

CHINESE TRAVELERS NEED MORE VISA-FREE DESTINATIONS



Visa issuance delays, insufficient flight capacities, and a lack of quality service tailored to the specific needs of Chinese travelers are some of the significant hurdles to China's outbound tourism recovery.

Chinese travelers tend to book their holidays with very short notice. More than 50% of Chinese domestic travelers who make hotel reservations do so on the same day they check-in. Additionally, **50% of customers who book flights typically make reservations the day before they fly.**

The delay in China's outbound travelers' return to pre-COVID levels significantly impacts travel-related companies, hotels, and retailers worldwide. China is home to the world's top spenders on international tourism and airlines.

According to UN Tourism data, Chinese travelers took 87 million trips abroad last year, a 40% decrease from pre-2019 levels. Additionally, China's travelers spent 24% less last year than in 2019.

UAE and Qatar Models

Visa-free travel has contributed significantly to the rapid growth of tourist numbers in destinations such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. Some of these destinations have seen a 200% increase in Chinese travelers compared to 2019. Similarly, countries like the UAE and Qatar, which offer visa-free visits, have experienced even more remarkable growth, with numbers increasing by up to 300% compared to 2019.

Chinese authorities are collaborating with governments to streamline the visa-free travel process and potentially introduce 5-year or 10-year visas. This would be advantageous for destinations, particularly for travelers who appreciate the convenience of making spontaneous travel decisions.

Boost Direct Airline Capacities

The second challenge for Chinese travelers is the availability of direct flights. Outbound flight capacity has recovered to about 80% of 2019 levels this year. However, direct flights are essential for Chinese travelers, especially for long-haul destinations.

Emirates currently operates flights to three destinations in China and aims to increase frequencies to Asia's biggest economy in the coming months.

Chinese travelers seek high-quality services and look for hotels with ratings of at least 4.8 out of 5. They also prioritize factors such as safety and language. Destinations that meet these needs will give Chinese travelers peace of mind when traveling abroad.

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