

Shanghai - Where the Ancient Meets the New



Shanghai is one of the most remarkable cities in Asia. It is the largest city in China and never ceases to surprise the visitor. There are ancient temples, long charming streets, and museums full of treasures. Put simply, for those who want to learn about China, its rich history, philosophy and art, Shanghai is the right place to be.

There are several ways to explore Shanghai. Tour buses offer uniquely designed sightseeing tours, yet when taking a bus, tourists need to understand that they are no longer 'in charge'. Walking is another great opportunity, although it may be quite tiring, as Shanghai is a huge city.

Local temples are simply unforgettable. They rightly deserve to be included among the first stops of any tour around Shanghai. The most spectacular one is the Jade Buddha Monastery in western Shanghai where two very valuable jade Buddha statues are located. It is still inhabited by monks. There is a large complex of buildings and halls. In the Tianwang Dian Hall there are statues of the four celestial kings. The Treasure Hall of the Great Hero contains three large gilded Buddha statues - representing the past, present and the future. Also, a collection of valuable Buddhist writing is kept in this monastery.

Another must-see place is the Yuyuan Garden. With its breathtaking design and moving history the garden is a haven of peace and quiet - and all this still not far from the old town. Near the garden, there is another temple worth visiting: the City God Temple. It used to be dedicated to one of the local deities, however nowadays it serves as a storage for crafts and arts.

Museum lovers shouldn't miss a tour around the Shanghai Museum. It is divided into eleven galleries and three exhibition halls, and one needs several days to appreciate its riches.

The favorite place for tourists to gather is the Bund, a 1.5 km long elegant boulevard with a wonderful view of the river. One of the other famous Shanghai streets is the Nanjing Road, which has the reputation of "China's No.1 Street" for its modern commercial character.

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