Small Town Breaks: Wonderful Shanghai

If you're arriving from Shanghai's Pudong airport, make a thrilling entrance into the town via the world's fastest train, the Maglev, which runs from the airport to the Lujiazui Financial district. Kids will love how a train generally seems to "fly" over the bottom, forced upwards in to the air by virtue of a powerful magnetic field. The possible lack of surface contact allows the train to reach incredible speeds: as much as 433 km per hour. Be sure to show your airport ticket when you yourself have one; this grants you a slight discount on the train ride.

An attractive as well as educational place to begin your exploration of the city may be the Jade Buddha Temple. Though built relatively recently (between 1911 and 1918), the temple's upturned pagoda-like eaves and bright red and yellow walls draw on centuries of Chinese architectural tradition. After admiring the colorful exterior, have a look at the treasures inside, the center-piece of which is the temple's namesake: a huge white jade Buddha, covered in jewels, measuring nearly 2 meters high and believed to weigh about one thousand kilograms.

After inspecting the cultural treasures in the temple, take some time in the open air with a trip to the Yuyuan gardens. Having its beautiful layout and harmonic blend of water, plants, zigzagging bridges, and dragon-lined walls, the gardens provide an unequaled introduction to the Ming Dynasty classical style. Lots of the buildings house cultural artifacts including centuries-old furniture, artwork and literature. Kids will enjoy the Exquisite Jade Rock, a 5-ton porous, translucent and oddly-shaped mineral. After wandering through the gardens, read the bazaar just outside and flick through traditional Chinese products and jewelry.

If you're tired after wandering through the gardens but nevertheless desperate to take in the sights, think about a cruise on the Huangu River, the longest river that passes through Shanghai. You are able to select from numerous cruises which run from 30 minutes to 3.5 hours. This is a superb, relaxing way to ingest both historic and modern aspects of the city. You'll go by British colonial architecture on the city's historic east side (Bund) as well as the futuristic skyline on the current east side (Pudong).

After taking in the cultural sights of Shanghai, why don't you indulge in a little shopping? A great place to begin is Xintiandi, a pedestrian zone shopping center integrated restored shikumen, typically Shanghainese buildings which incorporate both Western and Chinese architectural styles. Combined with the upscale shopping options, you are able to select from an array of international restaurants -- even the pickiest eater may find something to satisfy!

While it's still daylight, visit the most effective of Jin Mao (literally "Golden Prosperity Building") tower to ingest the spectacular sunset over Shanghai's skyline. At 88 floors high, it has only also been eclipsed as the 2nd tallest building in China.

End the afternoon with a return by wowing your kids with the unforgettable spectacle of the Shanghai Acrobats. The jaw-dropping feats of strength and daring along with colorful costumes and props could keep everyone at the edge of their seats for the entire show.

About the Author

With its historical landmarks and vibrant cultural scene regarding xian airport transfer, Shanghai educates along with delights the entire family.

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