

Shanghai Journal 2-4-15

Ni Hao Qinyou,

In my last entry I complained about the difficulty of finding good vegetarian food. That is still the case in the cafeteria at the university. However, on Sunday we went to a vegetarian place for lunch and it was so good it made us swoon! Our two favorites were hot and sour soup and stir-fried tree mushrooms that exploded with flavor – out of this world rich and delicious! We will definitely be going back there. Then we stopped into a nearby mall and discovered a bakery that has French bread and pastries. We were skeptical, having tried bread from other bakeries, but went ahead and bought a croissant and a batard. Both were very, very good. It is the only branch in the city so not that easy to get to, but since we will be going back to that restaurant often I guess it won't be too bad!

I signed us up for a Chinese vegetarian cooking class on Friday morning. We will be learning three dishes: Shanghai fried noodles, Gong bao doufu, Celery with fragrant firm tofu sliced. If we like it, the class meets every Friday morning so we can go back and learn more dishes. I'm psyched!

I have been intensely focused the past few days on finishing final drafts of chapters for the book. One co-authored chapter is complete and really looks good; two more are almost complete. Progress! Plus, I got a real boost Monday on a chapter I wrote for an edited book on color-blind racism. The editor was reporting feedback from anonymous external reviewers and said, "This is the only chapter [out of 12] in which there were no suggested changes. I am not at all surprised because the chapter remains one of my favorites." That made my day!

I will be screening my film at NYU-Shanghai in early March at a community wide forum. I'm curious to see what Chinese students and faculty make of the film since I don't know what they know about American history. I look forward to the discussion.

Everyone is gearing up for Chinese New Year the week after next. It is the biggest holiday of the year and the largest annual human migration in the world with an estimated 3 billion people traveling this year! We have been advised not to travel within China so we are planning to use that time to see more of Shanghai and the surrounding area. We could plan a trip to another country but we don't have our visas sorted out yet. My second blood test was fine but I just got the results this week and now it will take another ten working days to finish processing everything. The only good thing about this long process is that we won't have to do it again next year.



Our residence getting all spruced up!

I'm reading a wonderful book called *Dreaming in Chinese: Lessons in Life, Love and Language* by Deborah Fallows a linguist from the U.S. who lived here many years. She explains many of the complications for westerners trying to learn Mandarin and tells very amusing stories about her own mishaps with the language. It is both instructive and entertaining. Language classes start at the university next week, finally!

I'm going for a foot massage this afternoon. These dogs are getting a real workout with all the walking we do. Can't wait!

Zaijian, Lee

© Lee Anne Bell

