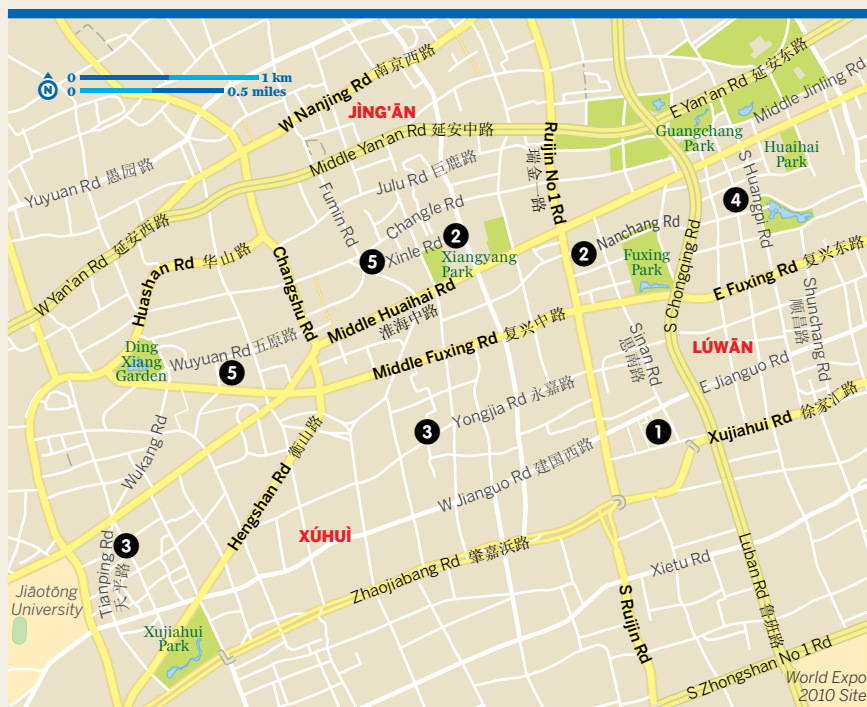


French Concession

FRENCH CONCESSION EAST | FRENCH CONCESSION WEST

Neighbourhood Top Five

- 1 Delve into the lived-in charm and trendy shops of **Tiánzifáng** (p90).
- 2 Go on a shopping spree in the city's best shopping strips along **Nanchang** or **Xinle Roads** (p117).
- 3 Savour home-style Shanghaiese cuisine at **Jesse** (p101) or **Diǎn Shì Zhāi Xiǎo Yàn** (p98).
- 4 Explore the interior of a stone-gate house at **Xīntiāndì** (p91).
- 5 Shake off the stress with massages at **Dragonfly** (p119), clubbing at **Shelter** (p110) or cocktails at **el Cóctel** (p109).



For more detail of this area, see Maps p290 & p286 →

Explore: French Concession

If you want to see the city's best profile, the French Concession (法租界) is Shànghǎi sunny side up, at its coolest, hippest and most elegant. Once home to the bulk of Shànghǎi's adventurers, revolutionaries, gangsters, prostitutes and writers – though ironically many of them weren't French – the former concession (also called Frenchtown) is the most graceful part of Pǔxī. Shànghǎi's erstwhile reputation as the 'Paris of the East' largely stems from this area's tree-lined avenues, 1920s mansions and French-influenced architecture.

While sights are few in number, the concession's leafy backstreets and distinct personality make exploration a delight. Most first-time visitors start off in Xintiāndi, which offers a quick introduction to the local *shíkùmén* (stone-gate house) architecture alongside delicious dining and shopping options. South from here is the former concession's other big draw: Tiánzifāng, a less-polished warren of lanes and artsy boutiques that can keep you wandering indefinitely.

The French Concession's real attraction, however, is not sightseeing. Like Shànghǎi itself, the area thrives on its endless quest for sophistication, and its tirelessly inventive restaurant and bar scene, coupled with pop-up boutiques and diverse entertainment options, means that you should come prepared to expand your tastes – just make sure you have cash to spend.

Local Life

- ➔ **Shopping** Follow the crowds to the nearest sale or boutique hop from one local designer to another.
- ➔ **Foot massages** Sink into an armchair (and maybe catch some Hong Kong action on the tube) while a masseuse kneads your tension away.
- ➔ **Snacks** Dumplings, noodles, haute cuisine, Sichuanese, Hunanese, stinky tofu and lychee ice cream – no matter the time of day or the location, you'll always find something to eat.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Metro** Two main lines serve the French Concession area, both running east–west past Xintiāndi: line 1 and line 10. Line 1 continues on to People's Square, while line 10 serves the Old Town and East Nanjing Rd (the Bund). The two lines meet at the South Shaanxi Rd metro stop. At the southern edge of the concession is line 9, which serves Tiánzifāng. The north–south line 7 provides a handy link between the French Concession and the Jìng'ān neighbourhood; it connects with line 1 at Changshu Rd and line 9 at Zhaojiabang Rd.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Although this guide uses the colonial-era term French Concession as a matter of convenience, the name will bring blank looks from many Shanghaiese. Locals refer to most of the eastern area as either Lúwān (卢湾) or Huángpǔ (黄浦), while the area west of South Shaanxi Rd is known as Xúhùi (徐汇), a district that extends southwest into Xújiāhú. If you're in Shànghǎi for more than a short visit, it's worth familiarising yourself with these official district names.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Spicy Joint (p100)
- ➔ Yín (p101)
- ➔ Jesse (p101)
- ➔ Dī Shuǐ Dòng (p97)
- ➔ T8 (p97)

For reviews, see p96 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ el Cóctel (p109)
- ➔ Cotton's (p109)
- ➔ Abbey Road (p110)
- ➔ Boxing Cat Brewery (p110)
- ➔ Dr Wine (p110)

For reviews, see p105 ➔

Best Shopping

- ➔ Tiánzifāng (p113)
- ➔ NuoMi (p116)
- ➔ Brocade Country (p117)
- ➔ Xintiāndi Style (p114)
- ➔ PCS (Pop Classic Sneakers) (p115)

For reviews, see p113 ➔