

ACCOMODATION

A list of recommended hotels in Shanghai is available on our homepage at travel and accommodation.

CHINESE EMBASSIES

At the website of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China** at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/> (Missions Overseas => Chinese Embassies) you can find the contact data of the Chinese Embassy in your country.

CLIMATE

China stretches over four climatic zones, from cool-temperate to tropical. North of the Yangtse river the winters are very cold and the summers are hot and dry. South of the Yangtse river the winters are less harsh, but the summers obtain high temperatures and high humidity. Best time to visit China is April to June and September to November. A brief weather report on all major cities in China is available at <http://weather.yahoo.com/regional/CHXX.html>.

CURRENCY / CREDIT CARDS

The **official currency** in China is the Renminbi (RMB), also called Yuan (¥) or Kuai (1 Yuan = 10 Jiao = 100 Fen). There is no limit on the amount of foreign currency that can be brought into China, but it must be declared to the customs. Dollar and Euros can be exchanged in every international hotel; however, exchange offices and banks offer better rates. The return exchange of RMB in foreign currency is only possible with the exchange receipt. One person is allowed to take along no more than RMB 6,000 at arrival and departure. Most Chinese ATMs will allow for withdrawals from foreign bank accounts for a small, flat, out of network fee. Before traveling, find out if your home bank charges a currency conversion fee on such transactions. Be sure to check for the Plus or Cirrus symbols, as there are many ATMs which are not linked to international networks and may retain your card. Some machines that show the Maestro or Visa or Cirrus signs will not necessarily deliver cash for a foreign card. However an adjacent, apparently identical machine in the same bank lobby may work.

The current exchange rate is available at <http://de.finance.yahoo.com/m5?a=1&s=EUR&t=CNY&c=0>. We recommend to bring a sufficient amount of cash (US\$, EUR).

Credit cards (e.g. Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Diners Club) are accepted in most international hotels and in tourist stores.

DEPARTURE TAX

The departure tax on international flights is about RMB 90 per person.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity in China is 220V, 50 cycles. Two-pin sockets and some three-pin sockets are in use. Most of the hotels have a socket in the bathroom for both 110V and 220V. However, outside of the bathroom, only 220V sockets are provided. Although an adapter may be borrowed from the hotel, it is recommended to bring your own adapter plug.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Visas are required by most foreigners entering mainland China. For a visa application the following documents are needed:

- passport (with a validity of more than 6 months)
- completed visa application form
- 1 passport photograph

At the homepage of the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China** at <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/> (Missions Overseas => Chinese Embassies), you can find a link of your country's embassy for downloading and printing the visa application form or further information on the application procedure.

For Germans: At the homepage of the **Chinese Embassy** (www.china-botschaft.de), you can find a link for downloading and printing the visa application form for China at <http://www.china-botschaft.de/det/qz/>.

Please check the homepage of the China embassy in your country for all further details on the application of a visa as well as the fees for processing the visa. We would recommend a visa application via a travel agency.

If you have to sign contracts in China you need a business visa (one-time entry). An official invitation letter is required to apply for a business visa. This invitation letter will be provided from our official travel agency in Shanghai:

Shanghai Vision Expo & Meeting Solutions Co., Ltd.

#1404, No.77 Lane 1980, Luoxiu Road,
Shanghai 200237 / PR China
Contact Person: Ms. Michelle Zheng

Phone: (+ 86 21) 5481 6051/6052
Fax: (+ 86 21) 5481 6032
Email : michelle@shanghai-vision.cn

FOREIGN EMBASSIES IN CHINA

At <http://www.embassiesinchina.com/> you find the addresses of your own Embassy and Consulate in Shanghai.

HEALTH / VACCINATIONS

There are no particular immunizations required for entry into China, unless the traveller is coming from a yellow fever infected area. As for direct entry from Europe no vaccinations are required. We recommend to renew vaccinations for Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Polio and Diphtheria.

In case of an emergency the embassies can give you the contact of English or German speaking physicians in China. Most hotels offer their own first-aid service or organize medical assistance. In large cities medical care has reached a high standard. You can even find medical divisions only for foreigners. Be cautious with unpeeled fruit, ice, ice-cream and water from the tap.

It is highly recommended to get an accident and medical insurance coverage for any medical expenses that may arise. Please also take a look at <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/> (Asia => China => Practical Information => Health & Safety).

Information in German can be found at:

<http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/diplo/de/LaenderReiseinformationen.jsp>

LANGUAGE / COMMUNICATION

The official language of China is Mandarin (chin.: pu tong hua). However, the regional dialects vary quite heavily. In tourist centres (e.g. international hotels) and business circles English is mostly spoken. If you take a taxi it is recommended to take a business card of your hotel with you or to ask for written directions in Chinese at the reception desk.

MAIL / TELEPHONE / INTERNET

Mail: Stamps are available at post offices or at the hotel reception, where postcards and letters will also be mailed for you.

Telephone: The international country code of China is +86. International calls from the hotel are very expensive. Local calls are usually free of charge. Most major cities operate telephone booths, which can be used for international calls with telephone cards. In most cases your mobile phone will work in large cities. You can also use your mobile phone with a Chinese prepaid card, which can be bought in stores.

Internet cafes can be found mainly in large cities and tourist centers.

OPENING HOURS

Banks:	Mo to Sa 9am – 12am and 1pm – 4:30pm
Offices:	Mo to Fr 8am – 12am and 1pm – 5pm
Stores:	Mo to Su 10am – 10pm There is no official closing hour.
Post Offices:	Mo to Fr 7am – 7pm Sa to Su 7am – 5pm
Restaurants:	Mo to Su 10am – 10pm
Sights:	usually 8am – 4:30pm

SAFETY

China is a very safe country. However, when visiting major tourist locations beware of pickpockets. Therefore, we recommend to deposit all valuables in your hotel safe.

For Germans: Additional information in German is available at the homepage of the **Federal Foreign Office** at <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de> (Länder, Reisen und Sicherheit) => please enter China)

TIME ZONE

Despite the enormous size China has only one time zone (Beijing standard time). There is no daylight saving time, i.e. only standardized Central European Time (CET) plus 7 hours, during the European daylight saving time plus 6 hours.

TIPPING

Although the practice is not officially recognized, tipping is now common in top-class international hotels and restaurants. However, tipping is still not expected in rural areas. There is no general rule about tipping; it is up to your own sensitiveness, usually about 10% are common. Normally consumer tax is included in the price on goods, but high-class hotels and restaurants may add a service charge of 10-15%.

TRANSFER FROM PUDONG AIRPORT

The airport is linked to Shanghai's metro with the new magnetic levitation train – the **Maglev**. The journey takes only 8 minutes and costs about RMB 50. Favorable Single trip ticket, prices RMB40 / passenger / trip by presenting air-ticket of the same day (with the exception of electronic ticket and other vouchers).

Taxis are available and usually the most convenient way to the city. Journeys take about an hour to most downtown areas and cost about RMB 160.

TRANSPORTATION

Taxis are numerous and convenient. A sticker on the car door gives information about the rate. Ask the driver to use the taxi meter. There is a basic charge (about RMB 11), which increases after 11 pm, and an additional charge depending on the distance. As taxi drivers rarely understand and speak English, ask the hotel receptionist to write your destination in Chinese characters and to give you a name card of your hotel for the trip back. Taxis drivers usually do not accept credit cards.

Public transport: Shanghai has a well connected underground network with sign postings in English. However, during peak hours public transport can be unpleasantly crowded.

USEFUL ADDRESSES IN GERMANY

Botschaft der Volksrepublik China

S. E. Herr Canrong Ma (Botschafter)
Märkisches Ufer 54, 10179 Berlin
Tel.: +49 (0)30-27 58 80
Fax: +49 (0)30-27 58 82 21
www.china-botschaft.de

Generalkonsulat der Volksrepublik China

Herr Huiqun Yang (Generalkonsul)
Romanstr. 107, 80639 München
Tel.: +49 (0)89-17301611
Fax: +49 (0)89-17301619 /23
Der Konsularbezirk umfasst das Land Bayern.

Botschaft der Volksrepublik China

Abt. für Außenwirtschaft und Handel
Selma-Lagerlöf-Str. 11, 13189 Berlin
Tel.: +49 (0)30-47901910 /13 /14
Fax: +49 (0)30-4710230

USEFUL ADDRESSES FOR GERMANS IN CHINA

Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany

Dr. Michael Schaefer (Botschafter)
17, Dongzhimenwai Dajie
Chaoyang District
Beijing 100600, PR China
Tel.: + 86 (0)10-8532 9000
eMail: embassy@peki.diplo.de
Internet: www.deutschebotschaft-china.org
Büro Konsular- und Visaangelegenheiten
14/F New Century Plaza
188 Wu Jiang Road
Shanghai 200041, PR China
Tel.: +86 (0)21-6217 1520
eMail: passvisa@gk-shanghai.org.cn

Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany

Dr. Albrecht von der Heyden (Generalkonsul)
181, Yongfu Lu
Shanghai 200031, PR China
Tel.: +86 (0)21-3401 0106
eMail: info@gk-shanghai.org.cn
Internet: <http://www.shanghai.diplo.de/Vertretung/shanghai/de/Startseite.html>
German Industry and Commerce (GIC) Shanghai
29/F Pos Plaza
1600 Century Avenue, Pudong
Shanghai 200010, PR China
Tel.: +86 (0)21-50812266 (AHK)
Tel.: +86 (0)21-68758536 (GIC)
eMail: office@sh.china.ahk.de
Internet: <http://china.ahk.de/en/home/>

USEFUL INTERNET LINKS

The following websites provide useful information about China:

In English:

- <http://www.travelchinaguide.com/essential/bring.htm>
- http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/north_east_asia/china/
- http://www.lonelyplanet.com/destinations/north_east_asia/shanghai/
- <http://shanghai.ixpat.com>

In German:

- <http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de> (Länder, Reisen und Sicherheit) => please enter China)
- <http://www.chinaweb.de>
- <http://www.schanghai.com>
- <http://www.china-botschaft.de>

The following applies:

No responsibility is taken for the correctness of this information. The author also expressly distances himself from the material of all third party internet web sites, even if this document links to these external sites. The declaration is valid for all links given in this document.