



Accessing China

-The Asia Pacific Access Quarterly Newsletter

2nd Quarter 2009

- [Moving to china ? How the Global Economic crisis might affect you](#)
- [Introducing APA's Cost Saving Programs](#)
- [Interview with APA Relocation Manager in Shanghai](#)
- [Summer Holidays at 'home' in Beijing](#)
- [Summer in Shanghai](#)

APA Taxi Books Help You Get Around China's Cities
Special Offer of Only 25RMB for pre-Olympic Beijing edition

Contact info@apachina.com or phone +8610 6512 996 for more information

Welcome to the second 2009 edition of the APA Newsletter Accessing China

The impact of the Global Recession has become clearer since our last issue but we now also may be seeing in some countries, small signs of recovery.

Foreign companies, particularly those based in the US, have cut down their expat staff numbers in China and we have seen higher numbers of repatriations and early terminations than usual. On the positive side, this has led to some reductions in housing prices and easier access to international schools. In this issue, mindful of cost-cutting pressures on HR, we have included a couple of articles looking at the impact of the global downturn on housing and schooling for expats in China as well as an introduction to APA's new cost-savings relocation programs. These programs may assist companies looking to support their employees during the downturn but unable to provide a full range of services to them at this time.

Another result of the global downturn has been more foreign investment interest in China's inland provinces, as investors look for lower cost locations to place their investment. Remote locations generally have less developed infrastructure and pose other problems for HR relocating employees. APA specializes in supporting companies sending expatriate employees and Chinese Nationals into "remote" Chinese sites. If you have any needs in this area, don't hesitate to contact us at info@apachina.com.

In the meantime, enjoy this issue of our Newsletter and may the second half of 2009 be brighter for you all

Shelley Warner



Presentation of Australia China Club Award to APA



We are delighted to announce that Asia Pacific Access' two managers, Tony Voutas and Shelley Warner, were Presented with an award for their long-term and outstanding contribution to improving cross-cultural understanding between Australian and Chinese business.

Their award was one among six awards presented by the newly-established Australia China Club. Tony and Shelley received their award from the Australia-China Club's Patron, the Australian Ambassador to China, H.E. Dr Geoff Raby, at a special function in Beijing on 6th June 2009.

Moving to china ?How the Global Economic crisis might affect you

Prepared by Faiszal Taib and Zhang Li

The global economic crisis has seen a reduction in the numbers of in-coming expats and a continuing outward flow of expatriates this year. Some have been repatriated even before the end of their assignments. This has had an impact on two key areas of concern to



expatriates relocating to China - housing and schooling.

Housing

Expatriates working with multinational companies in China have been finding that their previous housing budgets are being reviewed, and in most cases lowered, as the global financial crisis has forced many multinational companies to cut costs.

A recent survey by a prominent international real estate advisor, conducted among more than 400 multinational companies operating in China, found that over 50% of respondents in Beijing were considering reducing their housing budgets. The figures for Shanghai and Southern China were 22% and 31% respectively.

With lower budgets, some companies are now considering relocating project teams to China on a short-term basis instead of sending expats on long-term assignments

A type of cost-saving measure that has reportedly been widely adopted is a profit-sharing scheme whereby employees who choose to live in more affordable accommodation are entitled to share a portion, or the full amount, of the savings gained. The mutual benefit to both the company and the employee is the main reason behind the scheme's popularity, which has an adoption rate

of 55% of respondents in Beijing, 45% in Shanghai and 40% in Southern China.

In addition, multinational companies are also becoming more flexible towards allowing expatriates to live in accommodation owned by private individuals rather than lease-only properties, since rents offered by individual landlords are on average 10 to 30 percent lower than developer-owned properties. In Shanghai, over 90 percent of companies surveyed allowed their employees to be housed in individual landlord accommodation, while in Beijing and southern China the percentage was closer to 80 percent.

For expatriates already living in China, there is the expectancy of rental reductions once leases are up for renewal, due to falling rentals as the result of lower demand. There is also increased flexibility from landlords eager to keep their properties occupied as a result of lower than predicted number of expats arriving. This gives



potential tenants a better negotiating position, particularly for high-end villas and town houses. For example, over the past 6 months in Shanghai at least a 5% reduction and sometimes a 20% reduction in rental costs was achieved.

Both housing costs and occupancy rates have been falling in China since the third quarter of last year, and the trend is expected to continue in the second half of 2009. The pace of decline, however, is expected to slow as the market bottoms out and multinational companies become more certain about their short and medium term plans.

Multinational companies are also realizing the cost benefits gained from hiring expatriates locally, as opposed to bringing in expatriates from their home countries. Some companies are even replacing expatriates with local talent who can be hired under significantly less expensive remuneration packages. According to the report, these approaches had been adopted by about half of the respondents from southern China, while multinational companies in Shanghai are more likely to hire expatriates locally than hiring locals.

Schooling

The international education industry has been showing signs of cooling as a result of the economic downturn. Annual fees that could run up to over US\$20,000 per child meant that schools had the resources to expand and develop better programs and facilities, as well as attract quality faculty.

Now, as expatriate numbers drop, enrolment figures for international schools are also decreasing. Whereas in the past few years, waiting lists to the top schools were common, this year, waiting lists have freed up considerably. In addition, remaining expatriates are increasingly looking to move their children to more affordable schools, such as bilingual schools that also offer more in-depth study of local language and culture. Some local schools also now have accreditation from international education committees and provide a lower cost alternative to international schooling.

Asia has been the world's fastest expanding region for international schools, with average growth of around 11 percent in recent years, but the rate could ease to 5-7 percent this year. China was one of the fastest markets, leapfrogging from 123 international schools in 2006 to 210 this year.

Introducing APA's Cost Saving Programs



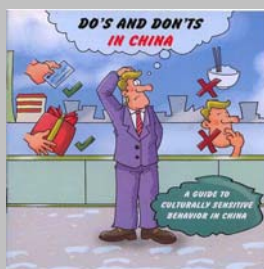
APA has been listening to our clients and partners, and now presents a series of cost saving orientation and settling in programs.

Even though the current economic crisis has slowed down the amount of international assignments globally, it has not prevented companies moving assignees to China altogether. Companies still want to ensure their assignees the support required to settle in quickly. The APA programs offer this as well as 3 months of ongoing phone and email support. In addition, a lease review is provided both for corporate and personal leases, to protect the company, and the assignee.

Our entry program provides you with the basic support to find a house and settle into your new city or you can choose a program that has more detailed and accompanied assistance.

We recommend these programs for companies on a tight budget, and for those assignees who otherwise might not receive any assistance at all. With costs starting at 595 USD, there is no reason for anyone to move to China without the support of APA.

SERVICE TYPE	BASIC	2ND TIER	3RD TIER
Welcome Info Pack	✓	✓	✓
House finding			
- home search based on needs assessment	✓	✓	✓
- accompanied by realtor	✓	✓	✓
- accompanied by counselor			✓
- lease review	✓	✓	✓
- lease negotiation and contract handling		✓	✓
Move-in/Check-in service			
- furniture and appliance list and report on condition	✓	✓	✓
- connection of gas, water, internet and electricity	✓	✓	✓
Orientation			
- detailed orientation briefing	✓	✓	✓
- one day tour of your city accompanied by counselor based on needs assessment		✓	✓
- city info pack and information folder	✓	✓	✓
- introduction to medical facilities and shopping Availability		✓	✓
- introduction to schools		✓	✓
Settling In			
- provide assistance in local practicalities eg. taking a taxi, subway, post, bank account, mobile phone, internet		✓ 1 day	✓ 2 days
- accompanied by counselor and driver		✓	✓
- introduction to community networking		✓	✓
- language training co-ordination, introduction to activities for kids		✓	✓
- introduction to your neighbourhood incl. nearest bank, grocery store, shops, subway, medical facilities		✓	✓
Support Service			
- 3 month phone/email support service	✓	✓	✓



Your Complete Guide to Cross-Cultural Do's and Don'ts in China

APA is pleased to announce that we have published a small booklet on cross-cultural do's and don'ts in China. The booklet contains **20 cartoons that illustrate a number of cross-cultural issues** that are important for foreigners to observe when in China for business or pleasure. To order copies of the booklet or to request a sample, please contact the **APA Beijing office** on +8610 6512 9996 ext. 216 or at info@apachina.com

Interview with APA Relocation Manager in Shanghai

Prepared by Laura Tilson



Please tell us a little about your background and what brings you here to China?

I joined APA in March of this year and am very excited to be working with other expats. In November 2004, my family made our way to the exciting city of Shanghai. My husband, two teenagers and I had no idea what to expect. We had lived in several cities in the United States and have looked upon each of our moves as a learning experience. Shanghai is our first overseas assignment. The first thing that struck me about Shanghai was the constant movement. There is always something going on and always something to see.

What do you enjoy most about living in China?

Helping newcomers enjoy living in Shanghai. Before moving to Shanghai, I worked for thirteen years in several cities for a packaging company in the United States. I began my career in packaging in Reno, Nevada. Afterwards opening a satellite office in Atlanta for six years and then opened a satellite office in Michigan. My various relocations have given me insights on how best to help new assignees. Shanghai has unique qualities that can only be described by people who have experienced Shanghai. I enjoy sharing my experiences with other newcomers. The best advice I could provide to

others is to look for the humor in every situation. When living in Shanghai one is involved in frustrating situations every day, but finding humor in it will help.

What advice would you give to other expats like yourself living China?

During the last few years, I studied Mandarin at Tongji University and Mandarin House Language Center. Although my language level is not where I thought it would be after three years of study, I have learned so much about the culture through the language. In addition to learning Mandarin, I have volunteered at my children's school and at The Community Center. I have also given tours of Shanghai to new expats and taught them how to use the Metro system. Teaching others how easy it is to navigate Shanghai is exciting for me. It seems that we are all intimidated by the size of Shanghai, but it is actually quite easy to find all the exciting places to see.

What do you hope to achieve in China?

I have already achieved the goals I set before coming to China. Embracing a new culture was my top priority. I have done this from my first day in Shanghai and my first trip to the nearby wet market. A favorite pastime of mine is to try all the delicious street food. Recently, a group of street vendors set up their stalls near my home. My family loves to visit these vendors for dinner. There is even a vendor that has his own portable pizza oven!

I believe that the only way to stop homesickness is to create a new home. This is exactly what my family has done in Shanghai.

Summer Holidays at 'home' in Beijing

Not every expatriate rushes to their home country the day school is out. Many families opt to stay in Beijing. Some stay for financial reasons, others for work, but many stay to make the most of their time in Beijing and expose their children to a wider range of experiences.

Around the world, while children are often thrilled at the prospect of summer break, parents often panic trying to fill the days with interesting and educational events that result in happily exhausted children. Many parents, especially those from North America, often turn to 'summer camps' for the perfect solution. Camps in that style don't exist in Beijing, but many international schools and other childhood education centers offer summer camp programs that meet the whole family's requirements.

Typical camp days run from 8am – 4pm, with options for half days. They include activities and lunch, and often have weekly themes culminating in a field trip. Themes range from water, transportation, food and cooking, animals and more.

Many camps start at 6 years of age, but some do exist for the 18 month to 6 year old kindergarten age children. The camps range in price from about 2,000 rmb a week, going up to over 5,000 rmb for the sailing camp including transportation, food and hotel accommodation for the latter.



Summer in Beijing

There are summer camps run by many of the international schools, which combine play and sports. There are also many options for

Summer Holidays at 'home' in Beijing (Continued)

learning Chinese for all ages, and special interest camps for topics such as theater and music. The Beijing Playhouse, for example, offers theater related summer programs and My Little Mozart Studio is offering morning music based camps with a different weekly themes, including a 'Kid's Café' week long camp for 1.5 – 6 year olds, this will include making shopping lists, then shopping and making the food before eating it. Ivy Bilingual has a weeklong 'Chinese life in a Hutong' theme. For sporty children, Sports Beijing is the first place to look for a variety of sports programs including a tennis and a soccer camp, as well as a multi sport camp.

Some students, especially those at international schools, would like to increase their Chinese level. Chinese Neighbor and Capital Mandarin are running camps for children aged 5-12 and 5-17 (respectively) to improve their Chinese language skills. ACLC also runs Chinese courses for ages 6-17, for local and overseas students to improve their Chinese and to have a full cultural experience. For international high school students who want to increase their Chinese level for the upcoming school year, they can join classes with college students and adults at CLE for an intensive academic period of study, including private tutors.

Another, less common option, for parents of toddlers who have some basic Chinese, is to send their child to a local Chinese kindergarten for the month of August, when many of the regular students might be away. This is not such an easy option, as it will mean approaching each school to see if they will allow a temporary student for the summer, but it is absolutely the most affordable!

For those who need improvement in English, The Canadian International School has an English phonics program for kindergarten age children who might need additional help with English.

Some families stress the importance of giving back and choose to participate in charitable activities, either part or full time for the summer. Teenagers, age 14 and older, can choose from a range of volunteer opportunities. Our Chinese Daughters Foundation has options for teenagers, and families, mostly working with orphanages. CAI is always in need of volunteers for their summer programs and weekend classes for children of migrant workers. Other opportunities might exist at Beijing Cat, Khamaid or Wokai among many deserving charities.

Other families choose this time to travel around China and explore their surroundings more extensively. Beijing has a wealth of museums and parks, as well as a rich countryside in every direction. For families wishing to travel, but would like some assistance, the travel company West China offers tailored family friendly packages and advice.

For those who can't stand the heat, there is a wide range of water parks, both indoors and out. Some families choose to drive 3 hours to BeiDaiHe, and spend some time at the beach, while others might cool down in Mongolia with Mongolian Ways.

For quick Asian getaways, Mercury Travel offers great guidance and a variety of tailored packages upon request. A summer 'in China' can easily include a weeklong break in Thailand or another Asian resort destination!

Staying in Beijing for the summer can be the best time of the year, allowing parents and children alike to explore more of their new home – be it through camps, language lessons, volunteering or travel.

If you would like more information on options for you or your employees, please contact APA China for more information.



Selected Beijing Resource list:

International Schools offering Summer Camps

Canadian International School
<http://www.cisb.com.cn>
AEA American Camp at BCIS
andrew.xiaochen@gmail.com
Dulwich College Beijing
<http://www.dcbj.com.cn>
Harrow International School
<http://www.harrowbeijing.cn>

Kindergarten Age Summer Camps

The Children's House Montessori Kindergarten
<http://www.montessoribeijing.com/ens/>
The International Montessori School of Beijing
<http://www.msb.edu.cn/>
Children's Learning Center of Beijing
<http://www.clcbkids.com/en/summercamp/>
Ivy Bilingual
www.ivybilingual.cn
Beanstalk
<http://www.bibs.com.cn/>
Eton Kids
<http://etonkids.com/english/>

Specialty Camps

The Beijing Playhouse
<http://www.beijingplayhouse.com/>
My Little Mozart Studio
<http://www.mylittlemozart.com/>
Sports Beijing
www.sportsbeijing.com
Sailing
http://www.beijingsailing.com/program_campus_en.htm

Language Schools

Chinese Neighbor
www.chineseneighbor.com
Capital Mandarin
<http://www.capitalmandarin.com>
ACLCL
<http://www.aclcl-cn.com>
CLE
<http://www.chinaledu.com/>
Canadian International School
<http://www.cisb.com.cn>

Volunteering

Our Chinese Daughters Foundation
www.ocdf.org
CAI www.cai-china.org
Beijing Cat
<http://www.beijingcat.org/>
Khamaid
<http://www.khamaid.org/>
Wokai
<http://www.wokai.org/>

Travel

West China
<http://www.westchina.net>
Mongolian Ways
<http://www.mongolian-ways.com>

Summer in Shanghai

By Rachel Zhou and June Fei

Spending the summer in Shanghai can sometimes be a challenge, especially for those that are new to the city. It might seem like there aren't many other families in Shanghai. This is because many families escape the heat by returning to their home countries during July and August. For those that are in Shanghai, there are several parks, playgrounds and water parks to keep you busy during the hot summer days. When the weather is just too hot or during rainy days, a movie cinema is the perfect place to spend an afternoon in air-conditioned comfort. Visiting Shanghai's parks and other recreation facilities will make the summer a lot more fun!

The Shanghai Sun Island Golf & Spa Resort.



Situated on the banks of the Huangpu River about 45 minutes drive from downtown Shanghai, this resort is already well known for its 36 holes golf course and hot springs swimming pool. However, the big draw for our kids is the huge water park behind the conference facility. Its massive wave pool and faux rock mountain gives the whole family hours of summer fun. At the same time, parents can catch some sun on the beach featuring real imported sand.

Dino Beach (热带风暴水上乐园)



As Shanghai's only water park, Dino Beach has the distinction of being one of city's top summer destinations. The park boasts a huge wave pool, numerous water slides, kiddie pools, concession stands serving Western fast food fare, and a highly relaxing lazy river flowing around the facility's

perimeter. Weekends during the summer can get very busy, but midweek discounts coupled with lower turnout can make for a very enjoyable experience. Don't forget your sunscreen! The entry fee varies according to day of week, time of day,



kids height, and etc. However, the price would be half for the kids under 1.5m and free to those under 0.8m.

Changfeng Ocean World (长风海底世界)

This new and modern indoor aquarium offers our kids a glimpse of life on the ocean floor. Access to the exhibits is through an unusual entrance comprising a mock airplane and a flight of stairs resembling an Inca Temple. Schools of colorful fish are viewed against a backdrop of themes, such as a sunken pirate ship, mountain streams and rainforests. The aquarium also features a touching pool, and tanks housing unusual crustaceans, sea horses, corals and anemones. Perhaps most impressive is the deep ocean and sea floor exhibit that brings visitors face-to-face with sharks, sea snakes and other creatures of the deep. The ticket for adults is RMB 120, RMB 90rmb the children between 1-1.4m and free for those kids below 1m.

Kidtown 儿童探索城



It is a miniature city built for kids from 6 months old to 8 years old to learn through play. It is also a good place for moms to socialized or have a cup of tea. The facilities include a fire station, police station, home, beauty parlor, park, supermarket, theater, a construction site, school, hospital and

art room. It also offers free classes: Bingo, Cooking, Arts/Crafts, Music/Movement, Story Time and Kids Yoga. It's a small space and will be crowded with expat kids and nannies. By paying 120rmb, your child can enjoy the whole day there.

The Shanghai Natural Wild Insect Kingdom. 大自然野生昆虫馆



If your kids love things creepy and crawly, this is the right place to go. The first floor has a fun open area with fish to feed and snakes to watch. Go downstairs for your fill of turtles and lizards as well as a fishing area where kids rent a net and catch goldfish. Admissions for adult are 35rmb each person, 20rmb for children, and free for those kids under 80cm.

Shanghai Sculpture Park (She Shan)



Wide open spaces with grass to run on, a man-made beach and lots of free kids' activities around Shanghai's "largest man-made lake". Your kids are going to love it. It is really a fun and interesting place in the summer with the Water Park and Man-made beach. It's also a great spot to just get out of the city and walk, take a picnic and sit on the grass with a blanket. The admission is 98RMB per adult and 70 RMB for kids under 1.2m.

Century Park (Shiji Gongyuan) 世纪公园



Being the largest park in Shanghai, your family can enjoy a whole day here. No admission is charged and there is a great children's outdoor play area. Within the park there is plenty of space to relax' have a picnic, you fly kites, rent family buggies to bike around, stroll

around the park and marvel at the skyscrapers that border it.

Grand Cinema 大光明电影院



Designed by a German architect L.E. Hudec, Grand Cinema was constructed in 1928. The building is a fine example of German architectural genius. The building is now protected and one of the very few heritage structures in Shanghai that has survived demolition in this ultra modern Chinese city. Grand Cinema in Shanghai screens some of the best Chinese movies. Hollywood blockbusters with Chinese subtitles are also exhibited.

Cathay Cinema 国泰电影院



Cathay Cinema first opened in January, 1932. It is one of the every few Art Deco style cinemas that are still surviving in modern Shanghai. Till 1949, this cinema hall used to screen only American and English films. From the second half of the 20th century, Chinese films also started to be screened along with Hollywood films. Until 2003, Cathay Cinema had only one screen. At the beginning of 2003, there was a massive renovation of this cinema hall as it was converted into a multiplex and a great place to watch a move in a historical building.



Shanghai Film Art Center is the largest and most popular cinema complex in Shanghai. Open every day from morning till late at night, the complex screens Chinese, Hong Kong and Hollywood blockbusters. There are food stalls, so you can munch on popcorn, eat ice cream, sip a soft drink while watching films. Tickets are priced at 40rmb. You can book your ticket over telephone or email beforehand to reserve a ticket.

Xintiandi UME International Cineplex 新天地国际影城



UME stands for Ultimate Movie Experience. Located at the Luwan District of Shanghai, Xintiandi UME International Cineplex has state-of-the-art sound system and huge projection screens. This is a popular auditorium for avid movie fans. Each of the 6 auditoriums is decorated and painted with a different color scheme. You can stretch out and comfortably watch the film on the unique cinema chairs.

Shanghai Film Art Center 上海影城

Asia Pacific Access' Services in China:

APA offers a wide-range of services to assist expatriate staff and their families moving to China:

- Destination Services:**
 >Orientation & Settling-In
 >Home Finding and Lease Renewal
 >Spouse Support
 >Tenancy Management Services

Cross-Cultural Training:
 For expatriates and Chinese employees working in MNCs

- Other:**
 >Immigration
 >Livability Assessment (2nd and 3rd-Tier Cities)