



A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PROVIDING SERVICE TO CHINESE VISITORS TO TASMANIA TOURISM



What Chinese Tourists Want from a Tasmanian Visit

Chinese travelers usually want to have a Tasmanian experience and there is no need to replicate a Chinese experience here. It is important though that we meet their main expectations. They want to visit sites and attractions, undertake activities and take home photos and gifts they see as being iconic to Tasmanian. While they are here they want to feel welcome and safe, not risk problems or embarrassment, and be comfortable.

Desirable Tasmanian Experiences

The Tasmanian experiences most commonly sought by Chinese visitors involve:

- Meeting and interacting with local animals and local people.
- Natural scenery and environment, particularly interactive experiences.
- Eating what are seen as renowned or gourmet Tasmanian foods.
- Tasmanian agricultural production, fish farms, research facilities, and so on.
- Local cultural experiences e.g. concerts, museums, art galleries, markets and shops.



A memorable dining experience

Itinerary Planning

- Destinations are more important than the drive or walk to get to them.
- Include several close attractions rather than one distant one.
- Fit a lot of different sites and attractions into a short time.
- Do not include long walks.
- Tours should provide plenty of photo opportunities preferably with identifiable backdrops.
- Prepare commentaries and brochures should giving plenty of information about sites and attractions.
- Include venues that offer high quality Tasmanian products and souvenirs for sale and time to shop.

SHOW AND TELL IN CHINA

After returning home from an overseas trip Chinese people like to show photographs to their family, friends and colleagues. They also relate stories and give information about the places they visited. On average this is more important to Chinese people than it is to Australians.

- If food is provided it should be hot if possible, e.g. chips are better than sandwiches.

Interacting and Giving Service

It is important to show tourists they are welcome and you want them to enjoy their visit.

- Acknowledge visitors as soon as you see them, 'welcome'. If they have to wait say 'welcome, please wait a moment'.
- The main thing to remember is to be friendly to visitors and show you want to help.
- Do not be nervous about acknowledging that a visitor is Chinese, it will be fine with them.
- Make small talk about where they are from and their visit to Tasmania but avoid politics, religion and sex as conversation topics.
- To get body language right:
 - ◊ Stand still and let the customer stand at the distance he or she is comfortable
 - ◊ If they express friendship by touching your arm or shoulder, copy what they do. You should not initiate touching but if you do not reciprocate they will think you have rebuffed their friendly gesture.



Interaction is highly valued

Language and Communication

Some Chinese people learned English at school but their reading and writing is usually much better than their speaking and listening.

- Write down important points. They are more likely to understand writing than speech. If they do not understand they can translate at their leisure. They will have a record to refer to.
- When you write, lower case printing is the easiest for Chinese people to understand.



- When you speak choose simple words, speak slowly, enunciate your words separately, and avoid slang and local expressions.
- Have important signage or information translated into Standard Modern Chinese. Translated signage provides important information but it also says 'you are welcome'.
- If you are dealing with a visitor through an interpreter look at and speak to the visitor, do not have a discussion with the interpreter and ignore the actual guest.

Souvenir Shoppers

A large proportion of the money spent by visitors in Australia is used to buy things to take back to China rather than on tourist experiences here. This presents a big opportunity for Tasmanian souvenir sellers. It is traditional for

THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER...

Chinese people joke that foreigners come to China to buy fake goods cheaply while Chinese people travel abroad to buy genuine goods to bring home. They have a jaundiced view of fake brands and low quality products and seek genuine quality travel mementos.

Chinese people to take gifts back for family, friends and colleagues. A clear theme in souvenir shopping preferences is to buy genuine quality items. They prefer to buy gifts identified with the places they have been, for colleagues they are likely to buy a number of similar things. Products with a health benefit are sought after.



Many souvenirs are bought

Some popular items are:

- Tasmanian Wood products.
- Tasmanian Honey.
- Tasmanian Essential oils.
- Sheep skin products.
- Fish oil.
- Goods purchased in Tasmania must be transported back to China, therefore small lightweight items are preferred .
- Photo books and calendars
- Toys or games for children.
- Soft toys of Tasmanian or Australian animals.
- Tasmanian fudge or other food products as long as they can be taken back to China.
- Jewelry containing Tasmanian gem stones or featuring Tasmanian designs.



A welcome sign

- If you have an attractive product that is large or heavy it is a good idea to offer a 'post to China' service or at least offer to help prospective purchasers with packaging and postal instructions.
- By far the most common Chinese credit card is Union Pay. Your Chinese customers will only be able to spend the cash they are carrying unless you accept Union Pay cards. You can arrange that through Union Pay or some Australian banks. Not taking Union Pay credit cards is a serious handicap to a business dealing with Chinese tourists. Taking union pay also indicates you welcome Chinese visitors' business.

Safety and Legal Compliance

If your venue or activity has safety requirements such as wearing seatbelts or lifejackets you will need to direct Chinese visitors to comply. Chinese people expect direction on important matters. Where legal compliance is essential you will need to make rules clear, point out that everyone needs to comply and keep checking that they are followed. For important legal information it is prudent to give written advice translated into Standard Modern Chinese. Chinese visitors will appreciate you caring about their safety.

Making Choices

When asked a question Chinese people want to avoid embarrassing themselves or the questioner. They tend to answer 'yes' to a yes or no question and are uncomfortable if asked an open question that requires them to make a suggestion. If you need a visitor to choose what they want to do it is best to outline two or three alternatives and let them choose.

TIPS ABOUT CHINESE CULTURE

- Smoking Is normal just about everywhere in China, have translated signage, indicate where to smoke and thank visitors for their cooperation.
- Even if they speak some English, Chinese people will talk to each other in Chinese. They can communicate so much better in Chinese. Do not take offence they probably are not talking about you.
- 'Please' and 'thank you' are used much less in China than in Australia, saying them too much is actually seen as being rather unfriendly because it is treating the other person too formally. The closer friends are the less polite they are to each other. Do not expect to hear please and thank you much.

