

Italy

An Ancient Country with
Unique Civilization

News in Brief

The National Costume
- *Cheongsam*

Explore the Chinese Cuisine
in St.Regis Beijing

Qijiyuan, A Fairy Tale in
the Winter Season



READING
DELIGHTS IN **BDS**



北京外交人员服务局
BEIJING DIPLOMATIC SERVICE



Get into Italy



**EXPLORE THE CHINESE CUISINE
IN ST. REGIS BEIJING**



Italy An Ancient Country with
Unique Civilization



**Appetizer Wine
of Milano**



**Traditional Chinese Art
— Seal Cutting**



**On Cheongsam
— An Interview with Mr. Tai, the Manager**



The Tranquil Square Zone



Cultural Integration and the Colorful World

The late Mr. Fei Xiaotong, a well-known sociologist of China, once put forward a 16-character dictum for handling the relations between different cultures: "Let each culture carry forward its own beauty while drawing on the beauty of others; let diversified cultures integrate themselves into one goal and the world harmony will prevail." The Chinese nation is made up of many ethnic groups. Looking back at the history, one can see that it is exactly the constant mixing together, mutual learning and the integration of diversifications among various ethnic groups that have created the time-honored and splendid Chinese civilization.

Along with the advent of the economic globalization and the multi-polarization of the world, it has become a common topic facing the cultural development of various countries that is to be fully aware of the diversifications of the world's cultures, respect, understand and appreciate the cultures of different countries with open mind and arms while cultivating and enhancing national cultures. In the course of cultural exchanges, we should recognize differences, treat each other harmoniously and promote common prosperity so as to achieve the ultimate realm of "integration of diversified cultures" and "the world harmony". As a window on the diplomatic service, Reading Delights BDS wishes to make its humble contribution towards this goal.

In this issue, we will introduce to you the beautiful Chinese national costume qipao, i.e. cheongsam, the Chinese art of seal cutting and the Italian customs as well, and we will also tell you the legendary life of the founder of St. Regis Hotel. Let's share in this limited space the radiant splendors of different cultures coming together.

陈辉





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1 **Build Upscale Villas, Look Forward to the “Liangma Gem”**

The Villas in C Zone of Liangmaqiao Diplomatic Compound have been completed ahead of schedule under the prerequisite of ensured safety and guaranteed quality, thanks to the unremitting efforts of 403 days by the Capital Construction Division of BDS and the builders who have worked hard day and night on the construction site. Customers are welcome to contact us for the rental information.

E-Marketing service: (86 10) 5979 2320, Public Relation Sales: (86 10) 6532 4849



The South Korea Ambassador to China, Li kuiheng, visited Jiandong construction site accompanied by Ms. Jiang Qi, Deputy Director General of BDS, and others.



fluent Chinese he expounded Hungary's history and its relationship with China, and he also had in-depth discussion with the audience on the relevant content.

2 **Hungarian Sinologist Péter Vámos Gave a Special Lecture**

On October 17, 2012, Péter Vámos, the senior researcher of the History Institute of the Hungarian Science Academy and a sinologist, gave a special-themed lecture entitled Comparison of Hungarian Modern Development Road with Western Countries at Beijing Language and Cultural Center for Diplomatic Missions at the latter's invitation. In

3

Christmas Lighting for the Year of 2012 Was Launched in a Grand Ceremony

As a splendid prelude to the 2012 Christmas celebrations, a grand Christmas tree lighting launching ceremony was held on November 30, 2012 by the Beijing St. Regis Hotel in its St. Regis Garden. On the evening, Jiang Qi, Deputy Director General of BDS, Gary F. Locke, the US Ambassador to China, and his family members joined hands in switching on the lights for the Christmas tree. Over 600 guests witnessed this wonderful moment.



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website: <http://www.stregis.com/beijing>*



4 *"Make Friends Through Ping-Pong And Enhance Friendship"*

On November 23, 2012, the first Ping-Pong Friendship Match was held between Beijing Personnel Service Corporation for Diplomatic Missions and the Russian Embassy in China. Mr. Wang Bingnan, BDS Deputy Director General cum General Manger BPSCDM, and Mr. Ignatenko Leonid, Counselor and Consul General of the Russian Embassy, respectively led the two teams in the contest. Both teams displayed playing skills and enhanced their friendship through the match.



5 *Chinese Language Training Course at the Jindao Diplomatic Residence Compound*

The Property Management Office of Beijing Housing Service Corporation for Diplomatic Missions, in joint efforts with Beijing Language and Cultural Center for Diplomatic Missions, ran an elaborately-designed but free-of-charge Chinese language training program of 20 course hours from October 10, 2012 for foreign tenants

at the Jindao Diplomatic Residence Compound. Lady trainees from Senegal, Sudan, Uganda and Jamaica attended the training course.



Beijing Language and Cultural Center for Diplomatic Missions

No.7 Sanlitun Beixiaojie Street, Chaoyang District, Beijing, PRC

Tel: (86 10) 6532 3005 / 6532 4303

website: <http://www.chinesestudy-lcc.com>

6 *Soiree by the Jianguomenwai Diplomatic Residence Compound to Thank Its Tenants*

The Public Relations and Marketing Dept. of Beijing Housing Service Corporation for Diplomatic Missions together with the Jianwai DRC Property Management Office held the Jianwai DRC Night Soiree at the Theatre of Dongcheng District Library on the evening of October 31, 2012 to say thanks to all the tenants. More than 400 Diplomats and other tenants of the Jianwai DRC attended the soiree. The audience includes H.E. Mr.

Alberto J. Blanco Silva, the Cuban Ambassador to China, deputy head of the mission of the Embassy of Cuba, counselors of the Embassy of Costa Rica, administrative officers of the Embassy of Sri Lanka, etc. The fabulous and exciting acrobatic show won warm acclaim from the tenants with its extremely difficult feats.



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A woman in a traditional Chinese Cheongsam (qipao) is shown in profile, looking down. She is wearing a dark, intricately patterned qipao with a high collar and traditional buttons. Her hair is styled in a bun with a decorative hairpiece. The background is a window with a view of a cityscape, and the lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the fabric and the contours of her face.

Costumes in **BDS**

On Cheongsam

**An Interview with Mr. Tai,
the Manager**

With their hairs turned up in buns, their figures slender and graceful, Chinese women dressed in Cheongsam can fully showcase the charms and elegance unique with oriental beauties.

In this issue of Reading Delights in BDS, Mr. Tai Yongshun, the manager of the Upscale Bespoke Tailor of the Comprehensive Services Corporation for Diplomatic Missions, will take you to the luxurious and noble world of Cheongsam.

Reading Delights in BDS: Representing the most beautiful dresses of Chinese women, Cheongsam has been attracting the attentions of women throughout the world over the past century. What is its special origin?

Mr. Tai: With its origin in the traditional dresses of Manchurian women, Cheongsam was improved by Han women in the Republican days in the first half of the 20th century. Then in 1929, it was designated by the Chinese Republican Government as one of the formal



national attires. In the wake of the Republican reign, Han women in Shanghai, Beijing (referred to as Beiping then), etc. further transformed the dress on the basis of the origin Cheongsam. Therefore, Cheongsam has witnessed both its past vicissitudes and its present new birth. As Cheongsam itself is of certain historical significance and highly enjoyable as well, it contains rich value for collection.

Reading Delights in BDS: Since there are great varieties of Cheongsam, what is particular about the selection of fabrics if Cheongsam is to be worn as formal dress?

Mr. Tai: Meticulous care has to be taken in the selection of fabrics for Cheongsam as formal attire. Pure silks such as crepe de Chine, silk habotal, Hangzhou silk and so on could be used for summer Cheongsam as these silk products are soft, light and non-sticking to the body, thus cool and comfortable. Whereas, for spring and autumn seasons, various satins, velvets and velour such as tapestry

satins, Suzhou brocade, flower satin brocade and pleche velvet, etc. could be chosen as fabrics. For winter season, various accessories such as shawl and handkerchief could accompany and supplement Cheongsam to make it more brilliant and attractive and also highlight the dignified and poised bearings of the wearers.

Reading Delights in BDS: Since the 80s' the Upscale Bespoke Tailor of Beijing Comprehensive Services Co. for Diplomatic Missions has been



providing custom-made high grade Cheongsam for wives of diplomatic envoys. What do you do to meet the special requirements from Western customers?

Mr. Tai: Our designers would always try their best to "cut the garment according

to the figure". In so doing, the strong points of the figures of the customers

TIPS

Handy Tips From Mr. Tai

Cleaning & Storage of Pure Silk Products:



1. Pure silk products with thin and light textures and loose weave can only be dry-cleaned.

2. In case of hand wash, make sure to avoid hot water above 30°C, be sure not to wring, rub or brush the pure silk products. Special detergents for silk and wool are recommended, and remember to cleanse thoroughly with clean water. Towels should be used to lightly squeeze out the water inside and the washed silk products should be aired dry in shade.

3. Separate deep-colored silk products from light colored ones in washing and cleaning.

4. After washing or cleaning, only iron the back side of the pure silk products when they are mostly dry. Control the temperatures within the range of 100-180°C. Do not spray water directly.

5. If pure silk products have been damaged, the relevant spots should be first straightened out slowly before a steam iron is used for shaping.

6. For storage, pure silk products should be folded after they have been washed or cleaned and dried in the shade. Please wrap them in a piece of cloth and place them flat in your wardrobe. Do not use camphor ball or other moth-ball.



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Tel: (86 10) 6508 8489*

will be given prominence. As Cheongsam is a close-fitting dress, trial-on must be done several times to ensure that customers feel comfortable at the three points of breast-line, waist-line and hip-line. To avoid repeated trips by the customers for measuring and trials-on, our tailors would make cardboard outlines of the measurements of the customers and keep them for files. In this way we just do our best to make things easier for our clients.



(Mr. Tai in this interview report refers to Mr. Tai Yongshun, the manager of the Garment Department of the Comprehensive Service Corporation for Diplomatic Missions.)



Food in **BDS**

The St. Regis History

— *“A home away from home”* —



John Jacob Astor

At the end of the 19th century, the St.Regis hotel's founder, Mr.Johnn Jacob Astor, was unable to come up with a name for his new hotel. During Astor's visit to his brother-in-law on a beautiful lake in the Adirondacks in upstate New York, Astor's niece offered a solution: "Why, Uncle Jack, don't you call it after this lake as Hotel St.Regis?" After doing some research on the name, he found that the lake was named after a 17th century French monk named Francois Regis who was known for his hospitality to travelers. Thus, the St. Regis name was born.

On September 4, 1904, Astor opened the doors of the St. Regis to the public. The St. Regis was the tallest hotel in New York, standing at eighteen stories high. The hotel had the marble floors and hallways from the quarries of Caen, France, Louis XV furniture from France, a library full of 3,000 leather-bound and even "modern" innovations. The press described the St. Regis as "the most richly furnished and opulent hotel in the world."



the St.Regis New York



In 1912, Colonel Astor got remarried with a beautiful and young woman. Unfortunately, their return honeymoon trip was on the doomed Titanic in which he gave up his seat on a lifeboat for his young wife. He was last seen alive trying to free his dog from the ship's kennels. At age 48, Colonel John Jacob Astor met his tragic death.

His son Vincent inherited the hotel. After that, the hotel had changed hands. It is worth to mention that one of the hotel bartenders named Fernand Petiot created a drink in 1934 he called the "Red Snapper", which is now known as the "bloody Mary" cocktail. It is the first of its kind innovated by the St. Regis Hotel and it gains popularity among the upper classes.

In 1966, the Sheraton Corporation of America purchased the St. Regis Hotel in February. In 1998, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide acquired the St. Regis Hotel, making it become the company's luxury flagship property. No matter whose management, the unparalleled luxury, attentive service and the elegant environment have never changed in the hotel.

In 1999, Starwood had the conversation with the Grand Hotel Rome, the Beijing International Club and the Carlton Hotel, Washington DC. It acquired them to the St.Regis brand shortly after. It was the first St. Regis hotel in Asia Pacific area and the first hotel providing butler service to the guests, escalating the service standard of Chinese hospitality industry to an even higher level. Beijing International Club Hotel was rebranded as the St. Regis Beijing in 2011.

Over its 15 years operation, the St. Regis Beijing has collected accolades with a long list of awards. It is the only hotel in China ranking one of the top hotels on Condé Nast Traveller's Gold List for past 15 consecutive years.



The St.Regis Beijing



How to make the famous “Bloody Mary”?

1 ½ ounce of vodka, 3 ounces of tomato juice,
a dash of salt, 1 teaspoon of Worcestershire sauce and
a dash of Tobasco, with a stalk of celery as the swizzle stick.

Explore the Chinese Cuisine in St.Regis Beijing



Astor Grill

Astor Grill as one of Beijing's most contemporary venues offers the best steak in town, which is located on the 3rd Floor of the Hotel Club Wing. The main dining area and four private rooms can accommodate 30-40 people to have dinner. In Astor Grill, the Cigar Lounge is a warm and cozy place with nostalgic interior designs. It offers an extensive selection of cigars from Cuba and Dominican Republic such as Cohiba, Montecristo.

Nearby the Astor Grill, the Wine Lounge is the place to savor the finest wines from places around the world. The lounge is also a great place to enjoy tastings or private functions where aficionados can enjoy their favorite wines while taking in the space's unique ambience.

Tips

Hours:

Astor Grill: 6:00pm-10:30pm, Daily

Cigar Lounge: 5:00pm-1:00am, Daily

Wine Lounge: 5:00pm-12:00am, Tuesday-Saturday



The Astor Surf and Turf

Tips

Hours:

Lunch:

11:30am - 2:00pm, Monday-Friday

Dinner:

6:00pm - 10:00pm, Daily



Danieli's Italian Restaurant

Danieli's Italian Restaurant is located on the 2nd Floor of the St. Regis Beijing, recognized as "Beijing's Finest Italian Restaurant". The restaurant represents a romantic Mediterranean castle style with hand-painted fresco, domed roof and primitive simple stone on the floor. And the restaurant can host 68 guests in total and has a private room featured a large wine cabinet. Introduced by celebrity chefs from Europe, authentic taste of Apennines peninsula reveals a sheer exuberant friendliness of typical Italian. With one of Beijing's most exciting wine selection, the only Hotel Director of Wine in Beijing will perfect your dine experience with a customized wine recommendation.



The Garden Court

The newly refurbished Garden Court is elegantly designed featuring a private room and al fresco dining, which is located on the hotel lobby level. It opens daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner showcasing a tempting array of Western and Asian buffet items as well as a sumptuous à la carte menu. The restaurant's show kitchen brings the excitement of cooking center stage, with a truly interactive dining experience that allows guests to watch the chefs in action. A large seafood station also complements the interactive scene.



Tips

Hours:

Buffet

6:00am - 9:30pm

A La Carte

6:00am - 10:30pm



Beijing International Club Co., Ltd.

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Upgrade to executive deluxe room subject to the availability

Daily breakfast for two at the garden court

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Room rate is subjected to 15% service charge

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Year-end party will enjoy special rate at CNY380 per person, with minimum of 30, including for buffet lunch or dinner and soft drinks.

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Iridium is one of the most precious and rarest metals on the earth. Built on a legacy that dates back to 1938, Iridium Spa is born from the DNA of the St. Regis brand and exclusive to St. Regis.

Today, Iridium Spa is honored to bring you the bespoke touches of a rare spa experience.

Diplomats enjoy the privilege of 20% off all treatment at the St. Regis Beijing Iridium SPA.

Offers apply to all the treatments with valid ID



Housing in **BDS**

Qijiayuan, A Fairy Tale in the Winter Season

By Shen Huxi (deep breath)



Towards the evening, when one emerges from the warm subway station, one would see huge crowds coming and going in a hurry. With the two sides of the great avenue well illuminated by lights of all colors and in all shapes, one would naturally think of the famous lines from the poem of Ezra Pound:

The apparition of these faces in the crowd / Petals on a wet, black bough.

To compare Beijing to Paris, particularly at the moment of this winter evening when the lights are shining through light winter mist, is by no means far-fetched. Behind the continental-featured iron fence there are several western-styled buildings with marble-veined facade, brimming with Baroque touches. One feels as if walking on the rue bourbon street. Of course, you should especially watch the compound in front of you. It seems to be shallow as the buildings glitter like crystal under the brilliant lights. Yet it seems to be deep at the same time as winding paths in the compound lead to a different community of tranquility against the backdrop of thick trees and plants. Outside the entrance stand two armed police guards tall and straight, adding a touch of mystery and grandness to the compound.

At the top of the building there is a conspicuous but gentle sign "Diplomatic Residence Compound", which brings you additional respect and longing for the compound. Indeed! This is exactly Qijiyuan DRC, which is time-honored, fresh and cool.

It is time-honored because it is the first diplomatic residence compound in new China. The huge diplomatic residence compound groups which have reached a total construction area of 1.25 million square meters up to now all originate in this compound. It is fresh because brand-new modern buildings are constantly springing up in the arms of this time-honored compound which has witnessed the vicissitudes of the history.

It is cool firstly because of its name. At the beginning of the last century, only farmland and farmers' cottages could be found in this area, which was said to be the vegetable garden of a rich family with the surname of "Qi(祁)". However, this area was more popularly known as "Qi(祁) Family Garden" at that time. After the liberation, this area was formally named "Qi(祁)jiayuan". In the years of early 50's, the Soviet experts designed and built here the first apartment building



for foreign diplomats, i.e. the rectangle-shaped building closed by the side of the avenue. Along with the passage of time, more and more small and high-rising diplomatic apartment buildings were added in the compound, which was officially named "Qi(齐)jiayuan Diplomatic Residence Compound". Maybe some readers have noticed that by this time that Qi(齐), although pronounced the same as Qi(祁), is completely a different character. Be sure not to mistake it for a careless pen-slip in Chinese character writing. People with sound knowledge about the Chinese language all know that Qi(祁)jiayuan is merely a place name while Qi(齐)jiayuan means a lot more because both characters of Qi(齐)and Jia(家) can be traced to the Great Learning of the Four Books:



"It is only when one is able to investigate things that his knowledge can be perfected. It is only when one's knowledge is perfect that one can be sincere and honest. It is only when one is honest and sincere that he can set his heart right. It is only when the heart is set right that a man can educate his family. It is only when the family is educated that he can rule the state. It is only when the state is ruled that the world can be governed well".

This passage is a summary of top career planning for idealized saints by Confucius sages. And it was later condensed by Confucius descendants into one line of "self-cultivation, family management(齐家Qi Jia), state governing and bringing about world peace". How precise and profound the name of "Qi(齐)jia (家) yuan(园)" is for a compound where foreign diplomats accredited to China set up their offices or find their dwellings!



It is cool also because it is really very cool: not to say that there is such a big and quiet compound nestling at the heart of the bustling metropolitan; not to say its cool shade of green trees and plants in summer, golden ginkgo leaves in autumn, beautiful flowers in the spring and the ever-green pines and cypresses in winter; not even to mention the large lawn of 1000-odd square meters dotted with well-arranged trees, with birds singing in the morning and cicadas chirping in the autumn nights. Just stay in the spacious and high-ceilinged, warm and cozy apartment, and cast a casual glance at the compound's courtyard through the bright windows, then the after-snow-scenery is sufficient to get you intoxicated.

Kids are shouting merrily on the snow ground to make their snowman. Several people are playing and chasing, and even their pets cannot stand the temptation, keeping on trying to free themselves from the control of their owners in the hope to have a great fun in the snow. The security wardens rush over to lead them to the Pets Garden nearby where special amusement amenities for pets are, including a single-log bridge for Husky are installed with high-fence around the playing ground.





The basketball court in the distant has already been cleaned spotless without people's knowing. Several young chaps with black skin are in the thick of a match, oozing out steams from their bodies. Two blondes are pushing baby prams while gesticulating with their tennis bats. You can guess they are just on their way to the club. They will first put their kids in the Kids' Playing Room on the ground floor before proceeding to the ping-pong table or the gymnasium on the second floor.



You can notice several familiar figures. They are making their way amidst trees to hang multi-color lamps. Indeed, the Christmas is just around the corner. On your desk are the Christmas gifts freshly sent from the DRC property management office: an exquisite desk calendar and a basket of flowers in full bloom.

Your friends are around you. You ask them smilingly what drinks they care for, Bordeaux or Napa? Or they might as well first try Monarca from Brazil. Oh that's a new arrival at the duty free shop which you have saved for today. You click your glass with that of your friends and exchanged good wishes with them. Facing the window, you raise your glass and make the toast: Merry Christmas! DRC



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New Year Greetings and Best Wishes Delivered Home

On the occasion of the new year of 2013, Mr. Liu Yong, manager of Qijiyuan DRC Property Management Office, called on some of the tenants. The tenants felt happy about the call and they put down in writing their new-year wishes and their heartfelt thanks in recognition of the thoughtful and highly efficient service of the property management office. They were quite pleased with the frog-leap improvements in both the hardware and software of the DRC and they sent their congratulations on the success of Qijiyuan DRC in passing the qualification appraisal and accreditation by Beijing city government for a four-star property community. The military attaché of the Embassy of Azerbaijan presented Azerbaijan-China Friendship souvenir badge and also pictorial album. The Pakistani commercial counselor expressed his satisfaction and appreciation for the excellent living environment, hardware facilities and amenities and the DRC service as well.



Study in **BDS**

Traditional Chinese Art Seal Cutting

石破竹勢
氏高平
王師
李一

出而
李一



As an ancient and unique oriental art, Chinese seal cutting is appealing to its broad appreciators with its diversified styles, smooth and gentle touches, antique taste and charm.

The Chinese character 「篆」 (seal) contained in the phrase of seal cutting used to be written as 「璪」 in ancient times, which referred to the raised and engraved stripes left on stones and jade by carving. Afterwards when bamboo and fabrics such as cotton and silk became prevalent instruments for people to write on, the pictograph for the character 「篆」 (seal) turned from 「玉」 (jade) into 「竹」 (bamboo).

Seal cutting dates back to quite an early time. Pictograph cutting art was highly popular as far back as over 3700 years ago during the period of Yin and Shang reigns. However, on the face of the seal, there was no pictograph to express what it was meant. Instead there were marks symbolizing the blood-relation groups. By the time of Zhou reign, Zhou Seals made with bronze material in the main became the style. They could be



found in various shapes, and they generally fell into the two categories of Bai Wen and Zhu Wen. The Qin dynasty was the period when the Chinese characters were developed from Zhou Shu style to Seal style. And the seals took on forms in a wider range. Seals became more prosperous during the Han Dynasty. So in history seal was called the Han Seal. Its shape system and the decorative carvings on the top of the seal were both exquisite. By the time of the



Tang and Song Dynasties, although the seal's shape system had been changed as a result of the scholars and calligraphers preference, the sealed type characters were still used for seal cutting. By the time of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, seal cutting artists had come forth in large numbers and seal cutting had also become a type of art based in sealed type calligraphy, using cutting methods and with the seal face giving play to the spacing and engagement of character strokes.

Presentation is an art for laying out a character or a character group on the face of the seal. Complicated and full of changes, it is the most important link for seal cutting art. If a seal just bears good cutting skills but lacks superb lay-out and presentation, it cannot be called a piece of excellent works. Particularly in the case of the creation of a set or a group of works, each and every



seal must show variation and diversification. Moreover, all the works must demonstrate the creator's solid foundation in his/her presentation skills. Therefore, the creator has to devise repeatedly when the draft design was made prior to cutting. Appropriate artistic forms should be adopted based on the number of character strokes, stroke flow, character shapes and the correlations between characters.

Serial courses in seal cutting elaborately devised by Beijing Language and Cultural Center for Diplomatic Missions (LCC) will impart to foreign learners the basic knowledge on the subjects of Chinese characters, seals and seal cutting skills as well. Such a program will enable you to experience not only the elegance of the traditional Chinese art, but also the hands-on pleasure of DIY.



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“Standing in the Snow Outside the Cheng Mansion”

The legend has it that one day Yang Shi and You Zuo, both scholars of the Song Dynasty, called on the well-known Confucius scholar Cheng Yi. It so happened that the senior was just having a break with his eyes closed at that time. The two scholars, for fear of disturbing the senior scholar, stood most quietly and in all respects



outside the door. By the time Cheng Yi noticed the visitors had come, the snow outside the entrance had already become over half a meter deep. This story spread far and wide among scholars in the Song Dynasty. Afterwards people often used the idiom phrase of “Chen Men Li Xue” (Standing in the Snow Outside the Cheng Mansion) to describe the respect for teachers from the students and also their earnest desire to learn.

“Sending Charcoal in the Snowy Weather”

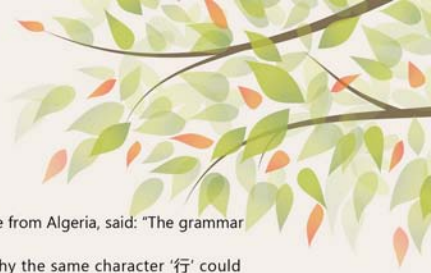
During the Warring States Period there was a heavy snow in a winter in the state of Chu. The Monarch Chu Huaiwang could still feel the extreme cold even after he had put on his heavy fur coat. All of a sudden, he came into the state of deep thought, and after a while he issued the order that charcoal be delivered to the poor people and tourists in the whole state of Chu. People were all happy and excited about this offer and they remained grateful to the King. From then on, people have used a lot this idiom of “Sending Charcoal in the Snowy Weather” as a metaphor to refer to all the material aid and spiritual support delivered in time of need.



if you Find Reading Baffling and Grammar Dumbfounding, We Will Solve the Puzzle of HSK test For you!



The new edition of the HSK test (dubbed as “TOEFL for the Chinese Language”) already started its operation as of the year of 2012. The up-to-date HSK is a new type of the Chinese language proficiency test launched by Hanban (The Office of the Chinese Language Council International) on the bases of full investigation into the actual overseas Chinese language teaching. It has absorbed the strong points of the previous HSK and also drawn upon the latest results of language assessment and testing in the world over recent years. Many experts on the Chinese language teaching, linguistics, psychology and education assessment both at home and abroad were involved in the preparation of the new edition of HSK. The test is divided into six levels, and it gets more difficult as the level grows. Participants in HSK are mostly Chinese language learners from abroad.



When asked how he felt about the new HSK, Harni, who came from Algeria, said: "The grammar in reading is rather difficult. I simply do not understand why the same character '行' could be interpreted both as '可以' (*i.e. ok in English*) and '走路' (*i.e. walk or make one's way in English*)."

Rola, a student from Japan, said: "I think level-6 writing is not easy. One needs to read 1000 odd characters within 10 minutes, then is required to condense the original passage into a shorter piece of 400 to 500 characters within half an hour and so. To put it in Chinese, I have to use the phrase '傻眼' (*i.e. a nasty shock or dumbfounding*) to describe my mood and state at the sight of the writing task."

Grammar is the basic rules governing phrase formation and sentence making in a language. Summing up grammar knowledge and practicing grammar are meant to master the target language with study of fewer hours. The peculiarity of the Chinese grammar lies in the fact that it looks like well-ruled sometimes, but actually has no set rules to follow. Take phrase-forming and sentence-making as an example, some learners of the Chinese language, even after

conscientious study, could still fail to understand why we can say '杯子' (*cup/glass*), '筷子' (*chopsticks*), but cannot say '碗子'. (*It would have been correct to describe '碗'/'bowl' and have the second character '子' been dropped*) Chinese people would humbly say it is '便饭' (*a simple meal*) even if they treat their guests with a sumptuous feast. Yet when some foreigners appreciate the Chinese hospitality they could laud it as a '大便饭' (*a meal of shit*), which would indeed set everybody laughing. (*What the foreigners really mean is 'a rich meal' or 'a big feast', but the Chinese character '大' (big) should not have been used here in collocation with '便饭'/'a simple meal', because although '大' could some times mean 'rich' or 'big', it could help form a completely different phrase, (i.e. '大便'/'shit') when it is placed ahead of the character '便'.) To learn the Chinese language well, foreigners should first of all get to know the difference between Chinese and their*



mother tongue. Secondly foreign learners should read more, write more and think more. When they make progress in the four aspects of oral comprehension, speaking, reading and writing, they will naturally get the feel of the Chinese language and the Chinese grammar will no longer be formidable and inaccessible to them.



Beijing Language and Cultural Center for Diplomatic Missions (LCC) is one of the designated HSK test venues. Every year it regularly stages 9 tests for Level-2 through Level-6 candidates. LCC especially provides these candidates with coaching lessons for the written test. These lessons can fully help candidates overcome difficulties in oral comprehension, speaking, reading and writing so that they can speedily improve their HSK performance.



2013 New HSK Tests Are Enrolling!

http://www.chinesestudy-lcc.com/en/curriculum/HSK_4.aspx

Travel in **BDS**





Get Into Italy



Italy

**An Ancient Country With
Unique Civilization**

by Dong Zhiren

The Republic of Italy, with time-honored civilization, boasts picturesque scenic spots, historical sites and unique folk customs. As a diplomat, I lived and worked in this beautiful country for a long period of time, and my stay there left me an unforgettable memory.

Towns, big and small, and all with their own features, are scattered throughout the country. Rome is the politic and cultural center blessed with numerous tourist attractions. Milano is its economic and financial center with highly developed industries and commerce. Florence is its cultural center. As the world-renowned originating place for the Renaissance, it has well known historic remains, carvings and paintings. Venice is a water city with many islands and a great variety of bridges and boats. Turin is a city of motor vehicle manufacturers while Genoa is a port city. Pisa is famous for the Leaning Tower where Galileo made the experiment of free fall. Naples is a sunshine city while San Ginignano is a city of towers with its ancient architectures, i.e. dozens of square towers inscribed on the world cultural heritage list. Arezzo is famous for gold and silver ornaments with 30 tons of gold processed annually. Carrara, a city of marbles, has an annual production of 180 tons of high grade marbles. Cremona is the violin capital of the country. Modena is world famous for its Ferrari car works. Siena is a city well-known for horse racing while Sanremo is a city of flowers with its longstanding fame of "flowers paradise".





Italy has many holidays, both national and local holidays with distinctive traditional features, such as Boat Racing Festival in Venice, Horse Racing Festival in Siena, City-Protection God Festival in Viterbo, Flower Festival in Genazzano and Carnival in Viareggio. These festivals are all well known and worth visiting.

Italian food well established in the world offers unique culinary delights. Italian cuisines date back to a long time. Italian dishes are popular all over the world. Italian food puts stress on the color, aroma, taste and shaping. For Italian cuisines, fresh

and tender raw materials are always preferred. The best color of meat after cooking should remain blackish red. Vegetables out of kitchen should remain brightly colorful. There are a great variety of bread and pasta with different shapes and in different colors. Everybody says that bread, cheese and meat with blood on it are "the three old goodies". Only those who have got used to these three can say they are accustomed to the Italian food. Amateur performers often put on shows at traditional restaurants. They come without invitation and play accordion or sing folk and pop songs for eaters in a most care-free manner. After each piece of rendering, restaurant guests give some tips of their own accord.



Italians are open and passionate. They have a bright and cheerful disposition, and they are romantic as well. They treat others on an equal footing. No matter which country or region you come from, they will treat you warm-heartedly. It is their custom to show respect



for seniors, women and children. On different social occasions, 'lady first' is always the rule. If they chat with each other, they would have vivid expressions on their faces, gesticulating incessantly. The spare-time life of Italians is rich and colorful and they have various hobbies. They have great zeal for sports. They take fancy for collection of red wine, cars and art pieces. They like to grow, buy and present flowers. They love to raise pets, go fishing and have picnics.

Note:The author once served as a counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Italy.



TIPS

Useful Tips for Touring Italy

Climate:

Italy has four distinctive seasons. Its summer is dry while winter is wet.

Jet leg:

The Italian time is seven hours late than that of China. During its summer day-light saving period (from March to October), Italy has its time six hours behind the Beijing Time.

Electric Appliances:

In Italy plugs with two or three poles are prevalent. Be sure to buy Italian standard or European standard plug adaptor.

Telecommunication:

*From Italy to China, dial 0086 plus telephone number.
From China to Italy, dial 0039 plus telephone number.*

Shopping:

Italy boasts a great number of top international brands. Its fashion dresses, leather shoes and hand bags are all worth buying. Italian specialties include red wine, olive oil, chocolate, ice-cream and cheese.

Bank Cards:

While shopping in Italy one can use Union Bank Card, Master-card or Visa Card with most of the shops, so we advise you to put money into your cards. As various banks and cards have different rules. One may consult the banks which issue these cards as for how these cards are exactly applied in Italy.

Hotel Accommodations:

Italian hotels do not provide one-off towel, tooth brush, shampoo and conditioner or slippers. So please take your own.

Currency:

Euro is used in Italy. The customs only permits each visitor to bring RMB 20,000 yuan or foreign currencies equivalent to USD 5,000 in value.

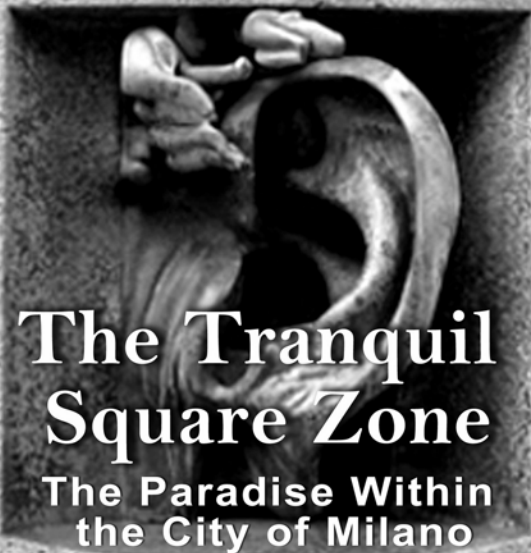
**Traffic:**

Keep to the right. In most cities travelers may take bus. The main transport in Venice is Gondora, a uniquely shaped small boat for river cruise.

Most Used Phone Numbers:

the Gendarme: 112, Police: 113,
Emergency: 113, Ambulance: 118,
Public Fire Alarm: 115.





The Tranquil Square Zone

The Paradise Within
the City of Milano

The little known but extremely charming Square Zone is blessed with super-realist ambience like paradise and architecture with unique features, so it is acclaimed as the paradise within the city of Milano.

Bronze walkie-talkie in the shape of an adult's ear was designed and built in 1930 by Adolf Wirth, a sculptor of Milano.

Netsch Al Pirieao's villa was built between in the years of 1932-1935. Designed by Pierrot Potalupi, the architecture displays profound decorative artistic style.

Fidia Palace has attracted wide-spread attentions from experts in architectural circle since its completion. The designing principle of Aldo Andreani, the designer, is regarded as the "unrestrained Sarabande", and it "dealt out a resounding slap on the faces of all convention followers".

At the crossing with Cappuccini Street, behind the entrance of N0.9 Compound, one can see a different scene: A flock of red flamingoes swim and play in the pond of the garden in great leisure, just ignoring the by-passers.

Located nearby is the Milano Association of the Blind, where a special exhibition unique in the world is going on. Nevertheless, the exhibition proceeds in the dark. Led by guide for the blind, visitors touch and feel the exhibition to experience "another way of viewing." You will not be able to acquire a profound feeling about the wordings at the entrance of the exhibition, i.e. "Clear Head and Bright Eyes" until and unless you have finished this trip in the dark.

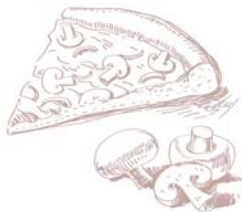


Appetizer Wine of Milano



Ever since quite an early time, people have got into the habit of taking a glass of appetizer or drink before dinner to whet their appetites. Friends get together, chatting about their work or cracking some jokes. As their happy mood shoots up, some would even directly drink appetizer wine instead of eating dinner.

Talking about appetizer wine, we cannot but mention Milano, dubbed "a city of wines", where appetizer has been described as genuinely trendy. On weekends or holidays, young people would always come to the most exciting venues in Milano before dinner to enjoy "Happy Hour." Nowadays, the Happy Hour is no longer limited to the one hour from 18:00 to 19:00. The so called Happy Hour lasts till late hours. And more varieties of main course would be provided for the occasion. Apart from snacks such as olive and nuts, pizza, cakes, grilled salads and vegetables, and sometimes cold food or hot Italian pastas would also be served as accompaniments to the appetizer wine. Some innovative restaurants would irregularly bring out foreign cuisines as appetizing food.





Do you know?

The appetizer wine named 'Mistaken Negroni' was invented in 1960s. It is often called 'the Mistaken'. Brut Champagne is to be used to replace the original gin so that the taste is lighter and more delicate.



Major ingredients of appetizer wine of Milano:

- 1/3 Campari bitter wine,
- 1/3 Brut Champagne,
- 1/3 red Martini, ice cubes,
- half a slice of orange and a roll of lemon slice

Procedure: Put three or four ice cubes first into the glass. Then add the above-mentioned ingredients according to the above-required proportion, mix and stir, finally put a slice of orange and a roll of lemon slice along the rim of glass as decoration. One may also put in several drops of Angostura tree juice if one likes.

(Special contribution by the Cultural Section of the Italian Embassy in China)

Build the Bridge of Sino-Italian Friendship With A New Flower of Diplomatic Service Coming Into Blossom



Mr Qian, the director general of BDS, met with the team led by Mr Cesare Romiti, President of Italy-China Foundation

Along with the rapid development of China's economy and culture, the number of Chinese citizens going abroad for tours has been increasing year by year. According to the statistics of the National Tourism Administration, the year of 2012 witnessed 78.40 million outbound trips by Chinese tourists, of which over 50 million trips were made by private tourists. This number accounts for 89 per cent of the total number of outbound tourist market, which reflects the fact that private trips have become the mainstream of China's outbound tourist market.

With the support of BDS Director General Qian Hongshan and the Embassy of Italy in China, based on the mutual trust between the Chinese and Italian sides and also BDS reputation in the field of diplomatic service over the last 50 years since its founding, an office for Italian ADS visa application service was set up in February 2012 jointly by Beijing Personnel Service Corporation for Diplomatic Missions and the Italy-China Foundation. Through joint efforts



by the two sides, this office has maintained a good momentum of development. Application for over 100,000 visas has been handled in the past nine months of operation. This number has exceeded the business volume of 90,000 visas expected for the whole year, bringing about an excellent beginning for this bilateral cooperation.

Cesare Romiti, President of Italy-China Foundation, said the number of visas for tourists to Italy in 2012 increased by 20% compared with that of the previous year. In 2013, the number of such visas could be expected to reach 120,000. The ADS Visa Service Office established through cooperation of the two sides will definitely facilitate a greater number of Italy-loving Chinese citizens to go to Italy for tours. That will make significant contribution to enhancing the friendship between the peoples of the two countries and further stimulating the vigorous development of China-Italy tourism.



What is ADS visa:

ADS (Approved Destination Status) is interpreted in the Chinese language as "the approved country of tourist destination". Tourists with ADS visas can only tour the destination country as approved by the visas. Such visa holders cannot in the destination country get their visas extended, nor can they ask for a transfer to other countries. ADS visa holders must enter and leave the destination country together with the group.



*The ADS Visa Service Office
Room 1, 14th Floor, Unit 1, Building 5, Tayuan DRC,
Chaoyang District, Beijing, PRC
Tel: (86 10) 8532 6014/24/34/44
Fax: 8532 6004*





Handy Tips for Winter Driving Under Rain or Snow

From Ring-Do Auto Hire Center, BDS

01 *Raise safety awareness for winter driving*

Fogs, rains and snow often appear in winter. Drivers should know how to handle driving problems which might crop up from time to time in winter so as to ensure normal driving. Drivers should absolutely avoid following the driving habits suitable only for other seasons.

02 *Seasonal car maintenance*

Do a good job with your car maintenance along with the change of seasons. Have an all round check of your car and fit your car with necessary anti-freezing installations.

Particularly make sure that the rain-brush should function normally, and promptly clear away the rain and snow on the windshield of your car.

03 *Prepare a car duster or a trowel / spatula*

Use a car duster or a trowel / spatula to timely remove the snow on the top and the four sides of the car so that your view is not blocked by the snow layers.

04 *Keep steady while driving*

Driving under rain or snow, one should avoid turning the steering wheel, speeding up or



braking the car abruptly so as to keep the slow speed. While turning, the driver should keep the steering wheel steady and avoid adjusting direction in the middle of the bend road so as to prevent side-sliding. In case of heavy snowfall and difficulties in judging the road condition ahead, the driver should pull up by the road side in good time and in the meantime switch on the double blinkers. Do not continue driving unless the view is up to the mark for safe driving.

05 *Keep the traction*

When you drive under rain or snow, and particularly if you are driving down slope or the road is ice-frozen and your car is not fitted with ABS, just try your best to use engine to reduce speed. Pedal the brake as little as possible when bringing the car to a halt or slowing down is necessary.

06 *Don't get nervous when slip occurs*

In the course of driving, in case of side-slip or tail-swing, be sure not to use brake with sudden force. The correct way is to relax the accelerator lightly, and then steer the car back to the correct position a little bit. Keep on making adjustments between turning the car and steering it back to the correct position. Yet any major or over adjustment is to be avoided, and the adjustment should be limited to the position only allowed for normal car wheel turns. When the car

is back to the correct position, the driver should pedal the car brake lightly until the car is completely brought back to control.

07 Driving on a slope calmly

If you fail to start when driving up slope under rain or snow, you should immediately pull up the hand brake, and with the help of the hand brake, you may restart. When driving down slope, you must apply the principle of slowing down and braking by the use of engine. Be sure to avoid pedaling the brake all the time.



07 Don't drive unless you are clear about the road

Maintain safety distance with the preceding car when you drive under rain or snow, and try your best to choose familiar roads. In case you find the preceding vehicle is likely to reduce speed or shift lane, you should make advance efforts for slowing down. You should switch on the indicator light prior to making turns or changing lane. If you are approaching a bend, you should keep enough space with the outer side of the bend.



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1st Floor, West Gate, No.1, Xindong Road,Chaoyang
District,Beijing ,PRC
Service Hotline: (86 10)6532 6328
mail: ydzhongxin@vip.sina.com

News Express

Yuyuantan Ice & Snow Cultural Festival in Full Swing

The first ice and snow cultural festival by a municipal park opened on December 20 2012 will last till February 20, 2013 at Yuyuantan Park. The festival activities are held in different themed zones respectively for high-platform snow ring slide, horse-drawn sledges and the real-person CS game on the snow ground, etc. Instead of driving far outside, visitors and players could experience the pleasures of the ice and snow world just in the city proper. During the festival, the park admission fee per person per trip is RMB 2 yuan while the admission to the ice and snow activity zones is set at RMB 30 yuan per person.

Expressways Will Continue Toll-Free Service during Spring Festival

The Ministry of Transport indicated that toll-free access to all the expressways for cars would be granted during the Spring Festival holidays, i.e. from 0 hour Feb.9, 2013 to 24:00 February 15,2013. In the meantime, various localities will exercise

control of toll-gates and vehicles respectively on the basis of their levels and the types of vehicles. Advance assessment will be made of the number of traveling vehicles and relevant conditions so as to avoid the congestion at the toll-gates.

Visa Exemption for Transient Passengers Within 72 Hours in Beijing

As from January 1, 2013, foreign travelers from 45 countries such as USA, Britain, France and Germany holding air tickets and visas to a third country can enjoy visa exemption in Beijing for a 72-hour transit stay. That is to say foreign travelers in transit at the Capital Airport no longer need entry visa to stay in Beijing for a longer time within 72 hours, which makes it much easier for them to arrange for commercial activities and sightseeing.

New Traffic Regulations in Force

The revised edition of Regulations on the Application for Drivers License and Its Use dubbed the “the harshest

traffic regulations in history” came into force on January 1, 2013.

According to the new regulation, drivers of motor vehicles will have 6 points deducted in case of driving in violation of the traffic lights on the road. Running yellow light is considered a violation of the traffic lights on the road, and the driver will be fined RMB 200 yuan plus a deduction of 6 points. The release of the new traffic regulations immediately triggered wide-spread controversies among all walks of life. As the enforcement faces rather big difficulties, the Ministry of Public Security has asked the various traffic authorities to withhold fines for the time being towards the yellow light running drivers. In such cases, admonition is still the main weapon of the traffic police for enforcement.



<http://www.bsbdm.com.cn>



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