

Study-in-Shanghai Programs for Canadian University Students (since 2007) and for Canadian High School Students (since 2016)

1. Study-in-Shanghai Programs for Canadian University Students

The annual Shanghai Language & Culture program at the Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine in May is a 4-week language & culture immersion program for Canadian college and university students. The program has been offered by the Association since 2007.

The program includes 50 hours of language instruction in the morning, cultural activities in the afternoon and evening, with sightseeing in and around Shanghai over the weekend.

The highlight and unique feature of the program is a Language Buddies system which pairs Canadian students with local university students for cultural and language exchange. Students have developed long-lasting friendship beyond the programs.

Most students who applied for transfer credits from Canadian colleges and universities have received 3 credits for the program.

The program has tremendous support from teachers, students and the Chinese government. Teachers from across Canada help promote the program to their students. Since 2016, the China Scholarship Bureau has provided bursaries to participants of the program.

Students have been very appreciative of the opportunity. Some have participated in the program a few times. Here are some of the student testimonies:

- * One of the best experiences I have ever had.
- * I can summarize it in one word: Amazing!
- * Awesome and a wonderful experience.
- * A language and culture experience. Non-stop fun for a month.
- * It was one of the best 27 days in my life! I had a great time and met many new friends.
- * Really fun! This month for some reason felt like 2 months as it was full of fun memories.
- * It was immersive and enlightening even as a second time because I got to see much more than I missed last time.
- * I was able to significantly improve my Mandarin, experience China's splendor and beauty, and revisit old friendships.
- * I had wonderful 27 days like in a dream. I met so many good friends and teachers and wonderful memories.
- * Unforgettable experience. My Chinese has improved a lot in just a month.
- * I learned a lot. The experience of living in Shanghai was amazing. I made many new and good friends that I will stay in contact with even after this trip.
- * This trip was both educational and cultural and provided me with multiple experiences that allowed me to improve my language skills and learn about Chinese cultural practices.
- * Before coming here, I was excited to leave Canada on a new adventure. After this program,

I am excited and eager to live and work in China.

*The experience was extremely valuable, and one that I hope to remember for a long time. I think that my Mandarin improved considerably and that I learned a lot about Chinese culture.

2. Chinese Language & Culture Immersion Program for Canadian High School Students in Shanghai

Building on the success of the Study-in Shanghai program for University students, the High School Chinese Language & Culture Immersion Program in Shanghai, a 2-week program during spring break for BC high school students, is the latest addition to the Association's tireless efforts to promote Chinese language and culture teaching to young Canadians. So far, two groups of students participated in the program in 2016 and 2018.

The program includes 32 hours of language instruction in the mornings as well as interactions with local students, cultural workshops and activities and sightseeing in and around Shanghai in the afternoons & evenings. Participants also did some volunteer work on campus and in a local kindergarten.

Organized by the Canadian TCSL Association and hosted by the International Education College at Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, this program has proved to be a most enriching educational trip, a great learning opportunity and an amazing cultural experience for high school students. No classroom learning or book reading or video watching could give the participants so many occasions for honing their language skills, interacting with the local people/students, and learning about the history, culture and day-to-day lives of the Chinese. New foods, dialects, stories, legends, entertainment, sights, and all walks of life filled every moment of each day.

Thanks to the supportive staff, language buddies from the hosting university, and the enthusiastic participants, the program has truly fulfilled its purpose of enabling students to raise awareness of the importance of learning foreign languages, to interact with people from different cultures in positive and productive ways, to witness the huge changes China has experienced for the past decades, to appreciate cultural products and activities such as sports, traditional music and dance, architecture and tea ceremony, to learn to overcome adversity and improve problem-solving skills, to enhance teamwork and develop leadership skills, and to understand the impact of China on the world economic and financial affairs and global interconnectedness.

The following is what participants reflected on their Shanghai experience:

"Overall this was a once in a lifetime trip that I not only found extremely enjoyable but I also got many learning takeaways from. I hope this trip will run again so other Mandarin students can get the phenomenal experience me and my classmates got."

"I was able to develop a new perspective about the language and culture that shapes Shanghai and further understand how studying a new language provides new opportunities

to interact with diverse communities and appreciate the value of cultural identity.”

“One of the most important parts of this trip was learning how to express ourselves in Mandarin and be willing to take risks; furthermore, this allowed us to understand global issues and learn about the unique career and travel opportunities as well as experience personal growth and study abroad.”

“I got the opportunity to practice the Mandarin I have learned while venturing around the city. I bargained, ordered food, asked questions, and talked to a person on the subway.”

“I was truly amazed by the advancement of technology in Shanghai. A lot of information was gained through QR codes found in everything and everywhere. Their subways were very fast and travelling on them was a very calm experience.”

“I felt a stronger connection in the Richmond community after returning because my Mandarin had improved and I could understand characters displayed in restaurants and signs better.”

“I have gained new connections with my Chinese heritage, my mother and grandmother's culture, when interacting with the university students and discovering Shanghai a new understanding of the historical significance and have realized its importance to my daily life.”