October 1 - October 14

Hangzhou

China's National Holiday, also known as the Golden Week, commemorates the founding of the People's Republic of China. For us, it also meant a week of no classes and a free weekend for traveling! Actually, most of us had a Chinese exam in the middle of the week, so it was more like a 4 day break instead of a week. Therefore, a group of us decided to take a trip to Hangzhou for three days. Shout out to Jerry for planning the trip!

We headed out on Thursday morning to the metro station. The Hangzhou crew consisted of yours truly, Matt, Ashley, Jerry, Justin, and David.

For those of you who know me, it wouldn't surprise you that I brought a chess board :P

The cute couple.

Xi Hu (West Lake)

Our first destination was Xi Hu. This freshwater lake contained numerous temples, gardens, and artificial islands. Our teachers warned us that during the National Holiday there would be so many people in Hangzhou that we would have to fight our way through to get around, so we were pleasantly surprised upon arriving to find a relatively light crowd.

The exact translation of "Xi Hu tian di" is "West lake heaven and earth."

We first had lunch at a nearby restaurant called Secret Recipe.

Their chocolate cake looked too good to pass up, so Matt and I shared a slice.

Jerry used Matt's selfie stick for this statue imitation.

PC: Justin Fong

We took a boat ride to the islands.

These multi-colored trees were everywhere.
Post boat ride selfie.

There were neat statues like this one all around the island.

Jerry with his fancy Nikon d7100.

Matt really wanted one of these pin wheel clips since so many people were wearing them. They were 10RMB for one, but 15RMB for two so Ashley decided to get one as well. PC: Jerry Chen

Some children were playing with bubbles near the water which...

...made for nice lakeside aesthetics.

The Leifeng Pagoda, a five story tower with eight sides.

PC: Jerry Chen

Water lilies PC: Jerry Chen
Dinner
For dinner, we decided to search for a restaurant inside a large department store near our hotel. As I recall, we found a place where the food tasted amazing, came out really fast, and was pretty cheap.

Large department stores similar to this one were really common throughout China, and they contained a plethora of shops and restaurants.

The food at this relatively fancy restaurant tasted amazing! Even though we ordered a lot, it cost less than $10 per person.

The cabbage with beef was my favorite vegetable dish in China. It was particularly tasty in this restaurant.

Justin lost his bag, so a Walmart run was necessary to buy clothing essentials. On our way back to the hotel we came across this really nice river view.

Ibis Hotel
New roomie!

Matt, Jerry, and Ashley bought facemasks, so we decided to have a mini party in our room. This party consisted of wearing facemasks, playing chess, and writing an essay for our fieldwork class. Multitasking at its finest.
Qiandao Hu (Thousand Island Lake)
The next day, we rented a van and driver to take us to Qiandao Hu. We left our hotel pretty early since the trip there took about two hours and the boat rides to the islands were on a first come first serve basis.

Arriving at Qiandaohu.

We stayed on the bottom (cheaper) level of this two-story boat.

We had a great view of the lake, and were fortunate it was gorgeous that day.

The first island on the tour was Meifeng Island (aka Plum Peak). We had around 2 hours to explore the island.

One of the optional activities was water skiing. Jerry (excitedly), Justin (enthusiastically), and I (hesitantly) decided to try it out. We could steer the boat and control the speed, so I went full throttle and it was so much fun!

We each got a guide who gave us a crash course on how to operate the ski boat (and make sure we didn’t fall off). The route consisted of driving around an island and coming back, but I tried to prolong the ride by zigzagging around despite the guide’s constant urging to go straight back. PC: Jerry Chen
The next stop was Yule Island (aka Joyful Fish Island).

I was impressed with the beauty of this place!

Due to time constraints, we were content to explore the island from the bottom.

The third (and last) island we went to was called Longshan Island (aka Dragon Hill Island). This island was a popular destination for couples.

The colored structures hanging down are locks that couples hang together. Locks hung from everywhere: trees, railings, statues, etc.

It might be hard to tell, but those lines running just above Matt’s head are zip line cords. If I had the time, I would have loved to try it!

There were three large fish tanks, each containing hundreds of fish. The fish were categorized by size.

The fish would fight and jump over each other when tourists fed them. PC: Justin Fong
Justin and I took the train back early next morning (the others left later that day), so that basically wraps up my trip to Hangzhou. Before I conclude recapping our time in Hangzhou, I want to shout out to my friends who made this trip incredibly fun and memorable.

Hangzhou Crew

Justin and I took the train back early next morning (the others left later that day), so that basically wraps up my trip to Hangzhou. Before I conclude recapping our time in Hangzhou, I want to shout out to my friends who made this trip incredibly fun and memorable.
We started shadowing at our chosen clinics during the first week of October. There were eight possible clinics we could choose from: Yueyang Hospital of Integrated Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Western Medicine, Shanghai San Ai TCM Clinic, American-Sino Women’s & Children’s Hospital, Zhoujiaqiao Street Community Health Center, Fudan University Shanghai Cancer Center (almost everyone’s top pick), Shanghai United Family Hospital, Natural Path Academy, and Children’s Hospital of Shanghai. We shadowed at two clinics for the first three weeks and then switched to two different clinics for the next three weeks, so we got the opportunity to shadow at a total of four clinics. We ranked which hospitals/clinics we wanted to shadow at, and then went through a selection process facilitated by Dr. Polites. I was excited to shadow at Yueyang Hospital and San Ai TCM Clinic during my first three weeks.

**Yueyang Hospital**

On Thursday mornings, Jerry, Ashley, David, and I biked to Yueyang Hospital. This hospital specialized in the integration of Chinese and Western medicine, and there were three possible departments we could shadow at: rehabilitation, acupuncture, and massage. We were assigned to the acupuncture ward, and it was one of the most memorable clinical experiences I had! The doctor not only let us experience cupping and acupuncture, but he also allowed us to perform cupping on each other. I came to China skeptical of TCM, but after learning about the theories of TCM and personally experiencing its methods, I have a much deeper appreciation for why people seek this type of treatment.

Cupping is a TCM technique used to treat a variety of symptoms, the most common being bodily pains and aches. The purpose is to increase blood flow to a certain region. The two cups above are positioned on Ashley’s shoulder blades.

Jerry trying his hand at cupping. I volunteered as guinea pig. The cotton ball stick he is holding is used to create a vacuum within the cup before placing it on the body.

Cupping Procedure

1. Dip a cotton ball in 95% alcohol. Make sure there isn’t alcohol dripping from the cotton swab by either shaking off or squeezing out the excess.
2. Light the cotton swab with a lighter. Make sure there is blue flame.
3. Stick the cotton swab into the cup very quickly in order to create a vacuum, being careful not to touch the cotton swab to the rim of the cup to avoid burning the patient’s skin.
4. When you are creating the vacuum, make sure that the cup is positioned close to the body while keeping a safe distance. Quickly take the cotton swab out and immediately place the cup on the person’s back.
5. Twist the cup around to make sure there is suction. If the cup pops off then repeat the vacuum procedure.

This may look bad, but trust me cupping doesn’t hurt. Cups are usually placed along a person’s (in this case David’s) back. Darker spots indicate there is more humidity within that region of the body which is problematic according to TCM concepts.
San Ai TCM Clinic

On Tuesday mornings, Cintia and I took the metro to San Ai, a private TCM clinic. We were fortunate to shadow Dr. Xiao and Dr. Wang, both highly experienced doctors who taught us the theory behind acupuncture and answered our questions. We also got to see how treatment herbs were measured and packaged.

---

Dr. Xiao could speak English, so communication wasn’t much of an issue. Dr. Xiao’s treatment consisted of a particular form of acupuncture where, instead of leaving needles in the body, he would move one needle in and out of regions where the patient felt pain.

To measure out certain herbs, we used a balancing scale. One adjusts the hanging weight to the correct amount, and then the herbs were added to the pan until they’re balanced.

---

Church

I attended Christian meetings which were hosted in apartment homes every Sunday. After the meeting, a delicious home cooked lunch was provided by the host and other members of the church. Cintia often came with me to the meetings.

---

We came across this gorgeous area when we were walking to the meeting.

A sampling of some of the best food I had in China.
Justin, Ryan, Eddie, and I went to the "fake market" which was at the Shanghai Science and Technology Museum Station metro stop. Here, we found Yeezys knock-offs, faux Canadian goose jackets and just about everything in between. Expect to bargain.

They were actually serious about buying these XD But the merchant seemed to be in a sour mood and refused to lower the price to where we wanted it. Or, maybe we were bad at bargaining.

Austin, Matt, and I played ping pong in the Fudan gym with Eddie, a graduate student and classmate.

I apparently was one reason Jerry constantly played chess games. I happily take responsibility :D

Cintia and Maya made their own granola bars! They were the chefs in our group.

One side event was the Wash U Reception hosted by Dr. Polites. Michelle and I needed to buy formal wear, and we eventually found these dresses at Forever 21.

Almost all the guys wore suits. These three actually got their shirt, suit, and pants tailor-made at a place called Joyce and Rita for a very reasonable price.
Until Next Time

Wow that was a bit lengthy, so I'll wrap up here :) Next weekend I took a trip with my church group to the Colorful Valley in Ningbo. We were blessed with amazing weather and the valley was gorgeous! But I'll have more photos in my next blog :)

See you in Ningbo!