

*Dear Shanghai,*

*I didn't realize how, cool, innovative and incredibly metropolitan city you were until we moved here! You have been home to my family for the last two years – we love our life here! I am a mother of two young boys and in these two years they have flourished and grown to embrace their life here.*

*I love so much about you and thought I should share some of those with you today:*

- ♥ *I love the energy I feel as I walk through your streets*
- ♥ *I love that I feel welcomed here*
- ♥ *I love the trees that change colour in Autumn in Century Park*
- ♥ *I love your food! the variety of cuisine you offer is amazing*
- ♥ *I love to see so many people from different places of the world thriving and finding their own space to be themselves here*
- ♥ *I love the hidden gems - photography café and the hidden bookstores in the French Concession*
- ♥ *I love Fuxing Lu*
- ♥ *I love watching square-dancing – so graceful, so elegant*
- ♥ *I love how your lights puts on a show for us – how you make the old and new Bund come to life*
- ♥ *I love the towering buildings of Lujiazui that kiss the sky and make me feel small*
- ♥ *I love that you keep me on my toes with so much change! Yesterday's Japanese restaurant is now a Hot Pot restaurant, just like that.*
- ♥ *I love Taobao*
- ♥ *I love that my children already speak your language*
- ♥ *Above all, I love how you make me feel – I love who I am and who I can be here.*

*I know this is a tough time for you, and the country, and so I wanted to reach out to you and give you a **big warm virtual hug**. I hope I am able to express to you that despite the anxiety induced by this outbreak, I couldn't be more grateful that you have made this a home away from home for me and the many expats I know.*

***This too shall pass!*** *We will celebrate again with you:*

- *The warm weather of Spring*
- *The crazy queues when a new restaurant opens*
- *The helter-skelter of Jing'an*
- *The crazy traffic and dodging of Kuaidis*
- *The sound of children skating in Golden Bridge*

*As soon as the dust settles, I promise we will get back to the business of building community together.*

*I get a lot of questions about expats; how are they feeling? Are they leaving Shanghai to go back home? And it all really depends on the situation and individual circumstance – everyone makes the decision that is right for their family (some of the expats have extended their holiday outside the country, some have left due to the uncertainty and some have chosen not to come out of their homes during this quarantine period).*

*Regardless of where we may be physically right now, I know that I speak for a lot of the expats in saying, **we are with you!** And we love you.*

*Yours,  
Senait and Family*

