

# Travel Outlook

## China rapidly becoming more accessible

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China is rapidly becoming much more accessible to Western visitors. Tourism is growing, new air routes are being opened, and airports and hotels expanded.

All of this is in sharp contrast to the Chinese tourism picture of only a few years ago. Professing a shortage of hotel accommodation, Chinese authorities restricted travel so tightly that only the most dedicated tourists and the most favored business people were able to visit the Middle Kingdom.

A lull seemed to begin about 1985, when the number of foreign visitors to China rose by 20.9 per cent. Last year, it increased by a further 7.8 per cent, to 1,470,000.

The first non-stop service to China by a North American airline was launched in April, 1986, with a weekly service between Vancouver and Shanghai by Canadian Pacific Air Lines.

### FLY TO BEIJING

That carrier, now known as Canadian Airlines International, has just been granted the authorization it has been seeking to add Beijing (Peking) to its route.

Every Tuesday, commencing Oct. 27, CAI will take off from Vancouver, fly non-stop to Beijing, then on to Shanghai, returning non-stop to Vancouver on Thursdays.

Introductory fare, now being sold, is \$999. Other fares are available that allow passengers to visit additional Asian destinations - for example Hong Kong, which is on another CAI route that originates in Vancouver, with an intermediate stop in Tokyo.

(Commencing Oct. 28, that route will be extended from Hong Kong to Bangkok, Thailand, with departures from Vancouver on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.)

A Japanese carrier, All Nippon Airways, flies on Mondays and Saturdays from Washington, D.C., to Beijing, with a stop overnight in Tokyo.

### WARM WELCOME

The addition of landing rights in Beijing, to the established Vancouver-Shanghai service, will be warmly welcomed by CAI.

The Canadian carrier was glad to get a toe in the door of China last

year, with the long-sought permission to fly into Shanghai - the financial and industrial centre of China prior to the 1938 Japanese invasion.

But the airline made no secret of its aspiration to be able to land as well in Beijing, the centre of government in the highly authoritarian country.

The new schedule to and from Beijing has been designed to dovetail with CAI's existing routes serving California, Amsterdam and Rio de Janeiro.

### FAMILIAR NAMES

Recently the U.S.-based Ramada Inns chain signed letters of intent to launch two hotels - one in Beijing, the other in Shanghai - in competition with such other U.S.-based chains as Sheraton and Holiday Inns.

In Shanghai, which has lagged far behind Beijing in hotel construction in modern times, 35 hotels and apartment buildings with about 15,000 rooms are being built or have recently been completed.

One forthcoming tourist event of symbolic significance will be the visit to Shanghai of Cunard's Sagafjord for a two-day stopover next

March, on her round-the-world cruise. The city is on the broad Huangpu River, which sees a great deal of ocean shipping but rarely a five-star luxury liner.

### A NEW ERA

In contrast to the high density of air travel from North America to Europe, the tourist flow heading across the Pacific so far is barely a trickle.

The potential for future growth of both business and pleasure travel seems almost unlimited, given the abundance of natural curiosity about "the mysterious East" and the evident intention of Chinese authorities to open up their country and to welcome visitors once again.

If China continues with that policy - and that's a big "if" in any Communist-ruled country - the Canadian airline could be in on the start of something big.

### TRAVEL NOTEBOOK

-Starting next April, CAI will be taking delivery of six new 767ER (extended range) airplanes from Boeing Co. of Seattle. The Vancouver-based airline has an option to purchase eight more of the airplanes, which may be used on

long-distance domestic routes and possibly intercontinental flights to Europe or South America.

-Carnival Cruise Lines is providing free air transportation, beginning Sept. 1, to departure points for some of its sailings: From Montreal and Toronto to Miami and Fort Lauderdale for three-day and four-day cruises of Carnival and Mardi Gras, and from Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton or Vancouver to Los Angeles for seven-day cruises of Tropical. Cruises are relatively inexpensive, and passengers tend to be youthful.

-Up to 230 Canadians will be circling the globe between Nov. 7 and 28, as P. Lawson Travel operates the dream trip for the third consecutive year. As before, the group will charter one of Air Canada's Boeing 747 jumbo jets, which would normally accommodate more than 400 passengers. Stops on the itinerary include the island of Fiji, Perth, the beautiful metropolis of Western Australia, the island of Bali, Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia, Kathmandu in Nepal, the Seychelle Islands in the Indian Ocean, and Vienna, a city added to Air Canada's network a few months ago.



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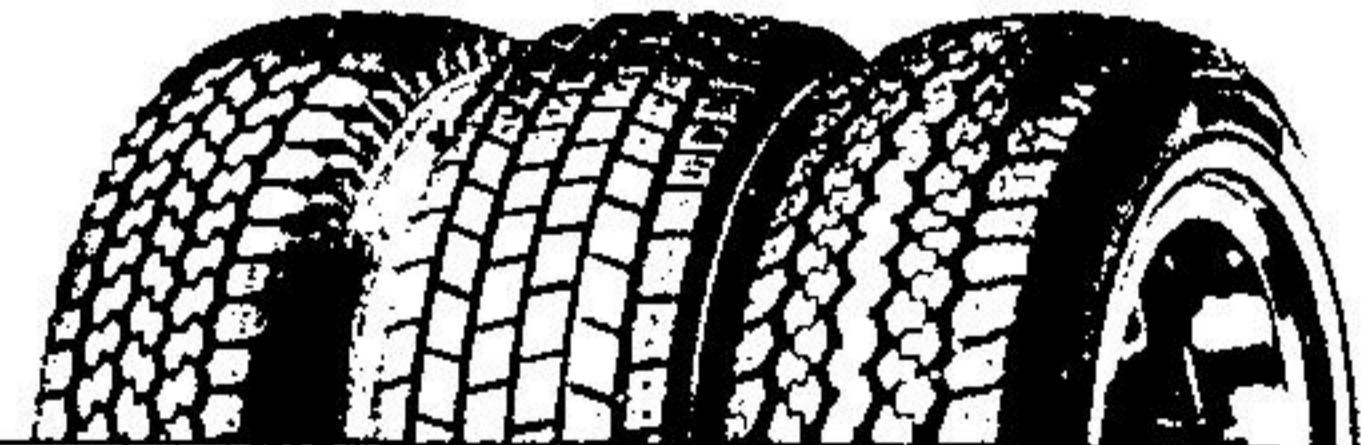
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