

General Information

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Do before you go

- Check TSA (Transportation Security Administration) MUST READ for all air travelers. Follow instructions to reduce your wait time at the security checkpoint.
- Make two copies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home with friends or relatives. Carry the other one along with a passport size photo with you in a separate place from your passport.
- Leave a copy of your itinerary and contact information with family or friends at home so that you can be contacted in case of an emergency.

Air Flights

- Contact airline concerned prior to leaving for the airport to confirm flight number and any possible schedule changes. Connecting passengers should verify, at the time of check-in, that luggage can be checked through to their China destination. For transpacific flights, you must check in at least three hours prior to the scheduled departure time.
- If you choose to arrange your own add-on flights to the designated gateway city, you must take the following facts into consideration before booking any flights. China Travel Service is not responsible for any missed connections and penalties/loss as a result. Note:
For transpacific flight, you must check-in three (3) hours ahead of departure time.
It takes at least one (1) hour to clear customs and claim your checked baggage.
For domestic flight, you must check in at least two (2) hours prior to departure time.
Most airline tickets are issued using special fare which cannot be changed or canceled without incurring additional cost. Should you lose or misplace your tickets while traveling, you should immediately notify the airline. In most cases they will have you complete a Lost Ticket Indemnity Form, and for a fee, issue replacement tickets.

Passport & Visa

All foreign nationals traveling to the People Republic of China must travel on a valid passport with at least six(6) month remaining validity after the entry date into China. Clients should contact the Chinese embassy in their own country for more information. Tourist visa must be obtained prior to entering the PRC. Please read complete details about Chinese Visa. Tourists from certain Western countries including Canada and the United States are exempt of visa requirement when visiting Hong Kong. More information on this subject will be provided upon receipt of deposit.

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Arrival Procedures

Your China Travel Service representative will greet you once you have cleared the Custom area at your China arrival airport. Please wear your name sign.

Baggage

Baggage Allowance

We strongly recommend you limit your baggage to one piece of checked luggage and one carry-on bag per person.

Baggage allowance differs for the transpacific and the China domestic sections of your trip. Baggage allowance for transpacific flight is two pieces of checked baggage per person. Total dimensions (Length + Width + Height) of the two pieces must not exceed 107 inches (273cm); maximum dimensions of single piece shall not exceed 62 inches (158cm). Maximum weight per piece is 70lbs (32kilos). Each passenger may carry one hand baggage, the combined dimensions of which shall not exceed 45 inches (115cm).

China domestic flights have stringent luggage restrictions allowing one piece of checked baggage that must not exceed 44 lbs(25kilos) per person, plus a carry-on bag not to exceed 5 lbs. The carry-on must fit in the overhead bin or under the seat.

Baggage in excess of allowances will incur excess baggage charge payable on site by the passenger.

Baggage Precautions

Make sure you have luggage tags for each checked suitcase. A copy of your itinerary and contact information should also go in an outside pocket of your luggage to aid the airline personnel to locate you in case you and your luggage become separated.

Never check luggage containing prohibited items (i.e. lighters), valuables (i.e. cash, jewelry, and cameras), fragile items (i.e. undeveloped film, bottles, eyeglasses) or critical items (i.e. medicines, travel vouchers). You should read more information about TSA Permitted and Prohibited Items.

Lost/damaged Baggage

China Travel Service will not be responsible for loss or damage to your luggage and personal belongings. You must report any loss or damage immediately at the time of the incident and obtain a written report from the local authority for submission to your insurance provider. If your luggage is lost or damaged by the airlines, a baggage claim form must be filled with the carrier before leaving the airport.

Baggage Lock

Your checked baggage must be locked during transportation while in China. This is a Chinese

regulation.

Due to increased security measures in U.S. airports, if you wish to lock your baggage, you must use a TSA recognized lock, which allows TSA screeners open and re-lock your bags for security screening. Ordinary locks are cut if physical inspection is required.

Tour Guides

For a guaranteed departure with no less than 10 passengers, a professional bilingual Tour Director will be assigned and meets up with the group at the Chinese port of entry and stays with the group throughout the tour. Local guides are assigned along the program to offer in-depth narrative about local attractions.??

Group travel

The easiest way to get to China is to join a group tour on a full package or a mini-package service. Your travel agent will be able to recommend many tour options. Most group tours include three meals daily, hotel accommodations, intercity transportation, visa service, sightseeing arrangements, portage and English-speaking guides throughout the trip.

Independent travel

FIT (foreign independent travel) programs to China are growing in popularity. We market modular FIT packages that offer most of the services of a group tour but without the group. FIT programs come in two types the "fully inclusive" tour, with all the inclusions of a standard group tour, and the "mini-package", with key inclusions like hotels, certain meals, and a pre-determined sightseeing schedule.

Seasonality

In China's most popular tourist areas, the peak tourist season is spring and fall (May and September through the first half of November). Shoulder season runs from March to April and June through August. The off-season arrives mid-November and lasts through winter.

Money Matters

It is wise to carry your currency in different forms of cash, traveler's check, and credit cards. You can use credit card whenever you shop in tourist stores especially for making big purchases. You should take advantage of traveler checks' favorable exchange rate against Chinese currency. You can use local currency wherever credit cards are not accepted. Tip with U.S. dollars. Pay in single dollar bills for bargains from street vendors.

Chinese Currency

The Chinese currency is known as Renminbi (RMB), literally "People's Money". The basic unit

of RMB is Yuan (dollar), which is divided into 10 Jiao (dime), which is divided again into 10 Fen (cent). Bank of China issues RMB bills in denominations of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 Yuan and 1, 2, 5 Jiao. Bronze and nickel coin equivalents exist for the smaller units. The RMB is pegged to the US dollar. A narrow range is set by the Chinese government to let the exchange rate between the RMB and the dollar fluctuate.

As of Oktober 2007, USD\$1=RMB 7.42 by cash, 7.49 by traveler's check. Exchange rate fluctuates daily.

Chinese RMB is not internationally convertible; you must wait until you arrive in China to change your money and spend it all or exchange back to U.S. dollar before you leave the country. Hong Kong 's currency is the Hong Kong Dollar. It is internationally convertible and worth about 5% less than RMB.

Exchanging money

You can change money at hotels, China arrival and departure airports, and at Bank of China branches. The official exchange rate is adopted in most places so it's unnecessary to shop around for a better deal. For the sake of convenience and safety we suggest that you change money in your hotel. All hotels you will stay in your China trip offer foreign currency exchange service supervised by Bank of China. Retain a few of your exchange receipts because you will need the receipt to convert RMB to your home currency at the end of the trip. Those traveling to Hong Kong can change RMB to Hong Kong Dollar there.

Traveler's Checks

The advantage of Traveler's Check is: a) It's exchangeable at all your China hotels; b) The exchange rate of Traveler's Check is better than cash rate (approximately 2% higher); c) You can always cancel it if you lose it. Keep your exchange slip; you will need it when buying back your home currency. While Traveler's Check from most of the world's leading banks and issuing agencies are now acceptable throughout China, we recommend you secure major company checks such as American Express, Thomas Cook and Visa.

U.S. Currency

Cash advance service is not commonly available in China; you need to bring some cash with you. Bring a supply of single dollar bills. You will find it very convenient to use particularly when shopping with street vendors. Please note: foreign coins are not acceptable in China. All paper bills should be complete, not badly worn and free from graffiti. Partial, badly worn or defaced bills will not be accepted.

Credit Cards

Master Card, Visa, American Express are accepted in hotels, tourist shops, and upscale

shopping centers, but may not be particularly welcome in smaller local stores or in remote areas.

Personal Checks

Personal checks are generally not acceptable in China.

ATMs (Automated Teller Machine)

Do not count on ATMs in mainland China , although they are commonly used in Hong Kong. ATMs can be found in a growing, but still limited number of large banks in mainland China. You can use Visa, Master card, American Express, Cirrus and Plus to withdraw cash. The network is only available in sizeable cities like Beijing and Shanghai. Most ATMs in China can only be used for withdrawing RMB. The exchange rate on ATM withdrawals is similar to credit cards but there is a maximum daily withdrawal amount(i.e. 4000RMB). For credit-card cash advance, service fees apply.

Carrying Money

You may feel more comfortable using a money belt for a large sums of cash and credit cards. Care and good judgment is a must in all travel.

Extra Costs

As indicated under Terms & Conditions, our tour price does not include visa fee, airfare taxes, and tips for guides, drivers and bellhops. An updated breakdown of the extra costs will be provided upon receipt of your deposit.

Time Difference

Although P. R. China covers five time zones, only Beijing Standard Time is adopted for the entire country. It is 8 hours ahead of GMT, 16 hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time (15 hours ahead of PST in daylight saving time). People in China 's far western regions like Tibet follow a later work schedule to keep pace with the official centralized Beijing Time. Please check World Clock for current regional time.

When it's 9am in Beijing , the time in other U.S. cities is:

San Francisco : 5pm (previous day) 6pm Daylight Saving Time

Denver : 6pm (previous day) 7pm D.S.T

Chicago : 7pm (previous day) 8pm D.S.T

New York : 8pm (previous day) 9pm D.S.T

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Electricity

China's electrical current is 220/240V, 50 cycles AC. Plugs and Outlets come in a variety of shapes. You are advised to bring along adapters and converters for your U.S. purchased appliances. Clients can borrow adapters and converters from Housekeeping at most hotels. Hair dryer and iron are readily available also. Simply contact hotel housekeeping when you need them.

Water

Tap water is not considered safe to drink in China except Hong Kong despite the fact that water in China is commonly chlorinated and processed. Drink only bottled water or boiled water. Bottled purified water and soft drinks are easily obtained at reasonable prices. You will find either You China hotels offer boiled water to your room daily at no charge; with this boiled water you can safely make your own tea.

Hotel

We use mostly 5 and 4-star hotels for our tours and choose them for their quality, comfort, location and service. However, it is important to keep in mind that in some remote areas such as Tibet accommodations may be basic. We assume all clients need non-smoking rooms and put in our requests with the hotels accordingly. When a hotel is unable to accommodate our request we make sure they do their best to minimize the odour of cigarette smoke. Rooms for tour groups are assigned by a run of house system. Consequently, requests for a specific floor or room type will not be accepted.

Hair dryer and iron are readily available at most hotels for your use; simply contact the Housekeeping.

Bath accessories in your private bathroom include disposable tooth brush and toothpaste, comb, soap, shampoo, body lotion, sewing kit, sanitary bag, shower cap etc.

Meals

All meals are included per itinerary. Breakfasts included on your tour are familiar American

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Breakfast (buffet breakfast) to give you a good start to the day. It combines Western items such as bacon and sausage with Chinese dishes. Tea, coffee, milk, fresh fruit and a variety of juices are also available. Again, choices may be very limited when we stay at 3-star or lower-grade hotels out of necessity. Lunches and dinners are usually served in set menu family style and feature a variety of regional specialties.

Lunch and dinner would be local cuisine served in restaurants outside the hotels. A routine lunch/dinner is composed of 6-12 dishes shared by 6-10 people sitting at a round table (which symbolizes union and perfection-harmony). One beverage of your choice (beer, mineral water and soda) is included per person per meal at no additional charge; Chinese tea is usually complimentary. Beer or soft drink is limited to one glass per client. Meals during Yangtze cruise do not include beer or soda. A standard lunch or dinner consists of pork or fish or chicken plus vegetable dishes, soup and rice or noodle. Serving utensils are provided.

Special meals such as an authentic Peking Duck dinner in Beijing can be reserved to enhance your culinary experiences.

Vegetarians and clients allergic to certain food items such as nuts, MSG or sesame oil should disclose their dietary needs at the time of reservation and then remind the tour leader or local guides once on the tour. Every effort will be made to satisfy the client's needs, but we cannot guarantee the dishes served contain absolutely no such items. Clients with special dietary needs due to medical conditions must disclose their needs at the time of reservation and be prepared to pay extra.

Dress

China is a country with few dress taboos. Dress for comfort. T-shirts, sandals, shorts, and jeans are widely accepted. Coordinate your outfits for multi-tasking. Dress in layers to suit various weather/temperature changes. No formal dress is required. For Yangtze cruise "casual smart" should be enough for various occasions such as the Captain's Welcome Party. More information on this subject will be supplied upon receipt of deposit.

Climate

China is a huge country with varied climates. In general, the north is cold and dry in winter. In the south, summer is hot and humid. The raining season is in July and August. Climate in Hong Kong is sub-tropical, similar to that of Hawaii.

Telephone

Both international and domestic calls can be made from your hotel room. Domestic long-distance rates in the PRC vary according to distance and are usually inexpensive. Local calls are either at a very low rate or free of charge depending on the hotel. International Direct Dial (IDD) calls made from hotel room could be expensive when hotel adds surcharge on top of

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China 's already high IDD rates. Some hotels may request that you pay a deposit before you can access international line from your hotel room. You can use phone card for international calls; it is becoming more widely available and the rate is reasonable. Simply consult your Tour Director regarding this matter, he (she) will be more than happy to assist you.

Calling North America from Mainland China

Dial 00(international access code) + 1(North America country code) + local number

Calling China from North America

Dial 011(international access code) + 86(China country code, or 852 for Hong Kong regional code) + China area code (minus initial zero) + local number

Essential Numbers in China

There are several telephone numbers that are the same throughout China. However, only International Assistance and Local Weather Forecast are likely to have English-speaking operator.

Local Directory Enquiries: 114

Local Weather Forecast: 121

Police Hotline: 110

Fire Hotline: 119

Area Code list

City Code:

Beijing 10, Guangzhou 20, Shanghai 21, Wuhan 27, Chongqing 23, Xian 29, Nanjing 25, Chengdu 28, Suzhou 512, Guilin 773, Hangzhou 571, Lhasa 891, Wuxi 510, Hong Kong 852

Internet & Fax

Fax and internet access are commonly available at your hotels. You can check the Business Centers for details.

Mail

Your China hotels have postal service allowing you to send postcard and letter to overseas. It usually takes more than 10 days for a postcard to reach North-America. The postage is charged in Chinese RMB(4.5) equivalent to about 50 cents U.S. for a postcard, and 80 cents U.S. for a letter up to 20 gram(6.0).

Media

China publishes various newspapers and magazines in English. Among them, China Daily is a popular English newspaper, complimentary at most hotels. Imported publications like Time, Newsweek, and The Economist can be found at certain hotels. BBC, CNN or even HBO are becoming commonly available in most tourist hotels.

Laundry

You have convenient, same day laundry service in all your hotels on your China trip, if you send clothes in the morning you should have them back in the evening. Price is reasonable. For any

destination city you stay 2 nights or more you can do laundry. The price is fairly reasonable.

Motor Vehicle

Comfortable, air-conditioned motor coaches or minivans are used depending on group size. The vehicles are professionally operated and well maintained. There will be enough empty seats to ensure everyone's comfort. We do not share vehicles with strangers or other groups, except during Yangtze cruise when shore excursions are arranged by the cruise operators.

Film

When flying U.S. domestic and transpacific flights, you should pack all undeveloped film in carry-on baggage. Repeat screening on checked baggage will damage undeveloped film. Most X-ray machines in China 's airports and railway stations are marked "film safe". However, films with a higher ASA rating could be fogged by repeat exposures to X-rays. You should carry such film by hand.

What to pack

Always remember, "He who would travel happily must travel light". Pack light and you'll soon find you are better off with less!

The best packing question a traveler can ask is "do people where I am headed live without this item"? Don't pack the stuff which is readily available in the hotels you will be staying. Don't cram your suitcase with unnecessary items so you'll have room for the "treasures" you collect along the way. Remember that you will have access to:

You can easily purchase a shoulder bag or small piece of luggage to carry your purchase back home. Virtually anything you require can be secured along the way. It is part of the adventure. Travel in China involves a lot of walking. Comfortable walking shoes are essential. Make sure to check current weather before you decide what clothes to pack.

Medication

If you take prescription medication, be sure to bring enough to last the entire trip. Always carry medications in the original prescription container when traveling. Keep the medications with you and do not pack them in checked baggage.

Long-term travel overseas might cause tourists to develop stomach upset; a change in water, food, sleep habits and/or climate may all cause discomfort. Bring anti-diarrhea medications such as Imodium and Lomotil just in case.

Canadian and U.S. residents are not required of any inoculation certificate to enter China. We suggest you contact your family physician or a travel medicine clinic to determine whether you should get inoculation shots for hepatitis A and B. Although food is prepared fresh and cooked or cleaned thoroughly, stomach upsets are possible.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are not mandatory to travel to China. However we remind you that traveling in China does require certain precautions. It is therefore highly recommended that you check with your personal physician to verify your particular needs. For the latest overseas travel health information, please contact the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by visiting www.cdc.gov/travel or by calling toll-free 1-888-232-3228.

Gratuities

Tipping is often confusing for the traveler. Your Tour Director, local guides, drivers and porters are professional, conscientious, and are most thankful for your acknowledgment. Detailed gratuity suggestions are also listed for specific programs and will be sent to you with you travel documents. Under any circumstances, gratuities are customary and totally depend on the satisfaction of the services. Yangtze cruise operators may have their own recommendations on tipping their staff. We understand the sensitive nature of this matter and strive to make our policy on tipping as clear as possible. Clients wishing to comment on our advice and recommendations should do so before, not after the trip.

Shopping

Shopping is always a part of the travel experience. China is known as bargain shoppers' paradise, offering a marvelous selection of arts and crafts such as jade, silk, rugs, cloisonné, ceramics, antique, painting, furniture. You can purchase an item in the area where it is "noted for" because such item has been proven to be the best value. Your Tour Director and local guides will be glad to assist you with detailed shopping orientation. Retain all receipts, When shopping it wise to use credit card for large purchases. Purchase insurance for items that you have shipped.

A supply of one dollar bills is very handy when shopping with street vendors.

Always keep in mind that a purchase is between the buyer and the seller. Tour Agency is not involved in and is not responsible for any purchases you make during the trip, whether that merchant is part of the scheduled itinerary or not.

Shopping Stops

Other than the factory visits listed in the itinerary that provide genuine educational value, shopping stops are banned on our tours. However, all guides aren't allowed to make a shopping stop without agree of you, or he/she will be punished.

U.S. Duty-free Exemption

When shopping in China, you should keep receipts of all purchases. Upon reentering U.S, you should be ready to show customs officials what you've bought. Effective November 4, 2002, the standard personal duty-free exemption is \$800 if you are a returning U.S. resident and the items you acquired abroad accompany you.

Duty on items you mail home to yourself will be waived if the value is \$200 or less. Antiques that are at least 100 years old, and fine art may enter duty-free, but folk art and handicrafts are generally dutiable.

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Only 1 liter of alcohol and 200 cigarettes or 100 cigars may be included in this exemption. Items purchased in "Duty Free" shops are subject to duty if the value of your total purchases exceeds \$800.

Family members who live in the same household and are returning together to the United States may combine their standard personal exemptions. Children and infants are allowed the same exemption as adults, except for alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend you buy travel insurance to protect yourself and your travel investment against the unexpected.

Seat assignment

Seat assignment with Air China can only be arranged upon check-in. If you request specific seat because of a medical condition you should phone Air China office per departure gateway no sooner than 5 days prior to departure:

San Francisco Office: 1-800-986-1985

Los Angeles Office: 1-800-882-8122

New York Office: 1-212-371-9899?

Frequent Flyer Miles

Currently, Air China is code sharing with United Airlines. Your transpacific flight air miles could be credited to your UA Mileage Plus account. China domestic flights don't count. It is your responsibility to call Air China or present your UA Mileage account number at airport check-in.

Jet Lag Precautions

Jet lag happens when your body's inner clock falls out of sync with daily cycles of light, rest and meals as you cross time zones to reach your destination. Its symptoms are fatigue, irritability and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag, but you can minimize its effects. Here are suggestions:

- Get several good nights of sleep before your trip departure.
- Set your watch to your destination time when you board the plane, and adjust sleep and meals accordingly.
- Try to sleep on the plane.
- Walk around the plane occasionally, do isometric exercises at your seat.
- Drink plenty of water and fruit juice while flying.
- Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated drinks during and after the flight.
- On arrival, throw yourself into your new schedule, avoid naps, and try to stay awake until your

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normal sleeping time at home.