PASSPORT TO SUZHOU
Suzhou Tourism offers an insiders’ guide to living like a local in the Venice of China

New York, NY (July 9, 2019) – Once under-the-radar among North American travelers, Suzhou has become a must-visit destination for those planning the ultimate China itinerary. UNESCO World Heritage-designated classical gardens, romantic canals and dynasties-old culture and heritage are the city’s top draws, but there are also plenty of ways to step outside of the tourist role to truly experience Suzhou like a local. Recommendations are below, with additional inspiration available on Suzhou Tourism’s social media channels on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube and via TravelToSuzhou.com.

Try the Mandarin Fish at Songhelou on Shantang Street
There is no better place to try Suzhou’s most famous dish than at its most famous dining establishment, established in the 1737. Locals and tourists alike flock to Songhelou on historic Shantang Street for a taste (and plenty of photographs) of the unique Mandarin fish. First created in Songhelou’s kitchen more than 200 years ago, the freshwater fish is carefully sliced to produce individual, French fry-style pieces that can be picked off and enjoyed individual after the fish is deep fried and topped with a bright sweet and sour sauce. Many locals say it looks like a squirrel, but Americans and Canadians often note the resemblance to a porcupinel. Either way, enjoying Mandarin fish at Songelou is a quintessential Suzhou experience.

View the musical fountain show on Jinji Lake
On Friday nights from 8 – 8:30 p.m., Suzhou’s modern SIP District draws crowds of locals for the weekly music fountain show on Jinji Lake. Dancing water choreographed to lights and music brightens the night. From sundown until 10 p.m., artistic designs are projected onto the pants-shaped “Gate to the East,” Suzhou’s tallest building. It’s a spectacle to behold, but travelers who want to experience a bit of the magic without the crowds can head to the outdoor deck of Toro Loco at the W Suzhou. It’s the perfect place to enjoy the fountain from above with a drink in hand.

Browse the styles at China’s largest shopping center
After browsing Shantang Street’s souvenir shops and perusing the fashions on Pingjiang Road, do as the locals do and head to Suzhou Center in the SIP District. This mega-mall, Suzhou’s largest, opened its doors in late 2017, boasting more than 600 retail brands and 645,000 square feet of lush greenery across its numerous outdoor terraces, rooftops and landscaped bridges. In addition to countless international and regional stores and eateries, Suzhou Center boasts an Olympic-size ice rink, children’s theme park, a snowboarding simulator, children’s pony rides and more.

Learn the art of dumpling making from local home cooks
Endless culinary choices await in Suzhou, but sometimes nothing is more satisfying than a homecooked meal. Travelers can get in on the action with a dumpling making class led by a local in their own home.
Travelers can work with a trusted travel professional to arrange experiences that provide cultural enrichment, lasting connections and a deeper understanding of the intricacies of Su cuisine.

**About Suzhou**
Suzhou, the "Venice of China," is known for its elegant stone bridges, canals, flowing water, and noteworthy architecture. Located in the center of the Yangtze River Delta, approximately 60 miles west of Shanghai, Suzhou is one of the oldest cities in the Yangtze Basin dating back more than 2,500 years. The city boasts the beautifully manicured Classical Gardens of Suzhou, nine of which have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Each year, millions of tourists travel to Suzhou to experience the destination’s more than 400 attractions, ranging from pagodas and temples to historical districts and world-class museums. As the largest industrial city in China, Suzhou continues to develop, such as the Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP), which boasts five-star hotels, the iconic Lake Jinji, and China’s largest overwater Ferris wheel.

Travel to Suzhou is easily accessible via three convenient area airports with non-stop flights from North America: Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport (SHA) offers bullet train service to Suzhou, which is approximately a 50-mile, 30-minute trip; Pudong International Airport (PVG) is approximately 65 miles from Suzhou, an hour and half drive; and Sunan Shuofang International Airport (WUX) is approximately 14 miles from Suzhou, a 30-minute drive.

For more information, visit [traveltosuzhou.com](http://traveltosuzhou.com) or follow the destination on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube.

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