

Shanghai River Town Cruise-Asia Venice

Towards the northern plains of China is the City of Shanghai, literally meaning "up the sea", there is a quaint river town called Zhujiajiao translated as "family bridge".

Zhujiajiao, sometimes dubbed as the Venice of Shanghai is an ancient water town well-known throughout the China, with a history of more than 1700 years. Spanning an area of about 47 sq km, lay snuggled in a landscape of beautiful lakes and majestic mountains.

Zhujiajiao is abound with quaint ancient bridges across bubbling streams and small rivers shaded by weeping willow trees. Houses with traditional Chinese cultural courtyards fringes along these waterways with the atmosphere of antiquity, leisure and tranquillity.

Bridges in Zhujiajiao are distinctive and ancient, mostly built during Ming and Qing dynasty era. The old town sector of Zhujiajiao is well connected by 36 bridges in different shapes, sizes and styles.

Fangsheng Bridge (Set animals free bridge) is the longest, largest and the tallest stone bridge with five openings both in Zhujiajiao and in the Shanghai region. Fangsheng Bridge is almost 500 years old. There is a stone tablet on the bridge called The Dragon Gate Stone, which is engraved with 8 beautiful Chinese dragons encircling a shining pearl. Perched at top of the bridge are 4 lifelike stone lions purportedly to be guarding the bridge against any evil intruders.

Lang Bridge (Veranda Bridge) or the Huimin Bridge, is the only wooden bridge and the most famous bridge of Zhujiajiao. It has wooden bars on the two sides and upturned eaves, just like a narrow corridor. Tourists to Zhujiajiao very often book river cruises to view these bridges just like in Vienna.

Besides the bridges, there are ancient streets with ancient buildings from the Ming and Qing Dynasties, attracting great numbers tourists from all over the world. The North Street, which is perhaps the best preserved ancient street is only one km long. The street is primitively simple yet very elegant. You can appreciate the historic buildings, long-established shops and old bridges as well as the many narrow lanes along this street.

Ke Zhi Yuan (Good Manners Garden) boasts impressive Chinese gardens as well as ancient dwellings built during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. This garden is commonly named 'Ma Family Garden' after a former owner named Ma Wenqin.

If you are vacationing in Shanghai or China, do take a river cruise to Zhujiajiao to experience an Asian Venice. Try the Viking floating hotel river cruise if you are touring the Yangtze Delta.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

About the Author

Chris Chew is a travelling fanatic. More free travel Asia articles at his site and blog <http://www.asiatravelbest.com> and <http://asiatravelbest.blogspot.com>