




Shanghai Shining

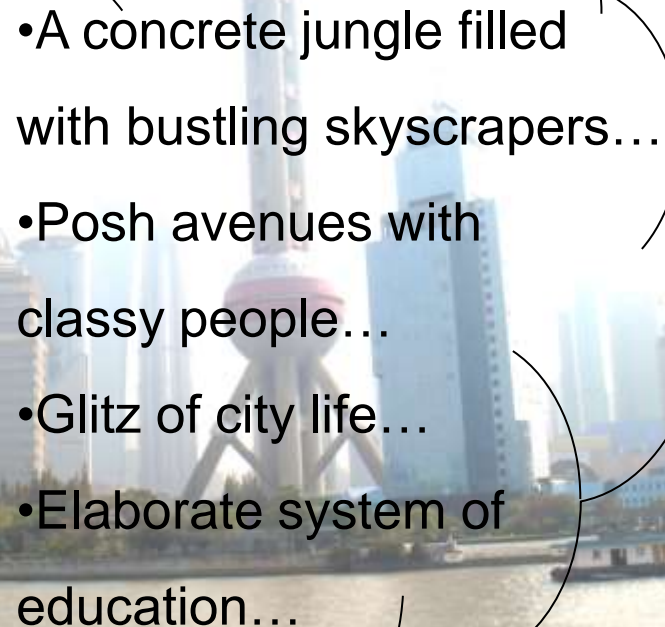


“You've won the Mysore Maths Championship!”,
the news was music to my ears.

For those of you who don't know, it is an aptitude test conducted by Learners' PU College with the motto '*Earn as you Learn*' to reward young masterminds. What's more, the prize was nothing less than an amazing trip to Shanghai!

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“Shanghai is a great city”, I had heard. Thoughts about this vast city began to occupy my mind.

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- A concrete jungle filled with bustling skyscrapers...
 - Posh avenues with classy people...
 - Glitz of city life...
 - Elaborate system of education...

I was eagerly awaiting the visit!



At Shanghai . . .

Sprawling greenery adjoining broad, pollution-free highways welcomed me. The meticulously planned infrastructure with an optimum balance of concrete and foliage took my breath away. The winding flyovers intertwining with each other laced the remarkable city.



First stop: Shanghai Zhangjiang High School

With a slight tremor in my heart, I stepped into the enormous campus and was baffled by the silence that greeted me (given the fact that Indian schools are cacophonous!) Our noble Chinese escort Evelyn led us, across the gardens, along the ground, down the corridors and past the classrooms. I must admit that I was truly astounded.



A talk with the principal

- The brainstorming sessions with the friendly principal gave me valuable insights on Chinese system of education.
- School extends from grade 1 to 12 after which students need to qualify an examination to enter the university.
- English, history, Chinese, science, maths, geography are the main subjects.
- Curriculum gives equal importance to sports, weekly field trips and hands-on workshops .



Memorable moments!

- Secret of Chinese energy: Gongfu tea!



- No wonder China gets all the Olympic Medals!



- Faculty



- At the library



- School with a view!



- New friends!



Next stop: Shanghai Shang Nan High school

This enormous school with excellent facilities swept me off my feet! After a little chat, Ms Sun, the teacher-in-charge, directed us into seven blocks of buildings for sports, music, labs etc. What amused me the most was the exclusive psychology floor meant to relieve the students' stress, a pioneer initiative by the principal (who is a psychologist himself!)



Gallery!

- Psychology Room



- Students will be students!



- Lighter moments with Ms. Sun



- Healthy body is key to healthy mind!



Chinese Biology class!

The 60 minutes I spent with the 12th graders, hearing biology lessons from a Chinese-speaking teacher will remain etched in my memories forever! The obedience of the students, the amiable nature of the teacher and the cordial apprentice-trainer relationship touched my heart.





Metro

One of the places in Shanghai that I found most interesting was undoubtedly the metro. Well planned, organized, clean and tidy network of trains carry thousands of passengers to different parts of the city every day. The passenger friendly, punctual system made our journey hassle free and enjoyable. It would definitely be a delight if such a system of high-speed railways could be adopted in many more parts of our country as well!



Food for thought!

Needless to say, china, a land where snakes adorn the menu has a vegetarian tourist scouting for vegan. We soon found solace in Pizza Hut's 'Veg Margarita'. Forced to depend on apples, bananas and other fruits to satisfy our hunger throughout the stay, we yearned for Indian meals.



Brrr... cold!

The October cold in china caught us off guard. Walking across the city in the foot numbing, spine-chilling cold, I wondered if I had turned into a shiny snow maiden! At a temperature of 9° C, the freezing drizzle gave us goose bumps. With the icy wind blowing over my face and a lovely city surrounding me, I had the time of my life! Nevertheless, it was an experience worth a million!

Shanghai of my dreams...

Shanghai has not only fulfilled my every expectation but its beauty has far exceeded my imagination. A picturesque location with the right mix of urbanization and ecology, Shanghai is an ideal example of sustainable development. The education system strives to build competent citizens. The local people certainly have my admiration for their simplicity and hospitability surpassing the boundaries of language, nationality etc.



A collage of images. In the center is a Ronald McDonald mascot figure. To the right is a smiling woman holding a blue cup. In the foreground, a woman in a pink shirt is smiling with her hands clasped in a prayer-like gesture. On the left is a cartoon character with a yellow 'M' on its head. The background has a yellow wall with the text 'm lovin' it' partially visible.

My heartiest gratitude to Murali sir, founder of Learners' PU College for bestowing me this rich experience and wish to see more whiz kids availing such opportunities.

Thank You!