

SKIING AND SKATING ★ WINTER ESSENTIALS ★ SHANGHAI BREWS

# thebeijinger

2016/11-12



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## CITY SCENE

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COM

Cover photograph of Jingjing Shen and Chris Corder shot by Uni You. Equipment from Blue Hawaii and Family Snow Equipment (addresses on [thebeijinger.com/directory](http://thebeijinger.com/directory)).



The most important dates this month

# WHAT'S HAPPENING



## NOV 5

### CHI FAN FOR CHARITY

One of the biggest charity events of the year is back with a night of eating, drinking, and being merry at 65 restaurants across Beijing, all to benefit the women's advocacy Starfish Project and Dandelion School.

## NOV 11

### WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP GALA

Celebrate female leadership and empowerment at the Beijing Women's Network's first Women in Leadership Gala. The event starts with two workshops, followed by a keynote address and formal dinner.



## NOV 26

### MAOVEMBER

Partake in Maovember activities throughout town including an event at Bungalow Tiki on Nov 12, a closing party at Paddy O'Shea's on Nov 18, and a flea market at Pop-Up Beijing on Nov 26. For full event listings check [thebeijinger.com/events/maovember](http://thebeijinger.com/events/maovember).

## DEC 10

### THE HUTONG WINTER FAYRE

Everything Christmas comes together at the Hutong's Winter Fayre, one of the best Christmas bazaars of the season, with stalls to stock up on last minute Christmas presents, mulled wine, snacks, and other seasonal goodies.



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

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

As we head into November and December we hit an array of international holidays and festivals: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hannukah, and the preliminary preparations also begin for the biggest Chinese festival, Spring Festival, which lands particularly early this year.

Holidays, combined with fear that stems from the harshness of Beijing's elongated winter, means that you are probably thinking of getting out of town. With that in mind, we have outlined some of our favorite adventurous domestic travel ideas. If it's a sunny escape plan that you're after, Robynne Tindall shares her favorite warm and nearby international travel getaways.

And of course there is always our favorite city that we love to hate: Shanghai. Tracy Wang takes a look at the Shanghai beer scene, perfect for a weekend of exploring suds outside our city.

Luckily Beijing also has its fair share of activities, even during this time of year, as Kyle Mullin explores our suburbs' skiing facilities, and also looks into the city's best ice skating rinks and the rapidly growing ice hockey scene. If you are sticking around, you'll want to pay heed to Tom Arnstein's winter essentials feature, which lists everything you need to know to survive this time of the year.

We hope you enjoy the November/December issue of *the Beijinger* and that you stay warm this winter!

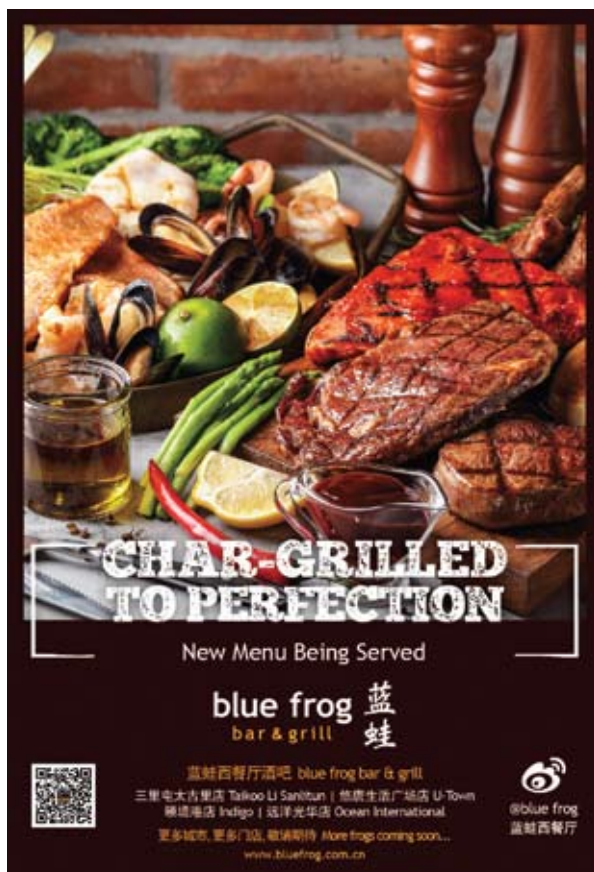
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# CITY SCENE

STAT // CHINA BUZZ // BEST OF THE BLOG // SCENE & HEARD



## USD 94.3 BILLION

Chinese retail behemoth Alibaba might have another record shattering Singles' Day on its hands come November 11. Earlier this fall a Business Insider article about Singles' Day – the biggest online shopping day in China, for which Alibaba plays host – noted that the mobile portion of the company's gross merchandise volume (GMV) leapt from 68 percent to 75 percent, adding: "The growing prevalence of mobiles could be a boon to Singles' Day results."

What's more, the e-commerce giant's GMV grew by 69 percent year-over-year in the second quarter of 2016, to a staggering total of USD 94.3 billion. "Mobile GMV has been driven in part by increasing conversion rates," the article went on to say, before adding that that means "Alibaba could see higher sales on Singles' Day than last year because of higher conversion rates on mobile

devices." The amount of time that customers spend on their phones, as compared to their desktops, could also lead them to make a greater number of purchases. All of this bodes well for the shopping occasion, known in Mandarin as 光棍节 (*guānggùn jié*), which saw a record breaking USD 14.3 billion in sales in 2015, making its November 11 date (i.e. 11/11, an ode to the supposed loneliness of the number one for single people) anything but a melancholy occasion.

Much of those money making efforts are likely to be coordinated from Beijing, rather than Alibaba's headquarters in Hangzhou. In 2015 a *Fortune* magazine article said Alibaba's "11/11 command center will be in Beijing for the first time ever ... because it commands great influence not only across China but also on the global stage."

PHOTO: BUSINESS INSIDER





# SMOGGY BEIJING AIR

CANNED SMOG

FOR CONVENIENT TRAVEL

By Kyle Mullin

Pull back the tab, crack open the can, and take a big, satisfying gulp of ... smog?

That's right. Plastered 8 is now selling canned Beijing Air, for those of us capital dwellers feeling panicked and short of breath at the thought of going abroad and not having ready access to the PM2.5s that have kept our lungs company for so long. The cans are emblazoned with the clothing and design outlet's trademark snarky sense of humor.

"I'd seen people going crazy to buy canned air from Canada and Australia, so I thought it was time to push business the other way," says Plastered 8 founder Dominic Johnson-Hill cheekily.

And while most of us would consider purchasing these cans as a gag gift, Johnson-Hill sees it as no laughing matter: "They're perfect gifts! What else are you going to take home when you go home from Beijing? A roast duck? A Plastered T-shirt? These cans are light, portable, you can just imagine someone's face when they unwrap it for Christmas."

Plastered 8 shot an appropriately zany video for the new product, which depicts a bumbling Beijinger traveling the world under beautiful blue skies, taking in the panoramic views, and then inhaling the contents of a can of Beijing Air.

"What I loved about working on the video was it gave me a chance to see the Taj Mahal, the Eiffel Tower, the White House, and the pyramids of Egypt, all in the confines and convenience of a park right next to the Fifth Ring Road," Johnson-Hill quips.

You can purchase a can for RMB 28. We just have one question: Seeing as though it's "Made in Shenzhen," is it truly the Beijing air that we know 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. End of an Era for Didi, Uber? New Car-Hailing Service Regs May Cut Out Half of Drivers

Ride-sharing services such as Didi, Yidao, and Uber, which liberated so many of us from the tyranny of terrible taxi service in Beijing, may be dealt a severe blow if new regulations released this past fall go into effect. The new policies place strict restrictions on both cars and drivers. Only holders of a Beijing *hukou* will be allowed to drive for private ride-share companies in the capital. The new policies will also enforce a minimum-size requirement for vehicles used by the car-hailing apps.



### 2. Cyberspace Official Says Facebook, Twitter Welcome in China, Under Local Rules

Don't renew your VPN subscription just yet. There may be no need for such Great Firewall of China software, because one high ranking official has said that the long contentious censorship of western social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, along with Google services, could be lifted in the near future, but only if these companies bend to the government's requirements.



### 3. Dip it Low: How Mastering the Squat Toilet Will Improve Your Life

Take away the negative publicity the Chinese squat toilet is constantly marred with and, for now, instead of calling it the squat toilet, let's call it by its other name, the "Natural Position Toilet." There's actually a reason why this type of toilet is still being used all over the world, and today, its positive attributes are slowly but surely being recognized.

### 4. Food Writer Carolyn Philips Serves up a Recipe for that Beijing Classic, Zhajiang Noodles

Last fall we posted an interview with food writer, academic, and illustrator Carolyn Phillips, who has just published *All Under Heaven*, a detailed compendium of stories and recipes from China's many cuisines. Carolyn was kind enough to also allow us to publish one of her recipes and since we are after all a Beijing publication, it seemed only right to choose a classic Beijing dish: *zhajiang* noodles. See the recipe on our blog.



For these stories and more, check out [theBeijinger.com/blog](http://theBeijinger.com/blog)



### 5. Will Chinese Travel Accommodation Platform Tujia Butt Airbnb Out of House and Home?

Though Airbnb has proven to be wildly popular in the international travel industry, one market with massive potential is proving a little lukewarm to the home rental platform: China. That's because a domestic service has been hogging all the buzz among Chinese travelers, accommodating their unique tastes and preferences. Dubbed Tujia (roughly translated as "home while travelling"), the Chinese platform differs from Airbnb in many ways, and therein lies the secret of its success.



### 6. Survivors of Fatal July Badaling Tiger Attack Demand RMB 2 Million in Compensation

Nearly three months after their 57-year-old relative was fatally mauled by a Badaling Wildlife Park tiger in a tragic incident, the surviving relatives have gone public with their demands for RMB 2 million in compensation. The SCMP reported that a family member surnamed Zhao, who was also attacked by the tiger and suffered major injuries after exiting the car that they were all riding in at the park, told a reporter from the *Beijing Times* that the July 23 incident caused "irreversible" damage to all involved. She also denied earlier reports that said she recklessly left the vehicle because she was arguing with her husband, insisting instead that she merely stepped out to replace her husband behind the wheel, because he was an inexperienced driver.

### 7. Biggest Ever Maovember Event Aimed to Fund Library Project, Kicks Off October 14

It wasn't November yet but the proverbial stubble was already starting to grow for Maovember, the Beijing-based, month-long charity event that aims to raise money via a full schedule of events at local bars (not to mention a lip full of facial hair, of course, for the participants).

Spearheaded by Jim Boyce of Beijing Boyce and Grape Wall of China fame, the event has grown bushier and bushier each year, both in terms of venue participation and money raised. "Maovember's a good cause because it believes in the power of the community and the idea that many small donations can lead to big results," Boyce says, adding that its other key attribute is transparency, allowing people to see how much money was raised at each event and how it will be used by checking the event's website.



### 8. Sichuan Dry-Fried Green Beans: An Adaptable Dish for Veggies and Non-Veggies

No meal at a Sichuan restaurant (or most homestyle Chinese restaurants for that matter) would be complete without a plate of dry-fried green beans (*ganbian sijidou*, 干煸四季豆). A classic trap for vegetarians, the beans are usually seasoned with a small amount of ground pork. However, the pork is easily left out (or even substituted for beef if you eat meat but not pork), making this adaptable dish a great one to have in your repertoire. See our blog for the recipe.



## SCENE & HEARD



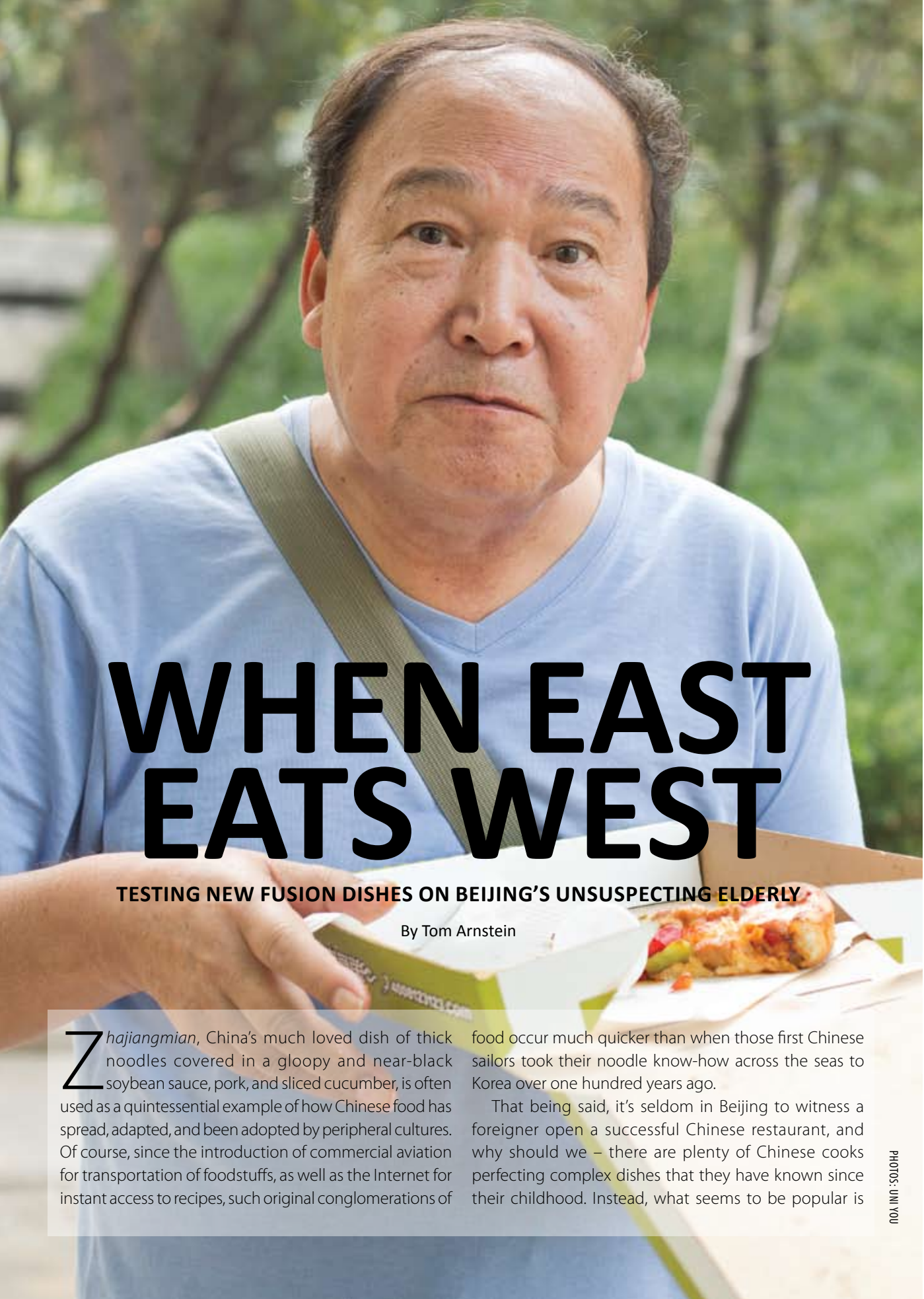
**2016 Pizza Festival**  
Oct 15-16, Wangjing Soho. Photos by Uni You









A middle-aged man with a serious expression is looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a light blue V-neck t-shirt and has a green strap over his shoulder. He is holding a white pizza box with a green logo. A slice of pizza with toppings is visible inside the box. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage.

# WHEN EAST EATS WEST

TESTING NEW FUSION DISHES ON BEIJING'S UNSUSPECTING ELDERLY

By Tom Arnstein

**Z**hijiangmian, China's much loved dish of thick noodles covered in a gloopy and near-black soybean sauce, pork, and sliced cucumber, is often used as a quintessential example of how Chinese food has spread, adapted, and been adopted by peripheral cultures. Of course, since the introduction of commercial aviation for transportation of foodstuffs, as well as the Internet for instant access to recipes, such original conglomerations of

food occur much quicker than when those first Chinese sailors took their noodle know-how across the seas to Korea over one hundred years ago.

That being said, it's seldom in Beijing to witness a foreigner open a successful Chinese restaurant, and why should we – there are plenty of Chinese cooks perfecting complex dishes that they have known since their childhood. Instead, what seems to be popular is



cooperation and the invention of exciting new takes on Western food seen through a Chinese kaleidoscope, taking fragments of familiar tastes that toe line between the imaginations of both Chinese and Western diners.

With that and *the Beijinger* Pizza Cup on my mind, I hit up four restaurants who currently stock a particularly Western take on a Chinese staple or vice versa. Granted, it seems that Italian-Chinese food is becoming a cuisine of its own, with my test dishes including North Capital's pizza dumplings, V Sports' Peking duck pizza, Baozza's meat lover *baozi*, plus a Sichuan beef Pizza Hut creation. With the goods in hand I then headed to Tuanjiehu Park to try out some of Beijing's current culinary amalgamations on the unsuspecting (elderly) public.

Going in, I feared a number of pitfalls: that strangers would never accept food off of a somewhat disheveled foreigner, everyone had already *chile'd* given that it was 12.05pm, and worst of all, that upon eating the food, I'd be met with any number of shades of disgust and accusations that I was trying to poison them.

Entering the park, it was obvious that there were going to be plenty of willing subjects, a few eyeing up my bags and boxes with looks of excitement usually reserved for when free meals are doled out to make up for a particularly delayed flight. But positive interest didn't mean positive ingestion, and after a few failed attempts by the geriatric jungle gym, we found our first famished patron on a nearby bench.



Wasting no time in grabbing a slice of Peking duck pizza, sprightly 84-year-old Mr Hua proudly proclaimed that he had "eaten all good foods before." And while I was a little concerned that the base of the pizza might not be as

forgiving on his teeth as time had apparently been on his looks, he tackled it like a pro. Just one singular complaint parsed his lips: not enough cheese.

Next up was Ms Ying, who at 80 years old, said that she had first tasted pizza a number of years ago. Just like greedy Mr Hua before her, she didn't hold back, seizing a *baozi* and folding two slices of pizza on top of each other, an ingenious method used



to avoid mess and calling to mind a similar Beijing snack: *roubing*. Ms Ying added that she often eats pizza with her family, which came to be a common theme during my taste test, with almost all of the participants explaining



that it was the younger generation of their family that had introduced such foods, later becoming customary to eat them together, usually as a treat.

My penultimate contributor was 80-year-old Ms Yang. While she was slightly dubious about the prospect of a fried pizza dumpling – perhaps because she often fried her leftover dumplings to give them a little extra firmness the day after – Ms Yang didn't hesitate to eat three in under a minute. She commented that although they were a little salty compared to her usual dose of dumplings, North Capital's take were seasoned in a way that meant that they didn't require a splash of customary soy or vinegar. "*Jiaozi zenmeyang?*" was met with a hearty, albeit muffled, "Ok!" on this one.

With half of my wares left, I needed a group to polish off the rest and I found just the motley crew: "Frank" and his troupe of dancing, badminton-playing buddies. Eager to practice his English, Frank told me that he has a long-time foreign friend that he meets with for language exchange, which is how he was first introduced to pizza. His children also treat him to food from all over the world, which he wouldn't have tried otherwise because of the relatively higher prices. He finished by saying that he understood why locals and foreigners might be drawn to such foods as the price often signifies higher quality ingredients, and therefore less risk, when compared to the offerings found on the street.

And there you have it: an innocent stroll around Tuanjiehu Park ended with no deaths, half a dozen full stomachs, and smiles all round. Given that this is Beijing, as well as the rapid proliferation of fast food across China over the past 20 years, including over 5,000 KFC outlets alone, it isn't surprising that nearly all of my participants were familiar and willing to gobble down these Western takes on Chinese staples. As more foreigners make their way to China and the local middle class continues to grow – many now having a new penchant for the Western foods tried when traveling abroad – tastes are sure to steadily adapt and become increasingly more adventurous. Let's hope that authentic Chinese foods continue their march abroad, as I can only pray that there are *baozi* waiting for me when I eventually return home.

*Did these fusion offerings get you hungry? You can now vote for your favorite pizzas – new or old – in our 2016 Pizza Cup, which runs until November 7. Go to [thebeijinger.com/2016pizzacup](http://thebeijinger.com/2016pizzacup) for more information.*

# ADVENTUROUS CHINA

## THREE SPECTACULAR DOMESTIC ESCAPES

By Margaux Schreurs

**N**ot enough money or time to leave China? Fret not – the Middle Kingdom has plenty to offer every type of traveler, regardless of the season. Just make sure you're packing enough layers and head far away from Beijing into landscapes you won't see elsewhere in the world.

### **For the Nature Lover: Huangshan**

Standing over 1,800 meters above ground with 36 impressive separate peaks, this granite massif has inspired artists throughout Chinese history, being depicted in numerous paintings and described in centuries of poetry. With many of these peaks shrouded in a mysterious mist, they appear to float on the clouds.

To get into the scenic area (entry fee: RMB 230), take the official shuttle bus from Tangkou to Yunge cable cars (RMB 19 each way for the shuttle bus, RMB 80 each way for the cable cars). Technically you could walk in, but it is a better idea to save your energy for the top of the mountain. From

the cable car station you can decide whether to hike to the top, or take the cable car up.

Upon alighting, most people head east. While you can easily see the popular landmarks in a day (Black Tiger Pine, Dawn Pavilion, Cloud-Dispelling Pavilion), allowing two days means you have time to check out some of the quieter paths, such as the so-called Fairy-Walking Bridge on the western side. Visiting during winter means you'll see a different side to Huangshan than most tourists do; just make sure you wrap up.

### **For the Historical Explorer: Kashgar**

This gateway to Central Asia feels far from Beijing geographically, and also presents you with an array of cultural, religious, and linguistic differences. Historically, Kashgar is the junction between two branches of the old Silk Road, and to this day remains an important trade center. Although winter here is cold, visiting off-season has a certain charm and ensures you aren't stuck in the





crowds.

Make sure you're in Kashgar on a Sunday to visit the Mal Bazaar, the livestock market located approximately 40 minutes from the city center, where locals from surrounding villages come to buy and sell their animals. Although a popular tourist destination, the market is large enough to still feel authentic rather than ersatz, which can't be said about many Chinese tourist traps. For souvenirs, head to the daily Yengi Bazaar, which sells handicrafts, cloths, carpets, and local snacks such as dried fruit.

Spend the rest of your time wandering around the old town and soaking up the Islamic architecture at the Id Kah Mosque and the Tomb of Apak Hoja, the holiest sites in Xinjiang province.

If you've got more time, Khotan, once the center of a Buddhist empire, is a 7-10 hour bus journey away, and will take you well off the beaten track. Learn about Khotan's history at the Khotan Museum, which houses two 2,500-year-old mummies, and visit the livestock market here if you did end up missing the one in Kashgar. By comparison this one, held every day, is more chaotic and sees fewer foreign visitors.

### **For the Foodie and Animal Lover: Chengdu and Leshan**

Perhaps the warmer choice of the three, here you can cross two iconic China sights off your list in just one

trip: the (apparently no longer endangered) giant panda, and the largest Buddha statue in the world.

First off, Chengdu, the Sichuanese capital is one of the homes of spicy food, and a trip here warrants burning your face off (and later another part of your body, but we won't go into too much detail) with some *mala* hot pot and local snacks.

Spend a day wandering around Wuhouci Temple, Jinli Ancient Street, and Wenshu Temple, or head straight to the Chengdu Panda Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding. For those with more money and time, you can even sign up to volunteer here. Who wouldn't want to pay money to scoop up cute panda droppings?

Travel to Leshan, where you can see the largest Buddha in the world. Carved into the side of a cliff by a river, the Buddha's purpose was to watch over an area that claimed many lives due to converging river currents. Since its completion, fewer people have died here. Whether that is due to Buddha's gaze or the fact that the incredible amount of rock displacement into the water actually altered the currents, we will never know. Regardless, the imposing statue is best taken in from the water by boat, which you can catch from the dock (RMB 70).

While Chengdu is the warmer option out of these three, make sure you've packed some layers as most houses do not have public heating.



# CHASING THE SUN

## THE BEST SHORT-HAUL WINTER GETAWAYS FROM BEIJING

By Robynne Tindall

There are plenty of things to love about winter in Beijing – ice skating on Houhai, a glass of mulled wine after a stroll in the hutongs, shopping for thermal underwear in Uniqlo – but there's no denying that the sub-zero temperatures and bone-chilling winds can wear you down. While Beijing isn't as well positioned for short hops around Southeast Asia as, say, Guangzhou, luckily there are still plenty of destinations within an easy four to five hour direct flight that afford a sunny getaway.

November and December can be tricky months to travel in Southeast Asia. Towards the beginning of November, many cheap and cheerful destinations will experience their final month of monsoon rain. December is better, although note that this is considered high season for many Asian destinations, so prices are higher.



### Hong Kong

A summer trip to Hong Kong may feel like vacationing in a sauna, but wait until a little later in the year and you will be rewarded with low humidity and temperatures around 20 degrees Celsius, the perfect weather for exploring the Frangant Harbor's many hiking trails. Increasing competition between airlines has also driven down the price of flights from Beijing to Hong Kong, meaning you can pick up a round trip return flight for as little as RMB 1,200.

**Do:** Annual Hong Kong music and arts festival Clockenflap takes place this year on November 25-27. With the likes of Crystal Castles and The Chemical Brothers headlining, this festival always delivers. Three-day weekend tickets are priced from HKD 1,620.

**Stay:** Business boutique hotel chain Ovolo offers tiny rooms that make up for their size with big freebies – from laundry facilities to daily all-you-can-drink happy hour. Try their Noho (that's north of Hollywood Road to you and me) branch, just around the corner from the bars and restaurants of Soho.

**Eat:** In Hong Kong, more often than not the question is: where not to eat? Try a hot new opening such as French-Vietnamese bistro Le Garçon Saïgon or stick with a classic such as dim sum favorite Lin Heung Teahouse.



### Chiang Mai

The cosmopolitan northern Thai city of Chiang Mai offers a little of something for everyone, from working temples to lush hiking trails to a vibrant contemporary art scene. The downtown area is easily navigable by foot and, despite being a popular tourist destination, still offers a respite from smoggy, traffic-clogged Beijing. Air China flies directly to Chiang Mai from Beijing three times a week.



**Do:** Once you've seen your fill of Chiang Mai's 300 or so temples, take a break at one of the city's many excellent cooking classes. Thai Farm Cooking School is set on an organic farm outside of the city center. Pick your own ingredients and use them to make classic Thai dishes.

**Stay:** The elegant, colonial 137 Pillars House has 30 suites named after the founders of the East Borneo Trading Co. Naturally this kind of understated luxury doesn't come cheap. At the other end of the spectrum, popular backpacker spot Diva Guesthouse offers double rooms from around USD 8.

**Eat:** Thanks to the region's relatively isolated geography, northern Thai cuisine is distinct from that of the rest of Thailand, identified by its pungent, sour flavors. A classic northern Thai dish is *laab*, a fiery salad of minced meat.



### Da Nang

Just a four-hour flight away from Beijing, Da Nang is the ideal destination for a short beach break from Beijing. The third largest city in Vietnam, its white sandy beaches are among the nicest in the country (although watch out for jellyfish in the sea). November marks the tail-end of the rainy season in Da Nang, but you will find this brings pleasant temperatures for sightseeing. China Eastern flies direct to Da Nang from Beijing three times per week.

**Do:** Pay a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage-listed town of Hoi An, a short 30-minute drive down the coast from Da Nang proper. While touristy, the old town offers a fascinating look at the influence of the Chinese diaspora in Vietnam.

**Stay:** Book a weekend at uber luxurious Intercontinental Da Nang Sun Peninsula and you may not feel like leaving. Ever. Spread across a lush hillside leading down to a private beach, the resort offers a spa, four food and beverage

outlets, two swimming pools, and much more.

**Eat:** Learn about the cuisine of Da Nang and central Vietnam with a cooking class at Green Bamboo Cooking School. After being picked up from your hotel, you'll be whisked off to a local market to shop for the ingredients to make the dish of your choice.



### Siem Reap

Siem Reap is the main jumping off point for Angkor Archeological Park, home to the temple complexes of Angkor Wat, Angkor Thom, and Bayon. The city itself is understandably touristy, yet is also home to world class wining and dining, and a thriving creative scene. Sky Angkor Air currently flies from Beijing to Siem Reap three times a week, although check the website for the up-to-date schedule ([skyangkorair.com](http://skyangkorair.com)).

**Do:** Angkor Wat, obviously. Even if you are not an archeology buff, we recommend spending at least three days exploring the temples at Angkor, giving you time to fit in visits at different points of the day (sunrise being the most popular). You will need to purchase a pass to visit the area, which are available for one, three, and seven day durations.

**Stay:** Siem Reap has a glut of hotels to suit every budget, but if you're only going for a short trip, make it count and splash out on a stay at Shinto Mani, a serene resort designed by acclaimed architect Bill Bensley. The resort is both gorgeous and socially conscious; they work with underprivileged youth to help them start a career in hospitality.

**Eat:** Fine dining restaurant Cuisine Wat Damnak serves remarkable Cambodian food, combining traditional flavors with French techniques. It is also the only restaurant in Cambodia with a place on the San Pellegrino Asia's 50 Best Restaurants list.

# FRESH POWDER AND OLYMPIC FEVER

## BEIJING'S SNOWY SLOPES HEAT UP AHEAD OF THE 2022 WINTER GAMES

By Kyle Mullin

Now that our fair capital has successfully ascended the steep summit that was its 2022 Winter Olympic bid, it's time for Beijingers to enjoy the thrill quickly zipping downhill. At least that's the conclusion that Justin Downes has reached, as he works to help upgrade several local resorts ahead of the games. The Canadian-born president of Axis Leisure Management tells us:

*"The buzz created by the Olympics, and the President's pronouncement stating that over 300 million people will get involved in winter sports, has certainly motivated the developers and operators to pick up their game. The quality of infrastructure and also the services being planned and provided is in many cases reaching leading global standards. There is still a ways to go, but it is leaps and bounds ahead of where things were five years ago and is steadily improving."*

Below, we've detailed some of the most exciting places to carve fresh powder near Beijing this winter.



### Chongli Fulong

Like freshly fallen snow, this new resort will entice Beijing skiers with its 70,000-square meter snow park, night skiing, an art and musical snow ground, and more. It also (more importantly) features a 750,000 sqm ski area with 37 slopes of varying difficulties, along with six high speed lifts and

nine magic carpets. Opens for the season on November 30, ticket prices TBC (0313 569 0025 or 185 0115 1555).

#### How to get there:

By car: Off the Chongli North toll, turn left and drive 1km.



### Genting Resort Secret Garden

This resort has been a longtime favorite for skiers, which will still be the case this year thanks to its 35 trails (10 advanced, 17 intermediate, two beginners, and six wild). But snowboarders will have equal cause to rejoice at Secret Garden, thanks to its new Olympic-sized half pipe. Opens for the season on November 5, tickets start at RMB 700 for a four-day pass (lift and equipment) on weekdays and weekends, RMB 1,450 (lift and equipment) for a two-day pass during national holidays (400 168 1234, [www.secretgardenresorts.com](http://www.secretgardenresorts.com)).

#### How to get there:

By shuttle: There are a few shuttles leaving every morning from Guomao Station (7am departure), Huixinxijie Nankou Station (7.45am departure), and Jiandemen Station (8am departure). The same shuttle leaves the resort at 4pm and stops at the same stops on the way back. By car: At Beijing Jianxiangqiao take the G6 Expressway to the Chongli South Exit, and keep going until you reach Genting Resort Secret Garden. By bus: At Beijiao station go to Beijing



Jianxiangqiao, transfer at Chongli District station, then change again to Genting Resort Secret Garden.



### Nanshan

This is arguably the most famous and most popular skiing spot in the greater Beijing area, boasting 25 trails. It's also a major hit with snowboarders, thanks to its snowboarding park. Furthermore it features special new amenities this season like the Shirton Inn log cabin and a Norwegian Villa. Opens for the season latest December 1, prices start at RMB 165 for a four-hour pass (entry and equipment) on weekdays to RMB 295 for the entire day (entry and equipment) on weekends and national holidays (8909 1909).

#### How to get there:

By car: Take the Jingcheng expressway to the No.16 Miyun Downtown Exit (exit after the expressway). Go straight and follow the signs to Nanshan Ski Village.

By shuttle bus: Shuttle buses every day depart at 8.30am from three stops (Sanyuan Bridge, Shaoyaoju subway station and Wudaokou subway station) (Wed-Sun RMB 45 return, Mon-Tue RMB 25 return, book in advance on 8909 1909). By bus: Take bus 980 at Dongzhimen and get off at West Bridge (every five minutes, RMB 14), and then go to Nanshan Ski Vacation Village by taxi (approximately RMB 25).

### Thaiwoo Ski Resort

This winter, the year old Thaiwoo resort has further improved its already impressive 18km of ski trails and 500m of vertical drops, enlarging its terrain park so that visitors can enjoy even more off-piste skiing. It will also unveil five new top-of-the-line hotels over the next six months. Opens for the season November 5, prices start at RMB 480 for a four-hour pass (lift and equipment) on weekdays to RMB 1,600 for a two-day pass (lift and equipment) during the national holidays (400 601 3300).

#### How to get there:

By high-speed train: Take the Beijing-Zhangjialou train at Beijing North Railway Station to the entrance of Thaiwoo Ski Resort (Chongli, Zhangjiakou). Approximately 50 mins.

### Other local slopes

Chongli Fulong Ski Resort (0313 569 0025), Duolemeidi (400 080 1810), Jundushan (6072 5888, [bjski.com.cn](http://bjski.com.cn)), Vanke Shijinglong Ski Resort (186 1135 5787), Wanlong (0313 478 5111, [wlski.com](http://wlski.com)), Yuyang (8485 6362, [yuyangski.com.cn](http://yuyangski.com.cn)).



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

# FOOD & DRINK

SA THI // THE CORNER // SHI WO ER // ROLLBOX // SLOW BOAT BREWPUB // BLUE FROG



## **CHYNNA HEALTHY ROAST BEIJING DUCK**

**UNTIL DEC 31 - Enjoy a healthier than average roast Beijing duck at the Hilton Beijing Wangfujing. The pancake recipe is healthier, the skin is not as oily as the original Beijing recipe, and the slow-cooked duck soup accompanying the meal comes with Chinese cabbage, tofu, and duck bone. The set is completed with a portion of wok-fried seasonal vegetables and a fruit plate. RMB 298 per set (plus 15 percent service charge). Hilton Beijing Wangfujing**

PHOTO COURTESY OF HILTON BEIJING WANGFUJING



## S

... *shaqima* 沙琪玛

Think of *shaqima* (often rendered in English as sachima) as the Chinese version of a Rice Krispie Treat, although made with threads of fluffy deep-fried batter instead of rice. This sugary snack appears in regional cuisines throughout China, from Manchuria to Guangdong, where it is often topped with sesame seeds, coconut or dried fruit. The most famous “brand name” *shaqima* come from Cantonese bakery Dynasty (皇朝), which has been selling the sweet treats since 1945.

... *sea cucumber* 海参

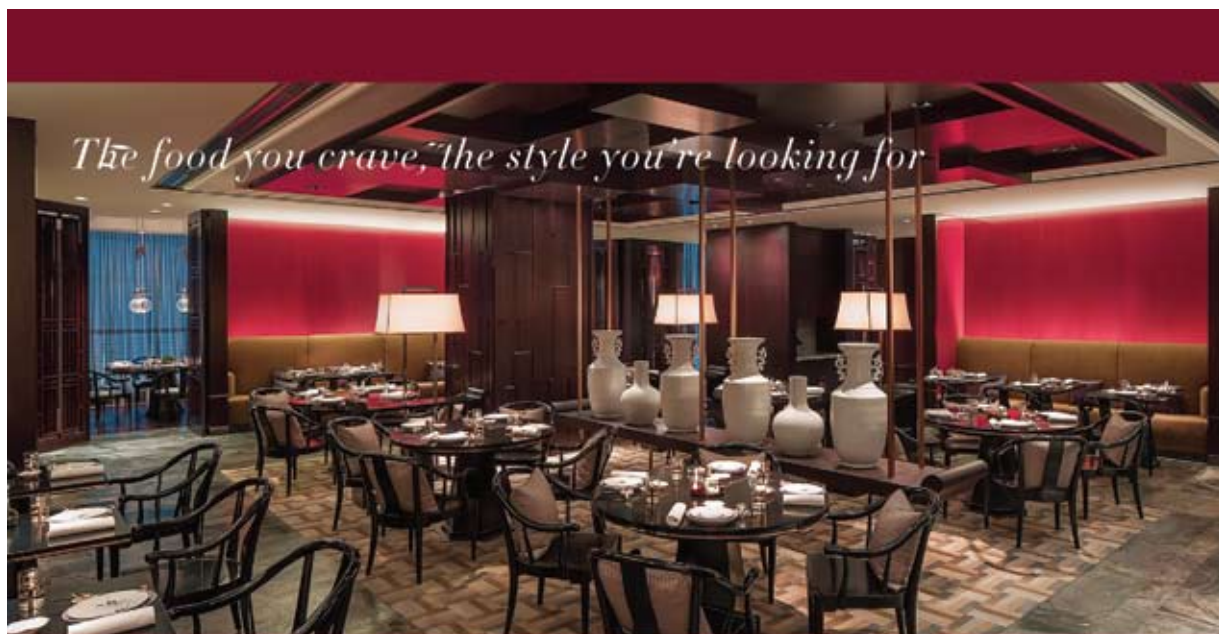
Sea cucumber definitely falls into the “texture over taste” category of Chinese foods. The sea floor-dwelling creatures are considered a delicacy in Chinese cuisine since they are difficult to prepare, requiring multiple rounds of cleaning, boiling, and stewing to infuse them with the flavor of other ingredients. The Qing dynasty gastronomic manual, *Menus from the Garden of Contentment*, describes them thusly: “As an ingredient, sea cucumbers have little to no taste, are full of sand, and are remarkably fishy in smell.” We’ll just stick with a regular cucumber, thanks.

... *shuizhu* 水煮

*Shuizhu* is one of Sichuan’s most well-known cooking methods, literally translating as “water cooking.” To make the dish, slices of meat or fish are briefly poached in boiling water until they’re just cooked, before being drained and topped with dried chilies, Sichuan peppercorns, garlic, and other seasonings. Smoking hot vegetable oil is then poured over the dish to release the flavors and finish cooking the meat. Our favorite *shuizhu* dish in Beijing can be found at Transit, where it is taken up a notch with slices of tender sea bass, oyster mushrooms, and a flourish of Maldon sea salt.

... *suanlatang* 酸辣汤

Many would be surprised to learn that the gloopy, peppery incarnation of hot and sour soup served in Chinese restaurants in the US is, for once, not that far off the original. Both feature fragrant vinegar, white pepper, day lily bulbs, sliced wood ear mushrooms, bamboo shoots, and tofu as the main ingredients, the only difference being the inclusion of more cornstarch in the American version. With all that nose-clearing pepper, we find hot and sour soup to be a great cure for Beijing winter colds.



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## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS



### SA THI

#### TASTY THAI TAKEOUT

Daily 10am-8pm. 0716B, 1/F, Bldg 7, Jianwai Soho East, 39 Dongsanhuan Zhonglu, Chaoyang District (186 1072 5615)

掌缙泰餐：朝阳区东三环中路39号建外Soho东区7号楼0716B

Despite being among the more popular foreign cuisines in China, it is a common complaint that there is a dearth of truly great Thai cuisine in Beijing (although we will always make a case for Pak Pak). So imagine our surprise when we discovered a potentially authentic Thai café hiding out in the windy corridors of Jianwai Soho.

Said restaurant, Sa Thi, is the brainchild of Thai expat Ally Chonlakarn Sirikolkarn. After graduating from the University of Southern California and spending a few years in the corporate world, Ally decided to turn her attention to food. Her Thai heritage, and the expertise of the Thai chef hired to run her kitchen, shines through in the short menu.

Sa Thi's tom yum soup is in the running for the best we've tried in Beijing, briskly spicy and sour, and funky with prawn stock, yet still light. At RMB 68, and hiding more than a few chunky tiger prawns in its spicy depth,

the portion is generous enough for two or even four as part of a shared dinner. Solo diners needn't worry about being overwhelmed by portion size, as there are plenty of single-serving rice and noodle dishes on the menu. The pork and holy basil stir-fry (otherwise known as pad krapow, RMB 40), topped with a perfectly runny fried egg and served with a mound of fragrant Thai rice, makes an admirable lunch for the price, its hefty dose of chili bringing verve to even the grayest of Beijing days.

This and other fusion-inspired dishes, such as a Thai-spiced version of Cantonese beef horfun (RMB 35) or a tom yum fried rice (RMB 59), are available for delivery through platforms such as Dianping and Baidu Waimai, which goes some way to explaining the small size and functional decor of the restaurant space itself. Whether for dine-in or delivery, Sa Thi looks to be a worthy addition to the daily lunch rotations of the denizens of Jianguomen and Guomao. *Robynne Tindall*



# WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS THE CORNER

## NEW CAFÉ OFF THE BEATEN PATH SERVES FANTASTIC IMPORTED COFFEE

Daily 8.30am-8.30pm. 8B Hepingli Nanjie Xikou,  
Dongcheng District (8421 1366)  
东城区和平里南街西口甲8号

**T**hough there's no shortage of chic cafés in Beijing's hutongs, one of the city's best new bean destinations lies a few blocks north, next to Ditan park, on an average street.

One reason that Bu chose this unique spot is that he already owns a garage in the same building. Customers have to walk through a small makeshift office before entering the café: a quirky, far from off-putting feature.

The most exciting item on the menu might be the Yirgacheffe Ethiopia Washed Abol. Priced at a mere RMB 27 per cup, this Horn of Africa brew is entrancingly bitter but never overly so, and is strong enough to rouse even the drowsiest. Other high end coffees on offer include the Costa Rica Black Honey and the Sumatra Mandehling (also both RMB 27), both sure to satisfy any bean fiend.

The Corner's menu is rounded out by more standard fare like espressos (RMB 17-19), Americanos (RMB 21), cappuccinos and lattes (both RMB 23), and mochas and caramel macchiatos (both RMB 27). While these options aren't overly innovative, they are satisfying and reasonably priced. Desserts include almond cookies (RMB 5 each), tasty muffins (RMB 17-21), and tempestuously rich tiramisu (RMB 31).

All in all it's a succinct, no frills menu, complimented by chicly minimalist decor which give the cafe a rugged industrial vibe, and that design comes courtesy of award winning designers Neri & Hu. Together, these elements are sure to not merely satisfy Bu's staff, but also anyone visiting the nearby Ditan Park, not to mention curious coffee lovers looking for an eccentric, unique cafe that serves impeccable imported beans. *Kyle Mullin*





# SHI WO ER

## FUSION, SOUTHEAST ASIAN STYLE

Daily 10am-12am. 3/F, Jiayi Vogue Square, 3A Xinyuan Nanlu, Chaoyang District (8453 3371)

食窝儿东南亚创意烤串: 朝阳区新源南路甲3号佳亿时尚广场三层

**Y**ou have to be confident to open a restaurant on the third floor of a small shopping center. Owner Ren Qiang's confidence is justified by a full house at his Southeast Asian restaurant Shi Wo Er during peak lunch hours as well as a flurry of delivery guys running in and out throughout the day. We presume the hive of activity has only been aided by the numerous TV shows it has been featured on, a fact that is proudly displayed on posters outside the door.

The 68-square-meter space seats approximately 40 diners and is delightfully and colorfully decorated; particularly one tropical-themed wall and the ceiling, which are covered with bright green leaves and parrots.

Beijinger Ren Qiang was once a chef at the Shangri-La Hotel 20 years ago, and has been involved in the TV industry for the past 10 years, most notably in *Shangcai*, a famous Chinese reality show about delicacies on BTV, a role that has led him to where he is today. Ren's preference lies in Southeast Asian food, as evidenced by his menu,

which he boasts only took 15 days to put together, and features a series of fishes, curries, and fusion dishes.

We highly recommend the spicy roast pig trotter (RMB 62), which boasts a rich pork skin seasoned with fried dry chilies and chopped citronella. We also loved the Phnom Penh fish in sour soup (RMB 50) and Thai sliced fish in hot chili oil (RMB 48); the former a moreish mixture of spicy and sour hot pot laden with fresh fish and a slight sweetness thanks to a touch of honey; the latter, although not as spicy as we expected, has a good numbing kick. For something as little different, diners will want to try the Mahjong fruit salad (RMB 45), which contains mock Mahjong blocks made of dark chocolate.

To play it safe for wallet and palate, grab a curry lunch set for around RMB 35, great value for the Liangmaqiao area. It's worth a visit for these curry sets alone although there are plenty of other options if you're craving something spicy. *Tracy Wang*



# ROLLBOX

## TASTY VIETNAMESE BANH MI AND THAI DRINKS

Daily 9.30am-8pm. Xingfucun Zhonglu (near Ling Er Jiu Noodles) Dongcheng District (177 1091 8725)  
东城区幸福村中路（靠近零贰玖油泼面）

**B**anh mi is an umbrella term for the bread, similar to a baguette, introduced to Vietnam during the French colonial period. It is now also an umbrella term for the sandwich made with said bread, often filled with meat, fresh cucumber, cilantro, and carrot. Think of it as a light and relatively healthy take on a hoagie.

This delicious Southeast Asian snack is what Rollbox specializes in, both in their original Chaowai Soho takeaway location and at their new Xingfucun Zhonglu joint. They serve up six variations, including grilled pork, barbecue pork, chicken, beef satay, tuna roll, and egg salad, ranging between RMB 15-30 in price.

The Xingfucun branch, which opened in September and is located next to Ling Er Jiu Noodles and Mr. Shi's latest venue, seats about 10 people around neat, white tables, where we enjoyed both a pork (RMB 25) and barbecue pork roll (RMB 28).

Each crisp and airy roll came packed with slices of carrot, preserved radish, cabbage, cucumber, cilantro, bird's eye chilies, lettuce, sliced pork, and ham, brought

together with a spread of paté and mayonnaise. The barbecue rendition was souped-up with slabs of smoky pork and every foreigner's favorite: a few whisks of pork floss, which added to the saltiness of the sandwich while complementing the sweetness of the carrot. Both of the sandwiches we tried hit the spot in this increasingly frigid weather.

Rollbox also offers coffees (RMB 15-32), teas, hot chocolate, as well as a number of Southeast Asian drinks, such as Thai renditions of milk tea, lemon tea, and green milk tea. The Thai milk tea (RMB 15), brewed using black tea, proved to be not as sweet as the versions found in Thailand, which could be good or bad depending on your preference.

While the shop opens at a relatively early 9.30am, we hope that they'd consider cracking their doors even earlier so as to catch the commuter crowd, as this cozy shop with friendly service, good coffee, and a quick takeaway breakfast is just what we need to face a grueling day of work. *Tracy Wang*



PHOTO: TRACY WANG



# LOST PLATE FOOD TOURS

## NOT JUST ANOTHER WALKING TOUR

By Robynne Tindall

Having lived in Beijing for over five years, and as an avowed food fanatic, I like to think I have a pretty good handle on the city's dining scene. However, sometimes even I feel like I'm not making the most of everything Beijing has to offer my stomach, especially when it comes to Chinese cuisine. This feeling is exactly what motivated Brian Bergey and his partner Ruixi to start Lost Plate Food Tours in Xi'an two years ago. Having lived in Xi'an for a few years, they frequently heard complaints from visitors and tourists that it was difficult to find truly local dining experiences, especially with no Chinese ability. So, Brian and Ruixi set out on a mission to discover hidden gems and hole-in-the-wall restaurants, and bring them to a wider foodie audience. Now, after two years operating in Xi'an and Chengdu (Ruixi's home town), they have brought their tours to Beijing.

I joined Lost Plate's signature Beijing hutong food tour on a chilly Friday night in October. Tour-goers are met at Yonghegong subway station by one of Lost Plate's knowledgeable local guides and a fleet of rickshaws stocked up with coolers of beer. The use of rickshaws is not just a clever gimmick; it allows the tours to cover much more ground than if visitors were on foot. So, during our tour, we zipped around Yonghegong and Zhangzizhong Lu, and as far south as Meishuguan.

The tour takes in four to five restaurants (I won't name them here so you'll still be surprised if you take the tour), the kind of down-home places packed with grizzled hutong residents that you always want to pluck up the courage to try but never quite get round to. Trust me though; this is some of the best food you can find in the hutongs. Highlights for me included my first ever plate of "door nail meat buns" (*mending roubing*), so-named because they resemble the gold door nails that grace the great red doors of the Forbidden City, and some of the best noodles I have ever had the good luck to consume, secreted away down a nameless alleyway in someone's living room.

Lost Plate's new tour may be a great alternative activity to entertain visitors with, but we wouldn't be surprised if even old Beijing hands find out something new about their adopted city.

*Lost Plate currently offer Beijing hutong food tours (RMB 450 per person) starting at 6.30pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Note that they offer 10 percent discount on your second (or third!) tour, including their Xi'an and Chengdu tours. To book, visit [lostplate.com](http://lostplate.com) or email [info@lostplate.com](mailto:info@lostplate.com).*

PHOTO COURTESY OF LOST PLATE TOURS



# LITTLE MING TAIWAN RAILWAY MEALBOX

## TAIWANESE BIANDANG GOES BACK TO SCHOOL AT THE TOPWIN CENTER

Daily 11am-9.30pm. 506, 5/F, Topwin Center, Sanlitun Nanlu, Chaoyang District (186 1096 3467)

小明同学台湾精致铁路便当：三里屯南路通盈中心5层5F-506

Taiwan is famous for its pretty landscapes as well as its delicious local street foods, even the mealboxes (*biandang*) on its trains. Opened late July, Little Ming Taiwan Railway Mealbox is located on the fifth floor of Topwin Center and combines two popular Taiwanese culinary elements: classroom decor and Taiwan railway mealbox cuisine.

The two dining areas are decorated in a classroom theme – a blackboard, a platform as the cashier desk, and tables and chairs resembling school desks – threatening to sacrifice some degree of comfort for the sake of style. The waitresses are all dressed in school uniforms – no, not like the skimpy things you see on pay-per-view – and to make it feel more like school, the menu is laid out like a test, with “homework” written at the top (unfortunately only in Chinese). You use the pencil to tick the food items you want, then hand the test to one of the uniformed staff.

We tried the crispy chicken leg mealbox (RMB 46), which includes a large portion containing three chicken legs, broccoli, half a boiled egg, preserved cabbage,

sliced cucumber, and cherry tomatoes, with rice on the side. Since the chicken legs are steamed and seasoned with black pepper (which gives it more flavor), it's much healthier than its fried counterpart, and considering the price and the portion, this is good value for Sanlitun.

We also tried the fried pork chop set (RMB 46), which is served with the same side vegetables. The oyster omelet (RMB 29), a popular street food in Taiwan and true to its original recipe with scrambled egg, vegetable and small oysters. Unfortunately it was a little too sticky because of undercooked dough and the tomato sauce being ladled on a little too liberally, the pancake looked like it was floating in red-hot lava. The signature milk tea (RMB 18) was average compared to the authentic version found upstairs at Coucou, but we appreciate that you can choose your preferred sweetness from five grades, ranging from not so sweet to very sweet.

Overall, Little Ming offers good value, and is less busy than Taoyuan Juancun, Taikooli's canteen-style restaurant that offers small dishes of the same quick and easy style of food. *Tracy Wang*



PHOTO: TRACY WANG

# KUAN'S BAR & DINING

## SIMPLE BUT DELECTABLE WESTERN DISHES AT THIS NEWLY OPENED RESTAURANT

Mon-Fri 5pm-late, Sat-Sun noon-late. 1 Taipingzhuang Nanli (opposite The Big Smoke), Chaoyang District  
(177 0122 0285)

朝阳区太平庄南里1号(The Big Smoke对面)

Sitting opposite beloved Xingfucun watering hole and dining spot The Big Smoke, and a mere two doors down from Frost, Kuan's Bar & Dining opened in early October. With a neat and simple décor, this cozy restaurant is kitted out with several wooden tables and chairs with black leather-backed seats, unfinished concrete walls, and plants to fill the gaps. The front area is occupied by a small bar, whereas the back is home to a relaxing dining area with Nordic stylistic touches, thanks to checkered cushions we have definitely seen before at Ikea.

The menu is simple but classic and not too posh, with artisan bread and foie gras as starters, and nine main dishes, including salmon, beef, scallops, octopus, halibut, confit duck leg, and macaroni (RMB 50-86), as well as salads and french fries as sides. To round the meal off there are also three desserts, all priced at RMB 38. Kuan's also offers three red and three white wines, three beers, and six classic cocktails (RMB 40-50).

The artisan bread is rustic, simple, and decidedly European, and is served with two kinds of dips: hummus with black sesame, and pumpkin with pumpkin seeds.

For a main, we recommend the Icelandic halibut (RMB 86), which is served with clams, cherry tomatoes, and seasoned with a light sauce (without sacrificing its crispy skin) and fennel. If you're a lover of cheese, don't pass on the macaroni (RMB 62), which comes in a steaming clay pot, is doused in cream and smatterings of ham hock, and is covered in a thick layer of Swiss cheese.

It's irresponsible to leave without tasting the dessert, which consists of a chocolate brownie, pumpkin spiced crème brulee, and Chinese spiced pavlova. We chose the latter two – on top of the crème brulee sat candied walnuts, pumpkin seeds, cream, peppermint leaves, and powdered sugar. With one bite of the cracked sugar and crème brulee my heart melted, the sweet satisfaction coursing through my veins. The crispy, Chinese-spiced pavlova also hit the spot, the crumbled pavlova balancing well with the crème at the bottom of the dish as well as the thick slices of banana and passion fruit.

The entire experience from the food to the service was impeccable. We are thrilled to have this low-key restaurant joining the neighborhood and can't wait to see how it grows. *Tracy Wang*



PHOTO: TRACY WANG



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

## barley and mixed mushrooms

### Moka Bros, RMB 58

A healthy mix of goji berries, kale, roasted carrots, garlic, parsley, and dill, this barley salad can be finished off by either adding smoked tofu (an additional RMB 18) or salmon steak (RMB 38) for an extra protein fix.

## tuna and avocado tartare

### Modernista, RMB 68

This starter of tuna and avocado is extremely fresh and tasty. The tuna and avocado tartare comes topped off with red caviar, and sprinkled with a light spring oil and lime juice dressing for extra zest. You'll want to order this, to share with friends if necessary.

## the black sea

### La Dolce Vita, RMB 95

Made using Fregola, a Sardinian pasta, which is soaked in ink squid sauce and served with sweet paprika, this dish gets its name from its black pearl-like appearance. The sweet and spicy elements of the paprika balance well with a distinctly umami finish.



## hello, you harissa chicken

### Tribe Lido, RMB 78

A delicious, slightly spicy mix of chicken, olives, tomato, watercress, and pickled lemon, served alongside red rice. Filling but without being so dense as to weigh you down for the rest of your day.

## roasted crunchy cauliflower

### The Big Smoke, RMB 40

Roasted crunchy cauliflower doused in a homemade roasted pepper sauce topped off with parmesan cheese and breadcrumbs make for the perfect side dish. Get two if you're in a big group, you won't regret it.



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# BRUNO ANON

## CONRAD BEIJING'S NEW EXECUTIVE CHEF TALKS ABOUT CHINESE FOOD AND SPANISH CUISINE

In this issue's Chef's Q&A we interview Bruno Anon, the new executive chef at Conrad Beijing, hailing from Valencia, Spain. Here we talk to him about his interest in China, Chinese cuisine, and the origins and influence of Spanish cuisine.

### What brought you to Beijing and how long have you been working at the Conrad?

I have worked for Conrad for about seven years in different countries and properties like the Maldives and Bangkok, but it wasn't until very recently that I joined Conrad Beijing. I have worked in seven different countries now, but have always admired Chinese culture and Chinese cuisine so it was just a matter of time [that I came here].

### Where do you get your inspiration when you're creating menus and cooking?

I'm always looking for inspiration. Travelling, meeting new people, and going to new destinations is inspiring, and I always try to be aware of being somewhere different. I believe chefs are always looking for things that inspire us, not only professionally but also personally. Inspiration comes through various channels, such as paintings, architecture, sculpture; we also like to keep up with new

trends in the fashion world, check new gadgets and technologies, and keep up to date with what other chefs are doing.

### What are your favorite Spanish ingredients that you miss in Beijing?

Nowadays we are fortunate in one way because you can basically have all the products that you need in any area of the world. So what's most important to me is high quality, not just access to an ingredient. What I miss more from my home country is the quality of the vegetables and fruits. In Spain we focus on seasonal ingredients a lot, ensuring quality and freshness. To me it is very strange to see people eating watermelon in winter as the taste is nowhere near as good.

### What ingredients from China would you miss if you were to leave?

I would miss eating many different dishes that are part of my diet now like dim sum, dumplings, and Beijing duck ... I also love the culture behind hot pot, when all friends gather at a round table to eat and have fun together.

### What is the most memorable food city in the world, in your opinion?

I think the most memorable city would be either San Sebastian or Barcelona.

There is a lot of diversity in Spanish cuisine. A lot of cultures have passed through the country – Greek, French, and Roman – leading to high diversity. In the last 15 years Spain has been able to build a food culture based on a strong understanding of the country's traditions combined with the freedom to develop a new way of understanding food. This new way of cooking has made the world focus on Spain, and in turn, Spain has influenced the world in a direct, notable, and we could even say central, way.

### What is your favorite comfort food during winter?

I personally always love to eat pasta. I'm a pasta lover! On a cold winter's day I love to eat a nice penne alla matricciana, for example. As for Chinese food, I really enjoy beef or wonton noodle soup.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CONRAD BEIJING





## THE BLACK MOTH

### NALI PATIO NEWBIE TAKES FLIGHT WITH LOFTY COCKTAILS

Daily 7pm-late. 4/F Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Beijie, Sanlitun, Chaoyang District  
北京市朝阳区三里屯北街81号那里花园四层

Many of The Black Moth's cocktails will leave you feeling uplifted and heaven bound. Opening earlier this fall at Nali Patio, this trendy new venue is staffed by bartenders from Hong Kong, features plenty of surrealist artwork on the walls, and even boasts a mural specially designed by none other than Dominic Johnson-Hill of Plastered 8 (depicting a gorgeous winged creature dodging a horrible flyswatter-toting fellow, ascending to the moon).

And while all those elements have helped the bar take flight (it was absolutely jam-packed with eager attendees during its opening party in late September), what really makes the places soar is of course the concoctions. Among the best is the osmanthus rum sour cocktail (RMB 85), which has a generous portion of osmanthus infused white rum, mixed subtly enough with homemade osmanthus syrup, lemon, and frothy

egg white, to give it a lightly, "just right" tart flavor that never becomes overpowering.

Other highlights include the cucumber daiquiri, cumin gin sour, and honey and chamomile bee sips, all of which boast complex, distinctive flavors.

However, just like any ambitious, eyes-to-the-sky daredevil, The Black Moth can't help but occasionally crash and burn. That Icarus-esque moment comes courtesy of the black truffle cocktail (RMB 120), which is more unbearably bitter than the acrid smoke of a wrecked aircraft. Despite its disastrous flavor, one can't help but admire the staff's attempts to mix unique ingredients like black truffle infused bourbon whiskey, Rosso, vermouth, and chocolate bitters. Such a misfire is especially forgivable at The Black Moth, considering the stratospheric success of the other drinks on offer.

*Kyle Mullin*

# VINVINO

## UPPING THE ANTE FOR BEIJING'S WINE BARS

Tue-Sun 6pm-1am. G/F, Binduyuan, 15 Zaoying Beili, Nongzhanguan Beilu, Chaoyang District (186 1196 8069)  
朝阳区农展馆北路枣营北里15号楼宾度苑一番街

Secreted down a nameless alley in Maizidian, down-to-earth izakaya Vin Vie is without a doubt one of our favorite Japanese restaurants, such that we're often reluctant to recommend it lest the small space is overcome by new diners. So it was with much delight that we heard about their new project VinVino, a Japanese-style wine bar located just down the street. While the concept and menu are not exactly the same as the original location, we're happy to see more from this talented team, not to mention finally having a place to get through the inevitable wait for a table at Vin Vie if you turn up without a booking.

This being, after all, a wine bar, the focus of their offering is on wines by the glass and bottle, with whites starting from RMB 240 a bottle and reds from RMB 270, alongside a short menu of tapas. There is also a short menu of wine-related cocktails (RMB 60-70), including a series of spritzes and a gin and tonic featuring Nordés gin, which is based on a spirit distilled from Albariño grapes. This kind of

attention to detail is present throughout, from the warm brick and wood of the decor to the friendly staff.

Much like its elder sibling Vin Vie, the food at VinVino draws on influences from both western and Japanese cuisines. This means the pesto on the crostini (RMB 28) is made with shiso instead of basil and the pork and beef meatballs (RMB 48) are texturally more akin to crunchy *tsukune* (chicken meatballs, a popular *yakitori* option) than they are to smoother Italian versions. The dishes are competitively priced at RMB 30-60 and portions are large for what is marketed as tapas; two people could probably fill up on just three to four dishes.

With delicious food and affordable wine, VinVino is upping the ante for Beijing's current crop of wine bars. Just don't tell anyone we told you. *Robynne Tindall*

*Note: We visited VinVino during their ongoing soft opening period, so expect some minor changes to the menu.*



PHOTO COURTESY OF VINVINO





## SLOW BOAT BREWPUB

### THE BELOVED BREWERY SAILS ITS WAY INTO SANLITUN

Sun-Thu 11am-midnight, Fri-Sat 11am-1am. 6 Nansanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District (6592 5388)

朝阳区南三里屯路6号

**A**fter an agonizing six-month wait, Slow Boat Brewery's new location at 6 Nan Sanlitun Lu finally opened on September 12.

The massive, million-*kuai* brewhouse sits opposite the Topwin Center, and has three stories, adorned with luxurious imported American red oak tables, red leather, black steel, and bare concrete walls. The wide windows on the second and third floors are so large because the brewing tanks had to be brought in through the side of the building. One upside to this is that they now afford a lot of light, making the 18 2,200-barrel brewing tanks shine. Compared to their original 40-seat space near Zhangzizhong Lu, more than 170 seats in total means this venue has more room for thirsty patrons. "My goal was to not have a bad seat in the place. Every seat has a clear view of the brewing process," says owner Chandler Jurinka.

There are 14 beers on tap all brewed on site, and several bottled brews, including the popular Zombie Pirate Pale Ale, Monkey's Fist IPA, Sea Anchor Imperial Vanilla

Stout, and the newly released 6-percent-ABV Cat's Paw Cucumber Saison.

Aside from the *the Beijinger* Burger Cup-winning line of burgers, they've extended the menu with chef Clement Rol, including their Beijinger Burger (featuring a beef patty adorned with onion and roasted vegetables), and a Lao Thai Thai (beef patty topped with spicy Siracha sauce, pineapple, and chunky peanut butter). Also available are chicken wings, two sizes of fries, three salads, smoothies, a full brunch menu, and desserts. One of our new favorites is the Aztec chocolate, which unleashes intense flavors as the hot chocolate spills out from inside the gooey brownie.

Slow Boat now also offers three lunch deals, with a salad, a dessert and juice for RMB 55, fried chicken, pickle and beer for RMB 60, or a classic hamburger, fries and a soft drink for RMB 70. This makes their new brewpub not only a nighttime drinking destination, but also a great Sanlitun lunch option. *Tracy Wang*

## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

# TINY

### NEW CRAFT BEER HAVEN OPENS ON XINYUAN JIE WITH BUBBLE LAB BREWS GALORE

Tue-Sun 6pm-1am. 7 Xinyuan Jie, Chaoyang District (134 6665 8361)

朝阳区新源街7号楼

Since opening in mid-September, Tiny has been leaving its mark on the craft beer scene on the quiet Xinyuan Jie, offering a more relaxed drinking environment when compared to the hustle and bustle of Sanlitun and the dense thrum of its bars.

The 36-square-meter bar is small but cozy; the team intends to provide superior service in a limited space, which explains the cutesy name. The two partners, Ma Jiliang and Huang Rong, come from two very different backgrounds, the former being the bass player of punk band SMZB, as well as Brain Failure, one of Beijing's best-regarded punk bands; the latter is an experienced architect.

The pair began their collaboration Ma learned about Bubble Lab brewery in Wuhan through Wu Wei, the singer of SMZB. They decided to help bring Bubble Lab's microbrews up north, and opened a small bar in Beijing.

Six people can be seated at the bar, whereas the adjacent room is decked out in delicate black and white floor tiles and a long bar-level mirror, somewhat reminiscent of Modernista's old space. The whole design is modern and comfortable, and thanks to Huang Rong's little touches and tricks, Tiny may be diminutive but is never suffocating. "A smaller place is easier to manage, and some customers prefer to drink in a small and quiet

place, so we made this an izakaya-style beer bar, but gave it the slogan 'Huge Power,'" Ma told us.

There are nine beers on tap: one pilsner, one saison, four IPAs, one porter, an ale, and a stout, with prices ranging from RMB 40 to RMB 50, all from Bubble Lab in Wuhan. We tried the Mosaic Single Hop IPA (6.8 percent ABV), a hoppy brew with aromas of tropical fruits; the Vanilla Imperial Stout (9.6 percent ABV), a great balance of smooth and strong; the Golden Porter (5.1 percent ABV), a golden beer full of coffee flavor; and the Scotch Ale (8.4 percent ABV), a dark brown ale with strong caramel notes. A flight of five 180ml beers costs RMB 90. To satisfy all needs, they also provide soft drinks, two ciders, seven cocktails, several single malt whiskeys, and three types of red wine.

As for food, the kitchen offers two salads (RMB 40-45), fried dumplings (RMB 30), a fried fish fillet, as well as a sausage, cheese, and nuts platter. Even though the menu is limited, all of the food we tried was tasty and fresh, making a change from the norm of greasy bar food.

During happy hour (6-8pm), beers are buy-two-pints-get-one-free. Considering the high-quality craft beer and food, we can definitely see ourselves back here at this tiny beer haven, so as to recharge after tackling the Sanlitun crowds. *Tracy Wang*



PHOTO: TRACY WANG



## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS



### BRONZE

#### NEW SHUANGJING BAR BOASTS A VAST WHISKEY COLLECTION

Daily 5pm-late. 2-06 Tianzhijiaozi, Dongbo Jie, Chaoyang District (182 0116 8816)  
朝阳区天之骄子东柏街小区底商2层06号

The bar may be called Bronze, but a better name for its whiskey selection would be "sterling." Indeed, this new Shuangjing venue has dozens of varieties on offer.

Several of those choices are very pricey, like a RMB 600 glass of 18-year-old Yamazaki, or a RMB 350 glass of 25-year-old Caol Ila. And while those high-end options are bound to impress connoisseurs, the bulk of Bronze's whiskeys range between RMB 100-200 for a glassful, including Kilchoman Loch Gorm (RMB 100), 20-year-old Benriach (RMB 120), and Highland Park Sigurd (RMB 150).

If those options still strike you as too steeply priced, fear not. Bronze also has a few even cheaper choices that will attract thrifter patrons. These entry level options include a 12-year-old Caol Ila (RMB 70 for a glass). From there, we also tried the RMB 80 15-year-old Glenfiddich. This Canadian single malt scotch may be only ten *kuai* more than the Caol Ila that we pleasantly downed a moment before, but it's flavor was robust enough to satisfy much more seasoned barflies.

As we knocked back the whiskeys, bartender Allen Ling also offered us some cocktails that he was experimenting with for an as yet unfinished new menu section. Ling, who worked at top-notch Courtyard 4 haunt Janes and Hooch before moving on to Bronze, is an amiable host who is eager to recommend the right whiskey to suit each of his customer's palates (and budgets). His hospitable demeanor was as smooth as the high grade whiskeys on offer, meaning Shuangjing now has an elegant, high end lounge specializing in whiskey on par with any other in Beijing. *Kyle Mullin*



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# GET FIRED UP AND CELEBRATE THE GRILLED FLAVORS OF AUTUMN

## BLUE FROG UNVEILS A HOT NEW MENU FOR THE FALL SEASON

**W**e are fired up! This autumn, our new seasonal menu features six new dishes, all prepared using the searing heat of our red hot chargrills to really bring out the best flavors in our high quality meat and seafood.

Veal and beef are fighting it out to be autumn's hero dish! Veal tenderloin gets the chargrill treatment to lock in all that delicate flavor and is served with veggies and a bacon and creamy mushroom sauce.

Up against this dish are our wagyu beef sliders, which are in serious danger of redefining our burger line up, they're that good!

Our last dish worthy of special mention is mixed grilled sausages, Which of the three awesome sausages will be your favorite – chorizo, thüringen, or neuberger?

Experience the magic that happens when great ingredients meet with flames!

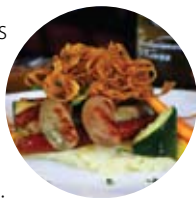
### Char-Grilled Veal Tenderloin

The star of our grill menu, this is the go-to dish for meat lovers. Veal is comparatively low in fat versus other meats, and the tenderloin is its most tender cut. Because of this, the chargrill is the perfect cooking method to deliver all that flavor and meltingly soft texture. A great partner for strong flavors, it's no surprise that our chef pairs the veal with bacon wrapped asparagus, sautéed baby potatoes, and finishes the dish with a deeply rich bacon and creamy mushroom sauce.



### Mixed Grilled Sausages

We've picked three of the world's great sausages that are sizzled to perfection and literally bursting out of their skins with flavor. We have the deep red chorizo with its smoky pimentón flavor and two authentic 'rostbratwurst' – the thüringen and neuberger. Amidst the incredible grill aromas, our chefs assemble this pork



feast with creamy mashed potato, sauerkraut, crispy onion, sautéed vegetables, and a rich gravy.

### Wagyu Beef Sliders

Is it possible that blue frog could improve on its legendary burger? Well, these sliders come close! We take the most amazing Australian wagyu beef, chargrill it nicely and pop it into a humble burger bun, jazzing it up with a stack of avocado, cheddar cheese, pan-fried onions and squiggles of garlic aioli and smoky chipotle mayo. The juicy beef just loves to embrace all those flavors and we serve these bitesize wonders with french fries, naturally. Who said that rich and poor don't mix well together?



Autumn is well recognised as apple season and so blue frog is delighted to introduce two interesting ciders from Strongbow to quench your thirst and refresh your palate of all that smoky charred goodness! We haven't forgotten our grape lovers too, introducing an elegant cabernet sauvignon, the ideal accompaniment to the red meat dishes from the chargrill.

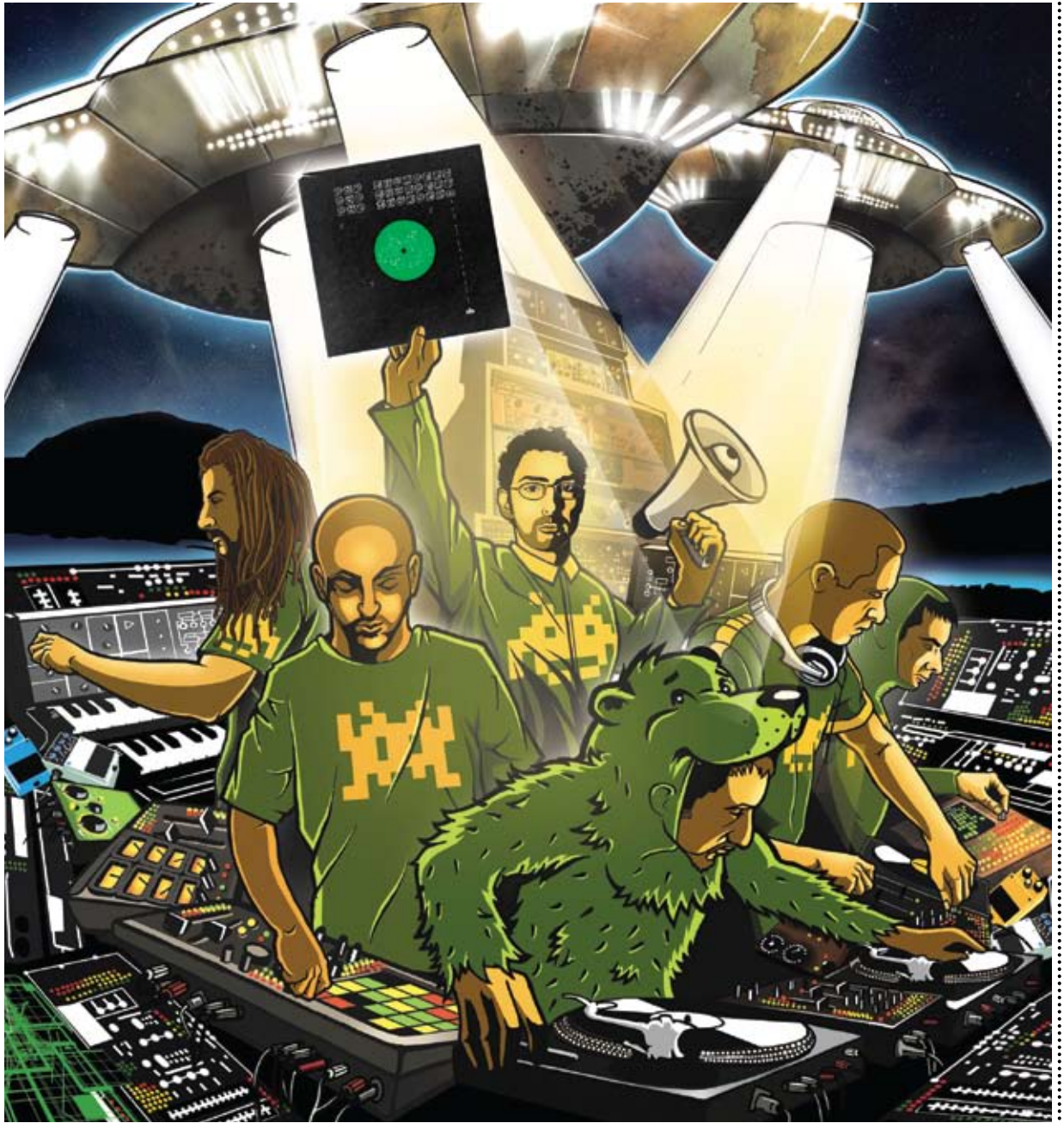
### About blue frog bar and grill

blue frog is one of the fastest growing western casual dining restaurant chains in China and operates a total of more than 30 restaurants in Shanghai, Beijing, Dalian, Tianjin, Nanjing, Wuxi, Chengdu, and Chongqing. It combines the professionalism of a big city eatery with the relaxed atmosphere of a local neighborhood joint. Its venues attract a cosmopolitan crowd that come for top-notch service and great food and drinks. It's a casual, relaxed kind of place, but they take food and drink seriously. From brunch to dinner, blue frog serves the classics of Western cuisine, with strong international flavors and influences. Visit [www.bluefrog.com.cn](http://www.bluefrog.com.cn) or add us on WeChat (ID: bluefrogChina) to learn more.



# GO

SINGAPORE // WINTER ESSENTIALS // ICE SKATING // CAPITAL HISTORY // SHANGHAI BEER



## **THE DUB INVADERS**

**NOV 12** - Mix a foundation of techno with a bit of hip-hop, drum 'n' bass, a pinch of the psychedelia, a large helping of dubstep, and what do you get? The unique turntable stylings of the Dub Invaders, of course. Hailing from Lyon, France, the group's members are also part of the band High Tone, a mainstay in the European dub scene since forming in 1997. Price TBD. 10pm. Dada





# SINGAPORE DREAMING

THE BEST FOOD AND DRINK IN THE LION CITY

By Margaux Schreurs

Foodies looking to get out of Beijing need to look no further than Singapore, where the cuisines of India and Malaysia have merged with southern Chinese influences for a whole range of exquisite flavors. The following are our top recommendations for what to eat and drink during a stay in Singapore.

## WHAT TO EAT

### Old Chang Kee

Well-known for its curry puffs, spring rolls, fish balls, and other hot traditional snacks, Old Chang Kee has been around on the island for over 50 years now. If you're visiting Singapore and considering leaving your hotel for even five seconds, it would be really hard to miss them, as their bright yellow-signposted branches are just about everywhere. 46 Pagoda Street, Singapore (+65 6221 8426)

### Zam Zam

This landmark Indian-Muslim restaurant located directly across from the Sultan Mosque has been a must-go for *murtabak* and *roti prata*, amongst other dishes, for over 100 years now. We highly recommend the chicken or

beef *murtabak* – crispy on the outside and generously filled, a small one of which is enough for one person. 697 North Bridge Road, Singapore (+65 6298 6320)

### PeraMakan

PeraMakan specializes in Peranakan or Nyonya cuisine, which was brought to Singapore by the Peranakans, descendants of early Chinese migrants who settled in and around Singapore and married local Malays. PeraMakan's specialties include *nasi ulam*, an aromatic salad made with jasmine rice, dried scallops, dried shrimp, salted *ikan kurau*, steamed prawns, shredded fried fish, sliced egg omelette, and spices and herbs. B1/F, Kiosk 13, Tangs at Tangs Plaza, 310 Orchard Road, Singapore (+65 6737 6562)

### Spize

Serving a varied assortment of all types of cuisine popular in Singapore and some eastern/western fusion cuisine, Spize has multiple outlets throughout the city. Do try their *roti prata* and their *roti john* – an omelet sandwich that is a popular snack not only in

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, SINGAPORE



Singapore but also in neighboring Malaysia and Brunei.  
 336 Bedok Road, Singapore (+65 6734 9194)



### WHAT TO DRINK

#### 1-Altitude

Perched on a rooftop 282 meters above sea level, 1-Altitude is the highest al fresco bar in the world, and is worth a visit just for that accolade alone, not to mention the spectacular 360-degree view of Singapore. Even if you're not looking to spend the whole night up here (drinks aren't cheap) you should definitely pop by for one.  
 1 Raffles Place (former OUB Center), Singapore (+65 6438 0410)

#### 28Hong Kong Street

Located on the ground floor of an old shophouse home, 28Hong Kong Street (pictured below) did Singapore proud this year by being named Best Bar at Drinks International's Asia 50 Best Bars Awards. The menu is built on spirits and American-style cocktails, and there are punches served in Shannon crystal bowls for larger groups.  
 28 Hong Kong Street, Singapore (+65 6533 2001)

#### Level 33

If you're not really a cocktail person but are instead into craft beer, Level 33 provides brews with views over Marina Bay from, you guessed it, the 33rd floor. It also serves up decent modern food: expect European classics with a twist and items to pair with beer such as their charred corn fritters with cojita cheese, chipotle balsamic, and fresh lime.  
 33/F, 33-01, 8 Marina Boulevard, Marina Bay Financial Center, Singapore (+65 6834 3133)

#### The Spiffy Dapper

This speakeasy, originally a mere hole in the wall, sits on Boat Quay and makes some of the best drinks you'll find in the area. Due to its proximity we suggest combining a visit to the Spiffy Dapper with a cruise on the Singapore River.  
 2/F, Amoy Street, Singapore (+65 8233 9810)

### WHERE TO STAY

Probably your best bet if you're looking for impeccable service, the Shangri-la's exclusive Valley Wing will turn your trip to Singapore into one of the most luxurious escapes you've ever experienced. In fact, we have to warn you in advance, you might not want to leave the hotel to explore Singapore at all.

The rooms are spacious and have a free mini bar (excluding alcoholic drinks and snacks), and you can enjoy free breakfast in the private summit room, which has menus designed by 2-Michelin starred chef Christophe Moret straight from Paris. In the afternoons, nip downstairs for complimentary afternoon tea, and in the evenings, enjoy champagne and cocktails in a tranquil setting.



# BEIJING WINTER ESSENTIALS

SURVIVAL ITEMS TO KICK MOTHER NATURE'S FRIGID AND MERCILESS ARSE

By Tom Arnstein



Winter is rarely a time to relish in Beijing – hellish smog, freezing temperatures, and globules of frozen spit aren't usually present in Santa's depiction of a winter wonderland. But the city's least hospitable time can be weathered with some good old preparation, and these few essentials will make it that much easier to get out of bed in the morning.

## **Pollution Mask** (防霾口罩, *fángmái kǒuzhào*)

This may seem like a no-brainer, but it probably is time you get yourself a pollution mask. Beijing's winters are notoriously bad as a mixture of increased coal burning and reduced wind means that the city is coated in a thick layer of lung gunk. By the end you'll be saying "never again," that is until spring rolls around and you forget it ever happened. Just remember, fit is key – 3M masks are usually a good bet.

**Where to buy:** 7-Eleven, Watsons

**Price:** 3M N95, RMB 10; 3M 9332, RMB 40





### Heat Pads (暖宝宝, *nuǎn bǎobao*)

Imagine having a glowing lump of coal inserted deep inside of you by a gaggle of cherubs who have surfed snowflakes down to earth straight from heaven. Well, that's what these feel like, minus the inevitable mess and questionable man-child relationship that this analogy conjures.

**Where to buy:** Watsons

**Price:** RMB 15 for 5 pads



### Chap Stick (唇膏, *chúngāo*)

Hey, men, put away whatever qualms you have about lip care in tubes not being masculine enough, your (potential) S.O. will thank you for buying a winter's worth of chap stick to avoid looking like your lips have been run through a paper shredder. Extra moisturizer to avoid lizard skin never goes amiss either.

**Where to buy:** Watsons

**Price:** RMB 10



### Long Johns (长内衣裤, *chǎng nèi yīkù*)

At risk of sounding like a Uniqlo fanboy (but not of the changing room variety – keep it classy, Beijing!), there hasn't been a winter yet where I haven't run to the nearest store like a screaming toddler scared for its life to buy some super high-tech Japanese long johns. There's no better way to say this: these will put you back in the womb.

**Where to buy:** Uniqlo

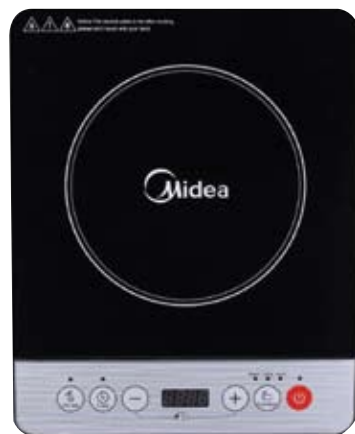
**Price:** RMB 150

### Electric Hot Plate (电磁炉, *diàncí lú*)

A hot plate is one of the best items you can own during a long Beijing winter. Not only is it essential for making all types of mulled boozy drinks and hot pot, you can also boil orange or pomelo rinds in it for a make-shift humidifier-cum-Christmas scent machine, combating both nosebleeds caused by the dry air as well as the sadness of having to endure the holidays without family.

**Where to buy:** JD.com

**Price:** RMB 200



### Phone Power Bank (手机充电宝, *shǒujī chōngdiàn bǎo*)

Have you ever seen a phone work in subzero temperatures? Nope, neither have we. That's because the cold saps batteries like the Siberian wind sucks color from your face, which is why it's always a good idea to have some extra juice on hand.

**Where to buy:** Bainaohui Electronics Market (百脑汇电脑商场), 10 Chaoyangmen Waidajie

**Price:** RMB 60-200



### Smartphone Gloves (智能触摸屏手套, *zhìnéng chùmōpíng shǒutào*)

Now that your phone actually works, it's time to use it without incurring frostbite and having to remove them while you shout over the wind that you are in fact, yes, where your Uber driver's phone says you are. A pair of smartphone-enabled gloves is a game-changer and will help you do just that.

**Where to buy:** Uniqlo

**Price:** RMB 100



# CRAFTY CHRISTMAS

DITCH THE TRINKETS FOR THESE CREATIVE GIFTS

By Kyle Mullin

Although it's the season of giving, many Beijing expats are left feeling like Scrouges. After all, they'd love to buy something special to bring back home to their relatives for the holidays, rather than the same old junky trinkets that they purchased at the Silk Market and other tourist traps in years past.

Thankfully, Beijing is host to a swath of entrepreneurs selling more distinctive wares. We've rounded up a few of the most promising below, so that your holiday shopping will leave you with cheer rather than feeling like a chore.

## 56 in One

With this e-commerce venture, Kalu Shama, who was born and raised in the Yi minority in Sichuan, is working to bring the traditional handcrafts of China's 56 minorities from the rural fringes and into urbanites' homes. "Our goal is to make more people aware of the interesting and beautiful products of the 56 ethnic groups in China," says Shama of the embroidered table cloths, coasters, and other items handmade by minority artisans that she sells on her WeChat store and Taobao. "We want to show respect, and help protect, these traditional crafts even as China's economy continues to develop so rapidly."

## Key Products:



A spun and woven placemat (RMB 80) from Tibetans residing in Qinghai. Shama says: "These items feature sheep and yak hair woven into a more modern design."



An embroidery placemat (RMB 100 each) from the Miao nationality in Guizhou province. Shama says: "This cross-stitch embroidery will add a vibrant aesthetic to your dining room."



A table runner made by members of the Miao nationality residing in Hunan province, which she describes as: "An ancient textile dyeing with 3,000 of years history."



56 in One has more items from various other ethnic minorities. In the future, Shama plans to also sell paintings, wall tapestries, and other artworks from various minority groups.

## Where to get it:

Taobao: Search "56inOne Collection" or "113826591"

WeChat public account: Search "i56inone" or add the owner directly (ID: kammo003) to ask about more specific styles and sizes.

**NOTE:** Book at least three weeks in advance, because the production cycle of these handmade products takes about 20 days to complete.



## ReVived Design

This is another socially conscious craft upstart, but ReVived is a little different because it has a strong environmental focus. Founder and designer Lise van den Bos collects discarded keyboard keys, waste textiles, broken zippers, and even soda can pull-tabs and bottle caps, and uses them to adorn handbags and other items until they are left with a chic, sleek look. "If you are a longterm Beijing resident you have already taken back silk and pearls several times, so something different and more creative is needed," she says, adding: "My items are all handmade ... and collected in Beijing, turning trash into a treasure to take home."

### Key Products:



Gold color round pull-tab purse (RMB 420)

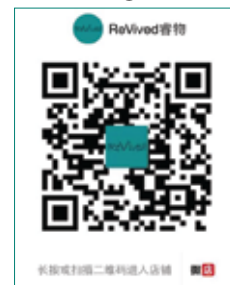


Keyboard key cuff links (RMB 35 per pair)



Pull-tab belts (RMB 130, both men's and women's)

### Where to get it:



Weidian: Scan the QR code above

## Peng Peng Paradise

A regular at the Farm to Neighbors Market in Liangmaqiao's Grand Summit, this designer fashions cutesy handmade felt jewellery, crafts and decorations. Patrons can also visit the Peng Peng Paradise WeChat page to ask for customized designs.

### Key Products:



Brooch (RMB 80-100)



Earrings (RMB 40-60, depending on customized design)



Zodiac doll ornaments (RMB 200 and up)

### Where to get it:

The Farm to Neighbors Market

WeChat public account, ID: pengpengmeow

## Liuba Draws

Liuba Vladimirova turns greeting cards into warmly colorful love letters to Beijing. "I like to create unique things that show the quirky side of Beijing," Vladimirova says. "My cards are suitable for different occasions, and I made sure to also make the inside of the cards attractive and fun."

### Key Products:

Cards are RMB 25 each (including an envelope), or five for RMB 100.

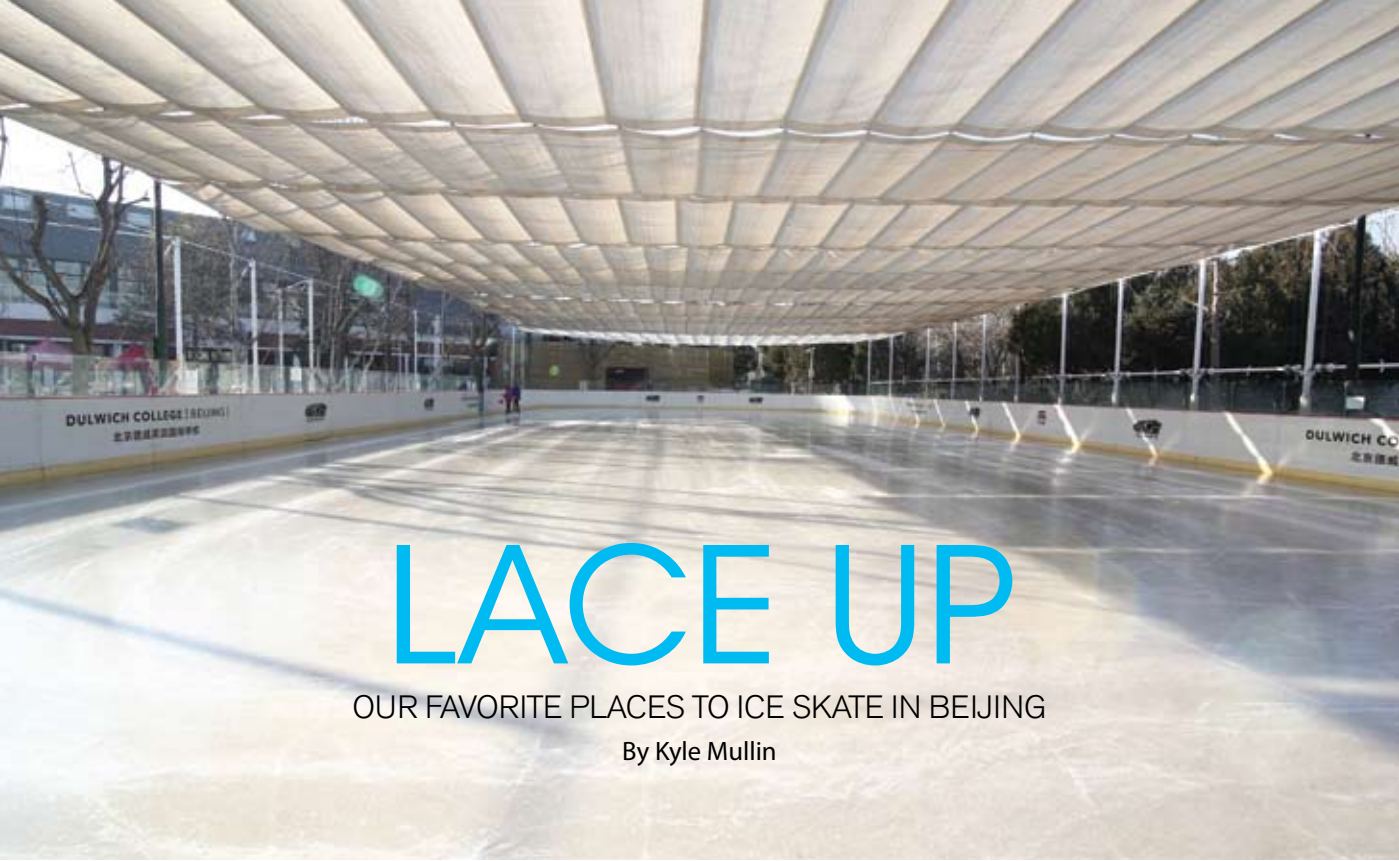
### Where to get it:

Website: [www.liubadraws.com](http://www.liubadraws.com)

Instagram: @liubadraws

WeChat: @liubatje





# LACE UP

OUR FAVORITE PLACES TO ICE SKATE IN BEIJING

By Kyle Mullin

Whether you're a wobbly beginner, or able to zip around in artful figure eights, there are few things more exciting than lacing up your skates and gliding across the ice. Thankfully, there's no shortage of rinks and outdoor ponds for Beijingers to dig their blades into as the colder weather sets in. Below, we've listed some of our favorite skating spots – both indoor and outdoor, from glitzy new arenas to charming and relaxing outdoor ponds. All indoor locations are open year-round, please call ahead or check online for prices.

## INDOOR

### All Star Rink

Located in Solana mall, this charming indoor rink is popular with families and even private lessons (in Chinese only) from national skating team coaches.

1/F, Solana Lifestyle Shopping Park, 6 Chaoyang Gongyuan Lu, Chaoyang District (5905 6328)

Daily 10am-9.30pm.

### Century Star Club

If you want to go for a leisurely skate, then this is not the place for you. However, serious skaters will enjoy the high quality lessons on offer at this rink, though the number of students and teachers leave no room for recreational skaters.

B1/F, Capital Gymnasium, 54 Zhongguancun Nandajie,

Haidian District (6834 6346, [www.centurystar.com.cn](http://www.centurystar.com.cn))

Daily 1.30-7.30pm.

### Joy City

From hockey tournaments to post ice team window shopping, this shopping mall housed rink has a wide spectrum of options for visitors.

7/F, Joy City Mall, Chaoyang North Road No. 101, Chaoyang District, Beijing 7F (8552 6871, 8552 6695, [www.championrink.com/en-us/events/champion](http://www.championrink.com/en-us/events/champion))

Mon-Tue 10am-9.30pm, Wed-Thu 10am-10.45pm, Fri 10am-8.30pm, Sat 3-7.30pm, Sun 1-7.15pm.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DULWICH COLLEGE BEIJING





## OUTDOOR

### Dulwich

While many popular local skating venues are bustling hubs of activity, this outdoor rink will satisfy many foreigner's longing for the quieter ice of their hometowns. Indeed, Dulwich's rink is perfect for timid children looking to better their balance, along seasoned adults looking to skate in peace.

Dulwich College Beijing, Legend Garden Villas, 89 Capital Airport Road, Shunyi District, Beijing (6454 9150, [www.dulwich-beijing.cn](http://www.dulwich-beijing.cn))

*Open for the season from Nov 22. Weekends, 3.30-7pm.*

### Houhai Qianhai

Glide across the ice with hutong rooftops as your backdrop. Nothing else will ever give lifelong *laowai* skiers such a simultaneous taste of both home and abroad.

Qianhai, North side of Beihai Park, Xihai Beiyuan, Xicheng District (6612 5717)

*Open to the season from Dec 20. 10am-dusk.*

### Summer Palace

Like Houhai, this historic site will give your ice time a distinctively Chinese feel. Better still: the lake is huge, ensuring that you have plenty of room to attempt figure eights.

Qinglongqiao Jiedao, Haidian District (6288 1144)

*Opening times TBC.*

### Le Cool

It may be a small rink, but the skaters at Le Cool give it plenty of personality. Thanks to its central location, it draws a crowd that is both vast in size and wide in variety, making it one of the liveliest and most downright fun rinks in town.

B2/F, China World Shopping Mall, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District (6505 5776, [lecool@cwtc.com](mailto:lecool@cwtc.com), [www.lecoolerink.com](http://www.lecoolerink.com))

*Mon-Sat 10am-10pm, Sun 10am-7pm.*





# CAPITAL HISTORIES

HOW BEIJING CAME TO BE CHINA'S CAPITAL

By Jeremiah Jenne

While Beijingers claim a history dating back to 1045 BC, it would be more accurate to say that the past 3,000 years have seen a number of cities rise and fall in the area around where we live today.

Lars Ulrik Thom, of Beijing Postcards, is a historian who gives talks on Beijing history including the popular lecture “Looking for the Master Plan,” which combines archival research done by Thom and his team with the work of local scholars such as Hou Renzhi.

According to Thom, “There are three passes going through the mountains connecting just about where Beijing is, and south of this is the Yongding River. These four roads are the main reason for Beijing’s location. Beijing was the perfect trade station for the nomads and other people north of the mountains and the people of the flat Huabei Plain.”

“Ji was the first city to emerge around where Beijing is today ... approximately 3,000 years ago,” says Thom.

But Ji had a rival city, Yan, located about 40 kilometers southwest of today’s city center.

According to Thom, “When Yan defeated Ji, Yan took over Ji’s location. Since then there have always been cities

where Beijing is located, but the original location of Yan was not as good as the area around Ji.” Today, the former Yan site has a museum devoted to the archaeology of this ancient city.

During the period of the Warring States (473-221 AD) Yan was its own kingdom, one of seven rival states in China. When the warring kingdoms were united under the rule of Qin, and the first Emperor of China Qin Shihuang in 221 BC, the state of Yan and the city of Ji faded into history.

Although just one early name for the city, “The Capital of Yan,” or “Yanjing” lives on in bottles of watery beer to this day.

With the demise of the state of Yan, the area around Beijing became something of a backwater. For nearly 1,000 years, the area we live in now was a way station between civilization and the steppe. It was the last stop of civilization before exiting the passes through the Northern Hills and out into the great beyond. Out of the pass and turn left, and you will be on the Silk Road. Next stop: Persia. Take a right and that was the road you would travel if you wanted to invade Korea, something of an obsession on the part of the emperors of the Sui and

PHOTO COURTESY OF JEREMIAH JENNE



early Tang Empires.

It was not until the 10th century AD that the area around Beijing became something more than a frontier outpost. In 938, the Khitan, a people hailing from what is Mongolia today conquered parts of Northern China, and they made the city one of their capitals. For the Khitan, the area around Beijing was not the last stop out of civilization, but the first port of call in from the steppe.

The Khitan were the first of three conquest dynasties founded by non-Chinese who made Beijing their capital over the next four centuries. The Jurchen, a proto-Manchu people from the mountains and forests near what is today the border between China and Korea would conquer the Khitan and took the city in 1122.

The Jurchens conquered almost all of northern China, and called their capital, located just to the southwest of today's Second Ring Road, "Middle Capital," or Zhongdu. But perhaps most famous of all were the Mongols. The armies of Genghis Khan sacked Zhongdu in 1215 on their way to extending their empire throughout Asia and into Europe.

It was also Mongolians who gave modern Beijing its basic shape. Sixty years after the sack of the Jurchen capital, Genghis Khan's grandson moved his capital from Shangdu to a new city, built to the northeast of the old Zhongdu. The new capital, built more or less in the location of present-day Beijing, was called Khanbaliq, the City of the Khans in Mongolian. In Chinese, it was simply known as "The Big Capital" or Dadu. Today, several sites and even some streets and hutongs have histories dating back to the era of Mongolian rule.

The Mongolians may have conquered most of the known world, but they didn't hold on to China for very long. Less than a century after moving their capital to Dadu, a massive rebellion chased the Mongols back across the mountains and into the steppe. The new dynasty which emerged, the Ming, established their capital in Nanjing.

The Mongolians did not go far. To protect the North, the founding emperor of the Ming Dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang, sent one of his most capable sons, Zhu Di, to the area around the old Khanbaliq to guard the north. He rebuilt the defenses, adding bricks and towers to the system of pretty good, if not great, earthen walls which marked the northern boundary of China.

History does not record whether or not he was able to get the Mongolians to pay for the wall. Zhu Di fought the Mongolians on their own turf on more than one

occasion, kept the empire safe, but when his father died, Zhu Di was passed over in favor of one of Zhu Yuanzhang's grandsons.

Zhu Di did not take the news very well. He mustered his armies, marched south, and stormed his nephew's palace. The nephew's body was never found. Some believe he escaped to the western realms. It is likely he was barbecued in his own chambers when the armies of his uncle set the palace on fire.

Zhu Di's usurpation of the throne left Nanjing a little too hot – both politically and literally – for comfort. One of Zhu Di's first acts as emperor (after erasing his nephew from the imperial histories) was to move the capital from Nanjing to Zhu Di's base of power in the north. Between 1403 and 1420, millions of laborers and thousands of artisans, craftsmen, engineers, and architects worked to build a new capital on top of the ruins of the old Mongolian city. Workers built city walls and gates which stood until the 1950s. They built the grand palaces of the Forbidden City and the altars of the Temple of Heaven.

It was Zhu Di, ruling as the Yongle Emperor, who, more than any one person, is responsible for the city we live in today. While the walls and gates are long gone, their shadows remain on the ring roads and the names of bridges and the Line 2 subway stations.

Later rules, first the Manchus of the Qing Empire, and then the modern states of the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China would, of course, leave their marks on the city. Mao Zedong and the CCP had a very particular vision for Beijing which meant transforming the imperial capital into a city of factories, production brigades, and socialist engineering. In the post-Mao era, Beijing has changed again with gleaming skyscrapers and luxury malls replacing hutongs and temples.

The city continually evolves. For 3,000 years, the area where we live has been home to kings, warriors, scholars, monks, merchants, and ordinary folk living their lives. Cities have risen and fallen, but each one has contributed something to the DNA of modern Beijing.

*Several exhibits in Beijing trace this fascinating history. The Beijing Urban Planning Hall, located near Qianmen and the southeast corner of Tiananmen Square has several maps, films, and exhibits which show the evolution of Beijing from earliest antiquity to present day. Mongolian-era Beijing is the subject of a temporary exhibition, The Capital Cities of Yuan Dynasty, running until December 9 at the Capital Museum.*



# SHANGHAI WATERING HOLES FOR CRAFT BEER LOVERS

By Tracy Wang

Shanghai, the magical city we love to compete with, is never lacking in surprises while visiting; it's impossible to avoid the sea of trendy craft beer, with all the micro-breweries and taprooms, let alone brewer-friendly events like the annual Shanghai Beer Week, Shanghai Craft Beer Festival, Kerry Craft Beer Festival, and Shanghai International Beer Festival. If you happen to travel down to see our Southern brethren, here are several watering holes we recommend you dive into. To get a good overview, you can even make it a pub crawl, since most of these venues are within walking distance of each other.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BOXING CAT BREWERY, TRACY WANG



### Boxing Cat Brewery

This leading microbrewery already has three outlets. Thanks to seasoned brewmaster Michael Jordan, their suds have won a lot of awards, not to mention that Boxing Cat was the first mainland Chinese craft brewery to win a medal at the 2016 World Beer Cup. Beers on offer include Right Hook Helles, Contender Extra Pale Ale, Sweet Sciences Summer Ale, TKO IPA, Upper Cut India Pale Lager, and Sugar Momma on tap, and American comfort food to pair with them. They also have a sister bar with a different concept, named Liquid Laundry, that has 15 microbrews on tap, located at Huaihai Zhonglu.

*Unit 26A, 519 Fuxing Road Central, Huangpu District, Shanghai (021 6426 0360)*

*82 Fuxing Road West, Xuhui District, Shanghai (021 6431 2091)*

*The Place HQ, 100 Zun Yi Road (021 6237 1128)*



### Daga Brewpub

Located next to Boxing Cat's Fuxing location, Daga Brewpub's two floors have more than 42 beers on tap. Unlike Boxing Cat which sells its own beers, Daga's focus lies in Chinese microbrews, such as beers from Nbeer, Wuhan No. 18, Chengdu Harvest, Master Gao, and Mr. Li, as well as some brews from Belgium and Denmark.

*100 Fuxing Road West, Xuhui District, Shanghai (021 3469 5338)*

*37 Tai'an Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai (021 3469 5337)*



### Dr. Beer

This Chinese-owned brewpub boasts a big open venue with huge brewing facilities, offering six beers on tap: wheat, pilsner, pale ale, IPA, dark lager, and cranberry ale. They also offer a pilsner beer mixed with ginger ale, strawberry puree, and lemon. Most of the beers would be considered relatively light for heavy beer drinkers.

*83 Fumin Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai (021 5468 1077)*

*749 Guyang Road, Changning District, Shanghai (021 5118 2930)*

### World of Beer

Next to Dr. Beer, this bar has 46 local and imported beers on tap, and hundreds of bottles in the massive fridges that line the bar, filled with your favorite brands like Goose Island, Brewdog, North Coast, Foxes, Brooklyn, Leffe, and Chimay. We love the Old Rasputin Russian Imperial Stout on tap.

*85 Fumin Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai (021 6205 8885)*



### Tap House

With three locations, Tap House offers over 20 imported beers on tap, including eight from Mikkeller, three from Rogue, several from North Coast, two from Timmermans, and two from Moosehead.

*Zhang Plaza, 99 Taixing Road, Jing'an District, Shanghai (021 5292 6990)*

*74 Yongkang Lu, Xuhui District, Shanghai (021 5448 8337)*

*36 Hongmei Entertainment Street, Lane 3338 Hongmei Road, Hongqiao, Shanghai (021 5470 5800)*



### The Brew

This brewpub is located on the first floor of the Kerry Hotel Pudong and has six beers on tap, all brewed on site, including White Ant Wheat, Skinny Green Low Cab Lager, IPA, Pils, Mash, Dugite Vanilla Stout, and Razorback Cider, which you can enjoy paired with their western-style food in The Brew's al fresco dining area.

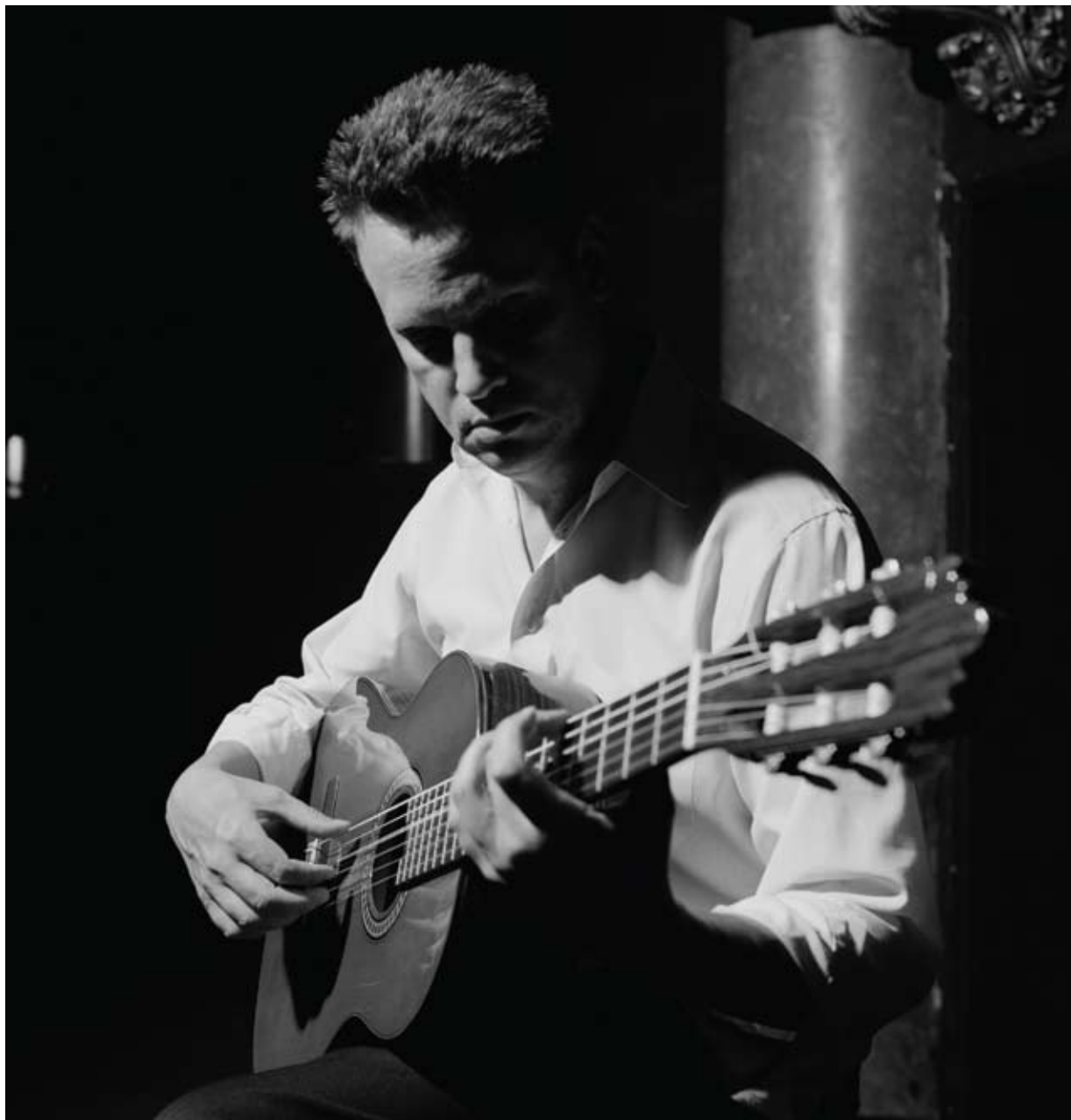
*1/F, Kerry Hotel, 1388 Huamu Road, Pudong District, Shanghai (021 6169 8888)*

If you are still not ready to go home and call it a night, we can also recommend you head to Jackie's Beer Nest, Shanghai Beer Factory, Reberg Brewpub, Dean's Bottle Shop, Kaiba, Drunk Uncle, the Beer Shelf, and The Hop Project to quench your remaining thirst.

Introducing the people who matter

# MEET

WILL GRIFFITH // ANDY MOK // TRAVELS THROUGH DALI WITH A LEG OF HAM



## **FOLK ROCKERS SUN KIL MOON**

**NOV 2** - Known as one of the most potently lyrical and avidly collaborative acts in the indie folk scene, Sun Kil Moon are sure to leave Beijing music fans swooning long after their performance. Frontman and founder Mark Kozelek has been praised for his distinctive lyrics and tone by the likes of Q Magazine, which said he had a “compelling ache of a voice,” just one of the elements sure to be making this one of the most hotly anticipated concerts of the year. RMB 200, RMB 150 (advance). Yugong Yishan

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUN KIL MOON



# WILL GRIFFITH

BEIJING'S PRINCIPAL MUSIC DOCUMENTARIAN

By Tom Arnstein



Will Griffith has been steadily churning out photography and video as well as unparalleled weekly coverage of Beijing's music scene for the past five years via his website *LiveBeijingMusic.com* (WeChat: livebeijingmusic). If you've been to a Gulou-side gig this year then you'll undoubtedly have seen him, either with a camera in his hand or getting sweaty in the pit. Below we talk to him about the music that saw him land the position of one of Beijing's premium aural mavens.

## Firstly, what have you been up to as of late?

We just released a few cassettes on Beijing-based Nasty Wizard Recordings, including a split between Wuhan emo up-and-comers Chinese Football and Aussie noise rockers Thug Mills, and a split between Beijing's own Lobekraft and Canada's Holy Hum. Also, I'll be hosting a special Christmas Live Beijing Music showcase at DDC and probably a few other gigs about town in November and December – keep your eyes peeled on the website and WeChat account.

## Ok, now to the nitty-gritty. What was the first record you ever bought?

Bought may not be the appropriate word here – more so borrowed indefinitely from my friends. And that would be the CD for Green Day's *Dookie*. Though I have vivid memories of receiving Boyz II Men's *//* on cassette and then immediately demanding it in CD format, 'cause it's friggin' Boyz II Men.

## What was the first song you heard from Beijing?

Pet Conspiracy's 'Don't Move,' back in the days when Helen Feng was still in the band. Remember taking a date to LAN Club (remember that place!) to see Holy Ghost! and being gobsmacked by Pet Conspiracy's opening set.

## What is your favorite cover version of a song?

The bets are the ones you don't even realize are covers until the covers are already engrained into your brain. Case in point: Talking Heads' 'Take Me To The River' – in university I used to try to dance with a lamp like David Byrne with my roommate whilst blasting *Stop Making Sense*.

## If you could meet one musician, alive or dead, who would it be and why?

David Bowie causes he seems like a dude that wouldn't reminisce too much.

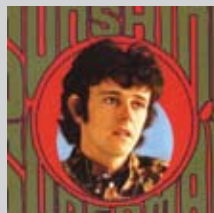
## What's your favorite Chinese song, and why?

Residence A's '送春 Farewell Spring' – an anthem for Beijing if I ever heard one – it's essentially the 'Hey Jude' of Beijing. This was the song that kinda got me entrenched and obsessed in the music scene here in the first place.

## What is your favorite active singer or band in Beijing right now?

There are too many to choose from, but as of late, I've been obsessed with december3am, the new drum and bass duo consisting of Lao Du and Dala, who both used to perform with Horse Radio. If we're talking about the big guns – I gotta go with someone like Second Hand Rose, who are operating on a whole other level.

## WILL GRIFFITH'S FIVE-SONG PLAYLIST



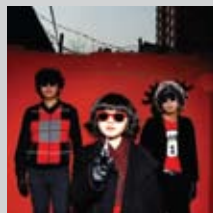
Donovan 'Season of the Witch'



Jurassic 5 'Jurassic Finish First'



Talking Heads 'This Must Be The Place'



Hedgehog 'Sky Song'



Wang Wen 'Lost in 21st Century'



**A**s America's 2016 Presidential Election Campaign endlessly dragged on earlier this fall, Andy Mok sat down to take the Beijinger's quiz about one of the candidates.

The IT guru and startup insider, who founded Red Pagoda resources and frequently offers his thoughts about tech on CCTV, Reuters, and other networks, also revels in a different kind of commentary in his spare time: continually posting articles about America's presidential race on his WeChat moments. And as the election grew more and more ridiculous, we decided to quiz him on quotes from Republican nominee Donald Trump, asking Mok to guess whether the controversial candidate said each excerpt, or whether it was uttered by the likely 2020 election frontrunner (and arguably bigger narcissist), rapper Kanye West.

**1) "The beauty of me is that I'm very rich."**

A) Trump B) Kanye ✓

**2) "My IQ is one of the highest – and you all know it! Please don't feel so stupid or insecure; it's not your fault."**

A) Trump ✓ B) Kanye

**3) "I feel like I'm too busy writing history to read it."**

A) Trump B) Kanye ✓

**4) "Sometimes people write novels and they're so wordy and so self-absorbed. I am not a fan of books. I would never want a book's autograph. I am a proud non-reader of books."**

A) Trump B) Kanye ✓

**5) "I'll say things that are serious and put them in a joke form so people can enjoy them. We laugh to keep from crying."**

A) Trump B) Kanye ✓

**6) "One of the problems with being a bubbling source of creativity, it's like I'm bubbling in a laboratory, and if you don't put a cap on it, at one point it will, like, break the glass. If I can hone that ... then I have, nuclear power, like a superhero."**

A) Trump B) Kanye ✓

**7) "It's freezing and snowing in New York – we need global warming!"**

A) Trump ✓ B) Kanye

**8) "I will be the leader of a company that ends up being worth billions of dollars, because I got the answers. I understand culture. I am the nucleus."**

A) Trump B) Kanye ✓

**9) "The Bible had 20, 30, 40, 50 characters in it. You don't think that I would be one of the characters of today's modern Bible?"**

A) Trump B) Kanye ✓

**10) "One of the key problems today is that politics is such a disgrace. Good people don't go into government."**

A) Trump ✓ B) Kanye

**FINAL SCORE: 10/10**

**VERDICT:** As the Donald would say, Mok's score on this test was "HUUUUUUGE."



# A DRINK WITH

ECHO XIE AND ZHANG FAN, CORE STAFF OF DC CHINESE FILM FESTIVAL

By Tracy Wang

**F**ounded by Cai Yibin in 2011, the biennial DC Chinese Film Festival (or DCCFF) celebrates Chinese cinema in its broadest sense, whether made by ethnically Chinese filmmakers, filmed in Mandarin or a regional language, or telling a story about the nation, it's all about culture or diaspora. The third DC Chinese Film Festival just took place in Washington DC, and we had a drink with their core staff – Echo Xie, the festival's deputy director, and Zhang Fan, director of media and PR.

## Could you introduce DCCFF?

**Zhang Fan:** By our definition, DC Chinese Film Festival is a nonprofit organization dedicated to discovering outstanding Chinese cinema around the world, and to encouraging cultural diversity through films. In my mind, DCCFF is a platform that provides young directors with professional connections and financial opportunities for projects, gets their films to be seen by a broader group of audiences, and celebrates the preciousness of film as art.

**Echo Xie:** At the moment DCCFF is completely run by volunteers. Our staff volunteers all have other day jobs but we devote most of our spare time and come together every year to make DCCFF happen. Our biennial festival showcases the best works from the past two years and has a main competition program that accepts submissions from all over the world. In between, we do other special programs such as retrospective series, master series, panels and other film-related events to continuously bring in great films and keep the conversation going.

## What makes a movie a winner?

This year we gave out 13 awards, among which eight winners were selected by our jury, two were selected by the audience, and three programming awards (including DCCFF Story That Matters Award, DCCFF Emerging Talent Award and Inter-Culture Spotlight Award) were selected by the festival committee. Our jury consists of seven jurors: four foreign jurors and three Chinese jurors. They watched and scored all of the nominated films prior to the festival, and sit together for a two-hour meeting to discuss the winners.

As for the committee's awards, we want to encourage more films to capture cultural and social perspectives.

For example, this year we selected "Outsourced Work," which documented the real and poor living conditions of those workers, as the "DCCFF Story That Matters Award." Although the film was shot on SD camera and didn't use many fancy techniques, we believe this film's subject matter is far more meaningful.

But as one of our jurors, Golden Bear awardwinning director Professor Xie Fei said, "Good is always a relative term; the most important thing is that all these films get opportunities to be seen by more people, across the ocean, on big screen."

## What are the biggest obstacles that the festival faces and what makes it special?

As a young and nonprofit festival, there are some inherent challenges we have to face. It's always hard to find funding, even harder to find sponsors who are not only willing to contribute but also share the same vision with us.

But we are really lucky none of these difficulties are big enough an "obstacle." We always say DCCFF is like a magnetic field, it attracts the right people. The volunteers who have worked for the event were fantastic.

## What do you think of the future of Chinese cinema?

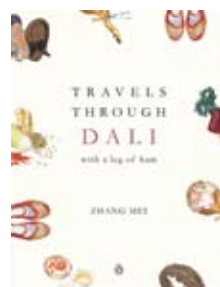
The quality of the film content is getting more and more important. As we can tell from this year's Chinese film box office, people are tired of Hollywood franchise films and domestic soap operas, and are inevitably looking for different content. I always believe Chinese directors and writers, even actors, need to learn to tell good stories. When all the stories in the cinema are the same or can't deliver a core message to audiences, those films will not touch people's hearts and will fail for sure.



# TRAVELS THROUGH DALI WITH A LEG OF HAM

WILDCHINA FOUNDER RETURNS TO HER HOMETOWN IN THIS BEAUTIFUL NEW TRAVELOGUE

By Robynne Tindall



Standing on China's southernmost borders, Yunnan's cultural and culinary complexities have fascinated travelers for centuries. Who better to tell the story of this fascinating province than Dali-native and WildChina founder Zhang Mei, who has dedicated years of her life to exploring the region.

In her new book *Travels Through Dali with a Leg of Ham*, Zhang Mei returns to her home town and uses one of the region's most famous culinary exports, cured ham, as a lens to focus on the local people and their stories. Accompanied by photographer Elizabeth Phung's beautiful images, the book is part travelogue, part recipe book. Below, the author tells us more.

## **What inspired you to take this journey and why do it with a leg of ham?**

The idea for the book originally came up when we were celebrating WildChina's 15th birthday. We are lucky to be able to travel and see beautiful things, and I wanted to share that experience with other people.

Ham for me represents a happy home, and that's what I think about when I think about Yunnan. For me, Yunnan is more than just one of China's top tourist destinations; its beauty goes deep, in the age-old traditions, in the hardworking spirit of the locals. I chose ham as a way to showcase local life.

## **On your travels outside China, have you ever found a ham that can live up to the ham you enjoyed during your childhood?**

In a way, ham has illustrated the evolution of my worldviews. Before leaving, I thought Yunnan was the only place on earth that produced ham. Of course, when I walked into the dining hall of Harvard Business School and encountered a ham and cheese sandwich, I realized that was not the case. However, the sandwich tasted so bad that I was convinced Yunnan was the only place on earth that produced tasty ham.

My life took on a different trajectory after I graduated, and the flavor of Yunnan faded in my memory. That is, until one Thanksgiving, when an entire leg of ham turned up in the mail at my house in Maryland, a gift from my American

father-in-law. This ham was different. It was smoked and ready to eat, and it tasted really good. What sort of ham was this, I inquired? Virginia ham!

Later, I was introduced to Italian prosciutto and Spanish jamón ibérico. The more I traveled, the more similarities presented themselves. Now I can say from experience, Yunnan ham is on par with the best in the world.

## **What changes have you seen take place in Dali and the surrounding region since you grew up there?**

There are many visible changes. Firstly, apartment buildings and highways now line the Erhai shore. Buildings are much taller, often 20-30 stories high. There are now highways leading north to Lijiang, west to Burma, and east to Kunming.

Secondly, the population mix has changed. There are now tens of thousands of Chinese tourists walking through the old town everyday, with new residents opening up shops, restaurants, and lodges.

## **What is your take on the way tourism is changing China?**

Chinese people are traveling more and their tastes are becoming more sophisticated. The more people travel, the more open-minded people become. I fundamentally believe in the value of travel.

That said, the majority of the travel industry is still offering cheap packaged tours that don't involve the sort of learning or discovery that travel should. Junk food travel may be cheap, but as the population gets wealthier, there will be a demand for "gourmet travel." As a result, cities like Beijing and Dali need to work on providing more "gourmet travel" products. One of the saddest things about traveling around China is that a lot of cities look the same. I believe that city managers and travel service providers need to explore the soul of each place, and how travel experiences can be made to reflect this. The first step for a local government to encourage conservation of tradition is first to realize the value of such traditions.

*Travels Through Dali With a Leg of Ham is available for purchase online now from [travelsthroughdali.com](http://travelsthroughdali.com).*



# BEIJING'S HOCKEY POWER PLAY

LONGTIME LOCAL SKATES-AND-PUCKS EXPERT ON THE SPORT'S PENDING CHINESE BREAKTHROUGH

By Kyle Mullin

Few things make Canadians living in Beijing more wistful than the thought of missing out on hockey season back in their homeland. That sort of hockey heartache has, however, been eased by Curtis Dracz's efforts to promote the skates-and-stickhandling sport in the capital with initiatives like Center Ice Asia, Hockey Night in Beijing, the Beijing Pond Hockey Tournament, and the Montreal Canadian Tour in Beijing (the latter of which featured former players from the beloved Quebec team coming to Beijing). Over the years he has worked with owners, developers, and clubs to (according to a bio on his website), "answer their needs with facility construction, event concepts, professional coaching, camps and tours abroad," so that not only Canadians, but expats from around the world and also local Chinese people can have better access to the sport.

This season, with Beijing having founded its first Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) team, Kunlun Red Star, and as the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics approach, Dracz says China's interest in the game is more apparent than ever. Below, he tells us more about how ice hockey is heating up in China.

**Do you think hockey is about to have a major breakthrough in China? A few things are indicating that might happen – the KHL team, the upcoming Olympics, and even a Beijing minor league hockey team beating a team from Ottawa.**

Yeah. It's an exciting time for the sport of ice hockey. New clubs, infrastructure, school initiatives, government support – you name it, people are talking about it. The 2022 Winter Olympics are certainly a key factor in all of this, but looking past the Olympics is the major objective. We need this sport to sustain in the long term.

**How did it feel to watch the KHL game in Beijing earlier this fall? What did you enjoy most about it?**

It's great hockey with a lot of former professional players as well as up-and-coming younger players. It was nice to see a few Chinese players get ice time as well.

**Have you seen an improvement of quality in both gear and playing facilities in Beijing?**

Quality equipment has always been accessible through dealers or Taobao. Unfortunately, the price tag for a new set of gear isn't cheap, so that becomes a factor to kick-start programs. Over the years, we've seen places like Decathlon sell entry-level skates, which are a great way to start, gain some interest, and then upgrade when needed. As for infrastructure, there has been some improvements over the years, although we still lack "proper" training centers with dressing rooms, benches, scoreboards, and so on.

**Before recent developments, you and your organization spent years advocating for hockey in Beijing. What have been some of the highlights?**

We have always tried to push the culture that comes with the sport. Whenever we have events or run training camps, it's about more than the on-ice experience. We want to build life-long players that can play wherever they go, utilizing the core values to sport – respect, leadership, and team work. Sometimes this is challenging for Chinese players to understand, until they experience one of our activities first-hand.



# HOW TO BE LOVED BY EVERYONE EVERYWHERE

By Andrew Killeen

**A**h, travel. We all love travel. But does travel love us? You may, at times, have felt less than wholly welcome when visiting other countries. Perhaps you've turned round in the marketplace to see the locals laughing and making hand gestures behind your back. Or you've found strange substances floating in your soup at the taverna. Perhaps you've woken up in the middle of the night with the muzzle of a Glock 17 jammed into your teeth while masked men rifle through your luggage.

The sad truth is that however gosh darn lovable you are, however cuddly and caramel-centered, it's just possible that your hosts will see you instead as overbearing, over-privileged and overweight. Particularly if you're American. And that's totes unfair, right? Considering all the good work your country has done liberating people all round the world, often so promptly that the people you liberated hadn't even realized yet they needed liberating.

But turn that frown upside down. We at *the Beijinger*, with our effortless cosmopolitan savoir faire, are here to help. We've produced this comprehensive guide to global etiquette, which will assure you of being loved and welcomed wherever you go. Any countries not mentioned can be assumed to be ugly and/or boring so not worth visiting.

## Japan

The Japanese are a tactile, demonstrative people and on first meeting you should enfold them in a big, sweaty hug. Be the life and soul of the party at onsen baths by "bombing" into the water, then putting an arm around a fellow bather while you tell them the stories behind your extensive tattoos.

## New Zealand

Nothing important or interesting happened in New Zealand prior to the filming of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, so be sure to ask people frequently whether they are Hobbits. They literally never tire of this joke. They also admire and look up to Australians – to be mistaken for an Australian is the highest compliment you can pay them.

## Mongolia

In Ulaanbaatar the men are very proud of the beauty of their women, and consider it a great honor when foreigners express their admiration. If you're a man

visiting a UB nightclub you should pay compliments to all the Mongolian women and offer to buy them drinks, particularly if they're accompanied by a male partner. Don't be surprised if a group of local youths then invite you to step outside with them; they just want to add you on Facebook.

## Brazil

Impress the locals by learning a few phrases in Spanish before your trip. Brazil's most popular soccer team is called "Argentina" – wearing their jersey and chanting their name is an easy way to make friends. No visit to Brazil's capital, Rio de Janeiro, is complete without a tour of the famous favelas. When the sun goes down, that's when it gets really lively!

## England

Londoners love tourists, and you can show your appreciation of their beautiful city by stopping on busy streets every few steps and taking pictures with a selfie stick. Particularly good views can be found at the top and bottom of escalators on the Underground.

The other places in England are Scotland, Ireland and Stratford-upon-Avon.

## France

Parisians are known for their friendliness and civic pride. If you see a local accidentally dropping a cigarette end, or forgetting to clean up after their little yappy dog has fouled the sidewalk, be sure to point it out to them – they'll be grateful to you. And remember to address them in English, they love to show off their language skills.

## Africa

Africa is a very big country, so make sure you pick the right part to visit, depending on whether you want to see lions and people with rings round their necks, or camels and the place *Star Wars* was filmed. People from the lion part of the country are called "Zulus" and do a famous dance where they jump up and down. You should ask everyone you meet to dance for you. In fact, it's considered polite to specify exactly how high you would like them to jump.

## Thailand, Laos, Vietnam

These countries are basically all the same, and exist mainly as a sort of theme park for western backpackers. Do what you like.



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