



CUT-OUT-AND-GO GUIDE | HIGH-SPEED SHANGHAI



instant escapes

High-speed Shanghai

Whizz through China's dynamic metropolis at a fittingly thrilling pace

Nothing stays still for long in China's sexiest city — be it the ever-taller thrusting architecture, the sizzling fast food, the buzzing fashion scene or the 'grape leap forward' in revolutionary local wine. Chances are, you'll only have a day or so here on your bucket-list grand tour, so here's how to get a heady inhalation of the place, lightning fast! **By Lee Cobaj**



SEE & DO

● Shooting up faster than bamboo, the skyscrapers sizzle. Take the new serpentine Shanghai Tower (Lujiazui, Pudong; £21; ① on map). Face against the glass on its 118th-floor observation deck, you'll look down on the 101-storey Shanghai World Financial Centre (it's the one that looks like a bottle opener); the snaking Huangpu river; and the **historic Bund, Shanghai's famed sweep of riverside Art Deco and Neo-Classical buildings**, as dinky as Toytown from up here.

● The architecture is a mad, mad whirl — witness the new Shanghai Natural History Museum (snhm.org.cn; £3.50; ②), shaped like a giant nautilus shell. Marvel at huge English-language video-screen walls, innovative interactive displays and **fantastic replicas, such as a house-sized glyptodon dinosaur**. Mountains of dino bones discovered in China include the ankylosaurus, a four-tonne beast from the Cretaceous period, with armoured skin and a scary-looking club for a tail.

● Drinking's a mad, mad swirl... From Ningxa Riesling to biodynamic Cabernet Gernischt from Inner Mongolia, **China is revolutionising its wine industry**. Find out on Untour's night-market and wine-pairing tour, sampling porky dumplings with Sino vino in the streets around People's Square (untourfoodtours.com; £72pp).

● Hurry before it changes. Plans are afoot to turn Zhang Garden ③ into an

DRINK WITH A VIEW

For dramatic, looming views of the Shanghai Tower and its mega-tall neighbours, head up to Flair Bar on the 58th storey of the adjacent Ritz-Carlton hotel (cocktails £14 — but worth it!)

RAINY-DAY TOP TIP

Shanghai is packed with lots of brilliant museums. Try the Power Station of Art (powerstationofart.com; free), the Jewish Refugee Museum (shanghaijews.org.cn; £6), or the somewhat gruesome Museum of Public Security (2-4/F, 518 Ruijin South Rd; free)

Spaghetti junction: intersection in Downtown Shanghai; below, People's Square, Renmin; the A-list Bar Rouge

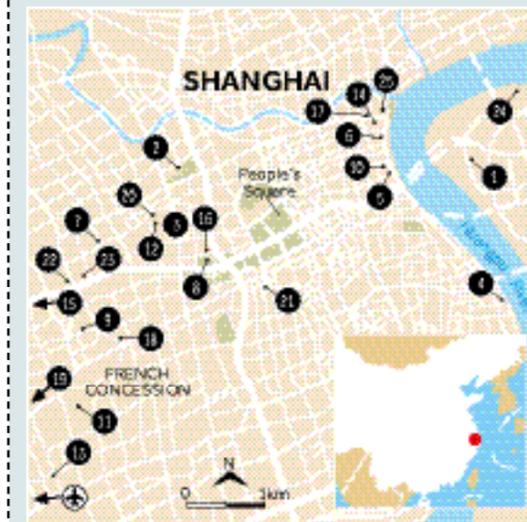
entertainment complex, but **for now it feels like a time capsule**. Built in the 1870s, its old red-brick villas (all Juliet balconies, mahogany staircases and checkerboard floors) sit beside former dance parlours, Chinese opera houses and theatres. It doesn't cost a bean to amble around the courtyards and alleys: look for the Taixing Lu entrance.

● Get your fashion fix in the former French Concession, with its sycamore-lined boulevards, Art Deco facades and lanes of laundry. **Bijou boutiques and courtyard cafes are revealed**, among Art Deco gems and Russian mansions, on a guided walk in search of well-hidden city secrets, with Bespoke Shanghai (bespoketravelcompany.com; £165 for two people).

● Time tight? Here's your fast track to the slickest bars along the Bund: start with sundowners at the rooftop Waterhouse (waterhouseshanghai.com; cocktails about £11; ④). Moving on, **shimmy behind the crystal curtain and onto the terrace at Glam bar**, housed at No. 5 The Bund, in a Neo-Classical former bank (m-onthebund.com; £11; ⑤). A few blocks on is Bar Rouge, where Quentin Tarantino, Scarlett Johansson and Tom Cruise have danced outdoors under billowing Communist flags (bar-rouge-shanghai.com; £12; ⑥).

● Need a break? Pick up a picnic of freshly baked *galettes* and chocolate strawberry tarts from Baker and Spice (bakerandspice.com.cn; sandwiches about £6; ⑦) to take to nearby Fuxing Park ⑧, in the French Concession. Here **pension-age lovers bring their stereos and speakers to dance** under the branches of weeping willow trees.

● There's just time to shop before you hop — so **seek out the city's best indie designers**. Eye-catching housecoats, coasters and cushion covers come in classic blue-and-white print fabrics at the Blue Nankeen Museum shop (637 Changle Rd; items from £7; ⑨). At Annabel Lee (annabel-lee.com; ⑩) you'll find silk purses from £10, traditional high-collared pyjamas for £50 and jade-studded jewellery at £300. Or stop at Culture Matters (15 Dongping Rd; from £9; ⑪) to buy some Feiyue Kung fu trainers. >



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EAT

● Superseafood

LITTLE CATCH POKE CAFE

(Dishes about £6)

Because: It's the place for the latest global food trend from Hawaii — poke (pronounced pok-ay), fresh raw seafood with fish seasoning, seaweed, cashews and scallions. **Travel's tip:** Personalise your own dish — throw in an avocado for just £1 more. 2B, 89 Taixing Lu; 00 86 216272 5788, littlecatchshanghai.com; @.

● Divine dumplings

NANJING TANG BAO'S SOUP

DUMPLINGS (Basket of steamed dumplings £8)

Because: This hole in the wall, serving up the city's best soup dumplings, has been sizzling for decades — and a basket of eight costs just £8. **Travel's tip:** Ask for a zingy side dip of ginger vinegar. 641 Jianguo West Rd; @.

● French fare

LE BORDELAIS (Mains about £10)

Because: This courtyard restaurant, with its baguettes, cheeseboards and extensive wine selection, feels as if it could be in Paris. **Travel's tip:** Pick up a decent Cabernet here to enjoy in your room later (from £16). Yifeng Galleria, 99 Beijing East Rd; 00 86 216333 9156, le-bordelais.com; @.

● Bund-view brunch

M ON THE BUND (Two-course brunch and a cocktail £31)

Because: Bubbly Mimosas, creamy eggs Benedict, and a showstopping waterfront view — M on the Bund delivers the goods with its Sunday brunch. **Travel's tip:** Book a spot on the terrace for a full-frontal of the Lujiazui skyline. 5 The Bund; 00 86 216350 9988, m-restaurantgroup.com; @.

● Green gourmet

FU HE HUI (Eight-course tasting menus from £44)

Because: Chef Tony Lu has reinvented Chinese vegetarian food — and this place just picked up a Michelin star for his efforts. Expect unforgettable dishes such as flowerpots filled with crisp spinach and edible flowers, and smoking jars of exotic mushrooms. **Travel's tip:** Vegans can be catered for. 1037 Yuyuan Rd; 00 86 213980 9188, email: fuhehui1037@163.com; @.

HEADING OUT? English isn't widely spoken in China, so make sure your next destination is written down in Chinese before you set off. Most hotels will also provide address cards so you can find your way home again.

FIND A WAY Due to internet censorship in China, few bars and restaurants are listed on the World Wide Web; download WeChat, China's social media and search app for addresses.

WEATHER: WHEN TO GO Shanghai's smog can make for dull views. For the best chance of clear skies, visit in October — avoiding the first week when the national Golden Week holidays fall.

BARS

● Beer buddy

THE HOP PROJECT

Because: Sample the latest craft beer blends, including Worker's Pale Ale and Flying Fist at this new ale house. **Travel's tip:** The Project's gooey grilled cheese sandwich (£6) is the perfect accompaniment to your brew. 372 Dagu Rd; camelhospitality.com; @.

● Fashionista's fuel

THE NEST

Because: Well-heeled locals and in-the-know visitors vie to see and be seen at this shimmering bar, lounge and restaurant in the cool Rock Bund neighbourhood. **Travel's tip:** On Sunday and Monday evenings, you can get a dozen half-price Fine de Claire oysters for £11. 130 Beijing East Rd; @.

● After-dark debauchery

LEBARON

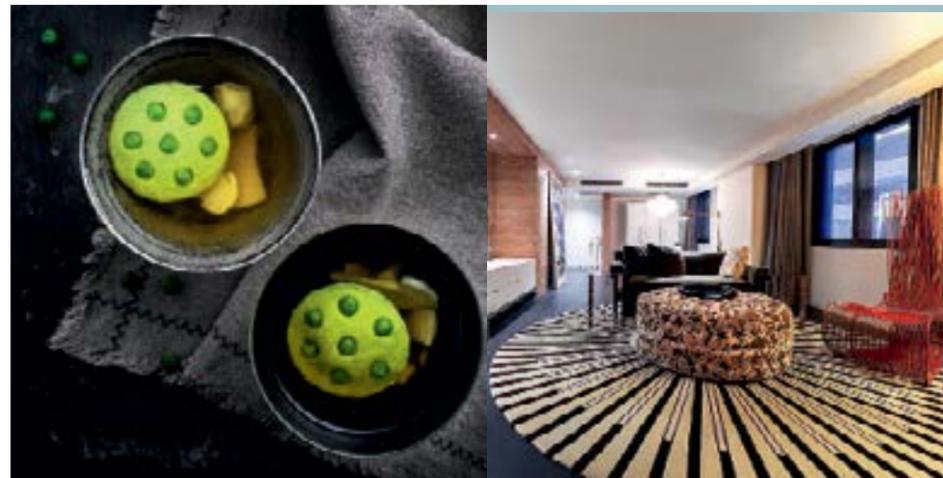
Because: If you love Old-School disco, rooftop gardens and karaoke suites with bathtubs and double beds, then Le Baron is for you. **Travel's tip:** Look conspicuously cool if you want to get in. Go glam or go home. 7F, 20 Donghu Rd; lebaronshanghai.com; @.



ASK THE LOCAL

Shanghai-born Yvonne Li is a financial analyst with a love of online shopping

I can't imagine having no wi-fi. In Shanghai, every mall, restaurant, cafe and even the Metro system has complimentary hot spots. The Metro is the best way to get around. It's really cheap — a one-day travel pass costs just £2 — and is much faster than taxis, thanks to Shanghai's terrible traffic. On my days off, I like to walk past the 19th-century European villas around Wukang Road in the French Concession — one of the city's most peaceful and beautiful districts. Or I take the 50-minute, high-speed Maglev train to Hangzhou to admire the beautiful lake scenery that has been inspiring poets and artists for thousands of years.



STAY

● Bargain beauty

CACHET (Doubles from £114, B&B)

Because: It's a push to find a room for less than £150 in Shanghai, but these '20s designer digs deliver with a central location, helpful staff and stylish rooms. **Travel's tip:** Cachet doesn't have a restaurant, but Wujiang Road, round the corner, is stuffed with street food. 931 Nanjing West Rd, Jing An; 00 86 21 6217 9000, cachethotels.com; @.

● Edgy hideaway

LANGHAM XINTIANDI (Doubles from £180, room only)

Because: This hotel buzzes with the city's creatives, who come to lunch at the T'ang Court. **Travel's tip:** Ease jet leg with an acupressure massage at its Chuan Spa. 99 Madang Rd, Xintiandi; 00 86 21 2330 2288, langhamhotels.com; @.

● Boutique babe

THE PULI (Doubles from £185, room only)

Because: The only thing missing from the glam black-and-glass lobby is a

panther wearing a diamond collar. The bamboo-lined terrace, serene pool and Zen rooms almost make you forget you're in the heart of the city. **Travel's tip:** Nip next door to Jing An Park at about 7am to see the city's elderly residents practising tai chi by the goldfish pond — they're happy for you to join in. 1 ChangDe Rd, Jing An; 00 86 213203 9999, thepuli.com; @.

● Family-friendly thrills

JING AN SHANGRI-LA (Doubles from £195, room only)

Because: All its plush rooms, between the 30th and 59th floors, have stunning city views and are big enough for roll-out beds. The hotel has a huge pool, a top-notch spa and enough restaurants to satisfy the fussiest of eaters — and deals with Shanghai Disneyland. **Travel's tip:** The food here is excellent, but expensive. Nip across the road to the Kerry Centre for cheap and cheerful dumplings, noodles, sushi and healthy salads. 1218 Yan'an Zhong Rd, Jing An; 00 86 212203 8888, shangri-la.com; @.



Gogreen: clockwise from top left, vegetarian cuisine at Fu He Hui; slip back to the '20s at Cachet; blow the budget at the Peninsula; forget you're in the heart of the city at the Puli; the Mandarin Oriental in the business district

START THE DAY Take an early-morning walk to nearby Huangpu Park to see pensioners practising tai chi — feel free to join in.

● Contemporary Shanghai chic

MANDARIN ORIENTAL (Doubles from £196, room only)

Because: This is one of those times when staying at a business hotel pays off. Rooms are luxurious, facilities abound, dining is world-class — so what if you have to spend an extra 15 minutes getting into town? **Travel's tip:** Don't bother with the £70-a-day lounge access unless you plan to stay in and fill up on food and unlimited booze. 111 Pudong Rd, Pudong; 00 86 212082 9888, mandarinoriental.com; @.

● Blow-out pad

THE PENINSULA (Doubles from £326, room only)

Because: String quartets, afternoon teas and elegant rooms will make you feel like you've been transported to the Golden Age of Travel. **Travel's tip:** Do it in style, and upgrade to a river-view suite for mesmerising vistas of the historic Bund, space-age Pudong skyline and Huangpu river (from £897, room only). 32 The Bund; 00 86 212327 2888, shanghai.peninsula.com; @.

GET ME THERE

GO INDEPENDENT

Virgin Atlantic (virgin-atlantic.com), BA (ba.com) and Air China (airchina.co.uk) operate direct return flights from Heathrow to Shanghai from £476. The 230kph Maglev train from Shanghai Pudong airport to Downtown Puxi takes eight minutes and costs £9 return.

GO PACKAGED

Abercrombie & Kent (01242 547914, abercrombiekent.co.uk) has five nights at the Mandarin Oriental from £1,995pp, room only, including flights. Travelbag (08714021633, travelbag.co.uk) has a five-night package from £712pp, room only, including direct Heathrow flights and four-star accommodation. Or try Audley Travel (01993 838000, audleytravel.com).

FURTHER INFORMATION

British citizens require a visa for all visits (£85 plus £66 application fee; visaforchina.org), unless they are transiting, in which case they are entitled to a visa-free stay of up to 72 hours. ■