



安泰经管学院
ANTAI COLLEGE
Economics · Management



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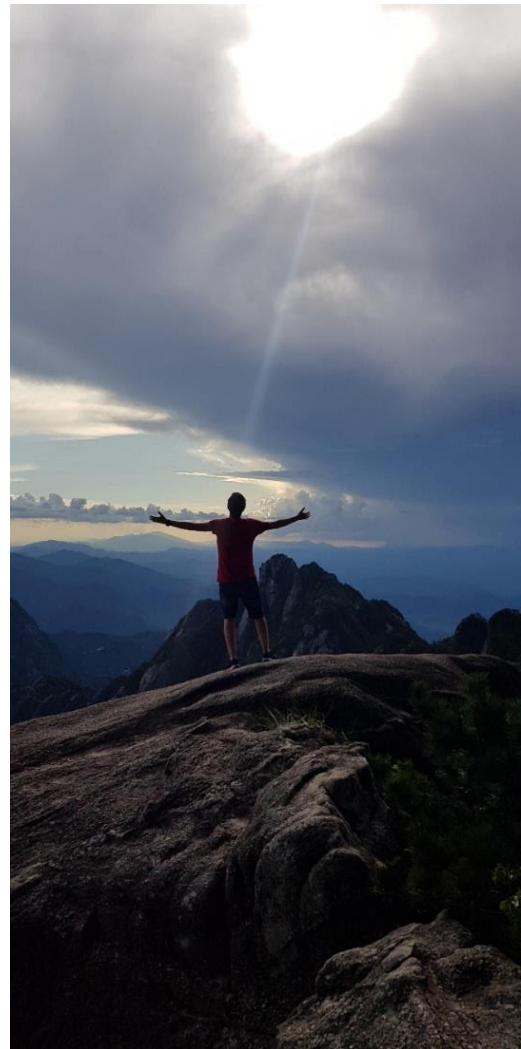
Intro

First of all, I need to say that I can recommend this program to each and every one of you. My time in China was unforgettable and amazing. Going to a country so different from our western world broadens one's horizons. Getting to understand people from different cultures and countries made me a better person and gave me a better understanding of the world. My picture of China changed massively during my time there. It is a totally different place compared to how it is represented in the media.

To anyone going or interested in going, please feel free to reach out to me and ask any questions.

Jiao Tong University

Jiao Tong is one of the top schools in China. Very few Chinese applicants get accepted there, and when you tell the Chinese people that you study at Jiao Tong, they are going to be impressed. The first sentence I learned in Chinese was 'Wô shì Jiaotong dàxué de xuésheng' (I am a student at Jiao Tong University) that happened to be a great ice breaker.



The school has many campuses, the Antai College is not on the main campus, and the program did not include a visit there (which is quite unfortunate), so it didn't feel like a large university, but it was clean and modern. The food on campus was free but horrible, and we often got food from outside the campus. But food in China is cheap, so it wasn't a huge problem.

Accommodation

This is where I was amazed. Instead of living in the dorms we got accommodated in the 5-star Crowne Plaza hotel, a 10-minute walk from the campus. All in all, it was a very standard hotel with nothing too exciting to write about. Everyone shared a room with one more person. It got cleaned every day, and the free breakfast was great. The \$1000 price for three weeks is fair. Most students lived on the same floor, so we mingled around a lot, and some rooms were used as a location for a first drink.

Tip: Don't make it your room and go to your friend's places.

Academics

There are some great classes. I personally liked the 'Infrastructure, people, and technology' class by John Van Fleet a lot. I enjoyed it so much I asked for more after the 2 classes were over. We ended up having two private meetings drinking tea in a French coffee bar. He is an American who lives in Asia for 20 years now and has a great understanding of what's going on politically and ecologically in the world. There is lots to learn from him. The classes helped to understand the place you're in. The culture is very different, so those lessons were useful in everyday life.



Professor JVF and my team after winning the 'best final presentation' award

WeChat Pay and Alipay

This was one of the biggest problems I faced in my time in China. Here is the deal: Chinese people don't know credit cards, and some already forgot how cash looks like. All they use is WeChat Pay and Alipay. And it makes sense. It's the most convenient way to pay I've ever seen. You just show your QR Code on your phone, and that's it. No need for plastic cards or wallets. Everything is transparent, and there is no way to steal anything.

The problem: In order to use it, you need a Chinese Bank Account. I went to at least 5 different Chinese Banks to get one, but it is not possible with a short-term student Visa. (A long-term student Visa would have been fine). So, with no Bank Account, there were no cool QR codes, and we needed to use cash for the whole time in our trip.

It's not just a way of paying. It's also ordering food, using vending machines, ordering taxis and buying train tickets and much much more. None of that works without WeChat Pay or Alipay. A huge bummer.

The Firewall

The firewall is a big deal, and the government is making it worse every day. The blocked services include everything from Google, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, some news sites, and WhatsApp. Install at least two VPN Apps (I used Kaspersky Secure Connection and ThunderVPN) and get ready to look at the 'connecting' screen about 20 times a day.

China is allowing VPN's but making it hard for them. Very often, it is not possible to connect, and if you do, its very slow. Use Microsoft apps such as Skype, Bing, and OneDrive to avoid Googles products.

Transportation

As said above, without the online payment systems, you cannot buy train tickets without going to the station. So, you better go there one or two days before you want to travel, because trains are often booked out. There is also an app called 'China Trains' where you can buy tickets using PayPal, but it's not the official app, you need to be 24 hours ahead, and you pay a \$6 fee for every ticket you buy:

The good part: Trains are amazing in China. They go 300 or 350kmh, and they're always on time. They are much preferred compared to flights. You can see the landscape, and you have the internet.

Inside Shanghai, the Metro is your best friend. Shanghai has the biggest Metro network worldwide. They go everywhere, and most lines go every 3 to 5 minutes. One experience I recommend is going to People Square (the central station) on Rush hour.

If you have luggage or it is after 11pm, you go by taxi. They are cheap, and you can get pretty much everywhere with less than 50RMB. You need to ask hotel receptions or friends to order a taxi because the apps don't work without WeChat Pay and Alipay. Some friends had

negative experiences with faulty meters. Be careful. Most taxi drivers don't speak a word in English. The app 'iTranslate' helps.

Visa Procedure

The process of getting a Chinese Visa was mostly straight forward. I highly recommend getting an extra tourist Visa to be able to stay one or two more weeks after the program. You should book your flights beforehand. I stayed for 10 more days after the program, and I wished it would have been at least 14 days.

Travel

These are the places I visited:

- Nanxun old Watertown (part of program, 1 day)
- Hangzhou, 1 day
- Beijing, 2.5 days
- Huangshan, 1.5 days
- Linhai, Zhejiang province (friend lives there, 2 days)

NANXUN

Nanxun is a beautiful Watertown that is romantic, historical, and reminds one of the Chinese Venice. There is lots of tea, nature and spiritual people there. Unfortunately, we had terrible weather when we were there. But still a lot of fun.

The person you see on the picture with the white hair was the highlight. A very spiritual painter who first seemed very old-school, but then drove away with a matte black Harley Davidson bike. Just like in a movie. The mountains on the picture are the Yellow mountains that I visited later on.



HANGZHOU

Hangzhou is famous for the Headquarters of Alibaba. A friend from the program did a great job of looking for people who worked there on LinkedIn and asking them if they could give us a tour. Someone was happy to walk us around, and we could even go inside the offices. Other than that,



Hangzhou has a vast, beautiful lake called West Lake. Definitely worth a visit. Hangzhou is also one of the 4 hottest cities and famous for the crazy humidity. We have never felt so hot before.

BEIJING

Beijing in 2.5 days was very intense, but you can manage to see the most important places. If you have more time, stay there for 3 or 4 days. To get everything done quickly, I booked a 2-day tour, including the great wall of China (Mutianyu), Summer Palace, Temple of Heaven, and the forbidden city. Beijing and Shanghai are somehow like Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. One is old, historical, and traditional. The other is an economic center, cool, young, and modernized.



The number of domestic tourists in China is going crazy. In Beijing, they had to limit the number of visitors per day to 'just' 80 000 people. And it was still completely overcrowded. Expect this in most touristic places you go to.

HUANGHAN

If you are into nature, this is your city (and if you aren't, this will change your mind). Huangshan is home to the yellow mountain, that is the most beautiful place in the world. I'm not kidding, hiking there for 7 hours was a blast, and felt like living in a movie. The views are totally astonishing. I would recommend going to the yellow mountain over any other places I visited. By far.





Tips:

BEFORE YOU GO

- Install WeChat, SmartShanghai, Baidu Maps, Google Translate (for live camera translation, needs VPN), iTranslate (for conversations with locals), China Trains, a Shanghai Metro app, and TanTan
- Get a Visa that allows you to stay after the program. Most people left China right away, and everyone was regretting it.
- Add your closest friend on skype. Microsoft and China are great friends.

WHEN YOU'RE THERE

- Get a Chinese Sim Card (but not at the airport).
- Make Bing your default search engine
- Buy a Metro card. It costs 20RMB that you get back when you return the card. I put 80RMB on my card, and it was exactly how much I needed.
- Do not talk about the government with local people. Trust me, don't.
- Make Chinese friends. There are some Chinese students in the program who will know what places to go to. Even better if you find Chinese people outside the program. Dating apps can help you with meeting people.
- Bargain. At first, it is awkward, but after a while, it's lots of fun and a great way to learn Chinese.
- Make most out of your time. 3 weeks go by quickly. You can sleep when you come back.

- Don't stress out on the final presentation. A lot of people missed out on the last part of the program because they were too stressed and worried. No need for that, it's just a 5-minute presentation.

AFTER THE PROGRAM

- Do not leave China right after the program. Go travel.
- I recommend not going to other countries. China is a massive place with lots to see. Don't go to other places just to check them from your list. Also, you probably have a one-time entry visa, so if your return flight is from China, you must stay.
- Visit the yellow mountain at Huangshan.

