

## Shanghai, My Third Hometown!

Shanghai unconsciously became an important part of my family and my life. I didn't realize it until three weeks ago when I landed in the Pudong Airport and saw the emptiness. "Devastating" was the first feeling and my heart was very saddened. It made me realize how much I cared and loved Shanghai and how it has become my third hometown.

My family moved to Shanghai in 2008/2009 but I traveled back and forth between Shanghai and Michigan in the first few years. Even though I spent most of my time in Shanghai starting 2013, I thought I was an outsider – a guest/tourist of Shanghai. Seeing the emptiness at the airport and on the streets really struck me deep inside. It forced me to ponder what Shanghai means to me and my family.

Shanghai is a city full of history but also has everything that any modern city offers. I love wondering at busy places like Tianzifang, as well as admiring the skyscrapers at Lujiazui; trying out new restaurants with friends at L+Mall; sipping coffee with love ones at a boutique shop overlooking a quiet street. It is in Shanghai I made new friends, took enrichment classes and explored new things/places...

Being an economic center, Shanghai provides great opportunities to people with different skill levels, interests and pursuits. It is in Shanghai where my husband advanced his career, realized his achievements and was awarded a citizen of Shanghai...

My sons appreciated their experience of living in Shanghai and studying at Shanghai American School. The multi-culture city and international school shaped them into being open minded, responsible and independent young men. They only had one week of break this past Christmas but they flew more than 14 hours to come back to Shanghai. Besides seeing us, they also wanted to embrace Shanghai again, meeting friends in Pudong and Puxi and visiting places that they missed while being away.

Shanghai is a place that no matter where we go, we'll always come back to it. It's a place that our hearts are tied to, cheering for its joy, grieving for its sufferance and fighting for its recovery. Shanghai, you've definitely taken my heart and I've made you my 3rd hometown! I am glad to see that the coronavirus is under control and people are in the process of going back to work. Can't wait to see thing get back to normal. I know the traffic will be congested, but I won't complain - I promise ☺!

Jenny He & Charles Huang

