

CHINESE TOURISM ANALYSIS



Chinese economy grows rapidly and so does its tourism industry. As the world's economy improves, number of tourists rises every year. In 2020 the number of overseas travelers is expected to rise to approximately 1.6 billion. Experts from the World Tourism Organization (WTO) expect China to become one of the countries with the most inbound tourism by 2020. The demand for this destination will be boosted by various factors. Among others the Beijing Olympics in 2008, the Shanghai World Expo and Asian Games in Guangzhou in 2010 will take place in China. The Olympics itself are expected to lure some two million visitors.

Chinese continuously improve their infrastructure. Plenty of projects will be finished in 2008 and many new will be started. Among those finished this year is e.g. the expansion at the Beijing and Shanghai airports. They will be operational in the first quarter of 2008. The government is also investing huge amounts of money to build airports in western and northern China. These developments should help second-tier cities to participate on the prosperous tourism industry. Beijing itself plans to continue in redeveloping a number of popular tourist locations. According to Kong Fanzhi, secretary of the Beijing Cultural Relics Bureau, they have removed 139 ancient buildings and 106 recently in past eight years.

There are, however, also setbacks to the development of the industry. A major one is the rising prices of jet fuel. The prices have gone by 48 percent in 2007 and the rise is likely to continue. Another problem is the ailing US economy, which may cause global economic slowdown. Also, China should have opened its travel industry, such as airlines and travel agencies to foreigners because it is now part of the World Tourism Organization. However, the country still remains somewhat protective of national interests.

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