

AMERICANS TRY TO TEMPT CHINESE TOURISTS



The following figures need some explanation: there are 1.3 billion people in China yet 300 million in the United States. Last year, 1,56 million Americans visited China as opposed to just 560,000 Chinese visitors to the states. Why are there so few Chinese tourists in America despite China having such a huge population? The answer lies in the fact that for the average Chinese family a trip to America is relatively expensive. Similarly, it involves a very complicated visa application process, as the U.S.A. is not among the 129 approved destinations for Chinese tourists. This is a situation that the Americans are trying to change as they seek to increase the amount of Chinese visitors in their country.

As recent as October 9, the Beijing Youth Daily reported the opening of the official tourism office to have been given the green light in China. Furthermore, the U.S.A. is likely to be given the ADS, or Approved Destination Status, in the near future and Shao Qiwei, chairman of the Chinese National Tourist Association, has pointed out there has been significant progress in negotiations between the 2 countries. Qiwei was also keen to stress that progress has been made in simplifying the complicated visa application process. Indeed, 90% of visas were approved between January and June. Once this obstacle has been made easier to survive, a trip to the U.S.A. would be a lot cheaper for Chinese people.

Jon Huntsman, the governor of the U.S. state Utah has been trying to attract more Chinese visitors in a different way. Using video footage of Utah's snow-capped mountains, various brochures and a promotional website in Chinese, he has always been confident that Utah would prove to be popular amongst Chinese tourists. He is not alone in America's task to overcome a market with, as the figures suggest, such a huge potential.

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