

CHINA ALLOWS VISA-FREE ENTRY TO 3 MORE CITIES



Travelers who want to make a short detour to the Middle Kingdom will soon have greater choice. China plans to make visa-free entry possible in more cities - but only under certain conditions.

Starting on December 1, transit **passengers from a total of 53 countries may visit the Chinese cities of Chongqing, Xi'an, Ningbo, and Chengdu for up to six days without a visa.** This was reported by the state television station CGTN with reference to the National Immigration Service.

A prerequisite for this is that the traveler is in transit to a third country and only makes a stopover in China. The traveler must be in possession of a valid passport or another travel document, an air, sea or land transport document with a confirmed seat to a destination. If necessary, the traveler needs to have a valid visa or passport for the country of final destination (which cannot be to be China but allowed for Hong Kong and Macao). Upon entry, travelers must complete an application form and present a valid ticket to their destination.

In many cases, travelers are not allowed to leave the city area. An exception is Ningbo: if entering via this coastal city, the travelers can also visit the Yangtze Delta - the metropolis Shanghai as well as the provinces Zhejiang and Jiangsu.

The government statement says that in recent years, the Ministry of Public Security and the Public Administration of Immigration have formulated a series of measures to facilitate the management of immigration and that from January 2013 to September 2019, 452,000 foreigners arrived in China thanks to this transit visa exemption policy, including 100,000 in 2018, an increase of 24% compared to 2017.

The number of Chinese cities that westerners can visit without a visa for up to six days thus rises to 20 in December. These include the metropolises of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen. 3 other cities - Harbin, Guilin, and Changsha - offer visa-free entry for up to three days.

The transit visa exemption of 72h or 144h is applicable by travelers from one of the following 53 countries:

Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, New Zealand, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, South Korea, Spain, USA, United Kingdom, Ukraine, and United Arab Emirates

Date: 2019-10-28

Article link:

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