SHANGHAI ENCOUNTER

CHRISTOPHER PITTS
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Colour-Coding & Maps

Colour-coding is used for symbols on maps and in the text that they relate to (e.g., all eating venues on the maps and in the text are given a green knife and fork symbol). Each neighbourhood also gets its own colour, and this is used down the edge of the page and throughout that neighbourhood section.

Shaded yellow areas on the maps denote areas of interest – for their historical significance, their attractive architecture or their great bars and restaurants. We encourage you to head to these areas and just start exploring!

Prices

Multiple prices listed with reviews (e.g., ¥10/5 or ¥10/5/20) indicate adult/child, adult/concession or adult/child/family.

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CHRISTOPHER PITTS
A Philadelphia native, Chris started off his university years studying classical Chinese poetry before a week in 1990s Shanghai (en route to school in Kunming) abruptly changed his focus to the idiosyncrasies of modern China. After spending several years in Asia memorising Chinese characters, he abruptly traded it all in and moved to Paris, where he currently lives with his family: Perrine, Elliot and Céleste. Chris works as a freelance writer, editor and translator for a number of publishers, including University of California Press, and has contributed to several Lonely Planet titles. Visit his website at www.christopherpitts.net.

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THE PHOTOGRAPHER
Greg Elms has been a contributor to Lonely Planet for more than 15 years. Armed with a Bachelor of Arts in photography, Greg was a photographer’s assistant for two years before embarking on a travel odyssey. He eventually settled down to a freelance career in Melbourne, and now works regularly for magazines, graphic designers, advertising agencies and, of course, publishers such as Lonely Planet.

Our readers Many thanks to the travellers who wrote to us with helpful hints, useful advice and interesting anecdotes.
Irene Arriaza, Mark Broadhead, Penny Lattey.

Cover photograph Flying a kite and cycling at sunrise on the Bund, Anthony Arendt/Alamy. Internal photographs p45, p57, p76, p89, p95 by Christopher Pitts; p8 Radius Images/Corbis; p87 Bali Laguna; p114 Sunmdm/Dreamstime; p119 Jia Shanghai; p128 Dragonfly Therapeutic Retreat; p132 Giles Robberts/Alamy. All other photographs by Lonely Planet Images and by Greg Elms, except p4, p23, p25 Richard l’Anson; p11 Keren Su; p20 Brent Winebrenner; p30, p39, p116, p135 Phil Weymouth; p47 Martin Puddy; p51 Krzysztof Dydynski; p112 Bruce Bi; p115 John Banagan; p125 Tony Burns.

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Shoppers enjoy a colourful day out
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THIS IS SHANGHAI

There’s no place in China quite like Shanghai. There are no summer palaces, fog-enmeshed temples or transcendent cliff-side Buddhas here.

Remnants of an alluring past remain, but to dwell there would be to miss the point entirely. Shanghai has never been about what has already happened; it is about what is going to happen. For millions of Chinese, it is more than just a city; it is a symbol of change, opportunity and sophistication. While Beijing may pull the country’s strings, Shanghai is the pacesetter when it comes to future aspirations. It revels in its glamorous airs and entrepreneurial flair, in its global reach and ability to synthesise and adapt foreign ideas to home-grown tastes.

Now two decades in the making, the post-Communist megalopolis is an ever-evolving cityscape. Old Concession architecture stands in the shadows of giant towers, glitzy restaurants open around the corner from tiny dumpling stands, and the intermittent flashes of welding torches compete with neon signs and ubiquitous TV screens. More than any other place in the Middle Kingdom, Shanghai is electrified with youthful optimism and prospects. Business may be the city’s raison d’être, but there’s plenty to do here, from nonstop shopping and skyscraper hopping to stand-out art and fantastic eats.

As modern China’s ground zero, the city exudes a unique style that’s unlike anywhere else in the country. Often portrayed as a blend of East and West, Shanghai, with its voracious appetite for new styles and trends, is above all cosmopolitan and cutting edge. It’s a place to taste a future that’s just around the bend, to hang on to the roller-coaster ride of change, to hunt down the ghosts of old alleyways, the vanishing remains of debauched glory days and the creations of the next generation. For deal makers, fashion freaks, in-the-know foodies and those who just want to ride the crest of China’s emerging wave – this is Shanghai.

Left Hearty homestyle meals at Dongbei Ren (p69)