The characteristics of the Chinese traveller are changing rapidly and evolving more quickly than any other international market to Australia and New South Wales (NSW). As China continues to grow into one of NSW’s largest inbound travel markets, it’s important for the NSW tourism industry to be ready to meet the demand. This toolkit will give you all the information, tips and contacts you need to target Chinese travellers to NSW. Find out how to become market-ready for China, how to do business in China, what marketing opportunities are available and who the key industry contacts are including Destination NSW offices in-market.

CHINA MARKET INFORMATION & RESOURCES

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The Chinese traveller: appealing experiences
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DEVELOPING PRODUCT FOR THE CHINA MARKET

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CHINA MARKETING & SALES OPPORTUNITIES


LANGUAGE RESOURCES FOR CHINA READY BUSINESSES

THE CULTURE OF DOING BUSINESS IN CHINA

USEFUL CHINA MARKET CONTACTS

Unless otherwise stated, figures in this fact sheet are from the International Visitor Survey (IVS) year ending September 2014, Tourism Research Australia.
China is a large and complex consumer travel market, with extensive geographic, ethnic and economic diversity. Greater China incorporates Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China. There is not one single profile that sums up Chinese visitors to Australia; however, significant segments can be identified:

- Approved Destination Status (ADS) group travellers
- Free Independent Travellers (FIT) and assisted FIT
- Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)
- Students
- Business/incentive travellers
- Niche segments, including technical visits, special interest (affinity) groups and high end luxury travellers.

**China market segments**

**Holiday**
- Of all Chinese holiday visitors to NSW, 60% were on a group tour while 40% were FIT Free Independent Travellers
- Of all Chinese holiday visitors to NSW, three quarters were first time visitors to Australia
- Just over half were aged over 45 years.

**Group tours – Approved Destination Status (ADS) travel**
- Of all Chinese group tour visitors to NSW, 97% were travelling for the purpose of holiday
- The most popular activities for group tour holiday visitors from China to NSW were going to the beach, shopping, sightseeing and visiting botanic gardens
- One of the main attractions for the Chinese visitor to Australia is having a nature-based experience. It is essential that this experience lives up to their expectations as Tourism Australia research shows that it affects overall trip satisfaction.

Chinese travellers visiting Australia on group tours can apply for an ADS visa, requiring them to book through an ADS-approved travel agent. Alternatively, they can apply for an individual tourist visa, in which case they can book their group tour through a non-ADS agent.

The ADS scheme is an agreement between the Chinese and Australian governments that allows Chinese travellers to visit Australia on guided group tours organised by approved travel agents. Australia was one of the first western countries to receive ADS in 1999. There are approximately 80 Australian inbound tour operators in the ADS visa network. This comes with the security of a tour guide, language translation and a fully-planned itinerary.

**Free Independent Travellers (FITs)**
- Of all Chinese holiday visitors to NSW, 40% were FIT or non-group travellers
- Holiday FITs are increasingly booking online – now 55% compared to 30% in 2009
- Chinese FITs tend to be more sophisticated and travel-savvy than travellers in ADS groups, with a higher spend ($3,760 vs. $1,147) and longer stays (6.6 nights vs. 2.4 nights)
- Almost two thirds of Chinese FIT holiday visitors are aged under 45, typically younger than those in ADS groups
- Seventy per cent of all Chinese FIT holiday visitors to NSW have visited Australia before.

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China’s new Tourism Law came into effect on 1 October 2013. It contains a number of provisions designed to protect consumers, including addressing practices such as coercive shopping measures, low price and low quality tours. It applies to all itineraries (domestic and international) which are sold in China, and is enforced by the China National Tourism Administration. The tourism law has the potential to deliver benefits to the Australian tourism industry in the medium and long term resulting in improvements in experience quality for Chinese travellers and higher yields per visitor.

– Tourism Australia website

Following the introduction of the China Tourism Law, travellers are showing increasing interest in [FIT] travel and semi-FIT. Social media, media advocacy and word-of-mouth are becoming more powerful sources of information to assist Chinese travellers with planning and purchasing travel.

– Tourism Australia website
FITs are generally more confident travellers with prior international travel experience who seek a broader range of activities and experiences than group travellers. Compared to five years ago, the FIT holiday sector has grown both in numbers (now 120,000 vs. 39,000) and share (now 40% of the Chinese holiday market to NSW vs. 29%) highlighting the maturing of the Chinese outbound travel market. The FIT market offers greater opportunities for the local tourism industry because they are more flexible than those on group tours in itinerary planning and spend more. Aspects of assisted FIT, such as use of a Chinese-speaking guide, are popular with travellers from cities beyond the main markets of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou.

Online travel agents such as Ctrip and Tuniu have had success in the market, particularly with air tickets and hotel accommodation bookings. A significant proportion of international travel is still booked through traditional travel agents, including flights, visas and accommodation. Many FITs then organise their own activities on arrival.

Visiting friends/relatives (VFR)
- Chinese VFR travellers are older with 60% aged over 45 years
- Almost two thirds are female
- Over three quarters prefer to travel in a private or company car.

Chinese VFR travellers tend to be older, with 60% over the age of 45. The majority of their time in Australia is spent staying in the homes of friends and family and their stay is much longer than a holiday visitor, around 42 nights. Trip planning is very much based on the recommendations of friends and relatives, as well as some internet research.

Students
- Education travel makes up 9% of the Chinese travel market to NSW
- The majority of education visitors from China to NSW visit Sydney
- The student market includes education tours, people attending colleges, universities and language schools (15+).

NSW has the largest share of the Australian international education sector (39%), attracting more Chinese students than any other Australian state. More than two thirds of the university students surveyed in a recent study, expected their friends and relatives to visit them in NSW for graduation; over 90% intended to travel with their families beyond Sydney.

Conventional youth market activities such as adventure experiences and drinking alcohol do not appeal to this market. Chinese students are more interested in nature experiences and visiting famous attractions; they avoid public transport for leisure trips in favour of travelling by car with their Chinese friends. Most students prefer to use the internet during their stay in Australia to find destination information; however they also rely strongly on word of mouth recommendations and the opinions of family and friends when choosing destinations to visit.

Business/incentive travellers
- Business travellers make up 8% of the Chinese market to NSW
- Nearly three quarters (73%) of Chinese business visitors to NSW are male with three quarters of business visitors under 45 years of age
- More Chinese business nights in NSW are spent in a rented house/apartment/unit (44%) than any other type of accommodation, while thirty per cent of their nights are spent in hotels.

1 Consumer Demand Project: Understanding the Chinese Consumer, May 2014, tourism.australia.com
2 Chinese student market to Sydney, Destination NSW 2012
While business travel to NSW from China is low in terms of the volume of visitors, the yield can be high – $3,292 is the average spend per person. Convention delegates stay in commercial accommodation and may take tours, visit attractions or dine in restaurants as part of their travel. Incentive travel, where high performing employees are rewarded with luxury travel experiences, also falls into this category.

The majority of business travellers visit Sydney (98%), while the Blue Mountains was the most popular region visited outside of Sydney, with 17% visiting, most for a daytrip.

### Niche segments

There are opportunities for tourism businesses to target specific niche segments of the China market and develop tailored products. For example, technical tours may include visiting agricultural sites or engineering projects and incorporate an educational element. Affinity groups of like-minded individuals favour tailored itineraries catering to a specific interest, such as golf or wine. Luxury travellers have high service expectations, staying in resorts and seeking out high-end experiences.

### The Chinese traveller: appealing experiences

Almost two thirds of Chinese visitors to NSW are on their first visit to Australia. Because they have a limited knowledge of Australian destinations, Chinese travellers are drawn to famous landmarks and major attractions. The majority of Chinese travellers visit Sydney attractions such as the Harbour Bridge, the Sydney Opera House and Darling Harbour. A common preference for regional travel is to undertake day trips from Sydney to surrounding regions, including the Hunter Valley, Port Stephens and the Blue Mountains.

While ADS group tours have traditionally focused on shopping, new drivers for this segment now also include famous sites, beaches and iconic landmarks. The emerging FIT segment is interested in a wider range of experiences than traditional group tours.

Chinese consumers are interested in learning more about and experiencing the Australian lifestyle. Experiences with broad appeal include:

#### Shopping

The most popular activity for Chinese visitors to NSW is shopping, with 84% shopping for pleasure during their trip in Australia. For Chinese travellers, shopping is influenced by Chinese cultural values of reciprocity and friendship, while gift-giving for friends and relatives is a key driver. Among the top gifts sought by luxury Chinese travellers are red wine, watches, jewellery, clothing and electronic products³. Value for money is also important, with cost-saving a consideration. Businesses providing China UnionPay, EFTPOS or ATM facilities may have an advantage in this regard. Signage indicating the availability of duty free goods or GST refunds where applicable may also appeal. In addition to duty free shopping, local markets and authentic Australian goods are also in demand.

In 2013, a new ‘China Tourism Law’ came into effect, aimed at addressing coercive shopping practices, low price and low quality tours. Read more about the China Tourism Law on the Tourism Australia website.

#### Nature

Almost 90% of Chinese visitors to NSW participate in outdoor or nature activities on their trip to Australia, with the most popular activities including visiting national parks, botanic gardens, visiting farms and bushwalking.

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³ The Chinese Luxury Traveller 2014, Hurun Luxury Report, hurun.net
Since many Chinese visitors come from densely urban environments, simple activities such as viewing sunsets, coastal vistas, bushwalking, visiting lookouts and star gazing have great appeal. Soft adventure is preferred, such as gentle walks rather than challenging hikes. There is a growing interest in nature tourism, including:

- Visiting open spaces and the outdoors - clean air and blue skies
- Viewing local wildlife
- Visiting wildlife parks and national parks.

Entertaining and educational wildlife experiences are very appealing. Wildlife experiences should include interpretation by a handler or specialist and provide the opportunity to get up close with animals and interact where possible.

Coastal lifestyle
The coastal lifestyle is an iconic Australian experience for Chinese travellers. Activities that appeal include:

- Visiting beaches
- Travelling on charter boats, ferries or cruises
- Whale or dolphin watching
- Soft adventure water activities at the beach and on other waterways including snorkelling and fishing
- One in ten went scuba diving during their trip in Australia.

Keep in mind that Chinese travellers may have limited swimming ability, if any.

Event-oriented travel is an evolving trend. Large-scale events such as Sydney’s Chinese New Year celebrations, New Year’s Eve fireworks, the Royal Easter Show and Vivid Sydney have recently drawn more attention among high-end travellers. These major events have the potential to offer Chinese travellers profound cultural experiences, becoming a highlight of their trip.

Wine
China has now joined the top five largest wine-consuming countries in the world, with red wine a popular choice. As a result, Chinese consumers are now interested in the associated wine culture and every tenth Chinese visitor to NSW visits a winery. The Chinese attraction to Australian wine is growing, making it the third largest export market for Australian wine. Keep in mind that wines may often be selected based on reputation rather than quality.

Self-drive
Just over a quarter of Chinese visitors to NSW do some form of self-drive; almost all are FIT travellers and over half of those are on a return visit to Australia. Youth travellers (15-29 years) and those aged 45-59 years form the largest self-drive age groups.

The Legendary Pacific Coast Drive from Sydney to the Gold Coast has been a success among Chinese self-drive travellers. More travellers are now also willing to discover the Sydney Melbourne Coastal Drive.

Golf
Special interest travellers may visit Australia on golf tours. Currently, only 2 per cent of visitors from China to NSW play golf on a trip to Australia. However, in China, the status of golf has risen dramatically and it is becoming the game of choice among wealthier Chinese men and women. In 2012, Destination NSW released the NSW Golf Guide for Chinese self-drive golf enthusiasts, a print publication distributed through travel agents in China.

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1 International Wine and Spirit Research, Vinexpo, 2014, vinexpo.com
2 Australian Grape and Wine Authority: Wine Export Approvals Report to December 2014, agwa.net.au
3 Golf’s 2020 Vision. The HSBC Report 2012, thefuturescompany.com
China market research and resources

A range of research and other resources are available to help you understand the China market.

Destination NSW
- China Tourism Strategy 2012-2020
- China FIT holiday market to NSW
- China market snapshot and time series
- Baby boomer holiday market - Eastern markets
- China (from primary cities) holiday market
- China (from secondary cities) holiday market
- China luxury holiday market
- International travel to NSW, IVS snapshot

Tourism Australia
- China 2020 Strategy
- Markets – Greater China: arrival statistics, market updates and profiles, research
- Consumer Demand Project, 2014

Tourism Research Australia
- Dispersal of Chinese Free and Independent Travellers in Australia, 2015
- Chinese Satisfaction Survey, 2014

Austrade
- Australia’s tourism engagement with China including the China Approved Destination Scheme (ADS)
DEVELOPING PRODUCT FOR THE CHINA MARKET

There are a range of product development considerations for any tourism businesses wishing to become China ready, from product design and service delivery to providing translated visitor information. There are also specific opportunities for different business types such as accommodation, tours or attractions to make refinements to suit the Chinese market.

Tailoring specific products

Accommodation

Chinese FIT and group visitors from markets such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou expect at least 4 star accommodation or to stay in well-known hotel chains. High-end visitors from 1st tier cities require 5+ star luxury resorts or international brand hotels. Feedback makes clear that currently the expectations of Chinese travellers are not being met in Australian hotels. The following services and facilities are preferred by this market:

- Free internet access or Wi-Fi
- Chinese speaking reception staff
- Chinese-language signs
- Signage at the front desk regarding the need to queue
- Fast check in and check out to speed up the process
- Chinese-language welcome kits in the rooms
- Suggestions of things to do
- Kettle, tea and Chinese teapots in rooms
- robes with slippers
- Chinese-language menus
- Provide Chinese options on the menu (e.g. noodles and rice)
- Breakfast items such as congee and dim sum
- Mini bar items such as instant noodles or rice
- Woks and rice cookers in self-catering accommodation
- Check-in forms in Chinese and English
- Smoking rooms, or advice on where to smoke, in Chinese language
- Chinese power adaptors
- Chinese TV channels and newspapers
- Concierge service
- Other customised services such as currency exchange, mailing, couriering.

Above: The Three Sisters, Blue Mountains.
Attractions
Attractions should consider providing Chinese-language content, such as brochures and audio guides. Welcome points and fast-track entry should be considered for group tours, to facilitate quick access. Hosted interactions and guided experiences within attractions, particularly incorporating natural experiences or wildlife, are also appealing to Chinese visitors.

Tours and transport operators
Australia’s wide open spaces and long stretches of road can be appealing, if unfamiliar, for Chinese visitors. Businesses offering tours should ensure the trip is broken up with regular stops to enable visitors to sightsee and visit attractions, or take photographs. This is also important for self-drive itineraries. Travel within 2.5 hours of Sydney CBD is more comfortable when city and nature experiences are included.

Other points to consider:
• Incorporate Chinese language elements into the tour
• Incorporate appropriate accommodation and dining options in tour packages, catering to the Chinese visitor.

Restaurants and dining
Chinese travellers are looking for genuine Australian experiences which include food and wine. Good food is almost as important as affordability when it comes to choosing a destination.

Understanding where to find Chinese food is an important factor in a satisfying travel experience; however, local food and wine experiences are also appealing. More than half of Chinese consumers suggested they would travel overseas to follow or participate in a food and wine based experience such as trying new or different foods, cooking or learning to cook, and wine tasting.

In Chinese culture, dining is a shared experience, loud and convivial; large shared dishes are more popular than individually-ordered meals. It is important to keep in mind the differences between an eastern and western palate. For instance:
• One ‘authentic’ Chinese meal per day is advisable. Note that westernised Chinese cuisine is not well received
• While steak and barbecue meals are desirable, it’s advisable to avoid too many meals featuring red meat
• Fresh fruit and seafood are appealing
• Light options, platters and picnic style dining work well
• Offer hot water and/or pots of tea, rather than iced water
• Avoid very long meals for fine dining; keep it to a maximum of 2.5 hours.

Restaurants may also consider offering a menu written in Chinese (Simplified) and earlier dinner offerings from 5.30pm.

7 AC Nielsen China Outbound Travel Monitor
8 Consumer Demand Project: Understanding the Chinese consumer, May 2014, tourism.australia.com
Considerations for China ready tourism businesses

All tourism businesses targeting Chinese visitors should consider the following:

**Chinese speaking staff and content ‘in language’**

There are a number of spoken dialects and written scripts used across Greater China. The two main spoken languages are Mandarin (mainland China and Taiwan), and Cantonese (Hong Kong, Macao and the mainland province of Guangdong). Mandarin is the official language of the People’s Republic of China.

There are also two types of written Chinese – Traditional and Simplified. The Simplified version is used in mainland China while Traditional is used in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

You might consider providing some written content in Simplified Chinese language. For example:

- Marketing collateral such as brochures or maps
- Website or specific translated pages
- Signage in Chinese language, for example welcome, safety and procedural messages, product information.

If a business is attracting Chinese travellers, it is a good idea to employ Mandarin-speaking staff. Audio guides providing content in Mandarin may also be an option.

The Australian Government provides a Translation and Interpreting Service (TIS), which provides interpreters in a number of languages for a fee, including via a 24-hour Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (ATIS). For more information on this paid service, contact the TIS client liaison team on 1300 655 820 or visit tisnational.gov.au.

**Cultural awareness training**

Consider cultural awareness training for frontline staff to ensure Chinese guests are welcomed and served appropriately. Understanding cultural differences makes for a better guest experience.

Some examples of cultural taboos to avoid include:

- Causing someone to publicly lose face or become embarrassed
- Writing someone’s name in red (for example on a business card) has negative connotations
- Providing hotel rooms or experiences featuring the number four is considered unlucky.

**Handling groups**

When communicating with a group, it’s important to address the most senior member. If you are not sure who this is, it is acceptable to ask.

ADS groups must travel with a Chinese escort and a local guide, so consider offering discount or free of charge (FOC) rooms or admission for tour guides accompanying groups. As groups travel on a tight itinerary, they may become frustrated and even confrontational when faced with delays and queues. It is important to be aware of this and ensure procedures and staff are prepared to adequately handle this situation. Minimise queuing time by creating quick check-in or fast-track group entry. Providing tea or written information to waiting group members (such as a welcome, safety briefing, or an introduction to your product) may assist in this situation.
A range of marketing tools exist to target this market.

**Work as a destination**

NSW tourism businesses hoping to attract Chinese travellers should consider how to work with complementary, market-suited experiences within their destination. A density of suitable tourism products will help to attract travellers.

Regional businesses should contact their Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) to discuss initiatives and opportunities to collaborate and target Chinese travellers. Some will already be working to develop Chinese visitation within their region. RTO contacts can be found at destinationnsw.com.au.

**Marketing collateral**

Marketing materials including printed brochures, sales kits and product fact sheets should be written in Simplified Chinese. Ensure that you source a quality translation service with relevant industry background to ensure your product information is translated appropriately for the travel trade. It’s also advisable to find a designer familiar with producing content for Chinese visitors, as there are design styles particular to the market.

**Publicity**

Destination NSW coordinates media visits by print and broadcast journalists, film crews, television productions and bloggers, many in partnership with Tourism Australia. Tourism businesses with products suited to Chinese visitors may register interest in participating in relevant media visits by contacting media@dnsw.com.au.

**Online marketing**

China had 649 million internet users at the end of 2014, more than 85% of whom access the web via a mobile device. Many use online research to plan their holiday, including travel forums, travel agent sites and local social networking sites.

sydney.com – free product listings

NSW tours, accommodation, attractions, events and tourism hire companies can register for a free product listing on Destination NSW consumer websites via the Get Connected program. Visit the Get Connected page for more information or to register. Destination NSW uses these listings when translating China-ready to feature on sydney.cn. When writing a product listing, include a phone number with international prefix, a gallery of good quality images and consider your international visitors when writing listing copy. For example, describing an animal encounter as scary or dangerous might not appeal to Chinese travellers.

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3 35th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China, cnnic.cn
Chinese social media

Social media is the preferred source for planning a trip to Australia for 35% of travellers\textsuperscript{10}. Chinese people enjoy contributing to blogs, forums and billboards and sharing photos and travel experiences during and after an international trip.

Western social media such as Facebook and Twitter are unavailable in China; local versions, however, present opportunities for NSW tourism operators to engage with Chinese travellers online in Chinese. The status-driven nature of travel in Chinese culture aligns well with sharing travel experiences with social networks. Social media is considered a reliable source of information for FIT travellers in China.

WeChat, a mobile messaging application (similar to WhatsApp but with more functionality) is the largest standalone messaging app in China and now the most popular form of social media; the application enables one to many sharing of video, photos and text. Other social media include Weibo, a microblogging platform with elements similar to both Facebook and Twitter; RenRen, which offers blogging, video sharing and gaming and is popular among students; and Youku, a video sharing site with similarities to YouTube.

Chinese social media activities should be managed by a native or fluent Chinese-speaker with experience in utilising these platforms effectively and appropriately. Destination NSW also operates a number of social media accounts, including Weibo and WeChat.

Online distribution

More than half of Chinese international travellers book their accommodation online or through mobile apps\textsuperscript{11}. Ctrip, Elong, AliTrips, Qunar and Tuniu are popular travel websites targeting Chinese travellers. Booking.com, agoda.com and hotels.com are also growing in popularity. Australian tourism operators can make their China-ready products available through Chinese online distributors by contacting them directly; commissions may vary.

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\textsuperscript{10} Consumer Demand Project: Understanding the Chinese Consumer, May 2014, tourism.australia.com
\textsuperscript{11} 35th Statistical Report on Internet Development in China, China Internet Network Information Centre
Inbound travel trade
Travel agents are an important part of the booking process for Chinese travellers, as flight and accommodation bookings for group travel are made through an agent.

Businesses with export-ready products suited to the China market may work with inbound tour operators based in Australia to distribute their products via wholesalers and travel agents in China, including online travel agents.

International trade events such as the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) provide a forum to meet with Chinese travel trade; businesses can also travel on trade missions to meet and provide product information to wholesalers and travel agents in China.

Destination NSW currently operates an annual Greater China Mission, showcasing NSW destinations and products to Chinese wholesalers in market. Before meeting with the Chinese travel trade, it’s advisable to prepare a sales kit translated into Simplified Chinese.

Tourism Australia operates the Key Distribution Partner program, aimed at building an elite network of specialist travel agencies in China to sell Australian experiences. A list of these Key Distribution Partners is available on the Tourism Australia website.

For more information on becoming export ready, trade events and missions, visit destinationnsw.com.au/exportready.

China UnionPay bank cards
China UnionPay has over 99% of the bank card market in China, with over 3 billion UnionPay cards in China. Australian businesses accepting UnionPay cards provide Chinese travellers with convenience and alleviate concerns about using foreign payment systems. The Commonwealth Bank, NAB and Westpac currently offer UnionPay EFTPOS facilities and over two thirds of Australian ATMs will accept withdrawals from UnionPay cards in Australian dollars, including ATMs from HSBC, National Australia Bank, Bank of China and Travelex.

Businesses that take direct bookings or sales from Chinese travellers should consider the competitive advantage of accepting China UnionPay cards via a payment terminal from a participating bank. Visit en.unionpay.com for more information.

Professional advice
There are a number of consultants in the tourism industry who specialise in producing advice on China and are available to assist businesses with strategies to access the China market. If this market has been identified as significant for your business, you may consider bringing a consultant on board to assist with market specific professional advice.

Provide China-ready product information to Destination NSW
Tourism businesses with suitable China-ready product should provide a product profile to Destination NSW to ensure it is featured in trade marketing collateral and online. You can also receive feedback on China-ready product development. Send China-ready product information and queries to product.queries@dnsw.com.au.
Translation & Interpreting Service (TIS)
The Australian Government provides a Translation and Interpreting Service (TIS), which provides interpreters in a number of languages for a fee, including via a 24-hour Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (ATIS). For immediate phone translations, call 131 450. For more information on this paid service, contact the TIS client liaison team on 1300 655 820 or visit tisnational.gov.au.

Chinese-language destination information
Connecting Chinese visitors to destination information written in Chinese will enhance their experience and assist them to explore the destination. Destination NSW offers the following visitor information translated into Simplified Chinese to help you communicate with this market.

Sydney.com website
Destination NSW has a mobile-responsive, Chinese-language version of the consumer Sydney.com website. The sydney.cn website contains information about key experiences in Sydney and surrounding regions and information for Chinese travellers.

Sydney Official Guide
The Sydney Official Guide is a print publication in Simplified Chinese that is distributed free of charge at Sydney Airport, hotels and Accredited Visitor Information Centres around Sydney. It contains maps and information on attractions, accommodation, things to see and do, shopping, events and transport in Sydney.

Note: If your business is based in regional NSW, contact your Regional Tourism Organisation to discuss the current availability of Chinese language information about your destination.

Visitor Safety and Security
Part of the National Visitor Safety Program, the Travel Safely in Australia brochure summarises the major safety considerations when travelling in Australia. The brochure is available to download in eight languages, including English and Simplified Chinese.

To ensure you make the most of working with Chinese clients and business partners, it is important to have an understanding of the culture of doing business in China.

From developing positive business relationships to understanding etiquette, a number of considerations will help your business dealings run smoothly.

**Business attire**
- Conservative business wear is recommended, for example business suits for men and conservative suits or dresses for women with low heels or flat shoes.

**Business cards**
- Have a plentiful supply of business cards with you, ideally translated into Chinese on one side
- Usually the visiting party presents their card first
- Use both hands to hand over your business card, ensuring the Chinese text is facing up for the recipient
- On accepting a business card, use both hands to receive it and show your interest by taking some time to read the details of the card and comment or ask a question e.g. about the pronunciation of their name or where they are from
- Do not write or print names in red colour on business cards.

**Business etiquette**
- Establishing good professional relationships and trust is very important
- Face to face meetings are preferred and appointments should be made in advance and confirmed in writing, along with an agenda
- Punctuality is very important, so ensure you arrive early for meetings
- Usually the most senior person will be introduced first, then the others in descending order of seniority
- Demonstrate particular respect to the most senior person you are meeting
- Remain polite, avoid becoming angry or annoyed and try to avoid saying ‘no’ outright, as this can cause Chinese people to lose face
- Ensure any written materials are written in both English and Chinese.

**Colours and numbers**
There are different meanings behind certain colours and numbers in Chinese culture. Tourism businesses can show they understand this by avoiding use of unlucky colours and numbers with their Chinese guests replacing with favourable alternatives. Appropriate decisions when allocating room and table numbers, setting prices and giving gifts can demonstrate a level of understanding and respect to Chinese visitors and business partners.

For example:
- Red represents good fortune; however writing someone’s name in red is associated with the end of a friendship
- Yellow or gold symbolises luxury
- The number 4 has a similar pronunciation to the word ‘death’ in Cantonese, and is considered unlucky in some parts of China
- The number 6 represents smoothness and fluidity, which is good for business
- The number 8 represents wealth and prosperity
- The number 9 symbolises harmony and forever, which is particularly useful for couples and honeymooners.

Be cautious about your use of colour in presentations and marketing materials, to avoid unintentionally communicating incorrectly.
Conversation

- Speak clearly, using short sentences and smile
- It is polite to engage in some general conversation first before talking business
- Avoid speaking too quickly or using jargon, Australian colloquialisms or slang, as you could be easily misunderstood
- Jokes can be easily misunderstood, so are best avoided
- Avoid making any negative observations, comparisons with or criticisms of China, including its relationship with Taiwan
- Do not be surprised if your Chinese counterpart uses pauses in speech. This is an accepted custom and the pauses are a sign of measured and considered thought in Asian culture
- Try to avoid saying ‘no’; instead look for indirect ways of communicating this, such as ‘I will have to look into that’ or ‘it may be difficult’
- If you are using an interpreter, ensure your attention remains focused on the person talking to you and not the interpreter
- You may be asked questions relating to your wealth, status, age or family. This is a way of trying to better understand your culture, and your willingness to respond is more important than your answer. Consider ways of replying in general terms or turning the question around if you are not comfortable giving personal answers
- Do not gesture by pointing your finger, particularly at people.

Dining and entertaining

Dining together is an important part of Chinese culture and business is often conducted over dinner; this may be the best time to build relationships. Here are some tips for dining:

- The most important person at the table should have most of your attention
- Frequently proposing toasts on both sides is customary, often after a new course arrives at the table
- It is polite to try everything, although you don’t need to finish it. Rejecting food without trying it may be seen as a rejection of your host as they try to share their culture with you
- Avoid totally emptying your bowl at the end of the meal as this suggests you have not had enough food
- When eating rice, hold the bowl close to your mouth
- Lay chopsticks horizontally on the rest provided when you have finished, do not leave them sticking out of the bowl
- If you receive a gift, be prepared to offer one back
- Be sure to thank the highest ranking person for their attendance
- Do not begin eating until the host starts
- If you have been somebody’s guest, make an effort to reciprocate the invitation another time
- Wait to be told where you will sit, as places at the table reflect seniority and importance
- If you are hosting, greet your guests as they arrive. Pour tea for your guests, preferably using both hands. Do not serve iced water with meals
- Do not order seven dishes as this is the custom at wakes
- After the banquet, guests should leave promptly. However, do not leave before the guest of honour.
Gifts
- Giving a small, inexpensive gift is seen as a positive gesture. It is wise to be prepared with some small Australian-themed gifts to provide to your hosts.
- Wrap gifts in red, yellow or gold as this is considered lucky.
- It isn’t customary for gifts to be opened in front of the person giving them.
- Politely refusing a gift two or three times before accepting is not unusual, as the recipient avoids looking greedy by accepting a gift quickly.
- Ensure sincere thanks are given for any gifts received to give face to the gift-giver.

Greetings and farewells
- The oldest or most important person is always greeted first in a group. This is not likely to be the tour guide, who is a paid employee. If you are unsure, ask the group to avoid embarrassment.
- Handshakes are commonly used when greeting men or women, however avoid aggressive handshakes.
- Personal space is important and hugs or similarly familiar actions are reserved for only very close friends or family.
- Laughing loudly is not appropriate when meeting someone for the first time.
- Chinese names are given with the surname first, and this is what you should use to address the person with the appropriate title, such as Mr Wong, Miss Wong or even Director Wong.
- It is helpful to be familiar with some basic phrases in Mandarin, such as:
  - Ni hao – hello (pronounced nee-how)
  - Xie xie – thank you (pronounced shay shay)
  - Zai jian – goodbye (pronounced ts-eye jee-ann)
- When an important guest is arriving or leaving, it shows great respect if the most senior person in your organisation is there to stand up and greet them or see them off.

Status and saving face
To lose face means “to suffer embarrassment and loss of prestige”12.
- The concept of saving face is important and is connected to preservation of reputation, self-esteem and status.
- Causing someone to lose face can cost you a business relationship so it’s important to prevent someone from losing face. This can include saving face or by allowing someone to avoid an unfortunate or embarrassing incident.
- You can ‘give’ face by enhancing someone’s reputation, particularly in front of others e.g. through praise for a successful venture or accepting an invitation. Giving face can benefit you in the long term.

12 Macquarie Dictionary 2014
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Tourism Australia
Tourism Australia operates offices in Hong Kong, Beijing, Guangzhou and Chengdu.
Contact details are available on the Tourism Australia website.

Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC)
The Australian Tourism Export Council (ATEC) is the peak industry body representing Australia’s tourism export sector. Its services include B2B opportunities, industry advocacy and development, education and business capacity building, local and national networking events and conferences.
atec.net.au
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