as a whole?

Today's guests want more flexibility, as busy non-traditional work hours tend to blend the boundaries between business and leisure. With the re-branding, we will broaden our range of guests and attract more travelers looking for distinctive local experiences. We definitely want to retain our existing customer base, which has been extremely loyal to us, but we also recognize that their needs have changed.

How do you apply your past experiences to the current management challenges raised by the rebranding?

Over the years, I had developed attributes like flexibility and adaptability. With the re-branding to Hotel Jen, it is about changing our approach from the inside out. "Setting the pace" is another important thing I have picked up from past experience. When a sense of urgency is spread throughout the team, it can make a substantial difference to efficiency. Team members like to work in a place where things happen.

Do you have any management role models?

Often provocative in his approach but always inspiring and exciting to watch, Richard Branson is the role model I admire. Like him, I like to take a highly participative management approach. I believe that team members must have professional respect and personal trust in my leadership. Respect and trust, however, are only the price of admission. Beyond that, you have to demonstrate a willingness to really invest in the development of each team member.

Do you have any favorite restaurant recommendations you can share with us?

One of my favorite local restaurants is XiBei – go to the branch in Wangfujing. They have an open kitchen concept where fresh produce is made and delivered to your table. If you are coming to Beijing for the first time, you must not miss Peking duck. I would always recommend Horizon Chinese Restaurant at Kerry Hotel Beijing. The chef has been in the business for decades and refuses to compromise on quality.

What is your "Desert Island Dish," the one dish you can't live without?

That would be my childhood favorite, *roti prata*, in Indian pancake dipped in fish curry gravy. It is generally available for breakfast or supper, but I can eat it any time of the day.



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOTEL JEN UPPER EAST BEIJING



H

... Hainan chicken rice 海南鸡饭

Contrary to its name, although Hainan chicken rice originated from the southern Chinese island, it is now most commonly found in Singaporean cuisine. Hainan chicken rice is based on Wenchang chicken, referring to both a breed of chicken and a chicken dish from the Hainanese city of Wenchang. Typically consisting of boiled, sliced chicken, rice cooked in chicken fat, chicken soup, and a dip of freshly made chili sauce, it is considered one of Singapore's national dishes.

... har gow 虾饺

This staple of the dim sum table is one of the toughest challenges for any budding Chinese pastry chef. The translucent, glutinous wrappers are notoriously difficult to work with; too thin and they will disintegrate against the chopsticks, too thick and the wrapper will mask the delicate flavor of the prawn. Traditionally, *har gow* were judged by the number of pleats in the wrapper, with 10 being the optimal number and seven acceptable for beginners.

... hawthorn 山楂

No snack is more emblematic of Beijing than the long sticks of burnished red candied hawthorns (*bingtang hulu*) brandished by sellers all over town. As well as being used in a variety of sweet preparations, in traditional Chinese medicine hawthorns are thought to reduce blood pressure and cholesterol, and relieve indigestion.

... hongshao 红烧

Anyone who has had to restrain themselves while eating a dish of unctuous red-cooked pork belly knows that the *hongshao* cooking method is up there with the greats. Named for the reddish-brown hue food takes on after a long period of braising in a sauce based on rice wine, dark soy sauce and brown sugar, *hongshao* is usually considered to be a Hunan-style dish and is often lauded as Mao Zedong's favorite dish (Mao was also from Hunan province).

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TASTE TEST

VERDICT

None of the baozi or sandwiches we tried are anyone's ideal lunch, and there was very little to actually recommend except 7-Eleven's Ham and Egg Sandwich. And by recommend, we of course mean "you probably won't feel sick."

Everyone gets their lunch cravings satisfied by a convenience store once in a while (if not every single day, three times per day) but which sandwiches and baozi actually make the cut? We went there and did your dirty work: We tried the steaming baozi and slimy sandwiches from three of Beijing's most visited convenience stores.



7-Eleven - Pork and Cabbage Baozi (RMB 1.5)

"The best baozi out of the bunch - for a convenience store item."
"This tastes a little bit sour. Like it was made using an anemic micro-pig cadaver."
"If Tianjin saw this baozi I think the city would just cry out of shame. I think I am talking myself into liking it though."



Haolinju - Shrimp and Rice Noodle Corn Baozi (RMB 3)

"Reminds me of the Beijing Aquarium, like its entire sea life exhibit has died inside this baozi. Twice."
"If we leave this baozi out long enough, it will grow legs and scuttle off."
"This baozi would always be on the losing end of 'would you rather.'"



Kuaike - Pork Baozi (RMB 2)

"It is like Doughboy decided to pop a squat inside the tiny reheat drawers and relieve himself. Rou-no-oh-oh."
"So as to save myself from vomiting I will say that the texture is most similar to discarded soggy lint."
"No matter how many times you reheat it, it will never be revived to something edible."

LUNCH CRUNCH

THE CHEAP-LUNCH DOUGH-OFF

by Margaux Schreurs



Haolinju - Ham Sandwich (RMB 6.9)

"It smells like it has been preserved in formaldehyde. This sandwich will still be here after I'm gone." "I think the meat slice used to be an animal, once, but the sugary bread is doing its very best to distract me from whether it's going to bite back or not." "This sandwich is just like my hopes and dreams in China; a brutally crushing lie. At least the fillings were squeezed to the front to make it appear nice."



Kuaike - Ham and Cheese Sandwich (RMB 5.5)

"The filling has receded into the middle, as my tongue did upon seeing this sandwich." "The odd combination of ketchup and mayonnaise hides the slightly sweet, oddly yellowed bread." "I just can't see past the fact that I'm eating what is essentially a glorified door wedge."



7-Eleven - Ham and Egg Sandwich (RMB 6.9)

"Doesn't taste as terrifying as it looks, except for a sad leaf of lettuce that looks like it was nibbled by a mouse." "Thinner ham leaves less space for genetically modified pig fat. That's good, right?" "Perfect dosage of mayonnaise, but the egg seems slightly toxic. Or are eggs meant to be lime green?"

FLAVOR WAR

CONQUERING THE STRONG TASTE OF BAIJIU WITH INFUSIONS

by Kipp Whittaker

Kiwi

Definitely the least successful of the batch. In this flavor battle, the kiwi was mercilessly slaughtered by the Erguotou. Kiwis are a popular choice for other spirits like gin or vodka, so we gave it a shot. There is a hint of the fruit in the mix, but it doesn't match or overcome the distilled sorghum's burning kitty litter flavor and aroma. Our recommendation if using a fruit: combine it with complementary but fierce flavors like ginger or vanilla bean.

500ml of Erguotou Baijiu

2 cups of sliced kiwis

Kumquats and Star Anise

This one worked out pretty well, the star anise and kumquat combo giving it a pastis flavor with a slight citrus aroma. It could be used to splash in those bitter tiki drink favorites like the Jet Pilot or Paper Airplane. Even on its own, it is pretty easy to sip with little or no remnants of the Ergoutou to pillage your pallet.

500ml of Erguotou Baijiu

2 cups of halved kumquats

5 star anise



PHOTOS: KIPP WHITTAKER

The quest to make the undrinkable drinkable isn't an easy one. For most, the burn, smell, and after effects of baijiu are rarely worth the effort that it takes to swallow it without convulsively spraying it out all over those in your company.

But, what if we told you there were steps that could be taken to turn this malicious firewater around? Baijiu is without a doubt the cheapest spirit in China and the most widely consumed alcohol on the planet. With the addition of some simple ingredients, you can make it pass for something that's almost, if not completely, drinkable.

Cinnamon

Straight up, this one was very hot, if not somewhat astringent and harsh. We threw in six ounces of simple syrup, in hopes to dilute and make it more palatable, which it did ... more or less. We could imagine this working well in a daiquiri with some ginger syrup and lime juice, to round out the flavor a little. We realize that a significant portion of our readership are sadists, so feel free to play with the ratio of cinnamon and sugar if you like it when it burns.

500ml of Erguotou Baijiu

4 cinnamon sticks

simple syrup to taste (optional)

Banana Chips

The flavor has a quick curve, going from delicious banana back to baijiu in a split second. It would be preferable if the taste were a long arch that resulted in an extended salsa dance with the Chiquita Banana lady with a little baijiu flavored burp an hour after imbibing, but we are not miracle workers. Regardless, after a few sips it becomes quite drinkable, although a heavy gulp may still cause a dangerous stomach turn.

500ml of Erguotou Baijiu

2 cups of banana chips



DAILY ROUTINE

FIT THIS CLASSIC JOINT INTO YOUR SCHEDULE



 300m west of Yonghegong (Line 2, Line 5)

If you have yet to check out Daily Routine, then make time in your schedule because this place directly competes with any other cocktail bar in the city, with decent prices and eats to match. Plus, the cheesecake was exceptionally dope. *Kipp Whittaker*



See the menu & more at www.ganges-restaurant.com



WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS



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东城区香饵胡同

 500m west of Beixinqiao (Line 5)

Steampunk is a weird thing that huffed and puffed its way into the collective consciousness in the middle of the last decade. I never quite understood the point of the movement, as it always seemed a little silly, characterized by things like wearing turn of the last century protective eyewear, making Rube Goldberg machines to wash your dog, or swagging out on some clunky copper accessories found on Etsy. Jules Verne would probably throw up if he were still alive to see this aesthetic in action.

Luckily there isn't much neo-Victorian swag shoved in your face at this new Xiang'er Hutong bar. Instead, Steam Punk offers bargain beers and a couple of silly cocktails to get you where you need to be during a night out on the town.

The room is super small - a group of about 10 people would turn the place into a sardine can - and is overlooked by a small wiry angel figurine with a perpetually moving system of wheels pulleys set up to make it flap its wings. This purveyor of steampunk added ambient squeaks to the sounds of Tom Waits and Bjork on the speakers.

The proprietor was friendly and ready to fix up a small number of cocktails (RMB 30). There's Steam Punk #1 which is a sweet tequila-based drink, and a blue one called Steam Punk #2. Nothing very revolutionary if you ask us, so we stuck with a Long Island Ice Tea. The beers here are mind-bogglingly cheap. You can get Guinness, Chimay, or Duvel for RMB 20, prices that are hard to beat. No doubt peeps will keep returning for this but who knows for how long with such a dubious profit margin. *Kipp Whittaker*

PHOTO: KIPP WHITTAKER

WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

GODFATHERS

CRIMINALLY GOOD FOOD AND DRINKS

Daily 11am-midnight. 44 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District (135 5292 5022)

朝阳区光华路44号

 700m northeast of Jianguomen (Line 1, Line 2)

Godfathers sits adjacent to Caravan on Guanghua Lu and despite the name there's no need to be afraid of getting whacked. What they did do is load us up with enough fish and chips and cold beer to make us feel like gangsters.

Godfathers is set in the middle of embassy town, on the west end Guanghua Lu and Ritan Park, an area that lacks abundant meal options and often forces the diplomatic community to migrate to other areas for their lunchtime and dinner concessions. The interior is clean and comfy in that classic bar motif. The walls were covered with "Godfather" posters for obvious reasons and there was a foosball table for the kiddies.

After getting settled in, we ordered the fish and chips (RMB 50) and a glass of La Chouffe (RMB 50). The mix of all this fried food was massive and everything we hoped it would be. Luckily it was served with a starter salad sprinkled with roasted pine nuts, so we didn't feel like complete fatties. The fish also came with a side of fries and upon request mixed with some calamari. Everything else on the small menu is straight-up bar food, such as chicken drum sticks (RMB 50) or bangers (RMB 50). We overheard that soon they will be making their own Australian-style meat pies and sausages on site.

There's a decently priced selection of draft or bottled beers, wine, and spirits. Show up during their happy hour (5-7pm) for discounts including half price draft beers, spirits, and house wines. Now that's an offer we couldn't refuse.

Kipp Whittaker



PHOTO: KIPP WHITTAKER

1% FOR THE PLANET

patagonia

GUNG HO 钢板比萨

PRESENT

BEIJING EARTH DAY FESTIVAL

北京地球日环保节



PERFORMANCES
KIDS' ENTERTAINMENT
LIVE MUSIC
PRESENTATIONS
MOVIE SCREENING
CHARITY AUCTION
FOOD & DRINK

4PM - 10PM WEDNESDAY APRIL 22

NTH PROMENADE SANLITUN SOHO

4月22日周三16:00点至22:00点

三里屯SOHO的北下沉广场

OFFICIAL MEDIA PARTNER thebeijinger



DE REFTER

BUSINESS CLASS BELGIAN BEER

Daily 5:30pm-2am. Courtyard 4, Gongti Beilu (across from The Rug), Chaoyang district
朝阳区工体北路4号院

 400m west of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

Belgian beer is nothing new to Beijing. You can find it in any chain store in the city, which definitely signifies the intense interest Beijingers must have in these delightfully potent beers. We honestly wonder how those rotund Trappiste monks, diligently brewing the concoctions, keep up with the ravenous demand.

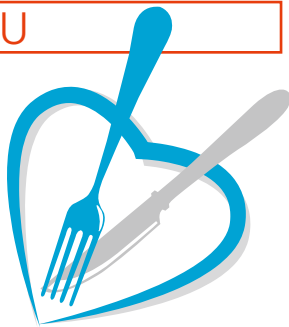
The newest place to quench this thirst is De Rafter, located next door to Janes & Hooch. Red neon honeycombs decorate the ceiling and a warm wood and brick design scheme give the place a smart and cozy vibe. Although it lacks the discounted prices and delicate fragrance of urine wafting from the bathroom at places like Heaven Supermarket, this new kid in town definitely follows the same template of filling up fridges with a supreme selection of fermented potions.

The menu is divided according to type of brew, including abbey ales, dubbels, trippels, and lambics. There are even a couple of uncommon ones that you will

unlikely find at any other bar in town, including Deus (RMB 380), which is quite literally the “Champagne of beers.” It undergoes fermentation and maturation in Belgium, then it’s sent off to the Champagne region of France, where sugars and yeast are added for re-fermentation and further aging. These come with an understandable price tag, but at least they are available if you are willing drop the drinkgeld. Make sure to slip in between 5:30-8:30pm for their daily happy hour where all drafts (RMB 45-70) are buy-one-get-one free. The management informed us they will eventually serve up burgers, paninis, barbecue and other beer-friendly eats by the time of their official opening in April.

Whether or not Beijing needs another bar specializing in posh beers, we have it and now with a slightly different and swankier angle, which is definitely where this new brew house succeeds. *Kipp Whittaker*

P.S. WE ATE YOU



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

pesto pork meatballs

The Meatball Company, RMB 38

The meatballs everyone has been raving about are perfect for lunch delivered to your office, or dinner delivered to your house. Choose your meat, your sauce, and add sides if you want. Our favorite combo is pork and pesto.

ma yuan

Huatian Emei Jiujia, RMB 12

These little deep-fried glutinous rice balls covered in sesame seeds are our new favorite discovery. Desserts aren't a specialty in Chinese restaurants, so if you do have a sweet tooth, finish off your meal with these on special occasions.

pollo tacos

Taco Bar, RMB 45

That Taco Bar is amazing is not a secret anymore. We love their *pollo* tacos; three grilled tender chicken soft tacos topped off with cherry tomatoes, sour cream, and some other veggies. Depending on your spice tolerance, it's best to add some extra chili sauce for that kick.

pork bone broth ramen

Baoli Ramen, RMB 36

There's still time to fit a few last bowls of belly-warming ramen before the weather renders the experience sweatier than preferable, and Baoli Ramen's pork bone broth, filled with noodles perfect to the bite, slivers of salty seaweed, and melt-in-your-mouth pork, is one of our favorites.

fish and chips

京A Taproom, Price TBD

As a Brit, the search for good fish and chips in Beijing seems endless and very often fruitless. Luckily, 京A have come to the rescue with their version, featuring perfectly crisp and tasty batter. Now if they'll only serve proper chips instead of sweet potato fries.



Sunday Roast Carvery

Bring back fond family memories at 29 Grill. The chef will be preparing Yorkshire puddings and gravy served with your choice of grilled and roast meats. Enjoy a huge selection of fresh salads, cheeses and cold cuts as well as a Sushi and Sashimi counter. Our wine trolley with our Sommeliers special selections to choose from and a beautiful selection of desserts. The perfect way to spend your Sunday afternoon.

CNY588 + 15% per person

Every Sunday, 11:30am to 3:00pm.

t: 86.10.65846300



TWENTY NINE grill
廿九間



Level 2, Conrad Beijing
29 North Dongsanhuan Road
Chaoyang District, Beijing 100027, China

北京康莱德酒店二层
中国北京市朝阳区东三环北路29号 邮编 100027

Things to do, places to be, stuff to try

GO

TOMS // RADIANCE TRUNK // HANOI // DE SARTHE GALLERY



Bespoke Beijing Public Tour: The Story of Communism

April 11, 12, 25, 26 – Following their last successful public tour, charting the latter years of Emperor Puyi's reign, Bespoke Beijing are back with another tour covering that trickiest of subjects, the story of the early years of Communism in China. Visit the university where Chairman Mao Zedong got his first job as a librarian, learn about the influential Song Sisters, and much, much more. RMB 300. 1-4pm.

PHOTO: WIDEAWAKENESS.COM



TOMS

PHILANTHROPIC FOOTWEAR BRAND ENTERS THE CAPITAL

Daily 10am-10pm. AA67E, 1 Chang'an Jie, Oriental Plaza, Dongcheng District (8518 6712)

东城区东长安街1号东方新天地一层AA67E



50m east of Wangfujing (Line 1)

The new TOMS shoe store at the foot of Beijing Oriental Plaza's dizzyingly lengthy roll call of foreign brands offers a brief intermission from single-minded consumerism. TOMS' business model is all about letting lovers of fashion give something back – in this case, it's a donation to a child in need. The US brand has sent more than 35 million pairs of new shoes to youth in more than 70 countries as part of its One for One project. Fans of the brand may have heard about founder Blake Mycoskie's commitment to villages in Argentina, but what the imagery in the new TOMS store doesn't tell you is that TOMS has donated more than 600,000 pairs of shoes to children in 10 Chinese provinces, and they're not stopping there.

If it's true that Chinese consumers are moving away from labels in search of a more meaningful ways to shop, then TOMS' philanthropic efforts may be one answer to their search. The shop, which displays hard-to-miss "GIVE"

signage, offers a wide range of the signature comfortable and casual TOMS footwear for women, men, and children in trendy prints and colors, and it doesn't disappoint for those looking for a shoe outside the realm of a canvas slip-on. Desert and chukka boots, brogues, and sneakers are in high supply, while the TOMS spring collection offers comfy and cute woolen shoes in celebration of the Year of the Ram. When we visited their shop display even featured a few good fortune red styles for good measure.

We know what you're thinking: Will TOMS' entry into China be enough to stamp out all those copycats in the markets? We're certainly breathing a sigh of relief that Chinese shoppers now have the chance to wear the style and make the donation. To make sure they're getting the real deal, shoppers can turn to the TOMS online store or one of the 25 stores set to be open across the country by the end of 2016. *Jessica Rapp*



RADIANCE TRUNK

QUALITY THREADS AREN'T DEAD

Tues-Sun 1pm-9pm. 102-103, 30 Sanlitun Rd, Chaoyang District (6409 4484)

朝阳区三里屯路30号楼1单元底商



700m northwest of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

We are really impressed by some of the new shops opening up in Sanlitun, just north of Taikoo Li. In the past year, a number of retail stores focusing on designer and handmade threads have taken over this strip to cater towards people whose style decisions lie on the fringe. The newest example being Radiance Trunk.

The concept of this shop relies heavily on its owner Samuel Hsin's interest in all things that possess that certain aura of craftsmanship and quality. Many items found here have an antique aesthetic, which also coincides with the plethora of WWII artifacts strewn about, making it a kind of mix between a crafty clothing retail and an army surplus store.

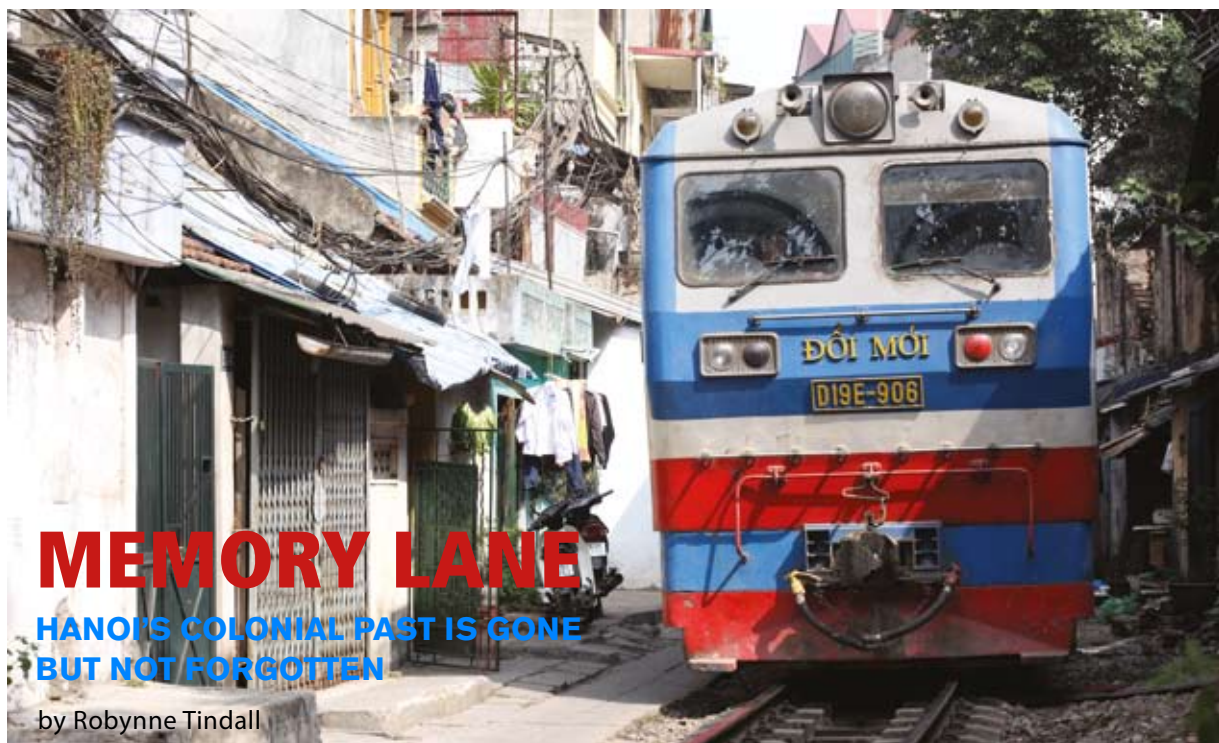
The garments available are made to be imbued with a character that can only be achieved through wear, marks, and fades. Often manufactured with rugged base materials, new old stock buttons, and zippers that reflect a timeless style and sense of craftsmanship that

is more often than not neglected in favor of cheap and eventually disposable.

Some of the heritage brands Samuel distributes include leather jackets from Himel Brothers, raw denim from Rising Sun, and classic shirts from designers like Nigel Cabourn. These brands are made with contemporary techniques by the hands of craftsmen who have taken cues from the designs of past eras in order to embody a unique combination of timeless fit, look, and functionality.

They also have a small selection of accessories. This includes fedoras, which are still quite popular here despite being a trend that went down faster than Harrison Ford's airplane. It's quite possible that Asian and old Latino men are among the only people on the planet who can effectively pull off this kind of swag. Caucasians should probably stay away from the headwear, but everything else is definitely worthy of your fashion consideration.

Kipp Whittaker



MEMORY LANE

HANOI'S COLONIAL PAST IS GONE
BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

by Robynne Tindall

With several three-day weekends coming up over the next few months, Hanoi is the perfect destination for a short break filled with delectable street food and vibrant colonial heritage. The weather in April and May is starting to heat up but will not yet have reached the sauna-like temperatures of summer. Vietnam Airlines flies direct to Hanoi on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays, a brief four-hour hop from Beijing, with friendly staff and new planes.

What to see

Hanoi's Old Quarter is the beating heart of the city. Also known as the 36 Streets after the streets that traditionally made up the area, each specializing in a different product or service, it is still the best place to shop for souvenirs such as silk or just to generally soak up the hectic atmosphere – watch out for the scooters! Design hunters (or those sick of the ubiquitous “I Love Hanoi” t-shirts) shouldn't miss Tan My Design on Hang Gai for beautiful homeware and accessories from local designers. If shopping isn't your thing, join the joggers and handholding couples for an evening stroll around Hoan Kiem Lake, before ending up at one of the area's many rooftop bars.

Where to stay

With its *fin de siècle* colonial architecture and French pave-

ment café, the Sofitel Legend Metropole is the definitive Hanoi hotel experience. Be sure to make the most of it with a room in the original Metropole wing (from USD 279 per night). Newly-opened boutique hotel Hanoi La Siesta Hotel and Spa in the Old Quarter (from USD 70 per night) offers a cheaper but still chic option, with helpful staff, a relaxing spa and an indulgent daily breakfast buffet, including *pho* as good as you'll get anywhere in town.

Where to dine

Don't limit yourself to hotel food though, because Hanoi is a dream destination for the gastronomic explorer. You can't walk more than 10 meters without tripping over a street food stall. Most places specialize in just one dish, so put together a moveable feast and flit between stalls serving steam bowls of *pho*, piping hot rice noodle rolls filled with pork and shrimp (*banh cuon*), or piquant green papaya salad. For a slightly more upscale experience, head to Chim Sao in the French Quarter, specializing in dishes inspired by northern Vietnam's ethnic minorities. The minced pigeon with crispy prawn crackers is exquisite. Save yourself from the inevitable food coma with a cup of Vietnam's potent Robusta coffee. Giang Café is famous for egg coffee, a shot of strong coffee topped with a whisked egg yolk and sugar mixture made with the same secret recipe since the 1940s.



DE SARTHE GALLERY BREAKS DOWN ART BOUNDARIES

by Erin Strong

Our new occasional art column, aiming to highlight artists, galleries, and prominent aficionados in Beijing, coincides with data firm Artprice releasing statistics showing China dominating in dollar value art acquisitions, maintaining its position as the global number one buyer in this ravenously intense race.

As the wealthy middle class grows, the need for contemporary culture, and the telling refinements of personal taste, emerges in private homes with the acquisitions of art from well-established practitioners and rising stars. Beijing's latest space in Caochangdi, De Sarthe Gallery, brings a new focus to art with Zhou Wendou (Zhou shows off his previous work *Helmet and Diamond Dream*, opposite) exhibiting his installation *Borderless* at their official opening on April 4.

"What makes De Sarthe Beijing different to our other galleries in Hong Kong and the USA," says owner Vincent De Sarthe, "is the need to showcase investment art." While contemporary art will remain an integral part of gallery operations, De Sarthe Beijing aims to drive the idea of investment art: pieces that are transferable from public exhibitions, and can be re-homed in the collections of enthusiastic buyers. Therefore it's appropriate that Zhou is showcasing his solo exhibition *Borderless* to highlight this burgeoning commercial crossover ideal. A special installation piece of metal cast from the fissures of a large slab of concrete, at once an installation that exudes a directionless, yet anxiously confined, sense of existence, shows De Sarthe Beijing's future direction perfectly.

The vernissage opens April 4 with the exhibition showing until May 10 at De Sarthe Gallery 328-D Caochangdi, 草场地 328—D.

GET THE LOOK

Aviva Shih
Founder of Comfyy

Her style: My style changes a lot, but I like the definition my friend gave me: an “eclectic, eccentric, modern, cool girl.”

Favorite places to shop:

Parkview Green, Lane Crawford, Sanlitun, and the occasional vintage fair for accessories

She splurged for: “A dashing green fur coat for more than RMB 20,000. I barely wear it, but the dye is so divine. I love the color green so much that I have to collect items in different shades of green.”

Guilty pleasure garment: “I’m a rational client. I have many dresses, knitwear, jewelry, and heels, but when I reach a certain amount, I stop buying. As I’ve gotten older, it’s increasingly rare that I purchase pieces that don’t match my style or other collections.”

What she’s wearing: Ted Baker dress, Rachel Zoe shoes

Find out more about Aviva’s new platform based on the individual concept of home on its official WeChat page ComfyLuxury-Home.



BAIT AND STITCH

TWO OF BEIJING’S STYLISH
SHARE THEIR SECRETS

by Jessica Rapp



MinJu Park
Business Student and Creative Consultant

Her style: “Minimalist and monochrome, functional, and no-fuss. For me, it’s more about textures and fabrics than colors and patterns. I don’t wear a lot of white or light colors because I’m the biggest klutz and I spill things. I never wear jeans. I like to have some architectural element to my clothes, and I have to be comfortable. Skincare is essential because I don’t wear a lot of makeup.”

How she shops: “I don’t go shopping very often, but anything I buy should be able to go with other items in my wardrobe, and be worn in different ways. I’ve modified many of my clothes.”

Style hack: “When I have a big presentation or if I need a confidence boost, I paint on my brightest red lipstick, and suddenly I feel like I can take on anything.”

Style transformation: “I used to think more clothes meant more choices. I was stopped at an airport once because I had so many pairs of shoes in my luggage that they thought I was trying to smuggle them in to sell. I’ve since downsized by about 60 percent, and now I’m more concerned with how I wear something as opposed to what I’m wearing.”

Who inspires her in Beijing’s style scene: Neemic, a Beijing-based brand that uses light, eco-friendly fabrics.

What she’s wearing: A lantern-shaped skirt bought by her sister in Seoul (she added fasteners so that it can be worn different ways), a shawl from her mom’s closet, a belt that’s the shoulder strap from a D.D.O bag, and shoes from a Shandong market. *When MinJu isn’t perusing Beijing’s fabric markets, she’s juggling numerous projects. Look out for the launch of her new website minjupark.com*

Introducing the people who matter

MEET

BLIXA BARGELD // MICHAEL MEYER // GENJING RECORDS // DIEGO FUNKYTO



April 1 – Pitbull

Miami's tuxedo-wearing bad boy is going to playing with fire at the Wukesong Arena. By fire we mean some smoking hot jock jams that will light up the night for maximum booty shaking potential. RMB 380-1,680. 7:30pm. MasterCard Center (6828 6386)

PHOTO: THEAUDIOPIENV.COM

DONGBEI OPUS

MICHAEL MEYER DISCUSSES HIS
NORTHEASTERN CHINESE TRAVELOGUE,
IN MANCHURIA

From its raw, relentless winds to its barren, icy planes, the tiny northeastern Chinese village known as Wasteland seems more than suited to its name. But when Michael Meyer writes about his sojourn to that frigid locale in *In Manchuria: A Village Called Wasteland and the Transformation of Rural China*, the award winning travel writer devotes his most evocative imagery to the village's rugged beauty. He doesn't quite romanticize this harshly exotic region, but there is a romantic element to the book: Wasteland is the hometown of his wife, Frances. Below, Meyer tells us how that far-flung locale – and its tenacious locals – became his muse.

Many expat reporters have written excellent, non-fiction China travelogues. But most of them focus on southern provinces. Did you feel the genre was lacking a definitive *dongbei* (northeastern) book?

I was attracted to Wasteland because it's in what I consider the most beautiful and interesting part of China. Also, I knew that anchoring the book there would allow my research to drift through the surrounding cities and relics, which illuminate the country's recent history, and its next era – mainly the increased importance of corporate farming, and its regionalism and decentralization.

The northeast is a region apart. In general, the people are bigger, franker and – as many boasted to me – champion storytellers, and exaggerators. After living in a Beijing that was tearing itself down and making itself anew, the thing that most surprised me about *dongbei* was the ongoing, palpable legacy of its past 100 years, with ruins scattered across its plains like playing pieces in a game called Empire. The Japanese occupation and its aftermath are particularly present. I visited sites where chemical weapons were still being unearthed, walked through former Manchukuo ministerial buildings and Shinto temples, a POW camp that held survivors of the Bataan Death March, and a cemetery sanctioned by Zhou Enlai that held the remains of Japanese settlers.

The book is both macro and micro -- the passages about Wasteland's history fit nicely with anecdotes about your own history with Frances. Was it



challenging to find that balance?

I wanted to write a love letter to the northeast – and my family – but for it to resonate with a general audience, the historical context was crucial, and a lot of fun to research.

What was the biggest hurdle that you faced while writing *In Manchuria*?

I found that it's much more difficult writing about family than it is about strangers, and much harder to write about a village than it is a city. In a city, and with strangers, nothing is known – or what is known is small compared to what fits into a book. But family, and a village, go on forever. Memories are like the weather – the fourth dimension on a farm. Resentments steep like tea leaves. The wonderful thing about nonfiction, however, is that a book goes through multiple rounds of fact checking, and has compendious source notes. In the end, everyone was satisfied that the “most honest” version of themselves was on the page, even when they were – perhaps – being less than truthful, such as the man who says he slept with an alien.

Will you visit Wasteland again? If so, what part of the trek are you most looking forward to?

I have a toddler son who the village can't wait to meet, so we'll visit once the northwest Mistral (wind) dies down and the land thaws out. The book will come out in two versions this autumn, so I'll deliver copies to Wastelanders then.

In Manchuria: A Village Called Wasteland and the Transformation of Rural China is published by Bloomsbury Press, and is available on Amazon, at The Bookworm and other bookstores.

BUILDING BRIDGES

HOW BEIJING'S UNDERGROUND MAKES MOVES

by Kipp Whittaker

As the only record label in China specializing in vinyl releases, Genjing has been unleashing China's underground music upon the world, one seven-inch at a time. No other DIY or indie label in China is creating the output at a speed comparable to Genjing, making their presence on the domestic and international scenes almost as loud as the music they release.

With a catalogue now is 45 releases deep with 15 of those just in the past year, founder and punk provocateur Nevin Domer hopes that "Genjing can be used as a vehicle for spreading knowledge of the Chinese scene, while building bridges between musicians here with like-minded artists around the world." Here's a history



of the label in five releases that reflect this mission and have helped extend a variety Chinese sounds into the global pantheon of independent music.



Fanzui Xiangfa / Daighila Split (2010)

This is the first release in the Genjing catalogue, put out following a Southeast Asian tour with Nevin's hardcore punk unit, Fanzui Xiangfa and Daighila a screamo band from Malaysia. It's a sample of some raw sounds coming from both of these countries, which are normally not associated with this genre.

"Castle" by Dear Eloise (2011)

A fuzz-drenched, yet elegant single that sounds like if Galaxy 500 recorded in a hive filled with angry bees. This record exhibits Genjing's desire to expand beyond the scope of a normal punk label into something more encompassing and symbolic Beijing's varied musical landscape.

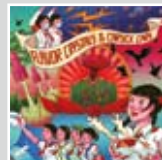


"Music for Advertisements" by Li Daiguo (2013)

This record shows Genjing's reach spilling out of Beijing and into other provinces. Li Daiguo is a notorious folk and experimental improviser using a mix of traditional Chinese instruments and vocal techniques to create a series of advertisements for specific locations in Chengdu.

Carsick Cars / Flavor Crystals (2014)

Here Genjing pairs together Beijing's Carsick Cars with Flavor Crystals from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to inaugurate a series of split 7-inch records used to pair bands from China and beyond and build bridges between these artists and promote further collaborations.



Hot & Cold / Tonstartssbandht (2014)

This record redefines the geographic definition of the split series between Chinese and foreign bands, and thickens the concept, by pairing two bands of brothers. One, Hot & Cold, an American two-piece from Beijing and the other Tonstartssbandht from Florida. Both bands kick out weirdo blends of folk, rock and electronic noise, swashed with fraternal sentiments.

Genjing Records has no plans of slowing down, with releases from Yang Fan, FUZZ, and Deadly Cradle Death now in production. Check out Genjing Records on the web for more info, www.genjingrecords.com.

DIEGO FUNKYTO

DJ CRYSTAL BONES

Can you play any instruments? If so, what?

I used to play piano and saxophone when I was young but I was never really good. I even played mouth harp quite a lot. Now I leave that to real musicians that I respect a lot and I prefer to DJ. So I can pass on the music I love to others without committing crimes.

What song would you sing on a TV talent show?

Either Celine Dion's "My Heart Will Go On" or Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You." I really sing horribly wrong but I have a very powerful voice and huge lung capacity. It's a massacre every time but also quite impressive.

What is your favorite song to sing at karaoke?

Like I said, my singing prowess are close to zero, even though I love singing. My life is made of contradictions. When I was 12, my music teacher let us choose between singing and flute in class. I was the only one who didn't have the choice, and had to play flute. So if I had to choose I would go for Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas is You."

What was your favorite period or year for music?

For me the end of the 70s and the beginning of the 80s was the most interesting period. And I would add "in New York." Disco, funk, hip hop, punk, electronic music were all tied together in a huge maelstrom of music. Some genres were dying while some were being born at the same time. It was an intense period of creativity and artistic liberty. I would have loved to be there to witness that.

Which artist would you most like for a drink with?

James Murphy. From the sadly buried band LCD Soundsystem and boss of DFA Records. He made the perfect synthesis of disco and rock, and has released the most original bands from the 2000s and still DJs disco like a boss. The guy must have a great vision about life, music,



love and I would definitely enjoy hearing all about it!

Which singer would you bring back from the dead?

I think I would want to see Janis Joplin in action. If this voice can make you have goose bumps on CD, then imagine what it could do to you live! I would go crazy maybe.

Name a song or record for your time in Beijing?

The Human League, "The Things that Dreams are Made of." There might be a better song but this one sums up pretty well why I left for Beijing and what I found here.

Catch DJ Crystal Bones at Dim Sum Disco on April 4 at Migas

DIEGO FUNKYTO'S FIVE-SONG PLAYLIST



"Kiss me Again" by
Dinosaur L



"Fernglänzend" by
Wim Mertens



"Love is in the Air" by
John Paul Young



"I'm an Indian too" by
Don Armando's 2nd Ave.
Rhumba Band



"The City Never Sleeps"
by The Crystal Ark



INDUSTRIAL TO CLASSICAL. BERLIN TO BEIJING.

AVANT-GARDE ROCKER BLIXA BARGELD DRAWS PARALLELS
BETWEEN HIS HOMELAND AND CHINA

by Kyle Mullin



What sort of changes?

Structural things. His first version of “Buntmetalldiebe,” was completely different originally. I wanted it to be more cinematic, and I tried to make it oscillate more between its main ideas.

You wrote that song’s lyrics in your native tongue, but aside from German you also sing in Italian and English on *Still Smiling*. Tell us about that challenge.

I hadn’t sung in Italian before. But it’s not new for me to sing in a language I don’t even speak. I do speak a little Italian. I learned Latin in school, which helped.

Did you learn to sing in Mandarin while living in Beijing?

I took some classes while I was there. But I’ve forgotten more Chinese than I ever learned.

What did you enjoy most about Beijing’s music scene while living here?

I used to go to 2 Kolegas. I heard they recently closed it. But I used to go a lot because my friend, Yan Jun, would perform there. He’s part of the avant-garde scene, which I wouldn’t say was to my taste, but it was to my interest. It was a highly creative and interesting time, especially leading up to the Olympics. The Beijing musicians that I met and worked with had quite a lot of similarities to what Berlin was like in the 80s.

How so?

In terms of attitude. Not in their sound. Sound really doesn’t mean anything. It was their attitude. That’s what’s important.

Do you think Einstürzende Neubauten will ever perform in Beijing?

It would not be easy to do. Everything gets recycled in China, so it’s not like you can go around finding metal on the ground there. At least not the amount of metal needed for an Einstürzende Neubauten show.

He first became famous for unleashing blood-curdling shrieks in Berlin’s warehouse venues. But nearly 30 years later, Blixa Bargeld began working on a far different musical project in a much cushier setting.

“I was sitting in the bar at the Opposite House in Sanlitun, when I got an email of song sketches from Teho,” Bargeld told *the Beijinger* of his time living in Beijing in 2008, when he began working remotely with Italian composer Teho Teardo. That project eventually became *Still Smiling*, a lauded avant-garde LP that was far more restrained than Bargeld’s earlier work with the brazen industrial outfit Einstürzende Neubauten (Knocking Down New Buildings), or his stint as guitarist for Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds. Bargeld and Teardo went on to record *Still Smiling* in their homelands – Berlin and Rome, respectively – releasing the album in 2013. We caught up with the singer before his April 1 return to Beijing, where he will perform those ominously subdued tunes for his old Chinese friends.

How has Teardo pushed you in ways that your other collaborators haven’t?

I think it was me that was trying to get the best out of Teho (*laughs*). I don’t love everything he does. When he first sent me the sketches for *Still Smiling*, I had to make many changes.

What are you planning to do?

EVENTS

OUR EDITORS PICK THE BEST OF THE MONTH

UPLOAD YOUR EVENTS AT THEBEIJINGER.COM/EVENTS

FIND ALL VENUE INFO AT THEBEIJINGER.COM/DIRECTORY. PLEASE CALL VENUES AHEAD OF TIME TO CONFIRM DETAILS.



A GUY CALLED GERALD + JIGSAW

APR 4 – Known as one of the founding fathers of UK acid house, Gerald Simpson is a living legend. On this night, he'll be joining forces with young techno mastermind, Jigsaw, for a mad evening that will burn the house down with dangerously funky voodoo rays. RMB 100. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPLIT WORKS

DON'T MISS

DON'T MISS – EASTER SUNDAY

DREAM LAND EASTER BRUNCH AT VIC RESTAURANT

APR 5 – Have a stress-free Easter at VIC, where you can indulge in a delicious international buffet and free-flow drinks, while the kids take part in an Easter egg hunt. From RMB 420. Noon. VIC (8599 6666)

CAPITAL M MOVIE NIGHT: EASTER PARADE

APR 5 – The perfect Easter movie: Fred Astaire, Judy Garland, the music of Irving Berlin, and an Easter Parade on Fifth Avenue. RMB 75. 5pm. Capital M (6702 2727)

COMPTOIRS DE FRANCE EASTER EGG HUNT

APR 5 – Comptoirs' annual Easter egg hunt is back for children from two to 10 years old. Register at the Eastlake Villas branch of Comptoirs to be in with a chance of winning giant chocolate prizes. 9am. Eastlake Villas

EASTER SUNDAY CELEBRATION AT ST. REGIS BEIJING

APR 5 – Enjoy brunch in St. Regis' sunny courtyard garden, including free-flow Veuve Clicquot Champagne and fun games like Easter egg hunt and cupcake decorating with the hotel's pastry chef. RMB 588. 11.30am. Garden Court, St. Regis Beijing (6460 6688)

EASTER-THEMED AFTERNOON TEA

APR 5 – Settle in for an Easter-themed afternoon tea at the Waldorf Astoria Beijing's sumptuous Peacock Alley. Sample special chocolates and traditional Easter cakes and desserts. RMB 388. 2pm. Peacock Alley (8520 8989)

EASTER SUNDAY SUNRISE AT THE GREAT WALL

APR 5 – Perfect for early birds, The Brickyard are offering a complimentary bus service to the Beigou trailhead so you can walk up onto the Great Wall for sunrise. 4.30-5.30am. The Brickyard Inn and Retreat Center (6162 6506)

BUNNIES, EGGS, AND MORE AT MATRIX

APR 5 – Rabbits, face painting, and Polaroid photos will keep the kids entertained while you enjoy a buffet spread and a la carte chef's specials. RMB 388. 11.30am. Crowne Plaza Beijing Lido (6437 3388)

"SHARE OF LOVE" EASTER BUNNY BRUNCH

APR 5 – As well as a special Easter-themed brunch, Ritz-Carlton have teamed up with Golden Wings Charity School to present the "Design an Easter Egg" exhibition at Aroma all day dining restaurant, with funds raised going to help autistic children. RMB 598. 11.30am. Aroma (5908 8161)

HOP TO KERRY'S EASTER SUNDAY BRUNCH

APR 5 – Seafood selections, traditional Easter snacks and a dedicated counter of Easter desserts await at Kerry's Kitchen, along with live entertainment and their famous Adventure Zone for kids. RMB 538. 11.30am. Kerry's Kitchen (8565 2088)



EVENTS



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1. GREAT LEAP BREWING CHILI COOK-OFF

APR 11 – The back alley chili cook-off is back! Get to the original Great Leap Brewing for a day of chili, beer, chili, and more beer. Your entry gets you sampling privileges on all 15 competing chilies, two beers, and suffrage. RMB 150. 2pm-6pm. Great Leap Brewing Original (5717 1399)

2. AUDIOEYES FEATURING DJUMA SOUNDSYSTEM

APR 3 – Join DJ and Producer Djuma Soundsystem as he's joined by local favorites Audioeyes for night of trippy house, disco, and techno that will make you shake your naughty bits into next week. RMB 50. 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)

3. COMPUTER LOVE

APR 25 – Pei returns with Beijing's biggest night of disco, corralling Beijing's dance fiends with help from local legends Eddie Lv and techno/ambient wizard Christiaan Virant. Expect a dusk till dawn disco session that will heat things up to groovy levels. Free. 10pm. Dada. (183 1108 0818)

4. THE GAYMAZING RACE

APR 25 – This great event combines the best parts of the "Amazing Race," hutong debauchery, and Beijing's gay community. Teams of four race around the city to five different bars until a full poker hand is dealt and every member of the team is sufficiently inebriated. All proceeds go to the Beijing LGBT Center. RMB 400 per team. 9pm. Great Leap Brewing #6 (5712 4376)

5. WOODY OFFLINE PRESENTS: DJ NOBU

APR 18 – Woody Offline calls on SPACE DEBRIS COMMITTEE to bring you DJ Nobu: The perfect pontiff of underground audio obscure and techno treaded into a compelling story. He will keep you on your toes as each gig he plays has an adjusted concept. RMB 60. 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)



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1. NATIONAL GRILLED CHEESE DAY

APR 12 – To celebrate this cheesy holiday, The Corner Melt has some cheesy events in store for you, including a new spring menu roll-out. The first 50 customers that come in and wish us a Happy National Grilled Cheese Day will enjoy a free 'Merica Melt on the house. Free. 8am-12am. The Corner Melt (6415 3713)

2.SHFT. PRESENTS: GRAND THEFT

APR 17 – Grandtheft, known for stealing half the crowd from Ke\$ha's main stage performance at Shanghai's 2014 Storm Festival, is taking on Beijing's 8MM. He is a real turntableist, a versatile producer, and a crowd smashing performer. RMB 120, RMB 80 (advance). 10pm. 8MM

3. HOMEBREW MARKETPLACE

APR 25 – 京A is inviting back Beijing's homebrewers for a cooperative event made to showcase some new local talents with some homemade bucket brews featuring some interesting flavors. Try new beers and learn from others just getting started in the dark art of craft beer. Free. 5pm. 京A (6501 8883)

4. IKONIKA

APR 3 – With releases on Warp, Hyperdub, and Planet Mu, Ikonika's music combines melodic synth patterns, driving drums, melancholic sub bass to create unorthodox song structures that put most people to shame. RMB 60. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

5. MAKE OUT CLUB

APR 3, 17, 24 – Check out Soi Baochao as they host the city's premier weekly event for retro and underground music with DJs Compact Dicks and the Count of Monte Disco. Here you won't find monotonous bass heavy EDM, but the best in new wave, glam, and other weird yet fun genres. Only good kissers allowed. Free. 9pm. Soi Baochao (6401 1066)



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1. MEET THE FILMMAKER: "THE LAND OF MANY PALACES"

APR 4 – Join Culture Yard as they introduce you to up and coming documentary filmmakers Song Ting and Adam Smith. They will be screening their film about China's plans to relocate 250 million farmers to cities across the nation over the next 20 years. RMB 60. 7pm. Culture Yard (8404 4166)

2. ME, MY, MYTH (OFFICIAL OPENING)

APR 7 – Be sure to check out Brendan McCumstie's new exhibit using iconographic imagery and vexing logic on the canvas to take you on a narrative journey through time and space, challenging conceptions that a painted 2D surface is unable to convey movement. Free. 8pm. Escape Space Gallery

3. MIGAS TERRACE OPENING WEEKEND FEATURING THE LOS RESIDENTES ALL-STARS

APR 24 & 25 – Los Residentes' best DJs kick off a bigger and badder summer season on the newly re-fashioned terrace. They bring the beats, Beijing brings the skyline, and all you have to do is keep going. RMB 40 (Free before 10pm). 10pm-late. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)

4. RELEASE

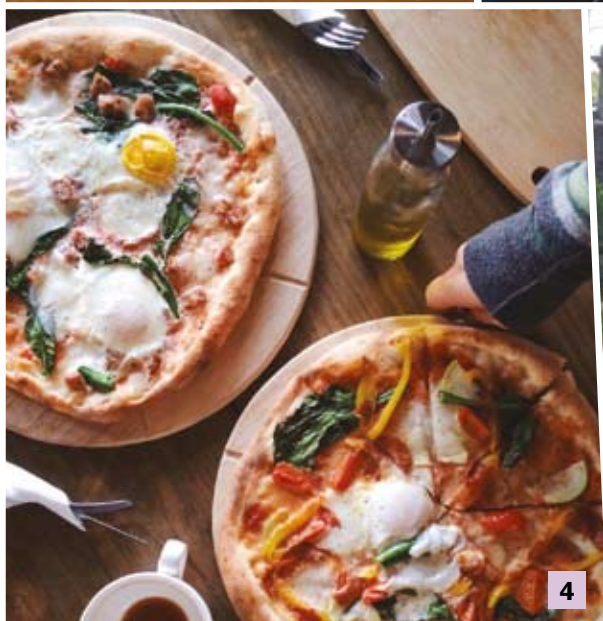
APR 30 – MAE celebrates two exciting events, firstly the newest edition of RELEASE at Tango 3rd Floor, launching a new electronic dance music track collaboration between Long Shen Dao and Dutch DJ duo The Partysquad. Secondly, the start-up of China's very first professional DJ Agency, MAD PANDA. RMB 100 (presale), RMB 150 (door). 10pm-4am. Tango 3rd Floor (186 1125 7960)



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1. SLIME HOUSE CINEMA PRESENTS: "WILD ZERO" AND "SON OF DRACULA"

APR 16 – Be prepared as a couple of true media nerds join forces to present a pairing of rocking horror films that star Guitar Wolf as a band of zombie slayers, and Harry Nilsson as Count Downe, the son of Dracula. Free. 8pm. Soi Baochao (6401 1066)

2. SLOW BOAT KITCHEN TAKEOVER

APR 6 – The Slow Boat Taproom will host Chef Michael Tsai of Palms L.A. Kitchen & Bar for their second takeover collaboration following last summer's huge success. Think craft beers specially paired with culinary creations by Palms and a surprise take-home gift for each gift. Contact Slow Boat at becky@slowboatbrewery.com for tickets. RMB 170. 7pm. Slow Boat Taproom (6538 5537)

3. ZARAH'S GRAND OPENING PARTY

APR 11 – Cafe Zarah has rebranded as Zarah and they are throwing a big party to show off their beautifully renovated space, new dishes, and signature cocktails. Free. 8pm. Zarah (8403 9807)

4. RAMO WINDOW OPENING PARTY

APR 4-5 – Celebrate the first weekend of April with Ramo, which is opening its windows for the ultimate hutong dining experience. Sit inside or outside and enjoy the weather alongside a more diversified weekend brunch menu available till late to the tunes of DJ Nassdak and DJ Cad73. 11am-late. Ramo (8403 5004)



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1. HOWIE B

APR 30 – Experience this legendary UK DJ and producer of artists like Bjork and U2 as he mixes away some magical trip hop in the booth, with support from Ni Bing and Dumb Plants. Not to be missed. RMB 60. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

2. STELLA PRESENTS: YUCK

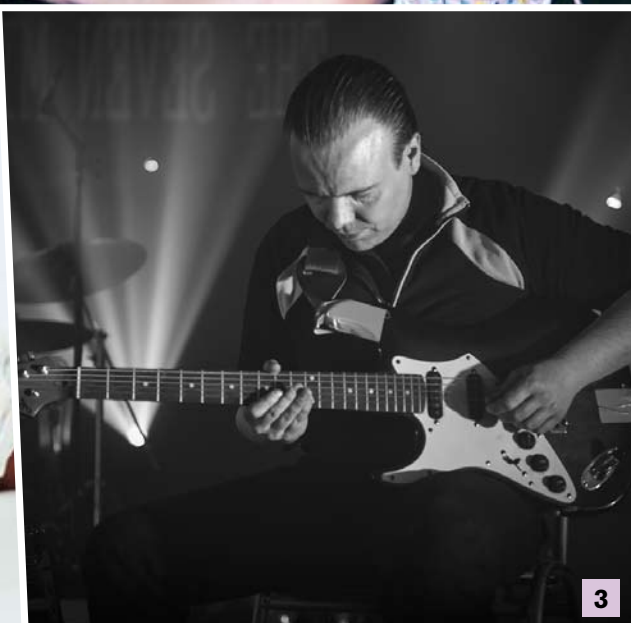
APR 24-25 – Yuck are an indie rock band that originated in London, England and often likened to the fuzzy slacker sounds of bands like Pavement, My Bloody Valentine, and Sonic Youth. Be ready to shoe-gaze till your ears fall off with their lackadaisical gloom. RMB 150, RMB 120 (advance). 8pm Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

3. GUEST CHEF ALAIN DEVAHIVE TOLOSA

APR 13-17 – Barcelona-born Chef Alain Devahive Tolosa spent a decade at the world-famous three-star Michelin elBulli. Catch him during the last stop of his Asian tour at Cépe of The Ritz-Carlton Beijing, Financial Street as he showcases his culinary talent. From RMB 588. 11.30am-10pm. Cepe (6629 6996)

4. THE SYNDICATE PRESENTS: OM UNIT

APR 11 – Beijing's biggest drum and bass night returns with another heavy hitter from the UK that will set your mind ablaze with hours of bass heavy jams. He will be joined by all the greats from the Syndicate crew. RMB 50 (or free with Skyscanner app on your phone). All day. Beijing Hikers (6432 2786)



1. PRE-EASTER PARTY

APR 4 – XIAN's sexy Easter bunnies have hidden their panties all over the bar. Find a pair of panties to get a free glass of Champagne or unearth the giant granny panties to win a bottle! Free. 8pm. XIAN (8414 9810)

2. THE DETROIT SERIES FEATURING TIMMY REGISFORD

APR 10 – The Detroit Series is back with one of the great legends of House Music, DJ/Producer Timmy Regisford. Known as one of the great legends of house music, he helped pioneer the soulful sound that has shaped the face of dance music today. RMB 50. 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)

3. THE SEVEN MILE JOURNEY

APR 11 – Join this Danish quartet as they lead you on power journey through new dimensional soundscapes and abstract instrumental storytelling the way only true masters of the post rock are capable. RMB 120, RMB 80 (advance). 9pm. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

4. FOOLS OF APRIL

APR 4 – Join the folks of Comedy Club China as they stop standing up and start partying out with DJs Ted Dancin, Tru\$t Fun, and Printer Jamz as they tear up the floor with some house party classics. Oh yeah, and there will be plenty of funny ways to get drunk and specials to accommodate the shenanigans. Free. 9pm. Soi Baochao (6401 1066)

GEORGE'S GUIDE TO LIVING IN CHINA WITHOUT LEARNING CHINESE

by George Ding

We've all met him: the foreigner who's lived in China for years but doesn't speak a lick of Chinese. How does he do it? How does he remain, against all odds, untouched by his surroundings, pristine in his primal form, like an insect preserved in amber? Some look down on this type of compatriot expatriate, but not me. I know that to go 10 or 20 years without learning how to order takeout is not luck — it is skill, refined through decades of indifference to local culture. Thankfully, it's easier than ever to develop this skill. So if you have a Chinese textbook in your home, burn it. Here's how to get by in China without ever learning Chinese.

FOOD

The most important issue is also the simplest to solve. Gone are the days when expats had to carry photos of kung pao chicken every time they left the house. Most restaurants today have an English menu or at least one with pictures. All you need to provide is a finger that points.

TRAVEL

Like a patient with Alzheimer's, carry a card with your name and home address on your person at all times. That way, when a Chinese passerby finds you wandering around Huilongguan at three in the morning, he can direct you to your home or healthcare facility.

Once you've mastered finding your home, you can start to collect business cards from the places you frequent, showing them to cab drivers whenever necessary. If this ever fails, don't panic. There's always the foolproof strategy of putting your friend who knows Mandarin on the phone to direct the cab driver.

WORK

A total inability to speak Mandarin might limit your career opportunities elsewhere, but not here! Most companies here are willing to dramatically lower their standards to accommodate native English speakers. What's more, the more professional your company is, the better your co-workers' English will be. Most will have a better grasp of English grammar than you and some might even possess a larger vocabulary. Take this opportunity to brush up on your mother tongue. But if you can't learn from your co-workers, they can still learn from you. In fact, by making no attempt at all to converse in Chinese, you're actually doing them a favor: forcing them to improve their English. Don't mind the whispering behind your back, in their heart of hearts they thank you for it.

TWO SIMPLE PHRASES

I'm not going to lie. Living in China without learning Chinese is difficult and should only be attempted by the truly obstinate. Of course life is much easier if you know Chinese. But what, you might ask, is the absolute minimum you must know to get by?

As long as you know these two simple phrases, there is no limit to the amount of time you can spend in China. 听不懂 (tīngbùdǒng) – "I don't understand." This is the magic bullet. Anytime someone says something to you with tones, this should be your go-to. (NOTE: This phrase is much more effective if said with a blatant foreign accent.)

我是美国人 (woshì měiguó rén) – "I'm an American." If someone is still bothering you after you've told them repeatedly you tīngbùdǒng, play this trump card. When a Chinese person hears this from someone who has made no attempt to engage with their culture, they usually leave that person alone. Forever.



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JANUARY

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FEBRUARY



March

Annual Reader Restaurant Awards



APRIL



May

Annual Reader Bar & Club Awards



JUNE

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July

Burger Festival



AUGUST

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September

Pizza Festival



October

14th Anniversary Party



NOVEMBER

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