

Baggage

For all Chinese airlines, the baggage allowance in economy class is 20kg per person. A piece of hand luggage up to maximum 5kg and dimensions of 20cm x 40cm x 55cm can be taken on the flight for free. We recommend carrying sturdy and lockable luggage as hand luggage. If luggage is missing or damaged on arrival at the airport or elsewhere, please immediately contact the airline, transport company or local police department. If travellers do not notify the appropriate authorities, they may risk losing claim to their luggage. The respective transport companies are obliged to issue a written confirmation recognising the damage or loss of luggage is due to improper transportation. Any valuables should be carried in your hand luggage.

Climate

Due to China's vast size, the country's climate varies greatly depending on the location and season. Generally speaking, the best time to travel in China is from April to June or September to November.

Domestic transportation

In most parts of China, buses are air-conditioned (note: this does not apply to all regions, such as Tibet!) and drivers are very friendly. Road conditions are not always optimal and potholes must be expected.

The Chinese Railway's ordinary trains offer four classes of seating – hard seats, soft seats, hard sleepers and soft sleepers. Typically, we recommend the soft sleepers for the most comfort where guests sleep in the cabin (4-bed compartment). Please note that the bed size on the train is about 90-100cm wide and 190cm long.

China has a well-developed domestic flight network encompassing both national and regional airlines. For domestic flights, we tend to book scheduled flights from well-known airlines, such as Air China, China Southern Airlines and China Eastern Airlines.

Photography

Photography is allowed in most places throughout China, with the exception of airports and military operations. In some museums, temples and other places of interest, photography may be prohibited or allowed for an additional fee.

Tour guides

Local tour guides for Diethelm Travel programmes are highly experienced and speak English unless another language-speaking guide is requested in advance. Occasionally, and in rural areas away from big cities, there may only be English-speaking tour guides available. During the popular Yangtze cruise, for instance, there is only one general (not private) English-speaking tour guide provided by the cruise itself.

Yunnan particularities

Yunnan, the sixth largest Chinese province, offers some of the most picturesque topography and diversified culture in the world. Located in the southwest part of the country, its towering mountains hug the borders of Tibet and Myanmar in the northwest and its



lush tropical rainforests embrace the perimeter of Laos and Vietnam in the south. It is home to 25 different ethnic groups that make up a third of China's ethnic minorities in addition to half the country's plant and animal species.

With a unique array of fascinating environments as well as a healthy climate and friendly people, Yunnan is one of the most alluring destinations in China.

airport tax

All international and domestic airport taxes are included in the airfare.

cancellation policy

1. Roundtrips & Overnight Packages

30 days or more prior start of service:	No charge
Between 29 days and 15 days prior start of service:	30% of package price
Between 14 days and 7 days prior start of service:	70% of package price
6 days or less prior start of service OR no show:	100% of package price

2. Accommodation

Actual cancellation terms are subject to each individual hotel policy.

3. Transfers & Day Excursions

6 days or more prior start of service:	No charge
Between 5 days and 3 days prior start of service:	50% of price
2 days or less prior start of service OR no show:	100% of price

4. Groups

60 days or more prior start of service:	No charge
Between 59 days and 45 days prior start of service:	25% of package price
Between 44 days and 30 days prior start of service:	50% of package price
Between 29 days and 15 days prior start of service:	75% of package price
Between 14 days prior start of service or less:	100% of package price
Remark: based on a cancellation of the entire group movement.	

Terms & Conditions:

Cancellation charges shall be calculated from the day the written notification is received by the company or agent as a percentage of the net total tour price as a shown, plus any surcharges (e.g. ticketed air sectors and other penalties imposed by suppliers, such as hotels).
Certain hotels, lodges, chalets, rest-houses are subject to stricter and specific cancellation terms. Specific cancellation terms will be advise at a time of proposal.

Some type of transportation and experiences (e.g. a full day yacht charter or a specific language guide) can be subject to stricter and specific cancellation terms. Such cancellation terms will be advise at a time a proposal.

Cancellation of air arrangements will be subject to fees charged in accordance with the type of airfare used and airline tariff regulations.

Refunds will not be given for unused or cancelled services after the tour arrangements have commenced.

Cancellation terms and conditions are subject to individual inquiry and are based on the services requested.

climate

Because of the magnitude of the country, China's climate can vary greatly with respect to region. There are tropical conditions in the south but a continental climate in the north, northeast and northwest. During the winter, the south of the country can be wet, which consequently leaves the north cold and dry. Rains are mostly concentrated in July and August throughout the entire country.

clothing

Since China's temperatures fluctuate throughout the day, it is important to dress in layers so that you can add or remove clothing for maximum comfort. For example, pack a sweater and a light jacket that can be easily removed as the day warms up or put back on as the evenings cool down.

Special items to bring to Yunnan include sunscreen lotion, a hat and sunglasses to protect against the intense sunlight. The dry, high-attitude plateau is likely to cause chapped lips and cracked skin, so be sure to bring lip salve and skin cream.

Be aware that the climate varies greatly in China. Travel to the southern part of Yunnan Province requires light, cotton clothing suitable for the tropics. Travellers to Dali, Lijiang or Zhongdian in the northwest of the province should take gloves and a warm coat or jacket between November and March.

currency and exchange

The Chinese currency is the renminbi (RMB), which means 'people's money'. It is also commonly known as the yuan (CNY) or in popular parlance, the kuai. One yuan is divided into 10 jiao (or mao) and into 100 fen. Coins are used in denominations of 1 yuan, 1, 2 and 5 jiao, and 1, 2 and 5 fen. Bank note denominations comprise 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 and 100 yuan.

Money Exchange

Cash and traveller's cheques can be exchanged into yuan in major hotels as well as most branches of the Bank of China and the Bank of Communications.

Credit Cards & ATMs

Although credit cards are accepted in major cities by larger, more established businesses, cash is still the most popular form of payment in China. More and more ATM machines are available in large cities but the connection to an international network can be unreliable in some locations.

customs regulations

It is unlawful and strictly prohibited to import any kind of narcotic, weapon, pornographic media and material harmful to state interest into China. Antiques may only be exported with a certificate or a receipt from an officially licensed shop. Baggage may be X-rayed or inspected before departure.

Contact

operation@cn.diethelmtravel.com



www.diethelmtravel.com

drinking water

The tap water in China cannot be consumed unless it is boiled.

Drinking Water in Hotels

Hotel rooms often feature a water dispenser which delivers both cool and hot potable water. However, some hotels have no water dispenser but are instead equipped with a water heater or thermos. You can use the heater to boil water or use the water directly from the thermos. If the water in the thermos has run out, you can ask a waiter to refill it. In some cases, four- or five-star hotels may supply high-quality mineral water for free or for a minimal charge. The tap water in the hotels can be used to brush teeth.

Drinking Water in Restaurants

In most Chinese restaurants, free water is served before the meal, although sometimes tea or noodle soup is offered instead. This water has been boiled and you can drink it without worry. Most restaurants also have bottled water or other beverages on their menu, although you must pay for them and the price is higher than what is found at the supermarket. Some restaurants may sell cold drinks without ice.

Drinking Water Outside

Although tap water is not drinkable, you can purchase bottled mineral water and various beverages from street shops, supermarkets, restaurants and hotel stores for about CNY 2 - 5 per bottle. Foreign brands are available in the supermarkets of big cities while local brands are sold in small cities or rural areas. Several popular brands of bottled water include Wa Ha Ha, Nestle and Nongfu Spring. Bottled tea and juice are also popular.

electricity

The electric current in China is 220 V, 50 Hz. Plugs can be three-pronged angled, three-pronged round, two flat pins or two narrow round pins.

food and dining

Like music, dance and drama, Chinese cookery is regarded as a form of art and an important part of Chinese culture. Chinese culinary style pays special attention to the selection of ingredients along with the colour, smell, taste, appearance and combination of dishes. Because China is such a diverse country, you will find that there are distinct regional cuisines that have developed over centuries based on the changes in produce availability, climate, traditions and eating habits.

In order to give travellers a true feeling for the country and its diverse regional cuisine, Diethelm Travel includes local restaurants in its itineraries whenever possible. They are carefully selected for hygiene as well as gastronomic considerations. In some countryside areas, dining opportunities are very limited. Travellers are advised against eating from street or market stalls no matter how tempting these may seem. Again, never drink tap water; purified bottled water is available everywhere.

general advice

The tropical cyclone (typhoon) season in China normally runs from May to November and affects the southern and eastern coastal regions of China. Be sure to monitor the progress of approaching storms. Take particular care if travelling in Tibet or Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Don't attempt to travel to Tibet without the appropriate permits. Tibetan Autonomous Region (or Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures in neighbouring Provinces) can be closed to foreigners without notice. We suggest taking out comprehensive travel and medical insurance before you travel.

Contact

operation@cn.diethelmtravel.com



www.diethelmtravel.com



getting there

In the early part of the 20th century, Yunnan was nearly inaccessible to foreigners. The arduous overland trip, which took travellers up the Yangzi River to Chongqing and south through brigand-infested mountains to Kunming, was considered too dangerous. Instead, most travellers chose to take the sea route from Hong Kong to Haiphong (in Vietnam) and the French-run railway from Hanoi to Kunming. Nowadays, Yunnan can be easily reached by air, train and overland.

China Yunnan Airlines offers a comfortable and convenient service to Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province. Its modern fleet of Boeing 737s and wide-bodied 767s fly from Kunming to 41 regional destinations. Thai International Airways services daily flights from Bangkok to Kunming in addition to routes from Chiang Mai to Kunming on Thursdays and Sundays. This is an ideal ‘gateway’ to China from Southeast Asia. A flight from Chiang Mai to Kunming is also now available through Bangkok Airways twice a week. Flights between Hong Kong and Kunming leave daily on China Southern Airlines or three to four times per week with Dragon Air. There are also direct flights from Kunming to Yangon and Mandalay (Myanmar), Kuala Lumpur, Osaka, Macao, Hanoi and Vientiane.

health requirement

No vaccinations are presently required before visiting China, including visiting Yunnan. Nevertheless, it is recommended that you be immunised against polio, typhoid, rabies, Japanese encephalitis and both hepatitis A and B.

Travellers should also take adequate supplies of any prescription medicines they may need because supplies may not be locally available.

hotels

Despite that the building boom has brought about the construction of new hotels that meet international standards, accommodation in Yunnan will still vary in quality and, during high seasons, availability. Diethelm Travel clients will generally receive hotel reservation priority, but Diethelm Travel cannot guarantee specific hotel requests and reserves the right to substitute the next best alternative when a first-choice hotel is not available. Clients are advised that accommodations, especially in upcountry or remote locations, may not always be up to international standards.

internet

China has internet coverage all over the country that is serviced by providers such as China Telecom, China Unicom and China Mobile.

Once you’ve arrived in China, go to a mobile internet service kiosk or shop, show your passport and buy a Chinese SIM card. This will allow you to surf the internet on your smartphone.

Broadband and mobile internet service rates vary depending on the regional providers and the length of your contract. Broadband service is available both monthly and yearly while mobile internet is charged by the month. Monthly payments are generally slightly higher than annual payments.

Today, most hotels provide free WiFi service. Some may have a business centre that provides computer access and internet service for a small fee. Ask before about the availability of free WiFi access in public places before you go.

language

Contact

operation@cn.diethelmtravel.com



www.diethelmtravel.com



Chinese (中文) is comprised of seven main dialects, Mandarin (普通话), Cantonese (广东话, 粤语), Hakka (客家话), Wu (吴语), Min (闽语), Xiang (湘语) and Gan (赣语). The official language of China is Mandarin, which is the very name of 'Putonghua', a parlance in mainland China. It is the common language of all modern Han nationality people.

local time and working hours

The entire country of China is set to Beijing time GMT + 8. Businesses, especially those in the westernmost provinces and regions of the country, have made adjustments to their daytime routine to accommodate the unusual daylight hours.

passport and visa

All visitors entering mainland China require a visa. The exception is western nationalities visiting Hong Kong for less than 30 days. Tourist visas for individuals and group visas can be obtained directly through Chinese embassies or consulates.

Please check with the Chinese embassy or consulate in your home country before your scheduled departure for any changes in visa requirement or travel restrictions. Be sure that your passport has at least 6 months validity beyond the expiration date of your visa.

post and communications

Mail, incoming and outgoing, is reliable and quite fast if sent by air. International telephone services are available in every major city and have access to all parts of the world. Email is widely used in companies, major hotels and internet cafés. China Telecom is one company offering a fast and efficient internet service.

religion

'Chinese religion' is a term describing the complex interaction of different religious and philosophical traditions that have been influential in China. Chinese religion is composed of four main traditions: Chinese folk religion, Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. The religious outlook of most Chinese people consists of some combination of beliefs and practices from these four traditions. It is rare for only one to be practised to the exclusion of the others.

restricted areas and overland border crossing

All areas of Yunnan are now open to foreign visitors. However, access to some border areas, such as overland travel to the Tibetan Autonomous Region and to Myanmar, is still subject to government permission. In such situations, Diethelm Travel will assist in obtaining the necessary permits based on passport information within our clients' booking forms. However, no guarantee can be given that permits will be granted.

safety and security

Generally speaking, China is a safe country to travel around and most people you meet are friendly, honest and trustworthy. However, China is far from immune to crime, the weather can affect travel plans and accidents do happen.

shopping

China's Shopping Scene

Serious about shopping in China? Keep an eye out for the country's beautiful calligraphy and jade. Here, calligraphy is not only a technique for writing characters, but also a unique art of expression and learning discipline. Jade also plays an important role for Chinese people as the precious stone stands for beauty, grace and purity.

Shopping Hints and Tips

- Receipts: Always ask for a receipt so you can return your purchase in case you have a quality problem, ask for a full refund or exchange the item. Chinese customs may also ask you for receipts when you leave the country so make sure to have them to hand.
- Antiques: When buying antiques, make sure that they carry a wax seal. This indicates that the piece is authentic and that it is allowed to be taken out of China.
- Payments: Although all major credit cards (Master Card, Visa and American Express) are accepted in most of the big department stores, it is still recommended to have cash on hand.
- Shipping: If you purchase large items, such as furniture, check that they can be shipped and be aware of all related costs and conditions. For these types of items, the easiest and cheapest way to send goods home is by arranging international shipping.

sightseeing tour policy

Yunnan's major tourist attractions include a variety of religious and historic monuments, fine museums and beautiful natural scenery that exude a rich cultural and artistic heritage.

These sites are incorporated into the Diethelm Travel experience in addition to lesser known attractions such as local markets, festivals and traditional handicraft shops. Our clients are also given the opportunity to meet local people in their own environment - sometimes even within their personal homes - and to sample regional cuisine and to see typical or traditional forms of entertainment. Diethelm Travel includes these extra dimensions to make any visit to Yunnan a richer, more rewarding and more memorable experience.

some fast facts

China, officially known as the People's Republic of China, covers an area of roughly 9.6 million square kilometres and is the world's third largest country after Russia and Canada. With approximately 1.4 billion inhabitants, the Chinese population accounts for one-fifth of the world's population, making China the most populous country on Earth. 92% of the population is Han Chinese and the remaining 8% is comprised of 55 different ethnic minorities.

The geographical vastness of China is comprised of three principal features: the forests of the east, the steppes and deserts of the north and northwest, and the high plateaus of Tibet and Qinghai. Within these spectacular landscapes are perhaps the most extraordinary natural attractions on Earth including the highest mountains, the deepest valleys and several of the longest rivers.

China is also endowed with a rich heritage and a great variety of culture and folklore, which is evident in its written history of over 4,000 years. It still remains shrouded in mystery for many travellers and is one of the most interesting places in the world to visit.

tipping

Today, attitudes toward tipping are changing in China. Although the practice is not officially recognised, tips are now frequently offered to and accepted by travel guides, tour bus drivers, porters and waiters in top-class hotels and restaurants as it's done

Contact

operation@cn.diethelmtravel.com



www.diethelmtravel.com



elsewhere in the world. The recommended tipping etiquette is USD 10 per person to your guide in your party. However, tipping is still not expected in most local restaurants or by taxi drivers.

travelling in the province

Although airlines accept reservations in advance, tickets must be purchased in full before departure times and flight numbers can be confirmed. Shanghai South Eastern Airlines is one airline that comes highly recommended because it serves all major cities within the province. It operates a brand new fleet of Boeing 737 and 767 planes and has a baggage allowance of up to 20 kg per passenger on domestic flights.

Land travel has improved greatly over the recent years. New roads have been opened and many more are currently being constructed. A new expressway now links Kunming to Dali with a commute time of 4 - 5 hours and then continues westwards to Baoshan (2 hours). To the south, a motorway reduces the travel time to Yuxi to just over an hour.

Long distance land transportation will be conducted using air-conditioned buses or vans. In remote areas, air-conditioned vehicles may not always be available and travellers should be advised that the quality of roads can vary greatly from good to bad. Additionally, many of the vehicles' back seats are not equipped with safety belts.