In China there is a saying that 'Xian has witnessed 2,000 years of history, Beijing has witnessed 1,000 years of history while Shanghai bears witness to the last 100 years.' For anyone who is interested in the history of modern China, Shanghai serves as an ideal starting point. Regarded as the 'Oriental Pearl', the city has a unique and important place in modern China and its rich heritage is worthy of exploration.

**Yesterday's Shanghai**

Shanghai, Hu for short, is situated on the estuary of Yangtze River, a position that led to frequently unwelcome intervention from foreigners seeking to impose their exports on the Empire during the nineteenth century. However, in the 1920s and the 1930s, Shanghai became an important international trade center. With its advantaged natural conditions, rapid development and splendid oriental culture, Shanghai was famed as the 'Oriental Paris' and attracted many entrepreneurs and established businesses. In addition, many foreign scientists, literary figures and artists chose to live, give lectures or just experience the Chinese charm in Shanghai. They included Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, Bernard Shaw and the poet Rabindranath Tagore, to name but a few. However, by the middle of the 20th century, the glory of the city was in decline.

**Today's Shanghai**

Having suffered the ravages of war, turmoil and economic crisis, the fortunes of Shanghai have been revived thanks to the great Reform and Opening Up since 1978. A favorable national policy, efficient administration, regular market mechanism and a large number of talents have come together to enhance by leaps and bounds the city’s economic development in recent years.

Now over 300 of the world's top 500 enterprises have opened branches in Shanghai, while many have their research and development centers or headquarters there. Pudong New Area has developed in just five years, and Lujiazui in Pudong has become one of the foremost world class financial and trade zones in Asia. Skyscrapers such as Jinmao Tower and Shanghai Global Financial Center dominate the
skyline, while landmark constructions like Oriental Pearl TV Tower, Pudong International Airport and Shanghai International Convention Center offer the finest and best of modern facilities.

These economic achievements are due to Shanghai’s progress in the fields of politics, finance, trade, culture, science and technology. Various important international events have held in Shanghai, including political conventions, commercial conferences, academic forums, sports events, cultural exhibitions, film festivals and fashion shows.

Shanghai's rapid development has come as a great surprise to many in China and has international recognition. Shanghai has grown from a provincial city into an international metropolis on par with New York and Paris in just ten years. No other city in the world has done this - it is unique!

Hundreds of thousands of tourists from all over the world throng to Shanghai to see for themselves its great economic impulse, distinctive attractions and to savor its blend of Eastern and Western cultures. In the eyes of westerners, Shanghai has special oriental charm; while in the eyes of Chinese, Shanghai has a fresh western style. The old say that Shanghai is modern and fashionable, while the young say that Shanghai is old and reminiscent. Wherever you come from and whoever you are, you will find Shanghai an ideal tour destination.

Shanghai has many attractions in the downtown area, including Huangpu River, the Bund, Oriental Pearl TV Tower, Jinmao Tower, Shanghai Museum, Yuyuan Garden, Xin Tian Di and the special old streets and lanes. Besides, there are places well worth a visit in the suburbs such as Qibao Ancient Town, Zhujiajiao Water Town and Chongming Island for in addition to its modern facets, the city has a wealth of more ancient Chinese traditions. Dining will be one of the most enjoyable aspects of your Shanghai trip. In addition to Shanghai dishes, restaurants in the city offer a wide variety of foods from other parts of China as well as a number of foreign countries.

Shanghai is a shopper's paradise. There are various bustling commercial streets and shopping centers waiting for you. These include Nanjing Road, Huaihai Road, North Sichuan Road, Xujiahui Shopping Center, Yuyuan Shopping City and Jiali Sleepless City.

The convenient transportation, comfortable accommodation and colorful places of entertainment will enhance your stay in this fascinating city.

Tomorrow’s Shanghai
Shanghai continues to develop at an amazing speed. It will host the football preliminary of the Beijing Olympics in 2008 and the World Expo in 2010, both of which offer the means to introduce Shanghai to yet more people worldwide. There is every reason to expect Shanghai to continue to surprise the world.