

# CHINA READY FACT SHEET



Every international market is unique, and Chinese visitors have their own set of expectations about their travel to other countries.

It's important to note that Chinese visitors will have different levels of wealth, travel experiences, needs, requirements and aspirations.

Welcoming Chinese visitors isn't about changing everything you do or making everything 'Chinese'. They seek authentic Australian experiences and interaction with locals. Simple things you can do to adapt to the Chinese market involve adjusting and tailoring your services and how you provide information.

## THE TERRITORY'S TARGET CHINA MARKET

The Territory's Chinese target markets include:

- affluent, free independent travellers
- repeat Chinese visitors
- 'millennials' (born from 1981 to 1995)
- mid-working (35-49 years old)
- special interest: photography, self-drive, bird-watching and fishing
- Chinese international students, working holiday makers from Taiwan and the Hong Kong FIT youth market
- business events and incentives market aligned to the Northern Territory's industry strengths, such as mining and resources.

## THE VALUE OF THE CHINESE MARKET TO AUSTRALIA AND THE TERRITORY

- The China outbound travel market is the largest and fastest-growing travel market in the world, driven by increasing economic prosperity and increased aviation capacity.
- Tourism NT's target is to attract 30 000 Chinese visitors per year by 2020.
- Greater China is the Territory's sixth-largest international source market (at Dec 2016).
- Chinese visitors to the Territory also have the longest average stay (nights)—23.2 nights—compared with any other individual source market.
- The Northern Territory had 15 000 Chinese visitors in the year ending December 2016, showing the highest individual market growth for the Territory of 18%.
- China is Australia's second-largest visitor source (after New Zealand).
- Chinese visitors to Australia spend \$8.9 billion per year.

## WHAT CHINESE VISITORS EXPECT

- safety, security and comfort
- world-class nature, including wildlife experiences
- quality food and wine
- shopping (see 'shopping' below)
- value for money
- to do more with less time
- structure and guidance
- fast and responsive service
- fast and reliable internet during their travels.

## GREETINGS AND LANGUAGE

Language is only a small part of how you successfully engage Chinese visitors. A warm welcome is far more important in delivering excellent customer service than providing Chinese-speaking staff or focussing on correct pronunciation.

Here are some pointers:

- Keep your language simple, and don't use slang.
- If you don't have Chinese-speaking staff, a few simple Chinese phrases should create a good first impression. If you feel confident, give them a try (see basic Chinese language, below).
- Personal space is important. Avoid uninitiated physical contact like hugging or touching on the shoulder.
- Handshakes are customary, but avoid hard/ aggressive handshakes.
- Give fast assistance on arrival—at reception and tour desks.
- Using titles—Mr, Madam, Miss—can be helpful with names. Madam is a sign of respect for older women. When in doubt, use full names.
- Use open questions like 'Which day would you like to do this tour on?' and avoid black-and-white options.
- Chinese people often use the phrase 'it is possible' to mean 'no'. 'No' may not be received well as it can appear final. Instead, you could respond with 'it is difficult', which keeps the communication open.
- Use two hands to exchange items like credit cards, room keys, plates and business cards.
- Most Chinese visitors have a tertiary education, and in many cases, their English reading and writing skills are better than their speaking and hearing skills. Use translated information sheets to break down verbal communication barriers to explain frequently asked questions and important rules and safety information.

## BASIC CHINESE LANGUAGE

Welcome	Huānyíng	Hwan-yíng
How are you?	Nǐ hǎo ma?	Nee-how mah?
Thank you	Xiè xiè nǐ	Sshyeh-sshhyeah
You're welcome	Bú kè qì	Boo kew-chi
Goodbye	Zài jiàn	Dzai jee-en

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## STATUS AND FACE

Status and the concept of 'face' are crucial influencers in Chinese relationships, both personal and professional. It is important not to let your Chinese guests or business partners 'lose face', by helping them to avoid an embarrassing situation or loss of prestige and to help them to 'gain face' (respect).

Some tips for maintaining good relationships and 'saving face' are:

- When addressing Chinese travellers, address the person of highest rank first. This is likely to be the eldest person in the party and usually male. It is not likely to be the tour guide, who is a paid employee. If you are unsure, ask the group, to avoid embarrassment. While others may speak on behalf of the leader due to language barriers, it is important to acknowledge the leader through body language, such as directing conversation to them through eye contact, even if working through a translator.
- When an important guest or group is arriving or leaving, get the most senior person in your organisation, perhaps with a delegation of your staff, to greet them or see them off.

## OTHER CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Superstition is a part of everyday life and decision making for Chinese people. One in three Chinese people believe in fortune telling.

### Numbers

Numbers have meaning. Keep this in mind when pricing and doing room allocations.

- **8** is the best and luckiest number, signifying prosperity and wealth
- **4** is the worst number, signifying death. Don't book your guests on level 4, in a room with 4 in the number or at table 4
- **6** signifies things will go smoothly
- **9** is a good number that represents things lasting for a long time.

### Colours

Colours have different meaning to what they might in the West.

-  Red is the best colour, signifying good luck, happiness and prosperity.
-  Yellow/gold signifies wealth.
-  Black signifies strength and power, but it also relates to death.
-  White is the worst colour, signifying death.

### Feng shui

Feng shui is a system of harmonising environments for favourable flow of energy. Feng shui is important, with bad feng shui being bad for business. Avoid cluttered entrances and exposed mirrors, particularly opposite beds.

### Chinese Zodiac

The Chinese Zodiac is based on a twelve year cycle with each year in the cycle related to an animal sign and an element (metal, wood, water, fire or earth). Each animal has symbolic meaning and different attributes. Both the zodiac and the element shape the astrology for the year. For example, it might be deemed a lucky year and a good time for adventure, or a year to avoid risks and outdoor activities.

## SAFETY

Safety, security and friendliness are critical for Chinese visitors when they're choosing a destination and to make them feel comfortable during their stay.

Consider what safety information is required for your business and how best to deliver it to ensure it is understood. For example, being croc safe and keeping heads down when entering/exiting helicopters.

Translated information sheets, in both simplified Chinese and English, and using international symbols can help here.

## SHOPPING

- Shopping is one of the most popular activities for Chinese visitors to Australia.
- Chinese visitors will particularly shop for gifts, which are customary to share back at home.
- Local Australian products are often revered. If you have a gift shop, you could create an easy-to-find area for local products to showcase your offering.
- Chinese visitors will often buy authentic Australian-made products (not products made in China) and products that represent their experience. Artwork and other souvenirs that can demonstrate their knowledge from their travels are popular, such as crocodile and camel products.
- In addition to gifts, Chinese visitors may seek luxury goods for themselves, including international brands, to avoid the 30% luxury tax paid on such goods in China.

## NEED MORE HELP?

Complete the China-ready checklist