

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR TRAVEL TO CHINA

*We have put together some useful information regarding your upcoming trip.
You may also wish to purchase a guidebook to read about the history and local customs and travel tips
for Beijing and Shanghai.*

THE CHINA EXPERIENCE

Tourism is relatively new to China. The country opened its doors to tourists only in the late 1970s, after almost 30 years behind the Bamboo Curtain. This makes a visit to China a unique travel experience, different from anything you have experienced. Your tour will provide an opportunity to observe one of the world's oldest civilizations going through a dynamic transition. At the same time you will be surrounded by the history, culture, intriguing way of life, and food sensations of the Middle Kingdom.

The Chinese are eager hosts who will welcome you to the People's Republic of China as guests who want to explore and learn. They actively convey to their guests comprehensive images of the nation's history and culture and its economic progress. Understanding and reciprocating this enthusiasm will be rewarded by a priceless experience.

1. Visa application

An individual visa is required for entry into The People's Republic of China. A visa application form is included as an appendix to this information kit. Our travel guide, GTB Destination Management, will be happy to process your visa application with the information provided on your registration form, with your permission. Please be advised that the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China charges a USD \$50.00 fee to process your application. GTB will charge a \$30 fee for doing this. You can, of course obtain a visa at one of the PRC's consulates near you.

2. Photocopy your passport

You should photocopy the data page of your passport (the one with your photo on it) and keep it in a separate place from your passport. We recommend you leave one copy at home or in the office, but in the care of someone whom you can contact quickly. Put another copy in your suitcase or briefcase that you will use on your trip. In the event that your passport is lost, stolen, or in the possession of government officials, travel agents or tourism representatives, you will have the requisite information available, as well as proof of your identity and U.S. citizenship.

3. Currency

Chinese currency is called yuan or, more commonly, renminbi (RMB). Currently, USD \$1.00 is the equivalent of RMB/Yuan 8.00. Please be aware that Chinese currency has no value outside of China. You should keep a receipt of the exchange you receive when you change money, as well as receipts of your purchases, so that your unspent Chinese currency can be converted for you on the day of your departure (this can be done at the airport or hotel).

Foreign currency (cash or traveler's checks) may be exchanged for Chinese currency at licensed exchange facilities of the Bank of China and other authorized banks.

Money exchange facilities are available at major airports, hotels, and department stores. Major brands of traveler's checks are accepted at such exchange facilities and cash advances against a credit card can be arranged. A service charge is usually added. Consult with your bank before departing the U.S. to be sure that your brand of check or credit card will be accepted.

Major credit cards (American Express, Mastercard and Visa) are accepted by most major hotels and in many well-known restaurants. ATMs compatible with U.S. and European bankcards are available only to a limited extent in Shanghai and Beijing.

4. Considerations for packing

The climate in China varies. We advise you to bring spring-weight clothing as the basis of your wardrobe. You can then add layers to adapt to a wide range of temperature conditions. Natural fiber clothing is best. We recommend casual, comfortable clothes for traveling, business attire for the meetings throughout the tour, and one or two dressier outfits (dresses for women, jacket and tie for men) for going out in the evening. Packing lightly is essential.

It is suggested that you pack the following items for this trip:

- Money belt, in which to carry valuables, money, passport, traveler's checks, etc
- Comfortable walking shoes (rubber soles are a must)
- Swimsuit
- Sunhat
- Sunscreen (recommend SPF15)
- Extra pair of prescription glasses
- Sunglasses
- Sewing kit
- Pocket calculator
- Plastic bag (variety)
- Travel alarm clock
- Moist towelette
- Laundry detergent
- Toilet tissue
- Necessary medicine
- Folding umbrella
- Camera and film
- Small flashlight
- Binoculars

5. Health considerations

Be sure to pack a sufficient quantity of your prescription medicines. Also bring your own supply of remedies for the relief of travel sickness, headache, indigestion, etc., since U.S. brands may be difficult or expensive to obtain in China. Pack all medicines in unbreakable containers and store them in your carry-on bag. Bring a list of the generic names of medications. It is wise to carry an up-to-date record of known allergies or chronic medical problems so that emergency treatment, if necessary, can be carried out without endangering your health.

6. Baggage allowance

a. Weight System

- According to weight system regulations, baggage allowance of each passenger is:
 - a) 40 kg (88 lbs) for first-class passenger
 - b) 30 kg (66 lbs) for business-class passenger
 - c) 20 kg (44 lbs) for economy-class passenger

b. However, please be advised that on internal flights in China, passengers are limited to one piece of checked luggage, 44 pounds or less.

c. Carry-on Baggage Allowances

- Passengers holding adult-fare or half-fare tickets are entitled to bear only one piece of unchecked baggage. The baggage should be suitable for placing under the passenger's seat or in the overhead compartment, and the sum of the greatest outside linear dimensions does not exceed 45 inches (115cms).
- Besides, each passenger may carry in his own custody the following articles free of charge:
 - a) A lady's handbag
 - b) An overcoat, wrap or traveling blanket
 - c) A raincoat, an umbrella or walking stick
 - d) A small camera and / or a pair of small binoculars
 - e) A reasonable amount of reading matter for the flight
 - f) A fully collapsible wheelchair, a pair of crutches/braces or artificial limbs

d. Following are some articles which cannot be shipped as baggage:

- 1. Dangerous articles, such as inflammable, explosive, corrosive, poisonous, radioactive, polymerizable and magnetized material
- 2. Arms, sharp or lethal weapons
- 3. Articles forbidden or limited to import or export according to Chinese laws

Note: Never pack currency, jewelry, securities and other valuables in your checked baggage.

7. Customs regulations

Items such as watches, radios, cameras, and calculators imported duty free for personal use may not be transferred or sold to others. Gifts and articles carried on behalf of others must be declared to the customs inspector and are subject to duty. Chinese customs regulations prohibit the import or export of the following items:

- (a) arms, ammunition, and explosives;
- (b) radio transmitter-receivers and principal parts;
- (c) Chinese currency (renminbi);
- (d) books, films, records, tapes, etc. which are “detrimental to China’s politics, economy, culture, and ethics” (e.g. pornographic or religious content)
- (e) poisonous drugs and narcotics;
- (f) infected animal or plant products; and
- (g) infected foodstuffs.

Note: Videotapes may be confiscated by Chinese customs to determine that they do not violate prohibitions noted in item (d), above. Tapes are sometimes held for several months before being returned. (There is no guarantee that they will ever be returned.)

Export of the following items is also prohibited:

- (a) valuable cultural relics and rare books relating to Chinese history, culture, and art;
- (b) rare animals, rare plants and their seeds; and
- (c) precious metals and diamonds and articles made from them.

Antiques and imitations approved for export are marked with a red wax seal. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, improper glazing of some dinnerware for sale in China can cause lead contamination in food. Therefore, unless you have proof of its safety, dinnerware purchased in China should be used for decorative purposes only. Chinese commercial shipments of dinnerware to the United States are tested to conform to U.S. safety standards.

Movie cameras and videotaping equipment should be declared upon entry into China.

Chinese customs officials encourage the use of an ATA (Admission Temporaire/Temporary Admission) Carnet for the temporary admission of professional equipment, commercial samples, and/or goods for exhibitions and fair purposes. ATA Carnet Headquarters, located at the U.S. Council for International Business, 1212 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036, issues and guarantees the ATA Carnet in the United States. For additional information, please call telephone (212) 354-4480, or send e-mail to atacarnet@uscib.org or visit <http://www.uscib.org> for details.

Additional information concerning regulations and procedures governing items that may be brought into China is available through the Chinese Embassy and Consulates in the United States.

8. Drinking water

Do not to drink tap water in China. Hotels almost always supply boiled water that is safe to drink. Buy bottled water and/or carbonated drinks. Make sure you carry water purification tablets to use when neither boiled water nor bottled drinks are available.

9. Public conveniences

Public conveniences in China are not up to Western standards. In some cases, toilet tissue is not provided, and some may not even have doors. In most tourist sites, you will find "pay toilets," which are better than the free ones. Remember to carry toilet tissue with you at all times.

Experienced travelers pack a generous handful folded carefully into a zip-lock plastic bag which can be discretely carried in a purse or jacket pocket.

10. Photography

One of the best parts of traveling is taking photographs to share with friends and to keep as memories of your trip. The following are some helpful guidelines:

- **Don't buy a brand-new** camera just before your trip. Be sure to take few rolls and have them developed to get used to the equipment and its options.
- **Consider bringing a** camera that has a zoom lens.
- **Bring plenty of film and a** fresh set of batteries.

- **Have your camera** equipment insured and keep a record of the serial numbers. This will facilitate re-entry into your home country when you clear Customs and provide information should your equipment be lost or stolen.

Note: Photography is prohibited in some museums and other historic buildings.

11. Tipping

Today, attitudes towards tipping in China are changing. Although the practice is not officially recognized, tips are now frequently offered to and accepted by travel guides, tour bus drivers, porters and waiters in top-class hotels and restaurants. However, tipping is still not expected in most restaurants and hotels. We recommend you ask the guide whether a tip is necessary and how much when you are uncertain. Sometimes, small gifts such as paperbacks, cassette tapes and western cigarettes appear to be preferred. Note that it is part of the polite ritual that any gift or tip initially will be firmly rejected. In all group situations, the DMA will take care of tips. However, if someone has done a personal service to you which you would like to discretely recognize, this will be appreciated.