

Two Weeks In China

by Richard G Leggett



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When one door closes, another door opens.

Originally, Jeanne and I had planned to travel to Italy this year, but we had to change plans to accommodate available dates. Just when the plans to travel to Italy were delayed, Jeanne's cousins wrote her and asked if we were interested in joining them on a trip to China! Since our calendar was clear, we decided to go. We never even thought about traveling to China before. We are so happy we decided to go.

Above is the two week itinerary and a map of China with our trip indicated with blue lines.

I took over 6000 photographs, so only some of the highlights are in this book. Enjoy.



Sayang Holidays

CHINA 2013 & YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

OCTOBER 20th THROUGH NOVEMBER 4th

Itinerary for


****MR RICHARD G. LEGGETT AND MS JEANNE R. LEGGETT****

- Sunday
October 20 -We meet at San Francisco International Airport at 11:00am Sunday to prepare for our flight to Beijing, China. Meals on Flight included.
- Monday
October 21 -When we arrive in Beijing we will be met by both a local and a national guide who will escort us to the Swissotel Beijing where we will rest to prepare for our first tour on the following day
- Tuesday
October 22 -All day tour of Great Wall and the Sacred Road of Ming Tombs. Return to hotel in the late afternoon. The evening is free to explore on your own.
Breakfast and Lunch included
NOTE !!!
Everyone must be in the hotel lobby at 8:00AM, ready to go to tour the Great Wall and the Sacred Road of Ming Tombs in order to making it through the traffic. The breakfast buffet usually opens at 6:30 AM
- Wednesday
October 23 -Tour Beijing with visits to Tian'anmen Square, the Forbidden City and the Temple of Heaven. Breakfast, lunch and dinner included. This evening we will enjoy a hosted Peking Duck Dinner at one of Beijing's most popular restaurants.
- Thursday
October 24 -Today is Free day. Our guides will arrange side transportation as guests request. In the past popular group requests included visits to the Hutong section of Old Beijing, the counterfeiter shopping area and/or the military museum. Breakfast included.
- Friday
October 25 -Checkout and leave for Xi'an after breakfast at the hotel. On the way to the airport. We will stop to tour the Summer Palace. Upon arrival in Xi'an we will be transported to the Sofitel Xi'an. The evening will be free. Breakfast and lunch included.
- Saturday
October 26 -Trip to the ancient city wall followed by the world famous Terracotta Museum. Breakfast, lunch and dinner included. This evening we will attend the elaborate Tang Dynasty Dinner show.



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Sayang Holidays

- Sunday
October 27 -After breakfast and checkout at the hotel, we will tour a traditional Chinese village and have lunch at a farmer's house before heading to the airport for our flight to Wuhan. In Wuhan we will board a bus for our transfers to the five- star riverboat, Victoria Katarina. Breakfast, lunch and dinner included.
- Monday
October 28thru
Wednesday
October 30 -Each room aboard this boat is an outside stateroom with a balcony. All meals are provided and include both Chinese and Western selections. Each day the boat will dock for included shore excursions, including a stop at the massive Three Gorges Dam.
- Thursday
October 31 -Disembark in Chongqing after breakfast. Board a bus for a tour to see the pandas at the Chongqing Zoo followed by a visit to the General Stillwell Museum and the Flying Tigers Museum. Then on to Kempinski Hotel. Breakfast and lunch included. Evening is free.
- Friday
November 1 -After breakfast at the hotel, checkout and fly to Shanghai and the Hengshan Picardie Hotel. Breakfast included. Evening is free.
- Friday
November 2 -Tour the historical European influenced Shanghai Bund, visit the Jade Buddha Temple, the Yu Gardens and Pudong New Area of modern Shanghai. Breakfast and lunch included. Evening is free.
- Sunday
November 3 -Today is free day. Breakfast included. The guides will provide a number of suggestions for touring this world-class city. If there is enough interest among the group, we will provide an optional tour to picturesque Suzhou known as the Venice of the Orient.
- Monday
November 4 -After breakfast at the hotel and checkout we will board a plane for our return trip to San Francisco.



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Jeanne and I at the San Francisco International Airport waiting for our Air China flight to Beijing, China.



We left San Francisco on a Sunday at about 3:30 PMS and arrived at the Beijing airport on Monday at 5:30 PMS. A twelve hour flight.



How would you look after a twelve hour flight?



Jeanne, Terry, Willie and I getting ready to board our first bus trip to our hotel.



Really? The hotel guest services person. His name is Richard !
I learned how to say my name in Chinese.



Our first hotel in China. Our first room.
And our first American style breakfast in Beijing.
Cousins Teri, Julie, Jeanne and cousin Al.

This gentleman was our first city guide.

He taught us a lot of simple Chinese phrases and gave us tons of information about all the places we visited while in Beijing. At each China destination, we had a different city guide.



This young lady was our official China government guide. She traveled with us for two weeks from the time we landed in Beijing to until we left China.



Our guides at our first official place to visit:
The Great Wall Of China



Even at the Great Wall Of China,
there are familiar icons.



Our first family photograph in China at the Great Wall Of China.
Richard, Pat, Al, Teri, Willie, Jeanne, Julie, Roger, and our tour guide Jim.



Our tour group.

Thirty-two people from the United States.



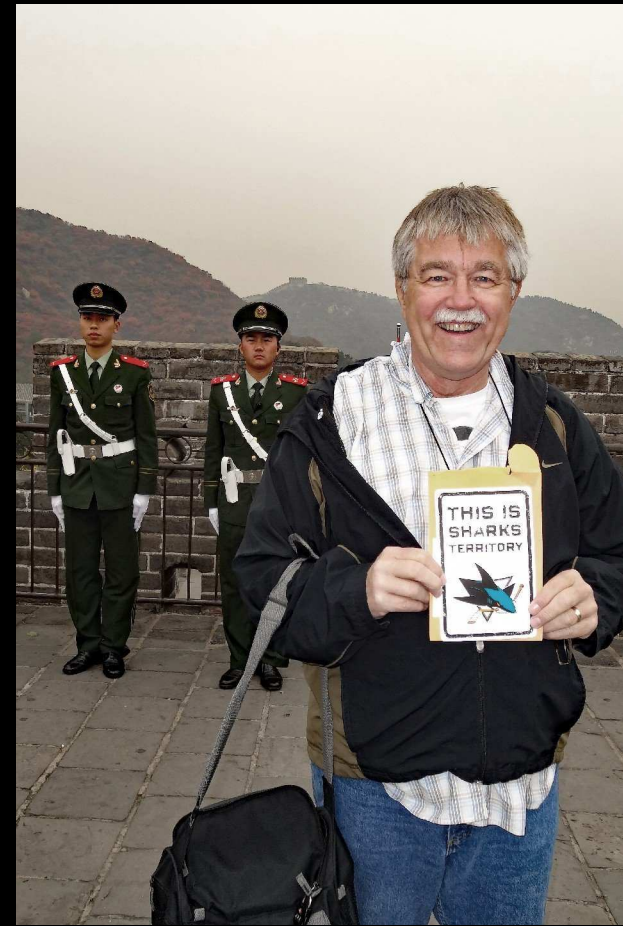
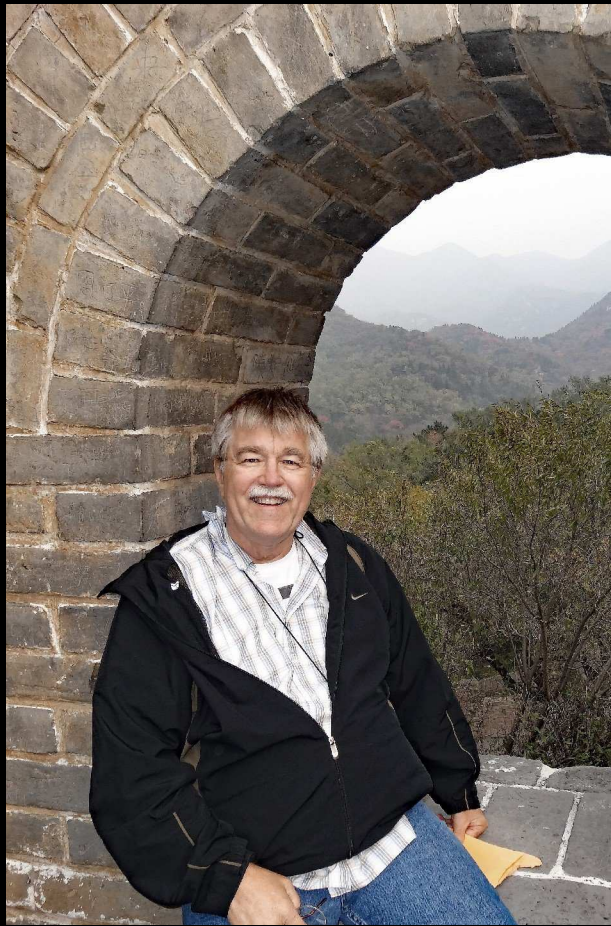
The Great Wall Of China

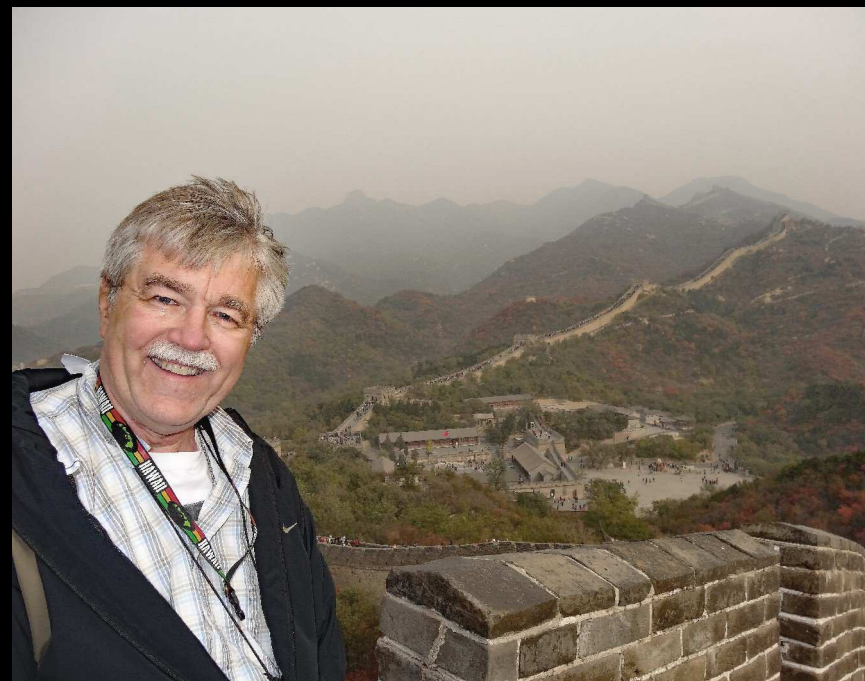
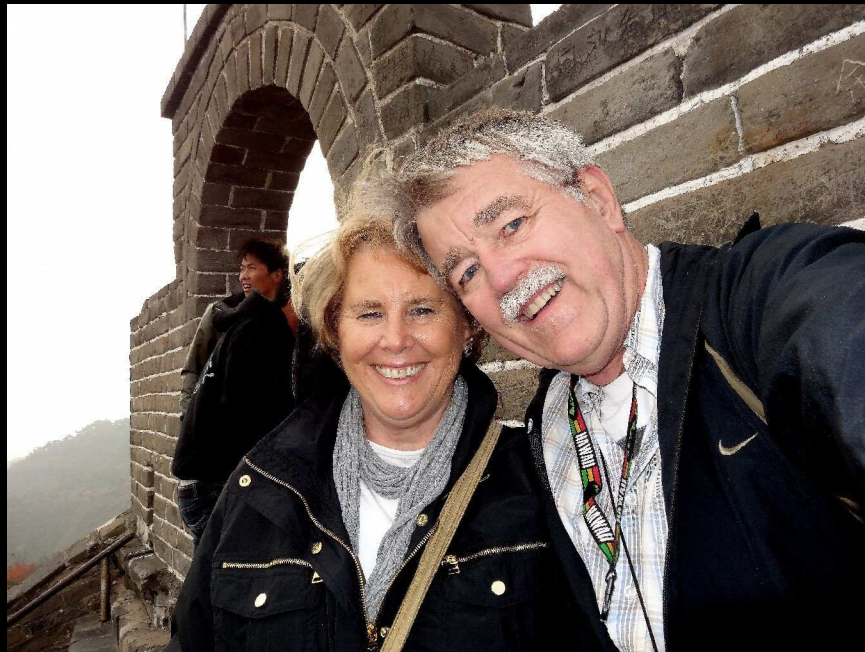
About a thirty minute drive outside Beijing.
I had to photo shop the photograph to minimize the haze.





Jeanne and I sitting in one of the look outs on the Great Wall.







On the way back from the Great Wall Of China, we had to stop at the Cloisonne factory. All tourist are required by China law to stop at this factory after visiting the Wall. This young lady is an artisan working on the first stage of the process.

A very typical mode of transportation in China.



Jeanne and I are asked about the types of food we ate during our visit to China.

This was our lunch at the factory.



An yes, we used chop sticks. However, most places gave us silverware as well.



Jeanne with some of the factory production items.

Our next visit was to the Sacred Road of Ming Tombs.

Here, Willie poses next to a VIP golf cart.



One of the statues along the road.

Every statue has a meaning and purpose.

Most to guard the road and protect the tombs.



Jeanne and I pose next to a statue of an elephant along the road to the tombs.

Our tour group stops for some educational information about the Road to the Tombs.



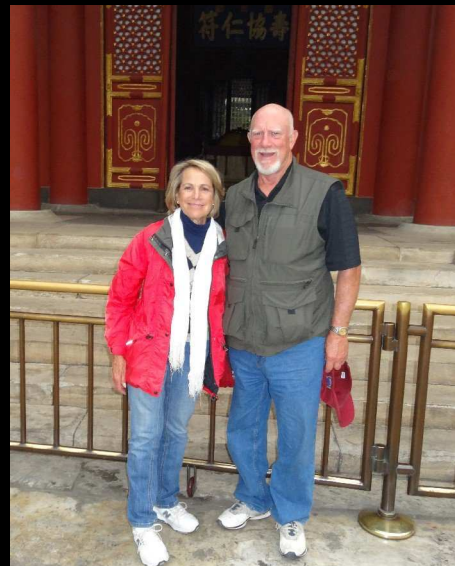
Each of these items is a prayer/blessing offering. These are found all over China where people wish to leave a blessing or a prayer.



Jeanne and Teri pose next to stone turtle statues at the Road to the Tombs temple. The turtles are symbols of fertility. Women that touch the turtles seek that blessing from gods. Notice the blessings and prayers.

Our next visit was to the Summer Palace.

This is where the emperor of China would spend his vacation.



Jeanne and I at the entrance to the Summer Palace.

Teri and Willie

Talk about toys for your Summer Palace lake.

Our cousins at the Summer Palace.



Sunset in Beijing.
The smog is that bad.



Our first fine dining experience in China
featuring Peking Duck.



So happy to see wine glasses.



Traffic in Beijing is a mix of vehicle types.



Our next Beijing visit was to
The Temple of Heaven.
One of my favorite places we visited.



Jeanne and I in front of the
Temple of Heaven.



The Temple of Heaven



Hotel lobby where we had lunch near Tiananmen Square.



Lunch at Tiananmen Square Hotel.



Another visit was to the Beijing Olympic site. This is a hotel in the shape of a dragon.



Family photograph at the Beijing Olympic Stadium.



The main government building next to Tianamen Square.



Teri and Willie at the Tianamen Square.

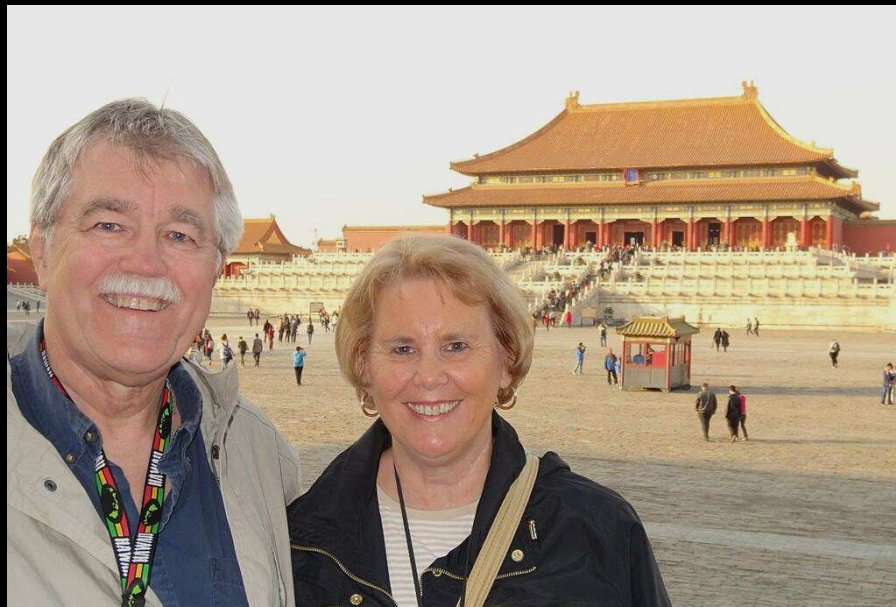


Jeanne and I squared up too.



Above is our official tour group photograph at Tianamen Square.

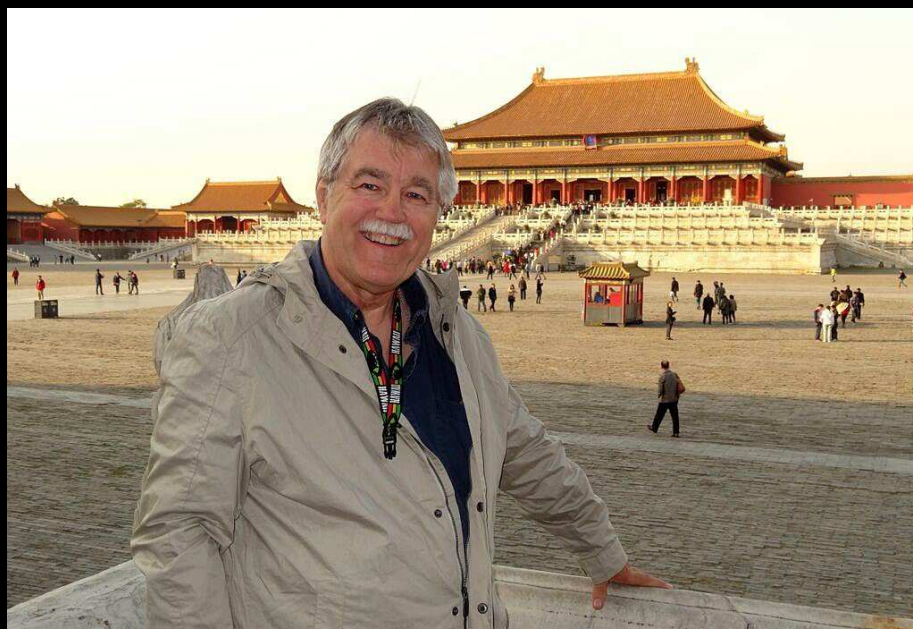
Across the street is the entrance to the Forbidden City.



Jeanne and I pose in front of the Hall of Supreme Harmony inside the Forbidden City.



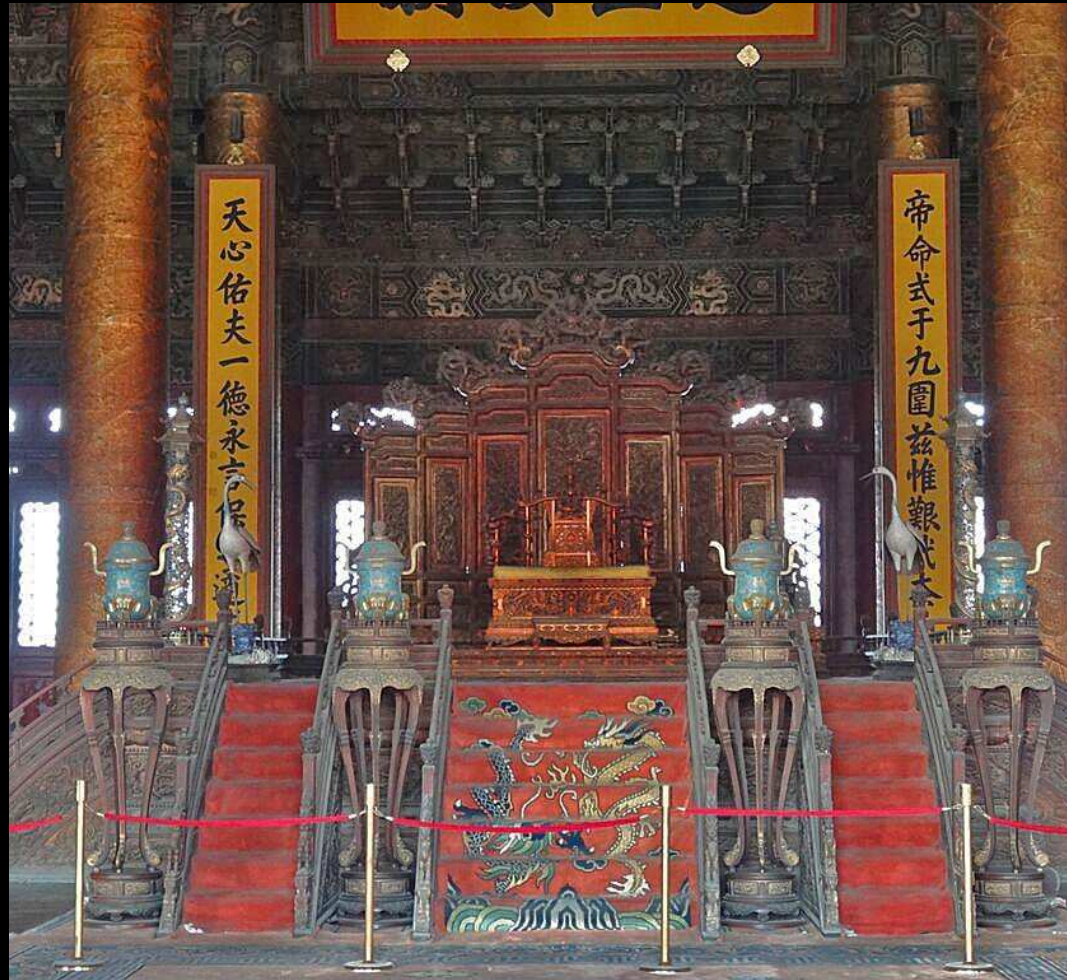
Willie and Teri on the grounds inside the Forbidden City.



A truly amazing place to see and visit.

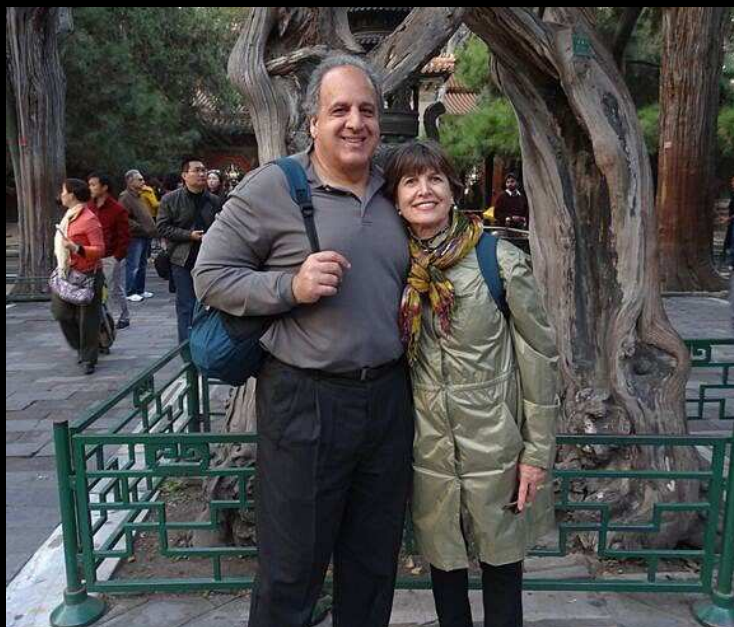


Jeanne and Willie enjoy the view.



The throne of the Emperor of China in the center of the Forbidden City.

Considered the enter of the universe at the time of its construction.



Robert and Julie pose in front of the marriage tree.
Located at the north end of the Forbidden City



Willie and Teri behind the marriage tree.



The kitchen area of a fine restaurant near our hotel. Can you guess the specialty?



So we ordered it again. Peking Duck.



Our dinner arrived.



My next vehicle.

Our next trip in Beijing was a trip to "Old Beijing." And naturally, the way to see it was to travel by rickshaw.



For thirty two tourists, that's a lot of rickshaws!

Old Beijing.

Jeanne and I are next to a river which is in the middle of Old Beijing.

A serene moment in a city of over thirty million people.



Teri and I chat at our next visit.

One of the watch towers in Beijing.



Our Beijing tour guide.



The Tower !



Teri and Julie at the top of the tower in front of the tower bell.



Yes Jeanne, it's 100 steps up to the bell and 100 steps down.



After all those steps, it's tea time.



After our visit to Beijing, we boarded a jet to travel to our next destination. During the flight, I took this photograph of the Great Wall Of China.



Our next city tour guide. We are in Xi'an, China.



A visit to the old city wall.



Julie, Teri, and Willie at the city wall of Xi'an.



Jeanne and I at the one of the warning bells of the city wall.



During high tourist season, bikes can be rented to travel the wall.



Signs we saw on the wall.



Jeanne at the city wall.



I checked out the security car.



Julie and Jeanne on the stairs to the city wall.



Willie with one of the group. Our Xi'an city guide.



Our group at the city wall.



Another shopping opportunity. This time, JADE.



I am checking out the jade.



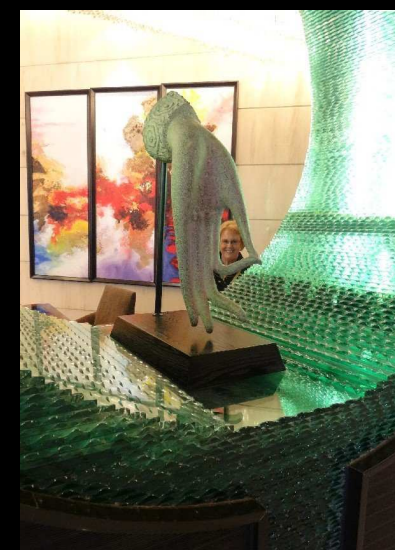
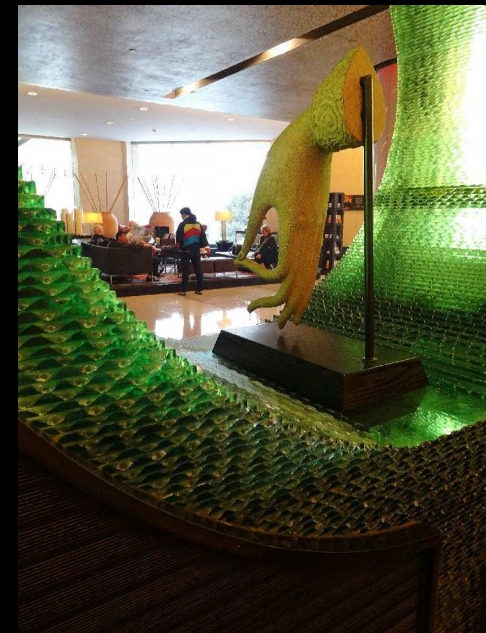
A jade beckoning cat. Believed to bring good luck.



Jeanne, Teri, and Julie shopping.



A very nice piece of Jade art.



The hotel lobby where we stayed while in Beijing.



Jeanne and I pose with one of the brothers that found the Terracotta Army.



My ticket to see the Terracotta Army pits.



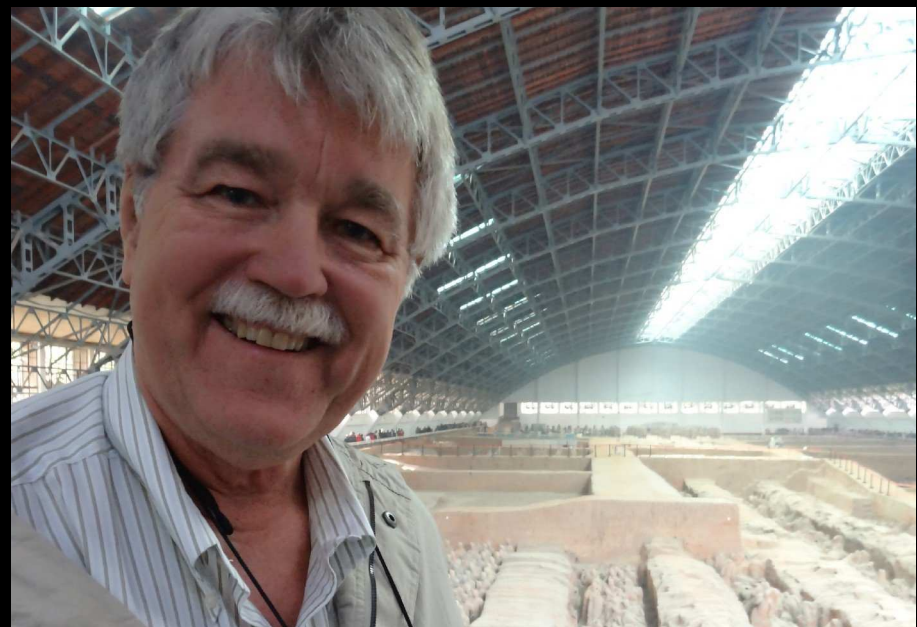
Our tour group ready to see the terracotta army.



The Terracotta Warriors









The Tang Dynasty Dinner Show.







A very special welcome to our group.





A visit to a local village near Xi'an. Here, we met a famous Chinese artist.



The artists wrote my name in Chinese. He put a red ink stamp on it. The official stamp made it an official art work of China. I have it in a frame in my den. This artist is very generous to his village and to guests like us.



The artist begins his demonstration.



Corn drying for the winter season.



In the small village we visited near Xi'an, the tour group turned right, and my photography mind said look left. When I looked left, I thought I saw a small dog walking down the left side of the road which seemed to wonder up to a golden stack of corn. So I quickly took the photograph. As I zoomed in to frame the shot, I noticed movement along the left side of the road was not a small dog. The photograph on this page and the next page became my two favorite photographs during our stay in China.



I have thought a lot about this photograph and what it means to me. A legless, one armed person on a modified skate board heading towards what appears to be a golden harvest. Not begging, not asking for help. Just living day-to-day with his handicap. Whenever I look at this photograph, I think of how blessed we are. No one else from our group had seen this moment until they seen it on my camera screen. Everyone was moved by these two photographs. Taking these two photographs became the most memorable moment during our two week visit to China.



Jeanne was greeted by school children when we visited a local grammar school.



Willie and Teri at the school.



Robert and I are joined by our China guide and her mother.
At the Xi'an airport the day we departed.

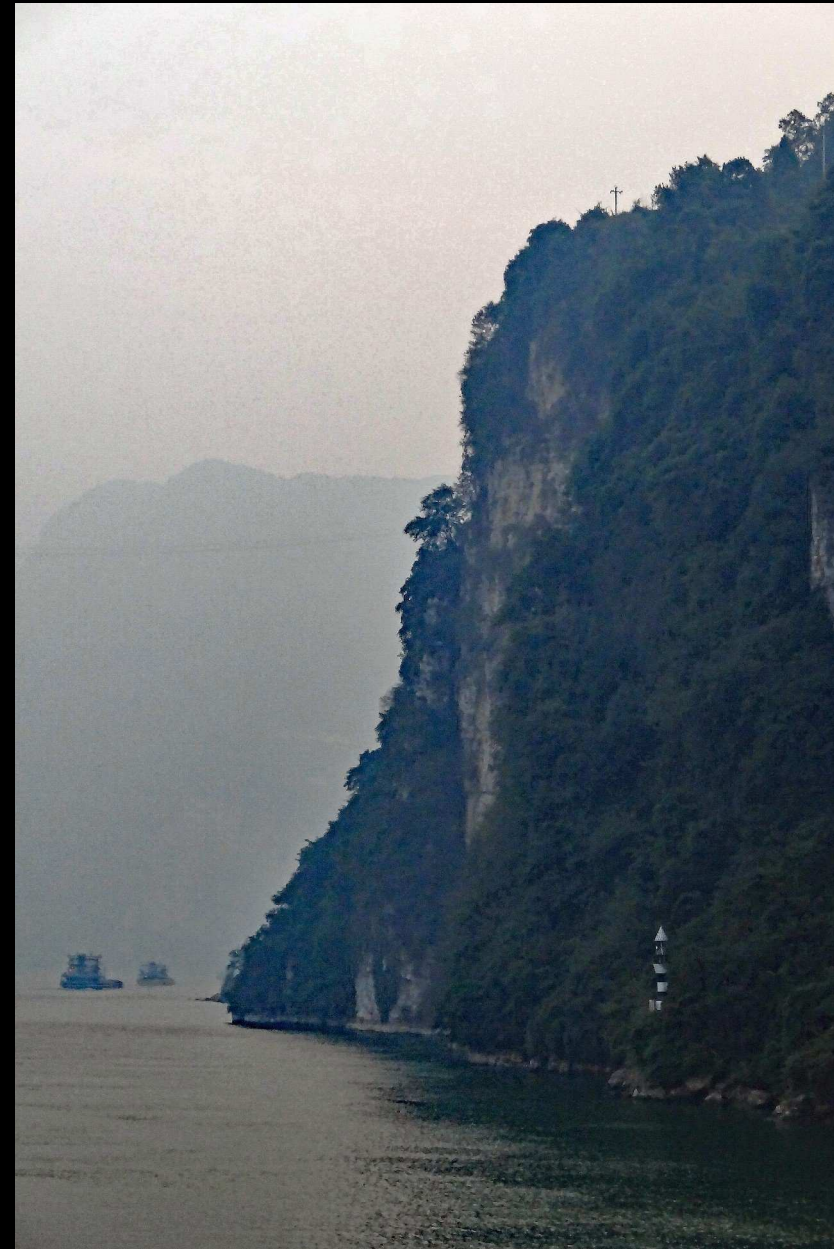


Our next city guide. He joined us at Wuhan.



After an eight hour bus trip through some of the farmlands of China, we arrived at the port and boarded our cruise ship for the next five days.

Our first view of the Victoria Cruise Ship.



Willie taking a photograph of me taking a photograph of the gorges on the Yangtze River.
In China, the river is know as the Chang Jiang . The longest and largest river in Asia. The Yangtze is the third largest
river in the world.





One of the many modern bridges along the Yangtze.

Very common see new bridges span the many gorges along the river.



This is how cruise ships park on the Yangtze.



Meal time on the Victoria.



Al is ready to eat.



Teri enjoys a mealtime conversation.



Our tour guide tells us about the Three Gorges Dam, the largest damn in the world.



Jeanne and I on the escalator to the Three Gorges Dam vista area.



Willie at the Three Gorges Dam.



Jeanne and I pose in front of the garden area on the vista point of the Three Gorges Dam.



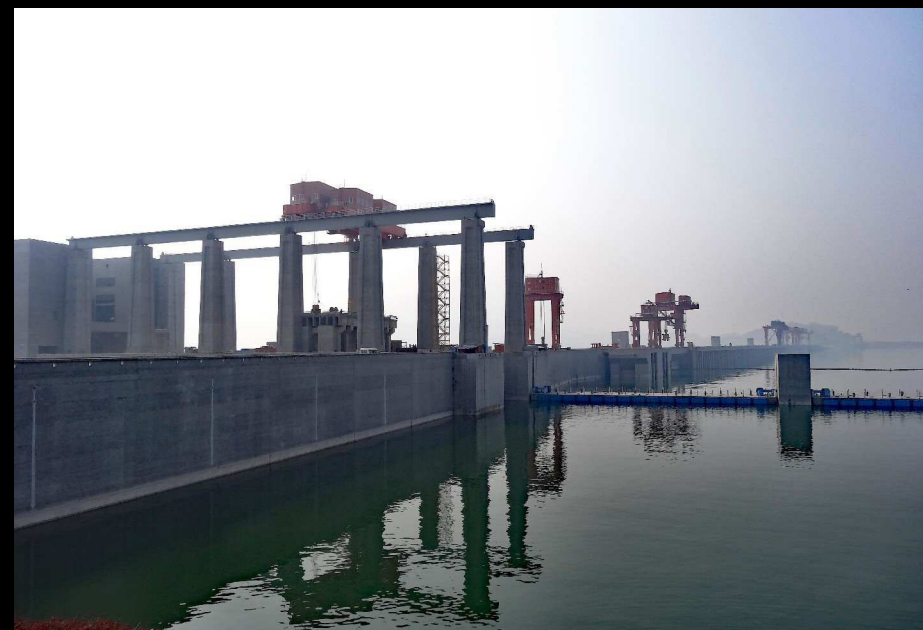
Jeanne in front of the highest point at the vista.



Jeanne and I are at the top of the vista. We could not see the whole damn due to smog.



In front of the tribute to the Three Gorges Dam.



The top of the Three Gorges Dam. Over one mile long.



Julie, Jeanne, Al, and I at the edge of the Three Gorges Dam.



Farmer's market China style. One of the stops along the Yangtze.



Willie and Teri.



Willie in the main elevator on the Victoria ship.



Jeanne is ready to board Victoria.



I was very popular at the bar on the Victoria. I had the 49er game on my ipad.



I did not have to pay for one beer. Thanks guys!



Jeanne and I pose with the Captain of the Victoria.



Cocktail party goodies on the Victoria.



Showtime on the Victoria.



The show was amazing for such a small ship.



One of our side trips along the Yangtze. We traveled up one of the many gorges along the river.



Jeanne and I are about to board a sampan to travel even further up the gorge.



We must have used 10 sampans to take our complete group all the way up the gorge.



Footbridges along the gorge. This is how Buddhist monks traveled to the many temples along the river and gorges.



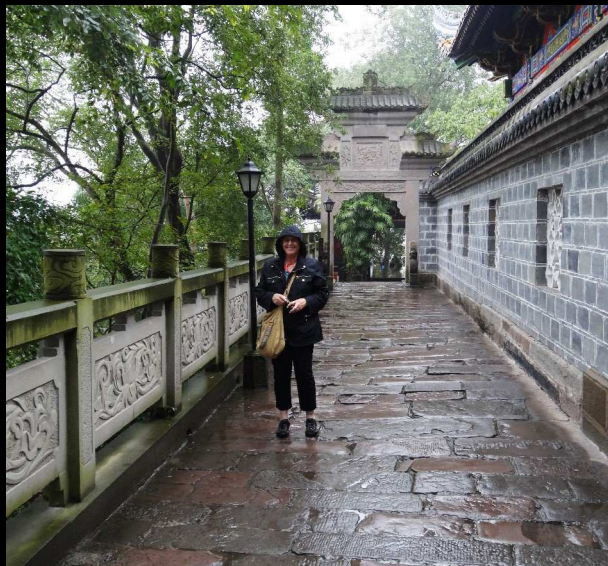
The original foot bridges are about 180 feet below this new foot bridges.
The Chinese government had these built when the Three Gorges Dam was being built to replace the originals.



Our view out the front of the sampan as we travel up the gorge.



Look closely at the cave. That is a buried site. You can see the casket from the gorge. The burial sites were made to deter grave robbers. It worked. This casket has been there for many decades.



Another stop along the Yangtze during our cruise was at one of the major Buddhist temple sites.

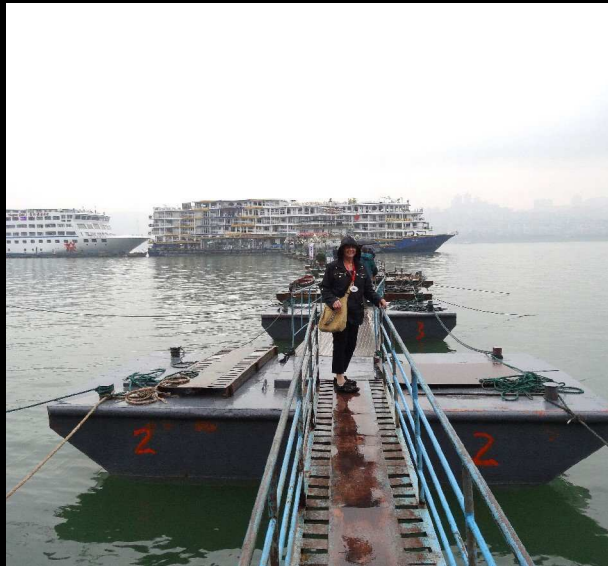


View of our cruise ship from the temple path. The Victoria.



Jeanne poses in front of a statue at the ticketing area to the temple.

Okay, I can't figure it out. A wizard statue in front of a ticketing area to the Buddhist temple?



Boarding the cruise ship is not as easy as you think



Teri waits for us to arrive for dinner in the dining room on the Victoria.



One of many family dinners we shared in China.



Robert eyes dinner on the Victoria.



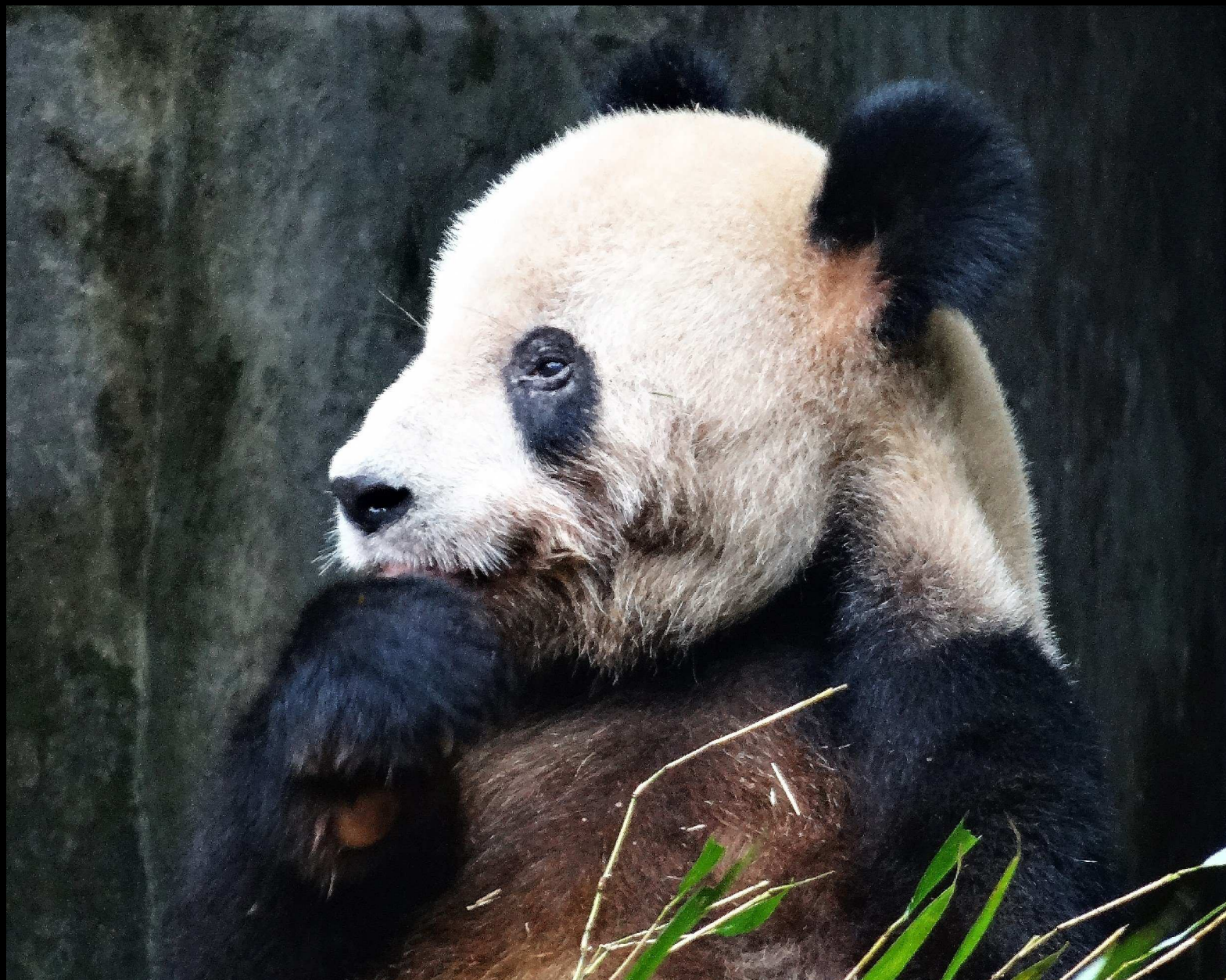
Formal dinner time on the Victoria Cruise Ship.



Julie enjoys some dinner conversation.



After our cruise on the Yangtze River, we arrived at our disembarkation port of Chongqing. We visited the Chongqing Zoo to see the Pandas. China's most famous animal.



It was mealtime. Pandas love bamboo.



The entrance of the zoo.



Jeanne and I pose in front of one the Panda exhibits.



Our group learning about Pandas



Willie and Teri dance at the Chongqing City Center Plaza.



The locals greeted us with smiles.



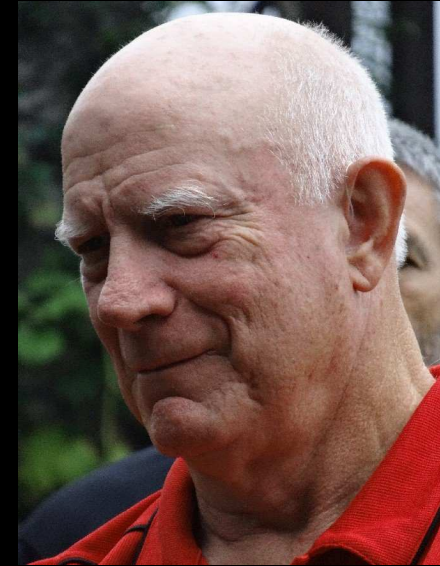
At one of the temples we visited.



Our guide gave us a lot of history about American Military while we visited the General Stillwell Museum.



Willie poses next to the General Stillwell memorial.



Willie takes a moment to reflect at this historic site,



Quiet moments at this historic museum.



A street vendor on the streets of Chongqing.



Julie enjoys the city sites.



Duck is certainly a food favorite in China.



Fruit store in Chongqing.



Chongqing Walmart. You won't find this kind of food court in the US.



Modern bridge in Chongqing, China.



Visit to a Chongqing temple.



In front of a wall of prayers and blessings for a past emperor.



Temple decorations up close.



A German Pub in our hotel?



Hotel pub complete with beer. Oktoberfest in China.



Jeanne and I at a public square in Chongqing, China.



We arrived in Shanghai, China.



From the Shanghai Airport, we got to take a ride on the fastest train in the world, The Maglev.



Jeanne and I waiting at the Maglev station.



Ready to board!



Jeanne loved the decor.



Taking photographs on the Maglev. The sign above indicated we were traveling at 300 KM per hour. Not our top speed.



China is one of the ancient societies. The country is full of national treasures of its historical past.

Yet, at the same time, China is part of the modern world. The Maglev, the Shanghai skyline, commerce, modern buildings, modern technologies, modern people.

Diverse puts it mildly.



In the middle of modern Shanghai is Old Town Shanghai.

These photographs are of Old Town Shanghai.





Old Town Shanghai Temple.



Jeanne and I enjoyed Old Town.



Willie and Teri pose near a skyline vista point.



Candid moments on the tour bus.

Julie.



Fast food Chinese style.

In Old Town Shanghai.



Candid moments on the tour bus.

Willie.



The famous Shanghai Tower.



Pat, Teri, and Julie enjoy the view of the Pudong skyline.



A favorite photo spot for newlyweds.



Jeanne and Julie in Shanghai.



Jeanne and I in Shanghai.
The Pudong skyline across the Yangtze River.



Helping Julie set up a shot.



Shanghai, China



Pudong Skyline - Shanghai, China

I had to photo shop this photograph to the max to eliminate as much smog and overcast as I could.







I was amazed at all the art.



The tour group watches a silk demonstration.



Some very fine silk work



Part of the hotel amenities.
For good reason.



One of my last lunches in China.
Mongolian sausage and fried rice.



And a mug full of hot tea.



Our last day in China. Some art, some farewell signs, the last look at the incredible Beijing Airport. Willie and Teri among our tour group waiting to take the Air China flight back to San Francisco.



