

2010 China Youth Ambassador Trip Reflections  
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I attended the 2010 youth ambassador trip to China and had loads of fun. I was able to visit three major cities in China, Shanghai, Jinan, and Beijing. Each city had its own highlights that made them enjoyable and exciting. The first city I visited was Shanghai, the most humid of the three. The plane ride was long, but as soon as we arrived in Shanghai it was straight to bed which was very nice. In Shanghai I got to see the Jade Buddhist temple and go to the World Fair. The fair was nice but the humidity kind of made it miserable for me. Every meal every day was unique. From the hotel buffets to the nine course dinners at fancy restaurants, almost all the food was delicious. I also began to make friends the first night in Shanghai. The hotels in each city were unique in their own special way. For instance, the hotel in Shanghai looked crummy from the outside, but was elegant on the inside. If the beds didn't feel like cardboard on concrete, it would have been quite a bit better. But you can't beat looking outside at night with the beautiful moon in the sky and the lights from the world's largest suspension bridge.

The second, and personally my favorite city we visited, was Jinan. Jinan had the nicest hotel with a beautiful garden, and the breakfasts were delicious. Because Jinan was the main city of the trip we got to stay there a bit longer, but I sure am glad we did. I did a lot of shopping there and got a lot of souvenirs for my family and myself. The main highlight in Jinan was probably meeting kids from countries all over the world. I made friends with some kids from Australia and now we keep in contact on facebook. The food that we ate in Jinan was good too, even when we went to McDonalds and KFC. The activities at the children's palace were fun. I was able to show Koreans how to throw a football, and I learned a Korean game with tops. The performances were really fun. We got to see kids from all different countries do their own thing, but to tell the truth I liked our performance the best because our group was so diverse that we could mix it up. In order to travel to Jinan from Shanghai and then Beijing from Jinan we rode on high speed trains that traveled at over two hundred and fifty miles an hour. The rides were long but we played cards and sung to pass the time on them.

The largest and final city we visited was Beijing. When we got to Beijing we went to see the Forbidden City which was really cool, but again the heat really did it for me and it soon became miserable. The hotel was nice and had a gym, basketball courts, and a spa. In Beijing we all got to go to the Great Wall of China, where me and a few other people climbed to the very top, or at least as far as they let you go. On the way back we were stuck in traffic for around three hours because of a wreck. That just goes to show you how bad the traffic is in China. One of the coolest things we saw was the Beijing Olympic center where the Olympics were held. All and all the trip was great and if I ever got another chance to go again I would do it in a heartbeat.