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February 2016

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**The Golden Thread**  
Chinese history and  
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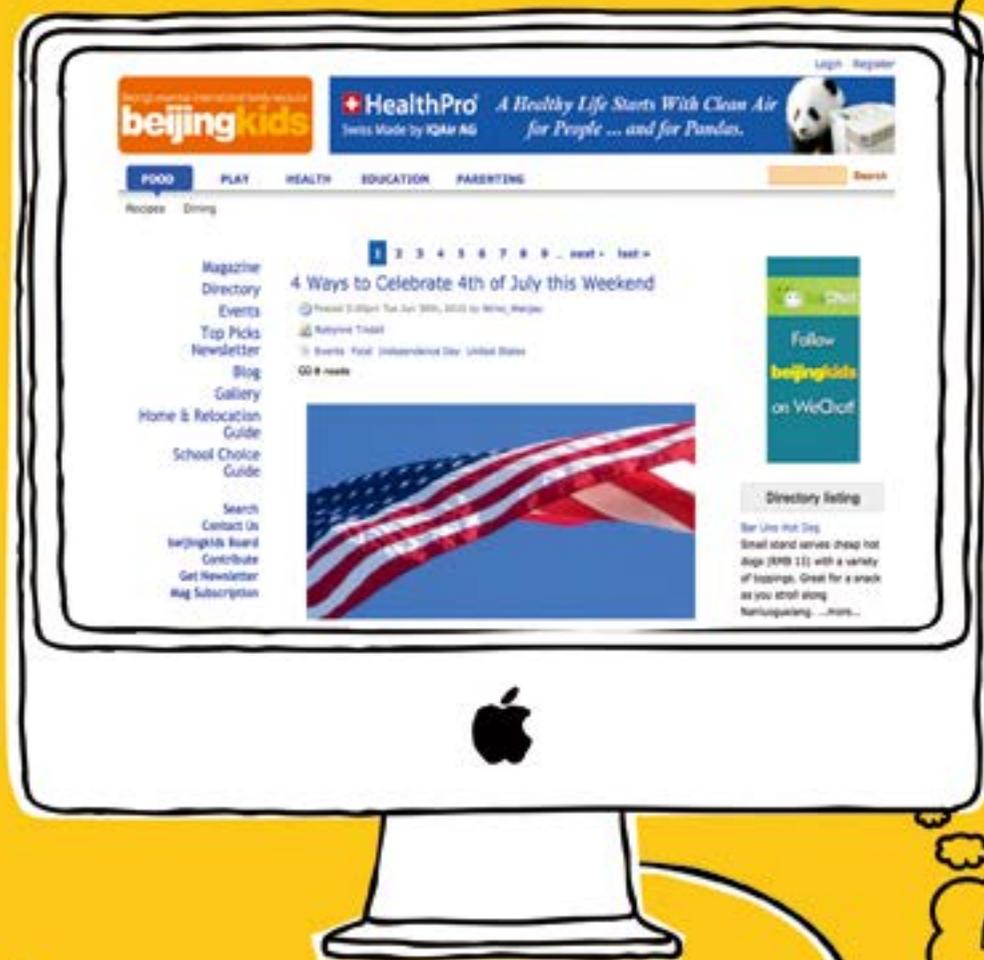


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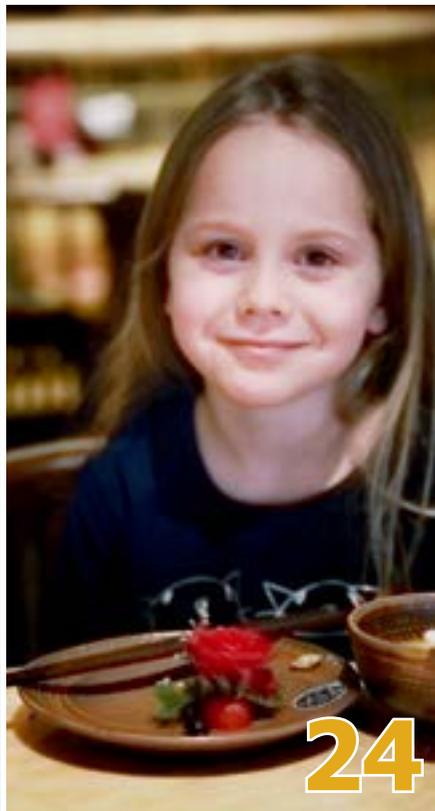
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# FEBRUARY 2016

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#### ON THE COVER:

Nine-year-old Keystone Academy student Selena Rao is a born and raised Beijinger. Mom Lan Ying is a freelancer while dad Rao Shengyong is the general manager of Beijing Hanmolin Culture Collection Company. Selena's 12-year-old brother also attends Keystone. For Spring Festival, the family plans to reunite with family for a traditional New Year's Eve dinner, before heading on their annual trip: this year the family is heading for New Zealand.



Extra special thanks to Tang' Roulou and Elisabeth Koch Millinery, who kindly supplied us with clothes and hats for our cover look.

*Photography by More x Joli*

# WOMEN OF CHINA



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## The *beijingkids* Board



### Lana Sultan

Lana Sultan has been in Beijing with her husband, son, and daughter since 2013. Prior to that, she lived in Saudi Arabia, the US, the UK, and Spain. Lana is the author of four children's books and is currently working on her fifth. Contact her at lana.sultan@gmail.com or visit www.lanasultan.com.



### AJ Warner

When AJ Warner is not with his two sons, he's coaching Chinese students on how to get admitted to the top 30 US universities. He also guides Chinese families through the process of sending their child to the US for high school and related homestays. Contact him at ajwarner@touchdown.org.cn.



### Mike Signorelli

Mike arrived in Beijing in 1994 as a student and has called China home ever since. He has held several senior management roles over the past 20+ years, including his last corporate job with NBA China. Mike is the founder of Signature Wine, China's first independent subscription wine club. Contact him at mike@sigwine.com.



### Sara Wramner-Wang

Over the past 20 years, Sara Wramner-Wang has worked in various senior management positions at companies like Ericsson, Ikea, and Oriflame. She is currently the director of sales and marketing and head of admissions for EF Academy International Boarding Schools' Asia operations. Contact her at sarawramner@hotmail.com.



### Catherine Bauwens

Catherine Bauwens is a mother of two; Robin (age 6) and Coralie (4) who both attend Candian International School of Beijing (CISB). Bauwens is managing editor of the French magazine *Pekin Infos*, is working on a documentary movie (together with her husband), and writing a science-fiction novel.



### Eyee Hsu

When CCTV talk show host and mom-preneur Eyee Hsu is not chasing after her two kids or the family dog, you might catch her at a Pilates studio, one of the Counting Sheep boutiques, or on TV. Find out more about the baby and maternity retailer she co-founded at www.countingsheepboutique.com.



### Caroline Nath

Caroline Nath moved to Beijing as a teenager after having grown up in the US, Canada, France, and India. She is a filmmaker, radio host, Parent Effectiveness Training teacher, founder of Bonne Nani Jams, and an organic food promoter. She has two multi-ethnic and multi-lingual children. Contact her at kulfidoll@gmail.com.



### Celine Suiter

Celine Suiter has been an expat for the past 17 years; from South America to Asia via Europe. This is her second posting in Beijing where she lives with her husband and two children. She likes making new friends, trying new restaurants, and visiting new countries. She documents her crazy life in Beijing and beyond with a picture a day at aTotalTaiTaiTale.tumblr.com

### Want to Join?

If you think you'd make a valuable contribution to the *beijingkids* board, email editor@beijing-kids.com.



Nimo Wanjau (web editor), Sijia Chen (contributing editor), Yvette Ferrari (school editor), and me at a Halloween party



Just some of my nieces and nephews in Ireland. Left to right: Eoghan, Niamh, and Molly

## In the Home Stretch

For the majority of Chinese people, Spring Festival is one of the most anticipated times of the year. Like millions of other Beijingers, I'm eagerly anticipating the end of the lunar calendar. I'll be traveling home for an extended break with family this Chinese New Year. Distance, migration, and the speed of modern life make it hard to gather the whole family in one place at one time. So I'll make two stops on my journey into the west; one to see my brother's family in Slovakia, and the second to be with my family and friends in Ireland.

This month, I spoke to two families about their Spring Festival traditions (p.48). Their stories resonate: the same things are on my agenda – going to my hometown, seeing relatives and friends, eating my regional foods, and decompressing. The 26-person village I live outside of is, as you can imagine, pretty sleepy. On the agenda will be long talks and day trips with my mother; rehearsing family legends that I never get tired of, recounting childhood memories, sleepovers with my nieces and nephews, eating Christmas lunch prepared by my mother, sister, and sister-in-law (if I'm lucky I'll get to peel a few spuds), and catching up on the friendships that no distance can sever. It's nothing mind-blowing, but it's heartwarming to experience, and it's heartrending to leave them to return each year.

Alas! Another heartbreak scheduled for later this month: our School Editor, Yvette Ferrari, is moving on to a new role with Dulwich College Beijing. Yvette has been with *beijingkids* for two years, and in that time has become a huge part of the magazine and a true friend. We're sad to lose her, but delighted that our paths are guaranteed to continue to cross in future. Best of luck, Yvette! With Yvette's departure, *beijingkids* is hiring. If you want to be part of the best international family resource in Beijing, please contact [hr@truerun.com](mailto:hr@truerun.com) to learn more about our vacant positions.

So much for leave taking! For those of you sticking around and spending February here in the capital, there's plenty of ways to connect to Chinese culture. Take in a folk performance and shop for traditional handicrafts at a temple fair (p.52), try Yi minority food at Asiniuniu (p.24) or check out one of our tried-and-tested recommendations for families (p.26). Temperatures have been dropping recently, and February, although technically the beginning of Spring, can often be the coldest month of the year. Find out how to protect yourself with our TCM tips (p.22). Ember Swift contemplates her longstanding love affair with China (p.44), WAB students conclude that anyone can "understand China" – given enough time and commitment (p. 40), while Keystone students take us through their Chinese culture and history studies (p.36). See you in March when I return from Ireland, and *Xin Nian Kuai le!* from all at *beijingkids* to all of you!

*Aisling O'Brien*

Aisling O'Brien  
Managing Editor





# February Events



1



3



2



4

**Sun, Feb 14**

## **Valentine's Weekend Set at Craft**



For adults. Treat your beloved to a gourmet set menu dinner including decadent desserts for a truly romantic experience. RSVP required. RMB 358 (net/per couple). 6-10pm. Crowne Plaza Beijing Lido (6437 3388)

## **Valentine's Day at Prego**



For adults. Celebrate the festival of love with a sumptuous five course gourmet dinner for couples, featuring oysters, caviar, *foie gras*, Wagyu beef, with paired free-flowing wine and champagne. RSVP required. RMB 1,368 (net/per couple). Westin Beijing Financial Street (6629 7815, f&b.beijing@westin.com)

## **Valentine's Day Celebration at Swissotel Beijing**



For adults. Wine and dine your darling with a romantic dinner buffet and indulge in specially created chocolates and other nibbles from Swiss Deli. Buffet dinner includes free flow house wine, beer, and non-alcoholic drinks. RSVP required. RMB 520 (net per couple). 6-9.30pm. Swissotel Beijing (6553 2288 – 2127, restaurant.beijing@swissotel.com)

**Sun, Feb 21**

## **1 Celebrating Lantern Festival**



All ages. That's Mandarin invites you to celebrate the end of Chinese Spring Festival by making 做元宵 *yuanxiao*, the round-shaped dumplings traditionally eaten to celebrate the wholeness and togetherness of the festival, and decorating lanterns. Regis-

tration required. RMB 100. 3-5pm. That's Mandarin (5218-6432, info@thatsmandarin.com)

## **China Through Cinema: The Arch (1970)**



For teens and adults. Lovers of Chinese cinema will enjoy this exploration of the forces that shaped Madam Tung's life during the Ming Dynasty. Limited space. Registration required. RMB 50, RMB 20 (Culture Yard students). 7-10pm. Culture Yard (8404 4166, <https://cultureyard.typeform.com/to/Dj2nVT>)

**Sun, Feb 27**

## **Introduction to Chinese Calligraphy**



Ages 7+. Create beautiful Chinese characters in a relaxing atmosphere as a teacher guides you through the basics of calligraphy. Limited space. Registration required. RMB 160 (all materials provided), RMB 80 (Culture Yard students). 2-5pm. Culture Yard (8404 4166, <https://cultureyard.typeform.com/to/u6QKaD>)

**Tue, Mar 1**

## **2 YCIS Beijing and BJU Teen Health Seminar**



For adults. YCIS Beijing hosts Dr. Caleb Korngold, Psychiatry Section Chief of Beijing United Family Hospital and Clinics. Dr. Korngold speak on common challenges for parents of teenage children, such as adolescent development, defining successful outcomes for teenagers, substance use problems, and identity issues, with by a Q&A session for parents. Registration required. Free. 10am-noon. Yew Chung International School of Beijing (info@bj.ycef.com)



Want your family-friendly event to appear in our February issue? Upload it at [www.beijing-kids.com/events](http://www.beijing-kids.com/events) by **February 5**.

**Fri, Mar 4**

### ISSCC 2016



Ages 7+. International Schools Snowsports Championships China (ISSCC) is an annual ski and snowboard race weekend for international school students organized by Imagine., taking place from March 4-6. Registration required. Varying prices. 10am-5pm. Wanlong Ski Resort (5739 4933, [snowsports@imagine-china.com](mailto:snowsports@imagine-china.com))

**Sat, Mar 5**

### 3 WAB's Spring Softball Tournament



All ages. The Western Academy of Beijing presents their Spring Softball tournament featuring international school student-athletes from schools around Asia. Over two days, March 5-6. Free. 10am-2pm. Western Academy of Beijing (5986 5588, [caliu@wab.edu](mailto:caliu@wab.edu))

**ONGOING**

### 4 Art Winter Camp



Ages 4-12. At this year's winter camp (February 1-5, 15-19), kids will become adventurous explorers as they trek through time and space to learn and create art. Each week will focus on a different theme: The Ice Age, The Polar Expedition, and Gods and Goddesses. Both Blue Bridge campuses are offering camps. Registration required. RMB 3,280/per person (per week). Blue

Bridge International Education (5900 0270, 5947 2275)

### Imagine the City of the Future



Ages 5-12. This five-day, February 8-12, workshop teaches kids to think like an architect. They will create their own city considering the principles of city planning such as trajectories, transportation, housing, schools, and more. Registration required. RMB 1,500. 10am-noon (ages 5-8), 1.30-4pm (ages 9-12). Atelier (6416 1614, 5686 4243)

### Roman Civilization



Ages 5-8. From February 8-12, kids can learn and explore the rich Roman civilization by using different art media such as paintings, mosaics, models, drawings, and more to conquer Europe. Registration required. RMB 1,500. 10am-noon (ages 5-8), 1.30-4pm (ages 9-12). Atelier (6416 1614, 5686 4243)

### Versailles and the Sun King



Ages 5-12. Kids can appreciate French architecture and learn more about one of France's most important palace in this five day workshop from February 29-March 4. They'll make paintings, drawings, sculpture, and more. Registration required. RMB 1,500. 10am-noon (ages 5-8), 1.30-4pm (ages 9-12). Atelier (6416 1614, 5686 4243)

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STEM

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# SAY HELLO TO BEIJING'S SMALLEST

**Want to share your new arrival with our readers?** Email a photo (at least 1MB in size) of your little one with their full name, nationality, birth date, hospital, and parents' names to [editor@beijing-kids.com](mailto:editor@beijing-kids.com). Due to space constraints, we will only publish photos of babies born in Beijing after September 1, 2015.



### Hannah Margaret Chemers

American. Born on October 15 to Cao Qiuping and Brandon Chemers at Beijing United Family Hospital.



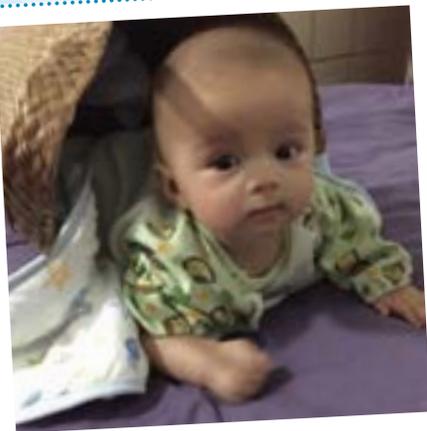
### Linshuo Gao

Chinese. Born on Jul 18 to Meng Li and Ming Gao at Beijing Amcare Women's and Children's Hospital.



### Callidora May Cook

British. Born on May 25 to Summer and Benjamin Cook at Beijing Chaoyang Maternal and Child Hospital.



### Hugo Ehrsam

French and Chinese. Born on Jul 31 to Ma Yanli and Yannick Ehrsam at Mary's Women's and Children's Hospital.



### Keanu Theodor Oremus

Dutch and South African. Born on Nov 7 to Nicola and Martijn Oremus at Beijing United Family Hospital.

# Taking a Gap Year

by Annabelle Jarrett



Figuring out what you want to do after high school can be tough. From choosing whether or not to continue your studies right away and which college to attend, to choosing what you want to study and which specific courses to take can be as overwhelming for the parents as it is for teens. An increasingly popular option these days is known as a “gap year”. But just what is a gap year exactly, and is it right for your child?

## What is it?

It’s taking a year off between finishing high school and starting college to save money, travel, gain some work experience; whatever you want to do.

## Why take a gap year?

There are many good arguments for taking a gap year; some would argue that it provides adolescents with self-sufficiency, life experience, and a greater understanding of who they

are and what they want to do in the future, which in itself can be helpful in making decisions regarding college applications. In fact, many college applications encourage taking a gap year for these reasons, reasoning that students can bring a more mature outlook and heightened sense of perspective into the classroom. Another reason people choose to take a gap year is to save money for college or future travel. Personally, I swear by my gap year spent working in England; my worldview widened immensely, not to mention my emotional maturity. While I didn’t save much money in the end, I did gain close friends, valuable work experience, and lifelong memories. Conversely, I had friends that were never interested, claiming that if they delayed college for a year they were afraid they would never make it, and others that downright regretted their decision to take a gap year. These friends of mine felt that while they had fun, they didn’t succeed in saving money, and

overall just delayed their graduation from college and entering the workforce by a year. In truth, the benefits of taking a gap year come down to the individual person, and what they choose to do with the year.

## Gap year options:

Having a whole year off provides heaps of options; break up the time into smaller sections and try out a few different things, or save up some money in the first part of the year before traveling afterwards. Here are some ideas:

- **Working overseas:** There are a wide range of websites to assist you with finding overseas work on your gap year – try [gapyear.com](http://gapyear.com) or [gapwork.com](http://gapwork.com). For example, if you hold a passport from an applicable country you can follow in the steps of yours truly and apply for a Youth Mobility visa to work in the UK.
- **Short-term study:** You can find short-term language programs at a variety of universities overseas, or think Tsinghua for one close to home. Alternatively, go online and access thousands of courses right at your fingertips. Check out [coursera.com](http://coursera.com) and [udemy.com](http://udemy.com) for courses in everything from psychology, to data analysis, to corporate finance.
- **Volunteering:** Using this time to volunteer can really make some positive change, as well as make a personal impact on the person and provide them with helpful contacts and life experience. Not to mention, it also looks great on a college application. There are thousands of great organizations out there to get involved with, it’s just up to choosing one that is personally significant, whether it’s teaching in rural areas, helping with wildlife conservation, or getting hands on with building structures or community projects.
- **Travel:** The world is your oyster. If the options prove too multitudinous, check out [contiki.com](http://contiki.com) or [busabout.com](http://busabout.com) for more guided tour options.

## Is it the right option for my child?

No two people are the same; whether or not a gap year is suitable depends on what the student wants to get out of it, their forward planning, and most of all their mindset. If your child is raring to get to college or enter the next phase of their life post-high school, then great. But if they are a bit tentative or just want to try something new for a year first, then a gap year might be for them.



# WHAT'S HAPPENING IN BEIJING



## Keystone Launches Scholarship Program

Education must be the pursuit of excellence, and in honoring this Keystone Academy mission the school has launched its scholarship program. There are two scholarships on offer: Founders' Scholarship and Junzi Scholarship. In honor of the men and women who had the vision to create Keystone Academy, the Founders' Scholarship is granted to students who distinguish themselves both academically, and in character. All applicants are eligible to apply for the Founders' scholarship. Scholarship amount varies from merit-only awards to merit and need-based awards that cover full tuition. Students applying to Grades 10 and 11 who have demonstrated outstanding academic and leadership ability in their previous schools will be considered for the Junzi Scholarship. As students applying to pursue the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP) in English, applicants' verbal and written English must be strong. Junzi scholarships are merit based, and valid for both years of the Diploma Programme. More information is available at [www.keystoneacademy.cn](http://www.keystoneacademy.cn)

## YCIS Beijing Co-Principal Christine Xu at Conference of International Educators

On December 12, Co-Principal Christine Xu attended the Vision of International Schools (VIS) Conference in Beijing to discuss the changing landscape of international school education in China. Principals and experts from various international schools across China were present as speakers addressed a packed audience. It was an informative event for all and a great opportunity to share the benefits of YCIS Beijing's unique education model with other educators.



## BSB Guinness World Record Holder

The British School of Beijing (BSB) is now the official Guinness World Record TM Holder for "The Largest Mathematical Jigsaw Puzzle" in the world with a new record of 3348 completed pieces. 75 secondary school students volunteered to work on the puzzle, over a 24 hour period on October 30 and 31 October, 2015. The puzzle contained 5200 pieces and the students managed to put together 3348 pieces! This was the first event in BSB's new amphitheatre building. Students thoroughly enjoyed the space they had, some slept during the late hours on mattresses but most preferred a power nap on chairs or just where they were working. There was a great atmosphere of determination and persistence. Well done to everyone involved!



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KEYSTONE, DCB, AND YCIS

Want your news to appear in our February issue? Email it along with a high-res photo (at least 1MB) to [webeditor@beijing-kids.com](mailto:webeditor@beijing-kids.com) by **February 5**.

**Stefan Norberg at WAB**

Grade 10 student Stefan Norberg wrote and directed a one-act play entitled "Where's the 4th Wall?" as part of the Winter One Acts theater production at Western Academy of Beijing. "I was thinking about boundaries between people and media," Stefan said. "That's when the 'fourth wall' said, 'Hi,' to me." Stefan says theater has become part of his daily life, and he expects it to be that way for a very, very long time.



**OASIS International Hospital Welcomes Ines Bendib Le Lan**

Dr. Le Lan, a Family Medicine physician with a specialty in Pulmonology (respiratory diseases), joined OASIS International Hospital in January. She received her medical degree from Paris Diderot VII University. Dr. Le Lan has over seven years clinical experience and before joining OASIS, she practiced as a physician in Algeria and France. A French, Arabic, and English-speaking physician, Dr. Ines is available for appointments in the Family Medicine Clinic of OASIS, located on 9 Jiuxianqiao North Road in Beijing.

**BCIS Student Performs with the National Ballet**

Qiqi, a student attending Pre-K at Beijing City International School (BCIS), performed as part of the National Ballet at National Center for the Performing Arts in December 2015. The performance was titled *Chinese New Year*.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF IMAGINE, SANFINE, BCIS, AND WAB

# Sweet Threads

French-designed children's clothes with Chinese flair

by Annabelle Jarrett





**T**ang' Roulou is a store that designs high quality children's clothing and accessories influenced by both traditional and contemporary China. Store owners Amelie Peraud and Pierre-Yves Babin both moved to Beijing over ten years ago, from their native France. Their brand has been registered since 2008, although Peraud has been designing since 2005. "I wanted to offer my pregnant friends some newborn baby gifts, but couldn't find anything nice and good quality," she explains, "I had no better option than to design something myself."

Tang' Roulou is influenced by Peraud and Babin's life and experiences in China. In particular, Peraud says, the people, colors, patterns, and architecture around them are integral in their process. Their designs take a unique look at different aspects of Chinese culture, retelling them through stories in the designs and patterns. These designs have proved popular with customers from all over the world, including some celebrities. Actor Jessica Alba, the designer Paul Smith, and Chinese stars Wong Faye and Liu Ye are fans of the store, Pierre tells us.

The name Tang' Roulou is the French spelling of the Beijing candies *tanghulu* 糖葫芦. Due to the sweet taste of the candy, their red color

traditionally associated with happiness, and their longstanding tradition within China, Peraud and Babin felt that this name was perfect for what their store offers.

Prices depend on the level of handmade work and detail in each product's design. Items range from RMB 390 for a baby's kimono shirt to RMB 780 for a warm child's jacket. Accessories are between RMB 140 for a Gingko leaf-shaped towel and RMB 560 for a newborn baby's sleeping bag.

#### **Tang' Roulou**

10.30am to 8.30pm daily. 30 Sanlitun Lu, (inside Phoenix Design), Chaoyang District (6416 9761, tangroulou@contact.com) [www.tangroulou.com](http://www.tangroulou.com) <http://tangroulou.taobao.com>  
朝阳区三里屯酒吧街北口内30, 路西(凤栖内)

# What's Cooking?

Make the day delicious at Le Kindergarten

by Aisling O'Brien





Taiwanese businessman, Jonathan Ma, has lived in Beijing for the past ten years. In that time he has opened a succession of businesses, including a gym (Le Wellness), yoga studio (Le Yoga), and now a preschool (Le Kindergarten). Le Kindergarten, located in Lido, counts among its facilities a child-friendly fully-equipped kitchen. Located within a retail mall, the preschool often receives inquiries from parents passing by, who asked if they could provide the venue for children's birthday parties. "We responded to the obvious demand and decided to give a try," says Ma. "It worked out well and the children had a great time."

As a result, on weekends Le Kindergarten now offers themed birthday services to families. Birthday themes can be based on different styles of cooking. Staff led group classes demonstrating both Chinese and western dishes are available.

Ma says the top three favorite cooking classes for families are dumplings, cupcakes, and muffins. Families can build their party around one of those existing options, but he emphasizes the accommodating approach staff takes to facilitating the family's vision. "Often the host family has their own ideas on how to decorate the venue and theme activities," he says. "We recently had a family request a Star Wars themed birthday party. We are very flexible and do our best to help cre-

ate great memories for their little ones, whatever theme they choose."

For example international families looking to introduce simple Chinese food and Chinese cultural activities could select a dumpling themed party including all ingredients, guided food preparation class, lunch, cake, arts and crafts, songs, stories, games, and themed decorations. A party for up to 20 families with a customized theme, activities, cooking class, and cake would cost from RMB 4,000 to 5,000. Contact Le Kindergarten directly to discuss theme, guest numbers, and activity requirements for an accurate quote.

Le Kindergarten is a bilingual preschool, and all staff is fluent in both Chinese and English, which makes communication straightforward both in terms of planning the event, and on the day itself.

**Le Kindergarten** 乐童日托中心

No 1-6, Hairun International, No 2, Jiantai Road, Chaoyang District (5135 7730, 5135 7729, admissions@le-kids.com) www.le-kids.com 朝阳区将台路乙2号海润国际底商1-6号

# Absolutely Golden

Alice Niven warms up at Hair Attack

Photos by Neverland Studio;  
text by Nimo Wanjau





*Alice Niven, pre-makeover*

**A**lice Niven and her family moved to Beijing from their home country Australia 10 months ago when her husband Paul was sent here to be the hub director at Falcon Dairy Holdings. Their four kids, sons Lachie (age 14), Darcy (12), Ted (8) and daughter Adelaide (10), all attend the British School of Beijing (Shunyi).

Niven's beauty routine couldn't be more low key. She always cuts her own hair and can't remember the last time she went to the hairdresser. She swims most days and finds the chlorine in the pool very drying. She tells us she usually just conditions her hair after swimming, and never brushes it, as "otherwise my hair goes really frizzy!" She also never styles it. "It's always a bit of a mess really," she says. "But I think you can get away with a lot when you have curly hair."

Today Niven is in the capable hands of Malaysian-born Tom Yuen, owner and creative director of newly opened **Hair Attack**. He assesses Niven's look and explains his plans for her hair. "Her hair is really dehydrated due to the change in environment. Beijing is making it dry and very dull. I want to give her a warmer, shinier, healthier look," he says.

Yuen's protégé Tim Chen, who has worked with him for eight years, colors her hair using Schwarzkopf products, adding highlights two levels lighter than her normal shade at hairline and parting. He adds depth with an ombre effect, applying darker color at the nape and roots to give a warm, natural look. Yuen recommends this technique because it is lower maintenance, requiring a less frequent coloring cycle; perfect for busy moms.

Yuen keeps Niven's length so she can still wear a ponytail when working out, but adds layers to give volume and bounce. Niven is happy her new look is low maintenance. "It's different to what I would do myself, but it's in keeping with what I can realistically manage." She's happy with her transformation and feels it complements her features. "I warned my husband that I might use this opportunity to upgrade my spouse!" she jokes. She also really enjoyed the experience and plans to return to Hair Attack. "I would like to treat myself with a trip there in future, perhaps to rescue my hair from what I'll be doing to it in the meantime."

#### Product list

- No. 4 Giorgio Armani shaping cream foundation SPF 20
- No. 2 Giorgio Armani liquid foundation
- Make up forever Super Matte loose powder
- No. 3 Tom Ford eye shadow – cocoa mirage
- No. 539 Dior eye shadow - Iridescent leather
- No. 609 Dior eye shadow – earth reflection
- Bobbi Brown 4 compact blush

## Get the Look:



**1** After a quick trim, hair is sectioned with the back and roots colored with darker shades while the front and ends are given lighter highlights.



**2** After washing, hair is evened at the ends and layered to make the hair look fuller.



**3** Stylist Howard Zhang shapes the eyebrows, cleans and moisturizes the face, then applies foundation. He uses liquid eyeliner, which he recommends for deep-set eyelids. He adds a pop of blush to her cheeks with a light pink to her lips giving a soft feminine look.

#### Hair Attack

Daily. 9am-9pm. Unit 3006, Tower AB, Vantone Center, 6 Chaoyangmenwaidajie, Chaoyang District (187 1006 1306) 朝阳区朝外大街甲6号万通中心AB座2层3006



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South Side, No. 9 An Hua Street, Shunyi District, Beijing

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### Got a question?

Dr. Melissa Rodriguez is a naturopathic doctor and mother of two, who works at Beijing United Family Hospital. To find out more, check out her website at [www.drmelissarodriguez.com](http://www.drmelissarodriguez.com)

## With or Against the Grain?

To say that there's a lot of conflicting information about health out there is an understatement. One debate revolves around grains, and whether or not they are a necessary part of our diet. Wheat and gluten get a lot of press, and you may be wondering, what's the big deal?

Over the years wheat, more specifically gluten (one of the proteins found in wheat, rye, and barley), has become problematic for many people all over the world. In the same way that some people have peanut allergies that can be deadly, some people have a severe reaction to eating even a small amount of gluten. These people have a condition called Celiac disease. The cases of celiac disease have increased dramatically in the last decade. There are also some people who when they consume gluten just don't feel right. Gluten can be implicated in a long list of symptoms, from digestive discomfort to difficulty concentrating to auto-immune conditions. So why is this a more recent phenomenon? Many theories abound, but one of them is related to the extent to which we've genetically modified wheat in recent history. Another theory is set forth by proponents of the paleo diet.

### Moderate consumption of whole grains such as brown rice, oats, barley, millet, and quinoa is advisable

This popular diet advocates eating foods which our Paleolithic ancestors did over a million years ago. It claims that we are genetically programmed to eat few grains, as humans didn't start farming them until 10,000 years ago. The diet places heavy emphasis on grass fed meats, eggs, and vegetables. There is some scientific evidence that supports the use of this diet, especially for conditions like diabetes, obesity, and some auto-immune conditions.

So should you eat wheat or not, and what types of grains are beneficial, if any? My motto is: moderation in all things. We are genetically unique creatures that don't fit a one-size fits all mold. If you have a specific health condition then maybe avoiding or decreasing your grain consumption can be beneficial. In this case I would suggest seeing a professional who has experience in this area. If you are overall healthy and have no specific health concerns, then I believe a moderate consumption of whole grains such as brown rice, oats, barley, millet, and quinoa is advisable. The problem is that in our society we tend to overdo things, and we've overdone wheat. It is found in all sorts of processed foods and is ubiquitous in many kitchen staples, like soy sauce. People are developing intolerance to wheat like never before. Reducing our consumption of wheat and maybe gluten is something that can likely benefit our health, especially when we replace it with more vegetables in our diet.

# Walking the Cultural Line

Coming to China is a chance to expose our children to a culture and language that may be quite different from the land of their birth. Time and again I have seen in my practice that children who have the most success in this new culture are the ones who are able to participate.

One obvious way is to learn the language. Many may be turned off from learning the language due to time commitment and perceptions of difficulty. However, learning Chinese can be a way for children to feel less "foreign" and to feel included in the community. Encourage children to learn the language by showing them that you are making an attempt as well.

Some children may shy away from making local friends for linguistic reasons, feeling too "different", or just plain shyness. Help your children by making friends with other parents and families, and arranging playdates. This first step can model for your child how to challenge their fears and take a risk that may have a great payoff.

Support your children when they feel certain parts of their new culture are difficult to accept. Validate your child's feelings and difficulties if they are having a tough time, and help them identify ways that they can express their own cultural values while respecting the ones of the culture they are living in. Help your child consider how

actions of others may be perceived as a cultural difference instead of simply as "rude."

It is not uncommon for some expatriate children to feel bullied or picked on, especially ones who may look different from the local population. If you feel that your child may be a target of bullying, alert the school (if applicable) and assist your child in finding activities and areas in which they can feel confident. Please also consider seeking the help of a qualified professional.

## Encourage children to learn the language

Help your child share aspects of your own native culture with the local population. Cultural exchange is a two-way street, and cultural understanding and acceptance can be built by children who take some initiative. One idea is to consider inviting members of the local community to your next holiday celebration of your home culture.

I've thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to share knowledge with the Beijing community. This will be my last column for *beijingkids* as my family moves on to our next chapter in Shanghai. Happy New Year, and my very best wishes to all our readers as you continue to raise happy, healthy kids here in Beijing.

### Need more info?

Dr. George Hu is a clinical psychologist at Beijing United Family Hospital. He has worked extensively on issues such as adjustment, relationships, and stress. He can be reached at [george.hu@ufh.com.cn](mailto:george.hu@ufh.com.cn).




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## TCM health tips for winter

by Sijia Chen



If you have ever been admonished by locals for forgetting to wear *qiuku* (long underwear) or drinking anything other than hot water, you have traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) to thank. Unlike in the West, TCM is not an “alternative” therapy here but a fact of life. At the core of this set of Chinese medical practices is the idea that good health comes from living in harmony with one’s environment. Each season has a distinct character and brings with it a particular host of ailments.

According to Taoist thought, the universe is governed by the balancing forces of *yin* and *yang*. *Yin* is associated with female energy, passivity, negativity, and the moon while *yang* is associated with male energy, activity, positivity, and the sun. Winter is the season of *yin*, when people should conserve and store their energy rather than expend it.

To understand what that means in concrete terms, we contacted TCM practitioner Dr. Mary Ma from Oasis International Hospital for winter wellness tips.

### BUNDLE UP

According to TCM, external energies known as the Six Pathogenic Factors are responsible for changes in weather that can cause disease. They are wind, damp, dryness, cold, heat, and summer heat. In winter, people are particularly vulnerable to wind and cold. “Keeping warm around the neck area and lower limbs is especially important, so wearing scarves and long underwear under your normal winter gear is recommended,” says Dr. Ma.



### STAY HYDRATED

In addition to keeping warm and hydrated, Dr. Ma recommends a warm foot both before going to bed. Staying hydrated is especially important because in the north of China, people are used to using heaters during winter, which can cause people to suffer from dry skin and a dry mouth or nose. In addition, in winter the respiratory system releases more of the body’s moisture when breathing (in the cold air).



*Dr. Mary Ma from Oasis International Hospital*



## YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Because winter is so heavy in *yin* energy, Dr. Ma says that readers should consume nourishing foods and drinks that contain plenty of yang. These include lamb, ginger, spicy foods, dates, longan, goji berries, boiled pear water, lily tea, black tea, hot water, and date tea. "We want to avoid eating raw or cold foods because these foods belong to the *yin*," she says. "If you eat them too much, they will negatively impact yang during the winter season." Many TCM practitioners recommend warming soups, stews, and broths cooked at lower temperatures for longer periods of time.



## LADIES, PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION

"Keeping warm is especially important for women because they belong to the *yin*. The winter season also belongs to the *yin*, which means that women suffer more from the cold than men," cautions Dr. Ma. She recommends putting on extra layers ahead of menstrual cycles, taking warming foot baths, and drinking tea made with ginseng and brown sugar to prevent colds and blood clots during periods. As in all seasons, female readers should avoid stressful or frustrating situations before their menstrual cycles, as getting through them smoothly depends on maintaining good *qi* (energy).

## WARM HEART WARM LUNGS

The lungs and heart are especially vulnerable to disease in the winter, says Dr. Ma. Children and the elderly are especially at risk for respiratory diseases like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, and bronchitis. She recommends common sense practices like spending more time exercising or socializing indoors, drinking hot water, and dressing warmly for the outdoors. In addition, those who smoke and drink regularly are at a higher risk for heart disease, and should take special care to cover up areas like the neck.

## DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY

Some people are susceptible to Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a serious mood change caused by the changing of the seasons. Symptoms include excessive sleeping, low energy, and depression. Dr. Ma urges readers to participate in social activities. "Spend time with friends and family and don't stay cooped up at home. TCM encourages people to avoid situations that [cause them to become] negative or pessimistic," she says. "Accepting that winter is cold and a natural part of life is helpful in maintaining a healthy mind."

## Resources

### Oasis International Hospital

Dr. Mary Ma specializes in treating a wide variety of disorders using TCM methods like herbal medicine, acupuncture, moxibustion, and acupuncture. She speaks English and Chinese.

Mon-Sat 8.30am-5.30pm (some clinics open from 8.30am-12.30pm), daily 24hrs emergency care. 9 Jiuxianqiao Beilu, Chaoyang District (400 UR OASIS) [www.oasishealth.cn](http://www.oasishealth.cn) 朝阳区酒仙桥北路9号

### How to Stay Healthy in Winter

Straight Bamboo founder and TCM expert Alex Tan wrote a comprehensive article on health and wellness tips for winter: [straightbamboo.com/how-to-stay-healthy-in-winter](http://straightbamboo.com/how-to-stay-healthy-in-winter)



# What Say Yi

Sichuan cuisine at  
Asiniuniu

by Kyle Mullin

*Angelina Germain (age 6) is this month's adventurous food critic*

PHOTOS: ZEUS



Pork ribs (RMB 58)



Stir-fried eggs (RMB 68)



Mixed mushrooms (RMB 38)

**A**siniuniu is a Yi minority themed restaurant in Sanlitun whose vibrant decor is rivaled only by its equally colorful dishes. That combination will wow curious youngsters, and satisfy parents who are hankering for unique eats. Quality meats, fresh vegetables, and other ingredients are flown in from Sichuan province's Liangshan Autonomous Prefecture, (which the majority of Yi people call home), ensuring that the dishes are authentic.

Like most Chinese restaurants, there's no kids menu on offer, but children will enjoy the nourishing, warm, slightly sweet *huili chuanfu yu pian* (RMB 98), a golden yellow rice porridge rounded out with slivers of boneless fresh fish. It comes in a bowl big enough to serve four hungry patrons, and is soft enough to practically melt in the mouth. Also good for little ones are the deeply flavorful pork ribs, *meizhi xiaopai* (RMB 58) and fluffy stir fried eggs *baishenjun chao tujidan* (RMB 68). No kids' meal is complete without getting some vegetables in, which come in the form of *suchao dajiao jungu* (RMB 38), a flavorful mix of mushrooms, peppers, and broccoli.

Today's burgeoning food critic, is Angelina Germain (age 6), who is a student at House of Knowledge International School and Kindergarten. Angelina is not acquainted with Asiniuniu's lesser-known style of Yi cuisine, and normally likes plain fare. She cites fried noodles and rice as her favorite Middle Kingdom dishes; her other favorites include spaghetti and pizza. However, she deftly snatches up some slices of Asiniuniu's reddish, fatty *lawei pinpan* pork (RMB 68) with her chopsticks, declaring it: "Yummy, but spicy." She also gobbles down a few spoonfuls of the aforementioned sunny rice porridge, deciding that it is "Also yummy and a little bit sweet," waving her hands enthusiastically while describing it.

Her parents, Patrick and Christina Germain (from Canada and Germany respectively) also enjoy the porridge, and are equally thoughtful while tasting it. Christina says: "It's a bit familiar, almost like

something I'd eat back in Germany." Then she pauses, and chuckles before correcting herself: it actually tastes like something she would have eaten in Thailand.

Such momentary mix-ups are understandable, the Germain family spent years living in Bangkok, before relocating to Beijing. Indeed, it's hard to picture a more globetrotting family, hence Angelina's eagerness to try unfamiliar foods. And while she was up for sampling everything, she wasn't immediately impressed by each and every dish. The *yijia qiaobing* flatbread, for instance, was bitter enough make her grimace, until we realized it should be dunked in the accompanying bowl of honey, making it suddenly quite tasty, which provoked further family laughter. Moments of exploration and fun like these make Asiniuniu a perfect venue for well-traveled expat clans like the Germain; not only satisfying their appetites but also their curiosities.

#### Family-friendly facilities:

Bathrooms are clean and tidy, with western toilets, toilet tissue, and soap. While the venue lacks play areas, it compensates with colorful murals depicting Yi Minority festivals, along with a gift shop that sells traditional earrings, hand crafted tableware, and more, all of which will intrigue older children. Better still is the daily performance at 7.30pm, which feature the Yi people's traditional music and dance.

#### Asiniuniu 阿斯牛牛

Daily 11am-10pm. Bldg. 66, Courtyard 4, Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District (5712 7788) 工体北路4号院66幢机电学院



# Ni Chifan Le Ma?



## Family-friendly Chinese dining

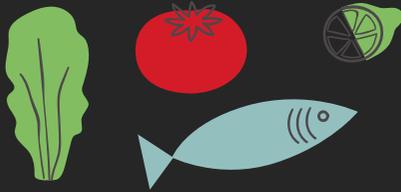
by Aisling O'Brien

**D**ining out *en famille* is one of the mainstays of modern Chinese life. In China, children are at the center of family culture and welcome everywhere. You'll see little ones dotted among most large groupings in every restaurant, and at every price point. We polled parents for their favorite restaurants, and they responded with a list of old faithfuls: because hygiene,

comfort, and reliable service are of critical concern for families. They also told us their kids hate sitting around in restaurants and love interactive food and individual portions: anything they make, manhandle, or eat on their own is a winner! So we've compiled a list of the best, clean, family-friendly options – where kids can get in on the action, and you can relax and explore the cuisine.

### Restaurants:

Due to space constraints, for chain restaurants we've listed only the most popular branches for expats. For complete addresses, check out our dining directory at [www.beijing-kids.com](http://www.beijing-kids.com).



### Cantonese

#### Charme

港丽餐厅

This Shanghai-based Hong Kong-style cafe is known for its bustling atmosphere, nutritious Cantonese soups, and tasty desserts, including their signature "honey toast" which comes topped with ice cream. Sure to be a big hit with the kids.

**Contact:** Daily 11am-10pm. Store 8-9 World City, 8-9 Jinhui Lu, Chaoyang District (8590 6088) 朝阳区朝阳区金汇路8-9号世界城商业街102号铺

#### Din Tai Fung

鼎泰丰

This is the go-to dim sum place for many families. A Taiwanese chain that has earned its international renown – taste just one delicate, hand-rolled xiaolongbao and you'll join the fan club. The soups, fried rice with pork, and noodles are also guaranteed to please. Friendly service and a kid's playroom rounds out the package for families.

**Contact:** [www.dintaifung.com.cn](http://www.dintaifung.com.cn) 1) Daily 11.30am-9.30pm. 6/F, Shin Kong Place, China Central Place, 87 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District (6533 1536) 朝阳区建国路87号华贸中心新光天地6层; 2) Mon-Thu 11am-2.30pm, 5-10.30pm, Fri-

Sun 11am-9pm. Unit LG2-20, Parkview Green, 9 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District (8562 6583) 朝阳区东大桥路9号芳草地LG2-20层

#### Herbal Cafe

泰和草本工坊

Light, MSG free Hong Kong fare, with herbal teas, stir-fries, steamed dishes, soups and dim sum. The Sanlitun branch a features large, airy windows letting in plenty of natural light and a good view of the surrounding area.

**Contact:** Daily 11am-11pm. Sanlitun branch: S6-33, 3/F, Sanlitun Taikooli South, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District (6416 0618) 朝阳区三里屯路19号三里屯Village南区6号楼3层s6-33



PHOTOS: AMLXVZ, CHENZHAO (FLICKR), MALAKAVANTI (TUMBLR), KHAOCK (WEIBO), AND COURTESY OF MAIKER VALDIVIA, CHARME, AND INTERNATIONAL SOS

## Duck

### Duck de Chine

全鸭季

Tucked away in the 1949-The Hidden City complex, the menu incorporates both Chinese and French duck-roasting traditions. Kids can happily play with their food: the classic Peking duck combo, (crisp roast duck to roll in pancakes with plum sauce, spring onion and cucumber) is, naturally, the showpiece dish. 10 percent service charge. English menu available.

**Contact:** 1) Daily 11am-2.30pm, 5.30-10.30pm. Sanlitun branch: 1949 – The Hidden City, Courtyard 4, Gongti Beilu (opposite the south gate of Pacific Century Place Mall) (6501 8881) 朝阳区工体北路4号院 (太平洋百货南门对面)

## Dumplings

### Green Bites Dumpling Bar

绿盒子蒸饺

Plump, steamed dumplings with healthy fillings made with organic certified veggies from local farms. Green Bites specialize in delivery, but if you pop over, your reward will be that they taste infinitely better made fresh.

**Contact:** www.greenbites.cn 1) Daily 10.30am-9.30pm. The Place and Central Park Branch: E166 (north of east gate), Tower E, World City (across from Central Park), 8-9 Jinhui Lu, Chaoyang District (8590 7875) 世贸天街新城国际朝阳区金汇路8-9号世界城商业街E座东门北侧E166; 2) Daily 10am-9.30pm. Dashanzi/798 Art District Branch: Shop 380, 3/F, Indigo Mall, 18 Jiuxiangqiao Lu, Chaoyang District (400 958 4394) 大山子艺术区朝阳区酒仙桥路18号颐堤港购物中心三层380; 3) Daily 10.30am-8.30pm. Sanlitun branch: Unit 5-106, first floor, Sanlitun Soho, Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang district (8590 0475) 朝阳区工体北路三里屯Soho1层5-106室

### Mr. Shi's Dumplings

老石饺子

Cozy and welcoming, the more convenient Sanlitun outpost of this Gulou original serves the same menu of boiled and fried dumplings, pork, shrimp, and

vegetarian, with over 30 combinations to choose from.

**Contact:** Daily 10am-10pm. Sanlitun Xijie (west of the Sanlitun Police Station), Chaoyang District (131 6100 3826) 朝阳区三里屯西街 (三里屯派出所往西)

## Hot Pot

### Haidilao Hot Pot

Famous for its hospitality: get your nails done or ask for the noodle dance – an energetic waiter will pull noodles right at your table. Older kids will love the interactivity of adding and removing food from the soup. Be careful with smaller kids; it's all too easy to get splashed with hot broth.

**Contact:** Daily 24hrs. www.haidilao.com 1) Sanlitun branch: 2A Baijiazhuang Lu (next to No. 80 Middle School), Chaoyang District (65952982, 65950079) 朝阳区白家庄路甲2号 (八十中学西侧); 2) Wangjing branch: 4/F Wangjing Guoji Shangye Zhongxin, 9 Wangjing Dongjie, Chaoyang District (5920 3512) 朝阳区望京街9号望京国际商业中心4楼



### Taiwan Xiabu Xiabu Hotpot

台湾呷哺呷哺涮涮锅

Children will really enjoy the independence of cooking their own dinner in the mini individual hot pots available at this bustling and ubiquitous fast food chain. Choose from mutton, beef, veggies, tofu, sesame buns (*shao bing*) and more. English menu available on request.

**Contact:** (6026 5888, 4008 177 878, kefu@xiabu.com) www.xiabu.com 1) Sanlitun branch: B1, Shimao Gongsan Mall, 13 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District

朝阳区工人体育场北路13号世贸百货B1层; 2) Wangjing branch: 9F Wangjing International Commercial Center, Wangjing Jie, Chaoyang District 朝阳区望京街9号望京国际商业中心一层



## Jiangsu

### Su Song Fu

苏松府生煎

Enjoy the southern treasures, *shengjian-bao*, crisp based and filled with hot soup. Four bao are just RMB 10, more than enough for a child's portion. The menu also includes cold dishes and noodles. Go outside of normal lunch hours to avoid the inevitable queues.

**Contact:** Daily 10am-8pm. B1, Shimao Department Store, 13 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District 朝阳区三里屯工体北路13号世贸工三B1



## Shandong

### Qing Yun Lou

卿云楼

The first Qing Yun Lou opened on the east shore of Shichahai Lake almost 200 years ago. The current incarnation has stunning lakeside views and serves sweet Shandong cuisine.

**Contact:** 22 Qianhai Lake East Bank, Xicheng District (6401 9581) 西城区前海东沿22号

## Introducing New Foods

Undoubtedly some kids can be picky eaters, and Chinese food can be daunting: there are often bones, oil, and spice to contend with. We get tips from Maiker Valdivia, parent and chef de cuisine at Aria Restaurant in China World Hotel, and Dr. Leora Martin, registered clinical dietician at Oasis International Hospital, on how to successfully introduce your kids to new fare.



Clockwise from back left: Maiker Valdivia, Cristina Kolesnichenko, Matias (age 6), and Lucas (2)

### The Chef

Chilean-born Maiker Valdivia and his Russian wife Cristina Kolesnichenko have lived in Beijing for over two years. They have two boys; Matias (age 6), who attends Fancaodi International School, and Lucas (2). Valdivia spent over a decade working in San Sebastián in Spain, working at many celebrated restaurants including the Michelin-starred Mirador de Ullia. Here are his tips on how to sneak some new dishes into your children's diet.

- **Make it funny and interesting.**

"Tell them funny stories, and make associations with their favorite super heroes or favorite animals," he says. "Explain the cooking technique, the benefits, or the history of the ingredients. Kids love stories."

- **Start them young.** Valdivia and Kolesnichenko love Chinese food, and began introducing their children to it at a very young age. He believes broadening their tastes early on pays long term dividends. "In the future they will have

great palates," he says.

- **Eat what they eat.** If all the family always enjoys the same menu it cuts down the ability to reject foods.

- **Camouflage and persist.** Valdivia says it's normal for kids to hate new flavors on the first go. He recommends trying again if kids reject certain flavors or ingredients. "Try dishes where they are disguised or mixed with a favorite flavor, or change up the preparation or presentation," he says.

### The Dietician

Israeli born Dr. Leora Martin obtained her BSc. in Nutritional Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem and has worked as clinical dietitian with an emphasis in pediatrics, internal medicine and post-surgical care. She shares her guidelines for expanding your children's tastes.

• **No pressure.** "Don't make a big deal out of it and don't draw a comparison to other kids or siblings," says Dr. Martin. If a child feels pressure to like a certain food they may respond negatively, so make it exciting rather than mandatory, and chances are they'll be more willing to explore.

• **Expect take backs.** They may eat a lot of it one day and a little or none the next. Which brings us to...

• **Keep trying.** Kids might need to be exposed to a food a dozen times before they are willing to taste it. Let it go and try again a few days later.

• **Never force your child to eat something.** Respect your child and allow them to make food decisions for themselves on what and how much to eat. Dr. Martin says "Just like there are some foods that we don't like, it is important to accept the fact that our child might also dislike a certain food."

• **Let kids play with food.** "I don't mean start a food fight," says Dr. Martin, "but let children explore new foods by smelling and touching them."

• **Set the example through family dinners.** "Studies have shown that children who watch their parents eat a large variety of foods, including new foods, are more willing to try them themselves," she says. Follow the family diet and offer the child whatever the family is eating.

• **Some like it hot.** Some cultures introduce children to spicy food at a very young age; there is no recom-

mended time frame. "Using a variety of spices to enhance food taste expands the child's palate, and will reduce the amount of sugar and salt often added to make foods taste better," she says. "That said, Chinese food is often heavily spiced with chili peppers, garlic, ginger and soy sauce. These flavors might be strong for some children. When dining out you can always ask your waiter to go easy."

• **Start with the familiar.** When you and your child are calm, start with foods that they might be familiar with such as dumplings and steamed vegetables, and continue from there. "Remember, once the stress factor is turned off, you might be pleasantly surprised by your child!" says Dr. Martin.

Dr. Leora Martin



### Vocabulary

#### Useful sentence:

Please don't put [meat, MSG, salt, spice, sugar, garlic, ginger, soy...].

Qing bu yao fang [rou, weijin, yan, la jiao, tang, dasuan, jiang, jiangyou...].

请不要放【肉，味精，盐，辣椒，大蒜，姜，酱油...】



# The Sweeter Side of Life

The Lyu-Joshi family makes sweet fish  
for Chinese New Year

by Nimo Wanjau



PHOTOS: ZEUS

*Sawam Lyu Joshi (age 3) admires his mom's culinary handiwork*

When we visit the Lyu-Joshi family at their home in Shuangjing we meet the whole household: Chinese mom Wenting Lyu, Nepalese dad Santoshi Joshi, an associate director at interior architecture firm, Adrianse Group, their 3-year-old son Sawan Lyu Joshi, who attends Etonkids International Bilingual School, Lyu's mother who is staying with them, and Ibu the dog.

Lyu loves to cook for her family and says that the family spends quality time at home making dumplings (*jiaozi*) together especially during the Chinese New Year. She says, "Every dish is a creative journey, a wonderful feeling of using ordinary ingredients to add spice to everyday life."

As Lyu prepares today's dish a low chant of *jia you* (an expression commonly as encouragement to competitors during sporting events) can be heard in the background. Grandma is prompting Sawan to cheer on his mom. Lyu laughs and whispers that she isn't on a cooking show. The sweet fried fish dish is Sawan's favorite and he can hardly contain his joy when Lyu finally sets the meal in front of him. He gobbles up his portion in less than ten minutes and is rewarded with two cookies for his hearty appetite.

### Sweet Fried Fish 松鼠桂鱼

#### Fish Ingredients 成分

200g fish fillet 一块龙利鱼柳  
One pear 一个梨  
Half of a carrot 半根胡萝卜  
Yellow pepper 一个黄椒  
Spring onions 少许腰果  
Ginger 少许葱末  
Corn starch 美末  
Flour 淀粉和面粉适量

#### Sweet Sauce

Ingredients 成分  
12g starch 淀粉12g  
12g sugar 糖12g  
12g salt 盐12g  
13g vinegar 醋13g  
40g ketchup 番茄酱40g  
200ml water 水200ml  
1g cooking wine 料酒1g  
Pinch of black pepper 胡椒粉少许

## Instructions 做法



1

1. Using a kitchen knife, score the fish in a crisscross pattern, and season with salt and pepper. Leave for 10 minutes. Next turn the fish up in starch and flour, coating evenly. 将鱼以十字花刀的切法切好，撒少许盐和胡椒粉腌制10分钟，然后将鱼放入淀粉和面粉的混合物中包裹均匀待用。

2. Using a melon baller, scoop balls out of the pear. Slice the carrot. Put the pear balls and carrot slices into boiling water. Remove after 2 minutes.

将梨用工具挖成球形，胡萝卜切片，水烧开后放入梨和胡萝卜，2分钟后捞出。

2



3

3. Pour cooking oil in a pan, and fry the fish until golden. 倒入足量油，将鱼入锅炸至成型，最好成金黄色。



4. In another pan, heat a little oil, and fry the green onions and ginger together. Add all of the sweet-and-sour sauce ingredients and stir.

取另一锅，倒入少许油，葱姜入锅炒香，放入少许番茄酱炒。

4



5

5. Add the pear balls, carrot slices, and cashews into the pan and stir-fry quickly. After 30 seconds, pour half of the vegetables over the yellow pepper and half over the fried fish. 然后把糖醋汁倒入锅中搅拌均匀，把梨，胡萝卜，腰果倒入锅中快速翻炒，30秒后出锅，一部分盛入黄椒内，一部分浇在炸好的鱼上。



# A-Z of Market Research

A round-up of Beijing's last markets standing

by Yvette Ferrari and Aisling O'Brien, with additional research by Scott DeVoy Su



Huaxiang



Pearl Market



Muxiyuan Fabric Market



Tianyi Toy Market



Guanyuan Bird and Fish Market

**A**h, markets. The fakes, the bargains, the crowds, the yelling, the visual overload, and general sense of chaos; they're a fast-vanishing part of the authentic Beijing cultural experience. Some are prized for their low-key, near-fair, first-offer prices while others are distinguished by their capacity to bring out your haggling A-game. Beijing's markets are a dying breed: rapidly falling victim to closures, refits, or relocation to neighboring Hubei Province over last couple of years. We round up some the last markets standing in the city and provide a guide on where to go for funky gifts, house plants, and everything in-between.

## Alien Street Market 老番街市场

Also known as the Russian market, this collection of markets around Yaobao Lu is one of the better options in particular for formal wear, winter coats, and leather goods in terms of fair prices, polite vendors, and a wider range of sizes. You can also find electronics and sports gear. Bear in mind that Chaoyang District had planned to close or move the Russian market by the end of 2015 according to state media, however, the last time we checked parts of the market are still operating. If the dying days of Yashow are anything to go by, there will be bargains galore as vendors move on. Be sure to head over before it goes the way of the dodo.

Laofan jie Shichang, Yabao Lu (south of Fullink Plaza), Chaoyang District 日坛公园雅宝路, 朝阳区雅宝路

## Dazhong Sijin Wuxing Market 大钟寺金五星市场

Another market with a little bit of everything, Dazhong supplies inexpensive camping gear, household supplies such as pots and cutlery, hardware, a limited selection of clothing for kids and adults, electronics, stationary, and

home renovation materials. It's a little bit of a trek for most expats; you'll find it on the south side of the Northwest Third Ring Road, behind the furniture stores.

Daily 8.30am-6pm. 118 Zhongguancun Donglu, Haidian District 海淀区中关村东路118号 (近联想桥)

## Guanyuan Bird and Fish Market 官园花鸟鱼虫市场

Find a selection of aquarium fish, birds, and even those walnuts Chinese people hold in their palms for good circulation, at this small market west off of Zizhu Yuan (Purple Mountain Park).

Mon-Thu 9am-6pm, Fri-Sun 9am-6.30pm. 5 Zizhuyuanlu, Guanyuan Dasha, Guanyuan Zha (northeast corner of Purple Bamboo Park) 海淀区紫竹院路广源闸5号广源大厦 (紫竹桥东北角)

## Hongqiao 红桥市场

Also known as Pearl Market, for many expats this is the spiritual successor for now unrecognizable Yashow Market. You'll find an entire floor dedicated to selling and designing jewelry of your own choosing; just pick your clasp.

There's also the usual array of knock-offs, electronics, cheap toys, souvenirs, and much more. Starting prices can be outrageously inflated; expect to bargain hard – down to as little as 20 percent of what's quoted initially. Daily 9.30am-7pm. Temple of Heaven, 46 Hongqiao Lu, Chongwen District (6713 3354) 天坛, 崇文区红桥路46号

## Huaxiang Wholesale Plants Market 花乡花卉批发市场

This is the one stop shop if you're in the market for natural, air filtering houseplants, yard decorations, or cheap pots at a good bargain. Negotiate with drivers for home delivery. 9am-5pm. Hua Xiang Yuquanying Lijiaoqiao (southwestern corner), Fengtai District 丰台区花乡玉泉营立交桥西南角

## Lady Street 女人街服装市场

Lady Street features slightly dressier clothing as well as smaller boutiques; browse for purses, shoes, jewelry, clothes and home accessories.

Mon-Sun 9am-7pm. Nuren Jie, Tianze Lu, Chaoyang District 朝阳区天泽路女人街

**Laitai Flower Market** 莱太花卉市场

Laitai Flower Market, located in the same area as Ladies' Street Market, has plants, garden gear, a selection of specialty furniture and home wares, and even small pets like fish, hamsters, and turtles.

Mon-Thu 9am-6pm, Fri-Sun 9am-6.30 pm. 9 Maizidian Xilu, Chaoyang District (6463 6145) 朝阳区麦子店西路9号

**Liangma Flower Market** 亮马花卉市场

Selling every variety of cut flower and potted plant at very reasonable prices, there are dozens of individual vendors, so variety is good and bargaining is the norm. Delivery by flatbed bicycle costs between RMB 50-100, depending on the quantity of plants ordered, distance, and your haggling skills. Upstairs the home wares vendors have cushions, lamps, scented candles, teapots, glassware, and more.

Daily 8.30am-6.30pm. South bank of Liangma River, 758 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District (6504 2446) 朝阳区东三环北路758号, 燕莎商城南, 亮马河南岸

**Muxiyuan Fabric Market** 大红门纺织品批发市场

We recommend heading to Jingdu Shiji Qingfangcheng as it is very easy to get lost in this extensive collection of fabric markets. Find everything from natural fabric and neutrals to an impressive collection of silks and brightly colored patterns.

Daily 6am-5pm. 33 Dahongmen Lu (south of Muxiyuan long-distance bus station), south of Muxiyuanqiao on South Third Ring Road,

Fengtai District 丰台区南三环木樨园桥往南大红门路木樨园长途汽车站南侧

**Panjiayuan Market** 潘家园旧货市场

Perhaps best known for its glasses and antiques sections, many consider Panjiayuan an essential visit. Get your eyes checked out while you're visiting and choose from a huge selection of frames and shades. Across the way find tin toys, calligraphy tools and chops, puppets, kites, furniture, beads, statues, and various other valuables (purportedly made by Chinese ethnic minority artisans).

Mon-Fri 8.30am-6pm, Sat-Sun 4.30am-6pm. Off of Southeast Third Ring Road, West of Panjiayuan Qiao, Chaoyang District (6775 2405) 朝阳区潘家园桥西边

**Tianyi Market** 天意市场 (阜外店)

This enormous market located off West Second Ring Road has everything under the sun: Christmas decorations, bags, toys, silk flowers, clothing, electronics, and office and art supplies. This is a wholesale market, so buying in larger quantities may result in a cheaper price. Mon-Sun 7am-6pm. 259 Fuchengmen Waidajie, Xicheng District (6831 7199) 阜成门外大街259号

**Silk Street Market** 秀水街

Rows upon rows of clothes for all ages, shoes, electronics, suitcases, and typical Chinese gifts such as teapots, chopsticks, and of course, Chinese "silk" can be found in this six-story market behemoth. Be prepared for loud vendors quoting high prices in multiple

languages as they are accustomed to dealing with tourists inexperienced at bargaining. Prices quoted are often

Daily 9am-9pm. 8 Xiushui Dongjie, Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District (5169 8800) 朝阳区建国门外大街秀水东街8号

**Yashow Market** 雅秀市场

The recently made-over Yashow bears no resemblance to its predecessor. The only remnant of what was is the tailor's floor. You can stop off for a Burger King, and still indulge in some TLC with a mani or pedi, but we hear vendors are no longer amenable to haggling; don't let that stop you from trying!

Daily 9.30am-9pm. Sanlitun, 58 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District (6415 1726) 三里屯, 朝阳区工体北路58号



Lady Street

**Market Tips:**

- **Look up goods online to get a guideline price before shopping.** It's sometimes more convenient to buy at the market, and it can be reassuring to handle goods and assess their quality in person. However, most of what you want to buy is also available, and possibly at a cheaper price, on Taobao.
- **Don't get frazzled; remember it's all a game.** If it feels like hard work, take a friend who actually enjoys the process (yes, they exist!) and let them take over. Pay no mind to frowns, shouting, or other signs of anger. These are meaningless and just part of the process.
- **Never reveal how much you like an item.** No matter what, keep up your façade of indifference. If you're shopping with a friend it can be fun to invent codewords in advance to secretly indicate how interested you really are.

- **The fake walk away.** Nothing shows your willingness to reject the deal like physically removing yourself from their space. Employ this judiciously – obviously it gives diminishing returns if you try it more than once.

- **Pretend to buy in bulk.** You can try negotiating a deal for several of an item, and then buying just one. Bear in mind if this backfires you will be leaving with nothing.

- **Genuinely buy in bulk.** Negotiate every item's price as low as you can, then negotiate an even lower overall price for a bulk order.

- **Trade vendors off against each other.** Tell the seller that their best price will be your opening bid with the next vendor.

- **Check everything you buy for flaws and stains, before you leave the stall.** Market shopping is the ultimate in caveat emptor – once the deal is done you will find it near impossible to refund, repair, or exchange.

**Vocabulary****Useful sentences:**

- I'm looking for \_\_\_\_: 我想找 \_\_\_\_  
wo xiang zhao \_\_\_\_
- Do you have \_\_\_\_? 你们有 \_\_\_\_ 吗?  
ni men you \_\_\_\_ ma?
- How much does it cost? 多少钱?  
duo shao qian?
- Too expensive. 太贵了! tai gui le!
- Give me a cheaper price: 给我便宜点吧  
gei wo pianyi dian ba



# Paper Dragon

Fly through the sky with Daystar's quick and easy craft

by Aisling O'Brien

Liying Yang is the lead Chinese Montessori teacher in Casa D, teaching children ages 3- to 6-years-old. Originally from Hebei, Yang has lived in Beijing for 12 years, and worked at Daystar Academy for six of them. She selected this craft to teach her students about the most auspicious and highest ranking animal in the Chinese zodiac. "I wanted to select an activity that was reflective of the importance of Chinese culture and tradition, but is still fun and easy for little kids to follow," she says. "We focus on different themes each month. This month we are focussing on Spring Festival, and tying in various arts and crafts activity to the theme," says Yang.

"Montessori promotes independence," says Yang. "The students choose when they would like to do a particular craft, and at what pace." On our visit to Daystar it's easy to see Montessori theory in action. The kids freely explore different areas of the classroom and choose their own activities. Some join in the craft project, some are learning about the solar system, some are making paper imitation-firecrackers. On paper it sounds like chaos should ensue, but an atmosphere of quiet focus prevails. Children work independently – dexterously cutting with real scissors, nonchalantly carrying water in a pottery jug – tasks that not every 4-year-old can accomplish without accident.

**Estimated time:**

20 minutes

**Suitable for:**

Age 3+

**Materials**

- Printed dragon sheet ([www.beijing-kids.com/download/Daystar handicraft.pdf](http://www.beijing-kids.com/download/Daystar%20handicraft.pdf))
- Crayons or markers
- A4 sized red or yellow paper
- 2 ice cream sticks
- Glue

**Instructions**



**1** Color in the dragons on the printed dragon sheet. Carefully cut out each part.



**2** Fold the A4 paper accordion style. Then cut the paper into four pieces. Glue the pieces together to make one length for the body.



**3** Glue the dragon head on one end, and the tail on the other.



**4** Attach the dragon feet, and ice cream sticks.



Clockwise from back left: Betty Xiao, Cindy Liang, Kitty He, John An, and Yana Li

# The Golden Thread

## The Chinese Thread at Keystone Academy ties students to national history and culture

by Yvette Ferrari

**W**hether your family's in Beijing for a short stint or an indefinite period, most parents hope their children will develop and retain an appreciation of their host country. Beijing's history is immediate and tangible. We're fortunate to have an endless array of museums, walking tours, and sites at our disposal when it comes to teaching our kids more about the place we call our temporary home. However, nothing matches the impact of formal education and a well-crafted curriculum on learning. For this reason, in many of Beijing's international schools, Chinese culture is woven into coursework, allowing students the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Chinese traditions and its layered history on an everyday basis. We speak to five students from Keystone Academy about some of their classes, and how their learning makes them feel more connected to Chinese culture.

### Q&A with Keystone's Strategic Advisor, Dr. Sally Booth

#### Tell us a bit about how the Chinese Thread was inspired.

While it's important to prepare students to be globally minded citizens with international perspectives and communicate effectively in two languages, our objective is to celebrate the culture and promote the identity of the local host culture of the school. One of the three keystones is bilingualism; we try to educate our students to be bilingual not only in two languages, but also in two cultures. The best way to do this is holistically. One cannot understand a culture by looking at its arts alone. Instead, one must see how the arts are influenced by history, and history is influenced by society, economy and politics, and so on. It's important our students understand the rich complexity of Chinese culture.

#### When developing the curriculum, how did the school decide on the subjects to represent the Chinese thread?

It is best to approach the study of culture in different ways related to

the developmental stages of the students, through integrated units in the Primary School curriculum, through detailed concept and skill-based study in the Middle School, and through serious academic scholarship in the High School. In the Primary School, Chinese themes from the Chinese national curriculum are woven throughout the units of study in both English and Chinese language classes.

Our goal in the Middle School program is to ensure our students are proficient in one of the traditional Chinese arts these arts including music, performing arts (wushu, drama) and visual arts (ceramics, painting, calligraphy) as key elements of Chinese culture. The meaning of culture can be abstract for students to understand; for that reason we use concrete examples from beautiful art, compelling music, expressive literature, and exciting events to help students grasp the development of ideas and the meaning of art in a coherent historical context. Thus, in middle school humanities, students study the complexity of Chinese history in a historical global context. They learn about developments in China, shifts in the evolution of culture, and the arts as they relate to world history. This is the key to developing creative and analytical thinking; critical thinking.

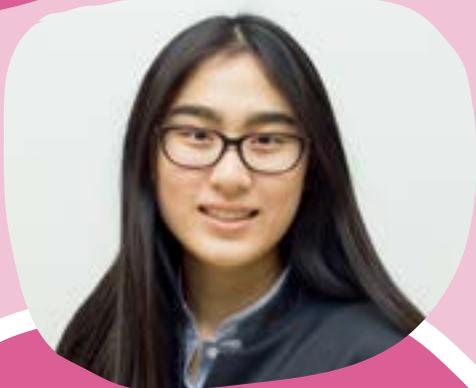
#### What qualities should parents look for in a school when considering a curriculum that successfully integrates Chinese Culture?

A curriculum should be coherent; it should have a narrative that provides a meaningful explanation of both what and why students are learning at different points in their course of study. An effective curriculum gives structure and meaning to the choices of content and skills being taught. A curriculum like that we're developing at Keystone Academy has its own distinctive character. While we use IPC (International Primary Curriculum) and the International Baccalaureate MYP (Middle Years Programme) and DP (Diploma Programme) as general frameworks, much of the curriculum content is shaped by our commitment to the Chinese Thread and the objectives of international education – the teaching of ideas in a global context.



**John An, 14, China  
Wushu Class**

"During wushu class, we learn a little about wushu's history either by doing some reading or watching a video. Afterwards, the teacher demonstrates the moves and then we have time to practice on our own. The teacher is always a perfect example for us to copy, so it makes it straightforward for us to learn. We have more classmates in wushu than in other classes and I feel more confident with the bigger group together, like a big family. If I can't perform a move, a classmate or the teacher will come help me immediately, and I really appreciate that. When the semester comes to an end, the final test for wushu is to perform all the moves we've learned during the semester, but some of those moves are ridiculously hard and memorizing is always tough too. It took me a long time to remember the names of every single move and be able to write them! But if you pay attention and practice every day, you'll be fine. Wushu is an interesting class to take. You can learn about Chinese culture and exercise at the same time!"



**Cindy Liang, 14, China  
Chinese History Class**

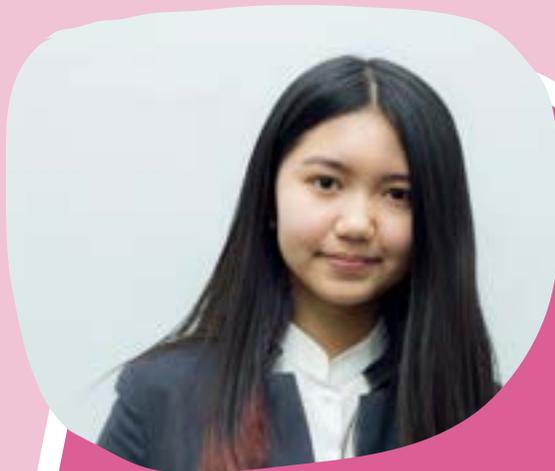
"In the history class you're expected to give your opinion and you're free to speak your mind. We mostly learn by studying in groups and through discussions. After finishing different units, you can see patterns such as the rise and decline of different emperors and repeating trends. Good history books should make the reader feel alive in the story and make you think. Good books also should let students see both the good and bad aspects of what happened in the past. The Chinese thread history class is not just about learning history however, it allows students to think about different problems from history and to apply the lessons to current times. I like talking about history in creative ways. It can be very boring to just learn things that can only help with your test or projects, but this class makes you think critically and develop a comprehensive, rigorous way of thinking. Linking what we've recently learned about the past, connecting it to China now, and answering questions such as whether we can see similar events happening again are difficult questions to answer but it is also challenges us. The most interesting project we worked on this year, was interviewing our grandparents and parents about lineal primogeniture. [The custom of the legitimate firstborn son to inherit his parent's entire estate]. This project made us think about rules and unfairness created by emperors and of what the consequences of this system were."



**Kitty He, 15, China  
Chinese Music Class**

"Chinese music class is a bit different from our regular music lessons. We have three choices of instruments to learn: the guzheng, the pipa, or the ruan. For most of us, it's our first time playing a Chinese instrument and we have to practice a lot. We all choose one song to play and at the end of the semester, we will perform in the Performing Arts Center. We play and practice every day and solve problems together. Our music teacher will film us and we'll be graded on how smoothly we play.

We also learn about the history and the development of Chinese music history. We watch videos of famous musicians' performances and the powerful, haunting music really fills us with awe. Chinese music class makes me feel more connected to Chinese culture because the guzheng is an ancient, traditional instrument and it's easy to connect to its beauty when playing and hearing it. I recommend that other students spend time in the music room practicing their instrument. A little practice every day helps to develop your skills."



**Yana Li, 13, China  
Chinese Dance class**

"Dance makes me feel relaxed, so I really enjoy every class.

Even if you can't dance well, you don't feel any pressure because the dance teachers are kind and always help us improve. The thing I like most about dance is that we are challenged to learn a lot. Before this I had never learned Chinese dance but after only one semester, I performed Chinese classical dance in the school play. I learned Dai last semester, which is an ethnic dance that requires coordination and enthusiasm; it's very active. About ten girls from different grades level performed on stage. We had rehearsals every week and worked hard to make the show better and better. The older girls often helped me when I had questions. At the beginning of rehearsals, sometimes I was impatient and frustrated because I instantly wanted to become a brilliant dancer in a short time. I've taken away a lot from the experience because I've learned to be more patient with everything in my life.

Chinese classical dance and ethnic dances are part of our culture and through us the tradition is being passed down from generation to generation. When we study abroad in the future, we can introduce these dances to other countries."

**Betty Xiao, 14, China  
Chinese History Class**

"We learn about China's past such as political systems of different dynasties. The purpose of learning history is to remember what happened before and to compare it with China's modern society. Though our teacher lectures us on different topics, for some sections we need to read textbooks and then do our own research. After that, we create group presentations on different topics. So we're not only receiving knowledge from our teacher or textbooks and memorizing it, we're exploring and giving our own opinions on what we've learned."

"I think the most interesting projects are essays though writing them can be difficult. We first need first find academic essays on a given topic, then analyze the essays; including information like the essay's purpose, and its value and limitations. After that, we need to write our own essay and complete a reflection. Although history can't be imparted and inherited in the same way skills can, but it is another way of connecting to Chinese culture."





# Understanding China

WAB students say outsiders can understand China with time and commitment

by Yvette Ferrari

## Can foreigners ever really understand China?

The jury is still out on this hot button issue; the naysayers point to over 5,000 years of a deep, layered history and culture while the more positive among us maintain that foreigners' understanding of China is entirely possible with study, an open mind, and time. Two students from Western Academy of Beijing (WAB) weigh in on the topic.

## Annette Lee, US/Korea, 16, has lived in Beijing 11 years

Although there has long been a prevalent view that no foreigner can ever truly understand China, this viewpoint is marked by a pessimistic skepticism and is an assessment that underestimates true human potential. Can anyone, especially foreigners, ever really understand the culture, language, and values of a gargantuan country as large as China? Yes. Will this undertaking require tremendous effort and dedication? Of course. But it is entirely possible.

Foreigners in this context can be defined as people who do not biologically originate from China that is, people who are born to a non-Chinese family. Therefore, expats, international students, and travelers all fall under the "foreigner" category. Historically, ever since the McCartney's visit to the Qing Government in 1793, when the West and China were able to interact, foreigners have continued to exponentially show interest in China – with both good and bad intentions. So great is the growth of foreigners residing in China, that, according

yes



to Jiang Jie in *Global Times*, a whopping 848,500 foreigners were living in China by 2013. Additionally, although it is true that there are numerous closed-minded people that may not seek to truly appreciate the beautiful culture, language, and values of their new country of residence, there are many more that are curious enough to take on the task of fully exploring it.

If a foreigner were to take intensive Chinese lessons to raise his or her levels of speaking, writing, and reading to those of a Chinese citizen, then it is entirely possible for this person's literary ability to be indistinguishable from that of a local Chinese citizen. Additionally, by taking personal interest and by extensively learning about Chinese history, famous monuments, popular figures, and cuisine, it is similarly possible to build up an exceptional wealth of knowledge on Chinese traditions. Foreigners can even appreciate Chinese customs, values, and culture through various means, such as by befriending local Chinese people and interacting regularly with them. Then, what can stop a foreigner from really understanding China?

A fundamental counter-argument is that a foreigner will never be able to completely appreciate Chinese culture, because he or she will not be able to experience the culture in a personal, meaningful, and defining manner. For example, despite knowing what a *hongbao* is, how will a foreigner know the feeling of receiving a *hongbao* for a special occasion if he or she had never received one before? These types of situations suggest that fully understanding China as a foreigner is a quite difficult task, and that it requires a person to step out of their comfort zone, such as by living with a Chinese family. However, it is not impossible.

The best example of a "foreigner" who really understands China is Michael Crook, one of the founders of the Western Academy of Beijing. His Chinese is completely fluent – undistinguishable from that of any other Chinese citizen – and he is seemingly an expert in Chinese culture and history. He has experienced events that even the young local Chinese have not, such as the Cultural Revolution. Although it is true that Mr. Crook had been raised in China as a child, he nevertheless is a perfect example for me that even foreigners – those not of Chinese origin – are capable of truly understanding China.

## Sara Nixon, US, 18, has been in Beijing one and a half years

I do not think foreigners' true understanding of China is a matter of ability, but rather, is a matter of time. At some point, foreigners will be able to understand China. Not necessarily because foreigners are becoming more culturally aware, but because China's culture is rapidly changing as it becomes more and more "international."

China has recently become the world's second largest economy, in terms of nominal GDP, and has also become a global hub for manufacturing. Furthermore, trade between China and the rest of the world seems to be increasing. As a result, more foreigners conduct business in China, whether it's outsourcing manufacturing jobs, or direct investment into Chinese companies. In 2014, for example, China took the US' position as the prime location for direct foreign investment. China, too, is engaged in business elsewhere, notably in Africa, where it has begun to exchange approximately USD 160 billion per year.

My point is this: all of China's economic growth and increased interaction with foreign companies has promoted the exchange and adaption of foreign culture. A growing number of foreign businesses are becoming involved in China's economy, thus promoting increased contact with Chinese culture. It has long been accepted that when people travel (or nowadays, post things on the Internet), they take their ideas and manners of behavior with them, and these ideas may



spread to others.

To some extent, aspects of Chinese work culture has changed in accordance with this. According to Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory, China scores high on the "masculinity" index, meaning that society is highly driven by competition. However, that attitude seems to be changing in exchange for a culture more interested in personal accomplishments and less concerned with society's litmus test for success. Just this year, a middle school teacher in Zhengzhou inspired many people when she resigned from her position in favor of exploring the world. What has changed, however, is not that that particular teacher left her job, but the approval she received from the other people in society. That idea of self expression, of putting yourself first rather than the collective came from foreigners, particularly Westerners.

That is, of course, is just one example, and what I've put forth applies singularly to the cultural aspect of China. There are of course different understandings of China; geographic, political, etc. However, when I think of understanding China, the biggest hurdle seems to be a cultural one. China is globalizing fast, and foreigners will find that it is just as quickly adopting other cultural traits. Soon, foreigners may be able to say, "I understand China."

# Students from The British School of Beijing, Shunyi (BSB) fill February's Blank Canvas



**Angela, 9, Singapore**

My picture shows a beautiful Chinese dragon and a beautiful girl.



**Andrew, 8, South Korea**

When I drew the Emperor I thought about the details of his clothes and the way his face looked.



**Jan, 8, Czech Republic**

My picture shows an evil dragon.



**Alex, 8, South Korea**

I decided my emperor should look happy because he ruled so much land.



**Lorenzo, 10, Mexico**

I drew a beautiful Chinese dragon.

**Cayden, 8, Singapore**

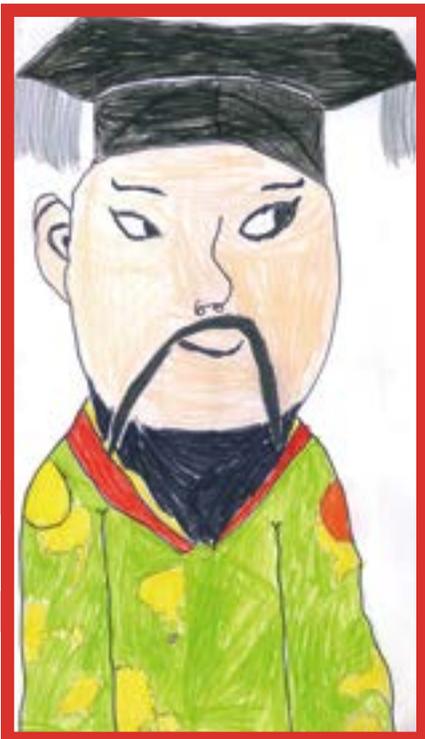
This is a dragon. We are learning about the Shang Dynasty.

**Kaetlyn, 8, Germany**

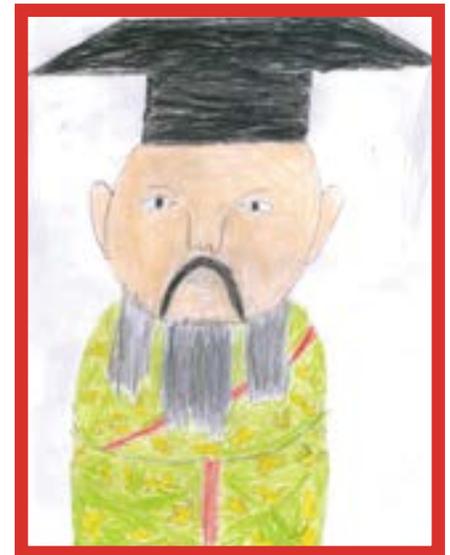
People in the Shang Dynasty believed that dragons protected them.

**Junwon, 9, South Korea**

I enjoyed drawing the emperor from the Shang Dynasty. He was a very important person in ancient China so I tried to make him look powerful.

**Moriaan, 9, Belgium**

This is a plant eating dragon that can breathe fire.

**Morena, 9, South Africa**

I thought that the emperor would have been a very serious person because he had so many jobs to do.

# To China, With Love

## A relationship deepened over time

by Ember Swift

When I first came to Beijing I was already in love with Chinese culture. I pursued a degree in East Asian Studies with a concentration on China, learning all I could about this country before ever setting foot in it. The problem with these kinds of majors, however, is how much fantasy they concoct. China was a faraway land, a mirage of my future I kept seeing in the distance but never seemed to reach. It was a promise. Of what, I wasn't sure.

I did finally reach China, nine years after graduation, and when it held up the weight of me under the soles of my shoes, I was awestruck: not just because I was really here, in an actual place, but because it felt like a memory rather than a novelty. How could a place I'd never known feel familiar? The whole country seemed to vibrate. There's a reason the word *destination* is connected to the word *destiny*.

Now, halfway into my eighth year of living in Beijing, I have taken that trippy, psychic memory of China and entwined it with tangible memories of residing here in real time. I am married into a Chinese family, the mother of two children, speaking the language, eating the

food, forgetting sometimes, while on brief sojourns back in Canada, that *tuoxie* (slippers) are not available in everyone's foyer for visitors.

While I found the land I was destined to meet, the geographic love of my life (and yeah, a life partner here too), my relationship with Chinese culture has gone through a lot of balancing acts. I wouldn't say I've fallen out of love with Chinese culture, exactly. It's more that I've come to the point where I know this culture almost too well. Like any long relationship, you start with what you *do* like and then eventually discover what you *don't*. And, while you're still in it, you adopt ways of *living with it*.

China's eating noises: Mouth smacking. Lip slurping. I've trained myself to locate their pitches, examining them like avant-garde music or else I still have violent thoughts about it, even eight years later.

China's roundabout, inherently manipulative, face-saving negotiation techniques: I have to view them as creative schematics or strategic masterpieces otherwise I have visions of stripping everyone naked while screaming: "See? Lay it bare! Tell it like it is!"

## I found the land I was destined to meet, the geographic love of my life

But nothing lasts forever. There will be a time – probably in 2018 – when we will return to Canada. And while I won't miss those irksome cultural elements, there are so many things I will certainly pine for: the holistic view of the body through Chinese medicine – present in everyday life here; the Daoist-Taichi balance, an ideology rejecting extremes; the amazing song of this tonal language in which I hear so much rhythm and pitch all around me; the tradition of extended family engagement with childrearing, which is sometimes crazy-making but so very invaluable; Taobao! The list is endless. The pros outweigh the cons or else I wouldn't still be here.

So, for the next couple of years I will savor this culture. I'll appreciate every flavor burst in every bite of *jiaozi*. I'll step up my language study. I'll perfect outward modesty. I'll gather some of China's vibrations to take back home with me.

When you fall in love with something as nebulous as a culture into which you were not born, there's always the chance that it won't love you back. Yet, I have always felt welcomed here. China's pretty reticent about declarations, but when the time comes for me to say goodbye, I prefer to believe China will always miss me.

It's all in the balance.



### About the Writer

Ember Swift is a Canadian musician and writer who has been living in Beijing since late 2008. She and her husband Guo Jian (国团), who is also a musician, have a daughter called Echo (国如一) and a son called Topaz.

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# Please and Xie Xie

## Cultural misunderstandings over gratitude

by Jennifer Ambrose

A few years ago while visiting the US, I walked into a fraught lunchtime scene: Brigid was sulking, separated from the table where the other children in the family were happily eating. The family member in whose care I had left her that morning pounced on me with the explanation of what had occurred. Brigid had been served lunch, and the family member waited a moment to be thanked. Even after prompting, "what-do-you-say," Brigid remained silent. For this offense, she was banished until I returned to deal with her.

The family member was understandably angry. I was embarrassed. At risk of exposing one of my weaker mothering moments, I admonished Brigid strongly for her ungratefulness. She was old enough to know better, I growled. My daughter looked up at me, tearful and baffled.

"Why would I say, 'thank you' to someone for giving me lunch? We're not in a restaurant," Brigid cried. "We're with family!"

I recognized what was going on; she was culturally confused. The words for 'please' and 'thank you' are discouraged in China among close relationships. I had once been more vigilant, in our earlier days in Shenzhen and Beijing, prompting the kids to say "qing" and "xie xie" with typically American frequency. I felt our cultural need to demonstrate thanks, especially to friends.

To Chinese ears these words sounded clumsy, creating needless formality and distance. The adults in our lives the kids had come to address as *shushu* or *ayi* always waved off these expressions of gratitude. I certainly never waited around for or prompted Chinese children to thank me like I would have in the US.

### To Chinese ears these words sounded clumsy, creating needless formality and distance

Brigid had by this time internalized this aspect of common Chinese manners, replacing my directives about thanking with *bu keqi*. It had gotten to the point, where I too had grown lax in policing the behavior even in our own household. When in Rome, and all that.

However, I knew that none of this would excuse Brigid's ingratitude in this family member's eyes. We were in America, where we were expected to operate according to American rules. There is no greater offense than rudeness, especially when it comes to interactions with family. It was the complete opposite of our daily Chinese life. Further, I guessed if I approached the affronted family member explaining

that Brigid wasn't really being inconsiderate, at least not by Chinese mores, I would sound as though I was trying to make lame excuses.

Instead, this all merely fed my aggravation with the situation. I knew Brigid didn't entirely understand what she did that was wrong, but I had to enforce the discipline that had already been dealt. All I felt I could do was continue in anger. It wasn't my finest moment, but the family member at least was mollified when she received a muffled "thank you" from an evidently chastened Brigid.

As I was sitting down in front of my computer to complete this column, Brigid came up to me and asked about my submission. I gave her the general overview. She barely remembered that day a few years back, but she did volunteer, "You know, the rules still confuse me."

She went on, "I guess that must be why we say 'xie xie' all the time now in China. It's a good thing our friends have grown used to us doing that."

Better safe than sorry. In China no one will be as offended by our saying, "Thanks," as Americans would be by the omission.

#### About the Writer

Jennifer Ambrose hails from Western Pennsylvania and misses it terribly. She still maintains an intense devotion to the Pittsburgh Steelers. She has lived in China since 2006 and is currently an at-home mother. With her husband Randy and children Myles and Brigid, she resides outside Sixth Ring Road in Changping. Her blog can be found at [jenambrose.blogspot.com](http://jenambrose.blogspot.com).



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*Selena Rao modeling headwear by Elisabeth Koch Millinery and a qipao by Tang'Roulou*



# When in Beijing

photo by More x Joli

by Yvette Ferrari

For most expats, *Chunjie* is a time to rejoice in time away from our everyday routines and enjoy the chance to travel; whether it means taking a trip home to see our families or escaping the freezing temperatures for somewhere warm and tropical. For those of us who remain in Beijing as its *waidiren* empty out, it's one of the quietest and therefore best times to be in the city. The countdown to Spring Festival is undoubtedly at the forefront of everyone's mind this month, and we invite readers to take a moment to appreciate the traditions of China's biggest holiday of the year. If you're staying in town, attend one of Beijing's many temple fairs; or better yet, consider starting a tradition of your own by trying out one of the Chinese cultural activities outlined in the coming pages. Happy exploring and *Xin nian kuai le!*



## How Chinese families celebrate Chinese New Year

By Aisling O'Brien

**S**pring Festival (*Chunjie* or 春节) kicks off the year of the Monkey, beginning with Chinese New Year on February 8, and ending 15 days later with Lantern Festival on February 22. As Christmas is very much about family for some westerners, so Chinese New Year is a time to gather together and share time with their families. With the Chinese Diaspora as far-flung and extensive as it is, trains, planes, and automobiles will be packed with family members expressing their filial piety by returning to their hometowns. We look into the traditions of two Beijing families to find out more about the country's most important holiday.



Miles Doherty and Ying Cao with their son Patrick (age 2)



Miles Doherty with Ying Cao's family at Spring Festival

## The Cao-Doherty Family

Australian Miles Doherty teaches at Beijing International Bilingual School (BIBA). His Chinese wife Ying Cao is a stay at home mother. Their son Patrick (age 2), was born in Beijing and attends ECC-2 at BIBA.

### Plans:

Every year we travel to Ying's hometown outside Beijing. Ying comes from a large family – the 33 people that make up Ying's side of our family gather at her 90-year-old Grandma's country farm house. It's a great opportunity for the family members that now work and live in different cities, to meet and catch up and enjoy discovering how each family member is doing. Chinese New Year is very important to our family. It's not just a cultural tradition but also a family tradition that has been passed down for many, many years and one which we will continue to value.

### Traditions:

On the first day of Chinese New Year, we scrub up and get dressed in our finest clothes. The younger generations will have the first formal greeting with Ying's Grandma and wish her a very happy New Year and wish for her to live a long and happy life with us. She will give red envelopes to the young kids and whoever has joined the workforce from the younger generations will give a red envelop to her. This part has been a tradition for our family over the last 30 years and when it's time, the second generations like Ying's parents or aunt and uncle will lead the third and fourth generation to Grandma's room and tell them what to do.

### Decorations:

Normally people will have a big clean up of their houses, then when everyone is home, Ying, her uncle, her dad, and her cousin will be in charge of putting *dui lian* [decorative couplets written on strips of red

paper] on the main gates, *chuang hua* [red paper-cuttings] on the windows, and big red lanterns on the main entrance. Then during New Year's day, cookies, candies, fruits, and tea will be put on the table in the living room for the guests.

### Food:

Ying's parents, *Shu Shu* (uncle), and *Shen Shen* (aunt) will cook dumplings and other dishes together while Ying's grandma walks around supervising.

### Patrick's Favorite Part:

He loves the fireworks and playing with his many family members - especially the younger ones and his great grandma. This year Patrick's teachers have started to warm up for the Chinese New Year by telling stories about the big monster Nian, so we think that this will be the story we will tell this year.

### How Spring Festival is Changing:

It was a big festival for Ying when she was younger. Back then Chinese New Year meant winter holidays, new clothes, yummy food, lots of red envelopes... it was like heaven. Chinese New Year has become less and less festival-like though. Many of Ying's generation married after growing up. The tradition that the wife would spend Chinese New Year at the in-law's place has meant that in Ying's family which has a lot of women, the number of people that celebrate New Year together has been getting smaller and smaller. China has developed so much that Chinese New Year food's are no longer as special and new clothes are available year-round. A lot of young people are choosing to travel during the long public holiday instead of visiting their families. Online greetings, online red envelopes, and phone calls have taken a far greater part in recent New Year celebrations.

## The Yao Family

Yuanna Yao (age 18) attends Beijing City International School. Her mom Jing Zhang and dad Kun Yao were both born and raised in Beijing, and both are engineers.

### Plans:

Having parents who work in multi-national companies, I've celebrated Spring Festival in many different places over the years due to their overseas postings. For instance we celebrated spring festival in Cyprus when I was three. Since I started school, even though we came back to China, we still love to spend the festival in other places such as Shanghai, Anhui, Zhejiang, and Thailand. Spring Festival is one of the most important times of the year, because the whole family gathers together. Normally I live in Beijing with my mom, whereas my dad lives in Shanghai. Spring Festival is the time of year when we can be together with entire the family. I'll study abroad later in the year so this year we plan to visit grandma and grandpa, and hang out with my cousins.

### Traditions:

Besides having dumplings on New Year 's Eve, we also eat dumplings on the fifth day of the new year according to the lunar calendar. On the fifth day we intentionally overcook the dumplings so that they break to celebrate the first five days of New Year. I learned this tradition from my grandma. My grandma usually starts to prepare for Spring Festival in December [Lunar calendar]. She begins preparing many dishes which she finishes making on New Year 's Eve, and then serves for dinner. After dinner, the whole family sits down to make dumplings. We eat them at midnight. After that, for the first fifteen days of the New Year we don't cook as often so that there's more time to enjoy ourselves and relax. One of our special traditions was passed on by my grandpa. He would put a coin in one of the dumplings and leave a special mark. Then he intentionally let one of the elders in the family have it, because whoever eats the dumpling with the coin has the best of luck in the following year. Now instead of coins we put other things in the filling such as sugar, orange, pepper, and more.

### Decorations:

The most visible decoration we put up is the Chinese character 福 (Fu), which means luck. We put it on the door. Sometimes we also put up pictures of that year's Chinese zodiac animal to celebrate the upcoming year.

### Food:

We usually have a fancy dinner which definitely includes dumplings. Fish is also a must. Interestingly we don't finish the fish as part of the tradition年年有余, [*nian nian youyu*, may you have surplus year after year]. We also have braised pork which is my favorite. The adults drink Chinese baijiu and the kids have soft drinks like juice or soda. My grandma cooks the most. Sometimes my dad cooks too. He learned from a Sichuan cuisine chef when he was abroad.

### Yuanna's Favorite Part:

I love watching the fireworks. Like every family, we tune into the Spring Festival Gala Evening, but when the show gets a little bit boring in the middle, we go out and light fireworks.

### How Spring Festival is Changing:

My parents were born in the 1960s when there was a lack of resources in the country. Spring Festival back then was simply the whole family having dumplings and playing poker after dinner. Back in the day, a set amount of the dinner on New Year's Eve would be allocated to each family member, and no one could have more than what they were given. This was to ensure that my grandma would have enough to eat, because her three sons certainly ate a lot!



Yuanna Yao (age 18) with her mom Jing Zhang



# MONKEY BUSINESS

A rundown of Beijing's best temple fairs

by Sijia Chen



For Beijingers, attending a *miaohui* (temple fair) comes second only to the family reunion dinner when it comes to Chinese New Year observances. Though *miaohui* started taking shape as early as the Wei dynasty (220-264 AD), the temple fair as we know it dates in earnest from the Tang era (618-907 AD).

As Buddhism and Taoism gained influence in China, temples started hosting festivals and celebrations tied to local deities and figures. Over time, these events started taking on cultural and commercial dimensions, with the development of temple markets (*miaoshi*) and folk performances.

During the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), the Quanzhen sect of Taoism spread throughout northern China and it was common for temple fairs to celebrate the achievements of Taoist figures. To this day, Taoist sites such as Beijing's White Cloud Temple continue to hold temple fairs during Spring Festival.

Though *miaohui* have thrived into the present, the modern-day phenomenon is largely secular in character and rarely takes place at a temple. The commercial aspect is front and center, with a variety of vendors typically hawking snacks, toys, souvenirs, and traditional handicrafts like papercuts and clay figurines. Folk performances include lion dances, *xiangshen* (a Chinese comedy form), kung fu demonstrations, shadow puppet shows, and *yangge*, a type of harvest dance with roots in the Song dynasty.

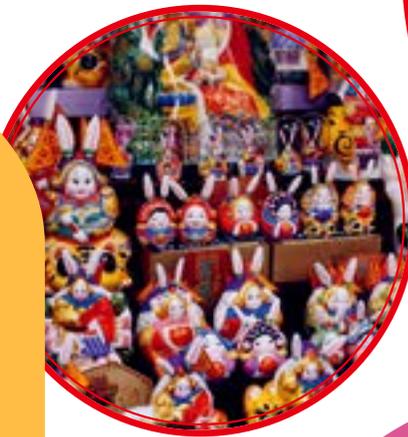
This year, the official dates for Spring Festival are **February 7-13** and mark the beginning of the Year of the Monkey. February 7 is the eve of Spring Festival, when Chinese families traditionally gather for a lavish reunion dinner. Most temple fairs run from the first to the seventh day of Spring Festival (February 8-14). Some of the dates and times for the following temple fairs were not confirmed as of print time, so call ahead for the most up-to-date information.

## DITAN PARK TEMPLE FAIR

地坛公园庙会

As one of the oldest temple fairs in Beijing, Ditan Park is a safe bet for first timers. The park contains the Temple of the Earth, where Ming and Qing dynasty emperors went to offer ritual sacrifices to the God of the Earth during the summer solstice. Reenactments of this ceremony are considered to be the highlight of the fair. A sea of red lanterns are hung all over the park for the occasion, with folk performances, historical costume displays, art exhibitions, vendors selling handicrafts, and food stalls with xiaochi (snacks) from Beijing, Sichuan, Tianjin, and Xinjiang.

RMB 10. Feb 8-14. Ditan Park, A2, Andingmenwai Dajie, Dongcheng District (6421 4657) 东城区安定门外大街2号地坛公园



## YUANMINGYUAN ROYAL TEMPLE FAIR

圆明园皇家庙会

Once known as "the Versailles of the East," Yuanmingyuan (the Old Summer Palace) hosted Spring Festival celebrations for the imperial family during the Qing dynasty. Despite the site's checkered history (it was pillaged and burned down by French and British forces during the Second Opium War), an annual temple fair was established there in 2010. Expect ice skating performances, cultural exhibitions, historical costume displays, and a "royal market" with imperial-style snacks, calligraphy, paintings, crafts, and lantern riddles.

RMB 10. Feb 8-14. Yuanmingyuan, 28 Qinghua Xilu, Haidian District (6261 7801) 海淀区清华西路28号圆明园

## CHANGDIAN TEMPLE FAIR

厂甸庙会

The Changdian temple fair has been around since the reign of the Jiajing Emperor (1521-1567) in the Ming dynasty. Historically, the fair took place in an area that contained three temples near Liulichang in Beijing's former Xuanwu District. In 2011, the temple fair was moved to Taoranting Park, where it now hosts *xiangsheng* performances, Beijing opera, dragon dances, acrobatic shows, food vendors, and traditional handicraft stalls.

RMB 10. Feb 8-14, 8.30am-4.30pm. Taoranting Park, 19 Taiping Jie, Xicheng District (6315 9837) 西城区太平街19号陶然亭公园

## Useful Vocabulary

- Spring Festival – 春节 *chunjie*
- Year of the Monkey – 猴年 *hou nian*
- Temple fair – 庙会 *miaohui*
- Lion dance – 舞狮 *wushi*
- Dragon dance – 舞龙 *wulong*
- Calligraphy – 书法 *shufa*
- Chinese New Year paintings – 年画 *nianhua*
- Chinese New Year couplets – 春联 *chunlian*
- Snacks – 小吃 *xiaochi*
- Worship the gods – 拜神 *baishen*
- Buddhism – 佛教 *fojiao*
- Buddhist – 佛教徒 *fojiao tu* or 佛教的 *fojiao de*
- Taoism – 道教 *daojiao*
- Taoist – 道教徒 *daojiao tu* or 道教的 *daojiao de*





## DAGUANYUAN TEMPLE FAIR

Daguanyuan is based on an aristocratic garden described in the masterpiece *A Dream of Red Mansions* by Qing Dynasty author Cao Xueqin (1715-1763). The garden was built in 1983 to serve as a backdrop for the CCTV television series of the same name; it was opened to the public in 1989.

At Daguanyuan's temple fair, visitors can get a sense of the grandness of the Red Mansions and the luxurious lifestyle of an upper-class Chinese family. Refined dishes from the novel will be available to try and actors will re-enact some of the novel's classic passages. However, you do not have to be a Chinese literature buff to enjoy the event. Kids will find yummy snacks, jigsaw puzzles, magician sets, and toys for sale.

RMB 40. Jan 31-Feb 4, 9am-5pm. Daguanyuan Temple, 12 Nancaiyan Xijie, Xicheng District (6354 4993) 西城区南菜园西街12号大观园



## DONGYUE TEMPLE FAIR

东岳庙庙会

Founded during the Yuan dynasty, Dongyue is a small Taoist temple dedicated to the god of Mount Tai, one of China's five sacred Taoist mountains. Despite its modest size, the Dongyue temple fair is popular with locals. Entertainment includes kung fu displays, shadow puppet shows, Taoist music performances, and art exhibitions. Local calligraphers demonstrate their skills in *chunlian*, a type of Chinese New Year decoration featuring a pair of couplets written on vertical strips of paper. *Chunlian* are usually given away for free and designed to be hung around the front door.

RMB 10. Feb 8-14. 141 Chaoyangmen Waidajie, Chaoyang District (6551 0151) 朝阳区朝阳门外大街141号



## WHITE CLOUD TEMPLE TEMPLE FAIR

白云观庙会

The seat of the Taoist Association of China, White Cloud Temple hosts one of the few Spring Festival fairs that still retain a religious character. Every year, the devout visit the temple to burn incense sticks. In addition, there is a curious tradition associated with the large coin that hangs from White Cloud's Wofeng Bridge; it is said that fortune will come to those who manage to hit the small brass bell hanging from the hole in the coin with a regular coin.

RMB 10. Feb 8-26. 6 Baiyunguan Jie, Xicheng District (6344 3666) 西城区白云观街6号



*Kites are a symbol for the arrival of spring*

# Beijing State of Mind

Unlock the capital's cultural side with these activities

by Sijia Chen

As we go through the daily grind, it's easy to forget that we're living in a place rich with art, history, and culture. Throughout its various incarnations – Zhongdu, Yanjing, Khanbaliq, Peiping – Beijing has remained the political center of the country for most of the past 800 years. To help you get in touch with the city's past, we've put together a roundup of family-friendly cultural activities. Happy exploring!

## Fly a Kite

Kites are believed to have been invented in China during the fifth century BC by Chinese philosophers Mozi and Lu Ban. By the fifth century AD, paper kites were being used for military purposes such as signaling and measuring distances. The legend goes that Cao Xueqin (1715-1764), author of the Chinese classic *Dream of the Red Chamber*, wrote a guidebook on how to make over 400 types of *yasha yan* kites to help the poor earn a living.

These days, locals commonly fly handmade kites to mark the arrival of spring. A classic motif is the *yasha yan* (崖沙燕) or sand martin, a migratory bird resembling a swallow. In Beijing, the kite string is traditionally cut to allow bad luck to be blown away by the wind. There are kites for sale at the **Beidong Flower Market** in Shunyi or, for something special, the family-owned **Sanshizhai Kite Store** in Di'anmen, which has been making kites for over a century. Alternatively, families can learn how to make their own kites at **China Culture Center**.

## Join a Jianzi Circle

Also known as "Chinese hacky sack," *jianzi* (毽子) is a folk game that uses a weighted shuttlecock with four feathers attached to a stack of plastic disks. The goal is to keep the *jianzi* from falling to the ground using any part of the body except the hands. Head to the nearest park and show off your fancy footwork by joining a "circle kick," but watch out for the middle-aged aunties and uncles in track suits – the

PHOTOS: THOLLY MILLS BAKER, JANUS BAH'S JACQUET (FLURCK) AND COURTESY OF SIJIA CHEN

young'uns have nothing on them. Shuttlecocks are commonly available at markets and the sporting sections of major supermarkets.

### Take a Cooking Class or Food Tour

From delicate *xiaolongbao* to fiery Sichuan hotpot, there's so much to love about Chinese food culture. Many cultural centers and cooking schools offer a more Beijing-specific experience, such as **The Hutong's** Taste of Beijing culinary tour, which explores the city's Muslim influence and heavy use of bean paste, fermented tofu, and pickled vegetables. From its picturesque new location near the Forbidden City, **Black Sesame Kitchen** hosts lunchtime cooking classes every Wednesday and Sunday from 11am to 2pm. Sample dishes include pan-fried dumplings with seasonal fillings, five-flavored eggplant, and kung pao shrimp. Near the Lama Temple, **Mama's Lunch** teaches visitors how to make northern-style shuijiao (boiled dumplings). Kids under 5 can join for free.

### Visit the Poly Art Museum

Tucked away on the ninth floor of an office building in Dongzhimen, the underrated Poly Art Museum makes up for its modest size with unparalleled access to a collection of pristine bronzes from the Shang and Zhou dynasties, and Buddhist stone carvings from the Northern Qi, Northern Wei, and Tang dynasties. The state-funded museum specifically exhibits pieces recovered from overseas, the centerpiece being four of the 12 zodiac animal fountainheads – the pig, monkey, tiger, and ox – pillaged by French and British forces during the ransacking of the Old Summer Palace in 1860. Fun fact: The most recently recovered sculptures, the rat and the rabbit, are currently housed at the National Museum of China while the horse is located at the Capital Museum.

### Chat with a Cricket Trainer

The sport of cricket fighting has roots in the Tang dynasty. Top cricket trainers held positions of prestige at the imperial court and winning crickets were as valuable as prize horses. Though the practice has dropped in popularity in modern-day China, pedigreed crickets can still fetch at least RMB 10,000. Unlike in other blood sports, cricket fighting rarely causes death or injury to the animals; the losing cricket is the first one to shy away from contact or run away from the fight. Boutique travel agency **Bespoke Beijing** leads a tour in which people can visit the home of a cricket trainer and see his prized insects.

## Resources

### Beidong Flower Market 北东花卉市场

Daily 8.30am-6.30pm (summer), 9am-5.30pm (winter). 150m south of Sundahe Qiao, Jingshun Lu, Shunyi District (8459 3093) 顺义区京顺路孙大河桥南150米

### Sanshizhai Kite Store 三石斋风筝店

Daily 10am-8.30pm. 25 Di'anmen Xidajie, Xicheng District (8404 4505, 6403 0393) 西城区地安门西大街甲25号

### China Culture Center (CCC)

北京致承文化  
Victoria Gardens D4, Chaoyang Gongyuan Xilu, Chaoyang District (6432 9341, info@chinaculturecenter.org) www.chinaculturecenter.org 朝阳区朝阳公园西路维多利亚花园D4

### The Hutong

1 Jiudaowan Zhongxiang Hutong, Dongcheng District (159 0104 6127, info@thehutong.com) thehutong.com 东城区九道湾中巷胡同1号

### Black Sesame Kitchen

28 Zhonglao Hutong, Dongcheng District (136 9147 4408, reservations@blacksesamekitchen.com) blacksesamekitchen.com 东城区中胡同28号院

### Mama's Lunch

14 Guanshuyuan Hutong, Dongcheng District (134 2628 6012, mamaslunch@outlook.com) www.mamaslunchbeijing.com 东城区官书院胡同14号

### Poly Art Museum

RMB 20. Daily 9.30am-4.30pm. 9/F, New Poly Plaza, Chaoyangmen Beidajie, Dongcheng District (6500 8117) 东城区东城区朝阳门北大街1号新保利大厦9层

### Bespoke Beijing

B510, 107 Dongsì Beidajie, Dongcheng District (6400 0133, info@bespoke-beijing.com) www.bespoketravelcompany.com 东城区东四北大街107号B510



Prized crickets in their cages



A bronze carving from Poly Art Museum



A jianzi game in action

The Circuit is a chance to check out what's happening on the Beijing family scene. Want to see your event on these pages?

### Ninth Beijing International School Expo

On January 16 and 17, *beijingkids* and *JingKids* held their annual international school expo at the Renaissance Beijing Capital Hotel in Shuangjing. The event was attended by more than 60 local international schools as well as many overseas schools. Parents and families met and spoke with headmasters and teaching staff to get their questions answered. There were also exciting kids' play areas and a series of informative lectures on educational topics including bilingualism and getting into top American educational institutions.



PHOTOS: UNI YOU

Send an email with the date of your event, a brief description, and high-resolution photos (at least 1MB each) to [webeditor@beijing-kids.com](mailto:webeditor@beijing-kids.com) by **February 5**.



**Keystone Celebrates Winter**

On December 17, Keystone Academy brought the whole school community together with a winter celebration. The festive mood was high with plenty of fun and creative activities for kids, and a bazaar organized by the PTA. At the end of the day, before everyone took off for their winter break, students performed some upbeat carols and holiday songs.



**BSB Students at World Scholar's Cup at Yale University**

Konnor, Claire, and Jeremy from The British School of Beijing (BSB) Shunyi were among 666 students from 27 countries around the world who attended the final round of the World Scholar's Cup - The Champion of Tournaments at Yale University, USA in November 2015.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KEYSTONE AND BSB SHUNYI



### YCIS Year 13 IB Artwork on Display

YCIS Beijing's Year 13 IB art class displayed their works in an on-campus exhibition during the month of December. The exhibitions focused on separate themes each student had been working on throughout the semester.



### Grand Lighting Ceremony at Sanfine

On December 10, Sanfine International Hospital held a special grand lighting ceremony to kick off the holiday season celebrations. The event attracted many locals, expats, professionals, and families. Throughout the night, performances from a magician and artists kept guests and children entertained. To add to the fun, Sanfine gave away prizes including WeChat hongbao grabs and lucky draw prizes. And of course, Sanfine's Santa was there to surprise all the children with special gifts. It was a full house with a lot of smiles and joyful festive spirits. If you'd like to attend Sanfine's upcoming events visit [www.sanfinehospital.com](http://www.sanfinehospital.com).



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF YCIS AND SANFINE



**Daddy Child Day at HoK**

On December 5, students from House of Knowledge International School and Kindergarten (HoK) invited their Daddies into school for the day. There were many activities including a performance, fun games, and crafts to make and take home to mummy.



**Winter Drama at WAB**

Students in Elementary, Middle and High School wowed the crowds in each of their school section's winter drama performances. They performed "We are Monsters" in the Elementary School, "Apocalypse or Bust" in the Middle School, and a series of one-act plays in the High School, one of which was written and directed by Grade 10 student, Stefan Norberg.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HOK AND WAB



### Edgemead High School Choir at BCIS

In December, Beijing City International School welcomed the Edgemead High School Choir all the way from Cape Town, South Africa. Edgemead performed for the students, and everyone had time to chat and exchange stories afterwards.



### Grade 5 Science Fair at ISB

International School of Beijing's (ISB) students showed off their chemistry knowledge on December 15 at the Grade 5 Science Fair.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF BCIS AND ISB



**Ganeinu International School Charity Bazaar at Dini's Restaurant**

On December 13, Ganeinu International School hosted a Charity Bazaar at Dini's Restaurant in Lido. Over 50 charities were represented. Many booths were run by children, who donated 100 percent of the proceeds to a charity of their choice. A wide range of vendors also donated a percentage of their sales. The day was capped off by the lighting of a gigantic menorah made of ice.



**Box Models at BISS**

Kindergarten students at BISS created models to express the connections between different parts of the school, the locations of key people, and their jobs. The models express the understanding of how the school works; the first steps in learning about human systems and collaborative working.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF GANEINU AND BISS

### Favorite Family Restaurant

**School's Out** (酷乐派) on Ritan Lu. They serve western and Chinese dishes. It's like a tiny Disneyland; they have a castle, a pumpkin carriage, and a Christmas tree library. They also organize parties and family activities.

### Favorite Dessert

Cheesecake from **Euro Bakery**.

### Best Day Trip

If the weather is good, **Fragrant Hills** or **Chaoyang Park** for an easy picnic.

### Best Place to Celebrate a Special Occasion

We invite friends to our home for celebrations like birthday parties or New Year.

### Best Place to Shop for your Children

**Hua Lian** and **Long Hu Tian Jie** are two malls close to our home. You can find lots of kids' clothes like **Gap**, **H&M**, and **Mother Care**. We also shop on **Taobao**.

### Favorite Winter Activity

**Chaoyang Park Ski** or skating in **Houhai**.

### The Kids Beg us to Go to

Toy shops for Barbie dolls or stickers.

### Best Place to Play Indoors

**Tian Jie** has lots of indoor play places.

### Weekend Activities

Ballet and English lessons on Saturday mornings for Sofia. Sundays, we meet with friends or visit my parents.

### Chunjie Traditions

On the last day of the lunar calendar, we gather with my husband's family for a very traditional family dinner. The children visit grandma and grandpa to *bai nian*, (exchange wishes for health and happiness) and the kids will get a *hongbao* on the first day of the lunar calendar. We visit my parents and relatives on the second day. We also go to temple fairs in February; this year it'll be Chloe's first time.

### Family Rituals

We have merit rules for Sofia. When she earns ten merits, our family will go to the cinema, playground, or her favorite restaurant.

# The Wang Family

For Beijingers Ava Wang and Jimmy Liu, theirs is a story of modern day Chinese romance. The pair became friends on popular Chinese networking site QQ in 2004, meeting for the first time two years later and marrying two years after that in 2008. Wang now works at Dulwich College Beijing (DCB) as a senior school campus administrator while Liu is a senior software engineer at security company Guosen. The couple has two daughters both born in Beijing, Sofia (age 6) and Chloe (1). Sofia goes to Liu Shi Kun Musical Kindergarten where she studies piano, while Wang's parents look after little sister Chloe. Wang lets us in on some lesser known Beijing spots and tells us about her family's *Chunjie* traditions.

From left to right: Chloe (age 1), Ava Wang, Sofia (6), and Jimmy Liu

Beijing's essential international family resource

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