

Shanghai Journal  
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Ni Hao, Qiyu (Hello friends – though without the diacritical marks),

I've been busy dealing with my knee and foot, with regular trips to the physical therapist. On Monday I had an MRI to make sure that nothing is wrong with the knee and to find out what the heck is going on with my foot. The care I get at this clinic is pretty amazing. The day of the MRI I went to the clinic for a shot that puts a contrasting dye in my system that I guess makes the image clearer. After that, the nurse AND doctor rode with me to the hospital where the MRI is done (the clinic has cars and drivers for this purpose. I think the doctor was just catching a ride to the other clinic where she works). The nurse stayed with me at the hospital through the procedure, then immediately got the screens and took me to the doctor's office where she went over them with me. Then the driver and nurse took me home. Of course, this is not the kind of medical care ordinary people get here (as is also true in the U.S. where we have a separate health care system for the wealthy). In my case, we paid a pretty affordable premium for the great health insurance I have, and I'm certainly getting my money's worth.

The results on the knee are reassuring. Nothing wrong – the meniscus is still healing and there is some fluid in the knee. Just have to keep seeing the PT to work on the swelling, do my exercises and all should be well. My foot has a neuroma (which I have known for awhile). Once the insurance company approves it, I will get a cortisone shot and see if that works. If it doesn't work, the doctor suggests having it removed surgically. I'll see the orthopedist when I'm in New York to get his opinion, and then decide what to do. I just want to be able to walk and hike without pain!

Ravi's class started on Monday. Again, all are Chinese and very good students so he is enjoying teaching. His colleague, Tom from Switzerland, is here to do research with him for the next two weeks. There are a few other people we've seen that we know from last year and some new people too. This Friday is the annual New Year party at the university. If you remember my photos from last year, you know it is a big deal and lots of fun. Each department, including the Chancellor, puts on a performance (singing, dancing, skits, poetry readings and other performances – in full costume). They are really talented so I'm looking forward to it. Also there is a big food spread with lots of different traditional dishes and hopefully a few vegetarian.

On Saturday, people in our residence have planned a progressive dinner party. That means having appetizers in one apartment, moving to a second apartment for entrees, then third apartment for dessert, etc. Everyone contributes something. We are bringing lemon rice and maybe guacamole and chips if our avocados ripen in time. Sounds like fun and we are looking forward to it.

On Sunday, Tom is taking us out for dinner to someplace "fancy." This is a real treat. We have started exploring options. I'm very excited to try someplace new.

Today I had a cooking class at the school I went to last year. We made two kinds of dim sum – scallion pancakes and pumpkin dumplings. Here is prep for scallion dumplings – mine in foreground, teacher’s behind – not too bad! Their pancakes had pork in them and mine are vegetarian. Don’t they look yummy? They were!



There were only three of us – a Japanese woman and a Chinese-American woman from L.A. who graduated from NYU and did a semester at NYU-Shanghai. She now works in Shanghai as a freelance journalist. We had fun learning together. In the case below, you can probably guess which pumpkin dumplings are mine (compared to teacher, who also made a cute pig dumpling).



The dumplings were fine, just not my favorite taste (pumpkin infused dough with red bean curd in the middle). I have another lesson next week.

We leave for Cambodia on Thursday and will spend 5 days seeing the temples at Ankor Wat and surrounding environs. I can’t wait to see the amazing temples; and the weather should be warm and sunny – very welcome after cold, rainy Shanghai.

I'll close with this photo. I love reading signs across cultures and saw this one the other day. I think it may be a play on nosh and is a wonderfully creative and funny substitution for mouth-watering.



I also want to say that such confusions across cultures go both ways. I'm sure there are many ways we use language in the west that seem funny to people here. There is something endearing about attempts to communicate across languages and cultures and fortunately we often find ways to do so.

Zaijian,

Lee

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