

2006 Chinese Adventure

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The China trip 2006 for me was a riot of foreign sights, sounds, tastes and smells. I hadn't known what to expect when embarking on such a trip with 23 other unknowns but what I got in return was genuinely priceless.

Unforgettable moments of the trip:

THE SHOPPING. OMG the shopping. With the fabulous exchange rate and markets filled with fake bags, wallets, jeans for \$14 NZ, the fantastic boutiques and mini malls dotted all over China...I was in heaven.

One of the highlights of the trip would have to be visiting the ancestral villages. Despite being unable to visit my own, I found the experience amazing in the way it seemed as though you were stepping into a time warp. The opportunity to observe rural Chinese people going about their daily routine was priceless. Furthermore the disparity between the wealthier and the poorer villages really hit home. It was a very humbling experience especially when visiting the more run-down villages and it only took five minutes of walking around to realize how lucky you were back home.

I am THE foodie and the array of different culinary delights on offer was amazing. The gow gees in Guangzhou, the mango sago desserts, the traditional water village lunch we had, the Peking duck...everything, the list just goes on and on. However I'm not afraid to admit that after the trip I had burgers and fries for about ten consecutive meals.

Traveling with the same people for a month might have been incredibly taxing if it hadn't been for the amazing group we had. The different personalities that made up the group made the trip what it was. A whole month of exploring temples, the Great Wall, museums, trying new food, shopping and not to mention karaoke brought the group closer together ultimately meaning we all had a great month away from home.

Perhaps my favorite city to visit was Beijing. I'd had a good feeling about Beijing all along but the literature on the city I'd read could not have possibly conveyed the dichotomy of traditional and historical with the new, as well as being there in the flesh. The opportunity to visit the Forbidden City, the Great Wall of China, the Ming Tombs, the Temple of Heaven and countless other attractions Beijing has to offer was mind blowing. The Great Wall of China especially was a highlight. Climbing up those virtually vertical steps to reach the most incredible view was memorable every step of the way.

Above is only a sample of what I found fabulous, amazing, incredible, mind-blowing and breath taking about the China Trip 2006. Thank you so much NZCA for organising this unforgettable experience. Truly memorable and I would do it again in a second!

