



YOUR PRACTICAL GUIDE TO CHINA

TIPS • TRANSPORT • SERVICES • SMART TRAVEL

Bridging Worlds, Inspiring Connections. • asian-city-travel.com

WELCOME TO CHINA!

China is a vast, fascinating and sometimes surprising country. Between high-speed trains, mobile payments, traditional markets and modern skyscrapers, the first few days can feel a little confusing. That is perfectly normal.

This guide has been designed to help you quickly find your bearings and make the most of your stay.

You will find practical advice and useful information to make travelling, paying, communicating and discovering everyday life in China easier.

Our aim is not to discover China for you, but to give you the keys to enjoy your own experience and create your own memories.

We wish you a wonderful journey and many great discoveries.

COME ON - THIS YEAR I'M TAKING YOU TO CHINA.

But the closer the trip gets, the more questions I have... How will I get around? How will I communicate? And... how will I pay?

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Before boarding your flight, a few preparations will help you start your journey with peace of mind and avoid unnecessary surprises.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

Passport valid for at least 6 months. • Visa or visa-exemption scheme, depending on your nationality. • Flight tickets. • Hotel bookings. • Contact details for your embassy or consulate.

HEALTH AND INSURANCE

Travel insurance recommended. • Important prescriptions. • Check the health recommendations issued by your country. • Pack a small travel medical kit.

PHONE AND INTERNET

Plan for an eSIM or local SIM card. • Check the CCC certification of your power bank; otherwise, buy one in China. • Install essential apps before departure. • Save important logins and passwords securely.

Before leaving, I check everything: passport, flight ticket, visa status, useful addresses in Chinese and English, medication and prescriptions, VPN, eSIM and essential accessories. Now I'm ready!

ESSENTIAL APPS

The essentials for communicating, paying, booking, getting around, finding your way and understanding what is happening around you - in short, staying connected!

RECOMMENDED APPS

WeChat • Alipay • Trip.com • Baidu Maps or Amap • A translation app • Your airline's app.

MONEY AND PAYMENTS

Avoid exchanging large amounts of cash before departure. Mobile payments are used almost everywhere. Tell your bank that you are travelling to China. Check that your bank card works abroad. Carry a second card as a backup.

PRACTICAL BUDGET

Local meals often cost much less than in Europe. Mobile payments make everyday spending extremely easy, and cash is needed less frequently in major cities.

INSTALL WECHAT AND ALIPAY

WECHAT

WeChat is the essential communication app in China: messages, calls, QR codes and many everyday services. Install it before departure, create your account with your usual phone number and confirm it by SMS. It is also useful to add your main contacts in advance.

In some cases, WeChat may request additional verification by another user. If necessary, your hotel, guide or travel agency may be able to help once you are in China.

ALIPAY

Alipay is one of China's main payment apps. It also gives access to many services, including public transport and some bookings. Install it before departure, complete identity verification if requested and add a compatible international bank card. Take a few minutes to become familiar with QR-code payments and the main functions.

Some cards may require additional verification. If you experience difficulties, local assistance can be useful when you arrive.

ACT TIP

Create your accounts several days before departure so you have time to resolve any verification issue.

My card isn't accepted?! Not necessarily. If your card appears greyed out, it does not automatically mean it has been rejected. Foreign cards may become fully usable once you are in China. Most importantly, tell your bank about your trip and carry a little cash as a backup.

TRAVEL, ACCOMMODATION AND GETTING AROUND

Your hotel will often be your main point of reference during your stay. We recommend keeping its address in Chinese on your phone or on a paper card at all times. This can be useful when asking for directions, taking a taxi or using a transport service.

Depending on your needs, several transport options are available: metro, high-speed train, bus, taxi, Didi and shared bicycles.

PRACTICAL AND CULTURAL TIPS

China is a safe and welcoming country. Some local habits may differ from those in your home country. Patience, courtesy and respect for local customs usually make interactions easier and the experience more enjoyable. For drinking water, choose bottled water or filtered water provided by your accommodation.

USEFUL NUMBERS

110 - Police • 120 - Ambulance • 12345 - Local public-service hotline; foreign-language assistance is available in some cities and regions. • 12367 - Immigration / entry and stay in China.

ELECTRONIC ARRIVAL CARD

Before departure, we recommend completing your arrival card online. Save the official link or take a screenshot of the QR code before travelling so you can access it easily if needed.

If I may give you one piece of advice: travel light. In China, you will find almost everything you need! ■■■ - N■■ h■■o. Use your flight to learn a few useful words.

RENT A SHARED BICYCLE WITH ALIPAY

Shared bicycles are available in almost every Chinese city. They are one of the most enjoyable and economical ways to explore a neighbourhood, ride through a park or make a short journey.

Many shared bicycles can be rented directly through Alipay, without installing an additional app.

A FEW USEFUL TIPS

Check that the bicycle is in good condition before setting off. • Follow traffic rules and use cycle lanes whenever possible. • Do not leave the bicycle blocking a pavement or passage. • Some areas require parking in a designated zone; the app will tell you. • Short rides are generally very inexpensive.

ACT TIP

Cycling is probably one of the best ways to discover neighbourhoods in Shanghai, Hangzhou or Suzhou at your own pace. It is an excellent complement to the metro and taxis.

Take the opportunity to wander through streets away from the usual tourist routes. At the end of the ride, park the bicycle in an authorised area and end the rental in the app.

RENT A SHARED BICYCLE WITH WECHAT

HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Open WeChat. 2. Tap Scan. 3. Scan the QR code on the bicycle. 4. On first use, the service's mini-programme opens automatically. 5. Accept the terms of use and complete registration if necessary. 6. Link your WeChat Pay payment method if requested. 7. The lock opens automatically and you can start your ride.

At the end of your ride, park the bicycle in an authorised area and lock it through the app. The rental ends in the app and the amount is charged automatically.

ACT TIP

The steps are similar to Alipay. When you scan the bicycle's QR code, WeChat opens the corresponding mini-programme so you can complete the rental.

Need to rent two bicycles? No problem. You can use WeChat to scan the second bicycle.

REMEMBER

Blue bicycle: Alipay. Yellow bicycle: Weixin Pay.

DIDI - ONE OF THE EASIEST WAYS TO GET AROUND

In China, Didi is one of the most common ways to book a car with a driver. It is similar to Uber and is generally a simple, practical and economical way to get around.

GOOD NEWS

Payment can be made automatically through Alipay if your bank card is registered.

THE APP SHOWS YOU

The car model • the licence plate number • the driver's name and rating • the car's real-time position on the map.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Always keep your destination address in Chinese and check the vehicle's licence plate. In major cities, waiting times are often only a few minutes.

ACT TIP

If you do not speak Chinese, show the driver the address in Chinese or let Didi transmit the destination directly. This avoids most misunderstandings.

And don't be surprised - honking is often part of the journey!

METRO AND BUS WITH ALIPAY

Chinese public transport is fast, inexpensive and easy to use. With Alipay, a simple QR code can give you access to the metro or bus.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Open Alipay. 2. From the home screen, tap Transport. 3. Choose Metro or Bus. 4. A QR code is generated automatically. 5. Present the QR code to the reader when entering the metro or boarding the bus. 6. On the metro, scan the QR code again when you exit to complete the journey.

ACT TIP

Always keep enough battery power on your phone. Without battery, you cannot display your QR code.

What if I take the metro today?

