

SERVICE DELIVERY GUIDELINES PREPARING FOR THE CHINESE VISITOR INFORMATION PROVISION



Chinese visitation to Australia has been growing strongly over the past ten years and has seen Australia reach its 2020 goal of one million visitors in March this year – making it the largest and fastest growing of all inbound markets.

Year ending March 2016, 34,000 Chinese visitors included South Australia in their itinerary, spending \$211 million, making it our most valuable international market. Projections suggest that if we maximise the growth of

Chinese visitation to South Australia we could attract up to 57,000 visitors by 2020 with associated expenditure of \$450 million.

To achieve this potential, it is essential we understand the current Chinese visitor, as well

as the likely changes in travel patterns that are to occur over the next five years and look at ways to prepare and deliver the expectations of the market.

The South Australian Tourism Commission in partnership with Fastrak Asian Solutions

has developed this series of service delivery guidelines to assist our industry partners in preparing South Australia to meet the expectations and grow visitation from one of the fastest growing markets – China.

Whilst the more mature Chinese visitors have an independent mindset, this does not necessarily translate to being able to travel independently. Chinese visitors are used to structure and guidance in their lives, so tourism operators need to help them to engage with the product / experiences by providing information that helps Chinese visitors understand “how things are done” and how to make their stay “easy”.

This is not about telling Chinese visitors what to do, but rather providing suggestions on what is available and offering assistance about how they might do it. For instance:

- Suggestions on how long they will need for activities and the minimum time needed for each activity at Chinese visitor pace;
- What order would make most sense (if there is one);
- Any clothing / safety requirements; and
- The different “groups” of options available (for adults only and / or families) so that Chinese visitors can “pick and mix” and feel like they are “independently” making up their program. Perception is reality!

It is not about telling Chinese visitors what to do, but rather about not assuming knowledge, as well as providing suggestions relating to the offering. Provide details of what to expect, how they can best engage, what they need to know in advance and how the business can help them not “lose face” through any embarrassment, conflict or dispute.

Aspects of regional Australia may prove challenging for Chinese visitors, as they may not be aware of reduced opening hours overall, lack of 24hr service / receptions, entry to things like a registered Club (like proof of identity), and / or the informal and formal rules of local society.

An operator’s visitor information sheets can also be used to manage Chinese visitor expectations in relation to regional differences. This will help with making the Chinese visitor aware, not just of elements within their own product, but also of elements within the region or relating to the visitor’s onward journey. With this type of information available for Chinese visitors, tourism operators will be in a better position to manage interactions with Chinese visitors and avoid unnecessary misunderstandings, conflict or loss of face.

The information should be provided in both English and simplified Chinese, with both versions handed to the visitor. While many Chinese visitors read and write English better than they speak it, the operator has a vested interest in making sure the visitors fully understand the information they are given and this is achieved more successfully with a Chinese version.

Providing information to the Chinese visitor is very important in terms of “face”. If the operator lets Chinese visitors know the “rules of engagement” up front, then if the Chinese visitor breaks the rules, they lose face. If, however, the operator assumes knowledge of the rules and then the Chinese visitor breaks them, and the operator reacts to the breach, it is the operator that loses face (and respect), in the eyes of the Chinese visitor.

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INFORMATION PROVISION



DISTANCES

Chinese visitors will travel at a faster pace than most Westerners as they are really getting from one place to another rather than "taking it easy". However, they do tend to have unrealistic expectation of how much distance can be accomplished in a day. Have some material available about travel times to key towns and cities and as part of their departure you ask them where they are headed - and then provide help!

AUSSIE OPTIONS

Chinese visitors may not understand what these are, how they operate, and / or how they can join in - so don't assume knowledge - they need to be explained. For example: a 'Sausage Sizzle' to an Australian usually indicates a free sausage and an opportunity to mix with locals, but a Chinese visitor may well think it is a specially arranged event for invited guests only.

SPORTING OPTIONS

It is highly likely Chinese visitors will require provision of equipment, guidance and instruction, and if possible personal support and / or instruction.

WALKING OPTIONS

Whilst (especially in nature) this is of great appeal to Chinese visitors, there needs to be support information about where to go, how to go, how long it will take, and what will be seen - or if possible some signage for walk options within an attraction.

NIGHT OPTIONS

Chinese visitors are used to night time activities that involve getting together and in many cases use shopping malls for this back home. They are going to want to get together and may be a little noisy, so make them aware of any indoor communal areas you have, movie nights if you have them, or invent an activity like "star gazing".

MAP

Colour code your maps by the type of experience provided - eg: blue for water if you have a pool, green for natural areas including walks.

AROUND YOU

Include options for Chinese visitors to do on the way to you and from you (including public transport options and local Asian supermarkets) and help for visitors to understand how to use such options (like a bus card if needed).

Disclaimer: This summary has been prepared by the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) in good faith and based on information provided by Fastrak Asian Solutions. While every care has been taken in preparing the information, the SATC does not represent or warrant that it is correct, complete or suitable for the purposes for which you wish to use it. By using this information you acknowledge that it is provided by SATC without any responsibility on behalf of the SATC and agree to release and indemnify the SATC for any loss or damage that you or any third party may suffer as a result of your reliance on this information.

CONTACT

For more information and the full series of Service Delivery Guidelines - Preparing for the Chinese visitor, see www.tourism.sa.gov.au