

A large, rounded beer glass filled with a golden beer and a thick head of foam. The glass has a logo that reads 'ZHANGMEN' and 'Brewery' below it. The background is a blurred city skyline at night with warm, bokeh lights.

SZ

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JANINE JAKOB

Founder of Girl Gone International in Suzhou

Interview by Samantha Kennedy

Born and raised in Germany, Janine Jakob recently made the decision to move to Suzhou to pursue a Master's degree at French SKEMA Business School. Having been living here for 10 months, Jakob has founded Girl Gone International: Suzhou.



What is your career background?

I started studying and working with a former Hewlett-Packard branch when starting my Bachelor's degree in International Management for Business and Information Technology. Then I was a full-time Account Manager for German Manufacturing companies before I switched in a virtual part-time job, in order to start and finish my two-year full-time Master's degree in Germany and Suzhou.

What is Girl Gone International, and how did you get to be involved with GGI?

Girl Gone International is a community of like-minded ladies who moved to another city or country due to work, studies or love. Before International Women's Day, I attended an interesting full-day event by AmCham in Shanghai, where I met GGI Asia's Manager Michelle Ibarra. Over the day, we got to know each other better and she asked me if I'd be interested in setting up GGI Suzhou. As I was already quite well-connected in Suzhou, I rearranged my projects and schedule to pursue

that, as I thought a female community was a missing piece in Suzhou. All women, no matter where they are from, are welcome to join.

Tell us a little bit more about the global GGI community, and how the Suzhou chapter will work with them.

Since its founding in 2013, Girl Gone International has a presence in over 140 cities worldwide. We're organized and run by volunteers. GGI members who are traveling in China or abroad can contact us and we will put them in the appropriate WeChat or Facebook group for particular cities. So even before flying off, they can make new friends and get in touch with like-minded women.

What activities will GGI Suzhou organize?

During the first year, we'll focus on growing our general GGI Suzhou community. Then, we can focus on creating other sub-groups based on different interests. If there are women who are interested in leading one of those branches (i.e. sports, fashion, or literary events), they are welcome to contact me

and join the organizing team. We are open for new ideas according to our community's needs.

Is GGI Suzhou your full time thing, or do you have another job?

GGI is a wonderful hobby, but I'm also finishing my Master thesis at the moment. I love to network and to bring people together, so I don't perceive organizing GGI events as work.

What is the best thing about living in Suzhou?

Last year, I was lucky to have found a Chinese family with whom I can live with in Suzhou. They are very generous, and they integrate me in local activities and introduced me to Chinese customs and traditions. Since then, I'm able to see Suzhou and China from a different, and deeper, perspective.

Visit girlgoneinternational.com or meetup.com/suzhou-girl-gone-international for more info



PÂTISSERIE DES ALPES

Serving Some of the
Best Fancies in Town

By Tess Humphrys

THE PLACE

Suzhou voted Pâtisserie des Alpes as the Dessert and Patisserie Venue of the Year at the recent *That's Suzhou* Food & Drink Awards. So, of course, we couldn't resist checking it out and seeing what all the fuss is about. Pâtisserie des Alpes opened its first branch back in 2016, in the Horizon 2 Compound, near Xinghai Square. Their newest location, opened earlier this year, is at Hanlin Neighborhood Center, or Suzhou's higher education district just southeast of Dushu Lake.

THE FOOD

Having resisted the urge to dive into some delectable-looking cakes and pastries, we started sensibly with the smoked salmon brioche sandwich (RMB40), which had a generous amount of smoked salmon and a thin layer of cream cheese that complemented but didn't overwhelm. The soft, fresh brioche adds a nice sweetness, while the salty capers rounded out the flavors. The substantial slice

of quiche Lorraine (RMB35) had a delicious creamy filling with the savory bacon lardons, complete with a savory, buttery crust. We washed these down with a nice, smooth latte (RMB25) that had a rich, robust flavor.

Spoiled with all the choices on the sweeter end of things, the diplomate (RMB18) was like a fancy bread pudding and while it had a mildly sweet flavor, the texture was quite stodgy. The cute little lemon tart (RMB30), in contrast, was deliciously light thanks to its crisp base and zesty lemon curd (though we thought it could be more tart).

The choux praliné (RMB30) was an amazing tasty treat: decadent, rich, and sure to remind you of a gooey BB-8 from *Star Wars*. Hidden pockets of apricot inside the pastry cut through the creaminess of the praline mousse and hazelnut cream, which were both utterly delicious. The show-stopping caramélia (RMB45) had layers of chocolatey goodness, serving as a beautiful contrast to the citrus marmalade underneath. Its variety of textures and depth of flavor make it perfect for dark chocolate lovers.



THE VIBE

The interiors have been kept simple, all greys and whites, letting the gorgeous award-winning cakes stand out. And, boy, do they deserve the recognition. It's a nice place to chill.

Shop N106, Hanlin Neighborhood Center, Linquan Jie, SIP. 林泉街翰林邻里中心N106号商铺

ZHANGMEN BREWERY

Brewing Up Something Special

By Tess Humphrys



THE PLACE

Suzhou's craft beer scene continues to develop with this latest opening from Zhangmen Brewery. This is the first brewery of the Taiwan transplant on the Chinese mainland (there's a taproom in Shenzhen), and most of the nearly 40 beers on offer here are brewed onsite. The huge outlet is a stylish addition to the Ligongdi bar street area, which has begun to look a little tired of late. The elegant interiors make this place more of a restaurant than a straight up bar, designed to cater to the local preference for consuming both food and alcohol at the same time.

THE FOOD AND DRINKS

With 37 beers on tap, from fruit and wheat beers, to IPAs and stouts, you're sure to find one that suits your tastes. All of the beers have tasting notes in English and can be bought in flights of smaller glasses so you can sample a few. If you don't like beer, you can also get wine by the bottle and plans are afoot to begin distilling gin and whiskey. We went for the Kiss Honey Ale (RMB32/small, RMB48/large), which uses local Suzhou honey to create a mildly sweet flavor and

a pleasant syrupy aftertaste – best enjoyed on a warm summer evenings at Zhangmen's small rooftop terrace. In contrast, the Vanilla Duke Vanilla Porter (RMB32 or RMB48) has the deep smokiness you might expect from a good solid porter, along with a subtle hint of vanilla and toffee and an unexpectedly light, almost lager-like mouthfeel. Meanwhile, the Welcome Doggy Year (RMB32 or RMB48) has a refreshing, zesty aroma and is also light on the palate – finished with a strong burst of kumquat flavor.

Having heard rumors of its greatness, we sampled the American Wagyu Burger (RMB78), which didn't disappoint, thanks to the succulent and flavorful meat patty. The flavor of the blue cheese sauce, however, could've been stronger. The massive Fried Combo Platter (RMB148), featuring fried fish, chicken nuggets, onion rings and fries, was great for sharing and the perfect accompaniment to the beer selection.

THE VIBE

Money has obviously gone into the development of this place – there's lots of expensive brewing equipment and high-quality furnishings, while little touches like mouthwash in the bathrooms add to the experience. Servers are approachable and happy to talk to you about their excellent drinks. All in all, it's a good addition to Suzhou's F&B scene.

Unit A14, Ligongdi Phase 2, 99 Ligongdi Lu 李公堤路
99号李公堤二期A14栋 (512 6289 5016)

EVENTS



● Paw Patrol Live

Popular Nickelodeon animation Paw Patrol's stage adaption is coming to Suzhou for four shows on the first weekend of August. The story of the show focuses on 10-year-old Ryder and his pack of search and rescue dogs who work together to save and protect members of the fictional Adventure Bay community. Since entering China in 2015, video clips of the show have been watched more than 1.6 billion times on iQiyi, and in 2017, the series began airing on CCTV and has since attracted an even wider audience around the nation.

// Thursday, Aug 2-Sunday, Aug 5, 7.30pm. RMB180-580. Suzhou Culture & Arts Center, 1 Guanfeng Jie, SIP 苏州工业园区观枫街1号 (www.sscac.com.cn)



● Cats

Andrew Lloyd Webber's quirky masterpiece, *Cats*, is one of the longest-running shows in West End and Broadway history. Since its premiere in 1981, it's been performed in 30 countries, adapted into 15 languages and seen by more than 73 million people. For its Suzhou run, the cast performs 10 shows over one week.

// Friday, Jul 13-Sunday, Jul 20, 7.30pm (additional 2pm shows on July 14-15). RMB200-1,180. Suzhou Culture & Arts Center, 1 Guanfeng Jie, SIP 苏州工业园区观枫街1号 (www.sscac.com.cn)



● Zeng Xiaojun: Wander with the Creator

Originally from Beijing, Zeng Xiaojun is well versed in various art mediums, and his solo exhibition at the Suzhou Museum is split into two sections to showcase his ceramic sculptures and paintings. With 'nature' as the overarching theme running through both art forms, the artist weaves an intriguing dialogue between humans and their natural surroundings.

// Through Sunday, Aug 5. Suzhou Museum, 204 Dongbei Jie 东北街204号 (szmuseum.com)



● Li Yundi in Suzhou

World-renowned classical pianist Li Yundi's 2018 World Tour arrives in Suzhou for one night. The Chongqing-born musical prodigy is best known for being the youngest winner of International Frederic Chopin Piano Competition when he took home the honor back in 2000 at age 18. For this show, Li will serenade the audience with the famous Polish musician's masterpieces.

// Saturday, Jul 21, 7.30pm. RMB180-1,580. Suzhou Culture & Arts Center, 1 Guanfeng Jie, SIP 苏州工业园区观枫街1号 (www.sscac.com.cn)

CITY SCENES



W Hotel recently hosted the grand premiere of W Suzhou, an event that was attended by nearly 1,000 guests. During the party, guests experienced the design narrative of the property, which was inspired by the classical gardens and local culture, and injected with the brand's passion for fashion, music and modern art.



● World Cup Live Viewing at The Camel

Looking for a spot to watch the FIFA World Cup? The Camel has you covered! They'll be showing every game live starting June 14, all the way up until the grand finale on July 15.

// Through Sunday, Jul 15. B1, Hengyu Plaza, 188 Xinghai Jie, SIP 苏州工业园区星海街188号恒宇广场一期富邦华一银行地下一楼

● Lin Yi's Lacquer Art Exhibition

Suzhou-born lacquer artist Lin Yi has been honing her craft for more than four decades, and the Suzhou Museum is honoring her contribution to this traditional art form with a special exhibition featuring some of her best-known paintings, antique furniture pieces, and more.

// Through Wednesday, Jul 25. Suzhou Museum, 204 Dongbei Jie 东北街204号 (szmuseum.com)



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