

## CHINA: BASIC DATA

- GEOGRAPHY** The land area of China is 9,544,000 square kilometres which is larger than the mainland United States. China shares borders with many countries including Laos, North Korea, Pakistan, Vietnam, Afghanistan, Russia, Mongolia, Myanmar, India, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Bhutan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan.
- CLIMATE** Continental, with extremes of temperature; sub-tropical in the south east. The hottest months are July and August (23-32°C), and the coldest month is January (1-8°C). The driest month is December (36 mm average rainfall), and the wettest month is June (180 mm average rainfall).
- POPULATION** 1.174 billion (mid-1993). Population density varies between a mere 2 persons per square kilometre in the remote western and north western regions, to an extremely overcrowded 2,204 per square kilometre in Shanghai.
- MAJOR CITIES**
- |          |            |           |           |
|----------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Shanghai | 14,950,000 | Shenyang  | 5,272,000 |
| Beijing  | 11,860,000 | Wuhan     | 4,341,000 |
| Tianjin  | 9,320,000  | Guangzhou | 4,084,000 |
- TIME** Zone I is 6 hours ahead of GMT; Zones II, III and IV are 8 hours ahead of GMT, and 9 hours ahead of GMT during Peking Summer Time (mid-April to October).
- MEASURES** The metric system is used in China, alongside certain standard Chinese weights and measures, of which the most common are: catty or jin=0.5kg; picul or dan=50kg; mu=0.0667 hectare; 2,000 catties=metric ton; 20 piculs=metric ton; and 15 mu=shang=hectare.
- LANGUAGE** Four major language families are found in China, the most important being the Sino-Tibetan, spoken by the Han Chinese. The Peking (or Mandarin) dialect is spoken in north China; Cantonese, Fukienese and Hakka dialects are spoken in southern China. These dialects are mutually incomprehensible, although there is a common script.
- CURRENCY** 1 yuan/renminbi (Y/Rmb)=10 jiao=100 fen.
- ENTRY** A valid passport and visa are required for travel to China, and persons travelling on tourist visas might find it difficult to make business appointments and to accomplish more than preliminary contact.
- HOLIDAYS** January 1, Chinese New Year (3 days), May 1, October 1-3.