

The only places that can be counted on to accept credit cards are five-star hotels.

### *Food and Drink*

Visitors to China may suffer from traveller's diarrhea. To avoid this and other discomforts, it is advisable to drink bottled water. Eating food prepared on the street is part of the local culture, but avoid stalls that do not use disposable utensils.

### *Health Care*

Some major hotels in China maintain clinics or resident doctors who can assist you with minor medical problems. Several hospitals in the larger cities have special services, designed for foreigners, with English-speaking staff. Nevertheless, you should be prepared to take an interpreter with you if you must visit a local hospital. You will be asked to deposit funds with the hospital upon arrival; the cost of your treatment and other medical expenses will be deducted from this deposit and the balance returned to you upon departure. Although medical care in local hospitals is relatively inexpensive, you should still purchase private

health insurance before your trip to cover any unforeseen expenses. Medical care in clinics offering Western-style care for foreigners is much more expensive and must be paid for on the spot, using U.S. dollars or a credit card.

### *Drugs*

The Government of China deals harshly with persons found in possession of illegal drugs. You should exercise the utmost caution when travelling. Never carry a package or luggage for someone else, unless you have completely verified the contents. Choose travelling companions carefully, since you may be implicated if they are found to be carrying drugs.

Prescription medicines and syringes may be considered suspicious by Chinese authorities. Keep all drugs in their original containers and carry the prescriptions with you. If you have a medical need for syringes, carry a medical certificate saying so. If you require over-the-counter medicines, such as those commonly used for traveller's diarrhea, it is best to take them with you.