



## COMBE PAFFORD SCHOOL

Visit to China 2018

Diary Entry 6

18<sup>th</sup> October 2018

### **Days 7 and 8 and 9!**

#### Day 7, Tuesday - Leaving Beijing

We had an early start as we needed to finish packing before breakfast and had to check out ready for the coach to collect us at 8.30. It was a short journey to Jinsong School, the very first school I visited in 2006. They took us on a tour, they are a large vocational school and have an extremely large 4 star hotel built on their premises so their students can learn Hospitality and Catering!....the hotel isn't open to the public, it is just for practical learning.

After the tour we tried our hand at making flower decorations from carrots! It's definitely harder than it looks!.....the chef tutor made it look so easy! Then we changed into hats and aprons and worked with a Chinese catering student to produce sweet and sour chicken for our lunch....it was delicious! After lunch, a final shop at the Pearl Market and then a farewell meal with our hosts and we went to the West Beijing railway station.....the largest station in Asia, in fact it's more like Heathrow airport! After a short wait in the holding area, we boarded the train for the 12 hour journey to Xian.....we had soft sleepers, with 4 bunks per cabin.....

#### Day 8 Wednesday - Xian

We were met on arrival by a worker from the Hantang House hostel! We all boarded a local service bus (with our cases!?) for the two stop ride ..... The hostel is lovely and our rooms were ready, so after a full English cooked breakfast!! We all had a shower and put on fresh clothes. Then we were off looking around the artists market, watching calligraphers at work and buying one or two small mementos.....terracotta warrior fridge magnets proving popular!

Lunch was in a noodle bar.....they mistook 16 for 60....!! Dishes kept arriving and arriving and arriving.....we couldn't stop them.....so we had 3 each! But they only charged for 16!?

Then we headed for the city wall, climbed up and hired bikes and set off on the 16k ride around the city.....you can see lots as you pass, couples being photographed for their wedding (they do it before the ceremony here and then display the photos on the day, temples, people exercising, shops, buildings.....the ride took one and a half hours and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it!

After the ride, we went to the Muslim market to shop.....the colours, noise, smells and unusual items sold make it a fascinating place to walk around, when its dark its bright lights add to the atmosphere and again, bartering skills were put into practice.....scarves and ice cream being popular!

The back to the hostel for a dumpling party.....Alex and Raph being the best at making them! Then it was a relatively early night as not everyone managed to sleep on the train!

## Day 9 Thursday - Terracotta Army Day!

We had a coach booked for 8.30 for the one hour ride to the museum. It was already crowded when we arrived, but we were soon inside the park and tried to understand the why and how they were made questions?

Then we visited the various 'pits' as they are called, seeing the way they are uncovered, in their damaged state.....how they are repaired.....and finally, the army itself.....everyone agreed it was an awe inspiring place.....

Then it was a final walk around the centre, our last Chinese meal in China.....which was lovely.....and then off to the Tang Dynasty Ribbon Dance Show.

Finally back about 10pm.....some basic packing and an early night

We leave the hostel at 8.30 tomorrow morning.....so this is the last message from China. We will update parents on the arrival time once we leave Heathrow.....

It has been a fabulous trip and your youngsters will have many happy memories to tell you about, they have done amazingly well, the days have been long and packed with activity.....they will possibly struggle a bit with jet lag and readjusting to the time in England.....so it's good its Half Term!!?

Mike Lock