



Asia Concierge

THE ART OF TRAVEL DESIGN



COUNTRY INFORMATION, FACTS & ADVICE

China



Asia Concierge

THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● ARRIVING INTO CHINA

All international airports in mainland China are open to foreign travellers. The main entry points include Beijing (PEK), Shanghai (PVG), Guangzhou (CAN), Chengdu (CTU), and other major cities that operate international routes. Overland entry is also possible from neighbouring countries such as Vietnam, Laos, Mongolia, Russia, and Kazakhstan.

All travellers should ensure they have the correct visa and travel documentation before departure. Travel insurance is strongly recommended for the full duration of your stay.

Note: If you are transiting through another country en route to China, always confirm any additional requirements directly with your airline before travel.

Passport and Visa

Visa-Free Entry

Europe (38 nations) France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus, Slovenia, Slovakia, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Iceland, Andorra, Monaco, Liechtenstein, Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Malta, Estonia, Latvia.

Oceania Australia, New Zealand.

Latin America Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Uruguay.

Middle East (GCC) Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain (plus UAE & Qatar).

Duration: Up to 60 days.

Validity: Depending on country, runs through Dec 31, 2025 or into mid-2026.

Purpose: Tourism, business, visiting, transit.

Transit Without Visa

240-Hour Transit (up to 10 days) - Available to nationals of 55 countries,

EU / Schengen: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Greece, Malta, Luxembourg.

Other Europe: UK, Ireland, Russia, Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Albania, Belarus, Monaco.

Americas: United States, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Chile.

Oceania: Australia, New Zealand.

✓ Travellers can move across multiple provinces (e.g. arrive Beijing, continue to Tianjin, Shanghai, Sichuan, Yunnan).

✗ Excluded: Tibet, Xinjiang, Gansu, Inner Mongolia, Jiuzhaigou, Qinghai, Ningxia, Jilin.

24-Hour Transit

Applies to all nationalities for short layovers under 24 hours.

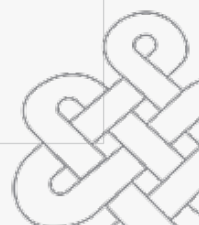
Cruise Ship Visa-Free Entry

Eligibility: Groups of 2+ who book a shore-excursion tour via a Chinese travel agency.

Stay: Up to 15 days (max 360 hours).

Permitted Areas: Only coastal provinces (Liaoning, Hebei, Tianjin, Shandong, Jiangsu, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan) and Beijing.

Eligible Ports (13): Tianjin, Dalian, Shanghai, Lianyungang, Wenzhou, Zhoushan, Xiamen, Qingdao, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Beihai, Haikou, Sanya.





Asia Concierge

THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

E-Visa & Standard Visa

E-Visa: Single-entry visa valid for up to 30 days. Available to eligible nationalities through the official MFA portal: cova.mfa.gov.cn.

Standard Visa: Required for longer stays, multiple entries, or for travellers not eligible for the e-Visa. Applications must be made in advance at a Chinese embassy or consulate.

Arrival Formalities

Upon arrival, all travellers must complete:

An Arrival/Departure Card (keep the stamped departure portion for exit).

A Customs Declaration Form.

These forms are usually distributed during the flight. Immigration officers will collect one copy on arrival and check the second when you depart.

Useful tips:

- Ensure your passport has at least six months' validity beyond your return date.
- Carry at least two blank pages in your passport.
- Print all important documents, including hotel confirmations (some hotels require printed proof of booking).
- If your passport is lost, contact your Asia Concierge representative or hotel staff immediately for assistance with your embassy or consulate.
- Download a VPN before travel if you need access to services such as Google, WhatsApp, or Facebook, which are blocked in China.

● KEEPING HEALTHY IN CHINA

Vaccinations

Staying up-to-date with your vaccinations is a crucial part of your pre-holiday planning and it is important to seek professional medical advice for your specific requirements. If you are traveling to remote areas, you may also consider preparing a medical kit.

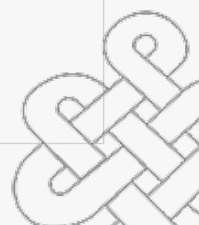
Drinking Water

Do not drink tap water in China and avoid ice in your drinks unless it is made from mineral water. Exercise caution when eating and drinking outside reputable hotels and restaurants and please only dine at places recommended by your Asia Concierge guide or representative as many local restaurants do not follow typical food hygiene practices.

Special Requirements

If you are on prescribed medication, ensure that you take a copy of your prescriptions in case of loss of supply. Be sure to pack enough medication in your hand luggage for the duration of your trip as it may not be available locally. It is important to keep it in its original packaging. Check with the relevant embassy or consulate that your medication is legal in the countries you plan to visit and find out whether you need to take a doctor's letter with you.

Please advise an Asia Concierge Travel Designer of any special dietary requirements or allergies at least four weeks prior to departure. Every effort will be made to comply with your request. Travellers with physical disabilities and those who require frequent or on-going medical attention should advise Asia Concierge of their situation at the time of booking or at the earliest possible opportunity.





Asia Concierge

THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

TIPPING

Tipping is not a widespread practice in China, though some restaurants may add a 10% service charge to the bill. Beyond this, offering a gratuity is entirely optional and at your discretion, should you wish to acknowledge attentive service.

When it comes to travel services, however, tipping is customary. Travel experts and drivers often rely on gratuities as a valued part of their income. While the amount remains a personal decision, it is common to offer tips when service meets your expectations and contributes positively to your journey. As a reference, the following guidelines are provided on a daily basis.

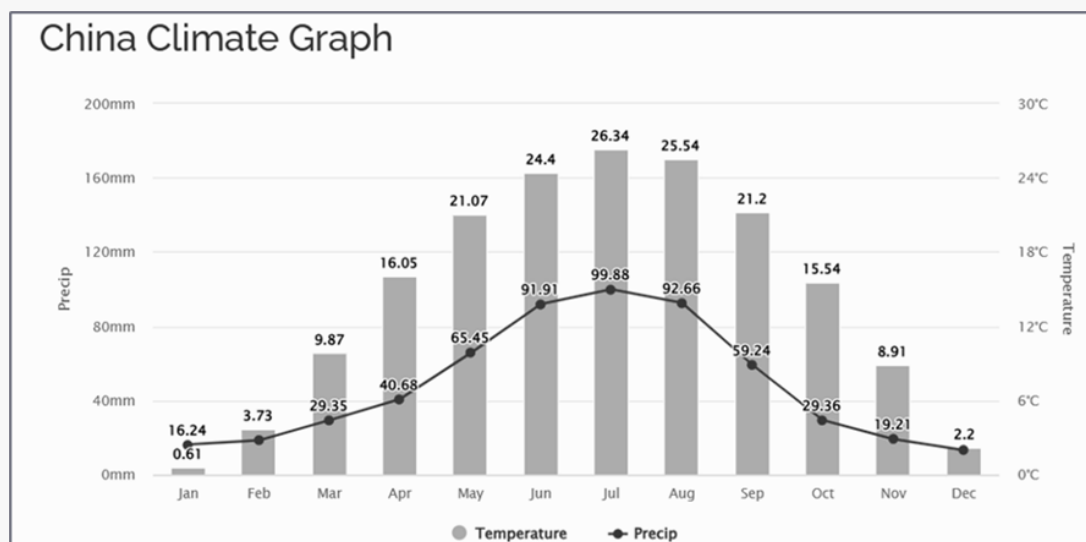
Type of Service (RMB)	1	2	3	4	5-9	10 >
Travel Expert	100	50	40	30	20	15
Driver (or Tour Assistant)	60	30	20	15	10	5
Hotel Porters	5 per item					
Local Service Providers						

WEATHER

China's immense size and varied landscapes mean the country experiences a remarkable range of climates. In the south, travellers find tropical conditions, while the north has a more temperate climate, and the west combines alpine regions with deserts in the northwest.

Summers are typically hot and humid, with temperatures often rising above 30°C, while winters can be bitterly cold in the north, frequently dropping below freezing with heavy snowfall. From May to September, much of eastern and southern China comes under the influence of the East Asian monsoon, bringing heavy rainfall and occasional typhoons along the coast.

Spring and autumn are widely considered the most pleasant times to travel, offering mild, dry conditions that suit destinations like Beijing, Shanghai, and Xi'an. Meanwhile, Tibet, Xinjiang, and other western regions are best enjoyed in summer, when skies are clear and temperatures are





Asia Concierge

THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● WHAT TO PACK

Light and breathable cotton or linen attire is recommended for China's summer months, while warmer clothing is necessary for winter. Comfortable walking shoes or sandals are perfect for exploring.

While shorts are generally acceptable, it's advisable to dress modestly, especially outside urban areas, respecting Chinese cultural norms. Smart casual attire is suitable for dining out.

Protective gear like a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, and sunblock are essential for sun protection, especially during outdoor activities.

When visiting temples and religious sites, modest attire is important. Clothing should cover the knees and shoulders, with long sleeves as needed. Transparent garments should be avoided, and footwear may need to be removed.

A universal travel adapter is recommended for China's electrical outlets, typically providing 220v 50Hz. Outlets may accommodate two or three round prongs or two parallel blades.

● MONEY

The official currency is the Renminbi (RMB), also known as the Yuan (CNY). ATMs are widely available in cities and accept international cards.

Credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard are accepted in large hotels and shopping centres, though less commonly in smaller establishments.

China is now one of the most cashless societies in the world. The majority of transactions — from restaurants and supermarkets to metro rides and even taxis — are handled through mobile payment apps such as Alipay and WeChat Pay. Travellers are strongly advised to download and set up one of these apps before arrival, ideally linking an international bank card. This way, you can pay seamlessly the same way locals do.

Carrying a small amount of cash can still be helpful in rural areas, very small shops, or for the occasional place that doesn't accept mobile payments.

● TIME ZONE

China operates on a single time zone, China Standard Time (UTC+8), despite the country's size. Daylight saving is not observed.

● SHOPPING

Shopping in China is diverse, ranging from traditional markets to modern shopping centres. Each city offers something distinctive:

Beijing – Known for pearls, silk, and antiques. Hongqiao Market and Panjiayuan Jiuhe Shichang (a large weekend market) are popular for jewellery, fabrics, Ming-style furniture, and ethnic clothing.

Shanghai – The South Bund Fabric Market is a hub for tailoring, with many stalls selling fabrics and offering bespoke suits. The city also has modern malls and designer boutiques.

Chengdu – Tea plays an important role in local culture. Visitors often purchase green tea, tea-ware, and related products.

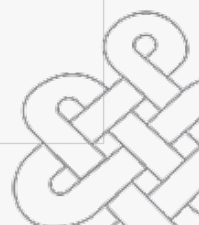
Guangzhou – Yide Road Wholesale Market is noted for its wide variety of goods and lively atmosphere.

Useful Tips

Carry smaller purchases home directly, as shipping can be costly, subject to customs duties, and sometimes delayed for months.

Be cautious when buying antiques, artwork, or jewellery. Vendors may exaggerate value, even in established shops. Travel experts may offer assistance but are not authorities on authentication.

Always check credit card slips carefully and confirm the exchange rate before signing.





Asia Concierge

THE ART OF EVENT DESIGN

● LOCAL FOOD & DRINK

China's cuisine is highly diverse, with regional differences across the country. In the north, wheat-based dishes such as dumplings, hand-pulled noodles and roast duck are staples. In the south, Cantonese cuisine is known for its dim sum, rice dishes and seafood. Western China, particularly Sichuan, is famous for spicy hotpots and richly flavoured dishes, while the east is celebrated for sweet-and-sour flavours and delicacies such as Shanghai soup dumplings.

Travellers are advised to drink bottled water only. While ice is safe in larger hotels, it is best avoided in smaller venues. Street food is widely available and often delicious, but it is safest to dine in busy stalls or those recommended by your Asia Concierge representative.

● CUSTOMS, ETIQUETTE & USEFUL INFORMATION

Religion in China includes Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Christianity and a variety of folk traditions. When visiting temples, it is respectful to dress modestly.

Public holidays, particularly Chinese New Year (January or February) and Golden Week (1–7 October), see heavy domestic travel and increased hotel and transport demand. Travellers planning visits during these times should book well in advance.

It is advisable to avoid discussing sensitive political topics in public. Internet access is heavily restricted, so travellers should download maps, translation tools and any essential apps prior to travel.

● STAYING CONNECTED

With a little preparation, staying online in China is straightforward. Local SIM cards from China Mobile, China Unicom, or China Telecom can be purchased at airports and convenience stores, though you will need your passport for registration. Coverage is generally reliable in cities but may be less consistent in rural areas.

The main challenge is that many familiar apps and services are blocked on domestic networks. **Google, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram**, and numerous international news sites are inaccessible without extra measures. While VPNs are sometimes used, they are not always dependable, with connections often disrupted by China's firewall.

A more reliable alternative is an international eSIM, available through apps such as **Airalo**. Make sure you download your eSIM before travelling; once you land, you can simply activate it and get connected. These eSIMs route traffic outside China, allowing you to use your usual apps and services freely, without relying on an unreliable VPN. Do note that eSIMs are **data-only** and do not provide a local phone number, so it is best to register for WeChat and Alipay in advance using your home country's number before you travel.

Wi-Fi is widely available in hotels, cafés, and airports, though access often requires a Chinese mobile number. For smooth, reliable, and unrestricted connectivity, an international eSIM remains the simplest and most effective solution.

China

