

Old Town

Neighbourhood Top Five

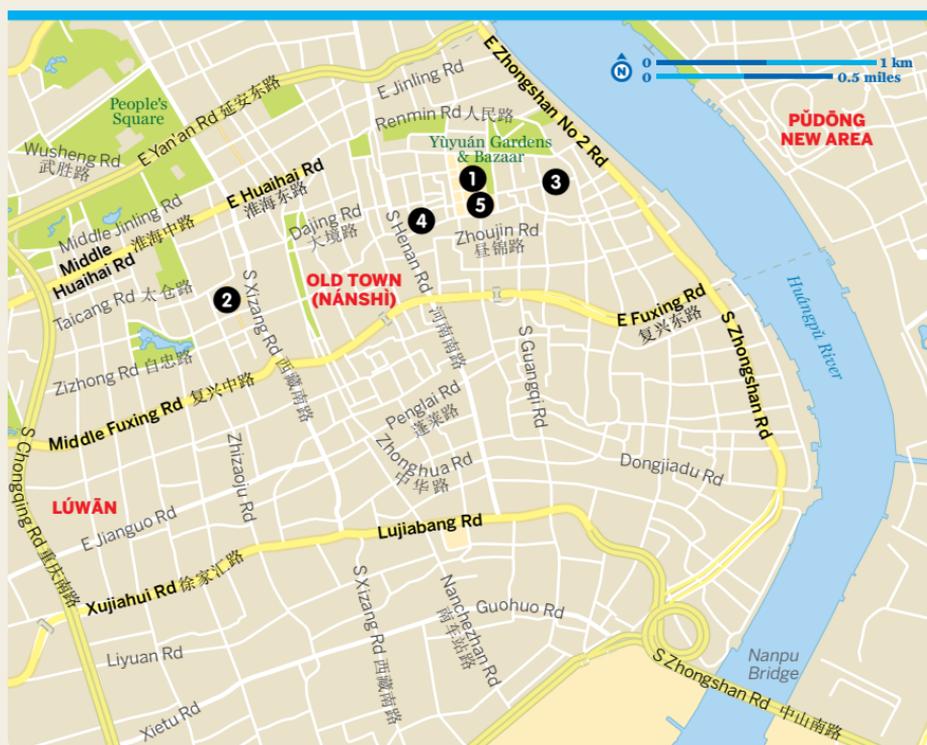
1 Zone out from Shànghǎi's concrete-and-glass jungle in the labyrinthine **Yùyuán Gardens & Bazaar** (p80), but avoid the weekend surge.

2 Sift through the clutter for gems at **Dongtai Road Antique Market** (p91).

3 Delve into traditional Old Town **backstreets** on a walking tour (p88).

4 Quaff a cup of Chinese tea in **Old Shanghai Tea-house** (p90).

5 Pay your respects to the diverse pantheon of divinities in the **Temple of the Town God** (p82).



For more detail of this area see Map p300 →

Explore: Old Town

Known to locals as Nánshì (南市; literally 'Southern City'), the Old Town is the most traditionally Chinese area of Shànghǎi, along with Qībǎo. For long a concoction of old-fashioned textures, tatty charm and musty temples, the neighbourhood's central positioning and lucrative real estate potential have been mined by developers, squeezing out the old for the new. For glimpses of old Shànghǎi (that of the Chinese, not the foreigners), however, explore the surviving Old Town backstreets with their narrow and crowded lanes, dark alleyways and overhanging laundry.

The oval layout of the Old Town follows the footprint of its old 5km-long city walls, flung up to defend against marauding Japanese pirates. The 16th-century city wall was eventually torn down in 1912, but its outline remains along Renmin and Zhonghua Rds.

Temple buffs will adore the area's modest Confucian, Taoist, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim shrines, but most visitors are here to capture the traditional Chinese charms of the Yùyuán Gardens. You can also down pots of Chinese tea, haggle at the attached bazaar and sift through knick-knacks on Old St and Dongtai Road Antique Market.

East of the Old Town, the riverside Cool Docks and South Bund 22 have brought some pizzazz to formerly run-down areas, attracting a steady stream of diners and drinkers to their Westerner-oriented bars and restaurants.

Local Life

- **Lanes** Jostle with Shànghǎi locals wandering along the pinched Old Town back lanes.
- **Chinese medicine** Forage for the best panaceas at the Tóng Hán Chūn Traditional Medicine Store (p92).
- **Religious devotion** Fathom the profound Buddhist mysteries of the Chénxiānggé Nunnery (p82).
- **Markets** Join the critter-loving Shanghainese browsing the Flower, Bird, Fish & Insect Market (p83).

Getting There & Away

- **Metro** Line 10 runs from East Nanjing Rd to the French Concession, passing under the Old Town. The Yuyuan Garden station is close to most sights. Line 8, which runs south from People's Sq to the China Art Museum, intersects with line 10 at Laoximen (near the Confucian Temple), line 9 at Lujiabang Rd and line 4 at South Xizang Rd. Line 9 runs along the Old Town's southern edge and into Pǔdōng with a station at Xiaonanmen.
- **Bus** Route 11 circles the Old Town, following Renmin and Zhonghua Rds; bus 66 travels along Henan Rd, connecting the Old Town with East Nanjing Rd.

Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Development has called in last orders for much of Shànghǎi's Old Town. The most intriguing areas to wander are well off the main drag: the alleys north of the Confucian Temple (old roads such as Zhuangjia St) retain their old flavour, as do some of the alleys off Dajing Rd (such as Changsheng St) and the western stretch of Dongjiadu Rd.

Best Places to Eat

- Kebabs on the Grille (p89)
- Nánxiāng Steamed Bun Restaurant (p89)
- Wúyuè Rénjiā (p85)
- el Willy (p89)
- Table No 1 by Jason Atherton (p89)

For reviews, see p84. ➔

Best Places to Shop

- Shílìpù Fabric Market (p91)
- South Bund Fabric Market (p91)
- Dongtai Road Antique Market (p91)
- Tóng Hán Chūn Traditional Medicine Store (p92)

For reviews, see p91. ➔