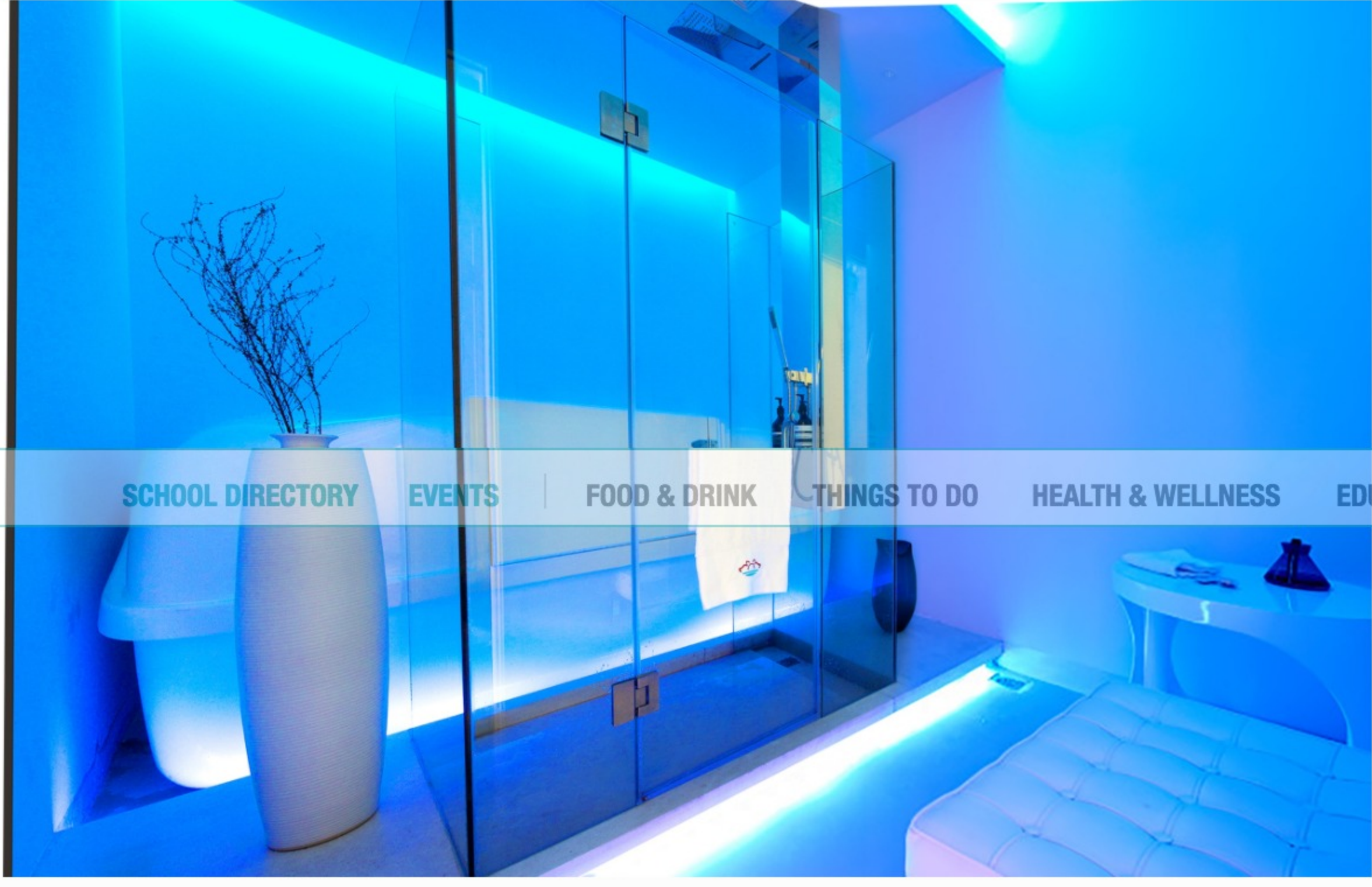




Shanghai Family Tested: Floatasian Spa

A first-hand account of what it's really like to "float"

 by Jennifer Stevens | Mon, January 23, 2017



The first time I heard about “floating” was a few years ago, while visiting my parents in Florida. Jet lagged, at 3am, I was scrolling through weeks of Instagram posts—catching up on life without a VPN. “Re-entered the womb today at a therapeutic float session” popped up, with a selfie of a well-rested, beautiful yogi friend. I had no idea what she was talking about, but I knew I wanted to try it.

Fast-forward to a week ago, and I find myself at Floatasian—an all-white, futuristic-looking spa on Dagū Lu, greeted by two tall Swedish brothers, Theodor and Andreas. They guided me through the doors of the spa, into another white room. All smiles, they told me—with passion—about their personal experiences with floating, along with all of the benefits—from reduced blood pressure and cortisol levels, to alleviating insomnia. I learned that the tanks were filled with filtered water, saturated with approximately 450 kg of Epsom salt and set to a stable 35 degrees Celsius. This is meant to create a feeling of weightlessness and allows the body to rest without pressure.



Once I was educated about the tank, the brothers showed me to my room. A fluorescent blue-lit cube housing a glass-walled shower, leading to a capsule full of body temperature salt water, it felt like the set of a sci-fi spaceship movie.

The doors shut and I was left to my own devices for the next hour. As instructed, I showered and washed my hair with the provided Aesop products, then stared at the tank in front of me. Riddled with fear (I'm claustrophobic, by the way), I took a few deep breaths, then not-so-gracefully slid into the water, flopping around like a beached manatee who'd been dumped back at sea.

After centering myself in the tank, I warily reached over and closed the capsule door. The soothing music faded—and with it, the light. It was dark, the water coated my skin like baby oil, and even with the earplugs, I could hear the water echoing in the chamber. I felt like I was in a cave—far removed from any map—a place where no one would find me.



Bobbing up and down, floating side-to-side, I leaned back and raised my hands over my head. I tried hard to stay in the same position, but my neck tensed (common for first timers) and my mind raced. I thought back to some techniques Theodor had taught me and began to count backward from 100—each number coinciding with each deep inhalation and exhalation. By the time I finished, I could no longer feel the water, and I could only hear the sound of my breath. My forehead felt heavy and my extremities tingled. I suddenly realized why sensory deprivation is a thing.

Not long after reaching that euphoric state, the music came back on and so did the lights. I emerged from the tank feeling lighter and clear-headed. I got dressed and met the brothers for an after-float chat. They listened with wide eyes and smiles as I told them about my “float high,” gave me some kale chips and an “after float shot,” courtesy of Farmhouse Juice. I felt like I had disembarked the spaceship and landed in Los Angeles.

If you're anything like me, you'll sleep better than you have in a long time—but be prepared for some seriously weird dreams.

Good to Know



Price: First-time floaters can use the code “ShanghaiFamily” to get a discount (¥299 from 7am-noon, or ¥399 from 1pm-10pm). Original price for a one-hour float is ¥688, and a package of three is ¥1050.

How to Book: Schedule your float session by phone, e-mail or Wechat.

Tel: English: 021-63855189, Chinese: 021-63855188

Email: info@floatasian.com

WeChat ID: Theo-ma

Address: Unit A, 2nd Floor, Building 5, 288 Dagū Road (near Chengdu North Road)

上海市黄浦区大沽路288号, 大沽庭, 5号楼, 2层, A室, 邮编 3 (靠近成都北路)

Recommendations:

- Go at least twice, as the first time can be overwhelming and hard to get into a comfortable position and stay still
- Go naked (not to the spa, but in the tank!)
- Try different arm positions until you're comfortable
- Don't consume caffeine at least four hours beforehand
- Wash your hair thoroughly before getting in (I didn't do this the first time and my scalp became very itchy)
- Try a variety of breathing techniques to relax
- Try to move as little as possible
- Go with an open mind

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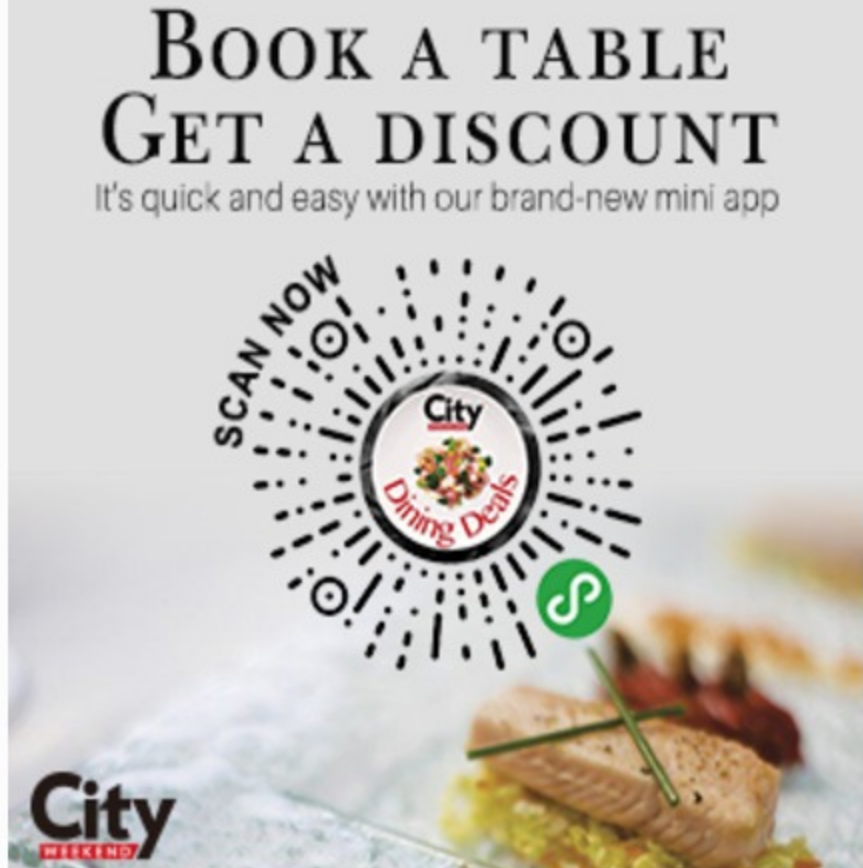
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