

# First Time Guide: Essential Travel Companion for China

## Welcome to China!

Congratulations! You're about to embark on a journey to China! This comprehensive guide will help you navigate essential aspects of your trip, from transportation and accommodation to food exploration and staying connected.



Welcome to China

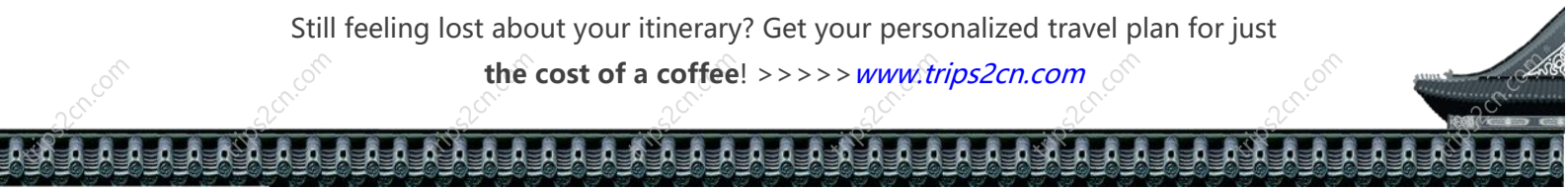
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## 1. Essential Apps

These applications will significantly enhance your travel experience in China:

### Translation Apps



**Google Translate**

**Google Translate** - Provides real-time translation of text, voice, and even images (requires internet connection).

### Navigation Apps



**Amap**

**Amap** - China's most comprehensive map application, offering real-time traffic updates and public transportation routes.



**MetroMan**

**MetroMan** - Specifically designed for navigating subway systems in major Chinese cities.

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## Transportation Apps



Didi

**Didi Chuxing** - China's leading ride-hailing service, providing options for private cars, taxis, and bike-sharing.



12306

**12306** - Official railway app for purchasing high-speed rail tickets when traveling between cities.

## Food & Lifestyle Apps



Dianping

**Dianping** - Provides restaurant reviews, recommendations, and discounts across China.

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## Payment Apps



**Alipay**

**Alipay** - Allows convenient mobile payments by scanning QR codes, accepted almost everywhere in China.



**WeChat**

**WeChat** - Multi-purpose app integrating messaging, social networking, and mobile payment functions.

## 2. Transportation

### Arrival Preparation

After arriving at the international airport:

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### Currency Exchange

**Currency Exchange:** Exchange some currency at the airport for immediate expenses like transportation.

### Getting Around



### High-Speed Rail

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**High-Speed Rail:** The most convenient way to travel between cities. Use the 12306 app to book tickets in advance.



Beijing Subway

**Subway:** Efficient for city travel. Purchase single-ride tickets at stations or use Alipay for QR code entry.



Didi Taxi

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**Taxis:** Use the Didi app to book rides or find designated taxi queues at transportation hubs.



**Helloride**

**Shared Bicycles:** Scan QR codes with Alipay for short-distance travel in city centers.

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### 3. Accommodation

#### Recommended Hotels

When planning your itinerary, we recommend hotels near popular attractions for convenient sightseeing and travel.



Hotel Room

#### Hotel Discounts

When booking a hotel through the website (<https://www.trips2cn.com>), you can enjoy customized services tailored to your specific needs as well as preferential pricing.

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## 4. Food Exploration

China offers a rich culinary experience with diverse regional cuisines:



**Peking Duck**

**Peking Duck** - A famous Beijing dish featuring crispy roasted duck served with pancakes and condiments.

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#### Hot Pot

**Hot Pot** - A popular dining experience where you cook various ingredients in a simmering pot of broth.



#### Jiaozi (Dumplings)

**Jiaozi** - Traditional Chinese dumplings, often served with vinegar.

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**Mapo Tofu**

**Mapo Tofu** - A spicy Sichuan dish made with tofu and fermented black beans.




**Xiaolongbao**

**Xiaolongbao** - Shanghai's famous soup dumplings, filled with savory broth and meat.

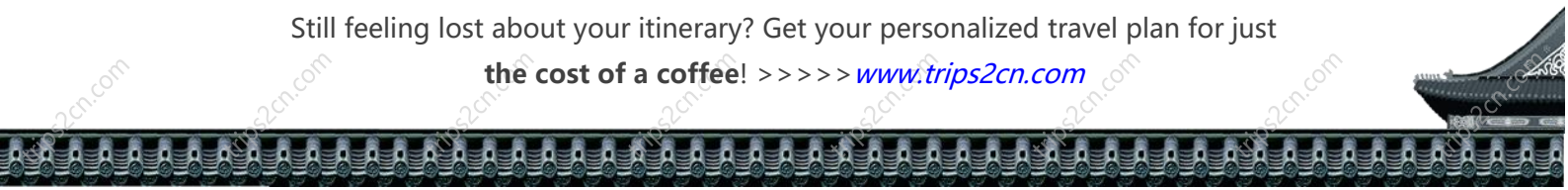
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For quick access to restaurant information and recommendations, download the Dianping app. Note that popular restaurants often require waiting in line, so plan your time accordingly.

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## 5. How to Access the Internet

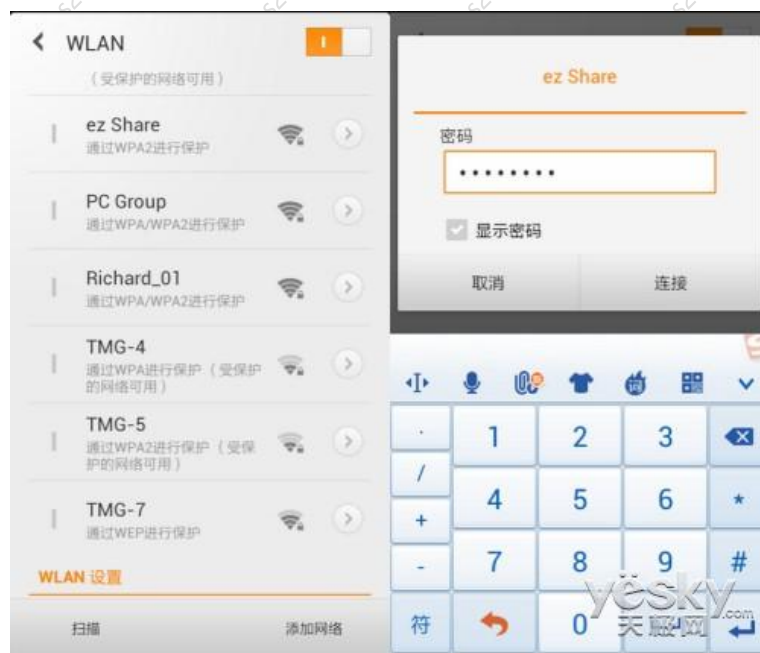


SIM Card

### Mobile Data Options

- **International Roaming:** Contact your local telecom provider to activate, though this can be expensive.
- **Local SIM Card:** Purchase at the airport or telecom stores (requires passport for registration).
- **eSIM:** If your phone supports it, eSIM is a convenient option with various data plans.

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## Wi-Fi Connection

### Wi-Fi Access

- Many public places offer free Wi-Fi (airports, train stations, shopping malls, hotels).
- Some require SMS verification or scanning QR codes for access.
- Portable Wi-Fi devices can be rented at airports for multiple device connectivity.

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## 6. Emergency Information

### General Emergency Numbers

- **110:** Public security police for crimes, threats, or public safety incidents.
- **120:** Medical emergency services for sudden illness or injury.

### Other Useful Hotlines

- **12367:** 24-hour multilingual immigration service hotline for visa and entry-exit inquiries.

Save these numbers in your phone for quick access during your trip.





## 7. Visa Policy

### Ordinary Tourist Visa (L-Visa)

Citizens of most countries planning to travel to China generally need to apply for an Ordinary Tourist Visa (L-Visa). When applying, prepare a valid passport (with at least 6 months validity remaining and at least 2 blank visa pages), a fully completed Application Form of the People's Republic of China for Visa (can be filled online, printed, and signed), and a recent (within the last 6 months) color, bareheaded, full-frontal photo with a white background (size 48mm×33mm).

### Electronic Visa (eVisa) Status

China currently offers specific types of electronic visas (e.g., short-term business, family visit) to citizens of certain countries, but electronic tourist visas are not yet universally implemented. Most foreign tourists still need to apply for paper visas through Chinese embassies/consulates abroad or visa application centers. It is advisable to check the latest policy on the official website of the Chinese embassy/consulate in your location before traveling.

### Transit Without Visa Policy

Eligible foreign citizens transiting through designated Chinese ports en route to a third country/region can enjoy a 72-hour or 144-hour visa-free transit policy (applicable ports include Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu, etc.). Requirements include: holding a valid passport, holding confirmed onward air/ticket tickets with fixed date and seat, and not exceeding the permitted stay duration. The specific list of eligible countries can be checked on the official website of the General Administration of Customs of China.



## Visa Application Process

**Online Appointment:** Schedule a submission appointment via the China Visa Application Service Center (e.g., VFS Global).

**Document Preparation:** In addition to basic documents, you may need to provide an itinerary, hotel booking confirmation, and proof of financial capability (e.g., bank statement).

**Application Submission:** Submit documents at the designated visa center or embassy/consulate. Biometric information collection may be required (applicable to citizens of some countries).

**Processing & Collection:** Processing usually takes 4-5 working days. Choose between postal return or on-site collection.

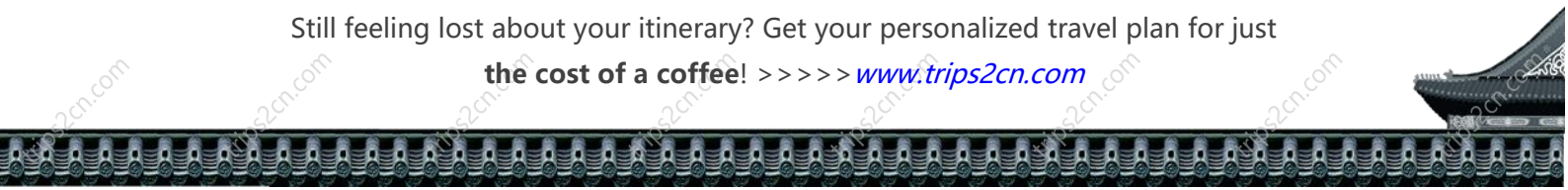
## Visa Fees

**Single Entry:** Approximately 140-160 USD (fees may vary for citizens of different countries).

**Multiple Entry:** 6-month multiple entry approx. 280 USD; 1-year multiple entry approx. 420 USD.

**Service Fee:** An additional service fee of approx. 50-80 USD applies when applying through a visa center.

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## 8. Entry Quarantine Policy

### Health Declaration Requirement

All inbound travelers must complete a health declaration via the "Customs Pocket Declaration" mini-program, accurately filling in:

Personal Information (Name, Passport Number, Contact Details)

Travel Information (Place of Departure, Places Transited Through, Mode of Transport)

Health Status (Presence of symptoms like fever, cough, etc.)

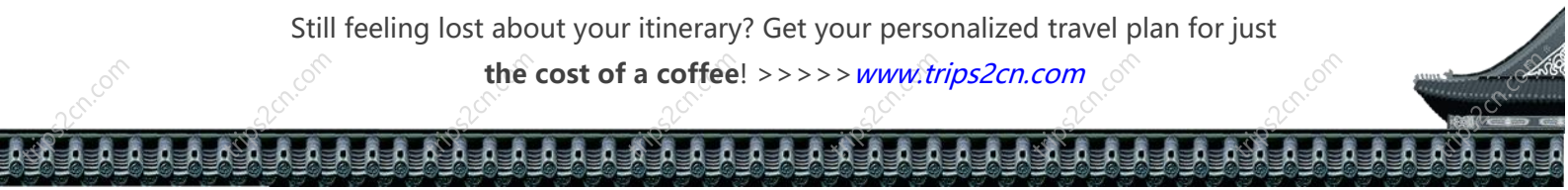
The QR code generated after submission must be shown to customs upon entry.

### Infectious Disease Prevention Measures


COVID-19: Implemented under "Class B infectious disease management." No universal nucleic acid testing or quarantine required, but personal protection is recommended.

Other Infectious Diseases: Travelers arriving from areas affected by influenza, malaria, dengue fever, etc., may undergo additional health screenings.

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Goods Quarantine: Carrying unquarantined animal/plant products is prohibited. Medications must be kept in their original packaging, and carry a doctor's prescription (especially for prescription drugs).

## 9. Other Important Policies

### Currency & Payment

Cash Carrying: No declaration needed for amounts  $\leq$  5000 USD equivalent; amounts exceeding this require written declaration.

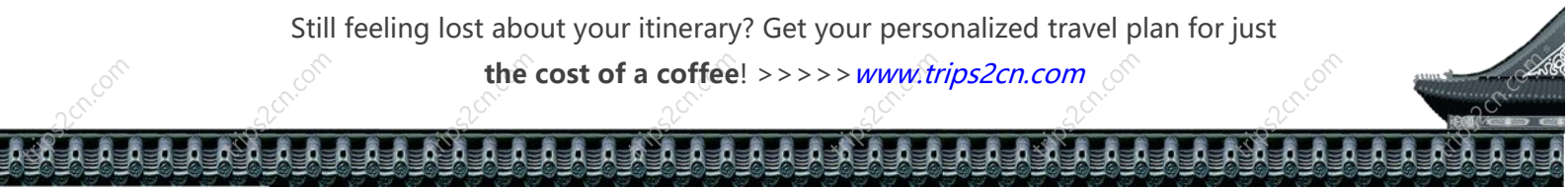
### Payment Methods:

Mobile Payment: Alipay (International version supports Visa/Mastercard binding), WeChat Pay (partial support for foreign cards).

Credit Cards: Visa/Mastercard widely accepted in large malls/hotels; carry cash for small vendors.

Currency Exchange: Recommended at banks or authorized exchange points; airport rates are usually poor.

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## Communication & Internet

**SIM Cards:** Major carriers (China Mobile, Unicom, Telecom) offer short-term tourist plans (7-30 days), requiring passport for real-name purchase.

**Internet Access:** Access to some foreign websites/apps requires a compliant VPN (recommend preparing outside China beforehand).

**Public Wi-Fi:** Free Wi-Fi widely available at airports, hotels, malls; some require SMS verification via phone number.

## Culture & Etiquette

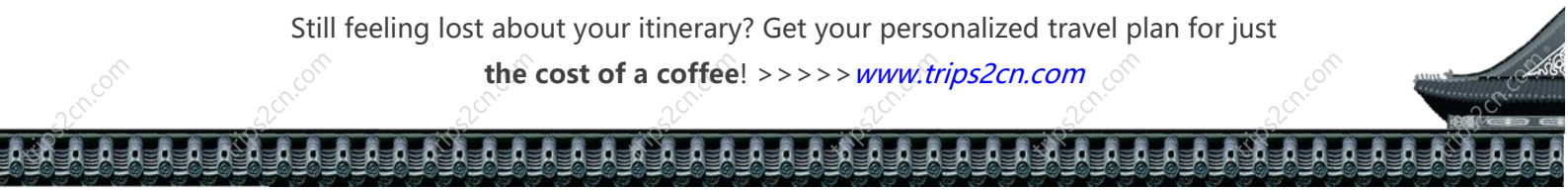
**Religious Sites:** Remove hats when entering temples; observe photography restrictions.

**Dining Etiquette:** Use public chopsticks and spoons; avoid tapping bowls with chopsticks or pointing them at others.

**Public Places:** Spitting and loud noise are prohibited; queuing is basic etiquette.

**Tipping Culture:** Tipping is not customary in China; service staff do not expect or solicit tips.

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## 10. Essential Items Checklist

### Documents:

Passport & Visa copies

Hotel/Flight booking confirmations (printed backup advised)

International Driving Permit (if renting a car; China recognizes translations from certain countries)

### Electronics:

Power adapter (Type A and Type I plugs; voltage 220V)

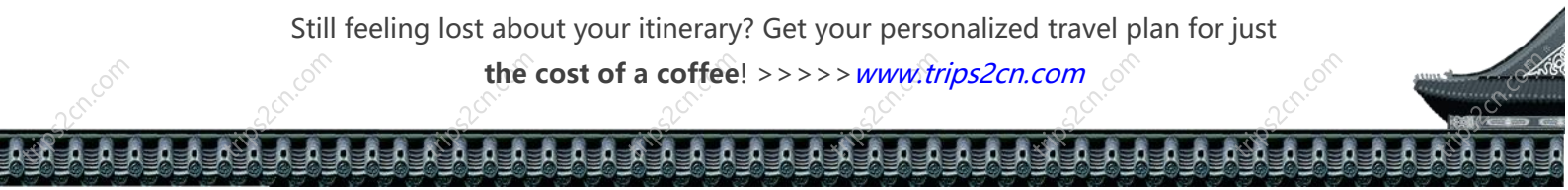
Universal travel adapter

Power bank ( $\leq 100\text{Wh}$  rated energy allowed in carry-on)


### Health & Safety:

Common medications (keep original packaging for cold/flu, stomach, pain relief meds)

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Travel insurance policy (recommend including medical & emergency evacuation)

Emergency contact card (with hotel address/phone in Chinese & English)

**Other Practical Items:**

Chinese phrasebook or offline translation app (e.g., download Google Translate Chinese offline pack)

Lightweight rain gear (for changeable weather)

Sun protection (especially for summer travel)

Small amount of cash (small denomination RMB notes for small payments)

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