



CHINA



[www.JourneysClub.ca](http://www.JourneysClub.ca)

# CHINA

*The Great Wall. The Yangtze River. The Forbidden City. China is a country rich with intrigue, natural wonders and magical charm. Lavish palaces and pagodas await your discovery here alongside ancient marvels like the terra-cotta warriors and the Ming Tombs. Nowhere is the juxtaposition of old and new more poignant than in China, where the cosmopolitan cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong are surrounded by sights and cultural traditions dating back thousands of years.*

## HISTORY

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A history spanning more than 5,000 years is not easily summarized. It should be noted, however, that while we tend to separate Western and Eastern civilizations, much of what we enjoy in our modern world originated in China—from noodles and ice cream to fireworks, opera and philosophy. China was a land ruled by dynasties from 211 B.C. until Nationalist Party leader Sun Yat-sen toppled the rule of the Manchu Dynasty in 1911. The twentieth century was a period of chaos in China, rife with power struggles and cultural suppression. More recently, the handover of Hong Kong and Macau have ushered in a more forward-thinking China with an eye on unity and economic growth. Recent successes include China's involvement in the World Trade Organization and its successful bid for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing.

## FAST

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### FACTS

<i>Capital</i>	<i>Beijing</i>
<i>Population</i>	<i>1.3 billion</i>
<i>Language</i>	<i>Mandarin Chinese and many other dialects</i>
<i>Currency</i>	<i>Yuanrenminbi (CNY) and Hong Kong dollar (HKD)</i>
<i>Time Zone</i>	<i>EST plus 13 hours</i>
<i>Electricity</i>	<i>220/240V, 50Hz</i>   

# CHINA CONTINUED

## HOLIDAYS &

### FESTIVALS

<i>February</i>	<i>Hong Kong Arts Festival</i>
<i>February</i>	<i>Beijing Spring Festival</i>
<i>February 7-9</i>	<i>Chinese New Year</i>
<i>February 20</i>	<i>Spring Lantern Festival (Hong Kong)</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>Beijing International Kite Festival</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>Peach Blossom Festival</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>Grave-Sweeping Day</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>QE2 Cup Horse Race (Hong Kong)</i>
<i>May</i>	<i>Buddha's Birthday (Hong Kong)</i>
<i>May 4</i>	<i>Youth Day</i>
<i>June</i>	<i>Hong Kong Dance Festival</i>
<i>June</i>	<i>Shanghai International Film Festival</i>
<i>June</i>	<i>Dragon Boat Festival (Hong Kong)</i>
<i>September 25</i>	<i>Mid-Autumn Festival</i>
<i>September 28</i>	<i>Birthday of Confucius</i>
<i>October 1</i>	<i>National Fireworks Day (Hong Kong)</i>
<i>December 25</i>	<i>Constitution Day (Taiwan)</i>

## BOOKS

- *The Bridegroom*, by Ha Jin
- *The Republic of Wine*, by Mo Yan
- *Riding the Iron Rooster: By Train through China*, by Paul Theroux
- *River Town: Two Years on the Yangtze*, by Peter Hessler
- *The Search for Modern China*, by Jonathan D. Spence
- *Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China*, by Jung Chang

## VIDEOS

- *Empire of the Sun (1987)*
- *The Last Emperor (1987)*
- *Mulan (1998)*
- *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon (2000)*
- *Hero (2002)*

## LOCAL TOURISM

### WEB SITES

<i>Beijing</i> .....	<i>english.bjta.gov.cn</i>
<i>China</i> .....	<i>www.cnto.org</i>
<i>Hong Kong</i> .....	<i>www.discoverhongkong.com</i>
<i>Shanghai</i> .....	<i>lyw.sh.gov.cn/en</i>
<i>Taiwan</i> .....	<i>www.taiwantourism.org</i>

# CHINA CONTINUED

## MANDARIN CHINESE

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### FOR TRAVELERS

<i>Hello</i>	<i>Nee hao</i>
<i>Good-bye</i>	<i>Zai-jian</i>
<i>Thank you</i>	<i>Xie-Xie</i>
<i>My name is _____</i>	<i>Wo jiao _____</i>
<i>Do you speak English?</i>	<i>Ni hui jiang ying yu ma?</i>
<i>Where is/lare? _____</i>	<i>_____ zai na li?</i>

## WEATHER

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*China's north and central areas are rainy, with tropically hot summers and icy, cold winters. The southeast is rainy, with semi-tropical summers and cool winters. Be sure to pack plenty of lightweight clothing with breathable fabric for the summer and bring layers to get you through the unpredictable winter weather. Rain gear is always a good idea when traveling in China.*

## AVERAGE

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### TEMPERATURES

	January	April	July	October
Beijing	25°	56°	80°	56°
Bangkok	79°	86°	83°	82°
Hong Kong	60°	71°	83°	77°
Tokyo	41°	57°	78°	66°
Xi'an	32°	59°	81°	58°

Temperatures in °F. For more specific weather information, visit [www.accuweather.com](http://www.accuweather.com).

## TIPS FOR

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### TIPPING

*A mostly foreign concept, tipping is gradually becoming more common. In restaurants, tip about 3 percent of the bill. A 10 percent service charge is added in most restaurants in Hong Kong. Bring U.S. dollars along and tip bellboys and room-service waiters \$1 U.S. to \$2 U.S., as U.S. currency is always appreciated as tips.*

## CURRENCY

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### NOTES

*Check the current value of one Chinese yuan renminbi or Hong Kong dollar at [www.exchangerate.com/world\\_rates.html?cont=asia](http://www.exchangerate.com/world_rates.html?cont=asia)*

# CHINA CONTINUED

## DID YOU KNOW?

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- *Chinese cuisine has eight major schools, each named for their region of origin.*
- *Only 10 percent of China is suitable for agriculture.*
- *The circus is over 2,000 years old in China and still going strong.*
- *In China, color is very symbolic: red means good luck and happiness; gold means prosperity and money; and white means mourning.*
- *Nail polish was invented about 5,000 years ago by the Chinese.*
- *Flower motifs represent the four seasons: plum, winter; peony, spring; lotus, summer; chrysanthemum, fall.*
- *It takes about 5,500 silkworms to produce 1 kg (2.2 pounds) of raw silk.*
- *No tooth fairy here. When a Chinese child loses an upper baby tooth, the child's parents plant the tooth in the ground so the new tooth will grow in straight and healthy. Parents toss a lost bottom tooth up to the rooftops so that the new tooth will grow upward.*