

Shanghai, China – Day 23 Oct. 20:

This was our second day in Shanghai. The early morning sky was overcast with the threat of rain. We had no organized tours today. A couple days ago we had lost or misplaced the charging device for our digital camera. Our Cruise Critic and cruising friends, Larry and Carol had bailed us out by using one of their chargers to bring our camera back to life. One objective today was to buy a charger for our camera in downtown Shanghai. Larry and Carol had a much more adventuresome agenda. They intended to use the modern subway system of Shanghai to explore several popular destinations of the city. Later, they told us that the subway system was very user friendly for English speaking westerners so we will have to add exploring the subway system to our list of things to do when next time in Shanghai. However, today we had more mundane objectives. The plan was to join forces with our friends Bob and Esther and visit the vibrant Nanjing shopping area and then the Old City of Shanghai. A map showing the location of our destinations was given in yesterday's blog entry for Shanghai, China – Day 22 Oct. 19.

We left the ship about 9am and caught the shuttle bus which took us to the Memorial Pagoda in the Huangpu Park section of The Bund. We walked south from there through the well landscaped Bund, parallel with Zhongshan Road. Topiary, like the example on the right, is a popular landscape feature here. This area is also where the Hop-On Hop-Off (HOHO) bus, shown below, can be caught for a drive to the many tourist spots in Shanghai.



After a few blocks we came to Nanjing Street which we took toward the center of town. A light rain came and went a few times but the temperature was comfortable and the sprinkles didn't dampen our spirits.

Nanjing Street was really busy with tourists and locals hustling along the sidewalks and sometimes having to use the street when the sidewalk was overloaded. We came to the Apple electronics store which we had heard was one of the largest Apple outlets in China. They were just in the process of opening up for the day and eager customers were crowded around the entrance. The international success of the Apple Company is a tribute to the founder, Steve Jobs, who recently passed away.



Further down Nanjing Street it turned into a broad pedestrian mall lined with prosperous looking stores. We came to the



huge Shanghai Landmark department store and Barbara took this opportunity to whip out her library card, as shown on the left, to record its visit to this busy corner of the world.

We went into the Shanghai Landmark store and after some arm waving and showing our camera battery to a courteous clerk we

found the camera section of the store. We were able to purchase a replacement battery charger for our digital camera for a very reasonable 98 Yuan RMB (~\$15 USD). Yesterday our guide, Scotty, had told us that “thank you” in Chinese is pronounced “she-she”. He said “You are welcome” sounds like “boo-she”. Orlin tried his best to thank the helpful clerk with “she-she”. The clerk had a momentary look of bewilderment on her face but suddenly she brightened and responded with a flood of words with something like “boo-she” buried in the mix. That’s about as far as we could push our foreign language skills today.



There were lots of people walking around in the pedestrian mall, as shown on the right. We occasionally saw people we recognized from the Amsterdam but there were also plenty of what looked like native Chinese exercising their cameras and playing the traditional role of a tourist. Shanghai is certainly a vacation destination for Asians as well as Westerners.



There was a little rubber tired train



weaving in and out of the mobs of pedestrians, as shown on the left. People could get on and ride from one end of the mall to the other. There was kind of a festive mood about the place that we enjoyed. Motorcycles were plying the streets around the mall and this place, shown below, was obviously a convenient place to park them next to the mall.



We noticed that the streets were very clean in Shanghai, no doubt due to an army of street sweepers, like the one shown on the right, who were evident all along the mall. Note that the collection bucket has wheels so that the sweeper just drags the bucket along as he sweeps.



We noticed that small children were frequently the object of attention from passing Chinese who would cluster around a stroller or a child being led by the hand. We



wondered if the government “One Child” policy had contributed to this public display of affection for children that is seldom, if ever, seen in the US. Shown on the left is what could be a grandfather taking a pair of twin boys for a stroll and attracting a lot of welcomed attention.

Eventually we came to this street corner, shown below, with signs that seemed to indicate “all roads lead from Shanghai”.



At this point we decided to catch a taxi and ride over to the Old City of Shanghai. After about a 15 minute ride our driver delivered us to the Old City at a cost of 15 Yuan (\$2.30 USD). The streets of the Old City were jammed with people, but unlike Nanjing Street these folks were 100% tourists along with the associated vendors.

We tourists from the Amsterdam fit right in with this crowd.

Street vendors and their scouts were very aggressive in pushing their wares such as wrist watches, paper hats and two wheeled skates that attach to the heel of your shoe. If you showed the slightest interest in their offering it was nearly impossible to get rid of them.



Here are some scenes in stores along the streets of the Old City.



Wrist watches were piled high in some stores. Orlin was looking to replace his watch which had stopped working because the battery ran down. It seemed



a lot easier and cheaper to replace the watch than to try and find a battery replacement. We avoided the street vendors by going into a store and after some haggling buying a watch for 195 Yuan or about \$30 USD.



The watch dealer smelling blood in the water brought out some Mao Tse Tung wrist watches and offered them for sale. Both Bob and Orlin wanted a Mao Tse Tung watch since learning about them in Dalian. After fierce bargaining we finally were able to each get one for 50 Yuan (\$7.70). The picture on the left shows Bob, Esther and the sales lady admiring Orlin's new Mao Tse Tung wrist watch. Here is a picture of the fine timepiece on the left. The watch is of the windup variety. It has normal watch hands but also has Chairman Mao with right hand lifted and waving up and down with each passing second.

The day was winding down and with the purchase of our watches we decided to return to the Amsterdam. We took a taxi back to the ship and brought all of our goodies on board.

By the time we finished dinner it was already dark. The Amsterdam was scheduled to get underway at 7:30pm and we wanted to get one last view of the Shanghai skyline at night. We rushed up to the open deck 9 with camera ready and took these last photos.



The iconic Pearl TV Tower shows its stuff in the night sky of Shanghai.

This cluster of financial and hotel buildings makes a beautiful sight. Yes, the two buildings on the left are actually concave toward each other. That is not an optical illusion. Architects from around the world have gone to China in recent years to challenge their skills during the construction boom.



The Amsterdam got underway about 7:30pm and we had to say goodbye to “the endless city” of Shanghai. Our ship eased smoothly down the Huangpu River to the Yangtze and then to open ocean. Tomorrow will be a day at sea as we sail southward and then the next day we visit the city of Xiamen, China.