

Sightseeing Guide for Shanghai Jiao Tong University Students



Welcome to Shanghai!

While your mornings will be dedicated to absorbing China's fascinating history, your afternoons and evenings are a perfect opportunity to explore Shanghai city and environs which is like a living museum of China's past, present, and future. In fact, those who arrive with spouse and children in tow, the kids can see the sights with Pa, while Ma keeps a seat warm at the University and joins them for lunch and the afternoon and evening for more incredible sightseeing. This guide offers suggestions to complement your studies, connecting Shanghai's iconic landmarks to the historical narratives you are learning about. Some organized group tours are available. Click for information.

The cradle of Shanghai, a history of 5,000 years



Guangfulin, an [archaeological site](#) in [Songjiang District](#), is estimated to be over 5,000 years old. Artifacts and skeletons from the [Zhou dynasty](#) have been unearthed. The site covers 250 square kilometers (ca. 97 square miles). The roofs of the museum buildings appear to be “floating” on the lake. The site encompasses verdant parks with many fine traditional Chinese buildings.

Central Shanghai & Urban Development



Yu Garden (Yù Yuán): Built in the Ming Dynasty (16th century) by Pan Yunduan, a high-ranking official, as a tranquil retreat for his father. This sprawling classical Chinese garden is a masterpiece of landscape design, featuring pavilions, rockeries, and ponds. The surrounding bazaar offers a glimpse into traditional Chinese architecture and commerce.

The Bund (Wàitān): This famous waterfront area highlights Shanghai's international history from the late 19th and early 20th centuries when Shanghai was reputed to be “The Paris of the east”. The waterfront strip of meticulously restored Neoclassical, Gothic, and Art Deco buildings was once the heart of Shanghai's foreign trade and finance, housing international banks and famous trading houses during the prosperous Treaty-Port era.

The French Concession: Stroll through the shady plane tree (*Platanus*) lined avenues of the elegant villa-strewn former French enclave. The area is known for its well preserved European-style villas from the early 1900s, which now houses chic cafes, boutiques, and restaurants, many of which offering *al fresco* dining in a lush garden setting, doubtlessly an ideal place to contemplate Shanghai's complex colonial past while hoping that you do not have to foot the restaurant bill.

Startingly modern architecture



See firsthand the metamorphosis of fertile farmland of the 1980s into awe-inspiring mega sized skyscrapers that are often enshrouded in clouds. The skyline here is a symbol of 21st-century China. You can ascend the **Oriental Pearl Tower**, the **Shanghai World Financial Center**, and the **Shanghai Tower** (the second tallest building in the world) for breathtaking panoramic views of the city.

Lujiazui Financial District: This is the bustling heart of modern Chinese finance. Walk among the

towering skyscrapers on the elevated pedestrian footpaths connecting most of the skyscrapers with the traffic speeding-on below.

Music centers, Opera, Ballet



Shanghai boasts a vibrant classical music and opera scene with several distinguished venues, among which : **Shanghai Grand Theatre** (上海大剧院) specializing in Opera, ballet, symphony. **Shanghai Oriental Art Centre** (上海东方艺术中心) Symphony, chamber music, opera. **Shanghai Concert Hall** (上海音乐厅) Classical music, especially chamber music and solo recitals. **Shanghai Symphony Orchestra Music Hall** (上海交响乐团音乐厅) Symphony and chamber music, famous for its fine acoustics. **He Luting Music Hall** (贺绿汀音乐厅) Professional symphony and chamber music. **Shanghai Opera Hall** (上海歌剧院) Opera performances. **Symphony Space of SSO** (上海交响乐团演艺厅) Chamber music in an intimate setting

Jazz and Modern Music Exploration



Explore Music Neighborhoods: visit the **Hengfu Music Block**. This area is a hub for music culture and is home to venues like JZ Club, alongside conservatories, instrument museums, and music-themed bookstores. **Jazz at Lincoln Center Shanghai** (especially traditional and mainstream) Official NY branch, intimate "swing" design, international jazz masters & fusion with Chinese instruments **JZ Club Jazz** Iconic "musicians' home", diverse styles from classic to modern jazz, lively nightly performances. **Qiantan 31 Culture Performance Center** Large, flexible state-of-the-art halls, hosts diverse performances from symphonic pop to immersive music theater. **Shanghai Bailemen** historic landmark, iconic ballroom with a classic jazz vibe. **Blues+ Club:** Landmark for blues and jazz lovers, classic decor, features brilliant live music. **SAIC • Shanghai Culture Square** Known for hosting large-scale musicals and performances

River Cruises:



A sightseeing boat cruise on the Huangpu River is highly recommended. It offers a unique perspective, placing the historical architecture of The Bund and the modern skyline of Pudong side by side. Dinner cruises are also available.

Chinese Opera:



Experience this UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage art form. Known for its elaborate costumes, stylized movements, and unique vocal techniques, watching a Chinese opera performance is a captivating cultural experience. Look for shows that include the famous "Bian Lian" (face-changing) act, a stunning and secretive skill.

Shanghai Circus: Witness world-renowned acrobatic performances. These acts, which often have deep historical roots in Chinese tradition, display incredible agility, precision, and artistry that are truly awesome.

Leisure & Shopping



Shopping: Shanghai is a city that not only never sleeps, but where you can shop till you drop!

Explore the massive **Nanjing Road Pedestrian Mall** for a quintessential Shanghai shopping experience.

For luxury brands, head to **Huaihai Road**. For bargains on fashion, accessories, and electronics (where haggling is

expected), visit the underground market at Metro Line 2, Science and Technology station or areas like the Qipu Road Clothing Market but do not forget to bargain to get a lower price!.

Dining & Nightlife:



Enjoy a cocktail or a dose of live jazz at the legendary **Fairmont Peace Hotel** on the Bund, an Art Deco gem from the 1930s, in original condition.

Sample delicious Chinese foods from all provinces in China or sample diverse international cuisines, from fine French to Italian in nicely restored villas in the Plane-tree lined avenues of the French Concession of Shanghai.

Experience the vibrant bar scene on **Hengshan Road** or find a rooftop bar for spectacular views of the city lights

For the children



Shanghai Disneyland: While not historical, it represents a significant cultural exchange and is a major entertainment destination with convenient metro access.

Indoor Skiing, year-round Ice skating & Waterparks: For a break from the city streets, visit one of Shanghai's large indoor ski slopes or waterparks, such as **Wintastar Shanghai** or **Happy Valley**

Look Ma: No wheels! The 431km/h maglev train from Pudong airport to the city.



The Maglev Train is floating on a magnetic “cushion” (no wheels) and whisks you along at a mindboggling speed of @ 431 km/h (270 miles/h) It has been tested at 501 km/h

A Final Note

This list is just a small palette of what Shanghai has to offer. There will not be enough hours in the day to discover all. Most importantly, though, enjoy everything this incredible city has to offer, but remember to rest well. Be fit and ready in the morning to continue absorbing the fascinating Chinese history that has shaped this dynamic nation!

