

Saturday in Xili with the CA Program: Dim Sum, Bubble Tea and More



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dim sum : *a style of Chinese cuisine prepared as small bite-sized portions of food served in small steamer baskets or on small plates.*
/'dim'sʌm/

When in Guangdong, do as the Guangdong people do, and dim sum tops your to-do list here in Shenzhen. So on March 3rd, the Campus Advisor Program organized a dim sum trip and led a group of international students, comprised of both new exchange students and full-time students, to experience the authentic Chinese culture of dimsum.

A quick ride on bus M369 took us from the campus dormitories to the Xili Nanrong Hotel. The restaurant is located on the second floor, and is a traditional Chinese *jiudian* style restaurant where people sit around round tables in an open floor.

Ordering dimsum can be quite a feat, especially since many of these types of establishments don't have an English menu. The Campus Advisors (CAs) spread out

amongst the international students and demonstrated how to order. In more traditional dim sum places, one would take the table card and place orders in front of food carts directly. At the Xili Nanrong Hotel, orders were taken like one would in a regular restaurant.

Dim sum originated in southern China with the Cantonese people, and it is usually linked with the tradition of yum cha (literally meaning "drink tea"). The elderly would get up early to eat dimsum after morning exercises, and sit at the table with a cup of tea for a few hours to read the newspaper or chat with others. For many, yum cha and dim sum are reserved for weekends with families. It is therefore not surprising to find many families happily eating and drinking away when we arrived.

The CAs introduced some of the must-haves when ordering dimsum: *xia jiao* (shrimp dumpling), *liu sha bao* (egg custard bun), *cha shao bao* (braised pork bun), *chang fen* and many more. Some people also ordered less conventional but equally delicious dishes, like roasted Peking duck and fried beef noodles.

While waiting for the food to be served, the international students learnt that when served tea, tapping your finger on the table means thank you. Tap once if the person pouring tea is younger than you and twice if he or she is older. However, this gesture is only recognized in Guangdong and surrounding areas, people in other parts of China would not understand it!

Realeboga Maboe, a new exchange student at PHBS this semester from South Africa, was excited about her first dim sum experience, "I felt like a kid in a candy store for the first time, all of a sudden... there were many plates presented to me and I just couldn't choose on which to taste first, so I did what my inner kid would do, take everything!" She would love to have a chance to learn how to cook Chinese food and be able to cook for family and friends back at home and introduce them to it.

The dimsum ended with everyone paying "AA style", which is a Chinese way of saying go dutch. After a very fulfilling meal, the crowd decided to walk to Street 366, a food street nearby, and order some bubble tea. Students got to

experience how to customize a drink, such as changing the amount of ice and sugar level, adding extra pearls or jelly. 366 during the weekend is alive and bustling with life, and you can get a glimpse of how a regular weekend is like here. Afterward, students purchased some plants from a local florist to make their dorms feel more like a home.

Hanna Friedman-Luzkova, a first year international PHBS student, said that she really enjoyed the trip and it was also a great way to meet the new exchange students. She would like to visit other places like this to experience the Chinese culture more.

This trip was a short break away from schoolwork and the campus, and everyone should step out of the campus more often and explore the city! The place you go doesn't have to be a well-known attraction. Ask around for where the locals eat and what they would do, and that is the best way to maximize your stay here.

Reported by Yang Wandong

Dafen Oil Painting Village

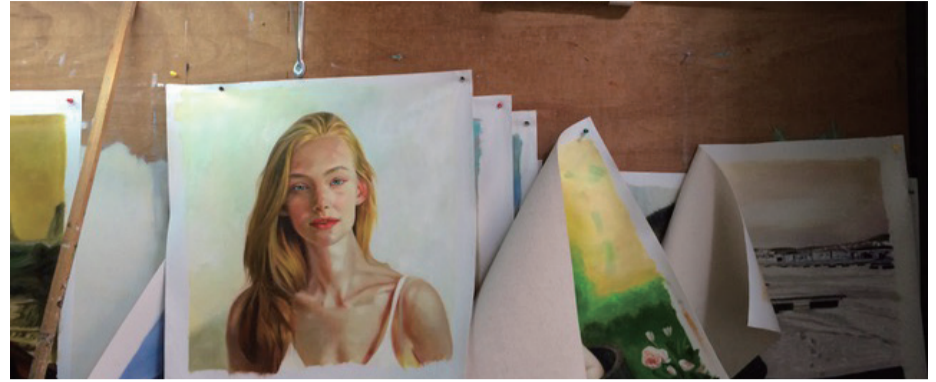


Dafen is supposedly the world's biggest art factory, where thousands of artists recreate iconic paintings for sale overseas. Imitation works have made Dafen a world-famous art zone and greatly supported the growth of the local economy. China is well known for its mass-production economy, but these factories are about as far from Foxconn's iPad plants as the imagination can wander.

In Dafen, a suburb of the coastal city of Shenzhen in China's south-eastern Guangdong province, thousands of artists labor constantly to reproduce famous paintings for the mass market.

The village is located close to Dafen metro station and very easy to find. A gigantic sculpture of a hand holding a painting brush welcomes you when entering the old Hakka village and guides you the right track. It was set up by a Hong Kong businessman called Wong Kong, who had a business specializing in reproduction art in 1988. Soon he was joined by artists from all over China, some classically trained but many just talented amateurs fresh from the paddy fields. This small village hosts 1100 galleries, over 8000 artists producing an astonishing number of painting per year (able to supply up to 60% of the oil painting demand worldwide). Street after street, shops are selling oil paintings, watercolors, and embroidered paintings. One can find experts of Impressionism, Pop art, art nouveau etc. or others specialized in portraits or copycats of specific painters. The whole village is organized around this cluster of small shops whose only activity is painting and selling hundreds of Mona Lisas every day.

But things seem to be changing, as the continuing economic troubles in the western countries has hit the purchasing power of their traditional customers. While in the past artists produced endless copies of iconic western paintings by the likes of Van Gogh, Monet and Picasso, these days they have had to adapt to cater to customers closer to home. The BBC just claimed that exports fell by more than half in the first half of last year alone after a collapse in western orders. Lately, nearly all of the western customers have



been replaced by Chinese clients. Consequently, artists have been forced to adapt their work. Moreover, as more and more oil painting production bases emerge, competition in the industry is becoming intense from home and abroad. What sets Dafen apart from other global art villages though is the slew of orderly arranged oil painting workshops and the distinctive artistic atmosphere. And with more galleries in Dafen realizing the importance of producing their own paintings, Dafen copy workers transform into real artists.

Last weekend, I went to discover this astonishing place in Shenzhen myself. I was curious to find out about this place and see the diversity in art it is offering. Dafen is a four square kilometers village whose unique atmosphere makes it a must-trip after days spent in the crowded Shenzhen. One can meet people from all over the world coming there to marvel at or buy paintings. What is very remarkable is the accuracy of these paintings; one could hardly recognize an original painting from one that is just inspired by it. As emphasized by the news, less people can afford art of well-known artists. Dafen allows every one of us to own a piece of art in our living room. Therefore, if one's wall is bare and is in need of nice artwork, one will be able to find almost anything one can imagine.

For a few hundred renminbi, one can commission an artist to copy your favorite piece of art, your wedding photo, or photos of your family. Insisting on quality will cost a little more but it's worth it. One can also get incredibly rapid framing while you wait and inexpensive art supplies. Moreover, there is a handsome modern gallery exhibiting works by Dafen local painters. And one should not miss out the experience of the Qi Xing teahouse, built around several 300-year-old Hakka houses with beautiful courtyards. This trip was worth it and made it possible to gaze a glimpse of the before-mentioned dimension of mass-production. It will be interesting to see further development of this peaceful enclave that is known for being the world's largest art factory.

Reported by Alexandra Battay

Drones All Over the World

A few weeks ago, I had the opportunity to fly my first drone and the experience was more exciting that I thought it was going to be. Doing some research about drones, I found that the so-called unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were initially developed for military purposes.

However, just recently normal people like me could get them in any store and play around with this innovation and technology all over the world. Long has been the trip since the Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle became a new hobby for people of all ages.

There are several things to evaluate a drone. The degree of autonomy for example. Until now regular sport drone's battery duration is quite limited and it should be controlled by a human pilot at all times. Manufacturers know this bottleneck and they are trying to design a better battery life so users can enjoy a better experience. This makes it difficult to fly long distances although the system is designed to fly further from the pilot. Lately some autopilot functions have also been developed

and this helps to perform low level human pilot intervention with several limitations.

Still, it is a real adventure to try to fly a drone by yourself. If you like feeling the emotion of remote control, you can dare to compete in exhibitions all over the world or just try to enjoy a tour from the sky. Just make sure that you know your country's regulations because some of these can be restrictive, and even controversial.

Since these less sophisticated UAVs' market has expanded to civil and commercial applications, drone manufacturers, such as the Chinese company DJI, have developed functions in very diverse fields. From agricultural uses to fertilize and plague control, to public safety, drones are improving the way specialists solve and prevent daily problems. Huge companies, like Amazon, are thinking about using drones to improve their delivery times and customer service. But smaller businesses are not an exception. In more remote places entrepreneurs all over the globe are also using drones

in many ways to be more efficient in terms of time, labor, and of course, money. The use of drones could even improve the decision-making processes by giving access to very accurate information in real time or from inaccessible places.

During my holidays at home I had the opportunity to see how DJI drones helped people from the Ministry of Agriculture to inspect the growth of tree plantations in a research project that will increase the income of hundreds of families. This is how I became more and more interested in how drones are changing the way of doing business.

Flying a drone was not as difficult as I thought, so after a while I felt the adrenaline of being a very small-scale pilot for first time in my life. The experience was astonishing but what I learned later was even more interesting. Ecuador is thousands of miles away from China and coincidentally I got to use a DJI drone. A Chinese DJI drone. That is how far this enterprise has gone. Just a few years ago, no-one could imagine that young enterprises like DJI

would be conquering the markets all over the world and marking the way for competitors.

Forbes noticed DJI potential. In an article of May 2015, this important magazine mentioned how the 35 years old visionary, Frank Wang, and his company Dajiang Innovation Technology Co has changed the drone market. DJI owns 70% of the consumer drone market and this empire has been growing continuously. In 2006 Wang started building prototypes until he and his two friends moved to Shenzhen manufacturing hub and nowadays is a well-respected worldwide brand.

As many other pioneering innovation enterprises, DJI headquarters are in Shenzhen and that means a lot of opportunities for PKU Shenzhen Campus students to see its evolution. There is even a Showroom in DJI Headquarters to live the DJI experience, or why not, start a new innovative enterprise yourself.

Reported by Lis Moreira



Arbor Day and More: Promoting a Green Mindset



March is a time which calls for spring, as flowers bloom and the weather gets warmer. Well, perhaps not so much in Shenzhen, but we can definitely feel the weather changing. On March 12, the Green Plus Association (GPA) planted plants and flowers in celebration of Arbor Day, or otherwise called Plant-a-Tree-day.

Arbor Day is celebrated worldwide, and many countries have set different dates for the day. However, it all comes down to caring about trees and plants and their ecological significance. In the U.S., National Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April in Nebraska, and other states select their own dates. In Belgium, the International Day of Treeplanting is celebrated on or around Mar 21.

GPA decided to plant Shenzhen's city flower, the bougainvillea, or more commonly referred to as the triangle plum, in the shape of the letters P, K and U, while the letters S and Z were formed using *Dracaena reflexa*, or pleomele. These plants were not only chosen for their aesthetic appeal, but also for their significance; the bright colors of the triangle plum symbolizes the passion of PKUers and the lively green color of the pleomele symbolizes the youth and energy of students here at PKU Shenzhen.

Students gathered around the Alumni Green on Sunday morning and started working right away. They first dug out the overall shape of the letters, then placed the plants in under the guidance of the school workers. Although it was a first time planting for many people, teamwork and passion made it possible to finish planting in just one morning.

GPA is a new association formed on September 5, 2016. It is a student



endeavor promoting environmental protection activities, and focuses on the frontier of green industry, including areas in economics, management, lifestyle and technology. GPA believes in green sustainable development as well.

If you don't know yet, the next few weeks and month features many more awareness days like these. For instance, World Forest Day is on March 21, and calls for people's attention to the depletion of our forest resources and promotes forest protection and sustainable use of the resources.

World Wide Fund for Nature's annual Earth Hour is coming up on March 25. You are encouraged to turn off your electricity between 8.30pm and 9.30pm on that day as part of a global movement to raise awareness for climate change and excessive CO2 emissions.

Last but not least, World Earth Day is on April 22 and celebrates environmental protection. This year's campaign is Environmental and Climate Literacy, which emphasizes on empowering through education and producing well-informed green voters that can push forward environmental and climate laws and policies.

These events and awareness days only last for day, but they serve as a reminder of the importance of our environment and how we sometimes take it for granted. The concern and awareness for our nature and environment should stay with us long after the events as we practice a greener lifestyle and mindset.

Reported by Yang Wandong

Dialogue in the Dark: An Untold Perspective

In February, I went to "Dialogue in the Dark" in Shenzhen with my friends. One of my friends told us about the social entrepreneur, Andreas Heinecke, the founder of "Dialogue in the Dark". Originally he worked at a radio station in his hometown Baden-Baden, Germany. One day he was asked to develop a work training for a young journalist who had lost his eyesight in a car accident. This working opportunity made Andreas and the young journalist good friends. Andreas started to understand the special group of people that he had never been familiar with before. His friend was a very optimistic and humorous person, quite different from the stereotype that people often have towards those who are blind.

Andreas realized that there was deep and widespread prejudice about blindness that blocks blind people from having an equal opportunity to receive an education and enter into the labor market. That's why eventually he became a social entrepreneur to create "Dialogue in the Dark". It was originally an exhibition, held by a stony road. In recent years, new formats such as "Dinner in the Dark" and business workshops in the dark were developed.

Of course when my friend introduced me about this exhibition I did not understand what it was really doing. We arrived at Chegongmiao station and found the correct place. After being equipped with a blindfold, we went inside. Completely dark, you cannot tell whether your eyes are open or not. A tour guide led us through roads. At first we were in a state of panic, without any sense of direction in the enormous darkness. But as time went by, we got used to the environment, and I felt that I became more sensitive without relying on my eyes. The tour guide led us to touch the water, the leaves, and the bamboo. Different objects have different tactile qualities. Afterwards, we passed by a newsstand where we scrambled to find pens and postcards and strove to write some words without being able to see.

I must say that it was so difficult, and when I finally saw my postcard I could

not even verify where I wrote my words. We also touched the braille on the postcards, which consisted of several dots. Next, we went to cross the road. That's the first time I noticed that there were different sounds that played while standing for a red or green light respectively. Across the road was a vegetable market. Different fruits and vegetables have different kinds of scents, which you can only smell when they are so close to your nose. The tour guide asked us to guess the weight of different fruits and vegetables and most of us failed to guess accurately.

Eventually we had a small talk with the tour guide. He said each one of us can ask him a question. I asked that if this job was open to blind people and he answered that he was blind. All of us were surprised. He then introduced himself and revealed that it was just a part time job for him. He had heard about this place about two years from the internet and came to work here. He graduated from the special college and worked full time as a masseur. We asked him a lot about his life. He was quite satisfied with his life and told us that his life was becoming easier as a result of technological progress. For instance, with VoiceOver he can use an iPhone and search the Internet. He even showed us his watch- the dial plate could open and he could touch the hands to know the time. Finally, we ended the trip and went back into the light. He smiled and said goodbye to us and went back to the darkness.

For those who interested, this place provides tour guides in both Chinese and English. If you also want to have the experience, just book the time via their Wechat. It is located a building near Chegongmiao station Entrance C. Apart from the regular tour, it also provides "Eat in the Dark", "Musical in the Dark" and leadership & team building workshops.

Reported by Floy Chen

Country Profile: Germany



Germany is a highly diverse country in which it is pleasant to live. It offers exciting cities and a variety of countryside areas, as the North Sea coast and the Alps never cease to fascinate their many visitors. A love of nature and cities alike, healthy food and gourmet restaurants, a strong sense of tradition and a cosmopolitan mindset measuring 357,000 square kilometers, Germany is the fourth largest country in the European Union after France, Spain and Sweden. The country lies at the heart of Europe. It shares its borders with nine other nations. No other European country has more neighbors.

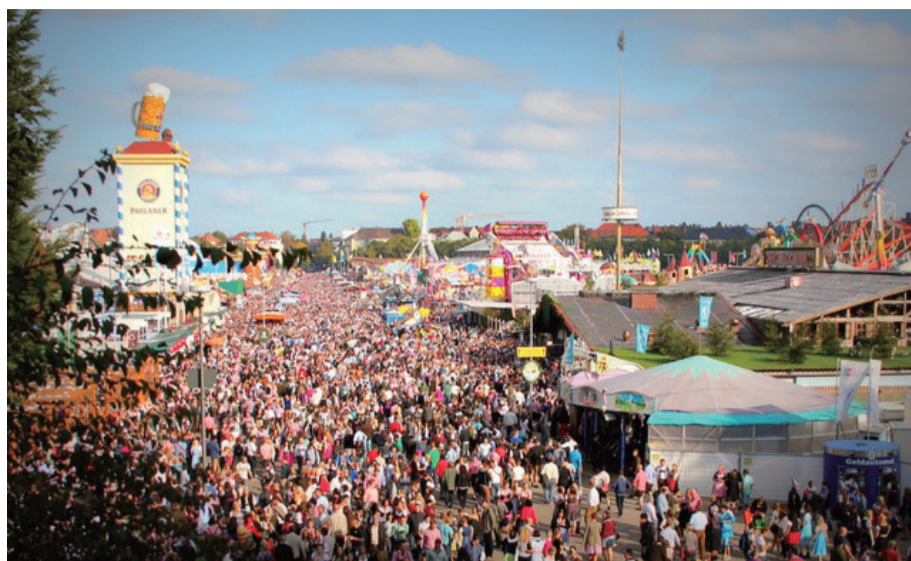
Germany is one of the countries with the highest standards of living in the world. The 2014 United Nations' Human Development Index puts Germany sixth out of a total of 187 countries. With 81.2 million inhabitants, Germany is the most populous country in the European Union and one of the most densely populated. Around 30 percent of the population resides in big cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, of which there are 76 in Germany; Hamburg has 2,400 people per square kilometer, Munich has 4,460 and Berlin 3,780.

Germany is a federation. The federation and the 16 states each have areas of responsibility of their own, including internal security, schools, universities, culture, and municipal administration. The administrative authorities of the states enforce not only their own laws, but also those of the federation. Through their representatives in the Bundesrat, the governments of the states are directly involved in the federation's legislation. Federalism in Germany is more than just a system of federal states; it represents the country's decentralized cultural and economic structure and is deeply rooted in tradition. Over and above their political function, the states are also a reflection of pronounced regional identities.

Concerning rights, duties, and volunteering, anyone living in Germany is free to decide how he or she wishes to live. People have many freedoms that enable them to help shape the country. Germany is a peaceful, democratic country. Men and women have the same rights, and all inhabitants and the state must comply with the law in this 'state under the rule of law'. You are free to choose your opinion and your religion: the constitution guarantees these rights and they are valued particularly highly. Civil society also defines modern Germany. Millions of young people are active in their free time: in clubs, church or political associations, and non-governmental organizations.

In our globalized world, a good education is the springboard to the future. The education system in Germany represents a good launching pad in this regard. For young people in Germany, education and training is very important and the education system offers them numerous opportunities. Generally, there is not just one route by which they can progress, but rather interesting alternatives and side routes. The fact that so many young people in Germany have jobs is also down to the fact that they are educated so well and to the very latest standards.

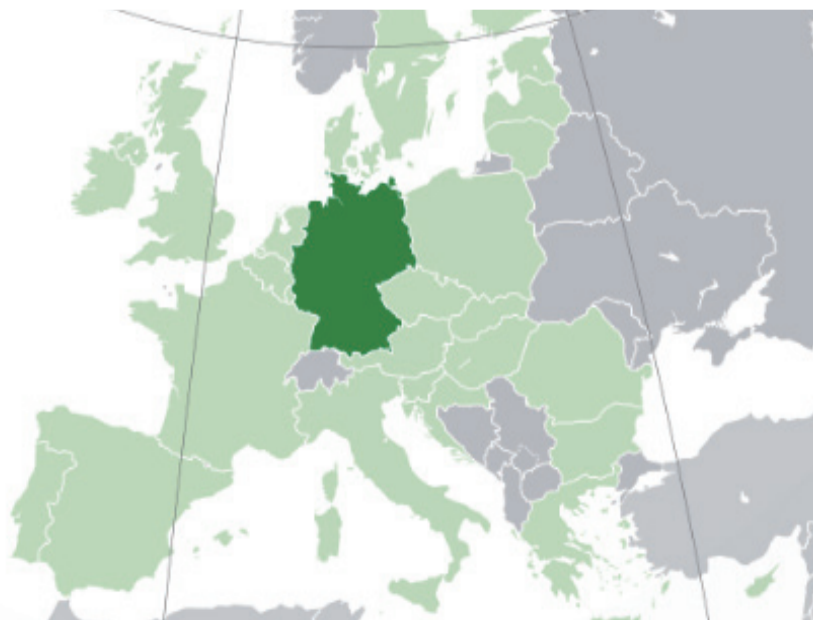
Therefore, studying abroad in Germany is a big chance not only for European people but for students from all over the world. They benefit from a high quality educational system, learning a new language and gaining experiences from this interesting country. However, when deciding to study in Germany one should not only consider the University rankings, one should rather consider the city to live in. From the author's perspective the



five best cities for studying in Germany are: Hamburg, Munich, Cologne, Frankfurt and Munich. Here is a short summary of these five cities:

- Hamburg is the country's second largest city and located in the north of Germany. It boasts one of the biggest harbors in the world and is famous for its legendary nightlife. With several waterways running through its center, Hamburg has maritime charm – with more bridges than Amsterdam and Venice combined.
- Munich, the capital of Bavaria and gateway to the Alps, is one of the most beautiful and green cities in Germany. It offers first class museums and traditional German architecture. One can get a true taste of Munich's culture and world-famous beer at its Oktoberfest, which attracts more than 6 million visitors every year.
- Cologne, founded by the Romans, is one of Germany's oldest cities. The soaring Cathedral of Cologne is the centerpiece of the city and its rich architectural history. Cologne is well-known for its contemporary art scene, excellent museums, and the largest carnival celebrations in Germany.
- Thanks to its international airport, Frankfurt is the major hub for Germany and Europe. The city is also the financial center of the country, which is reflected in Frankfurt's gleaming skyscrapers. Frankfurt is host to many important events, among them the International Book Fair in October, the biggest of its kind in the world.
- Berlin is both the German capital and the biggest city in Germany. After being separated into East and West during the Cold War, Berlin was reunited in 1990; it quickly emerged as the most cosmopolitan and exciting city in Germany for art, architecture, and nightlife.

Nonetheless, whatever University or city one decides to choose, studying in Germany is a great experience, as there is a great deal to discover.



Reported by Alexandra Rattay