

# Trip.com Group launches free transit tours to turn layovers into a mini-vacation

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International layovers don't have to mean waiting for hours in the airport terminal; making the most of the short time window and exploring the country transiting in is possible. Enter "Shanghai Express", free layover city tours launched by Trip.com Group to show travellers the top highlights of Shanghai before the next flight – all within a few hours.



Starting from 15 April 2024, international travellers stopping by the Shanghai Pudong International Airport (PVG) for over eight hours will have the opportunity to take part in these layover city tours – the first of their kind in Shanghai. Travellers do not have to worry about researching where to go and how either, as these tours take charge of everything: airport pick-up and send-off, attraction tickets, e-sim cards, and more. So, all that's needed is to turn up.

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*Han Feng*

The tours will be available to international travellers eligible for China's 72/144-hour visa-free transit policy and those holding a 24-hour temporary entry permit issued by the airport border inspection.

“As visa-free transit policies open up new avenues for international travellers to explore China, Trip.com Group is excited to unveil this innovative programme for those with just a short stopover,” said Ms Han Feng, Head of

Marketing at Trip.com. “We will leverage our extensive resources to ensure a memorable tour experience and provide world-class customer service to help flyers enjoy what Shanghai has to offer.”

Exploring the city between flights

Upon passing customs after arrival at the Shanghai Pudong International Airport, travellers may head to the Trip.com Group currency exchange counter on Island A in the Departure Hall of Terminal 2 for in-person registration. A professional guide will be available at the counter one hour before the start of each tour to assist with the registration process. Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Travellers will be able to choose from several tour timings. Each free tour accommodates a maximum of ten travellers and lasts five to six hours, including transportation from and back to the airport.

The tours feature some of the top attractions on the AI-powered Trip.Best list for Shanghai based on user reviews and expert curation, leading visitors on a journey through the past, present, and future of the bustling metropolis.

Led by English-speaking guides, each tour includes transportation, tickets, e-sim cards, and team insurance. Those seeking to travel light may store their luggage at the airport or on the shuttle bus if space permits. Please note that the free tours do not include meals, though our guides will be more than happy to offer dining recommendations.

Detailed information about the tours can be found [here](#).

### Rise in international transits via China

The Shanghai Express Tours are expected to enrich the experience of travellers as they transit in mainland China, sparking their interest in more in-depth trips in the future.

The International Air Transport Association reveals that transit numbers have been on the rise, with over 330,000 travellers experiencing layovers in mainland China last December alone. This represents a monthly growth of 47%. International airports in mainland China, particularly in Shanghai, Beijing, and Guangzhou, have been hubs for international flights particularly to and from the Asia Pacific region.

Malaysia is amongst the top 20 international departure countries transiting into Shanghai Pudong Airport. Transit times vary between eight hours to 144 hours.

Currently, nationals from 54 countries are eligible for the 72/144-hour transit visa-free policies in 23 cities across mainland China. As long as they hold valid international travel documents and interline tickets to countries or regions with confirmed dates and seats, they can apply for visa-free transit at border inspection in designated city ports.

Additionally, foreign nationals with international connecting flights within 24 hours can transit through nine designated airports in mainland China without immigration procedures. Those

interested in exploring the local city within this timeframe may obtain a 24-hour temporary entry permit by presenting their passports and connecting ticket flights and fill out the Temporary Entry Card.

Discover the beauty of China with ease

The Shanghai Express Tours are set against the backdrop of Trip.com Group's various initiatives to support international travellers to discover the beauty of China with ease as the country relaxes visa requirements.

With visa-free entry extended to Switzerland, Ireland, Hungary, Austria, Belgium, and Luxembourg on 14 March, China is now visa-free for eligible travellers from 15 countries.

Trip.com Group witnessed a triple-digit year-on-year rise in international travel bookings to China in the first two months of 2024. Shanghai, Guangzhou, Beijing, Shenzhen, and Chengdu drew the most attention from global travellers, with theme parks like the Shanghai Disney Resort and historic sites like the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum capturing significant interest.

Trip.com recently launched an initiative with the Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site in Xi'an to provide overseas online integration to offer international travellers deals, guided tour options, and more information about its astounding Terracotta Warriors and remarkable history.

To enhance convenience for visitors to China, Trip.com Group has implemented various initiatives. Notably, the China Travel Guide on the Trip.com app offers practical information on navigating the country. It covers topics such as entry requirements, internet access, payment, transportation and more with easy-to-follow tips and explanatory videos. Since its release in September 2023, the guide has served more than 100,000 international travellers planning to visit China.

Furthermore, to streamline payment options for visitors, Trip.com Group has also partnered with Alipay, a leading digital payment and lifestyle service platform. Through this partnership, selected packages and travel guides are available on the Alipay app, providing support for international visitors.

Meeting the needs of all kinds of travellers, whether you're just passing through or planning a deep dive, Trip.com Group is committed to using its expertise and resources to make such trips memorable, and help you explore China's endless possibilities.

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