

China Handbook Series

TOURISM



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CHINA HANDBOOK SERIES

TOURISM

Compiled by
The China Handbook Editorial Committee

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EDITOR'S NOTE

More than 30 years have elapsed since the birth of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. "What is China really like today?" many people abroad wish to know. To answer this question, we plan to compile and publish a voluminous *China Handbook*, in which we intend to introduce the New China in every field of its activities. Emphasis will be on the process of development during the past three decades, the accomplishments and the problems that still remain. The book will contain accurate statistics and related materials, all of which will be ready references for an interested reader.

To enhance the usefulness of the forthcoming volume, we plan to publish 10 major sections separately at first, so that we shall have an opportunity to take into consideration the opinions of our readers before all the composite parts are put together, revised and published as one volume. These separate sections are:

- Geography
- History
- Politics
- Economy
- Education and Science
- Literature and the Arts
- Sports and Public Health
- Culture
- Life and Lifestyles
- Tourism

Here, we wish particularly to point out the following:

First, the statistics listed in each separate book exclude those of Taiwan, unless otherwise indicated.

Second, the statistics are those compiled up to the end of 1980.

The *China Handbook* Editorial Committee

CONTENTS

Chapter I

GROWTH OF TOURISM IN CHINA	1
1. A General Picture	1
2. Tourist Agencies	2
3. Sites and Facilities	2
4. Tourist Programmes	4
5. Improving the Service	5
6. Personnel Training	6

Chapter II

TOURIST CITIES AND SITES	8
1. North China	8
Beijing	10
Chengde	18
Tianjin	21
Qinhuangdao Peninsula — Beidaihe	22
Datong	24
Taiyuan	26
Jinan	27
Qingdao	28
Mount Taishan	29
Qufu	31
Hohhot	32
2. East China	33
Shanghai	35
Hangzhou	37
Nanjing	41
Suzhou	44
Wuxi	47
Shaoxing	48
Yangzhou	49

Yixing	51
Zhenjiang	53
Mount Huangshan	54
Fuzhou	56
Xiamen	58
3. South China	60
Guangzhou	62
Guilin	65
Nanning	68
Changsha	68
Yueyang — Dongting Lake	71
Mount Lushan	73
Jinggang Mountains	74
4. Southwest China	76
Chengdu	77
Chongqing-Dazu	80
Leshan	83
Mount Emei	84
Wuhan	86
The Three Gorges on the Changjiang River	88
Kunming	91
Stone Forest	93
5. Northwest China	95
Xi'an	96
Dunhuang Grottoes and the Silk Road	99
Luoyang	102
Kaifeng	104
Zhengzhou	106
Urumqi	108
6. Northeast China	108
Shenyang — Anshan	109
Dalian	112
Harbin	113
Changchun — Jilin	114

Supplement

Helpful Facts for Travellers in China	116
1. The 135 Cities and Sites Open to Tourists from Abroad	116
2. Travel and Tourist Agencies	118
3. Entry Application	126

Contents

v

4. Visas	126
5. The Customs	127
6. Quarantine	127
7. Transportation	128
8. Foreign Currencies, Travellers' Cheques, Letters of Credit, Foreign Notes and Drafts	128
9. Foreign Currency Certificates and <i>Renminbi</i> Travellers' Cheques	129
10. Travel Expenditures	130
11. Travel Agency Services	131
12. Hotels	131
13. Chinese Cuisine	137
14. Temperature and Rainfall in China's Major Cities	142

Chapter I

GROWTH OF TOURISM IN CHINA

1. A GENERAL PICTURE

China's international travel and tourist industry began in 1954 with the founding of the China International Travel Service (CITS) in Beijing. Branches were established throughout the country. At first, most visitors handled by CITS were from the Soviet Union, East European countries, Korea and Viet Nam. In the 1960s, a limited number of tourists from the West came to China, and in 1964 the Travel and Tourism Administrative Bureau of China was established. However, not many tourists were accepted. In 1966, for instance, only some 4,500 foreign tourists came to China. During the "cultural revolution" (1966-76), tourism came to a standstill. It was only towards the end of 1976 that tourism in China began to grow faster.

In 1978, China received over 120,000 tourists. This equalled the total number of tourists in China in the more than 20 years before the "cultural revolution". Visitors in the same year included 560,000 overseas Chinese, Hong Kong and Macao compatriots and foreign citizens of Chinese descent.

By 1982, some 135 cities and sites with over 90,000 hotel beds were open to foreign tourists. In that year, some 7.92 million foreigners, overseas Chinese, Hong Kong and Macao compatriots and foreign citizens of Chinese origin visited China either for sightseeing or for

exchanges in the fields of economy, trade, sports, science and culture. Among these visitors, over 700,000 were foreigners.

2. TOURIST AGENCIES

Anyone wishing to visit China can contact China's embassies or consulates, organizations in their home countries which promote friendly relations with China, travel agencies specializing in China travel, or get in touch with the two Chinese agencies responsible for foreign tourists — China International Travel Service (CITS) and China Travel Service (CTS).

CITS has branches in major Chinese cities and offices in Hong Kong as well as the United States, Britain, France and Japan and business ties with several hundred travel agencies throughout the world. It is staffed with over 2,000 guides who speak English, Japanese, German, French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, Thai or Burmese.

China Travel Service provides services for overseas Chinese, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan compatriots and foreign citizens of Chinese origin. Based on the former Beijing Overseas Chinese Travel Service founded in 1953, it is under the leadership of the Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs of the State Council but receives guidance from the National Tourism Administration on travel and tourist business matters.

3. SITES AND FACILITIES

To accommodate the growing number of travellers from abroad, China has renovated old hotels, built new

ones and opened her top-level hostels to foreign visitors (including, by a state decision in 1979, the State Guest-house in Beijing). Over fifty of China's best hotel with 14,000 beds in 14 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions have been turned over to tourist services. And in 1980 alone, over 20 hotels in China were either expanded or built, making 4,300 new beds available. These include the eight hotels with 880 rooms built with foreign investment in such centres as Nanjing, Suzhou, Wuxi, Zhenjiang and Guilin. Twenty more hotels are now being built in cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Kunming, Lanzhou, Hangzhou, Xi'an and other cities. Some have already been completed and opened to visitors including the Jianguo Hotel and Yanjing Hotel in Beijing, the White Swan Hotel in Guangzhou and Jinling Hotel in Nanjing. Some smaller hotels with special national features have also been built in places like Zhuoxian and Jixian counties in Hebei Province.

Meanwhile, China in recent years has devoted a great deal of energy and money to improving tourist attractions. In Beijing, for example, the Great Wall, the Pool and Zhe Tree Temple (*Tanzhe Si*), White Dagoba Temple (*Baita Si*), Great Bell Temple (*Dazhong Si*) and Palace of Harmony and Peace (*Yonghe Gong*) are all open to foreign tourists after renovations.

Major work has been done in one of Sichuan Province's most beautiful areas, Leshan County, and in Shandong Province at the Confucian Temple (*Kong Miao*), Confucian Mansion (*Kong Fu*) and Confucian Woods (*Kong Lin*) in Qufu; in Yunnan Province at the Qianxun pagoda in the Temple of Worshipping the Sage (*Chong-*

sheng Si) at Dali; and in Hebei Province at the Temple of Prosperity (*Longxing Si*) in Zhengding.

Construction of a cableway to the top of Mount Tai-shan has begun in autumn 1983. The road at Mount Huangshan has been improved and new hotels, restaurants and tourist shops built. Restoration work has been done on ancient buildings on Putuo Island in Zhejiang Province and at Mount Wutai in Shanxi Province and Mount Emei in Sichuan Province.

4. TOURIST PROGRAMMES

Besides conducting general arrangements for tourists, travel and tourist agencies in China also offer specialized tours and activities such as trips to Haining near Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, to view the spectacular high tide of the Qiantang River bore and to go fishing on Taihu Lake, Jiangsu Province. In certain places in East China, tourists can take part in country walking and cycling, and attend classes in *Taiji* boxing, Chinese language and Chinese cooking. Honeymoon tours are also available. In the northeast city of Harbin, winter tourists can enjoy seeing ice sculptures and lanterns.

Regional travel routes, established in 1980, have proved particularly popular with tourists. The East China Route, for example, offers the scenery south of the Changjiang River in visits to Shanghai, China's largest city, the famous West Lake resort at Hangzhou, Taihu Lake at Wuxi, the gardens in Suzhou and the ancient capital, Nanjing. Changjiang (Yangtze) River Cruise Route takes in the Three Gorges on the river, with stops

at Jiujiang and Wanxian where tourists can go ashore to climb the mountain at Lushan County or visit tourist sites like Precious Stone Village (*Shibaozhai*). The Yunnan-Guangxi-Guizhou Route features karst region scenery along a route which takes visitors to Guilin, the Huangguoshu Waterfall in Guizhou and the Stone Forest (*Shi Lin*) in Yunnan.

Mountaineering as a tourist activity began in 1980 when nine mountain peaks were opened to foreign mountain climbers.

China's travel and tourism departments also have expanded their scope by hosting international conferences such as the First International Mine Planning and Development Symposium held in 1980 at the summer resort of Beidaihe. Before and after the five-day session, some 310 foreign specialists, industrialists and their spouses visited other places of interest, including Beijing. CITS played host in Beijing to the world travel conference "China — 1980" sponsored by the Travel Promotions Ltd., Britain.

In recent years, several thousand travel troupes have visited China, including professionals in such fields as economics, science, technology and culture.

5. IMPROVING THE SERVICE

China's travel and tourism departments have adopted various measures to raise service quality. At a 1980 conference of hotel managers sponsored by China's National Tourism Administration, participants adopted "Basic Requirements on Tourist Hotels" to spur service quality in tourist hotels. CITS's Beijing branch pro-

vides air-conditioned buses, and takes tourists to the best local restaurants. Visitors are given schedules on their programme in Beijing as soon as they arrive. Guides and interpreters inform guests of the weather forecast and major news items at the beginning of each day's tour and are prepared to answer all kinds of questions raised by visitors while they are on the bus to and from their visits.

The Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) has adjusted and increased its international and domestic flights in an effort to promote tourism. Service has been established between Beijing and London and non-stop flights between both Beijing and Hong Kong and Hangzhou and Hong Kong. CAAC began in 1980 to provide discount-rate charter flights for tourists coming to China.

Special trains for tourists are available from Beijing city proper to the Great Wall in the northern suburbs, from Shanghai to Nanjing and to Hangzhou. Coastal navigation routes are open from Shanghai and Xiamen (Amoy) to Hong Kong. Boats can be taken to scenic spots along the Changjiang and Lijiang rivers and Taihu Lake.

6. PERSONNEL TRAINING

A new generation of interpreters, guides, managerial and service staff is now being trained under China's travel and tourism departments. Shanghai Travel and Tourism Training School, set up in 1979 as the first of its kind in China to specialize in the training of tourist industry personnel, offers three two-year courses: hotel management, dining room and restaurant management,

and financial management. It has some 200 students and over 70 faculty members. Beijing, Jiangsu, Sichuan, and Hubei are among the provinces and municipalities which have opened schools of travel and tourism. Short training courses are operating in other localities.

Chapter II

TOURIST CITIES AND SITES

China with its world-famous culture, art, historical sites and natural beauty has countless attractions to offer foreign visitors. Our editors have selected 50 cities and sites — presented according to the six tourist regions in China — to give readers some idea of the variety and richness of travel in a land of many nationalities, customs and traditions. Beginning with 1977, more cities and sites have been opening one after another to tourists from abroad. At present, 135 cities and tourist attractions are officially opened.



1. NORTH CHINA

The nation's capital, Beijing, and the Great Wall are among the attractions of the North China Tourist Region characterized by mountain chains and vast expanses of plains. In its east are the seaport city of Tianjin and

NORTH CHINA TOURIST REGION

