Chinese Dining

Enjoy your time in China!

Be sure to try everything put in front of you.

Regional Cuisine

In Northern China, for example, wheat is eaten more than rice as staple food. Food using wheat as its main ingredient, such as noodles and dumplings is prevalent there.

Compared to the rather monotonous fare of the North, China's southern cuisine is notable for its exceptional tastiness and its great variety.

What to expect when you go to China
Things to Keep in Mind

Seating Arrangements

The seat of honor, reserved for the master of the banquet or the guest with highest status, is the one in the center facing east or facing the entrance. Those of higher position sit closer to the master of the banquet. The guests of lowest position sit furthest from the seat of honor. When a family holds a banquet, the seat of honor is for the guest with the highest status and the head of the house takes the least prominent seat.

If round tables are used, the seat facing the entrance is the seat of honor. The seats on the left hand side of the seat of honor are second, fourth, sixth, etc in importance, while those on the right are third, fifth, seventh and so on in importance, until they join together.

Food is often served family style, on a lazy susan, for easy access to anything that looks delicious!

NOT CHINESE TAKE-OUT

A surprising range and variety of plants and animals are eaten and every part of a plant or animal is used. This has given rise to a remarkable diversity in the regional cuisine, but to Westerners it can be overwhelming - surprising, fantastic, delicious, horrifying or disgusting but above all, different.

8 Most Popular Dishes in China

- Sweet and Sour Pork or Chicken
- Gong Bao Chicken
- Ma Po Tofu
- Wontons
- Dumplings
- Spring Rolls
- Chow Mein
- Peking Duck

If none of these sound appealing, there’s an abundance of fast food restaurants in all of the major cities.

Things All Americans Need to Know

- Most restaurants provide tea free of charge. This is normally green tea, or similar.
- Cutlery can be offered if asked.
- Tipping is not expected, although service charges may be included in the more expensive restaurant.
- When ordering dishes in a restaurant, make sure that you really understand what the dish is, because the name of the dish might be confusing, and you’d end up having a completely unexpected dish in front of you.
- Rice is served at nearly every meal, hold your bowl close to your mouth to avoid dropping rice everywhere.
- Never eat the last piece from the serving tray.
- Chopsticks should be returned to the chopstick rest after every few bites and when you drink or stop to speak.
- Do not be offended if a Chinese person makes slurping or belching sounds; it merely indicates that they are enjoying their food.
- There are no strict rules about finishing all the food in your bowl.