

Lots of holiday fun in Jiading

Having worked hard for long hours in the office, wouldn't it be a good idea to get away from the city and have some fun in the suburban town of Jiading?

• Auto

Shanghai International Auto City in Jiading offers a variety of activities including drive-in movies, trips to Shanghai International Circuit where Formula One is held, and exploration of the Automobile Museum.

From now to October 5, the Shanghai Anting Auto Week will stage four events, including "Romance of Car Life" and "Car Life Competition."

You can also watch three top movies at Shanghai's first drive-in movie theater in Shanghai Auto Expo Park for 100 yuan (US\$14.5).

In addition, China's first automobile museum will be open to the public where you will find nearly 70 classic models of

roadsters and sedans. Ticket sets are available to the Shanghai International Circuit, and the Automobile Museum. The ticket set also gets you a 20 percent discount at the drive-in theatre.

Route: Take Highway A11 to Anting Auto City, drive along Moyu Road S. and stop at the Boyuan Road. You can also take the bus Lu'an Line or Tourist Line 6B to Boyuan Road.

• Shopping

If you are up for shopping, try this. Through October 5, the Cao'an shopping festival offers you the opportunity to buy low-priced, high-quality goods.

Decathlon's outdoor entertainment zone and the food street are also worth visiting. There, you can try rock climbing and bike riding, or enjoy some real Chinese dim sum and Taiwan delicacies.

Do not hesitate to bargain because it can add lots of fun to

your visit.

Route: Take Cao'an Road Exit on the Outer-Ring Road. You can also take Buses 947, 948, 950 to the Textile Market.

• Culture

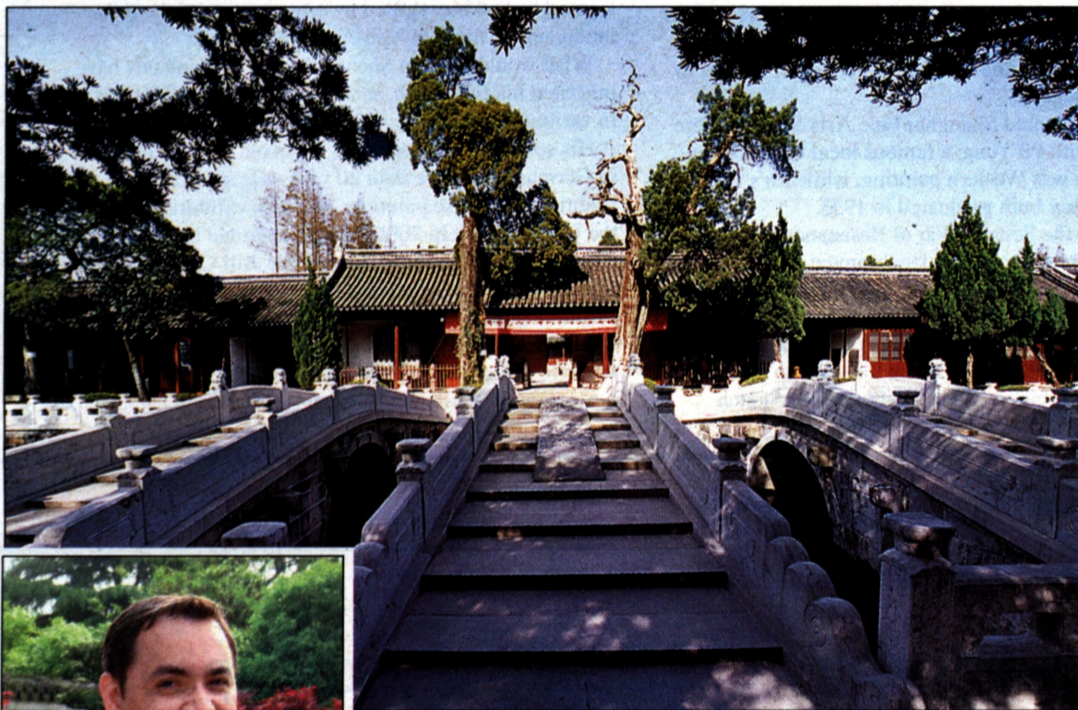
Boasting a history of more than 800 years, Jiading is rich in cultural heritages. The Confucius Temple, dating from the Ming Dynasty, is a must-see. This Sunday Shanghai Confucius Cultural Week started there, featuring performances, exhibitions and other events.

In Nanxiang, visitors can see a display of bamboo carvings or sample delicious steamed dumplings.

Route: Take Hujia Highway A12 to Jiading District Exit. Drive past Bole Rd. and go straight to Shaxia Road. Then turn right into South Street. You can also take bus Hutang Line or Tourist Line 6A to Tacheng Road.



Spectators cheer at last year's F1 China Prix at the Shanghai International Circuit. The race was won by Ferrari's Kimi Räikkönen with Fernando Alonso finishing second and Felipe Massa finishing third. Championship leader Lewis Hamilton retired from the race after going off at a very wet pit entrance after worn tyres stuck in the gravel.



For people preferring a quiet afternoon, the Confucius Temple in central Jiading is the best choice, according to Jack Heath (left).

Enjoy a memorable holiday in countryside



Jack Heath

With the National Day holiday almost upon us, I have hatched a perfect holiday plan which involves playing golf in Anting and enjoying some farm fun in well-known Maoqiao Village with my friends and family.

I think Maoqiao will be quite different to my home in the United States. I hear people get to pick fruits and vegetables and go fishing which I would love to try.

But if golf or fruit-picking don't appeal, here are some other Jiading ideas. Formula One motorsport fans should definitely go to the Grand Prix in Jiading on October 19 but if you prefer a quiet

afternoon, the Confucius Temple in central Jiading is the best choice.

Every time I go there, I am always amazed at the effort Jiading has made to save the historical and traditional culture of the area while still facilitating vast development.

Jiading also has several lively towns. Guyi Garden and Yunxiang Temple in Nanxiang Town seem to be the most popular places for visitors. I love Nanxiang because of the delicious *xiaolongbao* (steamed bun).

Speaking of tasty food, I have to mention juicy Malu grapes. Some of my Chinese friends said Nanxiang and Malu will be holding various events around *xiaolongbao* and grapes during the holiday.

Of course you don't need to worry

that the long journey takes too long. I remember when I first arrived in Jiading 13 years ago, many roads were still under construction and it took me two hours to travel from downtown to Jiading.

But now it only takes 30 minutes, through which you can see the great changes of Jiading's traffic situation. A lot of bus routes are also pretty convenient although you need to be able speak some Chinese.

Jiading people are the best. They may be part of the busy Shanghai environment but they know how to relax and enjoy life in the countryside.

(Compiled by Chen Qianqing)

Ancient marriage tradition still followed

Tao Jiming and Chen Qianqing

Like many other places in Jiangnan (south of the lower reaches of Yangtze River), a wedding custom still exists in Jiading where a marriage is decided by the parents of both the bride and the groom in ancient times.

While not everybody follows the custom, choosing a more modern approach, some still do.

Usually, the same social status is a factor in determining whether a couple can marry but overall it is a complicated business.

The first step is the engagement. The man's family asks a matchmaker to propose to the woman's family. If her family approves of the marriage, the parents write their daughter's *ba zi* (the exact time, date and year of her birth) in a red envelope and send it to the man's family. After a fortune-teller ensures the *ba zi* of the two fits, both families visit the other's offspring and then arrange a date to hold an engagement banquet.

The second step is sending gifts. The fiancé and the fiancée's family will exchange gifts, which in Chinese is called *na cai*. Rich families send silver coins, gold, jewelry, tea, and flour, which has the Chinese meaning "*jin* (gold) *ya* (tea leaf) *yu* (jewelry) *chen* (flour)."

Poor families choose jujube, peanut, longan, and lotus seeds which has a similar sound to "*zao sheng gui zi* (having a son soon)."

The fiancée's family usually send rice which is dyed red and green, known as "*jin zhu yu li*" (gold and jade beads). In addition, they will send a large *zongzi* (rice dumpling) and five small ones, which means "*wu zi deng ke*" (five sons succeeding in getting high official rank).

Thirdly, on the day before the wedding, the man's family goes to the fiancée's family to accept the dowry, which contains a closet, a case, a quilt, clothes and a foot basin. They also put red eggs, jujube, peanuts and sugarcane in a chamber pot as a sign of celebration. Lastly it's the wedding ceremony. The bride and the groom hold banquets in both houses. At the bride's house, lunch is the official banquet with dinner a smaller scale affair while at the groom's house, it is the other way round.

At dusk, the groom travels to the bride's home to pick her up. People light firecrackers for the celebration. After the bride and groom kowtow to their parents, the ceremony is over and every one at the ceremony goes to the newly weds' new house to party — it's called *nao xin fang*.

