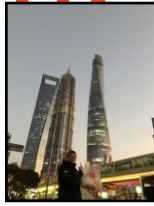


# JANUARY... IN CHINA



## Shanghai 上海

Jan 1st: The fam and I took a 4 hour, early, flight to Shanghai for a quick, 2 day, tour of the city 城市 that none of us had ever been to 没去过 before. When we arrived we took the subway straight to our hotel to leave our luggage 行李 and then spent 5 or so hours going around the local area where our hotel was. We chilled in the hotel and in the evening went to downtown Shanghai for some evening exploring of the bustling metropolis. Late on we decided that we couldn't come to Shanghai without taking in a birds-eye view so treated ourselves by heading 546m up in the Shanghai Tower. The next day we again did some exploring before heading back home to ready for our next trip.



## Harbin 哈尔滨

Harbin was possibly the highlight of my time in China! 13 of us, parents and siblings included, took a sleeper train from Beijing to Harbin for 4 days of spectacular experiences and chill to the bone weather. The train, first of all, was quite an experience... we all woke up in the middle what looked like the scenery from Frozen but inside the train was sweltering! First stop was for some food then straight to the Tiger park, this was when we first understood just how cold it was, -25 degrees Celsius! In the evening we went to the Ice and Snow world... it was amazing, astounding and absolutely freezing (-28) . It was a huge expanse of ice sculptures towering over us just like being in a city, busy with people and perfectly lit. It was scary to think how just a couple of weeks before not one bit of the ice stood there. Over the next couple of days we were taken around with our tour guide and group to many more cool places across Harbin, many of which looked Russian due to their huge influence in the region. We did a little shopping and had Harbin's famous ice cream which, in the cold, never melted one bit. It was such an interesting place to be as it was unlike anywhere I've ever been before in my life and having friends and our families there made it really fun. But all good things must come to an end so, after our fab few days, we headed home again to Tianjin, luckily on a much more comfortable train!



## Beijing 北京

Once back my fam and I gathered our belongings and headed to Beijing for the last of their time in China. We checked into a lovely hotel, did some "essential" shopping at the Pearl market for my mum and brother and were then joined by Bethany and her mum, Carol, for some food and drinks in an exclusive jazz bar tucked away in the city... not cheap but well worth it! We had a great last night chatting about our time and planning some meet-ups when everyone was back in the UK again! In the morning we had what was my first western style breakfast in 4 months before I said my goodbyes to everyone and headed to the airport for my flight to Sydney. When I left the others took a trip, with Bethany as their tour guide, to the Forbidden city and Temple of Heaven for some last day touring and finished off with roast duck for dinner!!! Then, with 2 weeks of memories and fun to tell everyone back home about, they headed to the airport themselves for their long flights back to the UK :))

