



CHINESE
VISITOR GUIDE

SIX



Chinese Visitor Guide

Dear Customer

On first looking, this Chinese Visitor Guide may remind you of a passport and this is not unintentional. After all, its purpose is to guide you through various situations with enthusiastic Chinese customers eager to spend money, and like a passport, it's meant to help you cross cultural borders.

Knowing a little about the background of people makes it easier for you to communicate with them. It creates understanding and ensures that the encounter is pleasant for both sides. If your Chinese visitors feel at home on their vacation, they will spend more. Coupled with the right means of payment, they're bound to make spontaneous purchases, which translates to higher sales for you. Don't miss out on this potential!

We wish you all the best for your business.

SIX Payment Services

Your high-value customer



Find out the most important things you should know about your Chinese customers and how you can offer them a perfect service. A few valuable tips about the Chinese language and customs will help you make your customers feel at home and ensure that they'll come back.



General Information

Facts about China and tips for interacting with Chinese



Greeting and welcome

Building bridges with the right welcome



Shopping as an experience

Shopping as the ultimate vacation experience



At the cash register

Worth knowing about payment



Hospitality

The little differences in service



Avoiding mishaps

Avoiding embarrassing situations

Information about the country

Learn more about where your Chinese customers come from and how they live.

(As of 2012)

Interesting facts:

Capital:	Peking (Beijing)
Official language:	Mandarin (high Chinese)
Form of government:	People's republic
Currency:	1 yuán is the equivalent of 10 jiǎo and is worth € 0,125
Time zone:	CET + 7 hours
Country code:	+86



Comparative facts:

Inhabitants of China

1'340'000'000

Population of Europe

740'000'000

Area:

China

9'571'302 km²

Europe

10'180'000 km²**Population density:**

China

140 inhabitants per km²

Europe

73 inhabitants per km²

General customs

Find out what is important for your Chinese customers, which expressions and gestures your Chinese customers will appreciate and what kind of things don't go down so well.



The most important principle in dealings with your Chinese customers is to maintain harmonious relations and avoid uncomfortable situations and especially arguments.



Negative statements, even about your own country, meet with incomprehension. Political topics are not taboo as a rule, but it's better to avoid them.



Learn a few Chinese expressions. Even if you don't pronounce them perfectly, this gesture is an immediate icebreaker and your customer will appreciate that you made the effort.



Do not blow your nose in the presence of Chinese guests. Even though Chinese customers are familiar with this Western habit, it is perceived as embarrassing.



Basic vocabulary

It's worth learning a few of the most important expressions in Chinese. Little gestures like this make your customers happy. If your customers are happy, so are you!

English	Chinese pronunciation	Chinese characters
Please	Qǐng	请
Thank you	Xiè xiè	谢谢
Yes	Shì	是
No	Bù shì	不是
Excuse me	Duì bù qǐ	对不起
My name is ...	Wǒ jiào	我叫
I don't speak Chinese.	Wǒ bù huì shuō zhōngwén	我不会说中文

Color symbolism

Symbols are important for the Chinese because they play an instrumental role in Chinese culture. Even the characters of the Chinese alphabet are based on symbols. Colors, too, have positive and negative connotations.



Red is the color of joy and summer. It stands for communion with others and the heart and hence is considered extremely positive.




It is better to avoid the color white in dealings with your Chinese customers because it is associated with death, age and deceitfulness.




Yellow used to be reserved for the emperors alone. It represents the earth, the center, China, fame and progress.




TIP
Use red wrapping
paper and
yellow ribbon.

 Blue has positive connotations in Europe and many companies use it for the corporate logo. In China blue stands for difficult and troubled social advancement.



 The color green stands for life and spring. But in terms of positive symbolism, green is far from the power of red and yellow.



 Black stands for darkness and death, winter and the north, the direction from which the worst military incursions came into the Chinese empire.



Greeting and welcome

The first impressions count. Give your customers a respectful, befitting and hearty welcome, that way they will feel at home with you.



When you are greeting a Chinese visitor, make a little bow. It's actually more like a gentle nod of the head and shoulders.



In conversations, do not look at a Chinese person into the eyes too firmly or determinedly. In China this is perceived as embarrassing and intrusive.



There's a good reason why China is called the "Land of Smiles." Smile! Smiling is a sign of sympathy and establishes a positive connection between you and the person you are communicating with.



Shaking hands is not common in China, although the Chinese are familiar with it as a custom peculiar to the West. If Chinese guests initiate a handshake, do not grip too hard since that is considered impolite.



Greeting vocabulary

A friendly hello is all it takes to win over your visitors. So it's worth taking a look at this basic vocabulary.

English	Chinese pronunciation	Chinese characters
Welcome!	Huān yíng!	欢迎!
Hello!	Nǐ hǎo!	你好!
How are you?	Nin hǎo me?	您吗么?
Good bye!	Zài jiàn!	再见!
Pleased to meet you!	Hěn gāo xìng jiàn dào nǐ!	很高兴见到你!
Have a nice trip!	Yì lù píng ān!	一路平安!
Did you enjoy your day?	Nín jīn tiān guò dé kāi xīng mē?	您今天过得好吗?

Exchanging business cards

Here in Europe, when we exchange business cards we tend to just loosely hold the card between our pointer and middle fingers and hand it over without much ado.

In China it's done very differently. Exchanging cards is not just about exchanging information; rather, the act of presenting a card is a way to show respect to another person.

Recipe for success:

1. Hold the business card at chest height with both hands, between thumbs and pointer fingers.
2. Make sure the writing on the card is right side up and facing the other person. Bow your torso slightly forward when holding the card.
3. When exchanging a card, look at it first.
4. Use both hands when accepting a card as well. Quietly read the name and title and smile at the other person briefly. (In a meeting, place the card on the table in front of you.)

Study the
card with interest
and approval.

Do not put the card
away too quickly.



Do not write
notes on
business cards!



Last names are usually
a single syllable and are
written before the first
name, which often consists
of multiple syllables.

Shopping as an experience

Shopping is the ultimate vacation experience for the Chinese, and they like to share it with others. This is why they like to go shopping in groups, preferably in the evening or on the week-end.



Do not only focus your eye contact on the main buyer, but on all members of the group.



Do not abruptly interrupt a sales negotiation if the customer starts to bargain; this kind of bargaining is part of the sales experience.



Offer tax-free shopping to your Chinese customers and find out in advance how it is handled.



Avoid gestures of refusal. If something is not possible or you do not agree, smile and say "bù shì," meaning "no."



It's Chinese to me!

Chinese love brand name products. Objects of desire are usually luxury goods like watches, bags, leather goods and designer clothes.

Since not all brand names can be pronounced, let alone translated, in Chinese, some of them are hard for Western ears to understand. Here's a little selection:

Brand	Chinese pronunciation	Chinese characters
Burberry	Babǎolì	巴宝莉
Cartier	Kǎdìyà	卡地亚
Chanel	Xiāngnàier	香奈儿
Gucci	Gūqí	古驰
Hermès	Àimǎshì	爱马仕
Hugo Boss	Yúguǒ Bō shì	雨果博斯
Louis Vuitton	Lùyìsī wēi dēng	路易威登
Omega	Ōumǐjiā	一欧米茄
Prada	Pǔlādá	普拉达
Rolex	Láolìshì	劳力士
Swarovski	Shīhuáluò shì qí	施华洛世奇
Swatch	Sī wò qí	斯沃琪

At the cash register

The Chinese prefer to pay using their UnionPay credit card. This is the most familiar means of payment for them.



Accepting UnionPay will increase your sales. Chinese usually have several UnionPay cards. Take advantage of this tremendous potential.



Do not insist on cash payment. Getting cash is uncomfortable, unsafe and costly for Chinese visitors.



Place the UnionPay acceptance sticker in a visible position on your entrance door. This will increase your sales and your customers from China will immediately feel at home with you.



The Chinese have very formal manners. But in everyday situations, communication is efficient. This may seem unfriendly. Whatever you do, don't let it bother you.



Make your customer king and actively offer tax-free shopping.



UnionPay Helpline

By accepting the UnionPay card you gain access to more than 3.5 billion cardholders who like to shop. Here are three important tips for handling problems that may arise:

Situation

Solution

UnionPay card cannot be read or the limit has already been reached.

The customer should call the card-issuing bank. If the customer does not understand you, show these words:

打电话给你的银行！

Dǎ diànhuà gěi nǐ de yínháng!
“Call your bank!”

The customer's bank is not reachable.

The customer should call the UnionPay helpline: Phone 00-800-800-95516

The processing of the card payment or the card terminal do not work.

SIX customer services will be happy to assist. For contact information, visit www.six-payment-services.com/contact

Your Partner-ID:

Your Terminal-ID:

Chinese numbers

Sign language can be of great help in communicating. But be careful! There are a few differences you should be aware of. Otherwise, if your Chinese customers want to buy 8 chocolates from you, you could easily misunderstand and give them only 2.

The number 4 is unlucky and is often avoided since it is pronounced similar to the word for “death.” The number 8, on the other hand, sounds similar to the word for “wealth” and is the luckiest number.

1



yī

2



èr

3



sān

4



sì

5



wǔ

6



liù

7



qī

8



bā

9



jiǔ

10



shí



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



9



10

8
is the most
positive number!

Other
positive numbers are
6 and 9.

Avoid this
number: **4**

Hospitality

If you are in the hospitality business and want to be successful with Chinese customers, pay attention to a few rules of the Chinese way of life. Here are a few tips:



Provide an electric kettle in your guests' rooms. The possibility of being able to boil water is just about as important as running water.



Keep a supply of power adapters on hand for your overnight guests from China. This is something that will be greatly appreciated.



Room numbers containing the lucky number 8 (or 6 or 9) are greatly appreciated. This little courtesy doesn't cost you anything but is tremendously effective.



Never put your Chinese guests in a room on the 4th floor or in a room containing the number 4. Number 4 is considered unlucky because it is pronounced similarly to the word for "death."



Eating is a social affair for the Chinese. They are true gourmets and like to enjoy. Here are a few tips for perfect service à la Chinoise:



Seat groups at a round table in your restaurant.



Do not use your finger to point when showing them to their table. Use your open hand instead.



Better: Lead your guests to their table and take their drink order immediately. Green tea by the pot for everyone would be ideal!



Do not plan a full evening dinner. Chinese restaurant diners want to eat quickly and then move on.



Don't be surprised:
soup is considered a
beverage in China.



Create a menu with images for your guests; it makes it easier for them to choose.



Do not attempt to keep the individual courses in sequence. Instead, bring everything to the table at the same time (starters and main courses).



Even if your guests will prefer to eat Chinese food, they like to experiment and try local specialties.



Chinese aren't terribly interested in the desert menu. It's better if you serve fresh fruit.

Do not overlook your regional specialties!

TIP
Do not whisper in front of your customers. That would be a break in etiquette.

Where is your guest traveling?

If your guests inform you that they are traveling to “Bali” tomorrow, that doesn’t mean they’re flying to Indonesia, but going to the “City of Love.” Expand your knowledge of geography with a few Chinese terms:

European city	Chinese pronunciation	Chinese characters
Amsterdam	Āmùsītèdān	阿姆斯特丹
Berlin	Bólin	柏林
Brussels	Bùlúsàif'ěr	布鲁塞尔
Budapest	Bùdápèisi	布达佩斯
Geneva	Rìnèiwǎ	日内瓦
London	Lúndūn	伦敦
Luxembourg	Lúsēnbǎo	卢森堡
Paris	Bāli	巴黎
Rome	Luómǎ	罗马
Warsaw	Huáshā	华沙
Vienna	Wéiyēnà	维也纳
Zurich	Sūlìshì	苏黎世

Avoiding mishaps

In the chapter “General” we learned that “shì” means YES and “bù shì” NO. But actually “bù” means NOT and “bù shì” NOT YES. This example demonstrates how the Chinese express negatives. They are not directly expressed, but are avoided, as explained in this quote by the philosopher Lao Tzu:

“The stiff and unbending is the
disciple of death. The gentle and yielding is
the disciple of life.”

The stiff and unbending in this case would be a hard and direct NO and the gentle and yielding the expression NOT YES.

This indirect approach can be found in all areas of life and has its origins in the philosophies of Lao Tzu (Taoism) and the teachings of Confucius (Confucianism), in which harmony and its cultivation play a central role.

This is why your Chinese customers will not address a problem directly. Questions and requests are not directly formulated but expressed in an indirect way.

Now you may understand why we called this chapter “Avoiding mishaps” rather than “Complaints.”

**Approach the
problem directly**



**Avoid
the problem**



Losing face

In connection with China, we repeatedly hear how important it is to avoid situations where a Chinese person could “lose face.” But what does it mean to “lose face” and how can it happen?

We Europeans save face by sticking to our position and firmly defending it. Taking this kind of a hard line in dealings with Chinese customers leads to uncomfortable situations and misunderstandings.



Simply put, loss of face occurs when the harmony in a group is disturbed and imbalance arises.



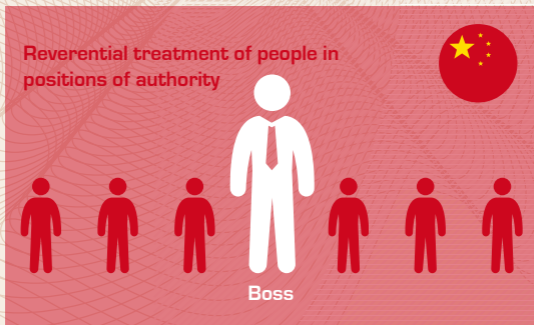
If someone behaves badly or gets angry, the Chinese smile. This is often misunderstood as laughing at the person. But in fact it is a desperate attempt to rescue the situation by reinstating harmony.



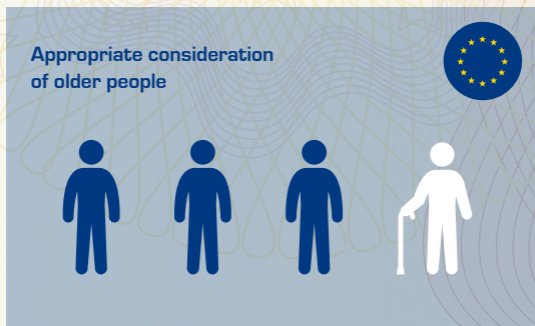
If you want your Chinese customers to take you seriously and consider you polite, the best response is a friendly smile and a restrained demeanor.



Losing face can also occur when the main person in a group is not shown enough esteem and respect.



People in positions of authority not only include bosses, but also older people, who are honored and respected for their wisdom.





Payment Services



Open the door to the East and
count on one card: UnionPay.



www.six-payment-services.com/unionpay
www.unionpay.com

Lots of luck with “Fú”



Here and on the cover of this booklet, you can see the Chinese character “Fú.” It mainly means luck, but it also stands for wealth and good deeds.

In this spirit, we wish you lots of luck with your Chinese customers, good business for both sides and pleasant experiences all around.



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