

Travelouge

Beijing, China

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This summer I traveled with Professor David Abler to Beijing, China to study Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology. Our trip started in Newark, NJ where we boarded a plane that we would be on for the next thirteen hours. Five movies and two crossword puzzles later we landed in Beijing. I had very little prior knowledge of Chinese cultures, the language or of the agricultural practices before I started meeting with Dr. Abler. I signed up for the trip mainly to gain international experience.

I hope someday to deal with international business and this trip really opened my eyes to the differences in business between the American and Chinese cultures. Some fundamental differences that we learned from Dr. Abler before traveling abroad was the importance of the personal relationship while doing business in China. It is not uncommon for people going into business together to join each other for a meal, drink some “piju” (beer), and ask personal questions about family and personal history. This is very different from America, where during a business deal only job history and success is pertinent.

We had the opportunity to meet with a business man from Beijing and facilitated business deals between United States and China based companies. His services are needed for many things but mainly to bridge the dissimilarities in the two very different business cultures.

The Chao Lai Agricultural Gardens was a great addition to our trip and was one of the businesses I found most interesting. The facility cultivated everything from vegetables, flowers and even bonsai trees such as this one. This establishment is community run and operated, meaning that the local inhabitants worked the gardens, ate from the gardens and profited from the sales of produce. This to me is a very sustainable idea where the gardens create jobs, food and financial security.



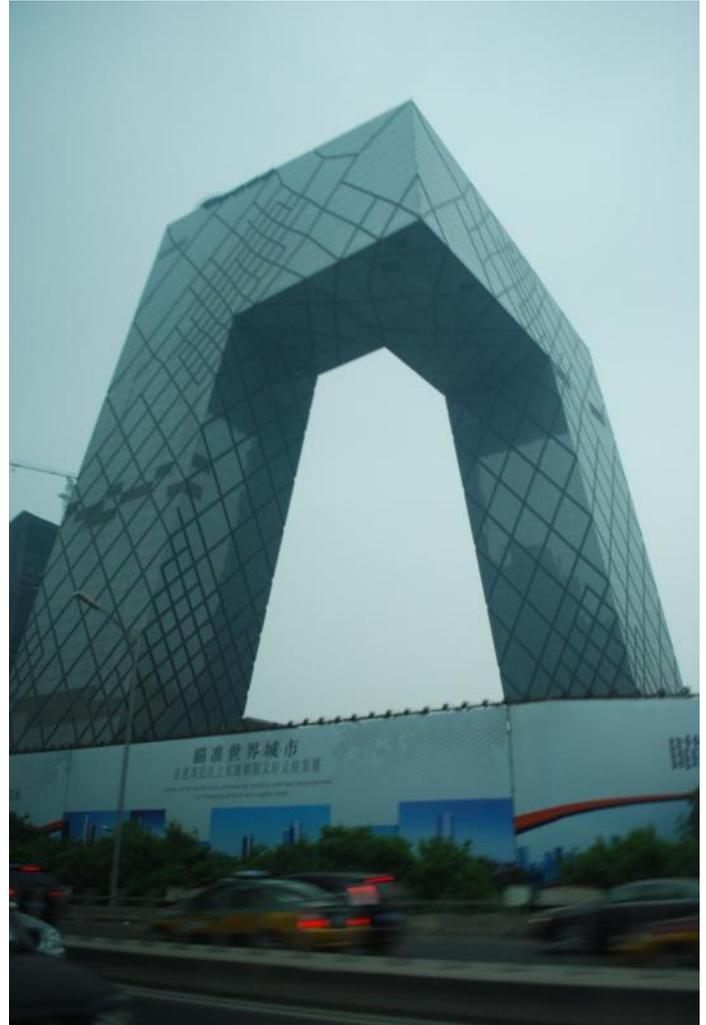
Aside from the agricultural business in China I was particularly taken with the architecture, both old and modern, in particular the religious venues. I liked how so much of their beliefs and culture were thought of when designing buildings. We had the chance to visit the Lama Temple, which is one of the most important Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in the world. The bright colors and ornate creatures painted on the structures within the temple were beautiful and unique to the Lama Temple. Below is a picture of the group that traveled to



Beijing standing in front of one of the main entry archways of the Lama Temple (from left to right: Chelsea, Rachael, Leah, Cara). Below are some pictures of modern architecture that impressed me.



The Olympic Media Tower



The Cultural Center for China
Central Television

Architect -Rem Koolhaas

Overall my trip to Beijing was an eye opening and great experience that only enforced my interest in international business. I'd like to thank Dr. Abler, our tour guide Jeffery and Rachel, Cara and Leah for sharing this great experience with me!!

