

STOMP ★ WATER PARKS ★ PUNCH ★ CAVALIA ★ YUNNAN

thebeijinger

2016/07-08

SUMMER FUN IN BEIJING

POOLS, PICNICS, AND PONIES



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Cavalier

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New York Times



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This issue is all about making the most of the long Beijing summer. We've gathered punch recipes for your enjoyment, put together helpful picnic tips, and found the best places to cool off in the city, whether you're looking to swim for exercise or splash around with friends.

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THE SUNDAY
ISSUE

DAILY UPDATES,
EVENTS, AND
CLASSIFIEDS ON
THEBEIJINGER.
COM

Cover photograph
courtesy of Cavalia.



The most important dates this month

WHAT'S HAPPENING



JUL-AUG

Cavalia

From one of the co-founders of famed *Cirque du Soleil* comes *Cavalia*, a mix of equestrianism and performing arts. Having travelled through 70 cities and viewed by over 6 million people, the show continues to draw crowds in Beijing.

JUL 14

Surfer Blood

Surfer Blood come to China for the first time ever with their UV soaked blend of power pop and grungy new wave. Don't miss out as these Floridians shred the night away at Yugong Yishan.



JUL 26-17

Farm to Neighbors 2nd Anniversary

Celebrate the 2nd anniversary of Farm to Neighbors at The Grand Summit, including the people's choice farmers' market vendor awards, where you can vote for and recognize your favorite regular vendors in different categories.

AUG 6-7

The Beijinger 2nd International Foodie Weekend and 13th Reader Bar and Club Awards

Enjoy our two-day long foodie weekend and the celebration of *the Beijinger* 2016 Bar and Club Awards with 54 booths serving up varying international fare.



Visit theBeijinger.com for even more events and details.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Summer in Beijing is a love it or hate it kind of season. On the one hand, it is a great time to get out and enjoy the many outdoor activities that Beijing has to offer, but it is also the time of the year you realize that all of your body parts have the very real ability to sweat individually. This reality gives you two options: suck it up and make the best of it, or lay low for the next three months. For the purpose of this issue, we'll assume that you're going with the former.

That is why, in our cover story, we look at swimming pools, water parks, putting together your own picnic, and at punches that you can easily make at home to aid said picnics: We believe that a picnic with your own punch by the pool is probably the best way to spend a day off.

Further in this issue, we introduce you to *Stomp*, the Beijing Hikers help you navigate the hiking spots of the city, with a focus on cooling down in natural waters, and Kyle Mullin takes a look at various ways to explore the hutongs, whether you want to get to Beijing's traditional core on foot, by bicycle, or e-bike.

Kipp Whittaker, as always, takes us to the hottest new watering holes in our fair city, while Tracy Wang questions some of the people that make the food and beverage industry great. Tom Arnstein, following a four-month long southwestern stint, gives us the low down on travel in Yunnan, just in case you did want to escape the city this summer.

And finally, after nearly a year and a half at True Run Media, I am honored to introduce myself as the Managing Editor from this issue onwards. I hope that you enjoy my first issue as Managing Editor, the July/August issue of *the Beijinger*.

Margaux Schreurs
Managing Editor





OUT DOOR . BRUNCH & BEER . DINNER

The Rug

CHAOYANG PARK STORE
no.4 Luliutan, inside the
Lishui Jiaoyuan Building
13161742511
weekday 10:30 ~ 22:30
weekend 09:30 ~ 22:30





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CITY SCENE

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



11 MILLION

There were 10,921,500 international arrivals who came to enjoy summer in our fair city last July, a whopping 2.9 percent increase on last year's tourism influx, according to the China National Tourism Administration's official data.

Perhaps not surprisingly, most of these visitors carry Hong Kong citizenship. The total make up of these almost 11 million visitors was comprised of 2,108,700 foreign visitors, 6,364,400 from Hong Kong, 1,941,400 from Macao,

and 507,100 from Taiwan. On top of that, there are more than 2 million additional tourists coming from Europe, North America, and other further away locales.

Hong Kong is also on top of the other list, the one that measures mainland Chinese tourists going on holiday abroad, with Macao and Thailand coming in as a very close second. That really comes as no surprise, as those are some of our favorite destinations, too.

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA



CAVALIA STILL GALLOPS IN BEIJING

By Tracy Wang

Having initially planned to only be in Beijing for two months, Cavalia, often describe as the equestrian ballet, is still going ahead at Chaoyang Park, and will continue to do so through summer. If you didn't see our interview with one of the co-founders of both Cavalia and famed Cirque du Soleil on our blog, read it here.

In the summer of 2003, Normand Latourelle, one of the co-founders of famed *Cirque du Soleil* conceived his next show: *Cavalia*, a fresh mix of equestrianism and performing arts. Since its founding 13 years ago, "The Horse Show" as it is simply referred to by its fans, has travelled to 70 cities around the world and has been seen by more than 6 million people.

"We have nearly a hundred performers," said Latourelle, the founder and art director of *Cavalia*. "There are 40 with two legs and 40 of them with four legs." *Cavalia* includes 40 top-class horses, represented by 11 different breeds, such as Appaloosa, Arabian, Comtois, Lusitano, Paint Horse, Selle Francais, Quarter Horse, and Spanish Purebred. Audiences will be led by performers and horses to understand the relationship that humans have developed with horses, a bond that can be traced back nearly 5,000

years, a message to help build bridges between cultures through kindness, patience, and love.

With 2,440 square meters of tent space, 60 meters of multimedia projection, a vast system of 120,000 liters of circulating water, 2,500 tons of sand, are all used to create sets from ancient caves to grasslands, deserts to forests, the ancient Orient to dream Europa, and other magical scenes.

However, these are just the foundation of *Cavalia's* success, the real beauty of the show is the love and care between human and horse on the stage. *Cavalia* performers had this to say about their stage partners: "the horse is the real protagonist on the stage, they are our family, [because] we have the same blood." Promoter Jean Héon confirmed that "they [the horses] have arrived and are currently in rehearsals for the opening night."

The audience will face a single 50-meter-wide stage which allows the horses and performers to present their "horseback trapeze" and the "10,000 steeds gallop" at full speed, conveying messages about the harmony of the universe, our place in nature, and what is possible through imagination and love.

BEST OF THE BLOG

Every month we tally the hits from *thebeijinger.com* and bring you the most viewed blogs from our website.



1. Slow Boat Wins Burger Cup

The Beijinger's month-long quest to find the capital's tastiest burger ended on the afternoon of June 20 as voters chose Slow Boat Brewery as the champion of the 2016 Burger Cup. Slow Boat sailed by 2016's Cinderella and future Slow Boat Sanlitun neighbor Q Mex, taking their second title and cementing their place in the pantheon of Beijing patty-and-buns greats.



2. Beijing is Literally Sinking

As if there weren't enough things to be concerned about when living in Beijing, now we can add another thing to the list: the city is literally sinking. A team of researchers, using satellite measurements, have figured out that our town is sagging into the ground at a rate of about 11 centimeters per year. The reason? We're simply using too much water, which is leading to the soil beneath our feet to collapse, amidst all the frenetic building going on above.



3. British Actor Ian McKellan Spotted at Destination Nightclub and Around Beijing

McKellan sure got around on a recent visit to China, popping up at the Great Wall, the Summer Palace, Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, and even Destination, our city's premiere gay club. McKellan was in Shanghai for our southern neighbor's International Film Festival and commemorating the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

4. Say Goodbye to Tech Guru and Heavy Metal Maven Kaiser Kuo

While he will be remembered more for his Sinica Podcast, being head of international communications for Chinese search engine giant Baidu, and his heavy metal beginnings as founding member and lead guitarist for Tang Dynasty and Chunqiu, we at *the Beijinger* know Kaiser Kuo as our former back page columnist (Ich Bin Ein Beijinger) from 2001-2011. Safe travels and keep up the good work.



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



5. Modernista and Mado Bar on Baochao Hutong Raided for Drugs

Approximately half a dozen foreigners were detained and subject to drug tests after Gulou-area bars Mado and Modernista were raided by police on June 24. A source present at Mado during the incident who requested to remain anonymous said that there had been rumors circulating for months among bars in the area that something like this was probably going to happen.



6. 94 Percent of Elevators in Beijing Fail Safety Test

The Beijing Municipal Administration of Quality and Technology Supervision recently tested 3,053 "high-risk" elevators in the city and found that an incredible 94 percent of them failed the safety test. According to the survey, that means about 54,000 elevators in Beijing fall into this category, more than half of which are in residential communities. Be afraid, be very afraid.

7. Good Riddance to Beijing's Biggest Embarrassment, the Donghuamen Night Market

Wangfujing's Donghuamen Night Market closed at the end of June, ridding the city (for now) of one of the biggest tourist rip-offs on this side of the teahouse scam. Scorpions on sticks are just not a thing for anyone here but tourists. In fact, after lots of research, and digging out some old posts from our forum, it seems like there aren't many scorpions around Beijing anyway.



8. Girls Order Food Delivery in Tuanjiehu, Are Taken Hostage Instead

A few Tuanjiehu residents, and the police cavalry subsequently assigned to save them, got a less than convenient and all the more scary experience after three girls were taken hostage by a 20-something-year-old food delivery man. Two policemen were injured in the scuffle.

SCENE & HEARD



We Are Made Of Stars
Jun 4, The Bar at Migas. Photos courtesy of Peng

Euro 2016 Kick-Off Party
Jun 11, JW Marriott. Photos courtesy of the organizers



Fundancia
Apr 16, Kerry Hotel Beijing. Photos courtesy of Fundancia





**Pretty in Pink
LGBT Center
Fundraising
Gala**
May 21, Yin
on 12. Photos
courtesy of the
Beijing LGBT
Center

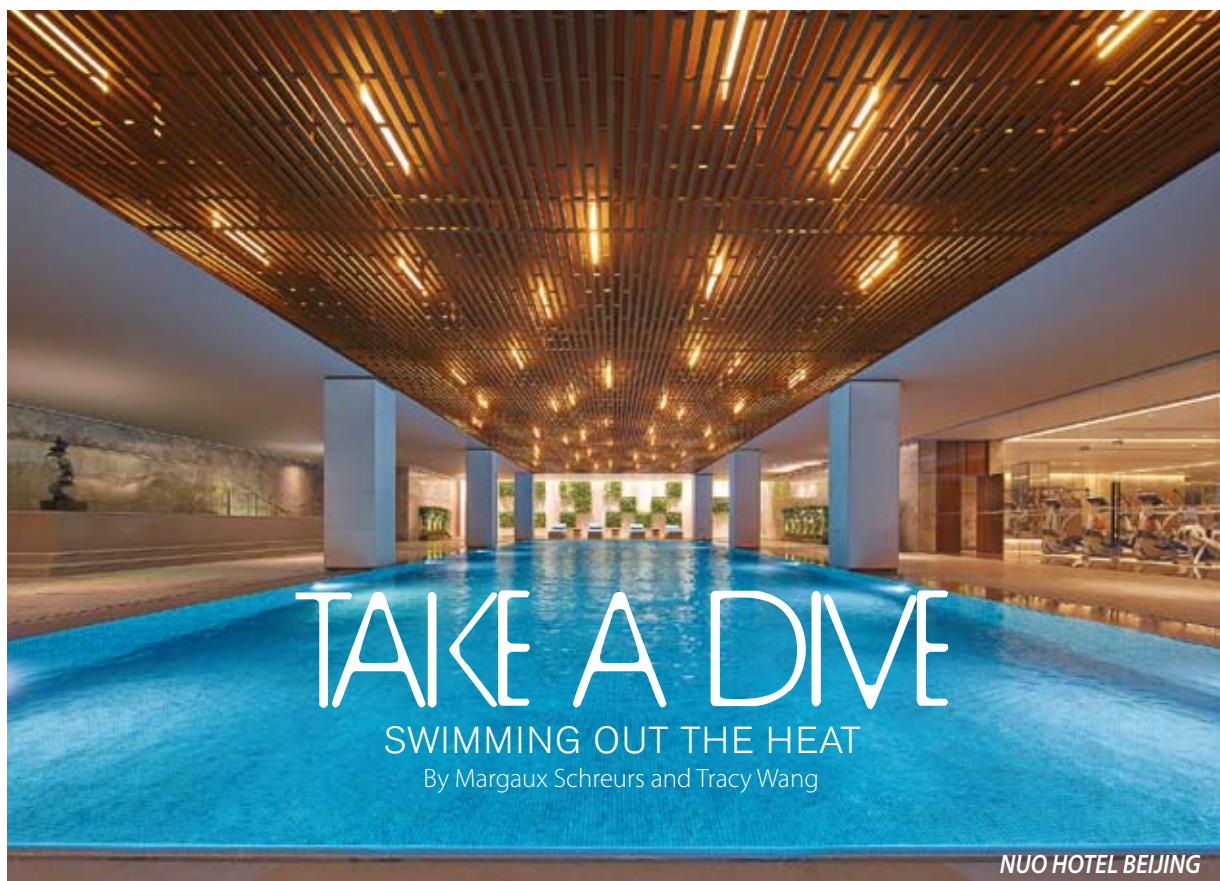


The Hutong Summer Fayre
Jun 11, The Hutong. Photos courtesy of The Hutong



M5 Presents Dive In
Jun 5, Secret location. Photos by
Laurent Hou





One perfect way to beat the heat is to swim it out – incidentally also the best way to exercise without getting sweaty. This summer, go for a swim somewhere new with these hotel pools, public pools, and spas. Whether you're going by yourself early in the morning, or want to have fun with friends all day long, these are the best places to lap up the summer heat.

HOTEL POOLS

The Emperor at Qianmen

An outdoor pool on the rooftop of the Emperor Hotel facing the Forbidden City – can you even imagine a better view of the city during your swim? A Beijing-specific pool experience like no other. Daily 11am-midnight. RMB 258 (three hours). 87 Xianyukou Jie, Qianmen Commercial Centre, Chaoyang District (6526 5566)
朝阳区鲜鱼口街87号皇家驿站酒店

The Kempinski Hotel Beijing Pulse Health Club

This 18th floor natatorium overlooks the Sanlitun embassy area and the northeastern part of the city. The pool is suitable for people just looking for a dip and light lap swimming. Daily 6am-10pm. RMB 300 (adults), RMB 150 (kids under 15). 50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District (6465 3388)
朝阳区亮马桥路50号

Waldorf Astoria Beijing

Intricately designed indoor pool perfect for a more luxurious swim or relaxing dip in the water. The pool here is quiet, and the water quality is monitored and cleaned on a daily basis. Daily 10.30am-4.30pm. RMB 18,000 (year, adults), RMB 2,200 (month). 5-15 Jinyu Hutong, Wangfujing, Dongcheng District (8520 8989)
东城区王府井金鱼胡同5-15

China World Summit Wing Health Club

This pool is the highest in Beijing, located on level 78 next to the Health Club, which includes a Finnish sauna, a herbal steam room, a crystal steam room, a laconium, an ice fountain, and a cocoon pool. Float above the clouds and bask in the indoor temperature-controlled 25-meter infinity pool. Daily 6am-11pm. RMB 30,000 (year, adults), RMB 50,000 (year, two adults). 1 Jianguomen Waidajie, Chaoyang District (6505 2299)
朝阳区建国门外大街1号

Westin Chaoyang Heavenly Spa

City views and an ambiance of luxury at this 25-meter indoor pool, perfect for early morning or late night swims due to its long opening hours. The water here is on a 24-hour filtration system to ensure hygiene levels are up to standard. Daily 6am-11pm. RMB 19,800 (year, adults), RMB 8,800

(year, kids under 12), RMB 11,800 (half year, adults).
7 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District (5922 8888)
朝阳区东三环北路7号

Nuo Hotel Beijing

Located near Beijing art zone 798, Nuo Hotel Beijing sports a 25-meter indoor heated swimming pool. There's also a steam room and sauna to relax in after soaking up some culture.

Daily 6am-11pm. RMB 400 (adults), RMB 25,000 (year), RMB 46,000 (two people, year). 2A, Jiangtai Lu, Chaoyang District (5926 8888)

朝阳区将台路甲2号

The Ritz-Carlton Beijing

This pool is centrally situated in one of Beijing's most fashionable areas and adjacent to SKP shopping center. Located on the top floor of The Ritz-Carlton Beijing, this heated indoor pool and spreads over a spacious area of 200 square meters.

Daily 6am-11pm. RMB 400 (adults), RMB 25,000 (year). 83A Jianguo Lu, China Central Place, Chaoyang District (5908 8951)

建国路甲83号

Fairmont Beijing

This pool suits the early birds' schedule too, opening at 6am every day. The water is 20 meters long and 7 meters wide. There is also a 37 to 40 degree pool for massages. Daily 6am-10pm. RMB 18,000 (year), RMB 35,000 (two people, year) and RMB 15,000 (group, year). 8 Yongan Dongli, Jianguomen Waidajie, Chaoyang District (8511 7777)

朝阳区建国门外大街永安东里8号

PUBLIC POOLS

Sino-Japanese Friendship Center

An Olympic-sized swimming pool popular with serious swimmers, this pool's water is filtered using a mild salt solution, eliminating chlorine irritation and smell. This pool can be chilly, so warm up first. Bathing caps are mandatory for all swimmers. Daily 9am-9pm. RMB 98 (adults) and RMB 66 (kids) for a single use, discount for multi-swim purchases. 40 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District (6466 4805)
朝阳区亮马桥路40号

Dongdan Swimming Pool

This indoor swimming pool has great facilities and is well-managed. Busy in the mornings with morning swimmers, but evenings tend to be peaceful. Water here is on a filtration system, and the pool is one of the better option out of the city's public pools.

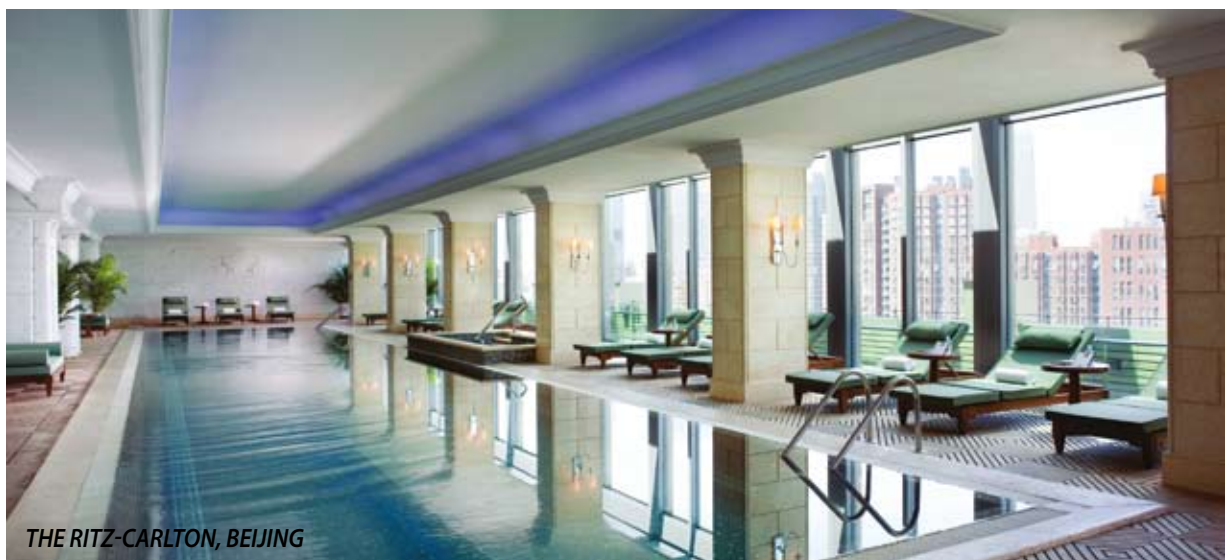
Daily 10am-9pm. RMB 50 (adults), RMB 30 (students), and RMB 20 (kids). A2 Dahua Lu, Dongcheng District (6523 1241)
东城区东单大华路甲2号

Chenjinglun Middle School

Belonging to Chenjinglun Middle School and now 20 years old, this indoor pool remains clean and busy, and has a depth of 1.4-1.6 meters. Many locals and their children learn to swim here.

Daily 10am-9pm. RMB 50 (adults). 38 Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang District (5703 7535)

朝阳区朝外大街38号陈经纶中学



PRACTICAL PICNICKING

ADVICE TO HELP YOU PACK UP AND HEAD
TO THE PARKS

By Kipp Whittaker



Public parks in Beijing may not be the best in the world given the unending drought but they do provide tranquil little nooks filled with lush greenery, where you can sit and contemplate love, life, the future of the global economy, or even picnic in reasonable peace. These areas give some much needed respite from the daily grind and the symphony of jackhammers pounding holes in the earth. But if you're planning on doing a picnic there are some guidelines you must

follow to keep things easy, fun, and safe as you venture into these natural spaces that have been gracefully carved out of our beloved megacity.

In here you'll find practical suggestions to help both party animals and health freaks alike make the most of green public spaces. We will touch base on everything from the importance of a blanket, food and drink suggestions, and finally, how best to completely exploit the park to the benefit of you and your party.

Bring Coverage

When venturing into China's outdoor public spaces, it is important to know that no surface is clean. There aren't many exterior surfaces in this city that are beyond the reach of animal waste. We'll just say it's sexier to come to a picnic prepared, so to at least create a small amount of separation between you and all of the creepy crawlies on the other side of that nice soft blanket. Whether it's two people, which is ideal for a successful picnic (wink wink), or a big group, a blanket, yoga mats, or a table and chairs will genuinely help your party seize the day and keep things hygienic.

Reasonable Food Options

Don't get too fancy on us. The best trick is keeping the food simple and bringing a lot of it. While there are restaurants like The Rug and Modo Urban Deli that put together picnic baskets of various sizes and prices (RMB 200-490), if you prefer to leave it to the experts, even something like sandwiches and a large bag of fruit can go a long way. If you journey outside the city you can bring a grill but in most areas in Beijing this has been banned, and can result in a fine (RMB 50) if security cares enough to take action. The final commandment of casual outdoor feasting is to avoid too much mayonnaise. Just the idea of eating lots of hot summer mayo gives us a queasy feeling. Don't do it!

Stay Hydrated or Drunk

There are so many options to staying hydrated that it is absurd. Beijing also has no open container laws, how great is that? Wheel those drinks in a cooler, if you're reading this article in the future just use drone delivery, or wear a couple of backpacks filled with

ice packs and some bottles of cheap Chardonnay. We have faith that you will know to do the right thing. Just don't drink too much. Things like fighting, intimidating others, and other lewd behavior that park security might deem anti-social could result in a fine of RMB 50-100, even though at times it seems like the only thing they discourage is a grown man with his top off. If you want to go above and beyond in the drinks department refer to our punches article (refer to p18-19) for superb ideas to make strong but delicious concoctions that are totally suitable for the great outdoors.

Pick Your Park Wisely

Most parks have special attributes that you must consider before choosing which is most suitable for your purpose. Of course, if you have limited time then pick the park that is closest to your place of residence. Some parks, besides having the customary amounts of grass for sitting and horseplay, also have a bunch of wet and wild activities that could make for a fun afternoon for you and your party. Don't limit yourself to ping pong tables and stretching equipment.

Chaoyang Park, in addition to having an insanely busy pool (that you might want to avoid), also has a climbing wall if that's more your style. If you are looking for a park that's not very busy and has a little of everything, Qingnianhu Park near Andingmen Station, is amazing. It also has a decent pool that's usually very empty during the week, bumper cars at the kiddy amusement section, and paddle boats with water cannons so that you can reenact your favorite historical nautical battles. Any one of these extracurricular activities will up your picnic game.



SUMMER

BEIJING'S WETTEST WATER PARKS

By Margaux Schreurs and Tracy Wang

Swimming doesn't have to be all lanes and square pools: Beijing has plenty of opportunities to entertain yourself the entire day, whether that be through slides, wave pools, or artificial beaches.

Crab Island

Family-friendly Crab Island has the option for fishing, go-karting, a zoo, an organic farm, aqua bumper boats, a lazy river, a wave pool, and an artificial beach. There's a water circulation system in place, and the water gets filtered and sterilized on a loop throughout the day. Daily 9am-8pm. RMB 98 (adults), RMB 50 (kids between 1m and 1.4m), Free (kids below 1m). 1 Xiedao Lu, Chaoyang District (take the Weigou Exit off the Airport Expressway and follow the signs). (8433 5566/5588) www.xiedao.com

蟹岛绿色生态度假村: 朝阳区蟹岛路1号

Happy Magic Watercube Park

As the former site of the 2008 Olympics water sport competitions, the Happy Magic Watercube Park has

now been given new use in the form of a water playground. There is a wave pool, a bunch of slides at different intensities, and never-ending entertainment. The water in this park is cleaned on a daily basis. Daily 10am-9pm. RMB 260 (adults), RMB 220 (kids between 1.2m and 1.5m), Free (kids below 1.2m). 11 Tianchen Donglu (in Olympic Park, near the Bird's Nest), Chaoyang District (8437 8086)

水立方嬉水乐园: 朝阳区北四环中路奥林匹克公园内 (近鸟巢)

Happy Water Rubik's Cube

The biggest open-air water park in the city, Happy Water Rubik's Cube is worth the trip to Fengtai District. The many rides inside, including flumes, raft rides, and a wave



FROLICKING

machine, will help you forget just how hot it is outside. The park is fitted with a water filter that operates 24 hours a day. Daily 10am-6pm. RMB 230 (adults), RMB 180 (kids between 1.2m and 1.5m), Free (kids below 1.2m). 11 Xiaotun Lu (next to Meishikou Lu), Fengtai District (8860 9999)

欢乐水魔方水上乐园：丰台区小屯路11号（近梅市口路）

Qingnianhu Water Park

Somewhere between water park and public pool, this centrally located swimming pool offers the option to swim for exercise and swim for fun, depending on your preference. If you get bored of the pool, there are slides of different intensities to keep you entertained. Daily 9am-5pm. RMB 40 (adults and kids above 1.3m), RMB 30 (kids below 1.3m). Andingmen Waidajie, Dongcheng District (8411 6321)

青年湖水世界：东城区安定门外大街

Hot Spring Leisure City

Located in Changping District, Hot Spring Leisure City

features mineral hot spring spas with rich geothermal resources and has been the site of many a crazy water-themed parties. There's also a huge hotel and conference center attached to it, as well as numerous different restaurants and entertainment options. Daily 9am-10pm. RMB 178, RMB 128 (online), RMB 100 (kids between 1.4m and 1.2m), Free (kids under 1.2m). Beiqijia, Changping District (8178 8888)

温都水城：昌平区北七家

Tuanjiehu Water Park

Tuanjiehu Water Park, perhaps more centrally located than many other water parks in the city, is not big but still boasts a beach and wave pool. There are also paddle boats, and other entertainment options such as rollerskating. The water facilities are linked up to a 24-hour filtering device. Daily 10.15am-8pm. RMB 50 (weekdays), RMB 60 (weekends). 16 Tuanjiehu Nanli, East Third Ring Road, Chaoyang District (8597 4677)

结湖水乐园：朝阳区团结湖南里16号



KNUCKLE UP

IT'S TIME FOR PUNCH AT YOUR NEXT PARTY

By Kipp Whittaker



Under the Cherry Moon

Ross Harris, Más

Named after the second best Prince film ever made, this tasty punch oozes the taste of an artisanal black cherry soda, which, believe us, is a level that all punches should aspire to ascend to. We remember a time when there wasn't punch, just jungle juice, that abhorrent concoction that was just the bottom of every liquor bottle and every juice in the house. Luckily we've matured since that time and are now knowledgeable enough to make nice drinks like this one. Start off by pitting and blending about 1/2 a kilo of fresh cherries in a bullet blender until completely blended. Set aside, or even freeze in ice cubes.

Recipe:

225 ml Plantation dark rum
225 ml of blended fresh cherries
150 ml Luxardo "Sangue Morlacco" cherry brandy
150 ml orgeat almond syrup
150 ml fresh lemon or lime juice
75 ml fernet branca
10 dashes of Angostura Bitters
Add all ingredients to a large punch bowl with ice and stir well



Besito Loco

Li Ambrocio, Palms L.A. Kitchen and Bar

Ay caramba, this punch is California to the core thanks to its delicious fusion of rums, juice, and cinnamon: Together they make an effective blend that knocked us into next week. Preparing a punch at its most basic level requires some understanding of taste to create the perfect ratio of sweet, sour, and bitterness. This hits all of those points perfectly, along with a generous portion of alcohol that is sure to leave most of you booze-hungry scoundrels satisfied at your next summer party. If Dole Food Corporation had to roll out a party punch at their quarterly meeting, it would be this one.

Recipe:

250ml of apricot infused dark rum
250ml of orange brandy
150ml peach liquor
150ml cinnamon syrup
150ml fresh lime juice
500ml orange juice
1 liter pineapple juice
Garnish with cherries, lemon and lime slices, peaches, and passion fruit

PHOTOS: KIPP WHITTAKER

We commissioned some of Beijing's favorite bartenders to conjure up a perfect punch for you to make at your next party. All of these hearty concoctions are delicious, dangerously alcoholic, and not too difficult to make. Delight in the fact that we have some truly exceptional people in this city who are very capable of giving us creative options for drinks made with local ingredients so that we can take our leisure time fun to new levels of cool. Unfortunately, none of these are for sale at their respective bars, but we're sure that they could be procured by special request.



The Pirate Boozy Punch

Badr Benjelloun, Caravan and Cuju

It goes without saying that this man makes a dangerously welcoming punch. This is one of his favorites, which he brings out whenever he caters parties with his Moroccan-themed eats. "When push comes to shove, there's nothing better than boozy punch on a hot day for hanging out and letting the sunshine soak in. They're easy to make, and the only limitation is your imagination and the ingredients that are available," Badr tells us. Start this monster off by pouring all liquids into an ice-filled container, followed by diced fruits, and lastly, crush up some mint sprigs by hand to make it pop.

Recipe:

150ml of Sailor Jerry Spiced Rum
150ml of Ron Diplomatico Aneju
75ml of green Chartreuse
150ml of orange juice
150ml of grapefruit juice
150ml of cranberry juice
75ml of tonic water
Mint, oranges, cherries, and other available fruits

The Velvet Sledgehammer

Chris Peart, Xian at East, Beijing

Peart came to our office a couple of months back with this creation: the Velvet Sledgehammer. It pretty much trashed the entire *Beijinger* team with its smooth medley of tropical flavors and spirits. There is a delicate balance here between sweet, sour, and a bitter element from the absinthe that makes this very drinkable but also dangerous. You can't have just one, but three will likely make anyone of low tolerance sloppy enough to act a fool. That is where the name comes from: It may go down smooth like velvet, it doesn't waste any time before pulverizing your brain much, like a sledgehammer would.

Recipe:

100ml Captain Morgan Rum
100ml cachaca
100ml Malibu Rum
150ml pineapple juice
150ml orange juice
75ml passionfruit syrup
75ml lemon juice
10ml absinthe
15 dashes Angostura Bitters
Garnish with a ridiculous amount of fruit

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

FOOD & DRINK

WAN // BUENA ONDA // TO MY DEAREST // LA SOCIAL // SUMMER SPRITZERS



LUXURY SEAFOOD TOWER

JUL-AUG - Celebrate summer with the Waldorf Astoria's luxury seafood tower which combines oysters, blue delta mussels, Boston lobsters, Alaska king crab, caviar superior oscietra with condiments and blinis, and everything else incredible that lives under the sea. RMB 1,998 (plus 15 percent service charge), request 24 hours in advance. Brasserie 1893

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WALDORF ASTORIA

NIBBLES AND SIPS

As always, Beijing's summer is when the city's food and beverage industry undergoes a sort of revival, with restaurants and bars popping up all over the place, and innovation reaching peak levels.

These last two months, we've seen the team behind the culinary incubator Hatchery reintroduce their earliest pop-up concept **Buena Onda**, a Peruvian cevicheria and bar. Ceviche and pisco sours went down well in its earlier reincarnation, and the winning formula is still going strong in Tuanjiehu.

The newest **Cafe Flo** branch, from the team behind Brasserie Flo, has moved into Sanlitun's Taikoo Li with an atmosphere that harks back to 1940s France chic and a menu to match; think big cuts of meat and dainty pastries. That isn't to say they're stuck in the past, also looking to introduce a range of cold-pressed fruit juices and cleanses soon.

We've also been enjoying a new Italian wine bar **Buona Bocca** just off Xindong Lu. Although we were disappointed with the size of their cheese platter; large salads, generous pours of Italian wines, and plenty of al fresco space will undoubtedly keep us coming back for more.

A similar concept, **Annie's Antipasteria**, has opened on Guanghua Lu, offering even more nibbling on antipasti platters and deep-fried Italian treats, for which we wholeheartedly approve.

However, on a sad note for wine lovers, this month we saw the closure of **Cheers** at Yashow, leaving the shopping center even more destitute than before, and giving us one less reason to go there.

Summer menus are appearing throughout the city to keep the sunny vibes going. **Q Mex** have introduced a number of new items hailing from the oceans, including sumptuous fish tacos. **Bottega** has also introduced a new summer lunch menu, that is sure to please just about everyone with affinity for pasta and pizza.

On a seafood trend, new power bowls at **Moka Bros** are certain to guarantee that midday boost, while **Modernista's** exquisite new summer seafood specials will make you drool - think scallop carpaccio with truffle oil and volcanic black salt.

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苑：东城区五道营胡同10号



WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Just next to King's Joy on Wudaoying Hutong, Vietnamese restaurant Wan has recently opened its large courtyard doors, aiming not only to please your tastebuds but also take you on a journey describing the origins of each dish.

Located in a beautifully renovated courtyard, high red wooden doorways, frames, and windows divide the separate dining rooms for added privacy, and for a traditional Chinese atmosphere. Plants adorned in each corner and sometimes even reaching the ceilings will most certainly win over hearts of your general Wudaoying stroller but, if that isn't enough, Wan also delivers where it matters most, with steamy bowls of pho and generous portions of spring rolls.

The spring rolls come pretty close to what one would encounter in Vietnam; the fresh prawn and vegetable rolls (RMB 43) were crammed with plenty of herbs and sliced veggies, bringing together a number of varying textures and flavors. From the list of deep-fried spring rolls, we chose the minced pork (RMB 46). The outer layer's crunch balanced well with the well-seasoned minced pork on the inside, and each bite provided equal amounts of meat and wrap.

Pho options come in classic (RMB 88) or with both raw and cooked beef (both RMB 58). We tried both the raw beef and the cooked beef renditions, and felt that while the broth's flavors could have had more depth (it most certainly wasn't brewed over hours and hours on a street corner in Hanoi's old town), and the egg was an interesting addition we wouldn't usually associate with pho, the soup and noodles were tasty. Bean sprouts added texture, and a side serving of chili allows you to add as much or as little kick as you want.

Factor in the relaxing courtyard atmosphere, the skylight, and the abundance of greenery that decorates this new eatery, we'd say a visit is most certainly worth your hard-earned pennies. *Margaux Schreurs*





DUBUJIB

AUTHENTIC KOREAN TOFU STEWS

Daily 10am-10pm. B111, The Grand Summit, 19 Dongfang Donglu, Chaoyang District (8531 5102)

朝阳区东方东路19号官舍南区B111

If you ask us, there aren't nearly enough Korean restaurants in town, so we're always happy to discover new forays into food from the Land of the Morning Calm when the opportunity arises. Down in the basement of The Grand Summit sits Dubujib, a small new modern-styled restaurant that brings authentic *soon dubu*, bibimbap, and barbecued meats to Liangmaqiao.

Soon dubu is a stew made using uncurdled tofu, vegetables, and plenty of seafood or meat, depending on your preference. The stew is flavored using Korean sauces *gochu garu* and *gochujang*, for a combination of spicy and sour accents and the ingredients are prepared together in a porcelain or stone vessel, in which it is then served. We opted for the seafood and meat combination (RMB 53) in which the seafood flavors definitely took the forefront.

For bibimbap, there's cold and hot varieties, of which the latter is served in a sizzling bowl similar to the *soon*

dubu. The hot beef bowl (RMB 48) came with plenty of *gochujang* to complete the spicy experience. What we especially liked was the large amount of toppings, making for a well-rounded, self-contained meal full of vegetables, texture, and color. And even better, you can choose a level of spice that you're comfortable with.

Off the meat menu, and probably more popular among dining groups, the chicken *bulgogi* (RMB 63, choose between mild and spicy), and the marinated pork belly (RMB 65) both came flavored in that slightly sweet, delicious, and highly addictive Korean barbecue sauce.

While the interactive side of Korean barbecue can be pleasant, it's also great to be able to sit back and just enjoy the flavors without having to go through the hard work of manning a grill. The combination of these facets of Korean cuisine makes Dubujib a solid choice for solo eating at lunch time, or for dinners with friends. *Margaux Schreurs*

WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

SANYOUDING

IZAKAYA GONE TEPPANYAKI IN THE HUTONGS

Daily 11.30am-1.30pm, 5-10.30pm. 5 Qianshaojia Hutong, Dongcheng District (6405 8280)

三友町：东城区前肖家胡同5号

Sanyouding, the izakaya that opened its first restaurant, tucked away behind Yonghegong Station Exit D, around this time last year, opened a second branch at the other end of Wudaoying.

The interior is similar but slightly larger than the original space, with the upstairs seating approximately 20 people behind private curtains and scrolls – perfect for date situations – while downstairs has a teppanyaki bar.

We explored every nook and cranny of their menu during our recent visit: from the salads to the sashimi and sushi, and the teppanyaki offerings. The sashimi set (five types, RMB 298), is presented on a huge cutting board with a wasabi-chunk big enough to trick you into thinking it's actually avocado, was an absolute treat. It features large and small prawns, squid, salmon, and surf clams: all incredibly fresh, and worth every *kuai*. Silence fell upon the table as we devoured this bad boy.

The teppanyaki plates also left an impression. The vegetables: zucchini, tofu, okra, and broccoli (priced between RMB 20-38) were all tested and approved, unsurprising perhaps given that they're baked in deliciously creamy butter, leaving us wanting more. The same went for the beef (RMB 68), which was tender and juicy, and doused in gravy. The scope of Sanyouding's teppanyaki offerings mean that if you have specific meat or fish cravings, you're unlikely to leave disappointed.

We can really see this becoming a hit in the neighborhood, as, on top of the aforementioned dishes there are also a number of solid lunch deals (starting from RMB 48 for udon sets). *Margaux Schreurs*



PHOTO: KEN

WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

BUENA ONDA

NEW PERUVIAN POP-UP AT HATCHERY THE PERFECT
INTRODUCTION TO SOUTH AMERICAN CUISINES

Daily (except Tue) 5-10.30pm. 12 Nongzhanguan Nanli,
Chaoyang District (6594 0188)
朝阳区农展馆南里12号

Buena Onda has made a glorious return at the Hatchery. The menu is fairly simple to understand, offering drinks, *aperitivos*, ceviche, a 'raw' category, *antichuchos* (the South American version of *chuan'r*), and desserts.

For the uninitiated, there are two ingredients you should know before ordering: *leche de tigre* and pisco. *Leche de tigre*, translated as tiger's milk, is the Peruvian term for the citrus-based marinade that cures the seafood in ceviche. It includes lime juice, sliced onion, chilies, salt, and pepper. Pisco, of crucial importance to the drinks menu, is a brandy produced in Peru and Chile made by distilling grape wine into a high-proof spirit. Both nations produce millions of liters of the stuff every year, much of which is likely to be consumed at Buena Onda. Unable to contain our excitement, we dove straight in. These are our favorite five things to try, in no particular order.

Passion Sour (RMB 70 per glass, RMB 270 per pitcher)

A concoction made with pisco, passion fruit, lime, sugar, and egg white. We really enjoyed the mix between the sweet, sour, and the frothy layer on top.

Chifa Tartar (RMB 75)

A Peruvian dish with a Chinese influence, chifa tartar is like the South American response to the raw tuna poke bowl

enjoyed so much at Soul Bowls: raw salmon layered on top of mango and avocado, seasoned with ginger, green onion, soy, and sesame, giving the dish a moreish element thanks to its strong umami flavors. Perfect for sharing, and served with chips for scooping.

Kokoda (RMB 80)

A different type of ceviche, made with yellow fin tuna instead of seabass, the kokoda is hearty, with coconut cream, tomato, coriander, and lime taking the front seat. The fish is bought daily for maximum freshness, and thus not each variety will be available every day. If this one is out of stock, try the clasico (RMB 65) or the chifa (RMB 65) if you're into spice.

Antichuchos Mixto (RMB 100)

These huge skewers make for wonderful sharing as everything else on the menu. The mixed set comes with two of each variety: beef heart, which is particularly tender, free-range chicken thigh, and a veggie rendition with spicy peppers, mushrooms, and eggplant (quinoa salad and potatoes not included).

Picarones (RMB 45)

If you've got a sweet tooth, you'll want to get stuck into this: a big bowl of sweet potato doughnuts covered in cinnamon accompanied with a bowl of kiwi ice cream, and a drizzle of spiced molasses. We recommend sharing this one, unless you think you can handle it without heading straight into a sugar coma. *Margaux Schreurs*

CAFÉ SAMBAL

JOURNEY TO MALAYSIA WITHOUT DEPARTING GULOU

Following almost 14 years of successful Malaysian cooking, Café Sambal's Beijing hutong restaurant is one of three branches throughout China. It continues to go from strength to strength, with a dedicated head chef popping in regularly from Shanghai to retrain the kitchen staff, and a new menu just around the corner.

Its location is definitely a plus: a renovated traditional courtyard home with separate smaller dining rooms for added privacy, and one main hall for larger groups. The most popular menu items, on both the old and new menus, include classic Malaysian fare such as *roti canai* with kapitan curry, beef rendang, and crunchy four-sided beans.

Roti canai, a soft flatbread found in Malaysia with Indian roots, owes its chewy consistency and alternative moniker – flying bread – to the way it is made; by tossing and spinning the bread in the air until the dough is soft and billowing.

Café Sambal's portions include two bundles of freshly-made *roti canai* alongside a rich kapitan chicken curry. While in Malaysia the curry would generally be served in whole chunks, the meat falling off the bone, Café Sambal opts for doing away with the bones, simplifying the eating process without sacrificing any of the flavor. The curry's rich depth comes from the wide variety of spices used: kaffir lime, galangal, candlenuts, lemongrass, and belacan, a popular Malaysian fermented shrimp paste.

The beef rendang, perhaps one of the most widely-known Malaysian dishes outside of the Southeast Asian country, also pairs well with the fluffy *roti*, if there is any left over. The huge cuts of tender beef are almost caramelized in the curry and are seasoned with coconut milk and a local spice mixture known as *pemasak*.

As their new menu is testament to, a trip to Café Sambal is a wonderful way to acquaint or re-acquaint yourself with Malaysian cuisine, without having to spend the cash on going all the way there this summer. *Margaux Schreurs*

Daily 11am-midnight. 43 Doufuchi Hutong, Xicheng District (6400 4875)
西城区豆腐池胡同43号



JUST DESSERTS

TO MY DEAREST

DONGSI SHITIAO'S DESTINATION FOR ORNATE SWEETS

Daily 11am-9pm. 96 Dongsi Shitiao,
Dongcheng District (6401 9980)
东城区东四十条96号



As you slide your knife into the top of the Dear Jasmine mousse, it quickly becomes as much of a treat for your eyes as your tastebuds. That's because the RMB 56 dessert is topped with a gooey orb that oozes sweet yellowy goodness over the sides whenever the mousse is cut. And while that golden little oval looks like a yolk, it's actually a carefully designed mixture of mango and osmanthus that is even more fragrant than you'd imagine.

Indeed, from scent to sight to taste, To My Dearest's European style desserts are deliberately crafted to entice as many senses as possible. Aside from the yolk, each serving of Dear Jasmine mousse is also comprised of caramel, peanut, and (fittingly) jasmine tea. Together they give the mousse a creamy yet firm texture that is elegantly moistened by the yolk once split.

Other highlights include a fluffier Lady Rose (RMB 49), made with rose mousse, lychee pulp, and a middle layer of raspberry filling, all topped with a crimson rose petal. And while those ingredients combine for a heady aroma, the tart raspberry core is what truly seals the deal in terms of flavor for this mousse.

Patrons with more bitter inclinations will likely prefer the RMB 18 'Chubbiness & Messiness' rum ball. Even the most meager of utensil prods lets loose the boozy amber rum filling in this dessert. But patrons should resist the urge to quickly slurp up that overflowing center, and take time to appreciate the dessert's subtler ingredients like raisin, fig, chocolate, almonds and a heavy dusting of dark tart coco powder.

Such conscientiousness is a given for much of To My Dearest's clientele, who look to the cafe for highly refined, elegantly creative sweets. The venue's minimalist decor, spiral staircase and posh terrace will also satisfy such sensibilities, almost as much as the French chocolate, Japanese milk and other upper echelon imports that the staff insist on using in their kitchen. In other words: customers looking for wide slices of wholesome homemade cakes and pies won't get their fix with To My Dearest's bitesized portions and subtle flavors. However, anyone craving sophisticated sweets at a fairly reasonable price, especially in the culinary barren Dongsi Shitiao stretch, are sure to swoon over this burgeoning spot's ornate morsels. *Kyle Mullin*

PHOTO COURTESY OF TO MY DEAREST

HUBEI WEIDAO

DOUPI, MIANWO, AND REGANMIAN

Daily 11am-9.30pm. Hubei Weidao, Hubei Dasha, 36 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian

District (6210 8377)

湖北味道：中关村南大街36号湖北大厦1层

After Henan comes Hubei in our ongoing trawl through Beijing's provincial government restaurants. Given that the capital of Hubei is Wuhan, a city well-known for its *reganmian*, or hot dry noodles, a favourite dish across China, there were plenty of high expectations.

Hubei Weidao's menu has a huge list of Hubei-specific dishes, prompting us to consult the waiter so as to select those dishes considered most authentic to the region. The waiter suggested *doupi*, *mianwo*, *yijiangguoqing*, *nuomi lian'ou*, a cold sweet sticky rice with lotus root dish, and of course the aforementioned *reganmian*.

The first three dishes were more like traditional Wuhan-style snacks. *Doupi*, a type of rice cake, is usually served at breakfast and gets its "bean skin" name from its top layer, which is made out of a blend of green bean powder, eggs, milk, and flour. The rest of the rice cake consists of fried sticky rice with a bean curd glaze, sliced pork, mushrooms, and scallions, making for a range of textures in every bite. While this rendition of *doupi* was a little too salty for my tastes, especially for breakfast, the combination of flavors made for a moreish snack.

The *reganmian* – noodles served with a melange of soy sauce, sesame paste, pickled vegetables, chopped garlic chives, and chili oil – were also a little too intense and there was a very peculiar bitter aftertaste that I didn't care for.

Rounding off this trio of nibbles was the *mianwo*, a deep-fried doughnut-shaped treat made from soy milk, rice milk, flour, sesame, and chopped scallion. The ingredients balance the slightly salty and sweet flavors, but lacked any real character, needing to be dipped in vinegar and chili for any substantial taste.

Finally, the *yijiangguoqing*, rounded off a pretty disappointing Hubei experience. In the soup sat a river fish and fish cakes that looked more like luncheon meats, the broth only containing a hint of cumin. As I'm not a fan of processed fish cakes or luncheon meats, it was left to the fish to save the soup. But given that it was full of bones, I left it almost entirely untouched for fear of choking.

It's likely that we won't be coming back to this provincial government restaurant, as honestly, you can find much better *reganmian* at just about any other noodle shop in the city. *Margaux Schreurs*





LA SOCIAL

A COLOMBIAN FIESTA FOR YOUR MOUTH

Daily 5.30pm-1am, Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District (5208 6030)
朝阳区三里屯路81号那里花园3层

La Social is the new, booze heavy project from the Mosto Group. If you know anything about this syndicate of bar and restaurant movers and shakers, it's probably that they pretty much own Sanlitun with places like Moka Bros, Modo, Mosto, and now La Social.

The digs sit directly behind Mosto and are delightfully vibrant, with a mix of South American (Colombian) and Chinese flair. Confetti is strewn about the floor, red and green lights illuminate cubbies filled with communist and Catholic regalia. It is a sight to see, and instantly achieves that desired fiesta vibe, without getting too *queso*.

We believe the focus of this establishment is to attract the after-work crowd, as La Social doesn't only provide intoxicating cocktails, but also a variety of *arepas* (RMB 42-48), a maize dough sandwich popular in South America, making it a one-stop source for every kind of sustenance you could possibly desire.

We started off with the Ginger Blasphemy (RMB 50), which was indeed delicious enough to have us shouting expletives to all that is holy. It was a fierce combo of rum, Campari, and ginger making it a very summer-friendly sipper that will no doubt soon find favor amongst the chic cocktail hounds frequenting this venture.

Next, we ordered the El Viejo Fashion (RMB 68), essentially a rum-based old fashioned that gives birth to a Pablo Escobar-esque fur covering over your entire body, plus a mustache to complete the look. Strong but flavorful, this one's a worthy option for any of you rum rascals out there.

Another enticing element of La Social are the relatively generous prices compared to what you might find at other Nali Patio bars. However, if we were to have one request: we beg of you, please add *salchipapa* to the menu! *Kipp Whittaker*

WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

DA VINCI

JOIN THE COCKTAIL RENAISSANCE

Daily 6pm-2am. 2-1612 Yongli International Service Apartment, Chaoyang District (6461 7962)

朝阳区永利国际2单元1612 (工体北门对面)

Many of you might know Jeff Ji has been instrumental, with emphasis on the mental, in developing Beijing's cocktail scene to the height it soars at today. Well, he's invigorating Beijing's nightlife yet again with the pleasantly exclusive Da Vinci.

Sitting on the 16th floor of Yongli tower two, the bar is surrounded by serviced apartments. The place gives off a vibe of being something between a brothel, a mad scientist's laboratory, and of course, a classic speakeasy.

We started our journey into this cocktail renaissance with the Smokey Red Jujube Old Fashioned (RMB 85), or more comedically known as Dongguan de Weidao, cheekily referring to the scent of Guangdong's famous red light district. Well, it may smell like that but it tasted like a delicious floral product that we couldn't quite put our finger on, probably due to its very potent mix of bourbon, cinnamon smoke, red jujube, and orange bitters. The best part of this drink was the presentation and the small side of pop rocks that added to the visual, oral, and even aural spectacle of the experience. We also had to try the Mona Lisa (RMB 85), which was no doubt the masterpiece of the bunch. Made with perilla, bourbon whiskey, passionfruit syrup, lemon juice, and ginger, this was a pleasant saccharine sipper that will leave you with a complicated smile just like the one Mona sports in the painting.

In the end, we got to wondering if this will become a thing, where bar owners sneak a business into an apartment making use of the unending real estate yet to be occupied. It would certainly make for an interesting shift in our current bar scene. *Kipp Whittaker*



PHOTO: KIPP WHITTAKER



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FANNOU HOUSE

WHISKED AWAY BY BOUTIQUE WHISKEYS

Daily 6pm-2am. Unit 5, 6 Nan Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District (6585 1325)

朝阳区南三里屯路6号楼5门

We ride down Nan Sanlitun Lu every day due to its proximity to our office, but we never realized that a world class whiskey bar called Fannou House had opened up right there. By world class we mean there are whiskeys here that in the words of Indiana Jones, “belong in a museum.” This is mainly because the owner of this establishment is conveniently also one of the founders of Single Malt Club China (SMCC), a local conglomerate of experts who specialize in this tasty spirit.

The head bartender came from Tokyo, Japan, and was more than knowledgeable about his inventory. He didn't speak much Chinese or English, so there was also a translator working behind the bar aiding in our exploration of the various flavor notes from each bottle. He let us try the Kilchoman Machir Bay, The Balvenie 12 Year Single Barrel, and the Springbank 18 Year Single Cask. All were produced in very different ways, and when paired together you could easily taste the difference made by

the barreling, aging, and filtering process.

They are in the process of rolling out a new cocktail menu that focuses almost entirely on whiskey-based cocktails. We tried their whiskey sour (RMB 120), which tasted top-notch and worth the hefty price as it was certainly made with the good stuff.

What was even more appealing though was that they are even working on rolling out a series of flight tastings in the future that is organized by barrel type, age, and region so that you can further understand the complexities that exist within these whiskeys.

Fannou House seems more of a library dedicated to this traditional spirit than a watering hole and a must visit for anyone wanting to expand their knowledge on these godly nectars. We had no idea what we were walking into and then walked out a whole lot smarter about what goes into a tasty whiskey. *Kipp Whittaker*

PHOTO: KIPP WHITTAKER

SPRITZ IT UP

BEIJING'S BEST SUMMER SPRITZERS



Beijing summer can be gorgeously warm with perfect blue skies, or too hot and polluted to handle. That's why we've rounded up three different locations with the best spritzers. Whether you want to sit on an idyllic hutong rooftop or a Sanlitun balcony, or be inside in the air-conditioning this summer, we've got your all spritzzy needs covered.

Auto Studio (RMB 50)

On the somewhat secluded rooftop of this hair studio and art gallery you'll be able to see as far as the Beixinqiao hutongs go, with a spritz in hand. We can't think of a better way to take in Beijing summer. For something different, try their giant gin and tonics.

The Local (RMB 50)

With their new balcony there is now no better way to enjoy Sanlitun's Courtyard 4 and to indulge in some people watching on Beijing's balmy afternoons. Especially enjoyable in combination with the weekend's brunch menu.

The Mixing House (RMB 70)

This recent Shuangjing addition makes for pleasant and quiet, air-conditioned drinking. The Aperol spritz is made well, with plenty of ice for an extra refreshing taste. Other innovative cocktails will keep you hanging around.



WANLI RESTAURANT

A GREAT INTRODUCTION TO CANTONESE CUISINE IN THE HEART OF BEIJING

It may seem like Cantonese food is easy to come by in Beijing. However, the Wanli Restaurant at the Renaissance Wangfujing is an ideal introduction to the cuisine and all its angles. Aside from the delicious dishes, the venue also boasts a stylish décor including both historical artifacts and contemporary influences.

Guangdong native and Executive Chinese Chef David Liang introduced us to some of the dishes, and their origins. When putting together the homemade poached chicken (RMB 128), he and his staff “use chickens that are between one year and one and a half years old,” he says. This means that the flavors are deeper and the chicken is juicier. Served alongside soy sauce with chili, and completely bone-free, this cold dish is a good option for the warmer summer months.

If you dare to venture into more traditional Chinese ingredients, the marinated sea cucumber with homemade sauce (RMB 118), in all its slithering smiley glory, has been used to allegedly battle cancer, arthritis, and other diseases for centuries. Other studies suggest that its fatty acids play a role in active tissue repair. Regardless of how

you feel about these creatures, in a cold vinegar sauce, the flavors are inoffensive, if not overly enticing.

However, the dim sum and other fried dishes on offer are simple but delicious, with fresh ingredients, lots of vegetables, and no crazy additives or unnecessary kerfuffle. Liang’s skills also shine through in the dim sum: he is a 13-year veteran of Cantonese cuisine who used to work at high-end Cantonese favorite Lei Garden. The steamed shrimp dumplings (RMB 28) and pan-fried pork dumplings (RMB 26) topped the list, with both sporting fresh fillings. The fried dumplings’ pork mince mixture reminded us of soup dumplings, with a small amount of soup gracing you with its presence.

For dim sum, go on Monday to Friday for all-you-can-eat for a mere RMB 188. That’s a whole lot of dim sum. Even better, if you’re looking for a staycation this summer, especially with visitors from out of town, half of the luxurious hotel rooms actually look out over the Forbidden City and Jingshan Park for the ultimate Beijing break. *Margaux Schreurs*

BAROLO

BUSINESS SET LUNCH AT THE RITZ CARLTON

It's hard not to enjoy lunch at a restaurant located in one of Beijing's fanciest hotels, especially when that restaurant is the Italian restaurant Barolo, named after one of the beloved boot-shaped nation's finest wine regions. And apart from the food, that is exactly what you can expect: plenty of fine reds and whites with strong character taken directly from the Barolo region in Italy.

New chef, Italian Amedeo Ferri, joined the restaurant in early June, taking over and intending to bring some classic Italian concepts from his hometown of Rome to the menu, which will be revamped every two weeks.

We tried the four-course set business lunch. Starting off we enjoyed the white asparagus salad, which was served with parma ham, a runny poached egg, and truffle sauce. This was absolutely our favorite dish there, the soft white asparagus matching well with the parma ham and poached egg, and the truffle sauce adding some freshness. Another starter on the menu was the cauliflower leek soup, with creamy milk that added strong flavor to the puffy white vegetable, good news for cauliflower-lovers.

As for the main course, there are five options, baked rigatoni, spaghetti, grilled lamb chop, roasted salmon, and beef tenderloin. We chose the roasted salmon with asparagus and fennel salad, as well as the beef tenderloin. The chunky salmon was tamed by the black pepper, and the beef tenderloin was served with creamy mashed potato, a fresh arugula salad, and red wine sauce.

Of course it wouldn't be a set meal without dessert: Barolo's tiramisu and vanilla panna cotta with almond crumble, both of which easily satisfied the most discerning of sugar fiends. There was enough rum in the tiramisu to balance the espresso and sweetness, and the panna cotta was a feast for the eyes too, decorated with hues of red, purple and blue: strawberry, blueberry, and raspberry.

If you're Guomao bound, and hungry for lunch, Barolo is located on the second floor of the Ritz-Carlton, and won't break the bank at RMB 168 for three courses, and RMB 198 for two courses (plus the mandatory 10 percent service charge and 6 percent VAT). *Tracy Wang*



PHOTO COURTESY OF BAROLO

Things to do, places to be, stuff to try

GO

STOMP // SHIDU // HUTONG ODYSSEYS // BEIJING HIKING // YUNNAN // SCUBA



STOMP

JUN 29-JUL 17 - There's a reason that Stomp has been touring the world for the past 25 years with their one-of-a-kind stage show. Find out what that particular reason is this month as they descend on Beijing for a couple weeks of gigs. We can tell you that it's not just a bunch of grungy dudes banging on things. RMB 180-800. 7.30-9.30pm. PLA Theater

PHOTO COURTESY OF STOMP



FULL STOMP AHEAD

WHY YOU NEED TO STOP EVERYTHING AND
BUY STOMP TICKETS NOW

By Kipp Whittaker

It's easy to see why *Stomp* has lasted 25 years and become one of the most popular stage productions in the world. It takes more than having fit people in baggy clothes pounding on garbage night after night to make a good show. It takes vision, innovation, and guts, and time has shown us that *Stomp* has it all.

Stomp was initiated in 1991, as the result of a 10-year collaboration between its creators, Luke Cresswell and Steve McNicholas. The show immediately went from small theaters across the UK to world tours and full capacity bookings. It has since been a constant off-Broadway production, and their skills have been commissioned for film, television, and by other musicians wanting to capture a bit of that distinctive rhythm.

The signature *Stomp* style that directors Cresswell and McNicholas created together blends dance, juggling, and stage combat with complex percussive performance. Can you imagine the job interview for this gig? It would be a treacherous ordeal filled with trash can lid bashing and broomsticks flying at your head.

We think it would be amazing if during their return visit to China, these junkyard percussionists did a collaboration

with a Peking Opera troupe. There is no doubt in our minds that the *Stomp* crew would be creating a lot of new noises with the unusual trash they could find in Beijing's hutongs, and this mixed with the shrill voices of Chinese opera singers would just be a riveting theater experience. Just a little food for thought.

The music is only one part of the *Stomp* experience. There is also a lot of acting going on. Though there is a complete absence of words, the performers use dance, facial expressions, and even a of couple lewd gestures to create simple narratives grounded by one banging song after another. This, in our opinion, will make *Stomp* a massive hit in Beijing because it's a form of theater that can be universally appreciated without being bogged down by language.

This can be a fortuitous departure for the avid theatergoer just looking for something fun and different. It is said that timing is everything when it comes to both comedy and percussion, and it wouldn't be out of tune to say *Stomp's* production is spot on in both of these departments. Finally, and most importantly, the kids will love it!



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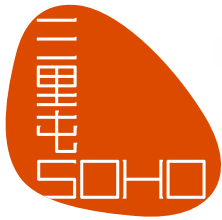


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SHIDU: BEIJING'S ANSWER TO GUILIN

BAMBOO RAFTING, FOOTBRIDGES, BUNGEE JUMPING, AND MORE

By Kyle Mullin

You don't need to travel all the way to Guilin to see stunning riverside rock formations. Sure, that southern tourist hotspot makes for an iconic backdrop, but a smaller and nearly-as-pretty locale sits a mere 100 kilometers from Beijing. The outlying Shidu Park has long been a major draw for Beijingers seeking an escape from the busy city.

During this past Labor Day weekend Katie Brailsford, a teacher at the Canadian International School of Beijing, visited Shidu and snapped some breathtaking photos. The outdoorsy Canadian shutterbug had high expectations for the trip, but unfortunately she was a little disappointed upon arrival. "I read that it's called 'Shidu Natural Park,' but sadly nature is not a priority there," she says, bemoaning the onslaught of hawkers pushing cheap umbrellas, toys and other trinkets. "That kind of took away from the view. The mountains and water were absolutely stunning, but others parts of it were just so commercialized."

Brailsford was quick to concede that the vendors were only trying to make an honest living, and she and her friends began to have a good time after they boarded bamboo rafts (RMB 60 per hour) and rowed closer to the rock formations, before trudging up the nearby hills' paths and crossing a rope bridge befitting an Indiana Jones movie. They opted not to take the longer inflatable raft option (RMB 80), and didn't work up the nerve to try the bungee jumps (RMB 200 from either the 48m or 55m high cliff platforms). But Brailsford says their leisurely bamboo ride and their stroll up the nearby hills provided more than enough excitement. If she'd had a better idea of what to expect (and if 'Shidu Natural Park' didn't have such a misleading official name) Brailsford would have enjoyed herself even more. She adds: "Overall it was super fun, and I'd recommend it to anyone looking for an adventurous day trip outside of Beijing."

PHOTO: KATIE BRAILSFORD



GETTING THERE

By Bus: From Tian Qiao, Guanganmen or Liuli Qiao Stations take either bus 917 or 836 for RMB 15. The ride will take about three hours. Many prior Shidu visitors say taking the bus is the cheapest and most convenient option.

By Subway (and bus): From Suzhuang Station (at the end of Fangshan line) transfer to bus 917 or 836. The commute will also be about three hours.

By Car: Several tour companies offer guides and hired drivers, but most appear to be ridiculously overpriced (costing RMB 500 or more). Taking an Uber or Didi Kuaidi would be equally expensive. Instead, we recommend

using Didi Kuaidi's *shunfengche* carpooling feature, which can cost around RMB 100 if another passenger tags along. The commute will likely take three hours. Try to leave early in the morning to avoid traffic.

By Train (Option 1): From Beijing West Railway Station take the 9:03am daily train 6437 to Shidu Station for RMB 6.50. Return train 6438 runs from 5.45-8.05pm. The commute takes 2 hours and 20 minutes.

By Train (Option 2): From Beijing Railway Station take the daily 9.03-10.48am train K5291 to Shidu Station for RMB 15.50. Return train K5292 runs from 6.56-9.12pm. The journey takes 1 hour and 45 minutes.



HUTONG ODYSSEYS

THE EASIEST SUMMERTIME ESCAPE

By Kyle Mullin

Beijingers need not take a long flight or flee to the suburbs to escape the sweltering concrete jungle this summer. There are endless adventures to be had in the narrow nooks and crannies at the heart of the capital. We're referring of course to hutong odysseys: Those meandering, winding strolls that feel worlds apart from the rest of Beijing's freeway frenzy. Below, three of Beijing's most adept alleyway explorers tell us about their favorite hutong haunts.

Ilya Cheremnikh, co-founder of Hutong E-Bikes, and founder and director of Culture Yard

Summer is the time when the hutongs really come to life! Hutong dwellers love sitting outside, chatting with their neighbors, playing cards and eating barbecue at night. There are also many cool terraces where you can sit and sip a coffee or a beer.

E-bikes are one of the best ways to travel the hutongs because Beijing is a very spread-out city. So you can explore much more on an electric bicycle. Besides, it is super fun to feel a nice breeze in the crazy Beijing summer on an e-bike, while everyone else is sweating!

Fuxue hutong has a few cool old imperial buildings. One is now a museum and another is a famous primary school. Be sure not to miss the old Beijinger tending to his birds and selling art at the corner of Fuxue Hutong and Jiadaokou Nandajie.

Penghao Theater is a great place to stop on the way to Nanluogu Xiang. They have an amazingly huge terrace that is usually empty during weekdays, and they serve good coffee and some food.

There are a lot of cool places to eat and drink around Beixinqiao and Andingmen. Moximoxi, the Israeli falafel joint, has recently been my local favorite.

Liang Ying, head of branding at the Beijing Dashilar-Liulichang Culture Development Co., Ltd.

My favorite way to get around the hutongs is by walking or on a small kick scooter, which can easily be bought on Taobao if you just type in “*huabanche*.” These scooters are meant for small-scale urban environments that are difficult to navigate. I prefer them to bicycles, which are often too big to take through the hutongs’ small courtyard gates.

Around Dashilar old businesses such as mahjong parlors, Northeastern restaurants, antique stores, and local convenience stores stand alongside relative new comers. Some of my favorite relative newbies include the Dutch Ubi Gallery, an industrial style cafe called Soloist Coffee, the LI+U leather goods shop, and the Suzuki Kitchen, which specializes in Japanese cuisine.

As a foodie, I also like to explore the Dashilar gourmet map. The area has some excellent hutong-style snacks, like steamed jujube bread sold on Yanshou Jie and hawthorn snacks sold in Meishi Jie.

Ines Brunn, founder and owner of Natooke Bicycle Shop

My favorite way to explore the hutongs is by bike. It’s the traditional Beijing way to get around. And it gives you the right speed to discover little things, without interfering too much.

I love cycling and taking visitors around Lama Temple, especially the hutongs in the square surrounded by north second ring road. Another great non-touristy area is around the Baitasi, or White Cloud Pagoda, which has many original hutongs. I love it because that area is much more laid back. It’s not touristy, and there are some nice galleries and project spaces that popped up there last year.

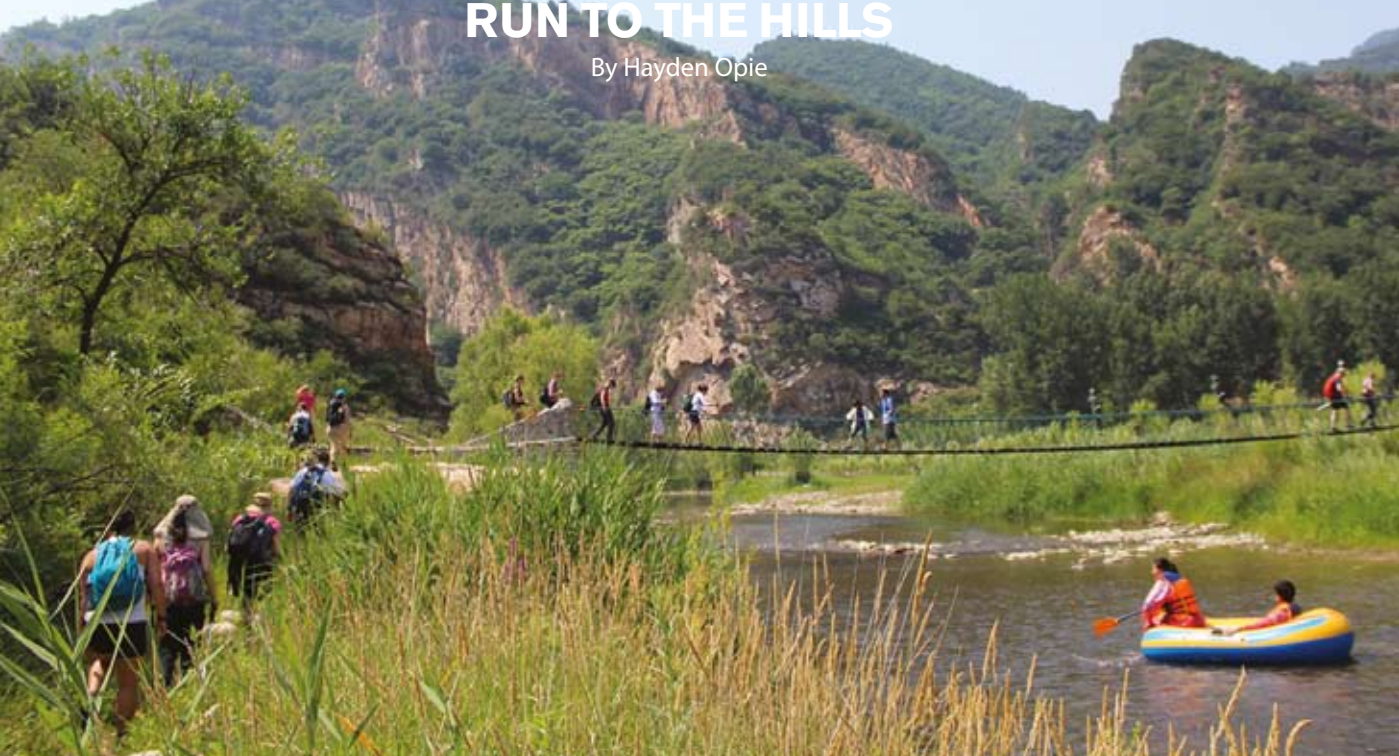
I love cycling in the hutongs as it gives me the cozy feeling of real Beijing. Tucked away from the hustle and bustle of the noisy main streets, time seems to pass slower in the hutongs. I love just cycling in these old alleys and randomly turning left or right.



BEIJING HIKING

RUN TO THE HILLS

By Hayden Opie



Beijing gets hot in summer. Really hot. So where do you go to stay cool if you're tired of popping champagne pool-side, or prefer to swim where there's still more water than people in the pool? Beijing Hikers dished out some expert insight into the city's best spots to run to the hills and cool down.

Yunmeng Gorge

Back in the day, the flow of water down the Yunmeng Gorge was fast enough to wash out the only road into Dujiahe Village. These days it is not quite so torrential, but the trickle that does make it to the end of the gorge helps keep Miyun Reservoir full. Hike up the gravel road by the riverbed to find pools of clear and clean water amidst the boulders. Tickets are RMB 25 per person.

Pro-tip: If you eat a meal at the restaurant right by the car park the owners usually don't mind if you have a swim at their private beach.

Bonus: About 4km up the valley is a side road that leads into a broadly terraced and mostly empty farming area. Keep an eye out for the semi-wild pigs that roam

about crunching walnuts.

Baihe

Once pristine and natural, the upper reaches of Baihe, known in English as White River, have been colonized by commercial rafting operators. It's still a great place to get your feet wet, and you can take a short (and very tame) float downstream on a rubber raft before walking back up past the pebbly beaches and big canyon walls.

Pro-tip: Bring some small change to pay the trolls who have staked claim to certain bends of the canyon – RMB 5 per person at each spot is a reasonable price.

Bonus: Hike further down the river to find a quiet spot under the trees, or go even further down to reach the big bridge at Sihetang.

Additional note: Some of the crossings run fast and it's not a good idea to hike down the river after a heavy fall of rain.

Sihetang and Longyun Mountain

Drive up the west side of the Miyun Reservoir, past Hei-



longtan, and you'll eventually arrive at the big bridge at Sihetang. Explore upstream or downstream to find a picnic spot. There are a lot of wooded areas on the east side of the river north of the bridge. As is the case with Baihe, bring some small change for the troll fees.

Pro-tip: Keep an eye out for the family of herons that nest high in the cliffs.

Bonus: Hike upstream and cross over the river, then hike back downstream on the east side to find the stairs to the top of Longyun Mountain.

Shentangyu and Intelligence Valley

A little stream runs down to Shentangyu, forming pools and beaches that are shaded by trees. Start your walk at the park at Shentangyu, which is 30 minutes' drive further into the hills past the conference center at Yanqi Lake. Tickets at Shentangyu cost about RMB 25 per person, and you can expect to pay a little more money if you want to swim in the Dragon Pool halfway up the valley.

Bonus: Start from the other end of the valley, and visit the fancy library at Jiaojiehe before hiking downstream.

The Pool by the Pagodas

At the fork in the road between Humen Village and Huaguoshan Village, near the Silver Pagodas, is a small hotel with a 25m outdoor swimming pool. A favourite with cyclists, the pool is only filled with water during summer and occasionally turns a bit green after a rainfall.

Pro-tip: The barbecue trout at the hotel restaurant is awesome.

Bonus: Keep heading up the left fork of the road, past the hotel, and see if you can sneak into the Silver Pagoda Park. The park has officially been closed for over two years as a result of a land-use dispute.

Beijing Hikers makes it easy for you to get out of the city and into nature. For more information on upcoming hikes and trips, check out their website www.beijinghikers.com.



VISITING YUNNAN

A BOUNTIFUL PARADISE SOUTH OF THE CLOUDS

By Tom Arnstein

Flanked by Tibet, Myanmar, Laos, and Vietnam, China's southern province of Yunnan presents a stunning mixture of Tibetan and Southeast Asian cultures. Yunnan holds 25 of China's 55 officially recognized ethnic minorities and a plethora of rich topographical sights and weekend escapes, making it infinitely explorable, wonderfully diverse, and permeating it with a vibe that can only be described as laidback.

Kunming

Just east of the province's center, and a cool 2,000 meters above sea level, Yunnan's capital and third-tier city Kunming is blessed and defined by its "eternal spring" climate, apparently tailor-made for sweat-prone, pasty vitamin D deficient Brits, and the perfect, comparatively reposed, hub to explore the surrounding landmarks. Sights in the city proper include the huge Dianchi Lake to the southwest and the accompanying Xi Shan. Visitors can ascend to the summit via a winding road dotted with somnambulist temples and Buddhist grottos carved into the rock. Hikers are further rewarded with a beautiful view across the city at the peak. In the center sits Green Lake, providing an escape from the nearby malls and the city's unending high rise construction, which has the quirky fortune of being bombarded by voracious Siberian seagulls in the winter months.

A little further afield, two hours east of the city, is one of the province's most famous sights: Shilin, or the Stone Forest. The sprawling park is made up of thousands of limestone karsts, which once marked the bottom of the ocean but have since been eroded by the elements. Now, they stand gnarled, phallic, and teetering towards the sky. It's a set taken directly from Jurassic Park, that's if, as with most of Yunnan's sights, you can dodge the far-from-extinct and flourishing herds of domestic tourists. Fortunately, the tour groups tend to mill around at the front of the park, completely oblivious to the kilometers of beautiful open green space at the back, thus leaving more breathing room for adventurous travelers.

Dali

Five hours west of Kunming by bus lies Dali, the Old Town of which is the closest thing to the continuation of Southeast Asia's Banana Pancake Trail in China. Dali is made special by its traditional wooden architecture (and less so by the requisite imposter western food chains), verdant scenery, and horizontal lifestyle, apparently in more ways than one, given that it has acquired the title of China's capital city for one-night stands. A fact difficult to corroborate, it can only have added to the swaths of Chinese travelers that slowly march down the main street. Those willing to travel a little further out to Shaxi

PHOTOS: TOM ARNSTEIN

will find a quiet escape akin to what Dali was said to be like a decade ago. Anyone interested should act quickly though, because the area is also being quickly overrun with concrete roads and other ugly infrastructure.

Lijiang

Another three hours north will land you in Lijiang, most notable for the residual effects of their once matriarchal society of the inhabiting Naxi people. This is demonstrated in women's dominant roles in society, from manual labor to business, a trend that apparently stretches through the province and marks it with a welcome progressive feel. The Old Town here falls somewhere between a theme park and a quaint Chinese village. It features alleyways cutting through newly-renovated wooden buildings and canals, and is also home to some hidden gems when you abscond from the main drags, which are only remarkable for the fact that every fifth storefront is inhabited by the same tune-inept cutesy girl banging on a bongo in an attempt to keep compact disc culture alive.

Tiger Leaping Gorge

There are however pockets of Yunnan that still remain comparatively peaceful and make for an adventure free from *renao*. The first is Tiger Leaping Gorge; a one- to two-day hike, depending on where you cut off the trail, 70 kilometers on from Lijiang, with none of the paving and tat-peddling that come with scenic notoriety. After a hard first few-hours ascent (local "spices" being offered but kindly refused along the way), the valley breaks open to reveal the turquoise Jinsha River below and the colossal snow-capped Jade Dragon Snow Mountain before a long downward amble. Both breathtaking and tranquil, it is easily one of Yunnan's best getaways and well worth the sweat.

Dongchuan Red Fields

The second less-traveled region is the Dongchuan Red Fields. Its maroon, clay earth is rich in minerals and as such, every inch is cultivated for crops: wheat, corn, and potatoes are rotated and harvested throughout the year, dividing the land into mesmerizing plots of husky reds, vibrant yellows, and lush greens akin to a color-by-numbers painting or Giuseppe Arcimboldo portrait. Be warned though, with the finishing touches to a giant viewing platform and ticketing tolls, it looks as though someone has big plans to solidify the area on the tourist map.

And finally, it wouldn't be China if you did any of that on an empty stomach. With ethnic diversity and temperate climes come the benefits of a plethora of cooking styles and varied plant matter, respectively, contrasting with the north's heavy reliance on wheat. The most prominent of Yunnan's ethnic cuisines is that of the Dai people, familiar to anyone who frequents Beijing's Xiao Yunnan, Dali Renjia, and Aimo Town restaurants. These restaurant's dishes are defined by a mixture of spicy and sour flavors on account of heavy use of chili, lime, and mint as well as anything else that can be scavenged from the province's rich milieu, including fungus, flowers, and bugs. When you're not eating Dai food, expect to consume your fair share of mixian, which with no semblance of exaggeration is what fuels Yunnan, and it's easy to see why given that it suits every meal, and is both filling and refreshing; fresh broth being the perfect accompaniment to the bouncy rice noodles.

If all of that isn't enough to convince you to head south, I would go as far as to say that people in Yunnan are visibly happier and are friendlier on the whole, an observation that means upon returning back to Beijing you can't help but ponder the spectral power of the sun.





SCUBA

EXPLORING BEIJING'S DEPTHS

By Steven Schwankert

Beijing offers opportunities for scuba diving with sharks and dolphins all within a subway ride, and a chance to dive a wonder of the world just a few hours away. For a capital city that's hours from the sea and doesn't even have a major lake or river nearby, Beijing is a great place to be – or become – a scuba diver.

Why is Beijing a great place for diving? The most important ingredient for scuba diving is not water; it's people who want to go underwater. In the last five years, the popularity of scuba diving as a recreational sport has exploded in China. Beijingers, who have probably the most active and best organized outdoor sports community in the country, migrated very naturally to diving once they overcame what was an initial impediment to the sport: the low or non-existent swimming ability of many people in China.

For starters our city has three aquariums, and all

three have scuba diving opportunities. Of those, the most centrally located is the New Zealand Blue Zoo Aquarium, right at the south gate of the Workers Stadium. Underneath the green algae lake that rims the stadium's south flank, the Blue Zoo's main tank is an Olympic-sized swimming pool is three meters deep and houses six species of shark, two table-sized sea turtles, moray eels, and a host of diverse reef fish from around the Pacific. This is a perfect opportunity for the first time diver to discover scuba and some of the ocean's most interesting residents, all in a controlled environment. Pet the shark – it's not a euphemism. The Blue Zoo is a great spot for people who want to try diving before committing to a course, or for special occasions like birthday parties for adults or children, and even for marriage proposals – we have yet to see someone who says no when they're surrounded by sharks.

The Beijing Zoo near Xizhimen is best known

FEATURE

for housing pandas and other animal favorites like elephants, but within the same complex also stands the Beijing Aquarium, the city's largest such facility. The Beijing Aquarium provides a unique encounter with Pacific bottlenose dolphins, with a deeper, eight-meter pool. Truth be told, these charismatic animals play with you more than you play with them. Despite your best efforts to reach out and touch them, they know exactly how far to stay away until they're ready for interaction. Hear their clicks and whistles around you as they race by, and then swim up for a belly rub, feeling like a wet rubber ball.

For people who would prefer to snorkel or free dive, the dolphins sometimes try to race you to the bottom, and then seem to block the way to the surface on the way back up. Certified divers may scuba with the dolphins, while non-certified divers may snorkel. In the same tank, but segregated for training purposes, are two belugas (white whales), the only cetaceans (whales and dolphins) with necks. It's highly amusing when these animals, covered with rolls of fat designed to keep them warm in their native Arctic waters, turn their heads to look at you.

And then there's the Great Wall. You can't dive the Pyramids, but you can dive the Great Wall. This is not Huanghuacheng, the so-called Water Great Wall, nor Shanhaiguan, the wall's eastern sea terminus. The Underwater Great Wall is 300 to 400 meters of wall that disappeared under the Panjiakou Reservoir in Hebei province, after a dam was constructed in 1977 to provide for the newly rebuilt city of Tangshan nearby. The centerpiece of this unique section, which is as dramatic above water as it is underneath, features a signal tower that divers can swim through, and a rare archway allowing for the rapid deployment of troops in the event of invasion.

Diving the Great Wall is eerie and intimate. It's a giant, sleeping dragon on the bottom that requires the diver to swim up close for a good look. The view reveals craftsmanship and aquatic life, including tiny fish and shrimp. Water depth and temperature vary by season, but even divers with an Open Water Diver certification will be able to see parts of the wall underwater.

SinoScuba offers these adventures along with a full range of PADI courses. Contact steven@sinoscuba.com, 186 1113 3629, or www.sinoscuba.com.

Disclosure: SinoScuba Founder and PADI Course Director Steven Schwankert is the Executive Editor of True Run Media, the Beijinger's parent company.

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA



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HIGH SATURATION! MAYBE MARS SHOW

JUL 30 - An excellent slew of Beijing based rockers will take the stage at Yugong Yishan to show people that this city knows how to make some serious noise. Check out Alpine Decline, Dream Can, Ex-Punishment, and White+ as they open up a wide spectrum of sounds that are sure to please fans of the Chinese underground. RMB 100 (door), RMB 80 (advance). 9.30pm. Yugong Yishan

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ORGANIZERS



MICHAEL HONGFU

OWNER AND FOUNDER OF
CAFÉ FLATWHITE

By Tracy Wang

Mastermind is a regular magazine column in which we quiz a Beijing personality on general knowledge as well as on a subject in which they consider themselves to be a specialist.

Contestant: Michael Hong Fu, Owner and Founder of Café Flatwhite

Specialist Subject: Fencing

1) How many types of weapons are there in fencing?

3 ✓

2) Fencing has been one of only four sports to be included in every modern Olympic Games, since which year?

1896 ✓

3) Fencing was also a sport in the original Olympic Games in Ancient Greece. True or False?

True ✓

4) Is there a time limit on a fencing bout?

9 minutes + 1 minute ✓

5) The tip of the fencing weapon is the fastest moving object in sport. True or False?

False ✓

6) Why are fencing suits white?

To help in recording score ✓

7) Many ballet positions are derived from fencing. True or False?

True ✓

8) Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the father of the modern Olympic Games, was a fencer. True or False?

True ✓

9) What is a 'lame'?

The blade ✗

10) What does it mean if you're given a black card at a tournament?

A serious foul ✗

FINAL SCORE: 8/10

VERDICT: Michael's strong knowledge of the subject demonstrates that he is not only an insider of Beijing's food and beverage scene, but one might say he is also an expert in fencing.

Answers: 1) Three: foil, sabre and epee, 2) 1896, 3) True, 4) Yes, 5) False, it's the second fastest one after the marksman's bullet, 6) To help to record the score because in earlier times touching was recorded with a piece of cotton at the tip of the weapon dripped in ink, 7) True, 8) True, 9) The vest-like jacket worn over your uniform when performing an electric bout 10) You have committed an offense so terrible that you're being told to leave the tournament.



A DRINK WITH

A DRINK WITH CORRADO MICHELAZZO

By Tracy Wang

After serving at four Michelin-starred restaurants and being the executive chef at 10 Corso Como in Shanghai, Corrado Michelazzo recently took a supervising role at newly-opened Mediterranean restaurant Casa Talia by Tiago. He designed the menu, which includes popular tapas, Australia grain-fed steaks, seafood, paella and risotto, tasty pastas, magical signature nitrogen tiramisu and traditional panna cotta, as well as Italian specialty coffee.

Would you like to introduce yourself to our readers?

I was born in a mountainous region of Italy: Val d'Aosta. First I worked at the three-Michelin starred La Ferme de Mom Pere and George Blanc restaurants in the 1990s, and after that I earned my Michelin star in 2003 from Hotel Bellevue's modern Italian eatery Relais-Chateaux. Since 2013 I have been the executive chef at 10 Corso Como in Shanghai.

You said that you decided you were going to be a chef at 9 years old, could you tell us what made you want to be a chef?

When I was younger, my parents had to work every day, and the person looking after me in their absence was a chef. It was then that I started to learn how to cook. When I was fourteen, I first started to work in a restaurant.

Could you tell us your experience of earning the

Michelin star?

It was very, very stressful; we worked from 7am to 1am every day, and I lost 25kg during that period. It is also really important to be creative, which I realized when I was working in a Michelin star restaurant in France. The experience blew my mind.

So you've worked at top restaurants and earned your own Michelin star, but what brought you to China?

A friend brought me to Shanghai. At the time I didn't speak any Chinese, but I wanted to learn, because I knew it was a golden opportunity to share my creativity and passion for Mediterranean flavors.

Are Chinese customers hard to please? Do you adjust the taste for Chinese customers?

I don't think they are hard to please. I always just ask them what they like to eat, or whether they have any allergies. One thing I do adjust in China: if they prefer softer pastas, I'll add two minutes to the pasta cooking time.

What is your favorite Chinese food, and what would you pair with it?

I love Chinese food, not the overly spicy food though. I like gongbao jiding, and I like Peking duck a lot, of course. Peking duck goes especially well with Amarone Italian wine.

LILY'S HANDMADE

CRAFTED SKIN CARE WITH A BIG HEART

By Tracy Wang

Lily Wu used to work at an herbal cosmetics company in Beijing. This makes her an expert in natural skincare. Six years ago, she started to make her own handmade soap. We recently met Lily and her boyfriend Gary Zhang at the Farm to Neighbors Market at the Grand Summit. The two energetic Beijingers started to attend the market almost one and a half years ago with their goods. All the products they make are under the brand Lily's Handmade. Highlights include craft soaps, balms, skincare, and other goods, all of which are made with organic produce. Below, she tells us more about her organic ethos.

What problems do people have with skincare in summer?

Sunburn is the biggest problem. In winter you only need about SPF 25, but you need to have over SPF 30 on your skin in the summertime, and it's preferable to reapply every four hours. Sometimes that is not realistic though, so you can put some on in the morning, and wash it off at night. If you have lighter skin, or you intend to be in the sun all day, you need to put more sunscreen on.

What inspired you to make your own products?

I used to work at a local company that made skincare cosmetics; sometimes it was hard to change my boss' mind, since his main concern was cost. For me, I'd rather to use organic and natural ingredients.

When my friends and I started using my own products, we began to think about starting our own business. I make a lot of tailored products now. For example pregnant customers will ask me to make chemical-free cosmetics for them, or people who have special requirements not met by the big cosmetics companies.

Tell us more about the ingredients. Where do you get them? What's the philosophy behind them?

We go for local ingredients, as well as the most natural ones we can get. If we have to use imported ones we only use cruelty-free ingredients. For the smaller farms,

it's hard to get products that are certified organic, so we trust local farms. For example, we use organic oats from Beijing farmers, organic sesame oil and flaxseed oil from Hebei, organic camellia oil from Hunan, and organic flowers from Anhui.

There are no preservatives in our products and thus most of them last five months. The products we sell at the market every weekend are made during the week. Soaps and mosquito repellents have natural preservatives, and last longer as a result. We don't use tallow or palm oil because of their environmental effects throughout Southeast Asia. And many of our customers are fans of our dog shampoos.

Any tips for customers?

When buying skincare products, you should first look at the ingredients, which most customers don't do. That's why we like coming to the Farm to Neighbors market, because it gives us the opportunity to communicate with our customers face to face.

To get Lily's Handmade products, find her at the Farm to Neighbors market every weekend, or check out their WeChat shop (ID: lilyshandmade).



POST-DUANG MANDARIN

THE AGED AND ONGOING COMPLEXITIES OF CHINESE

By Kyle Mullin

Who'd have thought that one of the world's most complex languages could be distilled into a silly meme? Yet the 2015 *duang* phenomenon (prompted by Jackie Chan making a nonsensical ad lib in a shampoo ad) encompassed just how dynamic Mandarin is, as experts and online commenters vigorously debated how the trendy new word should be pronounced, and what character should be used to represent it. The greater impact of *duang* is eloquently described by linguistic scholar David Moser in the opening paragraphs of his new book, *A Billion Voices: China's Search for a Common Language*.

"It conveniently brought up virtually all the Chinese language disputes that scholars have been dealing with for the last century," Moser says of why he opened his book with the viral slang term, adding: "And it goes to show that those problems – Chinese characters, dialects, language standards – are still very much with us. They haven't been solved."

Below, the author tells us more about how *putonghua* leaves even the best of us tongue tied, and why he still loves the language anyway.

In the book, you note that 30 percent of China's population doesn't speak *putonghua*. Should foreigners struggling to learn the language take comfort in that fact?

It certainly highlights how complicated the language problem is in China. To many millions of Chinese people, the official *lingua franca* is actually a foreign language, the same as it is for us *laowai*. The Chinese we foreigners are learning – *putonghua* – is not just "the language that Chinese people speak." It's got Beijing pronunciation, the Mandarin dialects for the basic grammar, literary aspects from *baihua* literature, and so on. It's a bit of "Frankensteinian" hodge-podge. So we've got this "standard" version of Chinese since 1949, but as many as 400 million Chinese people don't really speak it well.

You also describe what it was like before that standardization, when "networks of businessmen, bureaucrats, and the military were ... quite literally

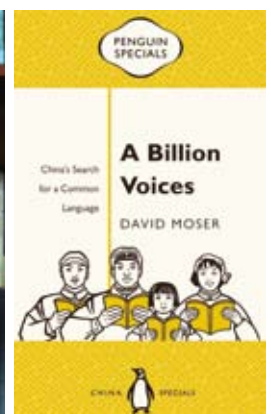
not speaking the same language, and the risk of disastrous miscommunication was quite real." Did your research unveil any specifics?

I'm not sure there are any specific examples, but the problem was real. We know one of the reasons that Mandarin arose, as a bureaucratic language of officialdom, was because the emperors couldn't understand what the heck the visitors from outside regions were saying. And we know that Chinese people, for hundreds of years, had to resort to writing characters on their hands or in the air in order to make themselves understood when visiting a dialect area.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

From reading this book, and some of my other articles, people may have the impression that I harbor a deep hatred for Chinese characters. Nothing could be further from the truth! I actually have a great fascination and love for the Chinese characters. I constantly spend time trying to increase my repertoire. And there's nothing I enjoy more than looking at calligraphy, whether it's Wang Xizhi's famous works or Chairman Mao's calligraphy. I think the characters are so intriguing, so rich with culture and meaning – and so cool! But there's so much nonsense out there about the script, I feel compelled to combat it. And yes, while I love the characters, they really are a pain in the ass to learn, I must say.

A Billion Voices: China's Search for a Common Language is available as an e-book on Amazon.



GE FEI

CONVERSATION WITH A
BEIJING AVANT-GARDE
FICTION WRITER

By Margaux Schreurs



Below, we talk to Ge Fei, well-known Beijing-based author and winner of multiple literary awards. As well as celebrating the release of his first translated work *Flock of Brown Birds*, his novel, *The Invisibility Cloak* also will become available in English after the summer. We asked him about his inspirations, and the difficulties faced when writing fiction in China.

Considering that you were one of the first writers of 'avant-garde' fiction in China, what was your inspiration?

I believe that by inspiration you mean the reason for writing or source materials. In those days, from the perspective of the concept of literature, Western modernism was a major influence.

If we could split writing into two parts, "what to write" and "how to write," we are most concerned with how to write. Authors hope to use language and style to bring about innovation in literature. My creative writing has two main preoccupations: first, a re-examination of history and secondly, a re-analysis of reality.

In what way do you think things have changed between the modern day and 1987 for fiction writers in China?

As far as novels are concerned, I think 1986-1987 were very significant years. Later, critics called these authors' works "pioneer novels," becoming influential in the field. Apart from myself, other authors from this time period are Yu Hua, Su Tong, Sun Ganlu, and Bei Chun.

Things really changed in the 1990s. Rapid changes

in Chinese society forced these writers to rediscover themselves. I think changes in the political situation followed, and mostly the marketization of China, which led to authors having to change their approach. For example, Yu Hua's work returned to realism after this period, and while Christianity influenced Bei Cun's early novels, these influences disappeared. I personally also underwent a great change as I stopped writing for almost 10 years. I only restarted in 2003 when I wrote the novel *Moment of Truth*.

What projects are you currently working on, besides your teaching?

I just finished writing *Spring Breeze*, so right now I'm taking a break. For me, the best way to rest is to read, so apart from teaching, I am reading *Historical Records* by Si Maqian during the day, a famous long historical work about ancient China, and at night I am reading *The Complete Works of Du Fu*.

Who are your personal favorites in Chinese and international literature?

If we are talking about authors from the past, Chinese writers like Si Maqian, Du Fu, Cao, Lu Xun, and if we're talking about foreign authors, Richard Yates, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Sir Salman Rushdie are high up on my list. My list is incredibly long though.

You can download Flock of Brown Birds as an e-book from Amazon, and The Invisibility Cloak will be available from October 11.

WE TALKIN' OR WE RACIN'?

THE ULTIMATE BEIJING STAYCATION

By Morgan Short

Welcome, dear friends. Once again, it looks like you've made it all the way to the very back page of *the Beijinger*, and for that feat, I doff my cap in earnest reverence to your tenacity and stick-to-it-ive-ness.

Of course, in doing so, by now you know all you need to know about "Summer Fun" in Beijing, as was the "theme" of this issue, as elucidated in the humble and forthright pages proceeding this one.

And now I would invite you to rip those pages out.

Yes, go on, rip them out. Rip them out! *Dead Poets Society* style, stand on your desk right now, "O Captain My Captain"-style, and rip those damned pages right out of the damned magazine, because this is the only page you'll need, my friends, and this is a war. You heard me. Rip. Them. Out.

Out with your Schwankerts! Begone, Mr. Whittaker!

This page right here, this one single sheet of cut-rate pulp, is your key to executing the perfect "Staycation" in Beijing. Oh, you want to talk "Summer Fun?"

Let's do this.

In a city rich as rich and bounteous in cultural and historical heritage and opportunity as Beijing is, one must take acute and exacting measures to sufficiently smother said cultural and historical heritage and opportunity in a complete and total manner. Fight the urge to visit points of cultural significance. Combat the impulse to do outdoor activities like hiking and group sports. Resist the temptation to better yourself with classes or seminar events. It's not easy. I know it's not easy. However ...

These four words have never failed me in the past, and thus I submit them to you now; they are the key to the best "staycation" in Beijing you could ever hope for: Vin Diesel movie marathon.

Nothing rakes the virulent culture from one's veins like an extended, non-stop appointment with the D-man's cinematic body of work. I'm talking xXx through to *The Pacifier* on into *Babylon A.D.* and *Chronicles of Riddick* into the fist bumpin', dry humpin' orgy that is the *Fast and Furious* franchise.

Lock your doors, shutter your windows, block the sun out of your life, throw your phone into the toilet, get naked as a jaybird, and crank the air-con till it's shuddering off the wall. Crank your TV up to a volume that would drown out a B-2 Bomber and let the sweet, sweet Vinnie D flow down on you like a healing tide.

If you do this right, your only contact with the outside world should be when you periodically throw McDonald's delivery bags off your balcony and shout "I am groot!" to the people passing by below.

I do this at least twice a year. It works. It really does. Vin Diesel. Enjoy.

(Well ... yeah, you could do Jason Statham as well. It's like a taster's choice kind of thing.)

The executive add-on:

One year I was feeling particularly inspired and I moved all the furniture from my living room, got a kiddie pool from Taobao, filled it up with buckets of water from the kitchen, and just wallowed in my own corruption and defilement in front of the TV for three days straight. Recommended.

A caveat: If you're drinking heavily during your Vin Diesel marathon, which by golly you should be, watch out for the drowning hazard. No one wants to find you floating face-down in a kiddie pool filled with bong water and floating McDonald's pickles while Dom Toretto talks up the importance of "family" in *Fast Five*.

Have a great summer!

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