



Media release

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With 9 new Swiss visa acceptance centers opening in China, Switzerland comes closer to Chinese tourists

The Embassy of Switzerland in China is expanding its visa services to more Chinese cities following the opening of nine new Visa Acceptance Centers (VACs) in nine cities from June to July. Chinese visitors to Switzerland and the Schengen region, of which Switzerland is a member country, can hand in applications at closer VACs and enjoy faster and more convenient services. This is expected to ease holiday preparations for Chinese tourists traveling to Switzerland this coming summer.

The nine cities are (in the order of the opening of the VACs): Xi'an, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Shenzhen, Kunming, Changsha, Fuzhou, Jinan and Chongqing. The new VACs are scheduled to be inaugurated between June 15 and July 15 and will be operated by the Swiss Embassy's commercial partner TLScontact. The centers are authorized by the Swiss Embassy in China to accept applications for short stay individual visa and provide administrative support services and biometric data implementation.

The expansion of the visa services is another initiative of the Swiss Embassy to meet the increasing number of Chinese tourists to Switzerland following the opening of three VACs in Chengdu, Wuhan and Shenyang in January.

In 2015, Switzerland issued 81,000 visas to Chinese applicants. The overnight stays from Chinese tourists in Switzerland came to a record number of over 1.6 million, up more than 33% the previous year. China now is the fourth source of tourists to Switzerland and the first from Asia.

According to the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, 45% of the visas issued to Chinese applicants are multi-entry or long-term visas. Short stay individual visa applications are being processed within 48 hours and at VACs, it should take no longer than five days for applicants to receive their visas. The Swiss Embassy and the VACs are also working together to provide mobile biometry in the future, to smooth the visa application process.

Themed tours from Switzerland Tourism

Switzerland has been of great appeal to Chinese visitors thanks to its numerous mountains and lakes, spectacular Swiss Alps, charming cities and vibrant contemporary culture scenes. It is also a popular destination for outdoor activities such as skiing, hiking and biking.

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Switzerland Tourism, which initiated the Grand Tour of Switzerland last year, launched new themed tours focusing on outdoor experience and cultural tours this year. It now partners up with top museums in Switzerland and provides easier access to tourists.

For more information about visa application, please visit: webpage of [TLScontact](#), visa page of [Swiss Embassy website](#), call +8610 8532 8888 or send emails to: bei.visa@eda.admin.ch.

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Embassy of Switzerland in China official website: www.eda.admin.ch/beijing

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