

A Podcast Guided Tour of Shanghai Museum of Public Security

Leave the traditional guided walks behind and strike out at your own pace with an audio guide. This bilingual podcast is presented by Shanghai Daily and supervised by the Shanghai Science and Technology Committee.

With over one hundred years of history, the Shanghai Police department is going to unveil their mysterious world to you today. Covering an area of 8,050-square-meters, the museum has 11 exhibition halls with different themes. The halls record the brilliant achievements and history of the Shanghai Police since 1854.

Upon entering the lobby on the first floor, you will see a combination of relief carvings. In the center of the lobby there are five carved pillars respectively portraying five public security officer groups: criminal officers, security officers, traffic officers, firefighters and prison wardens. Furthermore, the relief carvings on the front wall depict two ancient Chinese legends symbolizing the unyielding and altruistic spirit of our police force.

Now, let's go to the second floor to see the Shanghai Police history hall.

Standing on a cobblestone path from the old days, you'll find yourself captivated by the flavor of Shanghai in the 1920s. Feast your eyes on the lifelike panoramic photograph of the Bund in old Shanghai, and listen to the clanging of the clock tower from afar. Take a few steps forward and you will see three waxworks to your left. Displayed are an Indian patrolman with whiskers, a smug English patrolman and a Chinese patrolman. As India was once a colony of Britain, many robust, young Sikh men were chosen by the British colonialists to be patrolmen in China.

Turn right and you will see an assortment of Shanghai police station seals since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. As you walk along the left side, you will see exhibits that display hollowed-out books used by spies and the handgun of a Kuomintang's goon, which was seized during an assassination attempt on Chen Yi, the first mayor of Shanghai in 1949.

Let's take a short break and then move on to the criminal investigation hall, public security hall, traffic hall and prison hall on the third floor.

To start, let's visit the criminal investigation hall. This hall tells us the stories of over 30 astounding criminal cases since 1949. Walk to the end of the hall and turn right, you will notice a model of the first German police dogs introduced to China. These dogs completed hard tasks helping our police officers crack many important cases. Now move ahead and you will see many kinds of scientific instruments used by forensic experts, along with preserved human organs in glass containers. With the help of scientific instruments, forensic experts are able to uncover the clues needed to crack cases by

dissecting the organs of the victims. At the end of this hall is a scanning electron microscope used in the 1980s. At 3.3 meters in length, 1.5 meters in height and 0.9 meter in width, it played a decisive role in cracking many criminal cases.

Now follow us to the police security hall.

Besides the photographs of old Shanghai, what draws us the most, are the small drawers on the left hand side of the entrance. These drawers were used to keep population information cards before 1949. However, this filing system seems extremely inefficient in comparison to our high-tech computer-age databases.

Just a little bit further is the traffic hall.

This is where our traffic police officers are honored. The most important symbol of the traffic hall is a restored motorcycle.

Further along this path are three different historical periods of Nanjing Road, represented by three different construction materials: wood and brick, cobblestone and asphalt. The pavilion in the left corner shows where China's first generation of traffic policewomen were seated to observe traffic. At present, we have a transportation allocation center. Eight screens broadcast the current situation on Shanghai's main roads, so the police can efficiently monitor and solve traffic jams and accidents.

When you see a cangue from the Qing Dynasty, you have arrived at the prison hall.

You will see several simulated prison cells of the old Tilanqiao Prison. Alongside them are showcases where leg irons and handcuffs are displayed. Also on show is a tall three-legged stool. It is said that the stool was designed to prevent wardens from dozing off while they were on duty. If they did, they would fall to the ground. Nowadays, 24 hour surveillance systems are operated nearly everywhere in a modern prison.

Next, please follow us to the fourth floor where the firefighting hall, police equipment hall, police heroes' hall and police communication hall await.

The firefighting hall shows how the various methods in the past differ greatly from those of today. It impressed us with its red background. On the left side of the hall, notice China's first man-powered firefighting vehicle. It was introduced from Japan during the Qing dynasty. A short distance away are the helmets worn by early firefighters. Some of them are made of bamboo and others bronze. Unlike today's hosepipes and pumps, firefighters of the past used bamboo buckets to douse fires. On the right side of the hall, we can see a mini fire extinguisher shaped like a piggy bank that was used by households in the old days. Thanks to the developments in science and technology, a new kind of firefighting suit, which looks like a space suit, has been developed to resist extremely high temperatures.

If weapons intrigue you, the police equipment hall is an exciting place to visit.

It is said to be the biggest exhibition of its kind in China, with 238 guns from 17 countries on display. In the middle window are guns used by Sun Yat-Sen, the founder of China's first republic, and in the left window are guns used by Chen Yi, the late mayor of Shanghai. Alongside are guns disguised as pens, knives and other objects.

Take a quick rest because we are going to the police heroes' hall and the police communication hall next.

The first hall displays distinguished achievements of 66 police heroes. The second shows many souvenirs exchanged between Shanghai's police force and those of foreign countries.

Now, let's go to the fifth floor to take part in a simulated shooting range.

Here, you can choose to shoot targets to test your accuracy or you can try to mimic crime scenes to train your flexibility and team-working skills.

If you're still in the mood for playing and exploring, you can go back to the first floor and take part in a mock firefighting drill.

You will not only learn some firefighting skills, but your capacity to find hidden potential dangers will be tested. Here's a hint, don't ever take the elevator if a fire emergency occurs.

The Shanghai Museum of Public Security is an entertaining and educational place to visit. Take advantage of this piece of history and visit the real thing, don't miss out!

Address: 518 Ruijin Road

The opening hours are 9:00am—4:30pm (closed on Sunday).

The ticket prices are as follows:

Adults, 8 yuan, Students, 5 yuan (free for groups of students and free on the 10th of every month).

To get there, you can take bus No. 17, 41, 43, 72, 89, 96, 146, 205, 253, 572, 593, 781, 786, 932, 933.

For details, call the museum on 6472-0256 or 2402-5181.