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# thebeijinger

2014/08

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# OUTDOORS

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**Stat:** Is China ready to become a global force in golf?

**Neighborhood Watch:** Kipp Whittaker spends an afternoon around Gulou with Peipei Sun

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When was the last time you got out in Beijing and sampled the splendor of what's right on your doorstep? Whether it be the gun range, an ancient hiking trail, or a picturesque camping spot, this month *the Beijinger* shows you why it's time you re-connected with the city.

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**Taste Test:** Packaged Chicken

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AUGUST 11

This month's cover features Hayden Opie of Beijing Hikers. It was shot by Ken at the beautiful Beijing Botanical Gardens.





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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## AUG 2



### **BYE BYE DISCO SIX YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

Get over to Dada and join Beijing's disco queen DJ Pei as she celebrates six years of glitz and sleaze with fellow DJs Kaize, Tobias Wacker, PFAC, and Syoko. With free condoms for Qixi love birds.

## AUG 14

### **ELLIE GOULDING**

With soprano vox somewhere between Freddie Mercury and Bjork, she has won numerous awards, collaborated with Skrillex and performed at the royal wedding reception of William and Catherine. Catch her capital premiere at Beijing Exhibition Theater.



## AUG 16

### **DADA BEIJING TWO YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

After two years of kicking Beijing's youth counter culture in the arse, it's time to celebrate this venue's natural ability for pumping out the freshest electronic music year after year.

## AUG 22

### **MOCHIPET**

This motherfunking son of a glitch will keep you spinning till the roosters call. A collaborator to some huge names, don't get too close to the American though, this furry pet has some dangerous bite.



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

For more events, see p65.

Start as you mean to go on

# CITY SCENE

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

## TEED FOR SUCCESS?

Despite being outlawed by the CCCP until the mid-1980s, golf in China is booming. So much so that the game's potential for development has been talked about by some of its biggest stars. But is the infrastructure falling into place quick enough to bring success by the time golf becomes an Olympic sport in 2016?

- A stick and ball game with some similarities to golf was played in China as early as 1000 AD.
- As of 2012, there were more than 1 million golfers in China, marking an increase of some 16 percent on the year before.
- The number of golf courses in China has tripled since 2004 to around 1,000 today.
- Despite golf course construction being illegal, no country in the world is currently building more courses than China.
- The Omega China Tour was launched in 2005. The PGA Tour China made its debut this year and staged 12 tournaments across the country.



- China currently has three male golfers in the top 500 of the world rankings. The highest-ranked of them, Liang Wenchong, is ranked 185 and has won six career titles.
- China's top female golfer is Shanshan Feng ranked number eight in the world. The 24-year-old from Guangzhou has won 11 professional titles including the 2012 LPGA Championship.
- Last year, 14-year-old Guan Tianlang from Guangzhou finished 58th in his first Major tournament, the Masters. Tiger Woods called his talent "frightening."
- The Chinese Olympic Committee is targeting golf as a potential gold medal event at Rio 2016.

Sources: [forwardgolf.com](http://forwardgolf.com), [TheIndependent.com](http://TheIndependent.com), [golfdigest.com](http://golfdigest.com), [cbc.ca](http://cbc.ca), [PGA Tour Greater China](http://PGA Tour Greater China), [National Golf Foundation](http://National Golf Foundation), [wsj.com](http://wsj.com), [telegraph.co.uk](http://telegraph.co.uk), [Official World Golf Rankings](http://Official World Golf Rankings)

## PEKING PICS



Life in Beijing slows down to a snail's pace during the balmy summer months. Beijing locals are adept at taking it easy.

PHOTOS: HEATHER BUDIMULIA



## LETTER FROM AN EDITOR

It's easy to overlook a lot of the time, with the constant talk of how ugly Beijing can be, with its traffic jams and pollution ... [snore], but on a glorious blue sky day, the like of which we've had ample opportunity to enjoy so far this summer, you really are treated to something spectacular in Beijing. At least, you can be if you are graced with the wherewithal to get out and sample it.

DVD box sets and craft beer are reason enough to keep anyone indoors in front of the TV or perched at an air-conditioned bar, but our capital is surrounded by a selection of some of the most jaw-droppingly beautiful scenery there is, with landmarks that make us the envy of the world.

Take the spectacular Botanical Gardens in Haidian District (the location for this issue's cover shot), almost 1,000 acres of spectacular beauty with an enormous variety of plant species, including the long-thought extinct sequoia. Part of a glorious day was spent out there with our photographer and Hayden Opie of Beijing Hikers scouting around on weathered paths and among lush vegetation for a shot that could capture the beauty of the setting. Alas, it was nigh on impossible to do it justice. The afternoon served as a stark reminder for me that we often don't realize what we have here in the capital. Even if vegetation isn't your thing, to the north of the city limits stands the Wall and the camping and leisure opportunities it provides. Way out west are the mountainous ranges of Babaoshan with their imposing hiking challenges and dotted temples.

With the aid of some friends of *the Beijinger*, specialists in various outdoor pursuits and little more than enthusiastic amateurs in others, we had a great time putting together a selection of what the great outdoors has to offer, whether you like to spend your days hiking in hills, your nights camping under the stars, your mornings thumping golf balls at the driving range, or simply stocking up appropriately for a park picnic.

Elsewhere, July saw the launch of our exciting redevelopment of thebeijinger.com and we're interested to hear any thoughts you might have. Do stop by and give it a whirl. But for now, enjoy the outdoors.



Paul Ryding  
Managing Editor

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## BEST OF THE BLOG

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



### 1. The Beijinger Online Gets a Facelift

We ditched the turn-of-the-millennium vibe for something altogether different, sure to raise a couple hackles with the stick-in-the-muds who hate change. The biggest difference you'll notice past the fresh lipply is that our new website is completely responsive, which means seamless viewing across devices of all shapes and sizes.



### 2. Don't Eat so much! Eat More! Chinese Girlfriends Complain about Foreign Boyfriends

A report in the Chinese-language edition of the China Daily looked at the top ten complaints that Chinese women have about their foreign beaus. We picked out men not carrying their sweetheart's purse around, not calling often enough, not eating enough, eating too much, and one that we helped you out with - not being able to read Chinese characters.



### 3. Jiro Soon to Make Beijing's Sushi Dreams Come True

*The Wall Street Journal* reported Renowned three Michelin starred sushi restaurant Sukiyabashi Jiro was said to be expanding outside of Japan for the first time with a location in Beijing slated to open at the beginning of August, and you guys got very excited by the news. However, all of our hopes were dashed when a family representative said the claims were false.

### 4. Beijing Scientists Float Idea of a Tianjin-Beijing Canal to Tackle Water Deficit

The solution to Beijing's water deficit may be a 160km-long, one-kilometer-wide canal that links Beijing to the sea. It would be big enough to house 30,000-ton ships, and would effectively make Beijing a new seaport. Unfortunately, Beijing sits at a higher altitude to the East China Sea, so without an impressive anti-gravity system the canal wouldn't work.



### 5. Beijing's Anti-Jaywalking Campaign Ineffective

In an attempt to curb the "Chinese" style of crossing the road and promote safety, a one-month anti-jaywalking campaign was launched in Chaoyang District in July. The program was being run by "volunteers" stationed at seven unspecified intersections. One of them reported that 13 people were caught jaywalking within one two-minute red light period.

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



# PEIPEI SUN

DJ PEI, FOUNDER OF COMPUTER LOVE

by Kipp Whittaker

Beijing has its fair share of disco fiends. If you consider yourself an aficionado of this bacchanalian genre you have likely encountered Peipei Sun and her Computer Love or Bye Bye Disco parties. An active member of Beijing's nightlife culture, she started out selling vintage clothing



## EAT

Now hungry, we moved on to the corner of Jiadaokou and Gulou Dongdajie to a hybrid Shanxi-Yunnan restaurant called Mo & Mi. This is Peipei's standby restaurant and secret weapon against those evil weekend hangovers. Here you will find all of the famous dishes from both of these famous culinary regions made deliciously fresh and at a decent price. We ordered up some spicy cold noodles (RMB 7) and mint and chicken salad (RMB 18). You can get all of this along with one of their *roujiamo* for around RMB 30. Enjoy the peculiar selection of French jazz coming from the speakers while you enjoy your meal.



and other artifacts from '80s China at a small, now defunct storefront in Nanluoguxiang. This month marks the six year anniversary of the store and its parties. She shared with us a typical Saturday, showing off her favorite places and things to do around her West Gulou neighborhood.

## EXPERIENCE

We first stopped by Qingnianhu Park, situated west of Andingmenwai Dajie. It was a weekend, so you can imagine it was hopping with summer activity. Though there were quite a few people at the pool, it didn't look like those horror pictures that resemble a pot of boiling dumplings. Peipei says during weekdays, the pool is relatively empty and relaxing. Beside the pool is a cute little carnival area, where we won a bottle of bubbles by blasting some balloons with a gun. After this we continued to enjoy the sights of the park and the surrounding lake while blowing bubbles.



## PARTY

We decided it was time to head over to a friend's hutong party in Beiluoguxiang. It was hosted by some of the good folks over at Comedy Club China as a going away party for funny man Calvin Pollak. They were blasting the jams in their little courtyard with the appropriate amount of raunch, and dishing out copious amounts of Tsingtao and White Russians to keep the group lubricated and dancing until the early evening. Early keeps the neighbors happy, and Peipei had a guest spot at the Blow Yourself Blind party that needed filling, so we concluded our hang session and agreed to meet up later in the dark caverns of Lantern.

## SCENE & HEARD



### **The Beijinger's Canada Day Chilli Eating Contest**

Canadian International School of Beijing,  
Jun 21. Photos by Ken, Shannon Fagan



### **IAM**

Yugong Yishan, Jun 18. Photos  
by Laurent Hou



### **"We've Moved" + Operation Smile Charity Party**

Blue Frog (Taikoo Li),  
May 30.  
Photos courtesy of  
Blue Frog







**Deluxe**  
MAO Livehouse,  
Jun 19. Photos by  
Laurent Hou



**World Cup Final 2014**  
The Local, Jul 14. Photos  
by Jack Soltysik



**"Really Real" Independence Day Dinner**  
The Hutong, Jul 4. Photos courtesy of The  
Hutong







# RANGE LIFE

KEEPING YOUR EYE ON THE TARGET

Whether it's located in an open field or a Soho basement unit, the range is a place where you can develop the skills needed to survive in this dog-eat-dog world. Whether you shoot, fling or whack, Beijing has a range for you, and they are all way more than we bargained for. Being denied entry at Beijing North International Shooting Range was a minor blip compared to being slammed in the mouth with a golf ball at Chaoyang Kosaido Golf Club. In short, the assignment was equal parts painful, informative and challenging.



# SHOOTING RANGE

**Beijing Shooting Range Hall** 北京射击馆

Tues-Sat 7am-5pm. 3A Futiansi (take the West Fifth Ring Road and exit at either Xingshikou Qiao or Yongyin Qiao, turn onto Xiangshan Nanlu and follow signs) Shijingshan District (8896 5174)

石景山区福田寺甲3号



I have a genuine distaste for guns like most semi-effeminate twenty-something dudes. Regardless, knowing how to shoot a gun is an important skill. While shooting ranges aren't common in China, here in Beijing we have two within an hour of the city center. Out of necessity, I opted for a more athletic option at Beijing Shooting Range Hall, where you can often see Chinese national team members blasting clay discs into oblivion. This place has six guns available, including three pistols, one shotgun and two rifles, with prices ranging from RMB 8-15 per round.

My buddy Chao Fang and I started with the pistol. The targets were sent down the lane to a distance of about 25m. We both only hit the target three times, and though

these guns use low-caliber bullets (.22), each crack sent shivers through our dandy spines.

We continued on to the rifles, which conveniently came fitted with a scope. Putting to use all the knowledge we probably gained from cheesy action flicks, we did pretty well nailing the target at about 50m with every slug. After a few hours of target shooting and a couple hundred RMB out of our wallets, we left satisfied with the experience. If you prefer military munitions, hit up Beijing Northern International Shooting Range where they have everything from standard issue PLA sidearms to grenade launchers. Be sure to make reservations with a tourist group, bring your passport, and don't say that you work for *the Beijinger*.

# DRIVING RANGE

**Chaoyang Kosaido Golf Club** 广济堂高尔夫俱乐部

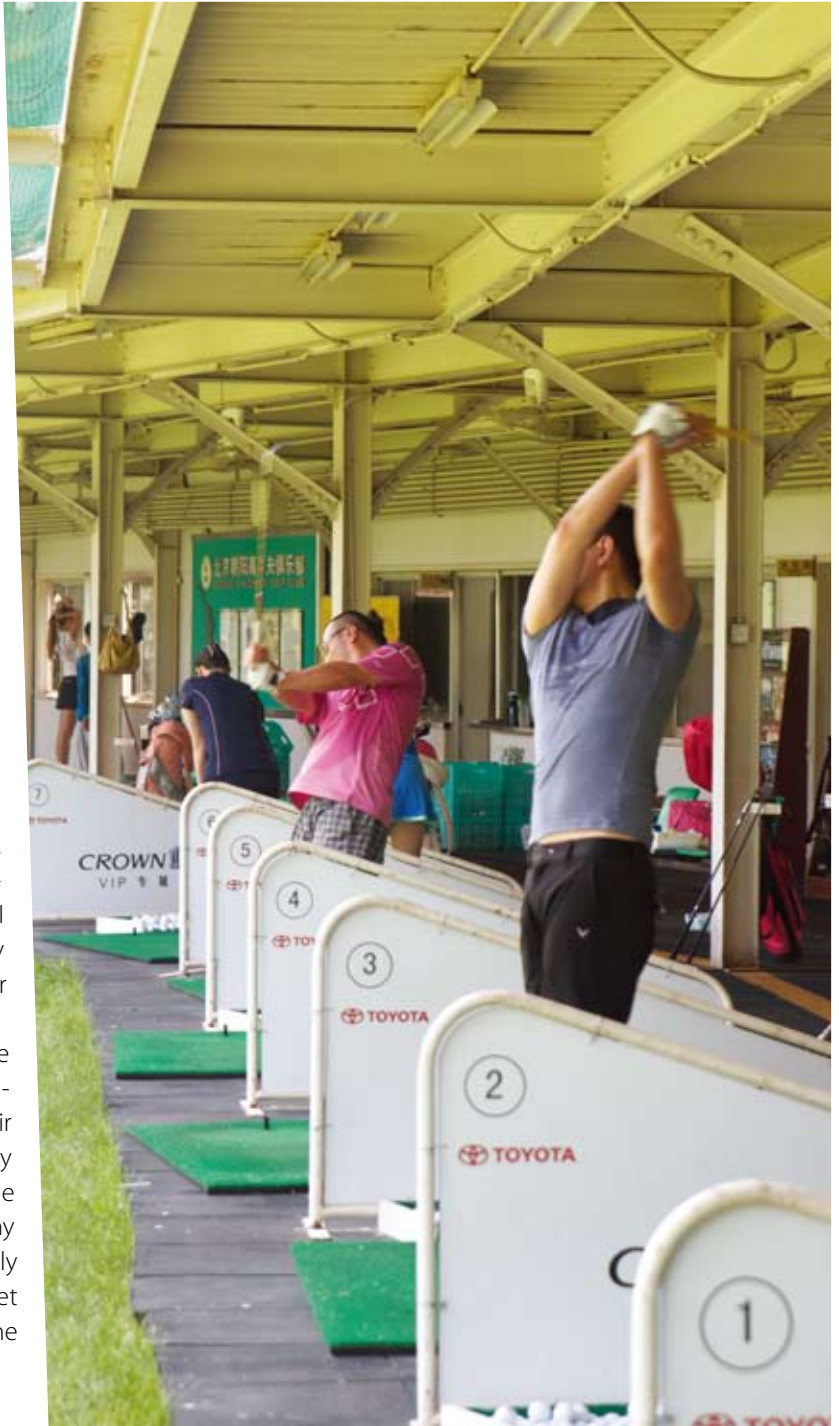
Daily 7am-10pm (summer only, closed in winter). 9A Nongzhan Nanlu, Chaoyang District (6501 8584)  
朝阳区农展南路甲9号

Just a ten-minute walk from Tuanjiehu subway station is a nine-hole golf course. Chaoyang Kosaido Golf Club is modest and not really worth the price of becoming a member, but it is conveniently open seven days a week, from 7am-10pm, for you to come and perfect your swing. Think of it as a place where you can prepare for weekend excursions to more reputable courses outside the city.

I hadn't been to a driving range in about 17 years. Golf was never a sport I enjoyed, but I remember at the time thinking Michael Jordan did it, so it had to be cool. Evidently, this wasn't enough to keep me interested in the sport during my adolescence, but I was excited to give it another try.

I arrived at about 9am and purchased an hour on the range (RMB 50), rented a couple clubs (RMB 100) and a basket of 100 balls (RMB 150). While initially a little rusty – impossibly whacking one ball into my lip – I was eventually surprising myself by slamming them past the 150-meter mark.

During summer mornings, the lanes are primarily filled with Beijing youths being observed by their mothers. I was one of three in my age bracket, but surprisingly not the worst on the range. With most of my pocket cash gone, and feeling slightly fortunate that I finished the bucket without losing my front teeth, I got the hell out of there.





# ARCHERY RANGE

**Jian Archery Club** 射箭俱乐部

Daily 11am-midnight. B1-308, Bldg 3, Sanlitun Soho, 8 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District (5290 2981)

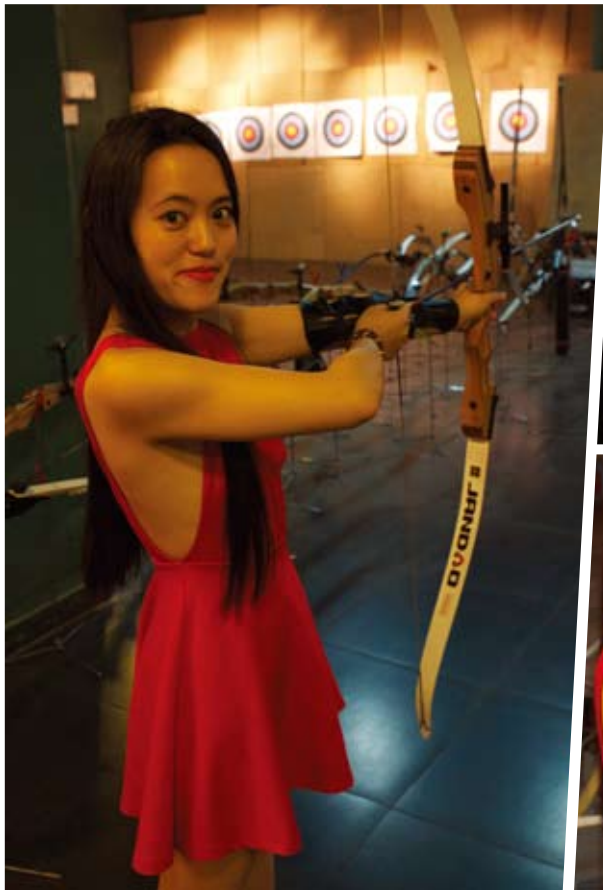
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I next headed to Jian Archery Club with Dada door princess, Emma Song. We handed over RMB 120 for an hour of target piercing fun. Along with being a tough lady to get past at Dada, Emma is a dedicated student of the nunchucks and I imagined this would be right up her ally. She had never been to the archery club or shot a bow and arrow and was a little reluctant to give it a try, but within her first two quivers she was delivering arrows to the vital zones of the target.

The staff give a minimal amount of instruction before leaving you alone to timidly figure out this instrument of death. I have some summer camp experience from when I was a lad and though I am far below the level of a Katniss Everdeen or a Ted Nugent for that matter, I love

the sport of archery and its delicate balance between grace and savagery, fuelled in no small way by a love of that Robin Hood movie from the '90s where they speak with American accents.

Archery is a huge pastime in China and there are many venues for it. Strangely, it appears a good number are found in the basements of Soho establishments (I knew something was off about that CEO when I saw him at Madame Tussauds). If you prefer shooting as nature intended out in the elements, there are seasonal outdoor ranges at Goose 'n' Duck Ranch in Huairou District and Genting Resort Secret Garden in Zhangjiakou. Just remember to queue up "Every Thing I Do" from the Prince of Thieves soundtrack and fire away. It works every time.



# CAMP SIGHTS

## THE PICK OF BEIJING'S CAMPING LOCATIONS

Although other major cities in China might rival Beijing's access to the great outdoors, nowhere has as big or as enthusiastic an outdoor community as we do. Nor, we would argue as proud Beijingers, do they

have as many breathtaking backdrops as us.

The pick of our locations are in the farthest reaches of the city, but the city's network of long-distance buses can get you out to most major locations. Go explore.



### MING TOMBS RESERVOIR

Another man-made body of water, this one is shallower and usually more welcoming of swimmers. It's also a great base for exploring the Ming Tombs, which, while not as elaborate as those in Egypt, can still give one a bit of an Indiana Jones – or maybe Marco Polo – feeling.



### LINGSHAN

Beijing's highest mountain, northwest of Mentougou, the area is a favorite of Birding Beijing founder Terry Townshend, who says that many difficult to find birds alight there. At 2,303 meters, it won't require supplemental oxygen, but it's a long hike with breathtaking views, and ample camping around the area. It does get a bit chilly, though.



### SHI DU/TEN FERRIES

One of Beijing's old school outdoor areas, it's only four kilometers from the border with Hebei province in southwest Beijing. It's best known for its scenery and the mix of mountains and water. Use local tour boats as ferries to get to trailheads or less accessible areas more amenable to camping and enjoying nature.





### GREAT WALL AT JIANKOU

Skip Mutianyu and Jinshanling. Those parts of the Great Wall are nice to visit, but camping options there are scarce. Instead, choose the section at Jiankou, about 73 kilometers due north of Wangjing. This is “wild wall,” unrestored, crumbling and authentic. Help preserve the Wall: camp near it, not on it.



### MIYUN RESERVOIR

Even out of town, Beijing lacks a major body of water. The Miyun Reservoir has served as a hub for semi-aquatic recreation for decades, and while many areas are closed to campers, a designated site in the White River area is also popular with rock climbers. Swimming in the reservoir is ... well, better ask first.



## GET KITTED OUT FOR CAMPING



([sanfo.com](http://sanfo.com))

Beijing's most established retailer of camping and outdoor equipment with locations around the city. They have a large selection of imported and domestically-manufactured equipment and is generally specialized – no beach balls here.



([decathlon.com.cn](http://decathlon.com.cn))

The name may be more familiar to Western consumers, and is better-suited for equipping the occasional outdoors person, not someone with dreams of climbing mountains or week-long backcountry treks.



*Fishing near the Mutianyu section of Great Wall, northeast of Beijing*



## SHUN TONG TROUT FARM

**Hikers:** Elliott Bloom and Katrina McDonnell

**Why they like this trail:** The hike starts at a trout farm, where visitors can catch their dinner and have it freshly grilled by friendly locals. From there, hikers can begin four-hour trek from a “wild” section of the Great Wall to the famously refurbished Mutianyu section.

**Directions:** Take the 916 bus from Dongzhimen station to either the Bei Da Jie or Yang Jia Yuan stations in Huairou District. At the bus stop, there are drivers willing to take people to Shun Tong trout farm for approximately RMB 60 (round trip). From the trout farm, hikers can begin walking east at Jiankou to Mutianyu.

# ADVENTURE SUMMIT

## JIANKOU

**Hikers:** Duan Linlin and Tian Yu

**Why they like this trail:** Duan and Tian are seasoned hikers having grown up hiking Shandong’s famous Tai Shan. Duan says: “Hiking Jiankou is an unforgettable experience. It’s a little dangerous but it helps me respect nature.”

**Directions:** Take the 916 bus from

Dongzhimen station to either Bei Da Jie or Yang Jia Yuan in Huairou District. Then take a cab to Jiankou. There, hikers should walk north toward the crags and navigate the steep incline until it levels off, then turn east and walk along the unrestored wall, before arriving at Mutianyu.

*The craggy Jiankou trail and the Mutianyu section of Great Wall, northeast of Beijing*







*Golden mountainside in Fangshan District, southwest of Beijing*



## GOLDEN MOUNTAIN

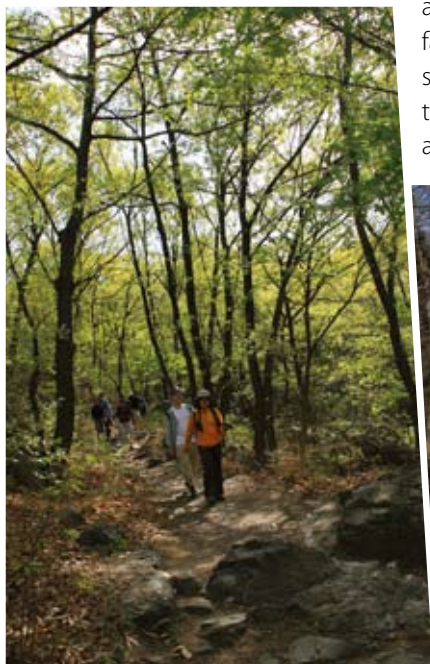
**Hiker:** Xiaolin Zhou

**Why he likes this trail:** This eight-kilometer trek is not too challenging. The trail leads up the Golden Mountain with a gradual incline. Xiaolin adds: "The most beautiful scene is looking down from the Goddess Temple at the top of mountain. After autumn, the grass withers making the mountain look like it's gold covered."

**Directions:** Take bus 917 at either Tiaoqiao or Liuliqiao stations to Bancheng village. Walk west towards the mountain, then hike to the top. After enjoying the view, head down the opposite side of Golden Mountain until you arrive at Manjinyu village near the bottom. From there, you can take the 917 bus back to Beijing.

WE ASKED A SELECTION OF EXPERIENCED BEIJING HIKERS TO CHOOSE THEIR FAVORITE TRAIL AND EXPLAIN WHY THEY LIKE IT AND HOW WE CAN GET THERE

*Phoenix Ridge in Beijing's west mountains, near Haidian District*



## THE "WALK LIKE A PILGRIM" TRAIL

**Hiker:** Hayden Opie

**Why he likes this trail:** This trail incorporates all the best elements of a good hiking trail. Hayden says: "My favorite part of the trail is the middle section – following a winding path through a forest, passing boulders and crags."

**Directions:** Hayden and his fellow guides at Beijing Hikers arrange bus tours from Lido Hotel to the "Pilgrim" trail once every two months. For a tour schedule of Beijing Hikers' vast network of trails, visit [beijingshikers.com](http://beijingshikers.com).



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

# FOOD & DRINK

PIZZA // BLACK FOREST // CHICKEN CHALLENGE // GONGTI PICNIC TRAIL



*Dine al fresco in Sureño's sunken garden on a refreshed summer menu of southern European classics, including an Iberian surtido of cold cuts.*

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE OPPOSITE HOUSE



## NIBBLES AND SIPS

### OPENINGS

The biggest opening this month, the one that everyone's been waiting for is **Taco Bar**. The new location in south Sanlitun has been creating hype since its soft opening in late June and the initial verdict is: delicious. Call to book a table in the dining room (6501 6026) or grab one of the seats at the bar that are reserved for walk-ins.

Meanwhile, **Great Leap Brewing** is working on its third location on Xinyuan Jie, which will be able to produce 15,000 liters of beer per month. It should be enough to help wash down the handmade pizzas.

Gongti seems to have earned its first taste of what it's like to be Gulou with the opening of its first live house, **Aluba Livehouse**. It's half-Taiwanese barbecue restaurant/half-live rock venue, but the owners plan to shake up the local scene and bring in a stream of pop stars from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

**Panda Brew Pub** is about to get much bigger, with an all new location near Dongsì Beidajie that will seat about 150 thirsty people. They will introduce a food menu with ribs, fried chicken wings, and grilled fish.

### HAPPENINGS

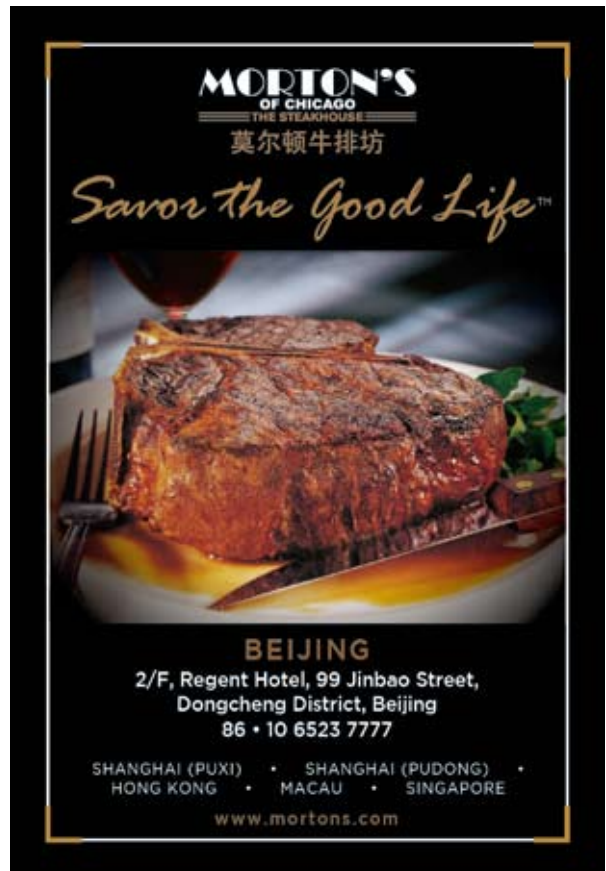
The **Opposite House** is planning a pop-up food truck for the summer that they are dubbing "Bao House." The word on the street is that it will be serving freshly steamed *baozi*.

**Slow Boat** now has an all-you-can-drink option for Sunday brunch (RMB 100, Sun 11.30am-2pm). Soak up all that booze with their new brunch menu items: a *mantou* breakfast burger (featuring an Andy's Craft Sausages patty) or imperial pancakes made with beer.

### NEW MENUS

The menu at **Parnas** has had a makeover for summer. Among the playfully presented dishes, we enjoyed a standout dish of seared Japanese scallops with house-cured duck breast and caramelized pineapple.

**Héritage** at the Sofitel Wanda Plaza has a revamped menu courtesy of new Chef de Cuisine Gilbert Wolfarth. The new menu focuses on modern takes on classic French dishes such as garlic butter snails.



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# PIZZA EXPRESS

BIG BRAND BRITISH PIZZA  
COMES TO BEIJING





## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Sunday-Thursday 11am-11pm, Friday-Saturday 11am-midnight. S4-30, 3/F, Taikoo Li Sanlitun, 19 Sanlitun Road, Chaoyang District (6417 6698)

朝阳区三里屯路19号太古里南区3层S4-30

🚇 650m northwest of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

Let's face it; we Brits are oft maligned in the culinary world. What nation hasn't shared a laugh about our supposed love of potatoes, roast meats and over-boiled vegetables? So, Brits doing Italian food? You could be forgiven for your incredulity.

Pizza Express is here to prove the doubters wrong. Started in 1965 by an Englishman with a passion for Italian cuisine, the brand has expanded from the UK to 500 stores around the world. Now, with the opening of their store in Taikoo Li, they have brought their pizza expertise to Beijing. And what pizzas they are. The pizza chefs, here dubbed Pizzaiolos, toss thin, Romana-style bases that hit that sweet spot between crispy and chewy. A Padana (RMB 94) features a savory holy trinity of goat's cheese, spinach and caramelized onions that will satisfy vegetarians and carnivores alike. Pizza traditionalists may balk at the idea, but the rectangular Calabrese (RMB 115), bristling with chillies and spicy salami, was a surprise hit with our table. We were delighted to discover melting nubs of 'nduja, a spreadable spicy sausage from Calabria, hiding among the last-minute topping of pesto-dressed rocket. This kind of attention to detail carries through into the sleek yet casual restaurant space, which just manages to escape the curse of overly corporate branding.

Brits may be the first to be excited by the arrival of a homegrown brand in Beijing, but we're sure the fervor will quickly spread. *Robynne Tindall*

**Also try:** La Pizza, Gung Ho!



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## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS



# BASIL RESTAURANT

### A NEW TAKE ON AFTERNOON TEA

Daily 10.30am-midnight. 8 Chaoyang Gongyuan Lu, Chaoyang District (6585 0889)

紫苏融合餐厅：朝阳区朝阳公园路8号八号公馆内

 1.3km northeast of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

It all started in England in the 1880s when the Duchess of Bedford decided she just couldn't wait until dinner for her next meal. Her attendants began serving her small sandwiches or cakes in the afternoon, and she clearly considered her idea so revolutionary that she started to invite her friends over to join her. The practice soon expanded out of the boudoir and into upscale dining establishments, and so afternoon tea was born.

No longer the sole preserve of the aristocracy, today afternoon tea has become synonymous with a couple of hours spent trying to maintain eye contact over a three-tier cake stand in the echoing lobby of a ritzy hotel. The people behind Basil Restaurant decided Beijing was in need of something different, so the obvious solution was to create the city's only afternoon tea served in a bird cage (RMB 268 per couple).

Unlocking the cage releases a panoply of tiny treats.

While the Duchess probably would have fired her chef for the bland savory sandwiches, the delicate selection of desserts is certainly fit for a refined lady (or gentleman). The selection rotates weekly, but you might come across a tiny cup of crisp-shelled *crème brûlée*, or a smooth heart-shaped chocolate mousse. If they happen to have it in stock, don't miss the gooey chocolate fudge cake, a world away from the dry, fluffy cakes so often found in Beijing's cake shops.

Some may find that the décor and concept at Basil errs on the chintzy side, but step past the gilded peacock standing lamps (yes, really) and out onto the grassy terrace, and you will find a perfect spot for a quiet afternoon tea, sheltered by the high walls from the frenetic world outside. *Robynne Tindall*

**Also try:** JE Mansion, Capital M



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

# PATOIS

### THE LANGUAGE OF FOOD

Daily 6pm-10.30pm. 1/F, shop 55-2, Jiezuo Dasha, Xingfucun Zhonglu (6416 3152)

芳盐: 朝阳区幸福村中路杰座大厦1层55-2

 1.2km northeast of Dongsishitiao station (Line 2)

Much like the linguistic form from which it takes its name, Patois can be a confusing place. We take a table on the patio outside and someone brings us the menu for next door café Hercules (the two share the same ownership) and gestures towards the table card advertising their two-for-one happy hour (daily, 4pm-8pm).

Having established with the wait staff, who zip between the two venues, that we would actually like to eat at Patois, we order from the short soft opening menu of ostensibly southern American-style dishes. The Yacht Club Sugar Steak with Bourbon (RMB 128) comes with a side of Wonder Fries – crispy, lightly spiced smashed new potatoes – that turn out to be the highlight of the meal. A good value dish of Oven Baked Parmesan Crusted Chicken (RMB 68) is tasty enough by itself, but the accompanying citrus sauce is cloying and the dish as a whole lacks any trace of a southern accent.

Still in the early stages of development, if Patois can find its voice then it could become a pleasant addition to Xingfucun's international dining scene. Until then, they pour a damn good happy hour. *Robynne Tindall*

**Also try:** Big Smoke, Frost



PHOTO: KEN



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# WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

## GET IN LINE AT BEIJING'S BUSIEST RESTAURANTS

Perhaps it's my British upbringing (we are globally renowned for our queuing skills, after all), but since I arrived in Beijing, I have always been fascinated by the fervent crowds that gather outside some of the Capital's restaurants every day. So, like the intrepid anthropologist I am, I struck off on a quest to find out just what it is about these venues that keeps people

going back day after day. Is it that the food is genuinely delicious and good value? Are people scared of missing out on what they've seen on social media and review websites (WeChat groups regularly publish round-ups of Beijing's most popular restaurants)? Or is it simply force of habit?

Whatever the reason, the question remains: Is it worth it?



### 8am: Shandong Qiangmian Mantou Dian, Gulou Dongdajie

Everyone in Gulou has had to navigate past the queue of *ayis* blocking the pavement outside this unassuming storefront peddling steamed *mantou* at some point. Explanations as to its popularity are not forthcoming; everyone we ask simply says: "We've been coming here for years." We grab a bag of the mountainous steamed beauties (RMB 1 each) to go. My friend, who considers himself a connoisseur of all things bread-related, declares them "slightly pointless" and I start to hope this doesn't become a metaphor for today's exercise. However, the *tang san jiao*, steamed buns stuffed with brown sugar (RMB 2), make the wait worthwhile.

**Average queuing time:**

**20 minutes**

**Worth the wait?** To say you've done it, yes. In truth, the fresh *mantou* are much better than shop bought ones.



### 1pm: Xishaoye Roujiamo, Wudaokou

Eateries in Beijing's office areas are notoriously crowded, so escaping to one of the outside stalls must be a better option, right? Wrong. Snaking queues form outside this small stall in Wudaokou every day, lasting well into the late afternoon. The stall specializes in *roujiamo*, crusty bread pockets filled with shredded meat – arguably the perfect take away lunch.

Rumored to have been started by a former Tencent employee, Xishaoye has received a fair amount of hype on Chinese social media, but perhaps the real reason for the queues is that it fulfills the main requirements of contemporary office eating culture: get in and out as quickly as possible for as little money as possible.

**Average queuing time:**

**30 minutes**

**Worth the wait?** No. Even if you happen to be in Wudaokou, there are much better ways to spend your lunch hour than queuing for a chopped meat sandwich (even if it is a good one).



### 6pm: Waipojia, Wangfujing APM Mall

The Dianping reviews of this otherwise unassuming branch of Zhejiang-style restaurant chain Waipojia number in the thousands. On the weekend, wait times can stretch well beyond two hours. So what is it that keeps the crowds stacking up outside? In a nutshell, cheap prices. At RMB 3, their signature *mapo doufu* (an admittedly solid rendition) is so cheap they are practically giving it away. Every table orders at least one portion. The location in Wangfujing's trendy APM Mall, home to a shiny Apple Store and Beijing's only branch of Forever 21, certainly doesn't hurt.

**Average queuing time:**

**60-120 minutes**

**Worth the wait?** No. True, you'll

struggle to find cheaper *mapo doufu* in the city, but it doesn't compensate for the uninspiring atmosphere and extreme wait times. If you just have to have spice, you'd be better off queuing at Zhang Mama.

### 11pm: Huda, Guijie

On any given night, you will find a small forest of stools outside Huda's flagship location on Guijie, blocking the sidewalk, ready to anticipate the waves of people who will fill them well into the early morning. The hoards milling around outside, cracking sunflower seeds and shooting the breeze, are all here for one thing: spicy crayfish. Locals and Beijing newbies alike come to sample the spiny beauties, which are sold individually (RMB 3/4/5/7) and, if Dianping is anything to go by, are considered some of the best in town. Maybe it's my aversion to peeling my own shellfish, but for me this one is pure hype; like seeing a queue and joining it just to see where you end up.

**Average queuing time:**

**90 minutes**

**Worth the wait?** Absolutely. The Guijie experience is a unique, and at times trying, one, but the carnival atmosphere more than makes up for it. Our top tip for Huda: go during the day and take an advance number. You will be given priority for table allocation no matter what time you arrive.



# VAIDURYA

ALL THAT GLITTERS





## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Mon-Fri 1-10pm, Sat-Sun 10am-10pm. 8 Jiadaokou  
Beiertiao, Dongcheng District (6406 9929)

对照记：东城区交道口北二条8号

🚶 250m north of Beixinqiao station (Line 5)

**T**ranquility is more often than not an illusion in this chaotic city. But in between the smog, the traffic jams and the infinite waves of people is a smattering of quiet spaces where you can go to collect your thoughts and cleanse your psyche.

With its name spelt out in off-white, hand-cut tile pieces embedded in the concrete, Vaidurya's entrance slopes up into a courtyard furnished with an array of comfortable sitting arrangements ranging from a lone lie-back rocking chair, to a cozy curtained nook, and intimate tables for two against glass panels that allow a glimpse into the whitewashed interior.

The *au natural* decorations and healthy potted plants give you a reason to breathe deep, although you might be inclined to hold that breath after looking at their menu. Desserts are their specialty with three different categories ranging from mini, to bite-size, to share-worthy (RMB 18/28/38).

Trying the toffee sea-salt thunder puff with pistachio pieces (RMB 28) I was falsely lead by the gold flake decoration into believing that luxury flowed into the core, but sadly the fresh cream center hadn't thawed out, and the sea-salt was a no-show having dissolved into the toffee. A tasty raspberry rose mousse (RMB 28, half-scoop) redeemed the order, but I felt I deserved more than three bites for the price.

Catering to those who enjoy curating their photo albums with well-presented spaces, this café is pretty on the outside, but scratching the surface reveals its gilded façade. *Erin Strong*

**Also try:** Cafe Zarah, Vineyard Cafe



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS



## UN LIVRE

### TAKE A LEAF OUT OF THEIR BOOK

Daily 10am-10pm. W103, World City, 9 Jinhui Lu, Chaoyang District (158 0114 0099)

一书咖啡：朝阳区金汇路9号世界城商业街W103商铺

 700m south of Dongdaqiao station (Line 6)

French café culture is the stuff that romantic dreams are made of. What visitor to Paris's famous cafés (Café de Flore, Les Deux Magots to name but a few) hasn't imagined themselves sipping a café au lait or better still a glass of absinthe with Hemingway or Sartre? It's fitting then that new French-inspired cafe Un Livre is located in World City, since the Parisian feel you get once you are sitting at one of their alfresco tables with the strains of accordion music drifting by is worlds away from Beijing.

Tucked away just off the clamorous main drag, the peaceful, high-ceilinged space was opened by a couple with a passion for all things French. For morning visitors (they aim to start opening at 8am soon), competent espresso-based drinks (RMB 22-39) are complemented by a daily selection of pastries (RMB 12-28) that live up to their continental roots.

Should you stay into the evening and require something more substantial, the main course food offerings are unexpectedly refined for a café. A sizeable platter of cold cuts (RMB 116) offers good value; although it's a shame they don't currently have any French wines to wash it down with. The smoked salmon and fennel salad (RMB 68) comes artfully dressed on a piece of slate, a telling sign of the chef's previous experience in the kitchens of high-end hotels. We didn't get a chance to try the small selection of pastas, but we noticed that they are already garnering good reviews on Dianping.

It may have opened just a few weeks ago, but with its enthusiastic staff and Gallic atmosphere, we can't help but feel some of Beijing's other cafes could stand to take a leaf out of Un Livre's book. *Robynne Tindall*

**Also try:** Café Flatwhite, Café de Sofa



## WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

# YUMMY KISS

### PUCKER UP

Daily 11am-11pm. S10-30, 3/F, Taikoo Li Sanlitun,  
19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District (6416 6757)

YK烤肉回廊: 朝阳区三里屯路19号太古里三里屯南区三层S10-30

 400m east of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

**W**e hesitate to use the word “yummy” to describe food, but it seems as if one of Taikoo Li’s latest rooftop additions is asking for it. 烤肉回廊, or Yummy Kiss, is part Korean barbecue, part Japanese yakitori and in some respects it does live up to its name, mostly thanks to its yummy braised beef tongue slathered in soy sauce and a clever – if a little outlandish – yummy crab claw croquette. The nuggets of sweet crab buried in a fried blanket of mashed potato, accompanied by zingy mayo dip, have us hooked.

Medium quality cuts of meat on the in-table grill, a slapdash mix of menu items, and a handful of mediocre dishes paired with gaudy presentation all suggest YK might be an average barbecue joint in a fancy disguise. The Oscar Diggs of barbecue joints will set you back about RMB 100 per person, an amount that might be better spent in a more authentic, frill-free Wangjing spot.

Should you crave tempura, yakitori and Korean-style grills, it’s best to bring along friends and order the assorted *yakiniku* platter (RMB 218). For the single diner, beef and eel over rice and a selection of spicy Korean soups are on offer, and for the brave, there’s the long, stone appetizer tray sporting a graveyard of squid legs and a scattering of chilies and spring onion. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** Palms L.A. Kitchen and Bar, Yu Ling Dao



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## JUST DESSERTS

# ARIA

## AN ENCHANTED BLACK FOREST

by Robynne Tindall

Some people prefer their food to be functional. They are satisfied with nothing more than a snatched sandwich – a nutritionally balanced, if uninspiring, meal. For someone who spends all day thinking about food in all its myriad forms, it probably won't come as a surprise that I tend to glory in the whimsical, the superfluous, the excessive. If his desserts are anything to go by, it seems Aria's Chef de Cuisine Phillip Taylor has been reading from the same book of culinary fairy tales as me.

His latest creation, simply dubbed Black Forest (RMB 70, available at lunch and dinner), is inspired by both the flavors of the

traditional gâteau and the sylvan region from which it takes its name.

Delicate petals, chocolate twigs and small mounds of multi-colored "soil" – ground pistachios, friable freeze-dried cherries, dark chocolate crumb and grilled white chocolate, the last an unexpected delight – simulate the forest floor. Above the earthy floor, things take a turn for the celestial. A burnished chocolate orb yields beneath a cascade of Kirsch-spiked warm chocolate sauce to reveal a filling of Chantilly cream, chocolate mousse, and tart cherry purée. The flavors and smells remain, but the experience is worlds away from the 1970s dessert trolley throwback that is the original gâteau. *Robynne Tindall*

*Customer who sign up for the Aria email newsletter can receive a free Black Forest dessert when they dine at Aria. Contact the restaurant for more details.*

Daily 5.30-10pm, Mon-Fri 11.30am-2pm. 2/F,  
China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Waidajie,  
Chaoyang District (6505 2266 ext 36).  
朝阳区建国门外大街1号中国大饭店2层

🚶 50m north of Guomao station  
(Lines 1 and 10)





# SETH GROSSMAN

CO-OWNER, HOME PLATE BAR-B-QUE

**A**fter almost a decade, the public face of Home Plate Bar-B-Que and winner of *the Beijinger* Reader Bar and Club Awards Personality of the Year in 2012, Seth Grossman, is heading home to New York. Before he goes, Seth tells us what he'll miss besides all that cooked meat.

## Location

I would choose the square between **the Drum Tower and the Bell Tower**. I always enjoyed it most on a hot summer night with a group of friends, sitting on what could only be described as children's furniture, surrounded by men with big bottles of Yanjing, their faces red, their shirts pulled up to reveal their bellies, a mixture of cigarette and *chuan'r* smoke filling the air, a TV hanging off a tree, screaming kids, and bowls and plates the size of a little girl's tea set, wrapped in plastic so they can charge you that extra *kuai*.

## Starters

For a special treat, I'd have barbecue dumplings filled with **Home Plate Bar-B-Que** meats. From my time living in the hutongs of Gulou, I would add a few dishes of noodles from the amazing **Noodle Inn**, near **Dali Courtyard**, run by the front man of Mi San Dao, one of Beijing's oldest and best known punk bands. I'd also have some Shanghai *tang bao* from that place in Sanlitun, across the street from Taikoo Li Sanlitun South.

## Main Course

I was first introduced to the pleasures of Xinjiang cuisine when I lived in Haidian, so we'd be having big plates of lamb spiced to perfection, paired with *chaomianpian'r*, and a big round wheel of naan bread to sop it up. Back when I lived in Shuangjing there was only one bar south of Guomao called the **Together Bar** that let you order food from next door. There, they made a unique diced chicken and potato dish that was to die for, so add that to the menu. And there was a restaurant in Jianwai Soho toward the back that served a Sichuan dish called *cui pi laziji*, a crispy boneless chicken dish surrounded in red peppers so spicy that it was like a battle in your mouth, requiring multiple bottles of iced green tea.

## Dessert

Last but not least I'd have an array of dim sum fun and Guangdong desserts from **Jin Ding Xuan** near Yonghegong to round out the meal.

## Entertainment

Music would have to include Helen Feng and Nova Heart, as well as the Hot Club, Residence A, and Bad Mamasan. The rest of the entertainment would arise just from watching the people of Beijing go by, doing their thing, keeping it real. I would love to invite all the wonderful people who touched my life here. That's a big crowd, but it would be an amazing party.



PHOTO: JUDY ZHOU



MORTON'S MIXED GRILL

## MORTON'S OF CHICAGO

### HIGH STEAKS DINING

Mon-Sat 5.30-11pm, Sunday 5-10pm. 2/F, Regent Hotel, 99 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District (6523 7777)  
东城区金宝街99号丽晶酒店2楼

 50m southeast of Dengshikou station (Line 5)

**B**atman and Robin. Hall and Oates. Ben and Jerry. There is something peculiarly appealing about things that come in twos. For the food obsessed there is one pairing in particular that never fails to get the blood pumping: surf and turf. The dynamic duo makes a standout appearance on the recently revamped menu at Morton's, in a mixed grill of 6oz filet mignon with grilled shrimp and bacon-wrapped scallops (RMB 638). Our waiter suggests the filet be cooked rare and when it arrives we're glad we took his advice; the imported Australian beef yields willingly at the merest glance of a knife.

It's fair to say that Morton's wears its carnivorous heart on its sleeve; guests are regaled with a pre-dinner menu presentation that takes a voyeuristic joyride through the various cuts of cow on offer. A prehistoric Bone-in Veal Chop (RMB 688) sits proudly alone on a plate, casting a

mocking glance at its token watercress garnish. Yet if you look for it, there is a lightness of touch in evidence here too. A trio of Tuna Tacos (RMB 180) stands out among the other, more traditional, appetizers (think crab cocktail and oysters Rockefeller). Unexpectedly, the tuna comes in the form of a tartare, delicately flavored with a sweet and sour Asian-fusion dressing, and stuffed in friable taco shells that reminded us (in a good way) of the crispy insides of a *jianbing*.

Morton's is admittedly not the kind of place you drop into for a quick, cheap dinner. For those lacking access to an expense account, we suggest stopping by during happy hour (Mon-Fri 5pm-8pm), when signature "Mortinis" (RMB 45) come with complimentary mini steak sandwiches to soak up the generous pours (bar opening hours: Mon-Sat 5-11pm, Sunday 4.30-10pm). *Robynne Tindall*



# JU'ER RENJIA

## SIMPLE FARE HYPED UP

Daily 11am-9pm. 63 Xiao Ju'er Hutong, Dongcheng District (6400 8117)

菊儿人家：东城区南锣鼓巷小菊儿胡同63号

 1km north of Nanluogu Xiang station (Lines 6 and 8)

Ju'er Renjia, located on a bustling side street off Nanluogu Xiang, recently caught our attention because of its notoriety for its limited menu of *zhajiangmian* (thick noodles smothered with fermented soybean paste), *lurou fan* (Taiwanese pork rice), and a range of traditional desserts. Its Dianping ratings are highly positive and food critics like Zhao Ziyun have commended the modest restaurant on TV. For a quick meal, anyway, its atmosphere is a certainly a pleasant one. Bright, welcoming lighting, clean, white walls, decorative dinnerware, miscellaneous books, and knick-knacks scattered across wooden cabinets give the diner the impression they're eating in the proprietor's own kitchen. And, in fact, they are.

For a family dining space, though, it may seem odd that the host at times prefers to sit outside. When we went, Zhang Peichun sat perched on a rickshaw, anticipating our exit from his restaurant.

"Are you full?" he asked. We had thought he was a nosy onlooker. Turns out, he's more like a caring parent. Surely, given all that media coverage, Zhang would have elaborated, sharing his passion for cooking. He would have a speech prepared about special spices or his family history of chefs. But the rotund man has only one desire: To give people food and make them full.

And so the *zhajiangmian*'s primary purpose at Ju'er Renjia is perhaps one reason why its sauce is too thin and its flavor errs towards bland. The *lurou fan* is also nothing special. But if we are to learn anything from those favorable Dianping ratings, it's to order the frozen double-layer milk custard (a scoop of vanilla ice cream atop a wobbly serving of the white stuff) or the Guiling jelly with red bean for a vintage cool-down this summer. How many servings you indulge in to satisfy Zhang's wishes is up to you. *Jessica Rapp*



ZHAJIANG MIAN

# GLOBAL PALATE

SINAN YILMAZ, GENERAL MANAGER, KERRY HOTEL BEIJING

by Robynne Tindall

**A**fter a stint at the Shangri-La Bosphorus in his native Istanbul, Sinan Yilmaz's 20-year journey through the hospitality industry has brought him to Beijing. He tells us about his culinary background and passion for local food and his vision for the Kerry Hotel.

**You arrived in Beijing just a few months ago. What have been your first impressions of Chinese food?**

Although this is my first time living in China, I'm familiar with Chinese food from my more than 15 years working in Asia. I'm very keen to discover the best of the food here in Beijing. I think I'm very lucky that we have a restaurant right here in the hotel [Horizon] serving some of the city's best Peking duck.



**Of all the cities you have visited, where have you had the most memorable food experiences?**

I really don't think I could pick a favorite – it's like asking someone to pick their favorite child! Having worked in Southeast Asia, I've had access to so much culinary diversity; there's really no need to limit yourself to one cuisine.

**What do you miss most about Turkish food?**

Everyone thinks Turkish food is just Doner kebabs, but because our cuisine incorporates influences from so many different cultures we actually have a huge range of delicious, original dishes. Since I have a culinary background, if I really miss something, at least I can cook it myself.

**So you would consider yourself to be a bit of a foodie?**

Certainly. I started my career in the food and beverage division, and I went through culinary school, so I know how to cook and how to serve. I have always loved trying local foods and learning how to cook them myself.

**Do you think a background in food and beverage is important for a hotel general manager?**

As a general manager you are driven by results, so first and foremost you have to be a businessman. However, food and beverage is the public face of any hotel. The majority of revenue comes from rooms, but restaurants and bars are often the hook that draws people in, so you have to be able to taste and evaluate how good they are.

**What is your vision for the Kerry Hotel?**

I hope that the Kerry Hotel can have a voice, for people to look to us as a venue that is constantly vibrant and changing. So I guess the last word would have to be: keep watching this space!

*Look out for the Kerry Hotel's new wine bar Vinotheque, which will stock more than 1,000 bottles from 200 labels, opening at the end of July.*





## Z IS FOR...

### ...zha 炸

This word means deep frying, and is very distinct from stir frying. Although deep frying has existed in China for hundreds of years, the concept of the deep fryer as a kitchen implement is still limited almost entirely to fast-food outlets. It's not nearly as popular as stir frying, especially because much of the deep frying here is done by first battering the food item and then frying it. In a country where cooking oil and its price affect a large part of the consumer food chain, using extra oil to prepare food seems wasteful.

### ...zhu 煮

The ideogram for "boil" is one of the few Chinese words that looks exactly like what it is expressing. One can see the pot on the stove, with tongues of flame rising up beneath it. Items that show up boiled on a Chinese table include *zhu huasheng* (煮花生) or boiled peanuts, preferred for being less oily than if stir-fried or even served raw (the boiling is seen as removing some of the fat).

### ...zheng 蒸

Rounding out the Z's of cooking methods, *zheng* means "to steam." Steaming is a slow cooking process, and although it's seen more in Western cooking with vegetables, it's often heavier foods like dumplings (*zheng jiao*), *baozi*, and steamed bread (*mantou*) that a Beijinger is likely to come across. Steaming is seen as retaining more of the flavor and nutritional value of the food item, along with permitting more of them to be cooked at the same time – witness the great stacks of dumplings, or *baozi*, outside any restaurant that serves them, especially for takeaway.

### ...zhu 猪

The pig provides the primary source of animal protein in China, with 50 million metric tons of it produced here in 2012. The average Chinese person eats about 39 kilograms of it each year. Bacon isn't as popular in China as it is elsewhere, but pork belly certainly is, along with other parts, including pig's ear (*zhu er*). The scale of China's pork industry has also sparked ancillary businesses, such as pig bristles for paint brushes. And the bottom part of the Chinese word for "home" *jia* (家) is a pig under a roof. They do make smart pets, you know.



# CHICKEN CHALLENGE

## A CHALLENGE TO EAT, THAT IS

by Kipp Whittaker

Packaged chicken legs are the bile of the universe. Part of this disgust is brought on by the fact that it isn't commonplace to be famished, short on time and left with only the option to tear open a package and gnaw on a chicken leg to feed your hunger. I'm sure this thought makes most stomachs turn rather than rumble, but we put it upon ourselves to give a selection a try.

### JIEMEI CHUFANG SUGAR SMOKED CHICKEN LEG (RMB 8.8)

"Synthetics were definitely used to create this Frankenstein snack. This is the product of a sick individual." "It smells like cold chicken soup. Yep, it tastes like straight from the can, room temperature chicken soup."

"Totally indigestible, and probably what Kuato from Total Recall tastes like. Kuato doesn't live."

### ZIXIANGYUAN SPICY CHICKEN LEG (RMB 4)

"This doesn't look or taste real. I really don't want to participate in this masochistic display any longer."

"It looks like tandoori chicken but has the taste of a drumstick coated in sick."

"I would only feed this to a convicted murderer, or my mortal enemy."

### KENCHANNI SMALL CHICKEN LEGS (RMB 6.5)

"Once you open the package this revolting fragrance of dead flesh attacks your nose."

"There's a cold jelly on the outside that sticks to your fingers, and makes me regret saying 'yes' to this."

"You could string a violin with this chicken. It's way too gristly."



### 7-ELEVEN SMOKED CHICKEN LEG (RMB 6.8)

"Like barbecue chicken that's been left outside in the rain."

"It's kind of like biting into a greasy chicken-flavored candle. There's this waxiness to the exterior that is pretty disgusting."

"More edible than some of the others, but it totally looks like it was grown in a petrie dish."

### XIANGBALAO, CHICKEN LEG (RMB 4)

"Tastes like a slimy chicken-flavored cigarette."

"It does have a smokey barbecue taste, but most likely caused from too many smokers in the packaging plant."

"It's kind of strange that every one of these legs looks exactly the same. Almost like the chicken flesh was pumped into an injection mold around the bone."

### XIANGBALAO, MALA CHICKEN LEG (RMB 14)

"Totally covered in red peppers. This is the best of the bunch, but only because it's spicy and you can't taste the meat."

"Maybe you could slip it into a soup to add that special processed meat flavor."

"This will probably give you cancer."

### VERDICT

If that old saying "you are what we eat" is true, then if you eat any of these you will probably end up with a wasting disease or look like a genetically modified puddle of feathers with two perfectly shaped legs. These are all genuinely disgusting and we are dismayed that such products exist. If you have to try any of these, maybe, we would say the spicy one only because the copious amount of chilli flakes mask the actual flavor. But seriously folks, don't do it.

# MALTAIL

A DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH



TOP SECRET

PHOTOS: KEN



## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

Daily 7pm-Late. Opposite the west entrance of 3.3 Shopping Mall, Sanlitun Houjie, Chaoyang District (6417 7758)

朝阳区三里屯后街 3.3 大厦西门斜对面

 600m northwest of Tuanjiehu station (Line 10)

**M**altail, located across from First Floor on Sanlitun Houjie, offers two menus. One with six long pages of unclassified cocktails and the other consisting solely of whiskey. The slightly overwhelming, but thorough selection ups the ante on this notoriously scuzzy bar street as a distinguished drinkery to sink into.

We first ordered the Bubbling Ginger (RMB 60), a house special consisting of sparkling wine, gin, lemon juice and ginger syrup. The champagne saucer contained a pleasingly generous helping of this spicy, sweet grape fizz.

Next up was Maltail's version of the tiki cocktail made famous by the Hilton Kuala Lumpur. The Jungle Bird (RMB 50) is an easy-to-drink mix of black rum, Campari, lime juice, pineapple, and simple syrup. It boasted a fresh pineapple base, and although we could sip it like a kid with a juice box, the proportions were thankfully heavy on the spirit side. If you arrive with the munchies, they also offer elegant snacking options via Manchego cheese (RMB 45, 50g) and Iberian ham (RMB 110, 50g).

The area is running the risk of becoming saturated with bars that can be described as (take your pick) gentlemen's clubs/whiskey bars/speakeasies and two-floor Maltail is another of them. How could we tell? The warm ambiance, fake candles, wooden decor, lounge music, bow tie and vest ensemble – the list goes on, but all were dead giveaways.

It might be too soon to tell whether Maltail has what it takes to stand out from the crowd, but for now, we don't care – we like it as an affordable and comfortable venue for escaping the grease-stricken back road. *Kipp Whittaker*

**Also try:** Apothecary, Hidden House



## REBIRTH OF A LEGENDARY CUISINE

Enjoy Chef Simon Wu's new menu of authentic and inspired Cantonese fare, artfully composed in a setting of total sophistication.

To make your reservation or for additional information,  
Please call 8516 6707 or e-mail [huangtingpbj@peninsula.com](mailto:huangtingpbj@peninsula.com)



凰庭  
HUANG TING

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# ALIEN SPIRITS

## FOUR FOREIGN COCKTAILS YOU'LL ONLY FIND IN THESE LOCAL BARS

by Jessica Rapp

There's nothing we love more than a bartender who can get a little creative, especially as we watch fads in our hometowns slip by without us there to enjoy them. How can our Beijing bartenders keep on top of the crafty trends when not everything they need is available in this city?

These four mixologists have no boundaries. We asked each of them about the single ingredient they couldn't work without and how they got a hold of it, whether it was by sneaking it through customs in a suitcase or by means of a firsthand expedition to far-flung farms.



**Ingredient:** Musk sticks

**Source:** Melbourne, Australia

**Drink:** Fairy Floose

**Bar:** Mao Mao Chong

**Runner:** Stephanie Rocard

This traditional Australian candy comes in the form of a pink, malleable stick with a musky, floral flavor that Rocard says is perfect for female drinkers. She infuses tequila with musk sticks because she believes the musk compliments the herbaceous character of the tequila and provides just the right amount of sweetness. The tequila is then paired with lime, fruit juice and crushed ice – “a well-balanced tequila that doesn't remind people of their bad memories is good.”



**Ingredient:** Citrus honey

**Source:** Yuanzhang, Hunan

**Drink:** Red Honey Ale

**Bar:** Panda Brew Pub

**Runner:** Kurt Xia and Pan Dinghao

Kurt Xia and Pan Dinghao tried 11 different honeys in Beijing before giving up. Xia says none of their samples boasted a flavor that would do a beer justice. Then they decided to go south to one of China's honey capitals, a small town called Yuanzhang. There, they tried six different honeys before settling on a red variant attributed to a rare flower from a local orange. It only blooms for half a month, so one can be sure Panda Brew Pub won't be stocking this bee-spoke beer for long.





**Ingredient:** Wormwood  
**Source:** Morocco  
**Drink:** Queen of Casablanca  
**Bar:** Cu Ju  
**Runner:** Badr Benjelloun

Wormwood is most commonly known for its inclusion in absinthe, but Badr Benjelloun grew up drinking it in Morocco in his mint tea. It makes for a bitter twist, but in the Queen of Casablanca, it complements the juniper in the gin, so much so that Badr has brought the herb back to Beijing for the last three years. To make his signature drink, he infuses the gin for three days, adds mint, lime, sugar, cucumber, bitters and another ingredient virtually unavailable in Beijing: rosewater.



**Ingredient:** Yerbe mate  
**Source:** South America (Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay)  
**Drink:** El Immigrante  
**Bar:** Palms  
**Runner:** Christian Jensen

Christian Jensen began infusing his vodka with Yerbemate, a type of caffeinated herb commonly consumed like tea in parts of South America, at his sister's house in downtown Los Angeles. His parents are South American, so he grew up drinking *mate*, which is traditionally shared by close friends in one gourd and a metal straw. In 2009, he began hauling as much as ten kilos of the herb to Beijing, at one point filling half a large suitcase. Jensen says airport security has yet to be suspicious, and thankfully so, or one may not have the chance to try his El Immigrante, which pairs the infused vodka with lime syrup and Sprite.

## THE ARGUMENT FOR STAYING LOCAL

Apothecary owner Leon Lee, creator of the Pain is Pleasure (pictured), imports hard liquor, but when it comes to raw ingredients, you won't catch him looking far from Beijing.

"It's so easy to read about and do things that are trending, but there are so many great things right here," he says. So you can be sure Lee won't be lugging over spices or confections when he has access to locally bred treats like Shangri-La Farms' pomegranate honey, a sweet and fruity alternative to grenadine in their Lusia cocktail, and the Meyer lemon, a Sichuan-born specimen that's available six months out of the year – "Sunkist is crap," he adds.

That doesn't mean there aren't quality one-of-a-kind

products on the market outside China. Take, for example, Manuka honey, made from a tree native to New Zealand and Australia, whose properties are known to be so good for the skin and digestive health that it seems everyone all over the world is making a beeline for a jar of the stuff.

Lee maintains, however, that Apothecary is focused on creating cocktails that adhere to Chinese tradition. Thus, he'd rather use a perhaps under-appreciated Chinese-born ingredient that exhibits a flavor distinctive to its environment. Then, there are the other factors: "To me, reducing your carbon footprint and supporting the economy make it more important to be local."



## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS



FROZEN BLUE MARGARITA



WILLY MOJITO




COOL CUCUMBER

## JAVA+ TERRACE

### A SPORTY PLACE FOR OUTDOOR DRINKING

Daily 7pm-1am. 26A Xiaoyun Lu, Chaoyang District (185 5297 1426)

朝阳区霄云路甲26号 邮政编码

 700m east of Sanyuanqiao station (Line 10)

**A**re you the type that occasionally enjoys the manufactured experience of a hotel bar? Everyone sometimes has the urge to go somewhere and have a cool drink without the risk of running into someone you know. Hotels are usually great for providing this form of privacy, and though you'll rarely find yourself in Marriott Northeast, they have a new terrace you should maybe check out.

We sat down at a table and were immediately served pretzels while *Transformers* was blasting on the projector from a poor quality Youku stream. Most days, though, you can expect live sports on the big screen.

They currently have a sweet deal going on with all cocktails priced at RMB 58, and two for RMB 70. We tried the Willy Mojito, made with homemade mint syrup, and it hit all of the basic points for a fine mojito. But since there was a RMB 70 for two deal we felt inclined to

follow this with the Cool Cucumber, which was essentially a cucumber martini. If suds are more your thing then they also have a decent selection of imported and domestic brews.

The overall concept of the space is lackluster, just lots of tables and chairs on a wooden deck near the entrance of the hotel. But once nighttime hits, this piece of real estate, surrounded by fountains and trees, becomes illuminated by strategically placed red orbs and a small indoor area housing a billiards table and dartboard to win free drinks off your buddies. We weren't ready to get all Samantha Jones on the place so after an enjoyable duo of cocktails and without seeing a single person we knew, we were finished and moderately satisfied with the experience. *Kipp Whittaker*

**Also try:** Yin Bar, Mesh

PHOTOS: KEN



## WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

### YIN BAR

#### WORLD CLASS ON DECK IN CHONGWENMEN

Tue-Thu, 6pm-1.30am; Fri-Sat, 6pm-2.30am. 12/F, New World Beijing Hotel, 8 Qinian Dajie, Dongcheng District (5960 8866)

东城区祈年大街8号北京新世界酒店12层

 400m southwest of Chongwenmen station (Lines 2 and 5)

Resting on the 12th floor of the New World Hotel, Yin Bar is introducing a “modern Oriental” ambience to Chongwenmen to class up your cocktail sipping experiences this summer. This 1,100-meter lounge is sure to attract hoards of local socialites interested in getting buzzed with an elevated view of one of Beijing’s fastest growing commercial areas.

Yin Bar’s design reflects the aesthetics of Beijing’s hutongs and courtyards, but is filtered by high-end architectural themes of modernist simplicity. Chinese style calligraphy brushes line the entryway leading you to the main room where musicians and DJs entertain nightly. You’ll likely find most of Yin’s clientele on their large terrace, filled with sleek, comfy furniture and warm amber lighting.

The cocktail and spirit menus have everything you could thirst for and a short list of specialties like their very own Long Island variation called the Long Yin Iced Tea (RMB 60). Equal parts potent and sweet, and featuring a dash of herbal tea, this was surprisingly easy to swig and a dangerous addition to their arsenal of mixes. The beer selection is overall not very impressive, consisting mainly of overpriced Qingdao (RMB 45) and various imports in bottles and on draft (RMB 40). *Kipp Whittaker*

**Also try:** Mesh, Atmosphere



PHOTO: KEN

## P.S. WE ATE YOU

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



#### **shredded beef burrito**

**Q Mex, RMB 65**

With the addition of a new chef, we can only say great things about the new and improved Q Mex. This burrito features a soft corn tortilla stuffed with juicy marinated beef, seasoned rice, beans and cheese. You will feel pregnant with satisfaction at the conclusion of this bulbous Tex Mex delicacy.

#### **curry fries**

**Let’s Burger, RMB 45**

We really like our French fries messy, and these look like they were dropped on the streets of Bangalore prior to being served. This plate of finger size potato wedges are covered in an aromatic glop that was both spicy and moreish. This confirms our belief that curry goes well on just about everything.

#### **burning Chinese cabbage and tofu**

**Fairy Su, RMB 32**

There is definitely more cabbage than tofu in this delicious dish, but what it tastes really meaty for a tofu dish and isn’t greasy, or spicy like the name may lead you to believe. Enjoy it with a nice serving of their fresh watermelon juice and you’re in for a very satisfying vegetarian experience.

#### **Agnolotti del Plin**

**Opera Bombana, RMB 158**

These delicate handmade pasta parcels (“plin” means pinched in Italian) conceal a richly umani filling of Parma ham and Parmigiano Reggiano, dotted with bursts of sweetness in the form of Sicilian figs. We challenge you not to mop up every last drop of the accompanying creamy sauce.

#### **mango bing sha**

**Coco, RMB 8**

It’s a travesty that you can only find 7-11 Slurpees in Hong Kong. This sweet and icy mango slush, is probably the most readily available thing that resembles this heat retardant treat in Beijing. Who knows though, this year we got carbonated Red Bull, maybe next summer will be the long overdue season of Slurpee.

## IRON BARTENDER



**T**hree bar masters. Three “secret” ingredients. One judge. Would Beijing’s cocksure mixologists fumble when faced with an unusual condiment or unfamiliar fruit? Or can they concoct a drink to

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

### THE CONTESTANTS



**ALFRED YU**  
Xian Bar,  
East Hotel Beijing

The 23-year-old from Henan province studied under Beijing’s legendary bartender, Tony Zhao of 99 Club. If you ever catch him having a drink, he’ll always go for the classics, but if he’s attending a guest, then he likes to grab for the gin. When it comes to ingredients for this competition, he says he’d take on just about anything.



**ROSS HARRIS**  
Mas

Ross brought Florida to Beijing when he opened Mas two years ago, introducing deadly tiki drinks to the hutongs. “Bartending is cooking, straight up,” he says. “I don’t have flair or skill. I don’t know how to spin around and sh\*t, but it’s just flavor combining.” The durian-loving “chef” cooks up exotic cocktails every Sunday from 4-10pm at Mas’s tropical barbecue.



**ALAN WANG**  
Cantina Agave

If you want to know the ins and outs of a margarita, ask Alan Wang, who would make you one of Cantina Agave’s four versions of the tequila drink over a boozy horchata in a heartbeat. Wang has been behind the bar for four years, whipping up cocktails at the Regent Hotel on Financial Street before hitting Sanlitun. His mix of choice? “Lady drinks,” i.e., sour and sweet.

### THE JUDGE



**SAM BOBERTZ**  
Xian Bar,  
East Hotel Beijing

Sam began his bartending career when he was 16 years old in Hong Kong. Now, already three years into his stint in Beijing, he channels his experience into innovative projects for Xian. While he’s one for the dark Italian digestifs, Sam likes to let guests ingest a more palatable version of the liqueur, with passion fruit, rum and lime.

PHOTOS: MITCHELL PE MASTLUN



# ROUND 1

Alfred



Belvedere vodka, Lillet aperitif, kelp

Alan



Cointreau, Absolut vodka, Galliano, grapefruit bitters, Campari, lime juice, kelp

Ross



Bombay Sapphire gin, Chartreuse, Pimms, muddled lime and kelp, garnished with lime, cucumber, and sea salt

SECRET INGREDIENT

KELP



*Verdict:* Alfred went for the classic, while Ross mastered presentation and a tropical flavor, but the kelp was lost. Alan's slightly sour creation won for its incorporation of seaweed in every sip.

# ROUND 2

Alfred



Havana Club rum, Monin caramel syrup, milk, yogurt, peach liqueur blended with durian pudding

Alan



Bacardi, grenadine, egg white, lime juice, simple sugar, Malibu, durian pudding (shaken)

Ross



Cachaca, fresh pineapple juice, canned lychee juice, durian pudding, drop of lemon juice (shaken)

SECRET INGREDIENT

DURIAN PUDDING



*Verdict:* Sam was uncertain whether the pungent pudding could be tamed, but Alfred didn't disappoint. He managed to sink a delectable smoothie, only needing to add chunks of banana to seal the deal.

# ROUND 3

Alfred



Lemon juice, simple syrup, jin jiu, garnished with cherry and lemon slice

Alan



Patrón, Peach Tree, Martini Rosso, jin jiu, garnished with flamed orange peel

Ross



Galliano, angostura bitters, lemon juice, jin jiu (shaken and strained), muddled green apple

SECRET INGREDIENT

JIN JIU



*Verdict:* While every bartender managed to pull a different flavor out of the herbal liquor, Ross succeeded in creating a textured cocktail with notes of cinnamon that Sam would order again.

# A WORKERS' PICNIC

SNACKING AND SWIGGING YOUR WAY AROUND GONGTI

by Jim Boyce

When balmy days and blue skies come our way, Beijing is a superb place to enjoy the great outdoors. Of course, a healthy diet is an important part of relishing such moments, one that includes key food groups such as cheese, wine, meat and beer. Thus, I present this walking tour of the Workers' Stadium area that provides both exercise and a picnic basket of made-in-China items to sustain one's energy during outdoor adventures.

## Trouble Bar

This beer haven at the back of China View stocks some 200 options, including Panda Honey Pale Ale (RMB 29) made by a team that includes local brewer Pan Dinghao. Trouble also sometimes has local craft draft, notably from Jing A, and will refill growlers at 15 percent off.

## Tavalin Bagels

No one does bagels like the guys at this shop just across from the west side of Yashow Market. There are nine bagel options: the "Everything" (RMB 10), dusted with sea salt and sesame seeds, is a favorite of many. Also grab a bag of crispy bagel chips to keep your hunger at bay during the tour.

## Andy's Craft Sausages

Links-maker Andy Horowitz has a freezer full of his products stored at Tavalin Bagels. From Lincolnshire and Cumberland to the newest product – Beijing duck – there are a half-dozen sausage options at RMB 75 per 500 grams. Horowitz advises cooking them on low heat with some oil or butter, then using them to make bagel sandwiches.

## Fromager de Pekin

Beijing's most famous craft cheese-makers stock some of their products at April Gourmet on Xingfucun Zhonglu. The Camembert is RMB 38 for 120 grams, while true from-age fans might want to try the one-kilo mixed cheeses option online for RMB 260. And if cash is an issue, April Gourmet also has Beijing-made mozzarella at RMB 8.8 per 100 grams.

## Great Leap Brewery

If you didn't fill your growler at Trouble Bar, you have a second chance at this brewpub due west of April Gourmet. And if you don't have a growler to begin with, you can get one here – full from RMB 75. Great Leap has over a dozen craft brews, with the Iron Buddha, a blonde ale infused with oolong tea, a refreshing option during the summer.

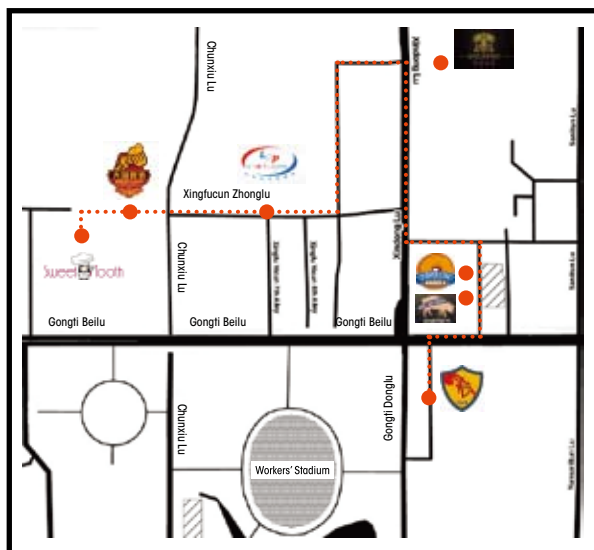
## Grace Vineyard

This Shanxi-based winery is arguably China's most successful and sells its wares via Everwines on Xindong Lu. While it offers a good range of whites and reds, a chilled bottle of the entry-level 2012 rose at RMB 60 is a nice option for hot weather.

## Sweet Tooth Bakery

Just a bit further west, close to Sun City, you can get dessert for your basket. Grab a half-dozen Snickerdoodle cookies (six big ones are RMB 72) or try the cupcakes or muffins. If you want something substantial, like the nine-inch fruit tart (RMB 260), you best order 24 hours ahead of time.

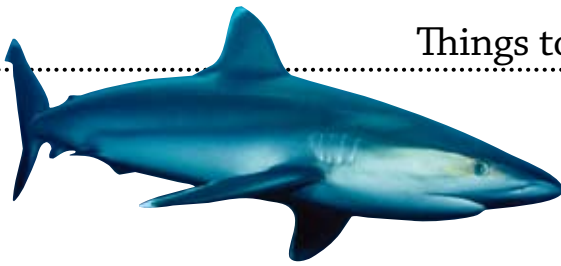
## ON THE GONGTI PICNIC TRAIL





Things to do, places to be, stuff to try

The end for  
trading in  
shark fin?  
P58



# GO

BESPOKE FASHION // HULA // NORTH KOREAN FOOD TRIP // CAMP COMFORTS



**Get over to the Oriental Theater and check out this Broadway-style musical commemorating pop star Teresa Teng and featuring more than 30 of her greatest hits.**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NORTHNEWS.CN



# KA PA HULA O MANOA

## HAWAIIAN DANCE STUDIO OPENS IN THE PLACE

Call for class times. L418A, The Place, 9 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District (6701 7790)

朝阳区光华路甲9号世贸天阶

 900m northwest of Yong'anli station (Line 1)

When I rocked up to Ka Pa Hula O Manoa (a hula studio better known in English as “My Dance Life Club”) in spandex leggings and a loose t-shirt, I knew I was going to stand out among the other dancers in Mandy Mai’s weekly class. See, I was lacking a sarong and an faux plumeria to pin in my hair.

Occupying The Place’s newest studio is what must be Beijing’s only group of hula dancers. Led by Mai, an experienced gymnast, the group works out via a form of ancient dance developed by the Polynesians in Hawaii. Some members of the class hula all the way down to the island of Oahu itself as every year Mai takes a group to participate in the World Invitational Hula Festival.

Luckily, my instructor, or the *kumu hula*, was looking out for me. She had a collection of floral sarongs on hand for dancers who didn’t have their own. I tied mine snugly around my hips, trying not to catch my reflection in the

floor-to-ceiling mirrors even though all of my classmates were studying theirs, making adjustments to their outfits and practicing dance steps. When the class kicked off, everyone dove right in to the dances whose moves most participants had nearly mastered – the hip sway key to the *ka’o* and the knee-bending *kupe*, for instance – while Mai made small adjustments to postures. It was their fluttering hands that told a story, but it was their core doing all the work. By the end, my muscles ached.

Sure, the hula isn’t a common dance floor move, but it’s hard to argue with the fact it makes a good party trick. More importantly though, this type of wiggling your middle is a fitness opportunity oceans away from a gym membership. I know what some of you will be saying: hula-lujah to that. *Jessica Rapp*

**Also try:** Phoenix Dance Studio, Beijing Tango



# RUI'Z BESPOKE

## SHUANGJING WELCOMES SHANGHAI SUIT BRAND

Daily 10.30am-9pm. 18, Bldg 2, Pingod North, 32 Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang District (5826 3877)

朝阳区百子湾路32号北京二十二院街艺术区2-18

 1.2km northeast of Shuangjing station (Line 10)

Looking stylish can be a challenge for the busy men of Beijing. "Lacking time and variation in choice, many of the city's gents are under-dressed on business and social occasions," Amy Tsai of Rui'Z Bespoke says. The focus of this Shanghai-based brand is to help change that, bringing high-end bespoke tailoring with a classic touch to the gents of Beijing. Whether it is the look of a playful dandy you are after, or that of a classic gentleman, Rui'Z Bespoke is on hand to assist you.

The shop is the newest addition to the city's burgeoning group of bespoke tailoring establishments aimed at making Beijing guys that little bit more dashing. Following in the footsteps of London's Savile Row tailors, the company provides suits made by hand to individually fit, with no made-to-measure or ready-to-wear. A wide selection of branded fabrics are available to choose from, all of which are sourced from England and Italy and include Scabal, Holland & Sherry, and Ermenegildo Zegna. Each suit takes between four and six weeks to produce (from

first measurement to fitting), and prices range from RMB 6,800 for a two-piece suit to between RMB 10,000 and RMB 20,000 for a luxury branded fabric suit. Production takes place at their workshop in Shanghai.

For those unaware of the difference between a notched and a peaked lapel, a bespoke specialist is on hand to advise on every detail of the suit. Holistic dress style advice is also on offer to help you to find the right look.

With its sleek wooden floors and spacious interior, the shop provides a bright and modern space for a one-on-one consultation, while a shiny red bicycle perched proudly in the window adds to the London "dapper chap" aesthetic. The shop exterior is made up of large plate glass windows, which allow ample opportunity for passersby to catch a glimpse of you in your new suit – ideal for those customers with an exhibitionist streak.

*Maria Nolan*

**Also try:** Principle M, Senli and Frye



PHOTO: SUI

# SUSAN BLUMBERG-KASON'S TALE OF TRYING – AND FAILING – TO BE A GOOD SPOUSE

by Stephen Schwankert



Intercultural relationships can be a wonderful or contentious part of living overseas, and sometimes both. Often it works out, but occasionally it fails, even after years of marriage.

Susan Blumberg-Kason looks at her own failed marriage in *Good Chinese Wife: A Love Affair with China Gone Wrong*. Describing herself as a “painfully shy Midwestern wallflower,” she met her future husband, Cai Jun, at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in the mid-1990s. Studying Mandarin gave the two an instant bond in Cantonese-speaking Hong Kong and their relationship flourished quickly. The pair were engaged within a year of their first encounter, when the author was 24. Their rush to marriage and the author’s rose-colored view of Chinese culture at

the time make the reader wonder if many of the issues that emerge later in the book might have been avoided if the two had had a longer courtship.

Their differences began to emerge as early as the first night of their honeymoon, with examples that will resonate with many readers who have been involved in intercultural relationships in China, highlighting what makes both sides uncomfortable with the other.

“Cai entered the bathroom to take a shower but soon returned fully dressed, holding a plush white hand towel. ‘Susan, is this okay?’ ‘What do you mean?’ ‘Aizibing.’ ‘AIDS?’ He nodded. ‘Do you think this towel is clean?’ ‘Of course. You think you can get AIDS from a towel?’ ‘Foreigners have AIDS, and they stay at this hotel.’ What? How could Cai, who was studying for a PhD (albeit not in a scientific field), believe that AIDS could be contracted from a hotel towel and that AIDS cases originated from foreigners? What about me, his foreign wife?”

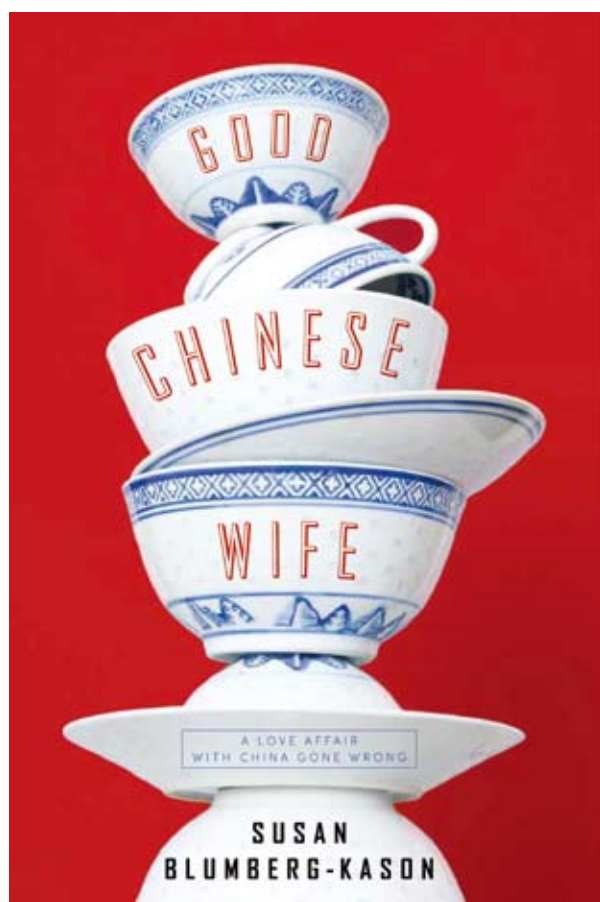
The contrast between Blumberg-Kason and her husband is magnified when they spend the summer with his parents in rural Hubei province. And things take a more difficult turn when their son, Jake, is born. Cai expects her to *zuo yuezi*, a traditional Chinese postnatal period of limited activity for new mothers. The tables are turned when Cai objects, after the fact, to Jake’s circumcision as part of Jewish custom.

Their relationship deteriorates, although as expected from a first-person memoir, we only hear Blumberg-Kason’s side of the story. Eventually they move to San Francisco, along with her husband’s in-laws, and Blumberg-Kason struggles to support all five people while working as a secretary.

*Good Chinese Wife* is guaranteed to make the reader uncomfortable for the unflinching way in which it examines first-hand the prejudices and stereotypes of both sides of a Chinese-Western relationship. Readers who have been in or are considering entering into one may squirm at moments when the culture clash resonates.

*Good Chinese Wife* is available from *The Bookworm* and on *Amazon.com*.

PHOTO: SUSAN BLUMBERG-KASON





**QUICKHIKER ULTRALIGHT 2 TENT**

This two-manner is one of the lightest and most compact tents on the market. It features two side doors, oodles of storage space, and quick-pitch technology. On top of all that, it's made of 50 percent recycled materials.

**Decathlon**  
**RMB 1,299**

**JOBY GORILLA-TORCH 100**

Fumbling around for bug spray in the dark is no fun. This torch grips effortlessly to your tent and has a massive 80-hour battery life.

**taobao.com**  
**RMB 385**



# Camp In Comfort

by Paul Ryding

*Every month the Beijinger reviews new gadgets so you don't have to. This month we show you some gizmos that will make your weekend taking on the elements as safe and comfortable as possible.*

**JETBOIL FLASH COOKER**

The jetboil, for those whom a watched pot never boils. This nifty bit of kit boils up a half liter of water in just over two and a half minutes, and the translucent lid lets you see exactly the moment the water is boiled. How's that for instant coffee?

**amazon.com.cn**  
**RMB 940**

**ENO DOUBLENEST DELUXE HAMMOCK**

A nest-like hammock, big enough for two, made with breathable fabric and easy to fold away.

**taobao.com**  
**RMB 723**

**EARL TABLET**

Initially designed through a crowd-funding campaign, the Earl is robust and potentially life-saving with a built-in two-way radio, a weather alert system, GPS, and comes pre-loaded with lots of trail maps.

**meetearl.com**  
**RMB 1,850**

**BIOLITE CAMP STOVE**

Compact and good for the environment, this gasless stove is a must-have for the conscientious camper. Powered by dead twigs, it powers your iPhone as you cook.

**jd.com**  
**RMB 1,380**





## DPRK DINING

CULINARY CAPERS BEYOND THE 38TH PARALLEL

by Robynne Tindall

Our trip to North Korea got off to a shaky start, gastronomy-wise. Half an hour into the Air Koryo flight from Beijing to Pyongyang, a member of the cabin crew hurriedly deposited a “hamburger” onto our trays. One look at the carrot-studded meat and I decided to stick to the more familiar glass of Coke. Things improved considerably at dinner. We ascended to the Yanggakdo Hotel’s revolving restaurant, where I broke my self-imposed hunger strike with a feast of duck and beef *bulgogi* cooked traditionally on hot stones. Later, our Australian guide told us they had been reluctant to serve us the dish, lest we consider this charming cooking method unsanitary.

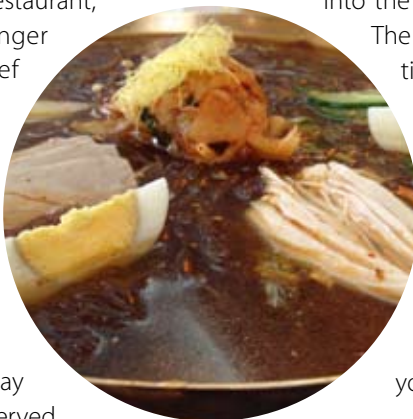
North Korea is not a country known for wearing its heart on its sleeve, but that reticence melted away when it came to food. Our initially reserved Korean guides lit up when describing their favorite dishes or when we declared a regional specialty “delicious.” Their excitement reached fever pitch when we visited Pyongyang’s most famous *raengmyŏn* (cold buckwheat noodles) restaurant, the Okryugwan, where the noodles and their myriad toppings are proudly displayed in a brass tray akin to an ornamental birdbath. As

we slurped tray after slippery trayful, we were surprised to learn that few regular tourists ever get a chance to eat there.

Our special culinary status opened doors as well as hearts. We were given rare access to a restaurant kitchen, where we watched as a shy female chef, just two weeks out of culinary school, manipulated a vast lump of dough into the aforementioned buckwheat noodles.

The openness didn’t quite extend to letting us have a go ourselves, but whether or not this was more due to our lack of skill in the kitchen department, I decline to speculate.

At the end of the day, any trip to North Korea inevitably carries an element of “just to say you’ve done it.” However, go with an open mind and you will leave with your curiosity – and your stomach – satisfied.



### Essential information

*I travelled to North Korea with Young Pioneer Tours. The four-night tour cost EUR 945 (including return train travel from Beijing to Pyongyang, accommodation and most meals) plus EUR 50 for a DPRK visa. US nationals must fly in and out for an additional EUR 100. For more information on upcoming tours, visit [youngpioneertours.com](http://youngpioneertours.com).*



# GUANGZHOU

## BARGAINS AND BUNS IN THE CANTON CAPITAL

by Jessica Rapp

More than a hundred years ago, Guangzhou was a place of uprising, its neighboring county, Xiangshan, being the birthplace of Chinese revolutionary Sun Yat-sen. These days, though, portrayal of the seaport city often gives its significant historical value a miss, with more travel guides pegging it instead as one of China's most modern and wealthy cities. We agree – it's difficult to ignore that sprawling, complex highway system and those sparkling shopping malls, and if these wonders don't convince you to make the three-hour trip by plane, then surely it will be the outrageously cheap deals in wholesale markets bustling with African, Middle Eastern and Chinese traders.

### WHAT TO SEE

Guangzhou is a bargain shopper's heaven. Start at the center of Tianhe District, where the malls have a range of both high-end and street labels on offer, and then have a look at Guangyuan Xilu for wholesale clothing options. You'll have to dig, but you won't have to haggle. Need a wig to complete your look? Get those, along with vibrant Ankara fabric at the African market on Xiaobei Lu. On the weekend from 3-10pm, head to Haizhu District for Guangzhou's biggest flea market, Mafa Bazaar, with more than 60 vendors selling everything from homemade food and handicrafts to vintage clothing and furniture.

Once you've exhausted the shopping bug, go to the city center and take a ride to the top of the 600m tall Canton Tower.

### WHERE TO STAY

There's no shortage of good budget options for a mindful traveler, including RiverSide YHA, which is located next to the Pearl River and near a spread of old factories that have been transformed into an art and culture district. For a seamless and more luxurious stay, try the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, a sleek and contemporary offering from Swire (the company who created Taikoo Li), conveniently located close to a handful of 24-hour dim sum restaurants and cafes.

### WHERE TO DINE

Many Guangzhou locals will claim their food is better than the offerings in Beijing, and after a lavish sampling of dim sum by Mandarin Oriental's Chef Fei, you just might believe them. Try the bulging shrimp dumplings or walnut paste buns at Guangzhou Restaurant (Guangzhou Jie Jia , 广州饭店), known for its longevity, or schlep to Mei Xin Garden in Tianhe District, highly regarded for its Chiuchow Steamed Dumplings. Wash it all down with a pint of Xurry's Porter by Strand Brewing, Guangzhou's tenderfoot of China's craft brew scene.

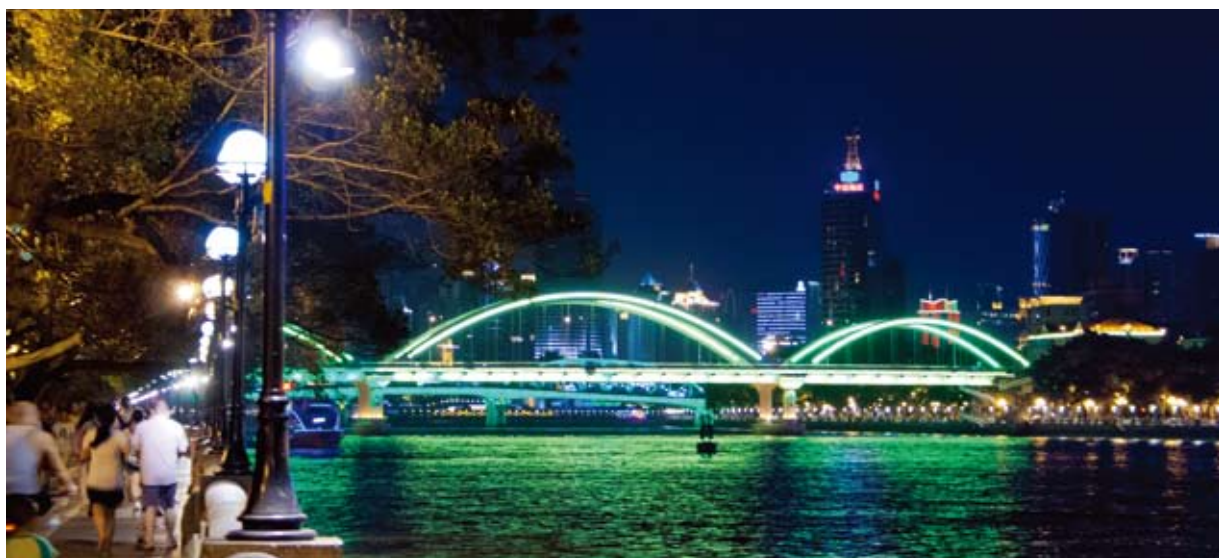


PHOTO: NATASIA CAUSSE (FLICKR)

A man with short dark hair and a goatee is sitting on a set of wooden stairs. He is wearing a white long-sleeved button-down shirt, grey shorts, and bright orange sneakers with black laces. He is also wearing dark sunglasses with reflective lenses, a gold watch on his left wrist, a ring on his left ring finger, and a colorful beaded bracelet on his right wrist. The background is a dark, textured wall.

GET THE LOOK

# COMFORT FIRST

by Jessica Rapp

We'll never run out of sunglasses or silver pendants with Shagi Defoe and Hannah Ren in Beijing, but we wanted to see what additional style insight the king and queen of accessories have to offer.

## SHAGI DEFOE

Managing Partner,  
Dienastie Eyewear  
Dienastie.com

### Personal style:

Comfortable. "I could wear white tees and blue jeans with sneakers every single day of my life and I'd be fine."

**Color palette:** "I like bright colors, but I won't mix them too much. I won't wear a green shirt with red shoes. It's all about the contrast, and I like the shoe to be the focus."

**Garment he can't live without:** Sneakers. "I'm not a brandmonger, but one brand I'm really religious to is Nike. Since I was a little kid, I've had quite a bit of them. My collection of shoes now stands at 120, and about two-thirds of them are Nike."

**What he's wearing:** Oxford shirt by Casual Drei, H&M jeans, Nike Chukkas, Meister "Raekwon the Chef" CL2 Edition Watch, Dienastie sunglasses





**HANNAH REN**  
**Jewellery Designer**  
**/ Design Director,**  
**Makelumer Dia-**  
**monds**  
**hannahrenjewel-**  
**lery@gmail.com**

**Personal style:** A little bit hipster, a little bit comfortable. "I run around a lot so I don't wear heels as much as I should, probably. I actually quite like taking something formal and wearing sneakers with it. We're all working women – you don't want to be exhausted when you go from place to place."

**Favorite places to shop:** Zara, Urban Revivo, and JNBY, plus Taobao for the occasional treasure. "I walk around and look a lot more than I buy to get inspiration not just for clothing, but for my jewellery as well."

**What she won't buy:** Luxury goods. "I don't think there's any creative input in a luxury product – it's more about the logo and brand than about the product itself."

**What she's wearing:** Shirt by Country Road, Skirt by Urban Revival, Zara shoes, and Hannah Ren silver rings





FEATURE

# TAKING A BITE OUT OF SHARK FIN SOUP

by Stephen Schwankert

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

But as of this summer, shark fin consumption is down between 70 and 90 percent, according to wildlife conservation groups including World Wildlife Fund Hong Kong. How did the situation change so quickly? The answer lies with a basketball player and a public austerity campaign, along with shifting public opinion on the treatment of animals in China.

As many as 73 million sharks are killed each year, with China representing the biggest market. The sharks are usually caught on long lines, and then hauled onto fishing boats, where their dorsal (back), pectoral (side), and tail fins

are cut off. Because the rest of the fish is not harvested or used, mutilated sharks are then usually thrown back into the ocean to drown, unable to swim or otherwise move, to save space on the boats for more fins. After drying, the fins are sold to distributors or directly to restaurants, who then make it into soup. The chewy, crunchy fin matter has no flavor, and the soup itself is usually chicken broth. Although viewed by some practitioners of traditional Chinese medicine as a cancer cure, no value in cancer treatment has been proven scientifically. In fact, sharks' position in the food chain as apex predators means that the fins often contain high levels of mercury, which can cause sterility.

The tide of public opinion on shark fin consumption turned in 2009, when NBA star Yao Ming appeared in a public service announcement in both Chinese and English on behalf of anti-wildlife product trafficking organization WildAid. In the 30-second spot, diners in a restaurant see a shark in an aquarium

PHOTO: COURTESY OF WILDAID





bleeding from where its fins had been cut off.

"I've been opposing the consumption of shark fin since 2006, and we've made good progress, you can see that the numbers have come down. The next step is to expand that to other areas, like elephants and ivory, and hopefully we'll have similar success there," Yao told *the Beijinger* in an interview.

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

The other key event in the fight to reduce shark fin consumption came in July 2012, when China's central government announced a three-year phase-out of shark fin nationwide. That order was given further force when in

December 2013, the government banned the dish from being served at any official banquet as part of its continuing drive against extravagant public expenditure.

"This sends out a really positive message. We are now working with universities to reach out to the private sector to see if they will align themselves with the government," said Lei Chen Wong, executive director of the Jane Goodall Institute China, whose Roots & Shoots program has taken up the shark fin fight as one of its primary causes.

At present, the list of companies dissociating themselves from shark fin include Hilton Worldwide, Peninsula Hotels, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, Starwood Hotels, and Swissotel; airlines like Air Pacific (Fiji), Asiana, Cathay Pacific Airlines, Cebu Pacific Air, Dragonair, and Korean Air, which refuse to carry shark fin as cargo; and companies like Alibaba, which restricted the sale of shark fin and related products on its site in 2009.

Introducing the people who matter

# MEET

"WE PERFECTED A FORM OF TORTURE USING KATE BUSH" SEE P61

"I HAVEN'T HAD TIME TO THINK ABOUT ANY NEW TATTOOS" SEE P62

"IT LOOKS ABOUT AS SCATALOGICAL AS IT READS" SEE P63

"WE HAD TO STAND SHAMEFULLY IN FRONT OF THE ENTIRE SCHOOL" SEE P64

ELLIE GOULDING // NIC SHEPHERD // ALEC ASH // DIANA HU



***M.A.N.D.Y. are set to enchant the Migas terrace with an eclectic mix of EDM genres. Prepare yourself for an evening of sweaty dance tunes on Aug 22.***

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE ORGANIZERS



# NIC SHEPHERD

DJ BOFLEX

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

I played the viola for a couple of years. Afterwards, I sang in my high school choir. Later, in my college years, I thought I should learn to play the guitar. Now I can play, but badly. Otherwise these days I'm more into programming electronic sound makers, like synths and drum machines. I can also put some records on turntables and do the whole DJ thing, if that's considered playing an instrument.

## What is your favorite song to sing at karaoke?

"Wuthering Heights." I had a karaoke trio in Berlin and we perfected a form of torture using Kate Bush.

## What was the first record you ever bought?

The first album I ever bought was either Vanilla Ice or MC Hammer, or maybe New Kids on the Block. It was probably the latter. Hangin' tough!

## What's the worst song for getting stuck in your head all day?

One of those songs that play in 7-Eleven every time you're there. Actually, I have a love-hate relationship with them. I've asked 7-Eleven staff about them and have tried to get a recording, but they always pretend not to hear me.

## What was your favorite period or year for music?

I listen to a lot of dance music and I love to romanticize the earlier years of disco, house and techno, which is the general range of music that I DJ. But if I had to choose, then I'd say right now. For me it's exciting to hear something that shakes my mind up a bit. Tracks like "Berghain" by



Locussolus, which is a minimal, spacey dystopia. Or "F\*ck Diamond" by Jesse Lanza, which combines R&B and pop sensibilities with an acidic, analog ambience. Or "Inspector Norse" by Todd Terje, where an amazing disco track has been coaxed out of a single modular synth.

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

I quite like the version of Hall and Oates' "Kiss on My List" by My Dick, which is called "Dick on My List."

*Check out DJ Boflex's new party, Kooky Soundsystem, on Aug 9 at Dada.*

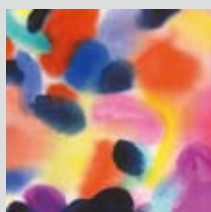
## NICK'S FIVE-SONG PLAYLIST



**"Ugly Edits #2 (The Love I Lost)"**  
by Theo Parrish



**"Keep The Fire Burning"**  
by Gwen McCrae



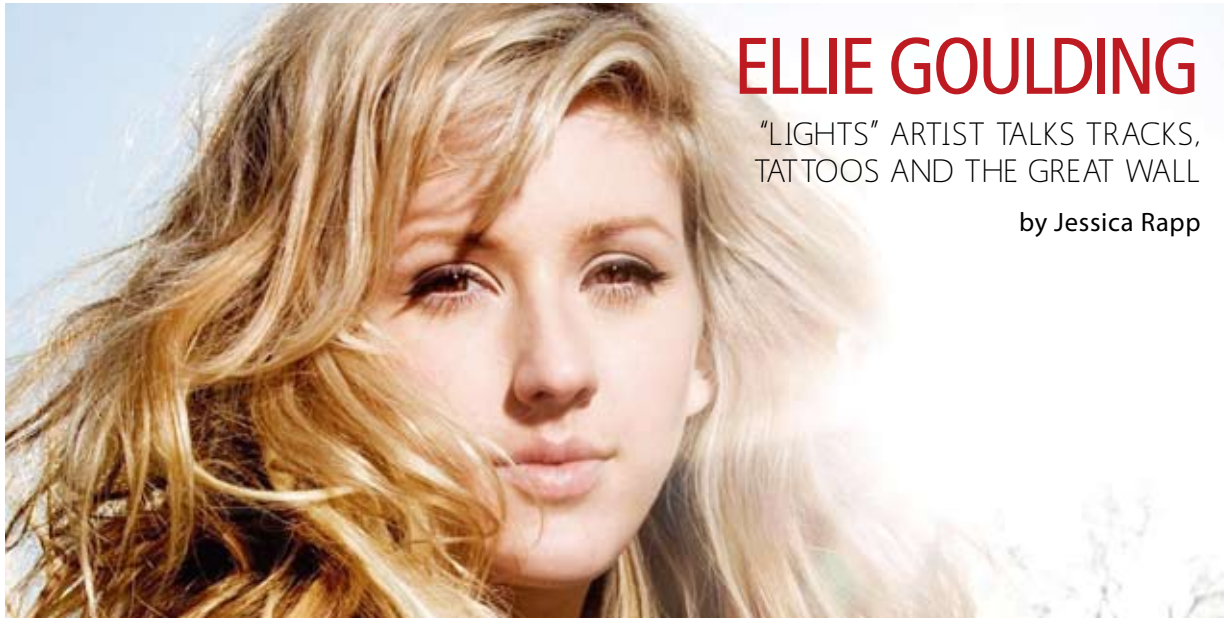
**"Weird Alps"**  
by Christopher Rau



**"Daa Nyinaa" by**  
Ata Kak



**"Rainstorm II" by**  
Levon Vincent



# ELLIE GOULDING

"LIGHTS" ARTIST TALKS TRACKS,  
TATTOOS AND THE GREAT WALL

by Jessica Rapp

If you have yet to bob your head to Ellie Goulding's "I Need Your Love," then it might be time to head on over to a dance floor because this star seems to be on just about every DJ's playlist. She's collaborated with Skrillex, been remixed by Tiësto, and has topped charts in the UK and the US – no small feats for a singer from a small town (she hails from Lyonshall, which has a population of just 750). Before she heads to Beijing, we found out what rework is Goulding's favorite and what song would make her grab the mic in KTV.

**Your songs get remixed by DJs a lot. Do you have a favorite?**

I will forever love the Monsieur Adi remix of "Guns and Horses."

**You've done a handful of hit covers. Are there any other covers you're itching to do?**

Kwabs' "Wrong or Right" would be on top of my list without a doubt. I love that song.

**How did it feel covering a song as venerable as "Your Song" by Elton John?**

It's such a sensitive and amazing song, so it was very exciting from the start to work on the cover. It was a true honor, and I am so happy with all the good comments and feedback.

**Did you get to write the music for the movie *Divergent*?**

I provided vocals for a lot of the score of the film. Four

of my tracks also ended up on the film's soundtrack, including "Beating Heart." I was really impressed and, of course, happy with this – I was definitely not expecting this to happen.

**Do you plan to work on other movie soundtracks?**

It's something I would like to explore further. Every movie project is such a large undertaking with such a clear end result. Being part of that by creating the soundtrack is personally very satisfying.

**We hear you like to run with your fans. Would you go as far as to run up the Great Wall?**

Yes, definitely! I always keep active. Healthy body, healthy mind. I was just talking to my band and everyone is so excited about the upcoming Asia trip. We will most definitely find the time to visit the Wall, either before or after the show, but probably just as tourists.

**Are you thinking about getting any new tattoos? If you could get a Chinese tattoo, what would it say?**

I think ancient Chinese art is incredibly beautiful, but I've been so busy touring this last year that I haven't had time to think about any new tattoo ideas.

**What's your ultimate karaoke song?**

Anything by Whitney Houston!

*See Ellie Goulding show off her vocals at the Beijing Exhibition Theater on Aug 14.*



# ALEC ASH

EDITOR, THE ANTHILL

**The book that has the greatest sentimental value to me** is a ridiculously travel-worn volume of Keats I've had since I was 16, complete with adolescent scribbles in the margins that no one else will ever see if I can help it.

**I pretend that I have read** *Journey to the West*, even though I haven't really. It's on my shelf in six volumes to impress people, and that makes me a horrible person. I've watched the TV show though.

**My bathroom reading** is a book by Evelyn Chao, which is a brilliant collection of colorful Chinese words. It has been next to my loo since I got it in 2009, and is now so well-thumbed, water-splashed and generally crusty that it looks about as scatological as it reads.

**My favorite book from childhood** is *The Earthsea Trilogy* by Ursula le Guin. I can't wait for someone to give this a proper film treatment. Hayao Miyazaki's son Goro did a film loosely based on the trilogy once, but it was just wide of the mark.

**The book I'm saving for old age** is *Journey to the West*. I'd love to read it, but I just don't think it's going to happen.

**The last book I read** was *Mr. Ma and Son* by Lao She, which is set in 1920s London and is a gripping read.

**The last book I bought** was *Apologies Forthcoming* by Xujun Eberlein, who is a writer I really rate. She was born in Chongqing, now lives near Boston, and just won the non-fiction contest in *The American Literary Review*.

**I've never judged a book by its cover**, but I judge people by their appearance all the time.

**The book I've brought with me on my latest travels** is an anthology of travel writing snippets and other miscellanea, called *The Tao of Travel*, edited by Paul Theroux, which is perfect for dipping into on long distance buses or short hop flights.

**My favorite line or quote from a book** is "I cannot remember the books I've read any more than the meals I

have eaten; even so, they have made me," by Ralph Waldo Emerson, a good quote about reading.

**The character from a book I'd like to meet** is the genie in *A Thousand and One Nights*. There's something I want to ask him.

**A book that had a profound effect on my life** is *Travels with Charley* by John Steinbeck. It was a chance find as a teenager, and the first book that got me hooked on how good writing can make a reader see through your eyes, plus Steinbeck's wanderlust is infectious. In one way or another I've been going down that rabbit hole ever since.

*Sample Alec's curating skills at work at [theanthill.com](http://theanthill.com).*





**DIANA HU**

YOGA/DANCE INSTRUCTOR

## Which uniform was the most flattering?

I have to say my yoga teaching “uniform.” I have lots of Lycra pants and tops in colorful solids and prints that I like to mix and match. I like to pair them with accessories like scarves and jewelry before and after the studio. It is one of the few jobs you can get away with wearing a tighter fit. Some teachers prefer looser clothes, but personally I like wearing clothes that feel like a second skin to demonstrate proper alignment and body mechanics like breathing. I try to keep things tasteful though. The last thing you want is to be distracting while teaching a yoga class.

## Which uniform was the worst fit?

Definitely my elementary and middle school uniform. An oversized white shirt with checkered tie. Matching long checkered skirt. Knee-high socks. And to top things off: black and white leather shoes! We were the only school in Hong Kong with these dual-colored shoes and were made fun of incessantly. When the nuns weren't looking we would roll up our skirts, otherwise, they reached our knees where our socks started!

## Did you ever feel transformed by wearing any uniform?

I wouldn't call this a uniform, but one year for Halloween,

I dressed up as a Wondergirl (a Korean girl band that sang the hit song “Nobody, Nobody But You”). The music video showcases the girls singing and dancing in a Motown-style concert, and so I wore a short satin dress with long satin gloves, had big, side-swept hair, cat eyes, and of course, sky-high heels. I felt like a glamorous star!

## Did you ruin any uniforms?

Even though I went to an all-girl Catholic school, I hung out with some pretty rough and tumble girls, so when the teachers and nuns weren't around, we would wrestle and rip some clothes here and there. One time a teacher caught us and thankfully they had eliminated ruler slapping by then, but we had to stand shamefully in front of our entire school.

## Which uniform would be considered the least fashionable?

My costume for Beijing Playhouse's rendition of Oklahoma. A flowery prairie dress, down to our ankles with poufy sleeves. Complete with a straw hat!

*Put your Lycra pants on and join Diana for one of her classes at YogaYard.*



What are you planning to do?

# EVENTS

OUR EDITORS PICK THE BEST OF THE MONTH

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

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



## MOCHIPET

**AUG 22** – Street Kids and Antidote present the mighty Mochipet for a special Beijing-only gig. His sound is a blend of glitch hop, breakcore and various other sub-genres sent through a meat grinder of excellence. RMB 50. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

## EVENTS



### 1. THE BEATMAKERS PRODUCTION GATHERING

**AUG 2** – Come meet local music producers and recording artists, and learn about the contemporary processes of music making. With some of the hottest producers Beijing has to offer, you can expect a day filled with chilled out tutorials, and nerding out over the best compressor plug-ins. Free. 4pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

### 2. THE GERMEIN SISTERS

**AUG 7** – Australian siblings the Germein Sisters are a refreshingly honest young female band, whose unique brand of pop/folk rock has lead them to a breadth of experiences and credits that defy their years. RMB 50, RMB 40 (advance). 9pm. Jianghu Jiuba (6401 5269)

### 3. PENG LABEL EIGHT YEAR ANNIVERSARY

**AUG 8** – Electronic music label Peng was founded in 2006 by Pancake Lee and a bunch of his friends driven by their passion for electronic music of all shapes and sizes. It has been eight years, and it's time to celebrate. RMB 50. 10pm. The Bar at Migas. (5208 6061)

### 4. KOOKY SOUNDSYSTEM

**AUG 9** – For those of you aware that Divine made some of the hottest disco tracks of the '80s, experience a night of humor-laden tunes from some of Beijing's deepest music nerds, featuring DJs Boflex, ClubGawd, Justynn, Count of Monte Disco. Free. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

### 5. NAKOMA

**AUG 9** – A resurrected Nakoma with a new lineup, new music and new direction. This three-piece math rock band has been geometrically popping up their intense sounds around Beijing and now bring their stimulating live experience to School bar. RMB 40. 9pm. School Bar (6402 8881)





## DON'T MISS

### ROMANTIC QIXI EVENTS

#### "BE MY VALENTINE" STAYCATION

**AUG 2** – Want a romantic getaway but don't have time to leave the city? Head over to Xicheng, where the DoubleTree is offering a staycation package including a five-course Chinese meal and breakfast for two. RMB 1,088 per couple. DoubleTree by Hilton (6338 1999)

#### CHINESE VALENTINE'S DAY CELEBRATION

**AUG 2** – Indulge in an international dinner buffet featuring seafood and salads from Greece, Thailand and Germany. Finish up with a selection of romantic, pink-themed desserts. RMB 498 (plus service charge) per person. 5.30pm. Greenfish Restaurant (6629 6990)

#### CHINESE VALENTINE'S DAY AT MUTIANYU

**AUG 2** – The Brickyard's great value Qixi package includes private transfers to and from Beijing, a stay in a superior Great Wall view queen room, a bottle of Prosecco, breakfast for two, and two 60-minute Chinese massages. RMB 2,488 per couple. Brickyard Eco-Retreat (6162 6506)

#### DOUBLE 7 VALENTINE'S DAY

**AUG 2** – Celebrate Qixi Spanish-style at Agua. Daytime diners can choose the infinity brunch, while evening visitors have the option of a special set menu for couples. Both will be showered with special Chinese Valentine's Day gifts. RMB 980 per couple. 6pm. Agua (5208 6188)

#### ITALIAN ROMANCE

**AUG 2** – Set the mood for romance with a special five-course menu of classic Italian dishes created by Barolo's Chef de Cuisine Eugenio, complemented by a welcome drink of rosé Champagne. Add an optional wine pairing for RMB 398 per person. RMB 2,288 per couple. 6pm. Barolo (5908 8151)

#### L'AMOUR FRANÇAIS

**AUG 2** – The French know how to do romance, so what better way to say "je t'aime" than with a cozy French meal. If you'd rather toast the occasion with a drink, the bar will have a menu of champagne cocktails for RMB 50 all night. RMB 388 per couple. 6pm. Cafe de la Poste (6402 7047)

#### INSPIRED BY GREAT LOVE AT MODO

**AUG 2** – Based on Modo Urban Deli's motto "Inspired by Great Produce," on Qixi the menu is "Inspired by Great Love." Sample a four-course menu of dishes such as beef tenderloin and Nutella crème brûlée. RMB 198 per person. All Day. Modo Urban Deli (6415 7207)

#### PINK SPARKLING AND BUBBLY AFTERNOONS

**AUG 2** – They say champagne is an aphrodisiac. Get in the mood at Fez Bar, where Sundays equal buy-one-get-one-free bottles of Pierre Chainier pink sparkling or Parxet Cuvée 21 Cava. RMB 398. 3pm-6pm. Fez Bar (5208 6188)

#### A FINE ROMANCE

**AUG 2** – The fastest way to a person's heart is through their stomach. Treat that special someone to a Cantonese feast at Huang Ting, featuring romance-inducing dishes such as chicken with goji berries. RMB 598 per couple. 6pm. Huang Ting (6510 6707)

SALE



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### 1. BILINGUAL IMPROV GROUP'S (BIG) MONTHLY SHOW

**AUG 9** – If the summer heat is getting you down, find your chuckles with the Bilingual Improv Group. Every month this hilarious collective dishes out impromptu laughter at Penghao Theater. RMB 40. 8pm. Penghao Theater (6400 6452)

### 2. SUMMER ORGANIC BBQ FEAST

**AUG 9** – Escape from the urban jungle at Moon River Farm for a full day of organic barbecue, beer, music and fun. Barbecue food offerings include a whole Pacific-style roast pig, roast lamb by Cu Ju and grilled fish by Sue Zhou. Jing A will be premiering an Orchard Peach Ale brewed specially for the occasion. RMB 330, RMB 280 (advance). 2-9.30pm. Moon River Farm (138 1169 1305)

### 3. STREET TRASH

**AUG 15** – DJ Compact Dicks and Cousin Kippy scavenge their digital libraries for the best of '80s camp, post-punk nihilism, and B-side stadium rock anthems impossible not to cream your jeans over. For one night only, taste trumps talent. Free. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)



3



**1. DADA BEIJING TWO YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

**AUG 16** – Party with Dada, as they celebrate two years of corrupting Beijing's youth. You can expect plenty of excellent DJs and free drinks for the freakishly dressed. DJs Ralph Zuckermann, Compact Dicks and more are sure to keep the party going till your head explodes. Free. 10 pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

**2. HOUSING THE BAR WITH BEN HUANG**

**AUG 16** – This edition of Housing brings the legendary Ben Huang groove to the DJ decks. So throw on those dancing

shoes and get ready to move your body to some infectious house tunes. RMB 50. 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)

**3. THE SANCTUARY SUMMER COURTYARD PARTY & BARBECUE**

**AUG 16** – The Other Place will exhibit some of the best Beijing-based DJs spinning outdoors in this super chilled Gulou hangout, featuring music from BB Deng, Charm, Juhstynn, Ralph Zuckermann, and Zhi Qi. Also, pick up some new used threads at the THRIFT pop up shop. Free. 3pm. The Other Place (6401 3269)





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### 1. THE YEAR MY HAIR FELL OUT – BOOK LAUNCH WITH BOB BLUNT

**AUG 14** – Bob Blunt will hold a launch for the release of his new book *The Year My Hair Fell Out*. The story is a humorous peek into the moral fabric of an unfamiliar culture that's dealing with Confucian traditions and a newfound modernity. RMB 50. 7.30pm. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

### 3. THE MOLDS, BEDSTARS, BAD BOOGIE, BLUES NATION REVIVAL

**AUG 23** – A full night of dangerously raw rock 'n' roll. If you haven't experienced the gutter oil raunch of these bands yet, and you call yourself a punk, you are sadly kidding yourself. RMB 50. 9pm. School Bar (6402 8881)

### 2. SYNDICATE SESSIONS

**AUG 23** – In August Syndicate head honcho DJ Blackie will step up to the decks for a full on two-hour birthday bass blast. Expect only the best in tech from these drum and bass heads. RMB 30. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

### 4. LOS RESIDENTES FEATURING BETOKO & CHUS

**AUG 23** – Four years ago Betoko came to Beijing to open the Migas terrace with a bang. Now, with much more recognition and a number of hits under his belt, he returns bringing the added fire-power of Barcelona legend Chus with him to ensure the dance floor will get wild. RMB 50. 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)



### 1. "THE PYONGYANG STARS" VOL. 1 FEATURING WHITE+, DA BING, LATE TROUBLES

**AUG 23** – This aptly named series brings you some of the latest in cold psychedelic sounds from Beijing. It's mind over matter in this evening of fringe music with noises that will keep you engaged and slightly disturbed. RMB 50. 9pm. School Bar (6402 8881)

### 2. SANLITUN VICE

**AUG 29** – Each summer a small group of dedicated enforcers gathers to purge Sanlitun of cheesy pop decadence one record at a time. Douse yourself in the raunchiest of colognes,

throw on some boogaloo shoes, shine up your best gold chain, oil up and brace yourself for Vice. RMB 50 (those dressed in 1980s Miami style get a free drink). 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)

### 3. SCRATCHING BEIJING

**AUG 30** – Scratching Beijing is a series of short plays performed during one showcase, encouraging artists to try something out, experiment with the new, old or something bold. This multimedia performance will be followed by a Q&A session with all the creatives involved. RMB 50. 7.30pm. The Bookworm (6586 9507)61



# HOW TO KEEP SUBWAY PRICES AT TWO YUAN



by George Ding

When I first heard that Beijing was raising its subway fares, I spat out whatever liquid I was drinking at the time. What a preposterous idea! Such a drastic change makes no practical sense other than repricing a service closer to its real-world value.

In fact, these changes benefit no one except the municipal government – whom I don't care about – and the buskers and beggars riding the subway in circles, who have it far too easy already. It seems unfair to punish us hardworking, everyday types just so the government can stop losing billions of yuan on subsidized public transportation.

So as a socially conscious Beijinger, I have come up with several ways the government can earn more money from operating the subway without raising ticket prices.

## 1. More advertisements

Sure, there are a lot of ads on subway cars already – on the walls, on the doors, on the windows, above the windows, outside the windows, on the handholds and sometimes on the subway car itself. But if you look closely, there are plenty of surfaces that are ad-free: seats, seat backs, the poles and the entire carriage floor and ceiling.

This is precious space that could be advertising the latest soft drink or car rental service.

And what about those ads that streak by between some stations? Those should be installed across the entire network. Whenever the train is moving, both windows should be blasting ads at passengers.

## 2. Let companies sponsor stations

Just as companies buy naming rights to American sports stadiums, Beijing Subway should do the same with station names. "The next station is Mengniu National Library." "We are arriving at Tsingtao Yonghegong Lama Temple."

## 3. Charge for sitting down

We all know that the most coveted spot in a subway car is the seat, so why not charge for it? Like a coin-operated

bed, each seat should have a cash deposit slot next to it. When the user inserts five kuai, the seat flips open for, say, ten minutes. When time is up, the seat slowly folds back up. Multiply this by Beijing's entire subway fleet and BAM! Deficit eliminated.

## 4. First- and Business-class carriages

China already has premium cabins on high-speed trains; subways are the next logical step.

The first- and business-class cars would be equipped with Wi-Fi, reclining pleather seats and include meal service if your trip is expected to take over an hour. Transferring is a cinch as attendants will place you in a wheelchair and roll you to your next train.

## 5. Rent station real estate to peddlers

Subways have some of the most valuable real estate in Beijing and peddlers of all kinds know it.

Whether they're selling mystery-meat-on-a-stick outside Dongzhimen or iPhone cases in Guomao, these vendors are stooping on public land for free! If the city charged peddlers what my landlord charges me, it would have a sovereign wealth fund by now.

Also, the government would save money because they wouldn't have to pay chengguan to beat peddlers up every couple of weeks or so.

## 6. Put the subway behind some kind of paywall

I don't really know this works but The New York Times swears by it. Each person gets ten free rides per month, then you nag them to buy a subscription. So long as they don't clear their cookies, you're golden.

## 7. Get rid of security check and security check personnel

Let's face it, the security check is a waste of time and paying all those people to run it is a waste of money. If you knew how many times I've smuggled jugs of gasoline on the train without incident, you'd agree.



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