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MAZDA - THE EMOTION OF MOTION ISSUE TEN 2011 £4

art car

THE SECRETS OF MAZDA DESIGN





SHANGHAI IS A FULL-THROTTLE CULTURE, WITH NEW INNOVATIONS
IN ARTS, ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN HAPPENING ALL THE TIME.
JOIN US FOR A RAPID-FIRE TOUR OF THIS BUSTLING CITY

SHANGHAI ISN'T A CITY THAT LETS YOU SETTLE IN slowly. My feet don't even touch the ground during the welcome act, a phenomenal levitating express train that blasts you 19 miles from the airport to the city centre at a hair-raising 267mph. This illusionist is named the Maglev, because it's swapped wheels for magnets to propel it along. They certainly do the job – after all, the take-off speed of the a jumbo jet is only 180mph.

Emerging in under eight minutes, then, into this

mega-city of some 19 million people, I soon realise that fast reactions and agile handling are much more valuable here than any amount of straight-line speed. And I don't just mean to help dodge the street hawkers with their fake Rolex watches, who appear at my elbow with uncanny, Swiss-like precision whenever I step outside. No, it's Shanghai's blend of sheer traffic density and frequent driver unpredictability that makes a car like the Mazda2 come into its own.





The Bund, where architectural history meets the future



The most spectacular spot to get to grips with the city's geography is down on the Bund, Shanghai's iconic strip of historic riverfront on the western bank of the mighty Huangpu. As darkness falls, the place fills with excited sightseers, but few of the thousands of cameras are focused on the heritage buildings. All the lenses are pointing east across the river towards the *Bladerunner*-esque district of Pudong, an exotic forest of neon-lit skyscrapers blinking and sparkling out curious messages of all kinds. My favourite is the shiny blue 101-storey World Financial Centre, which sports a giant mouth-like aperture cut into the upper floors. It seems to be opening up for a feed like a hungry sea lion, slowly stretching its neck out as far as it will go.

It is also an apt reminder that it is dinner time. I strike out along the Bund past the imposing stone edifices that sit shoulder to shoulder like squat old businessmen, still managing to look dapper thanks to their sharply tailored 1920s and 30s attire. Most buildings here have been immaculately restored and now house luxury fashion boutiques, art showrooms and splendid restaurants and hotels.

At number 18, I whizz up to the sixth floor to find Mr & Mrs Bund, an elegant brasserie under the wing of high-flying French chef Paul Pairet. Dressed in a jaunty designer flat cap, he plays the role of edgy kitchen maverick with aplomb. "Mash-ups: not just for potatoes and DJs any more," is how he refers to his classic French cuisine with a twist (he once added tinned sardines to a haute cuisine menu). He's currently fine-tuning a new venture called Ultraviolet, a restaurant with only ten chairs, where guests will savour a 20-course avant-garde menu at a communal table. Paul and his team, meanwhile, will deliver a bespoke 'sensory

play' featuring a hi-tech system that controls lighting, music, scent, projections and even the flow of air.

Is Shanghai ready for such an experiment? "It's a city that embraces new ideas quickly," Paul explains. Then he tells me a story about the tiny street stall that served him an interesting egg dish; only when he looked closer did he realise that this was no traditional Chinese recipe, but the cook's attempt to replicate the egg muffin sold in McDonald's.

"My point is that while Shanghai is driven by money, it's also driven by curiosity. That's what's taking over from tradition among the younger generation."

Do others in Shanghai share this creative optimism?

Next morning, I weave the Mazda2 quickly and with ease through the rush-hour traffic to catch up with Eike Stratmann who's busy putting the city's fast emerging art scene on the map – quite literally – with *Shanghai*



SHANGHAI GUIDE

GETTING THERE

Hop aboard the **Maglev** (50RMB/£5) from Shanghai Pudong International Airport to Longyang Road Station, then grab a cab into

the centre. Show the driver your hotel address printed in Chinese or you won't be going anywhere fast. www.shanghaiairport.com

WHERE TO STAY



Go green at **URBN** (above), China's first carbon-neutral hotel designed by AOO Architects. Slate-walled

rooms (some with private gardens) come with soft hemp rugs, Wi-Fi and iPod docks. www.urbnhotels.com

Move up in the world at the towering **Park Hyatt Shanghai**, the highest hotel on the planet, occupying floors 79 to 93 of the Shanghai World Financial Centre in Pudong. www.parkhyattshanghai.com

WHERE TO EAT

Origin, set in a historic house at Taikang Road, makes the perfect brunch spot thanks to its all-natural seasonal menu and refreshing smoothies. Then go souvenir hunting in the surrounding labyrinth of lanes that house dozens of trendy boutiques selling fashion, jewellery and handicrafts. www.originsh.com

Lost Heaven is worth finding for its exotic Yunnan cuisine blended with spicy influences from Thailand and Burma. www.lostheaven.com.cn

Mr & Mrs Bund presents chef Paul Pairet's innovative twists on French classic dishes (like the Tuna Mousse served in a tin, below) accompanied by fabulous views over Huangpu River to the bright lights of Pudong. www.mmbund.com



WHAT TO SEE

Pop a copy of *Shanghai Detour* www.shanghai-detour.org in your pocket and explore the city's dynamic contemporary art scene.



dull, the 5,380 square foot scale model of downtown Shanghai is mind-blowing. It'll also help make sense of the breathtaking views from the 100th-floor observation deck in the World Financial Centre. www.swfc-observatory.com.

Discover the city of the future at the **Urban Planning Exhibition Center** in People's Square www.supec.org. While it sounds slightly

Slow the pace with a pre-breakfast stroll in **Jing'an Park** to watch the locals getting stuck into t'ai chi, Chinese chequers and mahjong.

