

## Important FAQs from Discover China Tours

### 1. Regarding traveling in China

#### 1.1. Visa

Q: Do I need a Chinese visa, and how do I get it?

A: Foreign travelers to China are required to have a visa, except for travel in Hong Kong only. The China visa should be obtained in advance before you enter china. US citizens can stay in Hong Kong without a visa for up to 30 days.

Visas for leisure travel to China are quite easy to get, usually granted for a one month stay. Discover China Tours will help you process your visa application after you have booked your trip to China with us. Detailed instructions and invitation letter will be sent to you upon receipt of your tour deposit.

To find overseas Chinese Embassies and Consulates information in your area, please see this page.

<http://www.discoverchinatours.com/china-embassies/>

Q: What type of visa do I need?

A: Most people need only to apply for a single -entry visa. It is usually valid for 3 months after the issuing date. It will permit you to stay in China for a maximum of 30 days. One month is enough time for a normal tourist. However, for those tourists who will go to Hong Kong or Macau and then back to mainland China, the Double-entry visa is needed.



Q: FAQ concerning 72-hour Transit Visa Exemption for Foreign Nationals Measure at Airports of Beijing, Shanghai Guangzhou and Chengdu.

A: The measure of 72-hour Transit Visa Exemption for Foreign Nationals for citizens from 45 countries destined for a third country (region) with booked connecting flight goes into force in 2013 at the ports of entry of the airports in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu. During the visa exemption period, the passenger is allowed to move around within the administration precincts of Beijing Shanghai, and Chengdu municipality and Guangdong Province.

Q: What is *Tibet Travel Permit*?

A: Non-Chinese passport holders (including those of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau and other countries) should get a Travel Permit for entering Tibet in advance. Otherwise, they would be refused by the inspections on their way to Tibet. Furthermore, only then can you obtain the permit required to buy an air ticket in to Tibet.

When you arrive in Lhasa or any city in Tibet, you will need to show *Tibet travel permit* at the airport or railway station. Furthermore, whenever you buy a flight or train to Lhasa you need to show this permit.

For helping you to apply the *Tibet travel permit*, we need the following information.

*Full name appears on the passport;*

*Gender;*

*Date of birth;*

*Passport number & copy of passport;*

*Nationality;*

*Occupation;*

*Visa No. & copy of Visa.*

## **1.2. Hotels**

Q: Are your room rates per room or per person?

A: All of our hotel room rates are calculated per room and per night, NOT per person (unless otherwise specified). For hotel booking only, there is no charge for children at the age of 12 or below, if they share a room with their parents and do not need an extra bed.

Q: What time can I check-in and check-out?

A: General check-in and check-out times may vary according to hotel. In general they are:

Check-in time: from 12.00 p.m. (midday)

Check-out time: before 12.00 p.m. (midday)

Early check-in and late check-out are subject to availability and individual hotel policies

## **1.3. Dining**

Q: Does dining cause any problem for a western tourist in China?

A: Please do not worry about it. Chinese and Western cuisines are both available throughout China. If you require special meals due to religious or medical limitation, please inform us so that arrangements can be made in advance.

Q: What kind of meals will be available on my sightseeing tours?

A: At your sightseeing tours you will have a Chinese style lunch. The round dining table, accommodating 8-10 people provides an opportunity to get in contact with other tourists from your group, perhaps even from other countries. The meal variety is large but set and arranged by the restaurant. The guests do not have the possibility to choose from a menu. If you have any special requirements, please inform us so that arrangements can be made in advance.



Q: Do I get vegetarian meals in China?

A: If you travel in a large group or join in a group, generally 8 dishes and 1 soup are arranged for around 10 people for each table in local Chinese restaurant, always with some meat.

If you take a private tour, it is OK to arrange the maigre food for you accordingly. Your special food request inform in advance is highly appreciate. However, for the strict vegetarian or people who are very strict on anti-pork, it would be more reasonable that we do not include the meals arrangement in our tour itinerary. Our professional tour guide will give you suggestion about the right restaurant according to your requests.

#### **1.4. Transportation**

Q: What are the baggage regulations for flights within China?

A: CARRY-ON BAGGAGE

Total weight of carry-on baggage for each passenger may not exceed 5kg. First class passengers are allowed to carry up to 2 pieces. All other passengers shall carry on only one piece. The size may not exceed 20x40x55cm. Carry-on baggage in excess of the weight limit is subject to an excess baggage fee and has to be checked at the baggage control.

FREE BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

Free baggage allowance includes checked baggage and cabin baggage (please see "Carry-on baggage").

Passengers holding a first class ticket are entitled to a free baggage allowance of 40kg.

Passengers holding a Business class ticket are entitled to a free baggage

allowance of 30kg.

Passengers holding an economy class ticket are entitled to a free baggage allowance of 20kg.

No free baggage allowance is granted to infants.

Q: What is train travel like in China?

A: Taking the train in China can be a very interesting experience and a good alternative to the airplane. The train tickets are divided into four categories, namely, soft-sleeper, hard-sleeper, soft-seat, and hard-seat. Each carriage has two washrooms at both of its ends including a Chinese-style toilet (you better bring your own toilet paper).

If you have a soft-sleeper ticket you can stay in a comfortable four beds compartment. In there, there are 2 lower soft berths, 2 upper soft berths and a small table. Meals and drinks can be purchased in the train's restaurant carriage located directly next to the soft sleeper carriage.



Q: Can I book the train tickets only from you?

A: Sorry, we cannot provide this service for you. Because the train suppliers are not enough in China, a train pre-booking system is not available in China now. We only provide train ticket booking service for guests who buy our package service or other tours.

Q: What types of ground transportation will we use for our tour?

A: The vehicles we provide for our guests are equipped with air-conditioning and cushioned seats. Generally, a private car with driver is provided for a group of two persons. A 9-12 seat coach will be used for a group of about three to five persons. For groups with more than ten persons, a 22 to 30 seat coach will be set up. We provide always vehicles with more seats than passengers on our tours, to ensure that you feel comfortable and have enough space for all your baggage. These vehicles are all privately rented and just used for your tour.

## 1.5. Touring

Q: Is it possible to have English speaking tour guides?

A: Yes, it is. All tour guides in China, have to get licensed by passing an exam. All English speaking tour guides are graduated from university and most of them were enrolled in English. They are well trained in explaining Chinas scenery spots as well as its sights and know how to deal with foreign tourists from western countries. The communication with and the help through our tours guides should consequently be no problem.

Q: Is it possible to get other foreign language speaking guides?

A: Yes this is also possible. We can also engage guides speaking other foreign languages like German, French, Spanish, Japanese, Italian, etc.! However, there is the extra cost for special language tour guide service (About CNY200-300 / USD30-45 per day). Following is the list of different languages speaking tour guide in most of destination:

Beijing: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Russian and so on.

Xian: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Russian and so on.

Shanghai: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Russian and so on.

Guilin: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Japanese.

Sichuan (Chengdu): French, German, Japanese.

Tibet: French, German, Spanish.

Yunnan (Kunming/Lijiang/Dali): French, German.

Q: How to tip the guide, drivers during our China trip?

A: Tipping has become a common practice in China, but it is entirely voluntary. The following is just for your reference to tip the tour guides, drivers and the hotel bellboy, if they have delivered a real good service.

Tip for your local tour guides: 5-10 USD/day/person

Tip for the driver or hotel bellboy: 3-5 USD/day/person

## **1.6. Shopping**

Q: What are the best souvenirs to take from China? Where to buy them?

A: China is a big country; different cities are famous for different items. Silk, tea, antiques, paintings and calligraphy, Chinese medicines, handicrafts such as paper-cuttings, replicas of terra-cotta horses and warriors and other articles with Chinese flavor are all ideal souvenirs and good gifts for friends. For example, Beijing is famous for cloisonné, cashmere sweaters, Xian is famous for replicas of Terra-cotta soldiers and rugs and antiques, and Shanghai is famous for jade, Hangzhou for fresh water pearls, Suzhou for silk, Guilin for scroll paintings and China Southern Sea Pearls.

Our guide may offer you shopping opportunities to fill your leisure time, but if you don't want to go, please do not feel embarrassed to let our guide know.

Q: What are cautions for foreigners to take when buying Chinese antiques?

A: Buy them in the shops run by the state.

Make sure that the antiques you bought carry a wax seal indicating that it is authentic and is able to be exported from China.

The antiques dating before 1795 cannot be legally exported.

Keep the purchase receipts. They are requested to be produced by customs when leaving China.

## **2. Regarding Reservations**

### **2.1. Booking Procedures General**

Q: How does booking with Discover China Tours work?

A: Booking with Discover China Tours could not be easier! You can do it directly online, just by selecting your desired tour package from our website. Please check the itinerary, the rates and other details and then just hit the "Book now" button. Once you submitted your booking request, our travel agents will attend to your booking details immediately. A reply with further details from our agents will reach you within less than 24 hours.

For any questions about or during the booking process, you can contact us via online chat, E-mail, phone or fax. Once the availability for your booking request has been confirmed and your payment has been successfully processed, you will receive a tour-confirmation-letter, as well as a tour-voucher by email.

Q: When is the deadline to make a reservation?

A: For hotel booking only, one in advance should be enough.

For booking a seat-in-coach tour (sightseeing-tour), two or three days in advance are sufficient.

For booking a long tour (customized-tour), including several destinations and hotels, one or two weeks prior to arrival date are recommended.

We never the less accept bookings any time before the arrival date. But in that case, we cannot guarantee availability on short time booking requests. But our travel agents will always be available to give you professional suggestions.

### **2.2. Price & Payment**

Q: If I cancel my tour, can I get a refund?

A: For all regular group tours, if you cancel your tour, more than 90 days before departure, you will get a full refund of all your payments. After that, the refund depends on the date of cancellation. Please contact your consultant.

Q: What are possible payment methods?

A: The following payment methods are available:

Direct bank transfer.

Credit card (3% surcharge)

PayPal (4% surcharge)  
Western Union

Q: Although I am quite happy that it is possible to pay with credit card, I am a little concerned about sending copies of both sides of my credit card to you. How shall I know that the information is not misused?

A: For the clearance of your qualms please let us explain how credit card payment works here in China. Without your allowance, we are not able to do anything with your credit card details, because the whole payment is operated through the "Bank of China" which wants us to hand in a "Credit Card Payment Form". This form will be send to you by our service staff before it comes to any transaction. We kindly ask you to examine this form carefully and fill it out honestly. The "Bank of China" is one of the biggest and best banks in China (<http://www.bank-of-china.com/en/static/>).

Important Note: We have paid the 3% processing fee to Bank of China in our side. However, please note that your credit card issuing bank may probably charge you a 2-3% fee for foreign currency exchange.

### **3. Others**

Q: Is it necessary to purchase a travel-insurance?

A: Yes! We recommend you to purchase a travel-insurance in your home country. It is a security for unpredictable circumstances that may arise. We also purchase insurance for our clients, but it is not sufficient because the travel insurance companies in China are not as good as in your home county.

Q: How to make international phone calls in China?

A: It is very convenient to make phones call in China. IDD service is available at all hotels and post offices. The China country code is 86 and outgoing international code is 00.

Q: What should I do if I lose my properties or my passport?

A: Please take care of all your valuables during the trip! In the unlikely event of property loss, please ask your guide for help. In urgent cases he will help you to report the loss to the police. If your passport gets lost in China, report this directly to the local public security organ and explain detailed what has happened. Besides, contact with the embassy or consulate of your own country applying for an exit document with a certificate issued by the local public security organ.

For more FAQ, please send an email to [sales@discoverchinatours.com](mailto:sales@discoverchinatours.com) or click into our page: [http://www.discoverchinatours.com/faq\\_index.htm](http://www.discoverchinatours.com/faq_index.htm)