

# ESSENTIAL INFORMATION CHINA INCLUDING HONG KONG & TIBET

## PASSPORT AND VISA INFORMATION

Your passport needs to be valid for **at least six (6) months** after your journey ends, and should have a minimum of three (3) blank visa pages for entry and exit stamps.

### China

**A tourist visa is required for U.S. and Canadian passport holders for entry into China and must be obtained prior to departure.** A visa stamp in your passport can be obtained either by applying directly to a Chinese consulate or through a visa processing service. While there are additional costs involved in using a visa service, this option is available for guests who prefer additional assistance in the visa process.

U.S. citizens who have a passport with a remaining validity of one (1) year or more will be issued a multi-entry China visa that will be valid for 10 years. *Note: If you renew your passport after being issued a 10-year China visa, the visa will still remain valid for the full ten years. If you visit China again during this time, you will need to carry both your current, valid passport and the old passport with the 10-year China visa stamp.*

Those with passports that have less than one (1) year remaining validity will be issued a visa that is valid for 6 months. If your passport has less than one (1) year validity remaining, you must provide a signed letter stating you are aware that the consulate will not grant a visa greater than 6 months validity.

You may be asked to provide the name of the inviting agency hosting your stay in China on your visa application. In this instance, specify **A&K Hong Kong: Agency #350484**

Additionally, do NOT mention any planned travel to Tibet, which may result in your visa application being denied.

If you have ever travelled to Turkey or Afghanistan, you may be asked to provide a personal statement letter that includes specific dates and details about all visits. Your statement letter must include details for every immigration stamp for these countries in your current passport.

### Of Special Note for Canadian Passport Holders

The government of China requires all visa applicants in Canada to submit fingerprints. Applicants may submit fingerprints at Visa Application Centers located in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, Calgary, and Vancouver. These application centers are jurisdictional and you must submit your application to the specific center that covers the region of your home address. Additionally, Canadian citizens applying for a visa for China will need to provide proof of a round-trip or onward ticket and a comprehensive travel itinerary including hotel reservations. Financial proof such as a bank statement may also be required. For more information, please visit our partner VisaCentral's Canadian offices at [visacentral.ca/abercrombiekent](http://visacentral.ca/abercrombiekent) or the Government of Canada's Travel Advice and Advisories page at [travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories](http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories).

### Tibet

A special permit is required to enter Tibet. In order to obtain the appropriate authorization required to secure this permit, please email a clear, photo quality, copy of your passport – inclusive of both the photo/information page, as well as the page displaying your valid tourist visa for entry into the Peoples' Republic of China – to A&K at: [operations@abercrombiekent.com](mailto:operations@abercrombiekent.com)

It is imperative that we have this information **no later than 65 days prior to your departure** from the United States.

*This information is specific to Tibet, when combined with China. If you are combining Tibet with Nepal, please contact Abercrombie & Kent for information specific for travel between Nepal and Tibet.*

#### Hong Kong

Holders of U.S. and Canadian passports are not required to obtain a tourist visa for entry into Hong Kong for stays of up to 90 days.

Our partner VisaCentral offers easy, efficient passport and visa processing. Visit them online at [visacentral.com/abercrombiekent](http://visacentral.com/abercrombiekent) or call 844 823 1224 and reference A&K's account number 73001. Service fees apply.

Citizens of other countries should contact the appropriate consular office for entry requirements pertaining to their journey.

#### YELLOW FEVER VACCINATION

A yellow fever vaccination is only required to enter **China** (including Tibet) if you are arriving from, or have transited through, a yellow fever-endemic area in South America or Africa. The CDC and WHO each provide a current list of all affected countries. If vaccination for yellow fever is necessary, you must carry an International Certificate of Vaccination provided by your physician; you may be denied entry without it. If your physician advises against receiving the vaccination because of your personal medical history, he or she can provide you with the necessary documentation for the country/countries you are visiting. Yellow fever vaccination is not required to enter **Hong Kong**.

#### CASH & CREDIT CARDS

**China:** Cash transactions should be made in Chinese renminbi. Hong Kong dollars cannot be used in China but are easily converted to renminbi. Major credit cards are widely accepted for goods and services. Access to ATM machines is widespread in cities and towns but may be limited in rural areas.

**Tibet:** Cash transactions should be made in Chinese renminbi. Major credit cards have limited acceptance for goods and services. Access to ATM machines is limited to a few locations in Lhasa and Shigatse.

**Hong Kong:** Cash transactions should be made in Hong Kong dollars. Chinese renminbi are accepted at some shops but the exchange rate is usually poor. Major credit cards are widely accepted for goods and services. Access to ATM machines is widespread in cities and towns but may be limited in rural areas.

#### OF SPECIAL NOTE: INTERNET RESTRICTIONS IN CHINA

Please be aware that, due to government regulations, certain internet websites are not accessible in Mainland China, including Tibet. Currently blocked sites include, but are not limited to, Google, gmail and Facebook.

#### PACKING LIST & BAGGAGE RESTRICTIONS

On Internal Air flights within China, each passenger is limited to approximately 44 pounds (20 kilograms) of checked baggage in Economy Class, approximately 66 pounds (30 kilograms) in Business Class and approximately 88 pounds (40 kilograms) in First Class.

For carry-on baggage, passengers are allowed one piece of baggage for Economy Class with a maximum weight of approximately 11 pounds (5 kilograms) per person. Passengers are allowed two pieces for Business and First Class, with a maximum weight of approximately 17 pounds (8 kilograms) each piece per person. Carry-on baggage should not exceed dimensions of 22 inches (55 centimeters) x 16 inches (40 centimeters) x 8 inches (20 centimeters) each piece.

Luggage restrictions on high-speed “bullet” trains in China are 44 pounds (20 kilograms) of checked baggage per person. Total dimensions of any single piece of luggage are not to exceed 63 inches (160 centimeters).

Please use the provided A&K luggage tags, even if your bags already have ID tags. This makes it easier for A&K staff to collect and manage your luggage for you.

#### Special Restrictions on Lighters, Matches, Power Banks, Cellphone or Computer Batteries:

On Internal Air flights within China, lighters and matches are not allowed to be brought onto airplanes, either in checked or carry-on baggage. Power banks, cell phone and computer batteries are not allowed to be brought onto airplanes in checked baggage, they can only be brought onto the plane in carry-on baggage, however, power banks larger than 10400 mAh are not allowed to be taken on domestic flights in either checked or carry-on bags. Specifications of the power bank must be clearly labeled on it. Airport security officers have the right to confiscate any items that violate these restrictions.

#### Clothing

Choose versatile, casual clothing that can be layered if the weather requires. Tibet's varied topography and high altitudes create weather conditions which can change radically in the course of the day, and between daytime and nighttime. Smart casual attire is appropriate for evenings. Formal clothing is not necessary.

Temples and other religious sites require modest dress to enter. Guests are advised to pack clothing that covers knees, shoulders, and upper arms for select visits. You may be required to remove shoes when entering sacred sites.

- Casual slacks
- Walking shorts
- Polo shirts, casual short-sleeve shirts or blouses
- Long sleeve shirts or blouses
- Sweater or lightweight jacket
- Long comfortable skirts for women
- Comfortable walking shoes with traction
- Lightweight raincoat or poncho
- Brimmed hat for sun protection
- Sleepwear
- Personal garments
- Socks
- Swimwear/cover-up/bathing cap (many hotel swimming pools in China require bathing caps for both men and women)
- Foldable umbrella for rain protection and sun shade

#### Other Recommended Items

- Sunglasses
- Sun block / Insect repellent
- Simple first-aid kit
- Prescriptions and medications (in their original bottles and/or packaging)
- Extra eyeglasses/contact lenses
- Smartphone
- Charging cables for electronics
- Global travel adapter
- Women may want to wear a supportive sports bra.

The mountain roads of Tibet are very rough. An inflatable pillow or stadium cushion can help soften the bumps.

#### Optional Items

- Small LED flashlight
- Foldable walking stick
- Lightweight binoculars
- Small daypack or fanny pack

Laundry service is available at most hotels and dry cleaning is available in larger cities. Check costs and return times before using these services.

#### TIPPING GUIDELINES

While decisions regarding tipping rest entirely with you, we suggest the following gratuities (noted in U.S. dollars) depending on the type of journey.

|                                    | <b>Tailor Made Journeys</b>   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Local Guides                       | \$20 per person, per day (full day)   |
| Drivers                            | \$10 per person, per day (full day)   |
| Airport Transfer Drivers           | \$5 per person, per transfer  |
| Hotel Porters                      | \$2 per bag   |
| 'Yangzi Explorer' (if applicable)  | \$15 per person, per day – Gratuities are accepted on board and shared among the staff. |
| Housekeepers                       | \$2 per person, per night   |
| Included Meals                     | Included  |
| Restaurants or Room Service on Own | 10-15% unless already added   |