

China Guide Book

REAL CHINA !
UNIQUE EXPERIENCE!

TCT
Top China Travel

Address: Fuda Group, Xicheng Industrial Park, No.18 Lushan Road, Guilin China 541199

Toll Free UAS&CA: 800-9182657

Fax: 86-773-2805303

E-mail: sales@topchinatravel.com

<https://www.topchinatravel.com/>

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Before making your trip to China, there is something you need to confirm and pack:

1. Confirmation:

- The time of entry and departure of your flights.
- The expire date of passport and visa (Your tourist visa to China must be valid for at least 6 months)
- Print schedule or confirmation letter and international flight e-tickets, copies of passport and visa (packed separately from the originals).

2. Visa:

- You need a visa to visit most cities in China except Hong Kong or Macau. Top China Travel always suggests our customers to apply for a visa to China in advance in your countries. Your tourist visa must be valid for at least 6 months.
- 72-hour / 144-hour Visa-free Transit:**
Travelers from 53 countries and regions now can enjoy 72 or 144 hours visa-free transit and stay in around 18 cities (including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou) in China. Check out whether you are eligible for this: [72-hour Visa-free Transit](#) & [144-hour Visa-free Transit](#).

3. Package:

- Necessary documents: valid passport and Chinese visa
- Daily necessities: cloth, shoes, sun lotion, power charger, medicines, credit card, debit card, cash (It is suggested to carry RMB1500 – 2000 per person before going to China).
- Chinese aviation regulations of check-in luggage:

Carry-on baggage allowance:

Size: Each piece of carry-on must be no larger than 55 x 40 x 20 cm (21 x 15 x 7 in).

Weight: Economy passengers can take one piece and 5 kg (11 lbs) of carry-on baggage. First and Business Class passengers can take two pieces and 8 kg (17 lbs) of carry-on baggage.

Prohibited items:

- Arms, ammunition, and explosives of all kinds
- Controlled knife tools which are listed in "Interim provision for controlling implement of part of knife tools"
- Corrosive corporation
- Radio transmitters-receivers and principal parts
- Manuscripts, printed matter, films, photographs, gramophone records, cinematographic films, loaded recording tapes and videotapes, etc. which are detrimental to China's politics, economy, culture and ethics
- Poisonous drugs, habit-forming drugs, opium, morphine, heroin, etc.
- Animals, plants and products thereof infected with or carrying germs and insect pests
- Unsanitary foodstuffs and germ-carrying food-stuffs from infected areas
- Other articles prohibited by state regulations

Note: Cig lighter including Zippo lighter and Swiss Army Knife are not allowed through security in China. So don't carry these prohibited items with you when you enter or leave China.

For more information, please read at our China entry regulation page.

4. Payment:

a) Currency

Yuan (Renminbi, ¥)

b) Payment methods in China

Cash and mobile payments like WeChat Pay and Alipay are the most-used payment methods in China, while credit card payment is less widely used, and only available in some shopping malls, hotels or supermarkets. For tourists from foreign countries, cards like Visa card and MasterCard are available. So, carry cash or cards with you.

c) How to change money in China

You can change money at the airport upon arrival, or change at banks in large cities. You can also change money at your hotel or even with your tour guide. Each may use different exchange rates. Banks often use the most current exchange rates, while hotels use a rate that maybe a little bit higher. For exchanging a small amount of money, you can change them with your tour guide.

d) How to withdraw money at ATM in China

In most cities in China, there are many ATM machines that accept foreign bank cards. These ATM machines are widely distributed around cities, and you can easily find them in downtowns. Bank of China is your best bet as it provides a bilingual instruction.



5. Communication:

a) Language

The official Chinese language is called Mandarin, which is widely spoken by its nationals. But most Chinese don't speak English, so you'd better learn some simple Mandarin expressions for daily use before going to China. Also you can download some language apps such as Google Translate beforehand in case you meet any language barriers in China.

Essential Chinese phrases

English	Chinese	Pinyin
Hello	你好	Nǐ hǎo
How are you?	你好吗?	Nǐ hǎo mā?
Thank you	谢谢你	Xièxiè nǐ
Good bye	再见	Zǎi Jiàn
Sorry	对不起	Duì bù qǐ
You're welcome	不客气	Bú kè qì
How much money?	多少钱?	Duō shǎo qián?
I want to go to...	我想去...	Wó Xiǎn Qù...
Where is...?	...在哪里?	...Zài Nǎ lǐ?
I want...	我要...	Wǒ Yào...



Useful Chinese conversations for travel in China

At airport:

1. Is here the right counter to check in for this flight?
这班飞机是在这里办理登记手续吗?
2. Is the flight on schedule?
飞机能准点起飞吗?
3. How many bags can I check in?
我可以托运几件行李?
4. I'd love to take a window seat.
我想要靠窗的位置。
5. I have a stopover in Beijing, do I need to pick up my luggage there?
我在北京中转，我需要在那里取行李吗?
6. Will my luggage go straight through? (Eg: Shanghai)
我的行李会直达上海吗?
7. Where can I get my baggage?
我去哪里拿行李?
8. I am flying to Beijing on flight XXX. Where should I go for the transfer check in?
我要坐XXX班飞机去北京。请问到哪里办理转机手续?

At the hotel:

1. Hello, I want to check in.
你好，我要办理入住。
2. I booked a room. My name is Paul.
我预定了房间。我叫保罗。
3. This is my passport.
这是我的护照。
4. I'd like a quiet room if possible.
如有可能，我想要一间安静的房间。
5. Excuse me, where is the restaurant?
请问餐厅在哪里?
6. Please wake me up tomorrow morning at 06:00.
请明天早上6点钟叫醒我。
7. I'd like to check out of room 808.
我想退808号房间。
8. I would like to pay by credit card / cash, thank you.
我用信用卡 / 现金支付，谢谢!





At restaurant:

1. May I have a menu, please?
能给我们份菜单吗?
2. What's the special here?
你们这里有什么特色菜?
3. Fried Crispy Chicken and Eggplant with Chili Sauce
一份香酥鸡和一份鱼香茄子。
4. Is this a spicy dish?
这道菜是辣的吗?
5. How to eat this dish?
这道菜怎么吃?
6. We'd like to order four bowls of rice
我们要四份米饭。
7. Sir/Miss, May I have my bill?
服务员, 结账。
8. Where should I pay?
在哪里付钱?
9. Pay by credit card / cash, thank you.
我用信用卡 / 现金付款, 谢谢!

Take a taxi:

1. Could you take me to the Beijing Hotel?
我要去北京酒店。
2. I'd like to book a taxi to the Great Wall
我想订辆车去长城。
3. Could you have a taxi to pick me up and take me to the airport before 1 p.m.?
能帮我叫下出租车送我去机场吗? 我要下午1点前到达机场。
4. Could you please take us to Beijing South Train Station?
送我们去北京南站吗?
5. I am in a hurry. Go faster please.
我赶时间, 麻烦快一点。
6. How much if we want to charter your car for a whole day?
如果我们想包车, 一天要多少钱?
7. Okay, let me get off here
好的, 我在这下车。
8. How much will it cost?
收费多少钱?



b) Tools to keep in touch

Mobile phone:

You can use your unlocked smart phone in China. But it is advised to buy a local SIM card for your phone upon your arrival at airport. It helps you avoid global roaming, which saves you a big bill.

Internet access:

Internet is available all over China, and free WiFi—is accessible in hotels, cafes, restaurants and bars.

But due to Internet censor, some certain sites get blocked by the Great Fire Wall in China. You won't be able to access websites like Google-owned sites (Google Search, Gmail, Map, Youtube), or Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, Wikipedia, etc. To access these blocked sites, you need a VPN (Virtual Private Network), which can be bought online. It is advised to buy a VPN and install all APPs & Software you need before departure to China.

We Top China Travel also offers our own VPN service to our customers for free during your visits in China. But the VPN connection may not be stable and speed may not be fast enough. If you want a stable and fast one, just use a third-party VPN service.

Using WeChat:

WeChat is the most popular messaging and social networking app in China, with which you can send video, text message, share photos even make free phone calls. If you want to stay connected, communicate with your friends and families while in China, WeChat can be your choice. It can be a good alternative to Facebook or Whatsapp. Just download it before your trip to China.

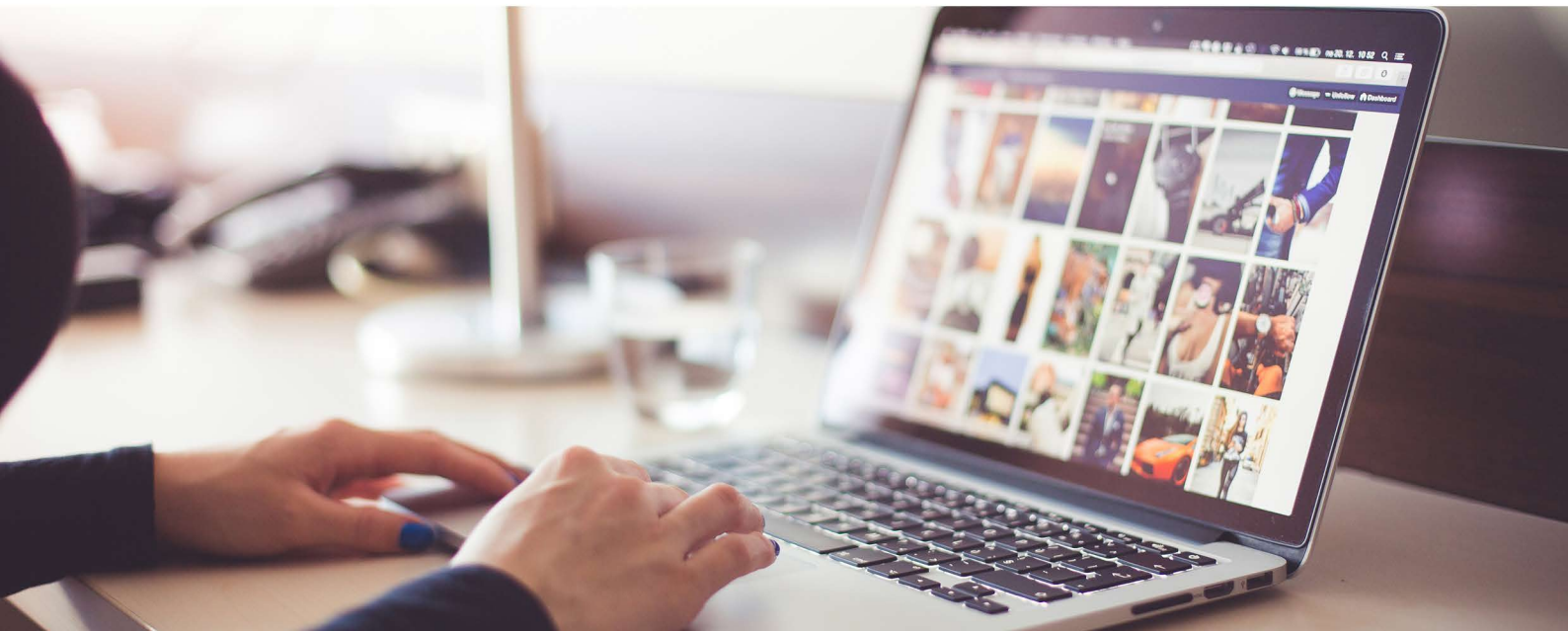
International phone call:

Dial country code + phone number.

For example:

Intl call from USA to China, dial 011-86-1555555555

011 is the exit code of USA, 86 the country code of China.



6. Time Zone:

Beijing time: China uses Beijing time (GMT/UTC plus 8 hours) as its only national standard time.

7. Travel Insurance:

Travel insurance is essential. Top China Travel suggests you to buy insurance in your country before travelling to China.

Personal comprehensive insurance

1. Arriving by flights:

Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Guangzhou are the principal cities for entering and exiting China, whose airports have direct international flights to or from China, such as Beijing Capital Airport, Shanghai Pudong Airport, Shanghai Hongqiao Airport and Hong Kong International Airport.

2. How to pass the customs?

After your flight's arrival at the airport, just follow the crowds or the signs directing you to international arrivals, immigration and customs, where you have your passport and visa checked by the custom officers.

3. Transfer flight in a China airport?

If you need to transfer to another domestic flight, one key thing you need to confirm when you check in your luggage at the origin airport is: will your luggage be transferred directly to the destination airport or will you have to reclaim them at the transfer airport?

4. Transfer flight in a China airport?

a) Reclaim luggage

After passing the customs, make your way to the baggage claim area, and check your luggage tag and flight No. on the information screen that lists the baggage carousel where you go and fetch your luggage. Then line up and wait to take your luggage.

b) Lost and damaged luggage

Sometimes you may run into troubles of losing luggage or finding your luggage damaged, then Top China Travel suggests you:

- ① Always take photos of your luggage with the tags when you get boarding card at origin airport before your departure to China.
- ② Meet our guide at the arrival airport, who will guide you to the luggage claim help center for help. Your boarding card is requested and the luggage photos you taken help make it easier.
- ③ Ask the airport staffs for help, who may deal with the issue.

c) Meet our guide at airport

After reclaiming your luggage, get out from the airport and our tour guide will be waiting you at the exit.



When in China

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1. Eating in China

a) What to eat

Eating is a top priority to Chinese, and Chinese people often greet each other with “Have you eaten yet?”. More importantly, China abounds with diverse delicious cuisines from the Peking Duck, Jiaozi, Hot Pot to Dim Sum, Hairy Crab and Ma Po Tofu, etc. Please don’t miss them during your travel.

Note: Some Chinese cuisines can be spicy, a little bit spicy and not spicy. If you are not into spicy food, you can ask for a not spicy one in Chinese phrase: “我要不辣的 (Wǒ yào bù là de)”.

b) Eating habits

Be known that Chinese eating habits are very different from the westerners’. Chinese use chopsticks to eat rice, spoon to eat soup. Sometimes, they prefer talking loudly while eating, which is their table way to socialize with friends, relatives, and business partners.

2. Sleeping in China

China offers a rich variety of hotels for your stay, including the top-end international brands, 5 star hotels, 4 star hotels, 3 star hotels, budget hotel chains, hostels. You can always find the one you need in large cities even a tourism town. But accommodations in rural areas or remote towns can be in poor supply. So confirm hotel booking before your travel.

Hotel amenities in international chain hotels or 5-star hotels have reach international standards, and will meet your expect, and mid-range hotels offer some amenities like bathroom, water-heater, hair-drier, show tub, even laundry service etc.

Note: Tap water in a hotel is undrinkable.

3. Transport in China

- a) **Flights:** Flight is the best choice when it comes to a long distance travel or a business trip to China, as it flies directly to your destinations and saves you time. But please be noted that flight delay in China is common due to strict air control. Thus, when having a flight in China, you can turn to a high speed train, which runs on time and fast.

Major airlines in China include:

China Southern Airlines (<https://global.csair.com/AR/GB/Home>)

China Eastern Airlines (www.ce-air.com)

Air China (<https://www.airchina.us/>)

Hainan Airlines (<https://www.hainanairlines.com/>)

Others airlines: Shandong Airlines, Shanghai Airlines, Shenzhen Airlines, Sichuan Airlines, Spring Airlines, Tianjin Airlines, Tibet Airlines, etc.

Tips for taking a flight

- Before you start packing, be clear about your airline's luggage regulations, including its luggage size limit, prohibited items, and checked bag fees, etc.
- Check-in gate closes 30 minutes prior to your flight's departure. So, arrive at airport at least 2 hours in advance. Give you time to check in, collect your boarding pass, check your baggage and go through the security screening checkpoint.
- Airports in China especially airports in large cities can be large and a little bit crowded. So follow the English signs for your direction.
- Keep an eye on flight delay or cancellation. You can contact your guide or travel consultant at Top China Travel for help if your flight get delayed or cancelled.

You can find cheap air ticket deals on official airlines' websites or applications.



- b) **Train:** Train is the best way to travel around China. Trains in China link cities to cities and towns to towns. They are affordable, fast, modern, clean and effectively punctual, giving you a way to see the real China. It is a unique experience itself.

Train tickets can be hard to get during travel peak days like national holiday, student holiday, etc. It is advised to buy tickets in advance, 30 days at most ahead of departure.

You can check live train schedule or buy tickets at official site www.12306.cn, which is in Chinese only. Top China Travel will offer help if you don't read Chinese when buying tickets.

Tips for taking a train in China

- Always arrive at train station early as most train stations in China are crowded and full of passengers.
- You will have to pass security check and ticket check, luggage X-ray scan before entering train station. It takes time to go through these, so you need to go to train station in advance.
- Make sure you go to the right waiting room or check-in gate for your train. Boarding usually begins 15 minutes prior to your train's departure. Just wait in line and have your tickets checked by the machine or station staffs before check-in.
- After check-in, just follow the crowd to go to the right platform for your train, and look for your carriage and seats.

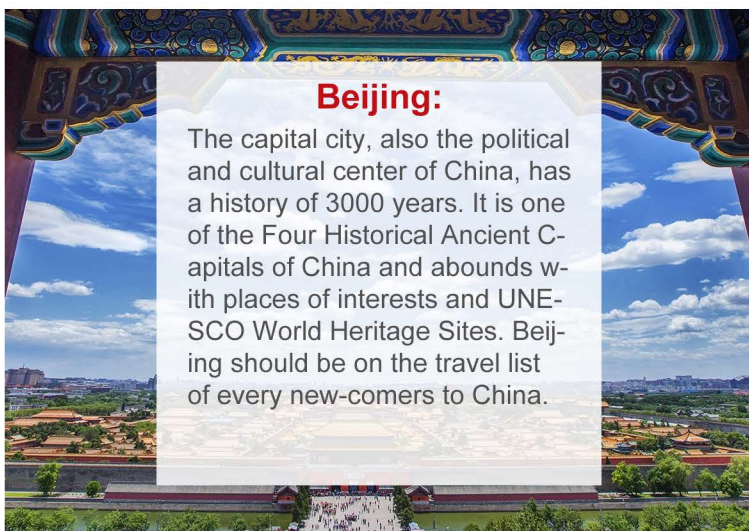
For more information, visit our step-by-step guide on how to take a train in China.



- c) **Bus:** Long distance buses are also a commonly-used transport tool for your travel in China. It often gets you to places that cannot be reached by train. But there is not an official online ticketing platform, and you will have to turn up at bus station and buy your tickets. Bus tickets can be booked prior to your travel date.
- d) **Didi Chuxing – Ride-sharing service:** China has its own Uber-like ride-sharing service: Didi Chuxing, which also has an English-version service at www.didichuxing.com. You can download the app and use its ride-sharing service when traveling in China.
- e) **Bike-sharing service:** Bike-sharing service is a new emerging but widely used local transport service in China, which can be found in most major cities in China. Bikes are widely distributed at every corner within a city, and users can use a mobile app to locate the bikes, unlock and ride a bike and pay through the app by credit card. After finished, you can leave the bike anywhere and lock it.

Major bike-sharing service providers include: OFO (Yellow Bike), Mobike (Orange Bike) and Hello Bike (Blue Bike), etc.

4. Travel destinations in China



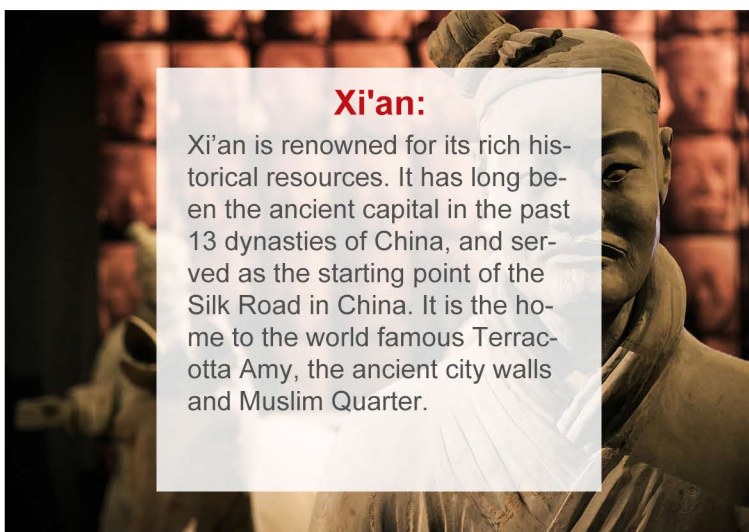
Beijing:

The capital city, also the political and cultural center of China, has a history of 3000 years. It is one of the Four Historical Ancient Capitals of China and abounds with places of interests and UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Beijing should be on the travel list of every new-comers to China.



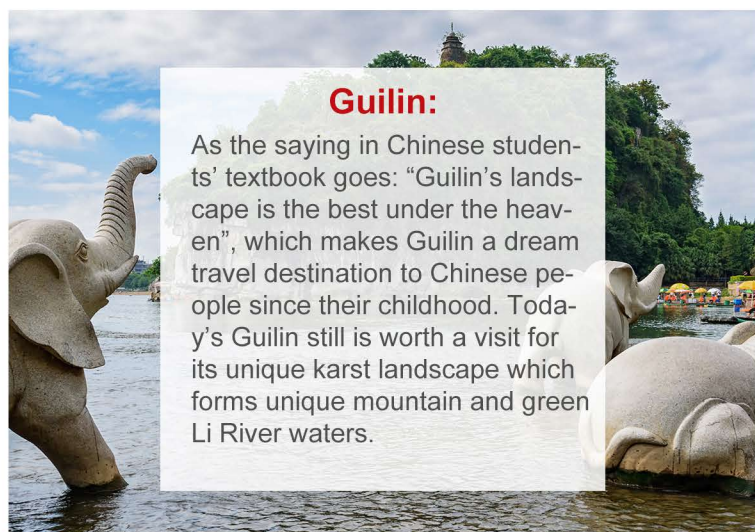
Shanghai:

China's economic center and the most vibrant city – Shanghai is regarded as the Oriental Pearl, here you can find a fusion of Eastern and Western culture. It boasts not only modern skyscrapers, shopping malls, but also traditional courtyards and charming water towns. Here you will see what a modern and traditional China is like.



Xi'an:

Xi'an is renowned for its rich historical resources. It has long been the ancient capital in the past 13 dynasties of China, and served as the starting point of the Silk Road in China. It is the home to the world famous Terracotta Army, the ancient city walls and Muslim Quarter.



Guilin:

As the saying in Chinese students' textbook goes: "Guilin's landscape is the best under the heaven", which makes Guilin a dream travel destination to Chinese people since their childhood. Today's Guilin still is worth a visit for its unique karst landscape which forms unique mountain and green Li River waters.

Except those mentioned above, there are more other places that deserve your visit: Chengdu, Suzhou and Hangzhou, Zhangjiajie, Huangshan, Jiuzhaigou, Silk Route, Yangtze River Cruise, etc.

5. Shopping in China

When in China, you may want to buy some mementos, souvenirs or bargains for taking home. Below are some shopping tips for you.

What to buy: You may consider buying some special Chinese things home, such as Chinese teas, silks, paintings, embroidery, ceramics or any Chinese style clothes. For more information, read about our [China shopping guide](#).

Shopping tips:

- a) Always take cash with you as most sellers only accept cash while you make a purchase.
- b) Be careful about counterfeit money. Foreigners may receive some fake notes when shopping at streets in China. To identify counterfeit money, please read [Chinese currency guide](#).



6. Entertainments in China



► Beijing:

As a national cultural center, Beijing offers many things to see and do. Tourists can taste the local dish- Beijing Roast Duck, enjoy Peking Opera or an acrobatics show, discover old Beijing by wandering Hutong. For more activities, read [activities in Beijing](#).



► Shanghai:

Shanghai is reputed as a city that never sleeps, where there are an amazing number of things to see and do: visit Xintiandi to experience nightlife in Shanghai, have a cruise on Huangpu River to see the city's night view or ride Shanghai's maglev train – the fastest train throughout the world. See [activities in Shanghai](#).



► Xi'an:

When you travel in the historic Xian, don't miss any chance to experience China's long history of over 3000 years. Take a Cycling on Xi'an's city wall built in AD 1370 in the Ming Dynasty, discover the past glory days from a Tang ynstasy show, or pay a visit the Eighth World Wonder –Terracotta Amy. Read [activities in Xi'an](#).



► Guilin:

Guilin City is small, but it offers lots fun things to do and see, from its classic Li River Cruise, hiking along the Li River to cycle around Yangshuo countryside, to watch a Liusanjie Impression show. [Activities in Guilin](#) will never let you down.

For more activities in other cities, visit [Top China Travel](#).

7. Security

China is a relatively safe and non-violent country to travel around, with a stable society and well-run social rules, still most Chinese people are friendly and hospitable to foreigners. Top China Travel would list some advice for your safe travel in China.

- a) Don't walk into dark alleys alone in evenings during free time of your travel.
- b) Be careful of pickpocketing and don't show your wallet in public or take too much cash as foreign travelers are often the targets to thieves.
- c) Don't be ripped off by vendors. Most things are negotiable when shopping in China. Don't be ripped off by any strangers showing you around without reason.
- d) Cautions on evening lady service or massage center covered for prostitutes.

For more security tips, please refer to Top China Travel's [safety tips in China](#).

Emergency Calls

Take down some emergency calls in China and keep your Top China Travel travel advisor's contact number in mind in case you run into any troubles or emergencies when traveling in China.

Ambulance	120
Fire	119
Police	110
Call Top China Travel	Tel: 1-800-9182657, 86-773-2885326



8. Rate our service

We, Top China Travel, value and welcome any feedback about our service from our customers, as it would help us to better serve our customers in the future. So, we will send you an online questionnaire to fill in. You can rate on the hotels, restaurants, vehicles and transfers we provided, and the performance of our local guides and drivers after you finish visiting each destination. We appreciate your ratings and hope it will help improve our service.



9. 24-hour customer service

Our customer service staffs are available for you 24 hours a day. Please contact 86-773-2885326 for our customer service if you have any issues.

Departing China for home

China Guide Book

Real China!
Unique Experience!

1. What to do after returning home?

After you have finished the journey and returned home, Top China Travel would welcome any service feedback or journey review from you. We value any reviews and suggestions from our guests, and hope to improve our service with your advice.

You can:

- a) Write a review at our Top China Travel's Trip Advisor listing page.
 - b) Leave a comment on Top China Travel's Facebook page.
 - c) Give us your feedback by sending an email to our travel advisor
- Top China Travel will appreciate any feedback from you.

2. Recommend us to more

Top China Travel strives to create a happy China trip for all of our guests. We may not be the best one right now, but we have worked on it and strived to be better. If you had a wonderful trip in China with Top China Travel, don't forget to recommend us to your friends, relatives or anyone who wants a travel to China. We really appreciate that.



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Toll Free UAS&CA: 800-9182657

Fax: 86-773-2805303

E-mail: sales@topchinatravel.com

<https://www.topchinatravel.com/>

Address: Fuda Group, Xicheng Industrial Park,
No.18 Lushan Road, Guilin China 541199