



CHINA: KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

PREMIERE SERIES

(1/19/2012)

Our experienced staff of China specialists take pride in providing you with the very best in service and planning. We offer the best quality tours at the most affordable prices. We hope you will have a wonderful trip.

PLEASE FIND ENCLOSED THE FOLLOWING TOUR DOCUMENTS:

1. Day-by-day Itinerary with Hotel Information and Emergency Contact Phone Numbers
2. International and US Domestic e-tickets (if applicable)
(Note: your China domestic flight tickets may not be enclosed in this package. These may be issued locally and given to you by Ritz Tours representatives in China)
3. Your Flight Schedule (if applicable)
4. Vouchers (if applicable)
5. Ritz Tours Badge
6. Luggage Tag
7. A Copy of "China Trips--Things to Know Before You Go"
8. Travel Insurance Policy (if applicable)
9. Questionnaire / Feedback Form

Upon arrival in China, please go through Customs and Immigration on your own. After exiting the Customs area, please look for a Ritz Tours representative who will be holding a Ritz Tours flag or a sign. Please make sure that you wear your Ritz Tours badge for easy identification.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON TIPPING

Gratuities are a customary way of showing your appreciation. For your Premiere Series vacation, tips to the local city guides, drivers, and porters in China are included in the tour fare. It is not necessary to tip these individuals. However, we do provide tipping guidelines for the Ritz Tours national guide who travels with you throughout China as well as for the Yangtze River. Tipping is NEVER mandatory.

- **Ritz Tours national guide** – US\$5 - US\$7 per person per day (except free days).
- Yangtze River Cruise - Tipping is separate from the above guidelines. For the recommended amount, please refer to the cruise company information sheet, available on board.

Again, thank you for choosing Ritz Tours as your partner in travel. We are confident that your trip will be happy and rewarding. If you need further information, please contact your travel agent or Ritz Tours.

We wish you “**yi lu shun fong,**” our way of saying Bon Voyage!



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Travel Documentation

- ❖ Passports must be valid for at least 6 months from the return date of your trip.
- ❖ A visa is needed for all tourists entering China. Visa must be obtained prior to arrival in China.
- ❖ In order to obtain a China Visa, you need a valid passport, 1 passport photo, and a visa application, available at the Chinese Consulate or at your travel agency. Submit everything to the Consulate for processing. There is also a processing fee for this (which varies according to citizenship and any rush charges that may apply). Processing time is typically one week. Normally, a single entry visa is valid for 6 months from date of issue, and for one month stay from date of entry into China.
- ❖ Please note it is the responsibility of the traveler to obtain this visa in a timely manner. If you are going to another country after the trip and re-entering China afterwards, you will require a double entry visa which is available for an extra charge.
- ❖ Tighter restrictions may apply to the entry of Tibet
- ❖ Hong Kong entry permit: United States citizens must have a valid passport, but no visa is required for a stay of up to 90 days.
- ❖ For detailed passport and entry requirements, all travelers are advised to check with their embassy or consulate.

Health & Medical Matters

No vaccinations are required for your trip with the exception of anyone traveling from or via an infected area. Due to the length of the trip and local traveling conditions, it is advised that you consult your doctor for existing medical/ dental conditions before departure. If you are taking prescription medicine, please pack in your hand luggage sufficient quantity for the duration of the trip and make sure it is fully labeled. It may also be useful to bring aspirin, over-the-counter medicine for flu, indigestion, motion sickness, etc. In case of illness during the trip, please immediately notify your tour conductor and local guide for assistance.

Chinese Customs Procedures

Foreign visitors are allowed to import, free of duty, one carton of cigarettes, and one 750ml bottle of alcohol. There are no restrictions on importing the following items for

personal use: medicine, camera/camcorder, watches, personal jewelry and any amount of money. Professional recording equipment is not allowed without an import permit. Pornography, weapons, inflammable and explosive items, certain drugs are illegal and are not allowed to be taken into China. Merchandise labeled as "cultural relic" or "antique" may not be taken out of China without an official export license.

Electrical Requirement

China's electrical system operates at 220 volts. The electrical outlets are either for fat round pins or for flat angled blades. Please bring your own voltage converter and adapter.

Money Matters

Chinese currency is called Ren Min Bi (RMB) and is issued by the state bank, the People's Bank of China. We suggest you bring a combination of cash (some \$1's, \$5's and \$20's) and travelers checks for your trip. US dollars in cash form are accepted at many places while travelers' checks must be converted into RMB first.

- ❖ There is no limit on the amount of foreign currencies you may bring into China.
- ❖ Keep the receipts when you exchange USD to RMB as receipts may be required when converting back to USD.
- ❖ Credit cards are not widely accepted in China but are becoming more popular in major cities. International hotels, department stores and shops frequented by foreign tourists generally accept them. Cash advance by credit card is not common and is only possible at a few assigned banks.

As of January 2012, the following exchange rates apply: 1 USD = 6.3 RMB (Subject to currency exchange rate fluctuations)

Baggage

- ❖ Baggage allowance for international flights may vary by airlines and is subject to change at any time. For up to date baggage allowance information, please check online at www.ritztours.com for the latest regulations.



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- ❖ The standard free baggage allowance of Air China or Cathay Pacific on international flights is two pieces per person for check-in baggage, up to 50 lbs each. Carry-on baggage is limited to one piece up to 15 lbs. For other airlines, please verify online.
- ❖ Within China and Asia, the baggage limitation on all flights is restricted to one piece of check-in luggage, up to 44 lbs, and one carry on bag with a combined total dimension not exceeding 45in. Checked luggage must have a lock (combination locks are recommended) and a luggage tag showing the name and contact information of the owner. **(Please use Ritz Tours tags for easy identification by our airport staff.)** Baggage without a lock may be refused for transport in China.
- ❖ Consider packing one change of clothing, one set of underwear and toiletry in your carry on bag to avoid inconvenience caused by delayed or lost luggage.
- ❖ DO NOT pack medicine, valuables and other personal necessities in checked luggage. Keep them in carry on bag.
- ❖ Important note: Ritz Tours representatives cannot enter the luggage claim area. Luggage carts are available, free of charge, at all airports. Collect your luggage and exit, our local representatives will be waiting for you outside. All luggage from the group will be collected for transport to your hotel in a separate vehicle.
- ❖ Please consult www.tsa.gov for USA carryon restrictions.

Shopping

Although Ritz Tours' national guides will be happy to assist you with any shopping requirements, Ritz Tours does not assume responsibility for any items purchased at shops while on tour. You are never required to purchase any items while on tour and thus must be responsible for your own purchases. Any after sales correspondence must be between the passenger and the shop in question.

Food and Drinks

- ❖ Fine meals are included in China as specified in the itinerary. For Hong Kong portion and free days of your trip, only breakfast is included.
- ❖ For your enjoyment and comfort, we provide a variety of Chinese meals and also Western style food. Most meals are served as a set menu with 10

people per table. One glass of local beer or soft drinks or mineral water is included with lunch and dinner. Unlimited amount of tea is included with all meals. Additional drinks are available for purchase. Please verify cost before ordering. Tap water is not potable in China. Hotel stores generally carry a variety of soft drinks and bottled water.

- ❖ Bottled water is provided free of charge on our buses in China (Premiere Series)

Language

- ❖ China has 28 provinces and 28 major dialects; the official language is Mandarin.
- ❖ To make your trip more interesting and rewarding, we have included a list of the most useful phrases in Mandarin.

Clothing

- ❖ We suggest you bring comfortable, casual clothing and good walking shoes for the trip.
- ❖ Check newspaper for weather conditions before you go, and pack accordingly.
- ❖ It is not necessary to bring formal clothing. However, modest attire is strongly recommended in Islamic western China.
- ❖ Do not over-pack, you can buy everything you need cheaply in China.

Time Differentials

Beijing is 12 hours ahead of New York, and 15 hours ahead of San Francisco and Los Angeles (DST). All time within China is based on Beijing time; there are no adjustments for seasons or longitude.

***Please visit www.victoriacruises.com for all pertinent information regarding to your cruise of the Yangtze River (if applicable).



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National Holidays and Festivals

National Holidays:

- * January 1 New Year
- * May 1 Labor Day
- * October 1 National Day

National Festivals:

- * Chinese Lunar New Year and Spring Festival - First day of the first lunar month
- * Mid-Autumn Festival (Moon Festival) - The 15th day of the eighth lunar month

Climate

China's climate can be compared to that of the United States in that there are four seasons, a primarily temperate climate, and conditions that vary widely from region to region.

North-Central China (Beijing, Xian) is similar in climate to Nebraska and Kansas, with less snow and rain during the winter. Late winter and early spring bring regular dust storms and haze.

South-Central China (Shanghai, Guangzhou) is

comparable to the Gulf Coast states, though winter storms do not occur as often. Summer is hot and humid with frequent rain. Winter is shorter, cooler, and often overcast with drizzle.

Northeast China (Shenyang, Harbin) is similar to Minnesota. Summer is hot and dry, and winter is long and very cold.

Xinjiang (Urumqi, Turpan) experiences severe climatic conditions with dramatic daily temperature swings. Summer can get very hot during the day, but generally cools off at night. Similarly, winter temperatures warm up during the day but plummet at night.

Tibet (Lhasa, Shigatse) also sees marked changes. When the sun shines, temperatures reach the mid-80s in the summer and the mid-60s in the winter. At night or when it rains or snows, temperatures drop significantly. Precipitation is minimal in the winter; summer showers are more common but occur mainly at night.

AVERAGE TEMPERATURES IN MAJOR CITIES

City	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Beijing	28	32	40	56	69	76	79	76	67	55	39	36
Chongqing	45	50	58	67	73	80	85	90	80	70	60	51
Dali	46	49	55	60	65	67	67	68	66	62	54	48
Guangzhou	58	60	64	71	78	81	83	83	81	75	67	57
Guilin	47	48	56	65	74	79	83	82	78	69	59	50
Hangzhou	39	41	48	60	69	75	83	83	75	64	54	43
Hong Kong	60	61	65	72	79	82	84	83	82	77	71	64
Jiuzhaigou	42	45	53	62	70	74	77	77	70	62	53	45
Lhasa	29	34	41	46	54	60	61	60	57	48	39	32
Lijiang	49	54	61	66	70	70	73	72	67	62	55	49
Kunming	50	52	56	62	67	67	68	67	64	59	53	50
Nanjing	35	38	47	59	68	76	83	82	73	62	51	39
Shanghai	40	42	47	57	66	74	82	82	75	64	55	42
Suzhou	38	40	48	58	67	74	83	83	74	64	54	43
Urumqi	5	10	32	50	66	74	78	74	64	47	28	10
Wuhan	37	41	50	61	70	78	84	83	74	64	52	42
Xian	32	38	50	56	72	80	78	76	60	52	40	30
Zhangjiajie	33	34	42	53	61	67	74	72	64	57	48	38



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Useful Phrases in Mandarin

English	Mandarin Pronunciation	Chinese
Hello	Ni Hao	你好
How are you?	Ni Hao Ma?	你好嗎?
Please	Qing	請
Thank you	Xie Xie	謝謝
Yes	Yao	要
No	Bu Yao	不要
You're welcome	Bu Ke Qi	不客氣
Sorry	Dui Bu Qi	對不起
I can't understand	Wo Bu Dong	我不懂
Good morning	Zao Shang Hao	早上好
Good afternoon	Xia Wu Hao	下午好
Good evening	Wan Shang Hao	晚上好
Good night	Wan An	晚安
Goodbye	Zai Jian	再見
See you tomorrow	Min Tian Jian	明天見
You are nice	Ni Hung Hao	你很好
American	Mei Guo Ren	美國人
May I ask your name?	Qing Wen Gui Xin?	請問貴姓?
My name is	Wo Jiao	我叫
How much?	Duo Shao Qian?	多少錢?
Where is the restroom?	Che Suo Zai Na Li?	廁所在哪裡?
Where is the telephone?	Dian Hua Zai Na Li?	電話在哪裡?
What time?	Ji Dian?	幾點?
The food was delicious	Heng Hao Chi	很好吃
Cheers! /Bottoms up!	Gan Bei!	乾杯!
Excellent!	Heng Hao!	很好
Coffee	Ka Fei	咖啡
Tea	Cha	茶
Beer	Pi Jiu	啤酒
Mineral water	Kuang Quan Shui	礦泉水
Ice cubes	Bin Kuai	冰塊

A LAST REMINDER

PLEASE BE SURE YOU HAVE ALL THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS & MONEY
BEFORE LEAVING FOR THE AIRPORT!!