



Taikang Road

Words and images by
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In a city rushing to embrace the 21st century, Taikang Road is a throwback to old Shanghai. While only 420 metres long, it boasts a labyrinth of lanes that makes up Tianzifang – an area that also includes the mammoth SML shopping centre and the Dapugiao subway station. Zoned as an art street, Tianzifang is a mixture of former factories and traditional Shanghai style shikumen dwellings. Shikumen once made up the majority of housing in Shanghai and were an early fusion of Western and Eastern design. Today you can find cafes spilling out onto the cobbled lanes and small shops selling everything from antiques to art in an area mercifully spared big brand homogeneity. Locals still live in some of the buildings, and the street has not yet been completely gentrified.

Kommune Café

Nestled in the heart of Tianzifang, this eaterie features an outdoor patio in the thick of the action. Started by Australian serial entrepreneur Kirk Jobsz, it was the first café in the area, and is now famed for its barbeques and weekend big breakfasts.

www.kommune.me
No. 7, Lane 210 Taikang Road
021 6466 2416



Ren Weiyin Art Gallery

The gallery is a retrospective exhibition of the persecuted late artist, Ren Weiyin. Forbidden from painting, he worked as a cobbler through the Cultural Revolution. Mixing Western techniques with Chinese style he painted everyday Shanghai scenes often on cardboard and with diluted oil paints.

No 3, Lane 210 Taikang Road



Casa Pagoda

Started by husband and wife team Capone Chowdry and Leontien Nipshanger, the shop consists of two stores facing each other across the street – one with furniture and in the other, smaller decorative items. Largely retro in style, most of the furnishings are new but some are genuinely old.

www.casapagoda.com
13-17 and 136 Taikang Road
021 6466 7521 & 021 6466 8198



Magic Mirror

Professional photographer Sau Chi Yong bridges the gap between photography and oil painting in a process that irons out the blemishes in your portrait before it is immortalised in oil. This all makes for a unique – if cheesy – souvenir of your trip.

www.picpaint.com
No 14, Lane 274 Taikang Road



The Melting Pot

This bar and restaurant has nightly live music courtesy of the house band, featuring an international line up, and plays host to regular guests. Performances take place both upstairs and downstairs.

288meltingpot.com
288 Taikang Road



Shokay

This small store sells socially responsible clothing made from yak down sourced from Tibetan herders in Qinghai Province. Yak down is a precious fibre with each animal only producing 100 grams a year which needs to be hand combed. This adds up to an ideal gift for the carry-on luggage.

www.shokay.com
No 6, Lane 210 Taikang Road