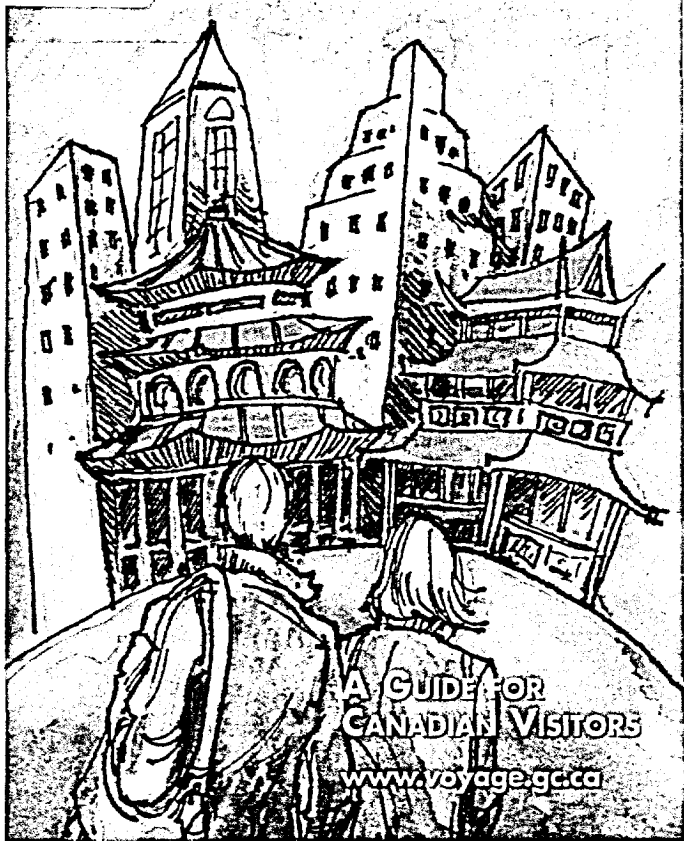


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# CHINA

INCLUDING HONG KONG



A GUIDE FOR  
CANADIAN VISITORS

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Department of Foreign Affairs  
and International Trade

Ministère des Affaires étrangères  
et du Commerce international

Canada

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Dept. of Foreign Affairs  
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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
The Canadian Connection.....	4
<b>Before You Go</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Dual Nationality and Canadian Consular Services.....	6
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA	
<b>Entering China</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Visas and Documentation.....	8
Customs.....	10
Children.....	11
<b>Visiting China</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Travel.....	12
Time.....	13
Language.....	13
Currency and Credit Cards.....	14
Food and Drink.....	15
Health Care.....	15
Drugs.....	15
Crime.....	16
Women Travelling Solo.....	16
The Justice System.....	16
Communications.....	17
Politics.....	18
Canadian Consular Services.....	18
<b>Living in China</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Foreigner Residence Certificates.....	19
Retirement.....	20
Real Estate.....	20

## THE SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF HONG KONG

<b>Visiting Hong Kong</b> .....	<b>22</b>
Temporary Visitors .....	22
Identity Cards .....	22
<b>Living in Hong Kong</b> .....	<b>23</b>
Rights of Canadians .....	23
Work Permits .....	25
Business Registration .....	25
Taxation .....	26
Customs .....	27
Money and Banking .....	28
Travel to Other Parts of China .....	28
<b>Doing Business in China (Including the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong)</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>Returning Home</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>For More Information</b> .....	<b>31</b>
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade .....	31
Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) .....	32
Canadian Food Inspection Agency .....	33
Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) .....	33
Environment Canada .....	33
Health Issues .....	33
Passport Office .....	34
Canadian Government Offices in China .....	35
Chinese Government Offices in Canada .....	36

## Introduction

Canadian travel to China has reached unprecedented levels. The cultural and business connections between Canada and Hong Kong were already well established before the Chinese economy began opening in 1978. Since then, China's encouragement of tourism and business travel, combined with market reforms and the restoration of Chinese sovereignty in Hong Kong, have greatly increased Canadian interest.

Since July 1, 1997, Hong Kong has been a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. It maintains its own currency and regulations concerning visitor entry and business operations. These aspects of travelling to Hong Kong are treated in a separate section of this guide.

Under an agreement with Portugal, the People's Republic of China resumed sovereignty over Macau on December 20, 1999, at which time it also became a Special Administrative Region. Canadians can obtain visas on arrival in Macau. Canadian citizens do not require a visa for a stay of up to 30 days and must have a passport

that is valid for at least 30 days after the intended departure date. A visitor fee of 100 patacas for each adult and 50 patacas for each child up to 12 years old is applied on arrival.

### *The Canadian Connection*

Canada's special relationship with China is based partly on the large Chinese community in Canada. It is estimated that half a million Canadians are from Hong Kong, and approximately 15,000 Hong Kong students attend Canadian universities. Recently, immigration from other parts of China has caught up with and even surpassed that from Hong Kong.

Increasing numbers of Canadian investors and business people have been visiting China since the Chinese government began its program of "open cities" and special economic zones in the late 1970s. Today there are many partnerships between Chinese and Canadian companies in a wide variety of industries, from the traditional sectors to emerging technology and knowledge-based industries.

The preparation you need depends on the purpose and duration of your trip. Regardless of where you are travelling in China and how long you will stay, ensure you have:

- a valid passport and the required visa;
- health insurance to cover you during your stay outside Canada; and
- the address of the Canadian Embassy or consulate nearest to where you will be travelling.

If you're travelling to Hong Kong or Macau, a valid Canadian passport is all that is required. If you're travelling to other parts of China, you will also require a visa. Visas can be obtained in Canada and also in Hong Kong, provided that you have the necessary documentation. There are seven types of visas and permits:

- "L" visa is issued to Canadians travelling either on group tours or as individual tourists;
- "F" visa is needed to conduct business in China;
- "Z" visa is required if you will be working in China;
- "G" visa is issued to travellers who will pass

- through China in transit;
- "X" visa is available to students attending accredited universities or colleges in China;
- "D" visa is issued to retirees to China; and
- special permission is required to visit Tibet.

If you stay in China for an extended period, or if you receive remuneration from Chinese sources, you will need additional residency and work permits that must be obtained in China after your arrival. However, information on the process should be obtained prior to your arrival in China from the Government of China embassies or consulates. This process can be bureaucratic and time-consuming, so be sure to allow adequate time for proper certification before you plan to start work.

Visitors to China are required to complete a health questionnaire on arrival, and it is prudent to carry documentation demonstrating that you have received all necessary immunizations. Health authorities in Canada can advise you about recommended precautions and vaccinations.

Statements made on the health questionnaire (for example, admitting that you are HIV positive) could result in denial of entry. Take into account that, in general, sanitation standards in China do not match those in Canada, and there are high levels of air pollution in the major cities. Drinking water can also be a problem. Take your prescription or over-the-counter medicines with you.

People with special requirements should verify the availability of any facilities they need before visiting China. In general, people with disabilities can expect access to travel facilities and other public places to be more difficult than it is in Canada. You may have to make special arrangements to obtain amenities that you expect as a matter of course at home.

Before you go, you should read about the social, political and economic environment in China. The Internet is a good source of information. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade has brought together information on a wide range of programs and services related to China on the Canadian Embassy's Web site (<http://www.canada.org.cn>).

If possible, take time to learn some basic Mandarin or Cantonese, depending on your destination. These languages are tonal, and you may find pronunciation more difficult than with Western languages. However, the Chinese people you meet will appreciate your effort to communicate with them in their own language, even if it is just a few phrases.

### *Dual Nationality and Canadian Consular Services*

China, like many countries, does not recognize a person's right to have more than one nationality (citizenship). Under the laws of China, when a citizen of China obtains a second nationality, there is a loss of Chinese citizenship. In practice, however, recognition of Canadian citizenship is not automatic. There have been cases where Chinese authorities have refused to recognize the Canadian citizenship of persons who had travelled to Canada on a Chinese Public Affairs passport and not returned to China, or had travelled to Canada at state expense and not returned to China. In these cases, Chinese authorities consider the person still to be a Chinese citizen until they have gone through an official



process to renounce their Chinese citizenship. The proper procedures for doing this are not entirely clear, and a Chinese Embassy or consulate should be consulted for specific information.

Canadian citizens of Chinese background must take overt action such as consistently using a Canadian passport and obtaining a visa from the Chinese authorities for entry into China. Chinese authorities will *usually* consider you a citizen of the country (and only that country) that issued the passport you used to enter China.

Under Chinese law, a citizen is a person who has Chinese nationality under the Chinese Nationality Law (CNL). Persons who have Chinese nationality under the CNL include Hong Kong residents and former residents who are of Chinese descent and who were born in Hong Kong or other parts of China. They may be Chinese citizens even though they hold,

or have held, Hong Kong British Dependent Territories Citizen passports, British National (Overseas) passports or other foreign passports. Canadian officials will be prevented by the Chinese authorities from providing consular services to Canadians who have used their Chinese or Hong Kong travel documents to enter China.

Canadian law permits a Canadian to have more than one nationality. It is the policy of the Canadian government to encourage Canadians to use a Canadian passport when travelling abroad and always to present themselves as Canadian to foreign authorities. Canadian officials in China will offer consular assistance to Canadian citizens whenever they can. But their right to do so may not be recognized by Chinese authorities in the case of Canadians who have not specified their Canadian citizenship when entering China, by using a Canadian passport, or when dealing with local authorities.

## Entering China

Entry into China usually involves a three-stage process:

- inspection of your passport, visa and other travel documents;
- completion of a health questionnaire; and
- customs inspection.

You can be fined or expelled if you arrive in China without a visa (except in Hong Kong or Macau, where only a valid passport is required).

### *Visas and Documentation*

Canadians visiting China require a visa, which can be obtained from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Ottawa, or from the Chinese consulates general in Calgary, Toronto and Vancouver. The Vancouver office has responsibility for British Columbia and Yukon. The Calgary office covers Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. The Toronto office handles applications from Ontario and Manitoba. Residents of the other provinces and territories should apply to

the Embassy in Ottawa. Visa applications can be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the Chinese Embassy, or they can be downloaded online (<http://www.chinaembassycanada.org>). Applications are normally processed in about five days, but priority service is available for an additional charge.

If you are travelling to Hong Kong first, visas for the rest of China can be obtained fairly quickly from the Visa Section of the Commission Office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 5/F Lower Block, China Resources Building, 26 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong, or through the China Travel Service (CTS), China International Travel Service (CITS) or some private travel agencies.

The Chinese visa will be inserted into your passport, and you must submit your passport with the visa application. At least two completely blank pages must be available in your passport.

You must also affix a passport-sized photograph to the application form and include a money order or corporate cheque for the required fee. Personal cheques are not accepted. The fee for a single-entry or transit visa is about \$50; multiple-entry visas can cost up to about \$300. Other required documentation depends on the type of visa you are requesting.

### Tourist Visas

An "L" visa will be issued to Canadians travelling either on group tours or as individual tourists. If you are participating in a group tour, submit a letter of confirmation of the tour arrangements from a travel agency in China along with your application. If you are travelling as an individual tourist and not as part of an escorted group, submit a copy of your return ticket along with evidence that you have sufficient funds for the trip. Tourist visas are generally valid for three months from the date of issue and for 30 to 60 days after entry into China. It is possible to arrange for longer stays if the visa is obtained in Hong Kong. Visas can be extended in China at Public Security Bureau offices or through China International

Travel Service agents. People entering China on an "L" visa are not permitted to work.

### Business and Working Visas

To conduct business in China, you require an "F" visa. To obtain an "F" visa, you need an official invitation from a business counterpart in China or the relevant Chinese authorities. To work in China, you require a "Z" visa. In addition to a letter of invitation, you must submit a work permit from the Chinese Ministry of Labour and Social Security or the State Bureau of Foreign Experts. If you are applying for multiple-entry privileges or wish to stay for more than six months, you must also submit a health certificate. At the end of this process, you will be issued a "Foreigner Residence Permit" (small green booklet), which is your official identification and proof of your status to legally live and work in China.

### Transit Visas

If you are passing through China in transit, you will require a "G" visa unless you are connecting on a continued international flight within 24 hours and will not leave the airport area. To

obtain a "G" visa, you must provide evidence of your onward trip. This may be a copy of an onward visa or a connecting air ticket to the next country of destination. Transit visas are generally valid for 10 days.

### Student Visas

Students must submit an Application Form for International Students issued by the State Education Commission of China, or a notification of admission from a university or college bearing the seal of the State Education Commission. Persons entering China on an "X" visa are not permitted to work and must obtain a residence permit from the Public Security Bureau after they arrive.

### Travel to Tibet

Special permission is required to visit Tibet. Although the requirements change from time to time, obtaining permission to travel to Tibet is usually easier if you are part of an escorted group tour. Ask your Canadian travel agent to provide you with appropriate documents regarding tourist permits to Tibet.

### Customs

Foreign visitors complete a Passenger's Luggage Declaration before proceeding through the customs area at the Chinese port of entry. You are allowed to bring in personal belongings duty-free, including a camera, a portable tape recorder, a movie or video camera and a portable computer. You are also entitled to bring in 400 cigarettes and two 0.75-litre bottles of alcoholic beverages if your stay will be less than six months. For longer stays, the limits are 600 cigarettes and four bottles. Gold and silver jewellery and other objects made of precious metals are duty-free up to a weight of 50 grams.

There are absolute prohibitions against arms, drugs, and plant or animal products considered infested with disease or pests. There are also restrictions on the entry of printed matter, film, photos, videotapes and CDs considered detrimental to the interests of China. These regulations are unlikely to affect tourists carrying small quantities of printed or electronic media for personal use, but be careful to avoid items that might be considered political or pornographic by Chinese authorities.

## Children

If you are travelling to China with your child and there is a possibility of a custody dispute developing while you are away, you should talk to a lawyer before leaving home. A special publication, *International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents*, is available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (see "For More Information").

Your child custody arrangements in Canada may not be recognized in China. In extreme cases, you or your child may not be allowed to leave. Check your status with the Chinese Embassy or a consulate in Canada before you travel. In regard to custody questions, contact the Department's consular case management division at **1-800-387-3124** (in Canada) or **(613) 943-1055**.

If a person younger than 18 is travelling alone or with only one parent or another adult, notarized documentation certifying that the trip is permitted by both parents should be carried.

Parents should also be aware of the problem of international child abduction in cases where children may be considered citizens of other countries, including China. If a child enters China with a parent who does not declare Canadian citizenship on arrival, Canadian officials may not be in a position to intervene on behalf of the other parent. This is true even though there may be a valid child custody order in Canada. Further information on this issue is available from the Department's publication *International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents*.

Many Canadians have adopted children from China. While the procedures are relatively complex, there are no fundamental obstacles to this process, provided that all of the relevant laws of China, Canada and the province of residence of the adopting parents are satisfied. General information is available on several Internet sites (for example, <http://www.adopting.com/countries.html#China>).

## Visiting China

China is a vast country with countless attractions for the traveller. China is as diverse as it is large, and it is difficult to generalize about many aspects of the country. This section provides an overview of things the traveller should know, based mainly on the experience of visitors to the major population centres. If you will be travelling off the beaten path, take extra time to research your destination carefully, and be prepared for the unexpected.

### *Travel*

The Chinese government has been gradually opening the country to outside influences since 1978. Every year, additional parts of China are opened to visitors. But travel permits are still required for some parts of the country. If you will be travelling outside established tourist areas, find out in advance if you will require a permit. Travel permits can be obtained from local offices of the Public Security Bureau.

All foreigners (tourists, visitors or long-term residents) are required to register their place of residence with the local Public

Security Bureau within 24 hours of arrival. If you are staying in a hotel, this is done as part of the check-in process. Those staying with family or friends in a private home must also observe this requirement. Failure to do so can result in fines and/or detention.

The simplest form of travel within China is scheduled air services. Air China, the national airline, and its regional carriers serve all the major cities. Domestic flights generally involve large wide-bodied jets. Tickets can be obtained from any travel agency, or directly from Air China or one of the many domestic carriers serving the regional markets, such as China Eastern or China Southern. Departure taxes are levied at both domestic and international airports.

China has an extensive system of passenger trains, providing an interesting way to see the countryside. Most trains are slow, although there are express trains on the well-travelled routes. Many visitors consider a train trip to be an adventure as well as part of the cultural experience, and overnight trips offer a fascinating look at Chinese life.

Taxis are plentiful in major cities and can be obtained at hotels or taxi stands. Drivers generally don't speak English, so you should arrange for a Chinese-speaking person to write out your destination in detail on a card before you go. Rental cars are available only in the largest cities, generally only with a driver. To drive a vehicle in China, you must obtain a Chinese driver's licence, which is available only to those foreigners who possess a residency permit. Cars with experienced Chinese drivers may be hired at a reasonable cost.

Tipping is not necessary, but it is no longer considered an insult and may be expected in some situations, especially in foreign hotels.

### *Time*

In spite of its size, all of China is in one time zone, which is GMT+8 or EST+13. However, customary opening and closing hours vary significantly across the country. Daylight savings time is not used.

### *Language*

The official spoken language of China is *Putonghua* (standard language or common speech), or

Mandarin, but there are dozens of regional dialects including Cantonese, Shanghainese and Sichuanese. Cantonese is usually spoken in Hong Kong and adjacent Guangdong province. Mandarin is spoken in Beijing and throughout most of China.

Business meetings (outside Hong Kong) are likely to take place in Mandarin. Interpreters are readily available at reasonable prices and can often be arranged through your hotel. Many Chinese people are studying English, so don't be surprised if you meet people who want to practise their English. Written Chinese,

In Mandarin, *pin yin* means "spell sound."

This transliteration system has gradually replaced an older British-designed method known as Wade-Giles in the Western media, which is why some well-known names have changed over the years. The replacement of *Peking* with the phonetically more accurate *Beijing* is an example.

which is the same regardless of the dialect spoken, is based on a system of ideographs or characters. Modern Chinese includes more than 400 basic syllables. Each syllable can be written using the Roman alphabet and a variety of phonetic symbols. The People's Republic of China adopted the *Hanyu Pinyin* system for transliterating Chinese ideograms into the Roman alphabet in the late 1950s, and it is now recognized as standard throughout most of the world. Many Chinese product labels and street signs are expressed in these syllables. They can also be used to input Chinese on computer keyboards.

### ***Currency and Credit Cards***

The official currency of the People's Republic of China is the *renminbi* (RMB or CNY), which means "people's money." The basic unit of currency is the *yuan*, commonly known as *kuai*, which may be written ¥. The *yuan* is divided into 10 *jiao* or 100 *fen*. In order to avoid misunderstandings, vendors usually write down the price for foreign clients. Except in hotels, restaurants and some fixed-priced shops, bargaining is the rule rather than the exception.

It is illegal to pay for anything with foreign currency or to exchange currency anywhere but at official government facilities. Refuse offers to change money on the street. This is not only illegal but also dangerous, since criminals operate the black market and use counterfeit bills.

The RMB cannot be purchased outside China and is not yet fully convertible into hard currency. You will be asked to declare your currency holdings over US\$10,000 when you enter the country. You can change foreign currency or traveller's cheques for RMB at Chinese banks, airports and major hotels. You will be expected to spend at least 50 percent of the RMB that you convert. You will be given official receipts for these transactions, which you must save if you wish to reconvert RMB to hard currency (maximum of 50 percent) when you leave the country.

Major credit cards are not widely accepted in China. Some Chinese banks will provide cash advances using these accounts, but they may charge for the service. Some stores and restaurants accept credit card purchases, but they may apply surcharges.



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.

**PROTOCOL TIPS****EATING**

Chopsticks are used at all meals. The food is placed in the centre of the table in serving dishes, and it is polite to taste every type of food prepared. Food should be served with serving spoons or serving chopsticks. Your chopsticks should be placed neatly on the right of your bowl or plate when not in use. It is considered impolite to drink alone, and toasts are frequent. Non-drinkers may toast with soft drinks.

***Crime***

China is a relatively safe country where violent crime is rare. But petty theft is common, and you should constantly be on guard for pickpockets. It is wise to leave valuables in a hotel safe wherever possible. Be careful when carrying money or passports in a handbag, shoulder bag or backpack, because bag slashing is a common tactic of criminals.

If you decide to stop at a bar, ensure that the prices are clearly marked on the menu so that your tab may be easily calculated. Avoid in particular "hostess bars," where foreign patrons have been taken advantage of, with costly results.

***Women Travelling Solo***

Female travellers should dress conservatively and take safety precautions. General guidelines for women travelling alone are provided in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade publication *Her Own Way: Advice for the Woman Traveller*.

***The Justice System***

When in China, you are subject to Chinese laws and are not entitled to any special protection or consideration because of your Canadian citizenship.

The administration of justice is substantially different in China from in Canada. In general, police and other officials have considerably more discretionary

power than their Canadian counterparts. A lawyer does not have the same advocacy role as in Canada, and the rights of accused persons are much more limited. In civil matters, claims of unstated intent may take precedence over written contract terms. Detention during the investigative period before charges are laid is common and can be lengthy.

If you are arrested or detained, you can request that the arresting officer inform the Canadian Embassy or nearest consulate, provided that you have entered China as a Canadian citizen. You will need a Chinese lawyer. Canadian officials can refer you to one who speaks English, as well as to Canadian lawyers who have experience working in the local court system.

Meanwhile, be aware that what you say can be used against you. Avoid making any arrangements with police or court officials unless your lawyer is present. Sentences will be served in a local prison.

### *Communications*

The telephone system in China is still not up to world standards, but it is improving rapidly. The best place to make phone calls is in your hotel, especially if it is a modern one. Cellular phones are readily available and are becoming very common as prices drop. *Canada Direct* service is available from some major cities in China by calling **108-186**.

Most of the major international courier companies operate in

#### PROTOCOL TIPS

##### GREETINGS

Chinese people often greet each other with a nod or a slight bow, but a handshake is quite acceptable. *Ni Hao* is the standard greeting at any time of the day, often said twice. Business cards should be printed with Chinese on one side and presented with both hands, Chinese side up. It is appropriate to make your position or status clear, even though the Chinese may avoid identifying themselves precisely.

China. Internet service is available but is subject to certain government restrictions. The larger modern hotels have business centres that can provide translation, fax and printing services.

## *Politics*

The close relationship between the Communist Party of China and the Government of the People's Republic of China means that there are few aspects of life in the country that do not have a political dimension. Moreover, Chinese citizens do not have the same rights or expectations of privacy that Westerners are accustomed to. The Chinese people you encounter may feel justifiably uncomfortable if you discuss politics, particularly if you are critical of their government—or even your own. If you

### **PROTOCOL TIPS CONVERSATION**

Refer to the country as the People's Republic of China, or simply China. Taiwan is considered a province of China, so don't refer to it as a country.

are not a Chinese citizen, participation in any political activities will be considered inconsistent with your status, and you may be expelled from the country.

## *Canadian Consular Services*

If you are going to remain in China for three months or more, you should register with the Canadian Embassy or nearest consulate. This will make it easier for them to help you if needed. Keep in mind, however, that your Canadian citizenship does not exempt you from any local laws or regulations. Moreover, Canadian officials may not be able to help you at all if you have Chinese citizenship.

The Canadian Embassy or consulates can help you with any of the following:

- contacting relatives at home in case of an emergency;
- dealing with medical emergencies;
- coping with situations such as natural disasters and civil or military conflict;
- accessing sources of information about local laws, regulations and customs;

- replacing passports; and
- dealing with local authorities if you are arrested.

These Canadian government offices offer 24-hour emergency assistance. You can also contact

the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in Ottawa at **(613) 996-8885** (collect calls accepted) or call **10800-1400125** toll-free from inside China.

## Living in China

### *Foreigner Residence Certificates*

Persons who have entered China on a "Z" or "X" visa must apply for a Foreigner Residence Certificate at the Public Security Bureau within 30 days of arrival. The authorities may issue a provisional certificate in some cases. Temporary residence cards are issued to those who will be staying in China for less than one year. A residence certificate is not required for foreigners holding other types of visas, including the "F" and the "L" visas. Foreigners aged 16 or older must carry their residence certificates or passports at all times for possible examination by authorities.

Foreigner Residence Certificates are issued for periods of one to five years, and the cards must be submitted to the local Public

Security Bureau for examination once a year.

The application for a residence certificate must be supported by documentation demonstrating the applicant's employment. A registration certificate for a representative office of a foreign company from the Chinese Administration for Industry and Commerce is acceptable for this purpose.

The residence certificate is valid for a specific residence and a specific employment situation. Foreigners who wish to change places of residence or employment must apply to the Public Security Bureau to have their residence certificate changed.

Once you have a permit to reside in China, you can obtain an import permit, valid for six months, to bring in personal

belongings duty-free. This process can take several weeks, so be prepared to live in temporary accommodation while you wait for your belongings.

### *Retirement*

Chinese law does not explicitly recognize retirement as a reason for immigration. Nonetheless, Canadian retirees wishing to emigrate to China and live there full-time, but who do not intend to work, study or invest, may consider applying for a "D" visa. This is most easily obtained if you have relatives in China who can sponsor you and handle your application. People in this category should be aware that they may be considered Chinese nationals, and they should research the implications very carefully before making a decision.

To obtain a "D" visa, you must first obtain a Permanent Residence Confirmation form from the local Public Security Bureau in the municipality or county where you intend to live. You will also require a health certificate.

### *Real Estate*

Until recently, the People's Republic of China prohibited the private ownership of land. With economic reforms starting in 1978, the need to introduce market principles to land use became apparent, but it was not until 1987 that China allowed private ownership of land, which is still very restricted.

Real estate reforms were implemented on an experimental basis in a few cities at first, and were extended to the nation as a

#### PROTOCOL TIPS

##### DRESS

Chinese business people are relatively formal; suits for men and suits or dresses for women are conventional for business meetings. When in doubt about appropriate clothing, it is always best to err on the conservative side and to behave with the same good manners as you would in Canada.

**PROTOCOL TIPS****PUNCTUALITY**

Arrive for meetings and social events on time. Arriving late for a meal is considered an insult to the host. Banquets last no longer than two hours and usually end promptly after the fruit course.

whole in 1990. The current regulations allow for "land use rights" over state property to be assigned to private interests, including foreign enterprises. This is done in the form of leases of varying duration, generally awarded through public bidding or auction. Lease terms, which depend on location, can provide for 70-year tenure, but generally they are not longer than 50 years and often they are less.

Grantees are required to substantially develop the land before they acquire the right to resell their land use rights. It is always advisable to check whether land use rights are "designated land use rights" or "granted land use

rights," as the former can be cancelled at any time.

As a result of these reforms, a real estate market has developed for the private sale or lease of residential, commercial and industrial property. Land rights can be sold, rented, leased or mortgaged and are transferable outside China. International-standard residential and commercial real estate in big cities such as Beijing and Shanghai is among the most expensive in the world. Executive apartments in Beijing are listed by several agents in the price range of US\$2,000 to \$10,000 monthly, on the basis of one- or two-year leases.

## THE SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION OF HONG KONG

*The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), which consists of Hong Kong island, Kowloon and the New Territories, passed from British to Chinese sovereignty on July 1, 1997. The governments of China and Britain reached an agreement known as the Joint Declaration in 1984, which set out the conditions for Chinese sovereignty. The National People's Congress passed legislation in 1990 known as the Basic Law, which implements the Joint Declaration. This law establishes the principle of "One Country, Two Systems," and stipulates that the HKSAR will enjoy considerable autonomy over the next 50 years. The entry of tourists and business visitors and the regulation of business activities are among the matters that continue to be governed by HKSAR law.*

**Visiting Hong Kong*****Temporary Visitors***

Canadian citizens entering Hong Kong temporarily for tourism or business purposes do not require visas unless they intend to work. You must present your Canadian passport along with confirmed airline tickets for your onward journey and sufficient funds for your planned stay in Hong Kong. Your passport must be valid for at least one month after your planned departure date. A pass-

port valid for six months after your departure date is required to enter other parts of China and most other countries in the region.

***Identity Cards***

Every person over the age of 11 who enters Hong Kong with the intent of staying more than 180 days must apply for an identity card. The type of card issued will depend on the status of the



individual, and may include any of the following:

- conditional stay;
- unconditional stay;
- the Right to Land; and
- the Right of Abode.

Applications are processed in Hong Kong, but some arrangements can be made from Canada in advance with the HKSAR Immigration Department. The

Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Canada does not handle applications for Hong Kong status.

Regardless of their status, all Hong Kong residents must carry an identity card and produce it when required by authorities. If you are not a resident, you should carry your passport.

## Living in Hong Kong

### *Rights of Canadians*

As of July 1, 1997, Canadians — regardless of their place of birth — who are not already residents of Hong Kong may apply for any of the four residency categories.

Some Canadians may be entitled to the Right to Land or the Right of Abode in the HKSAR by virtue of their birth or prior residency. If you were born in Chinese territory (including Hong Kong), you may be considered a Chinese national. If you obtain the Right of Abode, either by design or inadvertently, the Chinese

authorities may not permit Canada to provide consular services.

Canadians who may have Chinese citizenship are encouraged to learn more about the process by which they can make a declaration of their Canadian citizenship to Hong Kong authorities. Further information on this and other immigration issues can be obtained from the HKSAR Immigration Department. Information is available on the Internet (<http://www.info.gov.hk>), by e-mail at [roa@immd.gen/gov.hk](mailto:roa@immd.gen/gov.hk), and by telephone at (85-2) 2824-4044.

Canadians who remain in Hong Kong for three months or more are encouraged to register with the Canadian Consulate General. This will make it easier for Canadian officials to help you in the event of an emergency.

### Conditional and Unconditional Stay

Most Canadians who first enter Hong Kong with the intent to live there initially acquire Conditional Stay status. Permission to work is granted separately. Conditional Stay status can be revoked at any time and must be renewed periodically.

After seven years of continuous residency under Conditional Stay status, you can apply for Unconditional Stay status or the Right of Abode. The Unconditional Stay relieves you of the need to periodically renew residence and work permits. This is an administrative measure that does not convey any legal right to stay, and it can be revoked at the discretion of the Director of Immigration.

### The Right of Abode

Persons holding Right of Abode status cannot be deported. The law concerning the Right of Abode treats individuals differently depending on their ethnic background. Canadians of Chinese descent who were born in Hong Kong may be considered Chinese citizens. They have the Right of Abode in the HKSAR immediately. Canadians of Chinese descent who were born elsewhere have the Right of Abode after seven continuous years of residence. The required residency may be at any time in the past and does not have to immediately precede the claim to Right of Abode status.

Persons deemed not to be of Chinese nationality can qualify for the Right of Abode if they entered Hong Kong on a valid travel document and have ordinarily resided there for seven continuous years immediately prior to applying to become a permanent resident. The period of continuous residence can be before or after the establishment of the HKSAR.

Once you have acquired the Right of Abode, you are entitled

to enter Hong Kong without conditions, to vote, to run for election and to occupy certain civil positions reserved for permanent residents. You can also apply for an HKSAR passport.

### The Right to Land

Persons who have previously held the right of permanent residency in Hong Kong, but who do not qualify for the Right of Abode, are entitled to the statutory Right to Land. This category applies to Canadians who previously lived in Hong Kong, but were not resident there for seven continuous years immediately prior to seeking entry into the HKSAR. Persons holding the Right to Land are entitled to enter Hong Kong without restrictions, but do not have political rights and can be deported for serious offences.

### Work Permits

To obtain a work permit, you must normally be sponsored by a Hong Kong employer. The sponsoring employer usually handles the application to the HKSAR Immigration Department, and the process generally takes six to eight weeks.

The documents required include a contract of employment, along with a letter from your employer stating reasons for your employment. Your employer must demonstrate that the company is properly incorporated and/or registered and provide copies of financial statements. You should provide a copy of your résumé to demonstrate your qualifications for the job. If your family accompanies you, marriage and birth certificates are required.

### Business Registration

The HKSAR Business Registration Ordinance requires that every person carrying on a business must register with the government within one month of commencing business. A business is defined as any work, profession or activity (other than employment) carried on for the purpose of financial gain.

Foreign corporations can register a branch under this Ordinance. Companies incorporated in Hong Kong must register, whether or not they actually conduct business in Hong Kong. A Business Registration Certificate must be displayed at the address where the business is carried on and

may be demanded for inspection by officials. Business registration does not relieve the holder of obligations for complying with any other regulations applying to that business or profession.

Applications are submitted to the Business Registration Office, and must include copies of the HKSAR identity cards or passports of the proprietor or all of the partners. If the applicant is not a resident of the HKSAR, an agent who is a resident must be appointed. The appointment letter, along with a copy of the agent's HKSAR identity card, must accompany the application. The agent must sign the application.

Foreigners may create corporations with relatively little bureaucracy. Many Hong Kong accounting firms provide "shelf companies" that have been pre-incorporated and can be activated very quickly. So-called "overseas corporations" owned by non-residents must have an agent in the HKSAR, and there are many companies that offer secretariat services for this purpose. A company can register under the Business Registration Ordinance while the paperwork for incorporation is still pending.

## *Taxation*

Under the Basic Law, the HKSAR maintains its own tax regime independent of the system in other parts of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The HKSAR is specifically authorized to enter into independent tax arrangements with foreign governments under the name Hong Kong, China. The Basic Law further provides that the PRC will not enact tax legislation affecting the HKSAR. As a result, PRC tax treaties with other countries that prevent double taxation do not apply in Hong Kong, which is not party to any tax conventions. There are provisions, however, for relief from Hong Kong taxes where another country taxes Hong Kong-source income received for work performed abroad.

The HKSAR levies two taxes on income, a profits tax and a salaries tax. There is a stamp duty, a property tax and an estate tax, but there are no social security or capital gains taxes.

## Profits Tax

The profits tax is levied only on Hong Kong-source income, and applies equally to residents and non-residents. Agents are required to retain sufficient funds from the profits of businesses owned by non-residents and will be held liable for any tax due. Reasonable deductions are allowed for business expenses, including a share of the costs of maintaining a head office outside Hong Kong. If profits derived from business in Hong Kong cannot be reasonably determined, the Inland Revenue Ordinance provides that they may be estimated based on revenue. In 2000/2001, the profits tax was 16 percent for corporations and 15 percent for unincorporated businesses.

## Salaries Tax

The salaries tax applies to all income arising from employment in Hong Kong, including salaries, pensions and certain benefits such as employer-provided housing. This tax applies regardless of the nationality or residence of the taxpayer. Individuals who are employed and paid outside Hong Kong are liable for this tax only if

they spend more than 60 days in the HKSAR during any tax year.

This tax is levied at progressive rates, which in 2000/2001 ranged from 2 percent to 17 percent. Deductions are provided in the form of allowances for individuals, dependent spouses and other dependants. The total tax may not exceed the "standard rate," which is 15 percent of total income before allowances. If you are an HKSAR resident, you may elect to have taxes calculated by a system of personal assessment, which may result in lower taxes. When you permanently depart from Hong Kong, your employer is required to withhold sufficient amounts of your salary to guarantee payment of all taxes before the Inland Revenue Department will issue a certificate of release.

## Customs

Hong Kong is a free port and does not levy general tariffs on imported goods. If you go to Hong Kong to live and work, you can bring in your possessions duty-free, except for limitations on liquor, tobacco and fuel. There is a substantial tax on the first registration of a motor vehicle.

## ***Money and Banking***

The official currency is the Hong Kong dollar, and major credit cards are widely accepted. The HKSAR imposes no restrictions on the movement of funds into and out of the region.

## ***Travel to Other Parts of China***

The growth in economic links between Hong Kong and other parts of China has driven a huge increase in cross-boundary traffic. With 12 express trains running between Hong Kong and Guangdong every day, the Lo Wu crossing alone handles 150,000 passengers daily. In addition, automobile traffic across the Mam Kam To, Sha Tau Kok and Lok Ma Chau crossings amounts

to nearly 30,000 vehicles per day. There are seven ferry services in Hong Kong handling traffic to 25 mainland destinations. There are also many scheduled airline flights from Hong Kong to major cities on the mainland.

Travellers in Hong Kong must pass an additional border inspection when they cross into other parts of China. The requirements are generally the same as those for entry directly from Canada. Tourist visas can be obtained in Hong Kong from one of the official state agencies, including the China Travel Service (CTS) or the China International Travel Service (CITS), as well as from some private travel agencies. This can normally be done in one day.

### **PROTOCOL TIPS**

#### **FORMS OF ADDRESS**

Chinese personal names are usually three syllables, with the surname given first. For example, Zhou Pengfei's surname is Zhou.

Chinese tend to be more formal than Canadians, and it is best to use formal forms of address, such as Mr. Zhou, or occupational titles such as Director Zhou. If you are greeted by Vice-Mayor Wang or Vice-President Zhou, addressing them as Mayor Wang or President Zhou in subsequent conversation is considered quite polite.

## Doing Business in China

(Including the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong)

If you would like information on how to do business in China and the HKSAR, contact the Canadian Embassy and consulates in China (see the list of addresses and contact numbers on page 35) or consult the

Internet (<http://www.canada.org.cn>). This Web site includes a section on exporting to and investing in China that is specifically designed for Canadian business people.

## Returning Home

When planning your trip home from China, there are a few things to consider. First, you must convert your remaining holdings of *renminbi* to hard currency before you leave the country. To do this, you must provide receipts for your major transactions. Make sure you have cash ready to pay the international departure tax. In spring 2001, this tax was RMB 90.

Travellers should also be prepared for customs procedures when they enter Canada. Everything acquired abroad must be declared, so keeping receipts of purchases is advisable. Customs forms are usually distributed on the plane flying to Canada; they are also available

at airports and land and sea ports of entry.

If you have been away from Canada for 24 hours or more, you may bring back goods worth up to C\$50 without paying duties or taxes. This does not include alcohol and tobacco.

If you have been away from Canada for 48 hours or more, you may bring back goods worth up to C\$200 without paying duties or taxes. These goods can include tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, as described below.

If you have been away from Canada for seven days or more, you may bring back goods worth up to C\$750 without paying

duties or taxes. These goods can include tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, as described below. When calculating the number of days you are absent, do not include the date you leave Canada, but do include the date you return.

If you have been away from Canada for 48 hours or more, you may bring back up to 1.14 litres of liquor or 1.5 litres of wine, or a case of 24 bottles or cans of beer or ale, each containing 355 ml. You may also bring back up to 200 cigarettes, 50 cigars or cigarillos, 200 tobacco sticks and 200 grams of manufactured tobacco. Provincial age restrictions apply to liquor and tobacco products.

Canada imposes special restrictions on a variety of imported goods. They include meat and dairy products, weapons, plants,

vehicles and environmentally harmful products, as well as exotic animals and goods based on their exploitation. Check with Canadian customs officials in advance if you plan to import any articles in these categories. It is illegal to bring obscene materials or hate propaganda of any kind into the country.

Canadians who have lived abroad for more than one year are entitled to special customs treatment for household and personal items. Details of these provisions are found in the booklet *Moving Back to Canada*.

If you have any doubts about what you're allowed to bring back, call the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's toll-free information service at **1-800-461-9999** (in Canada) or **(204) 983-3500** or **(506) 636-5064**.



## For More Information

### *Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade*

Web sites:

Canada's Window on China:

<http://www.canada.org.cn>

China Perspectives:

<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/china>

### *Consular Affairs Bureau*

Web site:

<http://www.voyage.gc.ca>

E-mail: [voyage@dfait-maeci.gc.ca](mailto:voyage@dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

Publications (free)

*Bon Voyage, But... Information for the Canadian Traveller*

*Canadian Performers: How to Enter the United States*

*Crossing the 49th: Advice for Canadians Travelling to the United States*

*Destination: Success—Services for Business Travellers*

*Guide for Canadians Imprisoned Abroad*

*Her Own Way: Advice for the Woman Traveller*

*International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents*

*México: ¿Qué pasa? A Guide for Canadian Visitors*

*Out on a Limb: Advice for the Adventure Traveller*

*Retirement Abroad: Seeing the Sunsets*

*Teaching English in Korea*  
(available on the Internet only)

*What No Child Should Endure*

*Working Abroad: Unravelling the Maze*

### **To access or order:**

Consult the Consular Web site (see above) or

Tel.: **1-800-267-8376** (in Canada) or **(613) 944-4000**

*Country Travel Reports* (free)

Country Travel Reports provide information on safety and security conditions, health issues and entry requirements for over 220 travel destinations. This information is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

**To access or order:**

Consult the Consular Web site (see above) or  
Tel.: **1-800-267-6788** (in Canada)  
or **(613) 944-6788**  
Fax: **1-800-575-2500** (in Canada)  
or **(613) 944-2500**

Publication (approximately \$19.95 plus GST and shipping costs)

*Diplomatic, Consular and Other Representatives in Canada*

**To order:**

Canadian Government  
Publishing, Ottawa, ON K1A 0S9  
Tel.: **1-800-635-7943** (in Canada)  
or **(613) 956-4800**

**Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA)**

Web site:

<http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca>

**Customs**

Customs border services  
Automated Customs Information Service  
Tel.: **1-800-461-9999** (in Canada)  
or **(204) 983-3500** or  
**(506) 636-5064**

Publications (free)

*I Declare*

*Importing a Firearm into Canada*

*Importing a Motor Vehicle into Canada*

*Moving Back to Canada*

**To order:**

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, Ottawa, ON K1A 0L5  
Tel.: **1-800-461-9999** (in Canada)  
or **(204) 983-3500** or  
**(506) 636-5064**, consult the CCRA Web site, or contact your local Customs border services office.

**Taxation**

The International Tax Services Office processes the income tax returns of non-residents, deemed residents and Canadians posted overseas. It also services all non-resident tax withholding accounts. The Office provides client assistance by telephone, correspondence and counter service.

International Tax Services Office,  
2204 Walkley Road, Ottawa, ON  
K1A 1A8

Tel. (collect calls are accepted):

**1-800-267-5177** (in Canada)

or **(613) 952-3741**

Non-Resident Withholding

Accounts: **(613) 952-2344**

Problem Resolution Program:

**(613) 952-3502**

Fax: **(613) 941-2505**

Publication (free)

*Canadian Residents Abroad*

**To order:**

Consult the CCRA Web site

(see above) or

Tel.: **1-800-267-5177** (in Canada)

or **(613) 952-3741**

***Canadian Food  
Inspection Agency***

Web site:

**<http://www.inspection.gc.ca>**

Publication (free)

*What Can I Bring into Canada?*

**To order:**

Canadian Food Inspection

Agency, Public Affairs,

59 Camelot Drive, 2nd Floor East,

Nepean, ON K1A 0Y9

Tel.: **1-800-442-2342** or

**(613) 225-2342**

***Citizenship and  
Immigration Canada  
(CIC)***

Web site: **<http://www.cic.gc.ca>**

Publications (free)

*Dual Citizenship*

*How to Prove You Are a*

*Canadian Citizen*

**To order:**

Consult the CIC Web site

(see above) or

Tel.: **(613) 954-9019**

***Environment Canada***

Endangered Species Web site:

**<http://www.ec.gc.ca/cites>**

Tel.: **1-800-668-6767** or

**(819) 997-1840**

Fax: **(819) 953-6283**

***Health Issues***

***Canadian HIV/AIDS  
Clearinghouse***

Web site:

**<http://www.cpha.ca/cpha.docs/ch/basic.html>**

Publication (\$)

*Basic Facts About AIDS*

**To order:**

1565 Carling Avenue, Suite 400,  
Ottawa, ON K1Z 8R1  
Tel.: (613) 725-3434

**Canadian Public Health Association**

Publications (\$)

*Don't Drink the Water: The Complete Traveller's Guide to Staying Healthy in Warm Climates*

*International Travel and Health (2001): Vaccination Requirements and Health Advice*  
*Travel Immunization Record*

**To order:**

1565 Carling Avenue, Suite 400,  
Ottawa, ON K1Z 8R1  
Tel.: (613) 725-3769, ext. 190

**Canadian Society for International Health**

List of travel clinics:  
Tel.: (613) 241-5785

Publication (free)

*Health Information for Canadian Travellers*

**To order:**

1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1105,  
Ottawa, ON K1N 7B7  
Tel.: (613) 241-5785  
E-mail: [csih@csih.org](mailto:csih@csih.org)

**Health Canada**

Web sites:

Health Canada:

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>

Travel Medicine Program:

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/osh/tmp\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/osh/tmp_e.html)

Tel.: (613) 957-8739

FAXCall: (613) 941-3900

Health Canada provides information for travellers through a network of public and private health and travel clinics across the country.

**Passport Office**

Web site:

<http://www.ppt.gc.ca>

Tel.: 1-800-567-6868 (in Canada)  
Montreal (514) 283-2152  
Ottawa-Hull (819) 994-3500  
Toronto (416) 973-3251  
Vancouver (604) 586-2500

Applications for Canadian passports are available online, at passport offices and post offices in Canada and at Canadian government offices in China. There are separate forms for adults and children. Allow at least three weeks for passport delivery.

### *Canadian Government Offices in China*

Assistance and information may be sought in China from the Consular Section of the Canadian Embassy and the consulates throughout the country.

Web site:  
<http://www.canada.org.cn>

#### **Beijing**

Canadian Embassy  
19 Dong Zhi Men Wai Street  
Chao Yang District  
Beijing 100600  
People's Republic of China  
Tel.: **86 (10) 6532-3536**  
Fax: **86 (10) 6532-5544**  
(consular office)  
Fax: **86 (10) 6532-4072**  
(trade office)

#### **Chongqing**

Consulate of Canada  
Room 1705, Metropolitan Tower  
Wu Yi Lu, Yu Zhong District  
Chongqing 400010  
People's Republic of China  
Tel.: **86 (23) 6373-8007**  
Fax: **86 (23) 6373-8026**

#### **Guangzhou**

Consulate General of Canada  
Suite 801  
China Hotel Office Tower  
Liu Hua Lu  
Guangzhou 510015  
People's Republic of China  
Tel.: **86 (20) 8666-0569**  
Fax: **86 (20) 8667-0267**

#### **Hong Kong**

Consulate General of Canada  
14th Floor  
One Exchange Square, Central  
Hong Kong SAR  
People's Republic of China

#### **Postal address:**

G.P.O. Box 11142 Central  
Hong Kong SAR  
People's Republic of China  
Tel.: **85 (2) 2810-4321**  
(consular office)  
Tel.: **85 (2) 2847-7414**  
(trade office)  
Fax: **85 (2) 2810-6736**  
(consular office)  
Fax: **85 (2) 2847-7441**  
(trade office)

### **Shanghai**

Consulate General of Canada  
American International Centre  
West Tower, Suite 604  
1376 Nanjing Xi Lu  
Shanghai 200040  
People's Republic of China  
Tel.: **86 (21) 6279-8400**  
Fax: **86 (21) 6279-8401**

### ***Chinese Government Offices in Canada***

The Embassy of the People's Republic of China and the Chinese consulates can provide assistance and guidance to Canadian companies in need of information about visa and business regulations.

Web site: **<http://www.chinaembassycanada.org>**

### **Embassy of the People's Republic of China**

515 St. Patrick Street  
Ottawa, ON K1N 5H3  
Tel.: **(613) 789-3434**  
Fax: **(613) 789-1911**

### **Consulates General of the People's Republic of China**

#### **Calgary**

Suite 100, 1011 6th Avenue SW  
Calgary, AB T2P 0W1  
Tel.: **(403) 264-3322**  
Fax: **(403) 264-6656**

#### **Toronto**

240 St. George Street  
Toronto, ON M5R 2P4  
Tel.: **(416) 964-7260**  
Fax: **(416) 324-6468**

#### **Vancouver**

3380 Granville Street  
Vancouver, BC V6H 3K3  
Tel.: **(604) 736-3985**  
Fax: **(604) 737-0154**

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CONSULAR AFFAIRS

# *Travelling Abroad?*

**Contact us...**

**For information on  
safe travel issues:**

**E-mail:**

[voyage@dfait-maeci.gc.ca](mailto:voyage@dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

**Web site:**

<http://www.voyage.gc.ca>

**For urgent assistance  
abroad, call:**

**(613) 996-8885**