



China Market Brief

Outbound Tourism

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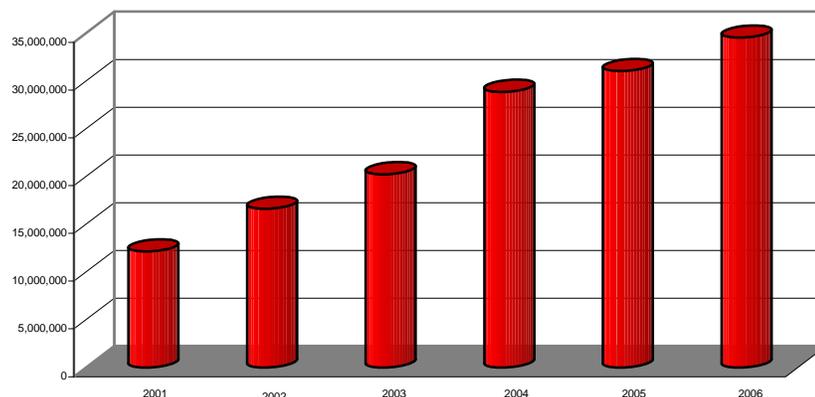
China is predicted to be the fastest growing outbound tourism market in the world over the next twelve years. The number of Chinese traveling abroad has nearly tripled in the past five years to over 34 million - making China the fastest-growing tourism market in the world. By 2020, China is projected to supply 100 million outbound travelers, fourth largest market in the world.

Market Overview

While growth in Chinese traveler numbers to the U.S. have lagged in recent years, a December 2007 ground-breaking tourism agreement between the United States and China is expected to bring 579,000 Chinese customers to the U.S. tourism industry by 2011.

Even before the 2007 U.S. – China Tourism Agreement, significant numbers of Chinese travelers and tourists were visiting the U.S. In 2006, there were 320,000 arrivals to the U.S. from China, an increase of 19 percent over 2005 levels. This made the U.S. the sixth largest recipient of Chinese travelers – and the only non-Asia destination in the top ten. Notably, Chinese travelers spent more in the U.S. than did visitors from most other countries. In 2006, the average per visitor spending by Chinese citizens traveling in the United States was more than \$6,000.

China's Outbound Tourists 2001 - 2006



The December 2007 bilateral agreement signed by U.S. Commerce Secretary Carlos M. Guitierrez opened up the Chinese market with an agreement by China to allow group leisure travel from China to the United States and to permit U.S. destinations to advertise and promote themselves in China.

The perception among potential Chinese visitors that visas to the U.S. are too difficult to obtain is a significant hurdle facing the U.S. travel and tourism industry. However, in 2006, significant strides were made in U.S. visa issuances of tourist and business visas in China:

- The U.S. Mission in China issued a total of 325,323 non-immigrant visas, up 11% from 2005
- Visa issuances are expected to continue to increase between 11-25% year on year as the U.S. State Department continues to expand capacity and improve systems.
- U.S. Department of Commerce and State Department colleagues are currently working to develop systems to facilitate efficient information flow from Chinese tour operators/U.S. industry to visa officers regarding tour groups.

China's rapid economic growth and expanding middle class will continue to fuel the growth in the numbers of Chinese outbound travelers. As China's economy continues to grow at a rate of about 10 % per year the country's upsurge in outbound tourism is not expected to abate anytime soon.

For More Information

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