

China Public Holidays & Peak Travel Seasons Guide 2026

Plan Ahead for a Smooth Travel Experience

China's public holidays can significantly impact hotel availability, transportation capacity, attraction crowds, and travel costs.

Understanding China's major holidays helps travelers and travel planners choose the best travel periods and avoid peak congestion whenever possible.

Public Holiday Overview

Holiday	Date (2026)	Duration	Travel Impact
New Year's Day	Jan 1	1 Day	Low
Chinese New Year	Feb 17–23*	7 Days	Very High
Qingming Festival	Apr 5	1 Day	Medium
Labour Day Holiday	May 1–5	5 Days	Very High
Dragon Boat Festival	Jun 19–21	3 Days	Medium
Mid-Autumn Festival	Sep 25–27	3 Days	Medium
National Day Golden Week	Oct 1–8	8 Days	Extremely High

*Dates subject to official government announcement.

Chinese New Year (Spring Festival)

When

Typically January or February

2026 Expected Period:

Mid-February

Travel Impact

★★★★★

Highest Travel Demand of the Year

What Happens

- Hundreds of millions of people travel domestically
 - Flights become fully booked
 - Train tickets sell out quickly
 - Hotel prices increase
 - Many local businesses close temporarily
-

Recommendation

For leisure travelers:

Book at least 3 months in advance

Avoid last-minute bookings

Consider alternative destinations

Labour Day Holiday

When

1–5 May

Travel Impact

★★★★★

One of China's busiest domestic travel periods.

What Happens

- Tourist attractions become crowded
 - Hotel occupancy rises significantly
 - Transportation demand surges
 - Popular destinations may reach visitor limits
-

Recommendation

Book hotels early

Purchase attraction tickets in advance

Consider luxury or private travel arrangements

Dragon Boat Festival

When

June

Travel Impact

★★★☆☆

Moderate

Recommendation

Generally manageable with advance planning.

Mid-Autumn Festival

When

September

Travel Impact

★★★★☆☆

Moderate

Highlights

- Traditional mooncake celebrations
 - Cultural activities
 - Family gatherings
-

National Day Golden Week

When

1–8 October

Travel Impact

★★★★★+

Highest Tourism Demand in China

What Happens

- Millions of domestic tourists travel nationwide
- Attractions operate at maximum capacity
- Hotels sell out quickly
- Transportation networks become extremely busy
- Premium pricing applies

Recommendation

For international travelers:

Book 3–6 months in advance

Expect higher prices

Use private transportation when possible

Avoid highly crowded attractions during peak days

Best Time to Visit China

Recommended Travel Seasons

March – May

Spring

Advantages:

Comfortable weather

Beautiful flowers

Lower crowds

September – November

Autumn

Advantages:

Clear skies

Pleasant temperatures

Excellent sightseeing conditions

Peak Travel Periods to Avoid

Unless planned well in advance:

Chinese New Year

★★★★★

Labour Day Holiday

★★★★★

National Day Golden Week

★★★★★+

Hotel Pricing Impact

Period	Expected Price Increase
Normal Season	Standard Rates
Chinese New Year	+20% to +80%
Labour Day	+20% to +60%
National Day	+30% to +100%
Major Events & Exhibitions	Varies

Transportation Impact

During major holidays:

Flights

- Higher demand
- Limited availability

High-Speed Rail

- Tickets sell out rapidly
- Advance booking strongly recommended

Private Transfers

- Increased demand
 - Vehicle availability may be limited
-

Attraction Crowds

Most affected attractions include:

- Great Wall
- Forbidden City
- Shanghai Disney Resort
- Universal Beijing Resort
- Zhangjiajie National Forest Park
- Terracotta Warriors
- West Lake
- Jiuzhaigou

Advance reservations are strongly recommended.

Recommended Booking Window

Travel Type	Recommended Booking Time
FIT Travel	30–60 Days
Luxury Travel	60–90 Days
Small Groups	60–90 Days



MICE Groups 3–6 Months

Peak Holiday Travel 3–6 Months

RedGate DMC Recommendation

For the best travel experience in China:

Best Travel Periods

March – May

September – November

Avoid Peak Crowds

Chinese New Year

Labour Day Holiday

National Day Golden Week

When traveling during holiday periods, early planning and reservations are essential.

Need Assistance?

RedGate DMC can assist with:

- Hotel reservations
- High-speed rail tickets
- Private transportation
- Attraction reservations
- Group travel planning
- Corporate and MICE arrangements

Our team is happy to help you plan around China's peak travel seasons.

China Travel Season Overview

Month	Travel Rating	Notes
January	☆☆☆	Winter Travel, Beijing & Harbin
February	☆☆	Chinese New Year Peak Season
March	☆☆☆☆☆	Excellent Weather, Spring Season
April	☆☆☆☆☆	One of the Best Months to Visit China
May	☆☆☆☆	Labour Day Holiday (Peak Travel Period)
June	☆☆☆☆☆	Great for Guilin, Zhangjiajie & Yunnan
July	☆☆☆☆	Summer Holiday Season
August	☆☆☆☆	Summer Holiday Season
September	☆☆☆☆☆	Excellent Weather, Ideal for Sightseeing
October	☆☆☆☆	National Day Golden Week (Peak Travel Period)
November	☆☆☆☆☆	One of the Best Months to Visit China
December	☆☆☆☆	Winter Travel & Festive Season

Best Time to Visit China

China travel season rating

Recommended travel periods throughout the year based on weather, crowds, and overall travel experience.

