



CHONGQING

Travel Guide

Food · Night Life · Viewpoints · Hidden Gems

Vertical, foggy, and utterly unlike anywhere else — Chongqing is China's most cinematic city. Built across mountain ridges above two great rivers, it's a place of neon-lit staircases, hotpot at midnight, and drone shows that light up the whole skyline.

■ HOTPOT CAPITAL

■ 3D CITY

■ CITY OF FOG

■ CABLE CAR CITY

Made with love by Katrin · katrinyeljamon.com · [@katrin_y_el_jamon](https://twitter.com/katrin_y_el_jamon)

WHERE TO EAT

From legendary underground tunnels to notorious chili ice cream — Chongqing is best explored through its stomach.

Finding these places: Google Maps barely works in China. Download Amap (AutoNavi / Gaode Maps) before you arrive — it's free, has English mode, and all restaurants and sights in this guide are searchable by name.



— HOTPOT — · — ICONIC — · — UNDERGROUND —

Old Underground Zhicheng Tunnel Hotpot

智城地道火锅

One of Chongqing's most atmospheric dining experiences — a former WWII air-raid tunnel converted into a hotpot restaurant. Long brick arches, hanging lanterns, and bubbling broth. Absolutely unmissable.

— SICHUAN CUISINE — · — LOCAL FAVOURITE —

Bamendong Tianchuan Restaurant

八门洞天串餐厅

A highly-rated Sichuan restaurant near Linjiang Gate with great value (around ¥47/person). Known for generous portions and bold, authentic flavours — the rabbit meat dish is particularly celebrated by locals.

> No. 178 Zhonghua Road B1, near Linjiang Gate Subway Station Exit 3

— DIM SUM — · — CROWD FAVOURITE —

Diandoude — Dim Sum

点都德

A popular dim sum spot beloved for its creative take on Cantonese-style small plates with Sichuan twists. Great for a lighter meal between sightseeing.

— GRILLED FISH — · — LOCAL FAVOURITE —

Shenjie Roast Fish

沈姐烤鱼

The restaurant serves charcoal-grilled fish — always freshly caught, with a clean, bright flavour. You choose your own side dishes to accompany the meal. Highlights include the grilled fish itself and the spicy lotus root slices.



— HOTPOT — · — BEEF SPECIALIST —

Shouqi Beef — Beef Hotpot

受起牛肉火锅

A speciality beef hotpot restaurant focusing on quality cuts cooked in a rich, deeply spiced broth. A step up from the standard hotpot experience.



— STREET FOOD — · — ONLY IN CHONGQING —

Malisi Red Oil Chili Ice Cream

麻辣冰淇淋

The city's most notorious snack — soft-serve ice cream drizzled with red chili oil and mala spice. Gimmick? Maybe. Worth trying? Absolutely.

> Jiefangbei, central Chongqing



— CAFÉ — · — HIDDEN GEM — · — VIEWS —

WaDingDing Café

瓦顶顶

A hidden café inside a mall with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the ancient rooftops of Luohan Temple. Ask staff to turn on the fog machine for a truly cinematic moment. Pure magic.

> Inside a mall overlooking Luohan Temple, central Chongqing

— HOTPOT — · — WORLD RECORD — · — SPECTACLE —

Shu Daxia — World's Largest Hotpot Restaurant

蜀大侠火锅

888 tables. Seats 7,200 people. Illuminated terraces, fireworks, and a spectacle that has to be seen to be believed. The food is solid too — this is not just a tourist trap, locals love it.

— SICHUAN CUISINE — · — POPULAR —

Fanbatuo

饭霸驼

A well-loved local restaurant chain known for bold Sichuan flavours and generous portions at reasonable prices. The Deyi World branch is centrally located and always busy — a reliable choice for an authentic sit-down meal.

> Deyi World Branch, central Chongqing

— BRAISED CHICKEN — · — LOCAL CHAIN —

Yizhi Braising Chicken

一只卤鸡

Famous for its slow-braised whole chicken — tender, deeply flavoured, and unlike anything you'll find outside Chongqing. The Jiefangbei branch puts it right in the heart of the city.

> Jiefangbei Branch, Yuzhong District



CITY WALKS

Chongqing rewards wanderers. Every staircase leads somewhere unexpected.

— HISTORIC DISTRICT — · — CATS — · — STREET FOOD —

ShiBaTi (18 Steps)

十八梯

A restored historic neighbourhood of old Chongqing — narrow lanes, traditional teahouses, street food, and a very photogenic cat population. One of the best places to feel the city's old soul.

— HIDDEN GEM — · — LOCAL VIBES —

XiaHaoLi

下浩里

A quieter, more authentic alternative to the tourist-heavy areas. Old shophouses, indie cafés, and river views. Come in the late afternoon for the best light.

— OLD STREET — · — RIVER VIEWS —

LongMenHao Laojie

龙门浩老街

An ancient street running along the cliffside with sweeping views over the Yangtze. Lined with small restaurants, bars, and craft stalls. Magical at night when the city lights up below.

— HISTORIC — · — HIDDEN GEM — · — VIEWS —

Kuixing Building

魁星楼

A beautifully restored traditional tower perched on the cliffside of the Yuzhong peninsula, overlooking the confluence of the Yangtze and Jialing rivers. One of Chongqing's oldest surviving structures — and one of its best kept secrets. Come for the architecture, stay for the panoramic river views.

— CITY CENTRE — · — NIGHTLIFE —

JieFangBei — Liberation Monument

解放碑

The beating heart of modern Chongqing — a pedestrianised square surrounded by skyscrapers, shopping malls, and street food. Lively at all hours, essential at night.

> Central Chongqing, Yuzhong District

— STREET ART — · — PHOTO SPOT —

Qi Cai Alley — Colourful Alley

七彩巷 (马房湾)

Skip the famous but overrated "Hong Kong Street" — come here instead. A narrow alleyway painted floor-to-ceiling in vivid murals, including a giant cat.

> Mafangwan area, Chongqing

— CREATIVE PARK — · — INDUSTRIAL CHIC —

TESTBED2

贰厂文创公园

A converted 1930s power station turned into a creative park full of concept stores, design studios, and vintage-industrial aesthetics. Great for cool coffee and retro finds.

— CULTURE — · — WEEKEND MARKET —

Beicang Cultural & Creative Park

北仓文创区

Another converted warehouse district with indie boutiques, bookshops, and weekend markets. Chongqing's answer to a creative village.



VIEWPOINTS & EXPERIENCES

A city built on mountains means every corner is a viewpoint.

— ICONIC · NIGHT VIEW · MUST-SEE —



HongYaDong

洪崖洞

Chongqing's most iconic image — a stack of traditional stilted buildings clinging to the cliffside, illuminated in gold and red at night. Looks like it's straight out of Spirited Away. Go at dusk.

> Jialing River waterfront, Yuzhong District



— ONLY IN CHONGQING — · — ARCHITECTURE —

LiZiBa Monorail Station

李子坝站

The world-famous metro station where Train Line 2 passes directly through the middle of a residential apartment block. An only-in-Chongqing moment. Time your visit for when trains pass.

> Li Zi Ba Station, Line 2

— CABLE CAR — · — RIVER VIEWS — · — ICONIC —

Yangtze River Cable Car

长江索道

A vintage cable car that crosses the Yangtze River, connecting Yuzhong to Nan'an district. Short ride, spectacular views of the river canyon and city skyline. Buy tickets early — it sells out.

> South Station: Shanxi Jie (better option, less crowded)

— LOCAL AREA — · — STREET FOOD — · — NIGHT —

GuanYinQiao

观音桥

Chongqing's second major commercial hub — more local and less polished than Jiefangbei. Great street food scene and lively nightlife. The area around the square is perfect for an evening wander.

> Jiangbei District

— HIKING — · — HIDDEN VIEWS — · — LOCAL LIFE —

Shancheng Trail

山城步道

The best way to experience Chongqing's vertical geography on foot. A network of ancient stone steps winding through cliffside neighbourhoods, past temples, old courtyards, and unexpected river lookouts.

Drone Show over the Yangtze

On weekend evenings, hundreds of drones create enormous light sculptures above the Yangtze River — figures, animals, and cityscapes painted in the sky. Check local listings for show times. Best viewed from the riverbank.

> Yangtze River waterfront, central Chongqing

PRACTICAL TIPS

WEAR GOOD SHOES

Chongqing is built on hills — there are stairs everywhere. Comfortable walking shoes are non-negotiable.

USE THE METRO

The metro is excellent and the city sprawls across mountain ridges. Best way to navigate between districts.

CABLE CAR HACK

For the Yangtze Cable Car, use the South Station (Shanxi Jie) to avoid the worst queues.

SPICE WARNING

"Slightly spicy" is already very spicy for most visitors. Know what you're ordering.

DRONE SHOW

The drone show runs on weekends — check exact times on arrival. It changes seasonally.

FOG MACHINE

At WaDingDing cafe, ask specifically for the fog machine — it won't happen automatically. Worth every second.

NAVIGATION IN CHINA

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