Congrats on choosing to study abroad in China! In addition to any cultural and social considerations you may have to make before and during your time abroad, you should consider how you want your actions to affect the ecosystems and communities that you will be a part of. This guide will walk you through ways to consciously and sustainably study abroad in China, including your options to shop locally, ride public transit, and give back to the communities you will be staying in.
Public Transportation

- The city of Beijing has one of the most extensive public transportation systems in the world which consists of subway and bus lines. The cost of a metro ticket is between CNY 2-6 (US $.28-.84), depending on how far you ride the train.
- High speed trains to other cities and provinces are readily available and can take you to places like Shanghai and Xi’an.

Food Options

- Beijing is known for its Peking duck, so make sure to give this regional specialty a try while there.
- Local farms around Beijing grow persimmons, strawberries, leafy greens, and other seasonal produce. These are fresh and sustainable options for fruit and veg in Beijing and will likely be cheaper than other produce at markets and grocery stores.

Volunteering

- Giving back to the Beijing community could look like volunteering with education organizations, environmental groups that lead cleanups and gardening projects, or various humanitarian initiatives. Beijing is a huge city with myriad volunteer needs: find one that fits your interest!

Recycling and Thrifting

- Beijing implements mandatory trash sorting to encourage recycling and reduce trash in landfills.
Public Transportation

- Shanghai’s public transportation system includes buses, metro lines, and ferries that can take you virtually anywhere in the city. The price for a ride on the metro costs no more than CNY 6 (US $0.84) and a bus ticket will typically cost CNY 2 (US $0.28).
- For a more active and sustainable transportation option, Shanghai offers a bike sharing program. City bikes can be rented by downloading an app like Ofo or Mobike and scanning the QR code on the bike.

Food Options

- While in Shanghai, make sure to check out the many local markets that sell produce, fresh buns, baked goods and other items.
- DU students at USAC Shanghai do not receive a meal plan, so be sure to take advantage of the cheap, local food nearby.

Volunteering

- Through USAC Shanghai, you can participate in various volunteering roles including volunteering as a teacher’s aide in an elementary school and tutoring English at the “English Corner”.

Recycling and Thrifting

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