

## Great Wall of China meaningful highlight

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
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For both Matt and Susan Williams, visiting the approximate 5,500-mile long wall that stretches across mountains and valleys, is perhaps the highlight of their recent trip to China.

The Great Wall of China, started in the 7th century B.C. to keep out invaders, is considered one of the seven construction wonders in the world, Susan said.

“I was most impressed people could build it out of dirt, mud, stones and bricks,” she said.

Matt said the wall was constructed in very rugged places on a vast tract of land in North China.

The couple also loved the Bund in Shanghai, a famous waterfront that has been regarded as the architectural symbol of Shanghai for hundreds of years.

Susan said the Huangpu River divides Shanghai into two regions—Puxi (west bank) is the historic center of Shanghai while Pudong (east bank) houses more modern structures and financial and commercial hubs.

“Seventeen years ago, there was nothing there,” Matt said about the newer section of Shanghai.

Susan said she was amazed to see mostly retired Chinese congregating in people’s parks to dance, do other exercises and play music and games.

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Because the Chinese in the cities live in high rises with no yards, Matt said people go to parks.

Both said they were surprised at how aggressive the Chinese are on roadways.

“The largest vehicle has the right of way,” Matt said, noting that pedestrians are disregarded.

Susan added that Tian’anmen Square, and the Forbidden City next door, were also impressive.

Tian’anmen Square was the principal entry to the Imperial Palace during the Ming and Qing dynasties, according to a Beijing guidebook, and where state ceremonies took place.

The Forbidden City also called the Palace Museum, was the imperial home of 24 emperors of the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties.

From a throne in the Forbidden City, they governed the country.

“We enjoyed the cultural experience and were grateful for the opportunity to attend the IMC,” Susan said, “Meeting bankers and their spouses and making new friends was a highlight as well as a blessing.”

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