



Shanghai City guide

2016-2017

Shanghai, China

by U-Learn

Shanghai, located in East China, sits on the south edge of the mouth of the Yangtze River in the middle portion of the Chinese coastline. It is a major administrative, shipping and trading city, described as the "showpiece" of the booming economy of mainland China, renowned for its Lujiazui skyline of skyscrapers (above), museums, and historic buildings, such as those along the Bund, the Yu Garden, and City God Temple.

Size and population

With a population of more than 24 million people, Shanghai is the second most populated Chinese city, but without counting the surrounding areas, Shanghai is classed as the most populous city in the world. Shanghai's location on an alluvial plain means that the vast majority of its 6,340km² (2,448 square miles) land area is flat, with an average elevation of 4m (13ft). The city has many rivers, streams, canals and lakes, and is known for its rich water resources.

Climate

Shanghai has a humid, subtropical climate and experiences four distinct seasons. Winters are chilly and damp, with northwesterly winds from Siberia causing

nighttime temperatures to drop below freezing, although most years there are only one or two days of snowfall. Summers are hot and humid, with an average of 8.7 days exceeding 35 °C (95 °F) annually; occasional downpours or freak thunderstorms can be expected. The city is also susceptible to typhoons in summer and the beginning of autumn, none of which in recent years has caused considerable damage. The most pleasant seasons are spring, although changeable and often rainy, and autumn, which is generally sunny and dry. The city averages 4.2 °C (39.6 °F) in January and 27.9 °C (82.2 °F) in July.

Things to Do

Shanghai is much more than the iconic view of Lujiazui and the Bund. In addition to its modernization, the city's multicultural flair endows it with a unique glamour, and this makes Shanghai unique in China as the country's most progressive and cosmopolitan city. Here, one finds the perfect blend of cultures, the modern and the traditional, and the western and the oriental. Western customs and Chinese traditions are intertwined, forming the city's culture, making a visitor's stay wonderfully memorable.



Yu Gardens and City God Temple

The Yu Garden is an extensive Chinese garden oasis located beside the City God Temple in the northeast of the Old City of Shanghai. Built more than 400 years ago during the Ming dynasty, the artistic style of the garden architecture make it one of the highlights of Shanghai. Around the garden, you will also find beautiful tea rooms and traditional shops, alleys of the Yuyuan Bazaar leading to hundreds of tourist and souvenir stores, also the iconic and serene City God Temple.



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Living costs

The cost of renting an apartment in Shanghai is comparable to most Chinese cities: at the upper end, a large apartment in a new apartment block, with two or three bedrooms, kitchen, living space and bathroom, can cost around ¥20,000 upwards. However, some great places can be found for very little, if you have time and energy to look for it – landlords often show you around the poor-quality locations first, hoping you will sign up for it. Be patient and keep looking! A regular one-bedroomed apartment with kitchen and bathroom would cost between ¥4,000-8,000, depending on location and age of the building. You could also consider sharing an apartment with other expat teachers/professionals, and a decent room in a clean, new apartment would cost around ¥2,500-4,000 per month, often including all bills.

When moving to China, be prepared to have to pay a deposit on your apartment (of around the value of 2 months' rent), plus your first month rent – this is standard, but can often be disconcerting or daunting for new arrivals. Also, expect to have to purchase additional items for your home, such as cooking utensils, bedding, which will add to your arrival costs.

Bills are not usually covered in with the cost of your apartment, unless it is a shared apartment with bills included. However, the cost of utilities is relatively low – water, or gas, are roughly ¥50 per quarter, and electricity is around ¥150 per month.

Travel and transport

Shanghai has two international airports – Pudong International Airport (PVG) and Hongqiao International Airport (SHA). Pudong Airport is around 18.5 miles (30km) to the east of the downtown area, while Hongqiao Airport is around 8 miles (13km) to the east of downtown. Between the two airports, there are flights available to almost everywhere in the world.

From Pudong International Airport, shuttle buses and taxis are available to the city centre – a taxi would cost around ¥180 (more at night), and would take around 45 minutes. However, the most convenient way to get to the city is by using the subway, although you must change to a longer subway train at Guanglan Road (costs ¥4-8). Alternatively, take the superfast Maglev (¥50 one-way) to Longyang Road and transfer to the subway there. (You should definitely take the

Maglev once, just for the experience of traveling at 270mph (410km/h)).

Cycling – If you're prepared to join the thousands of cyclists in Shanghai dodging traffic and avoiding pedestrians, cycling is a great way to get around because of the flat, even roads. Make sure you wear a helmet and keep your ears and eyes open for obstacles. On arriving in Shanghai, you will notice the thousands of orange and silver pay-per-use "Mobikes" available everywhere. These bikes cost only ¥1 for 30 minutes, and are a fantastic way of getting around. To use them, you should download the app to your phone and have a Chinese bank account registered to it. A ¥300 deposit is required, but after you have made it through all the red tape, you can check the map for nearby bikes, scan the QR code on the bike, and away you go!

Bus - Shanghai has a clean, efficient bus system and getting around is easy. Buses charge ¥2, but they are a little more difficult to use and less comfortable than taxis or the Metro. Most buses only have money slots in the front of the bus with no change given. Be prepared to stand and be cramped during your expedition. Some phone apps are available to help you navigate the bus system, for example "Shanghai Stops", but only if you know the bus number you will take already.

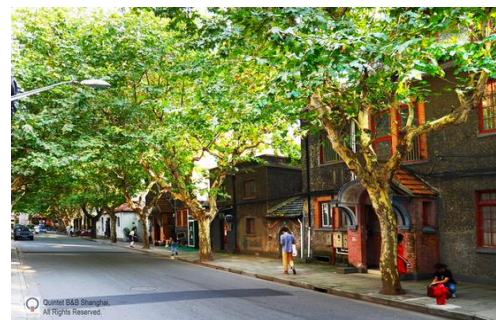
Metro - Operating from 5:30am to midnight daily, the Shanghai Metro is by far the easiest way of getting around the city. Navigating the subway is easy. Subway platform signs in Chinese and English indicate the station name and the name of the next station in each direction, and maps of the complete Metro system are posted in each station and inside the subway cars too. English announcements of upcoming stops are made on trains. Fares range from ¥3 for the first few stops to ¥10 for the most distant ones. Tickets can be purchased from the ticket vending machines (in English). If you are going to be riding the subway a fair amount, consider purchasing a rechargeable **Shanghai Public Transportation Card (Jiaotong Ka)**, which costs ¥20 - simply place your card on the sensor at the barriers. The card can be purchased at Metro stations throughout the city and can also be used to pay for bus, ferry, and taxi rides.

AROUND TOWN



Jing'an Temple

One of the most famous temples in Shanghai, located on West Nanjing Road, this Buddhist temple was first built in around 280AD but rebuilt in its current location in 1216. The temple houses the largest jade Buddha in the country, at 3.8m high.



The French Concession

Described as a "sliver of Europe in Shanghai", the French Concession is a large area of elegant, tree-lined streets in central Shanghai with quaint cafes, art galleries, and trendy boutique shops. The essence of this historical enclave is best explored on foot.



Nanjing Road

This shopping street runs from the Bund in the East, for 6km towards Hongqiao in the West. Once named as one of the world's seven "great roads", Nanjing road hosts high-end luxury and fashion shops, markets, souvenir shops, speciality shops, department stores and traditional eateries.