

# CHINA READY GUIDE

Tips to help your business  
welcome Chinese visitors



**Multilingual**

TRANSLATION & MARKETING

# INTRODUCTION

## The number of Chinese tourists to Canada is growing at a remarkable rate

Direct flights and Chinese visa processing centres are becoming more and more abundant, and 2018 was officially declared the Canada-China Year of Tourism. That means that it's in the best interests of businesses and tourist destinations alike to establish connections with this important market.



Reaching a record of 682,000 arrivals to Canada in 2017, China was Canada's largest source of tourist arrivals from the Asia-Pacific region and our second largest overseas market.

According to Statistics Canada, Chinese tourism injects over \$1 billion into the Canadian economy and affects some 7,400 jobs.

## Get your business ready for the Chinese market

This guide will help you get your business ready for the Chinese market. It's designed for all sectors of the tourism industry, including:

- Restaurants
- Hospitality
- Retail sales
- Guided tours and tourist experiences

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# HOTELS

## 1) Language

Your Chinese guests may not speak much English. **Learning a few key phrases in Chinese** will help your guests feel welcome and make a good impression. Here are some useful expressions to keep in mind:

- **Welcome:** Huan ying ni (hwan ying nee)
- **How are you?:** Ni hao ma? (nee how ma)
- **Thank you:** Xie xie (shee-eh shee-eh)

## 2) Wi-Fi

**Wi-Fi access** is a top priority for Chinese visitors. Ideally, **you should offer instructions on how to connect to the Wi-Fi network in Chinese**. Chinese visitors will be more inclined to promote your business **by sharing their experience on Chinese social media networks** like WeChat and Weibo.

## 3) Slippers or booties

Most Chinese people don't like walking around their hotel room in their socks. They will appreciate it if you provide **slippers**.



# HOTELS (CONTINUED)

## 4) Hot water

**Hot water** is extremely important in Chinese culture. In traditional Chinese medicine, a cup of hot water in the morning is believed to wake up the digestive system and improve circulation. Make sure there is a **kettle** in your Chinese guests' rooms.

## 5) Bottled water

Chinese guests don't generally like drinking tap water. **Water bottles** in their rooms will be appreciated.

## 6) Tipping

The **concept of tipping** does not exist in Chinese culture. Don't be offended if Chinese guests don't leave a tip. It's most likely a cultural difference. If they don't leave a tip, you can always ask them if they are satisfied with the service and gently remind them that tipping is common practice in North America.



# FOOD

Meals are generally served earlier in China than in the West. Breakfast can be served starting at 6:30 a.m., lunch around 11:30 a.m., and dinner at 6:00 p.m.

**Breakfast** is the most important meal for the Chinese, and a hot, hearty meal in the morning is a great way to start the day. Be aware that a typical Chinese breakfast is completely different from the North American norm. Consider adding congee (rice oatmeal) to the breakfast options available for your Chinese guests.

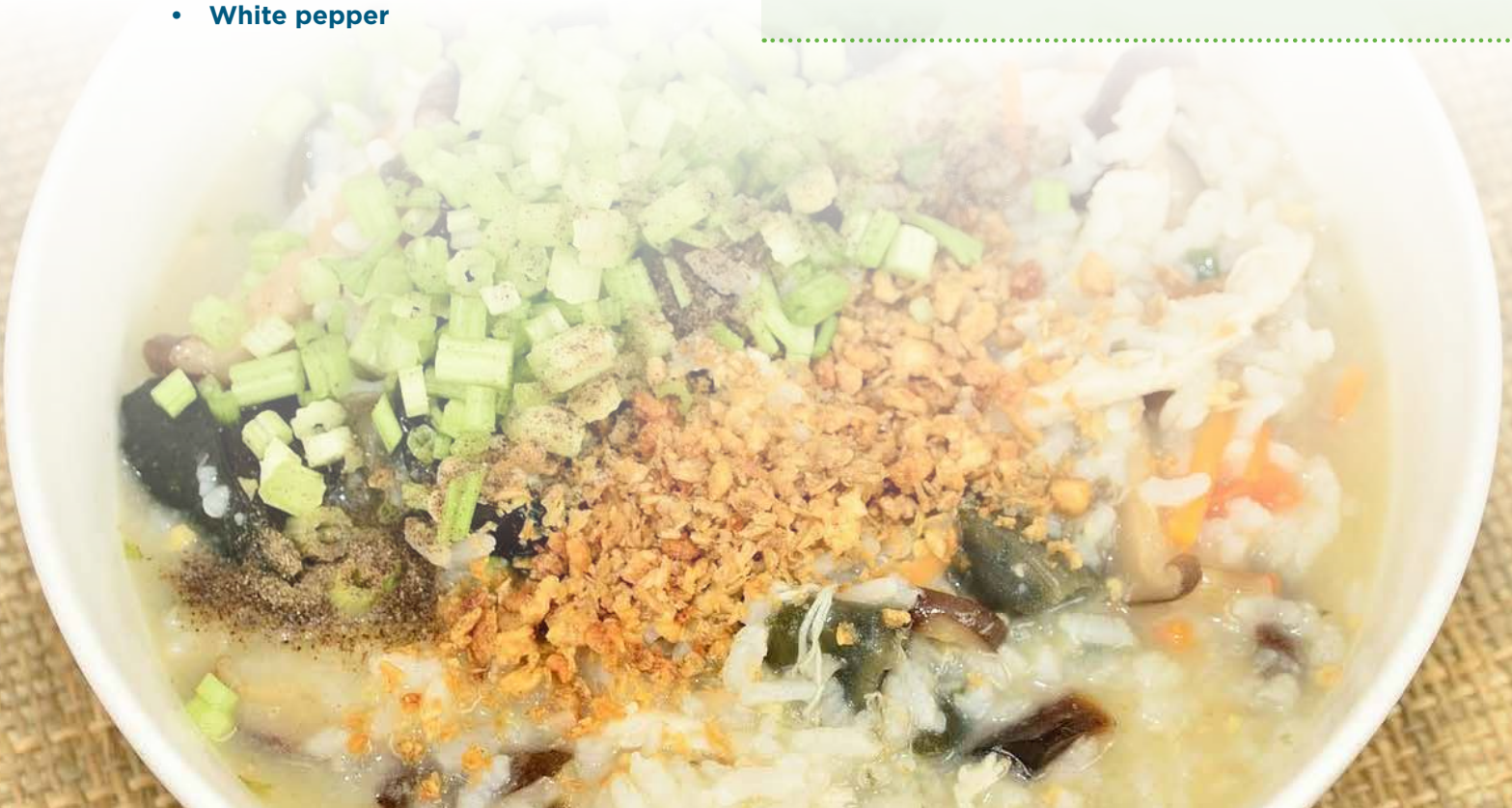
Something as simple as adding Chinese condiments can also make a big difference.

**The most popular condiments are:**

- **Soy sauce**
- **Chili sauce or oil**
- **Vinegar**
- **White pepper**



Your Chinese guests will also greatly appreciate it if you provide Chinese-brand products upon request, such as Lao Gan Ma chili sauce.





# FOOD (CONTINUED)

And of course, **tea** is a vital part of nearly every meal. Some people believe that hot food and cold water should not be mixed because it creates an imbalance in the body. **Green tea** and **herbal tea** are preferred to Western varieties of black or “breakfast” teas.

Most Chinese people enjoy trying new dishes and cuisines, but they also want some familiar foods to fall back on, so they can enjoy their trip to the fullest. Sometimes **adding a side of rice to the menu** is enough to make them feel a little more at home.

They’ll also be grateful if you make chopsticks available at the table.

In general, Chinese people do not really enjoy **dairy products**, so make sure dishes with rich cream sauces or other dairy-based ingredients are clearly indicated.

If possible, **offer a Chinese version of your menu** or an illustrated menu to help overcome any language barriers.



# SHOPPING

Chinese visitors love **authentic stories** related to our country's culture and history and will almost surely want to purchase **cultural souvenirs**.

**Gifts** are extremely important in Chinese culture. Chinese visitors will often buy **several identical items** to give to their loved ones or colleagues as gifts.

**Asking for a discount** is also common. This is the norm in China, so look at it as a sign of real interest in your product rather than a lack of respect. You can boost sales by offering a discount on multiple purchases.

Many Chinese travellers also enjoy **luxury items**, like **furs** and **handbags**.

- Items with a clearly visible “**Made in Canada**” label are **coveted**, since they act as proof of the trip upon return.
- Chinese visitors will generally **avoid** products labelled “**Made in China**.”
- It's just as important to **greet your guests warmly** when they arrive as when they leave.

In a **hotel**, one way to show your appreciation is to accompany your guests to their car or to the hotel door as they leave. This gesture will surely garner you a recommendation, if not a return visit.

In a **boutique** or **restaurant**, staff members should remain polite and thank customers as they leave.





# SOCIAL MEDIA

Access to social networks like **Facebook** and **Twitter** is restricted in China. **WeChat** and **Weibo**, their Chinese equivalents, are the most popular social media platforms in China and should be included in your marketing strategy.

WeChat started as an instant messaging app but quickly evolved into an **integrated tool** allowing users to communicate with friends, follow brands, get information, and shop at a wide variety of retailers.

**WeChat is unique “one-stop app” for its users** and doesn't have a North American equivalent. Users can buy clothes or food, organize trips, and place all sorts of orders.

Even Justin Trudeau is active on WeChat and Weibo:



# SOCIAL MEDIA — WECHAT AND WEIBO

**WeChat** is an extraordinary platform for your business. This multipurpose application is an impressive marketing tool that also lets you provide your Chinese customers with indispensable **customer service** and answer all their questions about your offers. WeChat has over **870 million monthly active users**, which makes it by far the best way to interact with your Chinese customers. WeChat users **also share photos, reviews, links, and articles** with their family and friends.

In order to break into the Chinese market, a growing number of North American **airports, tourist destinations, universities, and businesses** are establishing a presence on **Weibo**, another major social media platform in China.

Let's take a look at **Vancouver International Airport (YVR)**. Chinese visitors can explore deals on duty-free item before they even set foot in the airport and pay for their in-store purchases using their preferred payment methods, **WeChat Pay** and **Alipay**.



# PAYMENT OPTIONS

Chinese consumers are **more likely to spend** if they can pay using their preferred methods of payment.

**WeChat Pay** is a simple payment method that's **integrated into the app**.

Putting **a sticker or sign in your window** indicating that you accept WeChat Pay and Alipay will make Chinese passersby more inclined to come into your store.





# CHINESE NEW YEAR

**Chinese New Year** is a major holiday in China, comparable to Christmas in the West, and is a special time of the year for Chinese people. This event marks the start of the lunar year and is an opportunity to give gifts.



- Typical gifts include **hong baos**, the decorated red envelopes that you may have already noticed at this time of the year.
- Boxes of **tea** and **sweets** are also common gift items.

Your Chinese visitors will be thrilled and honoured if you **decorate** your hotel or business for the occasion.

In previous years, companies such as Shoppers Drug Mart (Pharmaprix in Quebec) have celebrated Chinese New Year by offer customers red envelopes containing chocolate coins. Chinese visitors really appreciate this sort of gesture.

- Some items should not be offered as gifts, such as **clocks** and **scissors** or other sharp objects like **knives** and **letter openers**, which have negative connotations in China.
- Similarly, **black and white** should not be used on wrapping paper, since these colours are associated with funeral rites.



# CULTURAL BELIEFS

Superstitions are an integral part of Chinese life and must be taken seriously.

Every **number** has a meaning. Keep these in mind when booking rooms or giving your rates to Chinese guests.

- **The number 8 is the best number**, because it represents prosperity and wealth.
- **The number 4 should be avoided**, as it is associated with death.
- **The number 6 is favourable** and means that everything will go smoothly.
- **The number 9 is also favourable** and indicates that things will last a long time.

**Colours** also have meaning and importance, and it's a good idea to keep these in mind when wrapping gifts or purchases.

- Red is associated with luck and prosperity.
- White is linked to death.
- Yellow and gold are excellent colours and represent wealth.



# CULTURAL BELIEFS (CONTINUED)

Familiarize yourself with the Chinese concept of **feng shui**, keeping in mind that it's a double-edged sword—it can help or hurt your sales.

## A few elements to absolutely avoid:

- **obstructed entrances**, as these trap negative energy
- **headboards against windows**, as these cause luck to abandon you
- **mirrors** placed directly opposite a bed, as this creates emotional tension and uneasiness for your guests

## A few elements to consider:

- **Chinese** or Imperial guardian lions, also called “foo dogs,” placed at entrances, as they are said to protect the premises
- **amethyst crystals** placed in hotel lobbies, as these promote health
- small **green flowers** in bathrooms, which can improve the feng shui of the entire room





# CONCLUSION:

Each culture has its own traditions and preferences. We hope that you found this guide useful as you welcome Chinese guests to your establishment.

For more information on how to offer your guests an experience they'll never forget, please **contact us at LAT Multilingual!**



# USEFUL CHINESE EXPRESSIONS

## Hello! (Good Day)

你好 nǐ hǎo

[nee hao] (General)

您好 nín hǎo

[nin hao] (More respect)

早上好 zǎo shàng hǎo

[dsao shuh-ng hao] (Good morning)

晚上好 wǎn shàng hǎo

[wan shuh-ng hao] (Good night)

## Welcome

欢迎光临 huān yíng guāng lín  
[hoo-ann ying goo-ang linn]

## It will be a pleasure to welcome you again

欢迎下次再来

huān yíng xià cì zài lái

[hoo-ann ying shia tss ds-eye L-eye]

## Thank you

谢谢 xiè xie [shee-ay shee-ay]

## You are welcome

不客气 bú kè qi [boo kuh chee]

## May I help you?

有什么需要帮助的吗?

yǒu shén me xū yào bāng zhù de ma

[yo shun-muh shü-yao  
bong djoo duh ma]

## Enjoy your meal

祝您用餐愉快

zhù nín yòng cān yú kuài

[djoo nin yong tsan yü koo-eye]

## Have a great stay

祝您下榻愉快 zhù nín xià tà yú kuài

[djoo nin shia ta yü koo-eye]

(For Hotels)

## Goodbye

再见 zài jiàn

[ds-eye djia-nn]











**GET YOUR  
GOLDEN DRAGON  
CERTIFICATION**  
AND PROMOTE YOUR  
BUSINESS ON CHINESE  
SOCIAL NETWORKS



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