

About Xi'an

Xi'an, a sub-provincial city, is the capital and political, economic, and cultural center of Shaanxi Province. Located in the middle of Guanzhong (Central Shaanxi) Plain, it lies nearby Weihe River in the north and Mt.Qinling in the south, covering total area of 10,108km² in nine districts and four counties, including the urban area of 369km². Currently, there are 8.4346 million permanent residents in Xi'an, including 7.8167 million registered residents.



History

Xi'an served as the imperial capital for ten ancient imperial dynasties and a number of regional kingdoms. The ten dynasties when Xi'an (Western Peace), then called Chang'an (Perpetual Peace), was the capital of China are as follows: Qin (221–206 BC at Xianyang just northwest of Xi'an), Western Han (200–8 BC), Xin (8–23 AD), Eastern Han (191–195), Western Jin (313–316), Wei (535–557), Zhou (556–581), Tang (618–690), Zhou (690–705) and Tang (705–904).

Xi'an has a great number of precious relics and historical sites, some dating back to its times as capital. More than 4,000 historical sites and tombs have been excavated.

Xian's history began in the Stone Age, 3,000 years ago, when the Western Zhou Dynasty founded its capital at Haojing, today's Xi'an. The Western Zhou Dynasty was famous for its bronze, some of which is now displayed in Shaanxi Provincial Museum.

Barbarian invaders caused the collapsed of the Western Zhou Dynasty in 771 BC. The Eastern Zhou Dynasty began and made its capital at Luoyang. In 221 BC, Emperor Qin Shihuang unified

the country and built a strong feudal society, with its capital at Xianyang, just north of Xi'an.

However, it wasn't until the Tang Dynasty (618–907) that Chang'an (today's Xi'an) came into its own. Chang'an was one of the biggest international cities at that time, a great metropolis of equal importance with Rome in its heyday. The Tang Dynasty witnessed advances in many fields and the capital city boomed. It was built with grand, symmetrical layouts and became a model for city design at that time.

After the fall of the Tang Dynasty, Xi'an went into decline and its tenure as capital of China came to an end. Although Xi'an still played an important role as a commercial center on the Silk Road in the later dynasties, it never regained its political or cultural importance.

Economy & Science

Xi'an enjoys superb traffic and location advantages. Located in the geographical center and the bordering area of Middle China and West China, Xi'an has been a portal and traffic hub that connects Northwest China with other regions. In the regional economic layout of China, Xi'an, the biggest central city in the Chinese section of the New Eurasia Land Bridge and the Longhai-Lanxin Railway Economic Belt, has been the bridgehead for West China Development and has played a significant strategic role in linking up different regions of China. Besides, as an important hub in the national "cross-shape" railway network and the radiating railway network of Shaanxi, Xi'an has become one of the largest nodes of the trunk highway network, and one of the six largest aviation and communication hubs in China with outstanding advantages. Along with the accelerated construction of high-speed railway network in China, it's expected that in the future five years, the "one-day traffic circle" of Xi'an will cover more than half of China, and the population influenced by it will grow from the current 600 million to more than 1.2 billion.



Xi'an is a city of advanced technology and outstanding innovation capacity. In terms of comprehensive technological strength, Xi'an ranks the top in China. So far, there are 49 institutes of higher education, over 3,000 technical research institutes, and 661 independent research institutes in Xi'an, including 44 national key labs and industrial test centers. At present, there are 632,200 on-campus college students and over 417,700 technical professionals in Xi'an. Each year, more than 10,000 students of master and doctorate degrees graduate from local universities. Besides, there are 45 academicians of Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chinese Academy of Engineering, and many first-rate scientists in Xi'an. Currently, there are 820,000 people above the educational level of junior colleges, accounting for 10.92% of the total population in Xi'an, and ranking first in China. In terms of the percentage of adults (above 18 years old) who have received education, Xi'an also ranks first in China. What's more, Xi'an has attracts more than 1/3 of the technical forces for spaceflight in China. Spaceship, and the rocket engine, propellant, rocket-borne computer, and remote sensing facilities for "Shenzhou V" and "Shenzhou-VI" spaceship are all made in Xi'an. In 2009, 12,772 patents were submitted in Xi'an, which contributed for 51% of local economic growth.



Xi'an has witnessed rapid economic growth and blooming industry. In recent years, particularly since the commencement of West China Development, Xi'an has undergone accelerated growth and drastic change in urban landscape, thus entering a new age for fast social and economic development. For nine successive years, its economic growth has been kept above 13%, and its comprehensive strength has been enhanced remarkably. In 2009, the GDP of Xi'an reached RMB 272.4 billion Yuan, up by 14.5%. Over years of development, Xi'an has established a complete industrial system covering machineries, transportation, electronic information, aviation and space, biomedicine, food and beverage, and petroleum and chemical engineering; cultivated five leading industries including hi-tech, equipment manufacturing, tourism, modern service, and cultural

industry, and; founded eight development platforms including Xi'an Hi-tech Industries Development Zone, Xi'an National Civil Aviation Industrial Base, Xi'an International Trade & Logistics Park, and Xi'an Fengwei New District, etc. Among them, Xi'an Hi-tech Industries Development Zone has been recognized as one of the six Chinese hi-tech parks to be built into world first-rate ones; Xi'an Economic & Technological Development Zone has dedicated to forging a manufacturing base in Jingwei Industrial Park with the investment of RMB 100 billion Yuan; Qujiang New District has been listed as one of the two national demonstration districts for cultural industry in China, and; Chan-Ba Ecological District is now preparing for the 2011 World Horticultural Exposition. Today, such development zones and bases have agglomerated the leading industries, promoted the local economy, and expedited the modern urban construction of Xi'an.



Environment

Xi'an is endowed with pleasant ecological environment. Located nearby Weihe River, the largest branch of the Yellow River in its north, and bordered on Mt.Qinling, the national park of China in its south, Xi'an boasts fascinating natural landscape. In recent years, its investment on urban construction has been increased; urban infrastructural conditions have been further improved, and; urban road, greening, supply of gas, water, power and heat, telecommunication, and sewage and garbage treatment have been consummated, and; its comprehensive urban service capability has been outstandingly elevated. So far, the coverage rate of fuel gas in Xi'an has reached 97.7%; 100% of the source for drinking water has lived up to relevant standards; daily water supply capacity has reached 1.75 million tons; sewage treatment capacity has reached 0.95 million tons/day, and; it has become the first city in northern China to solve the problem of water supply. In addition, by implementing the programs such as "large area of water surface" and "blue sky and green water",

the landscape of “eight rivers surrounding Xi’an” has been revived and the quality of residential environment has been improved remarkably. With the forest coverage of 42%, Xi’an enjoyed 304 days with the air quality above Grade-2 in 2009. To date, Xi’an has won several honors including the national clean city, national garden-like city, outstanding tourism city in China, and best Chinese city with the sense of happiness, thus making it an ideal place for living, recreation, investment, and business pioneering.

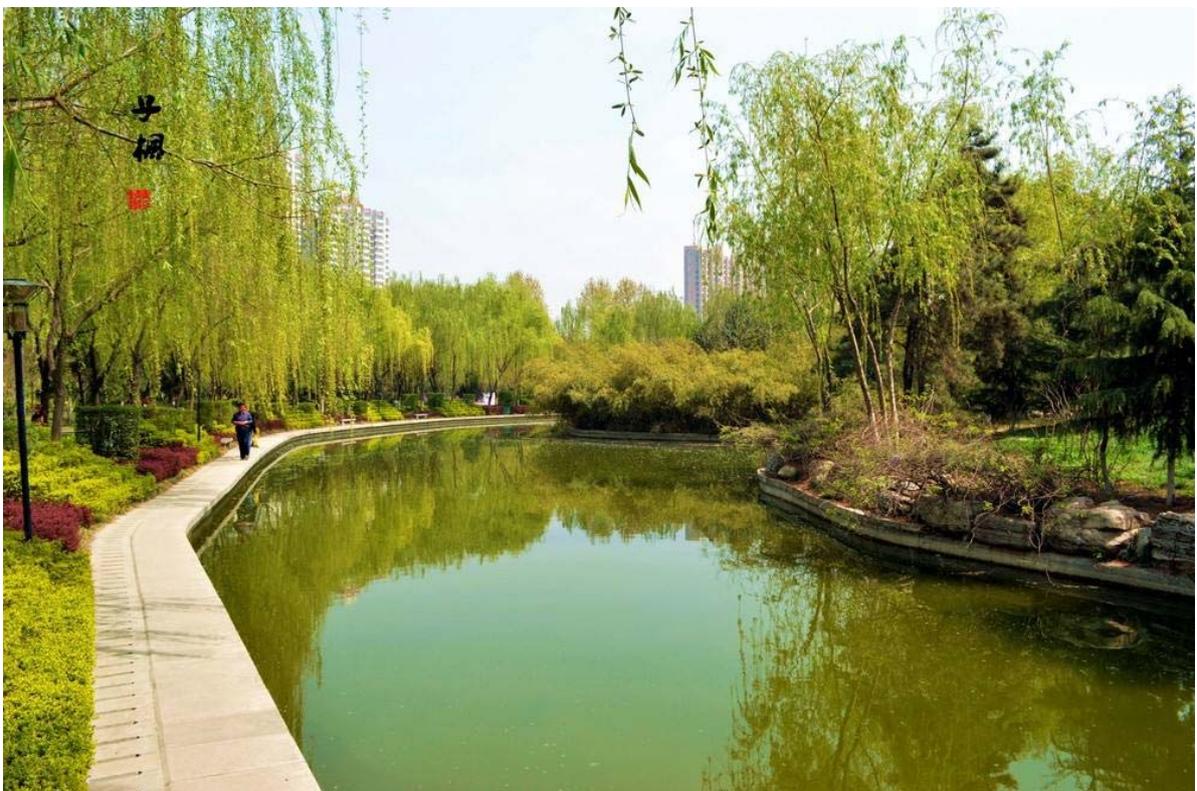


Xi'an will meet with important strategic opportunities in future. It is proposed in the 11th Congress of Party Representatives of Xi'an that Xi'an will be built into a cultural, lively and harmonious city in the years to come. It is also proposed that: The GDP of Xi'an will be increased by more than 13% annually; after fulfilling the “11th Five-year Plan”, the local GDP of Xi'an will reach RMB 350 billion Yuan, and the per capita GDP will exceed US\$ 4,500 by 2011, doubling that in 2005, assuring the well-off society of Xi'an in Shaanxi, and making Xi'an the bellwether among the innovation-oriented cities in West China, and engendering Xi'an a first-rate tourist destination and the most livable city in China. In June 2008, the State Council approved the Development Planning of Guanzhong-Tianshui Economic Zone, in which Xi'an was positioned to: forge an international metropolis. It is expected that by 2020, with total population of more than ten million and total urban area of 800km², Xi'an will become an important R&D center in China, a regional center for trade, logistics, conference, exhibition and finance, a first-rate international tourist destination, a vital base for hi-tech industries and advanced manufacturing in China. The implementation of Development Planning of Guanzhong-Tianshui Economic Zone signifies that “Guanzhong-Tianshui Economic Zone” has become a national economic area and Xi'an will play a leading role in the regional development of China. At present, guided by the scientific outlook on development, all the people in Xi'an have been working hard to promote various courses, to create better future for Xi'an and happier life for residents.

Climate

Xi'an has a temperate and continental monsoon climate, with four distinct seasons. Summer in Xi'an is hot and rainy, while winter it is usually cold and dry. The rainy season is from July to September, though there is significant rain from April through to October, with showers that come and go quickly. The weather is generally pleasant all year round, but spring and autumn are the best seasons to visit Xi'an. Have a look at our Xi'an Tour Packages and choose your time of travel.

Spring: Spring is from March till May. There are dust storms due to the rapid increase of temperatures, but only occasionally. The warm sunshine and gentle breeze make spring a good time for traveling and outdoor activities.



Summer: Summer (June to August) in Xi'an is typically scorching with strong sunshine at noon. Visitors should avoid going to outdoor sights at noon, such as the Ancient City Wall, and visit indoor sights instead, such as Shaanxi History Museum. Bring sunglasses, sunscreen and hats, eat more fruits and vegetables, and drink plenty of water when going sightseeing. Cool mountains around the city such as Huashan Mountain are very popular among travelers for escaping the heat.

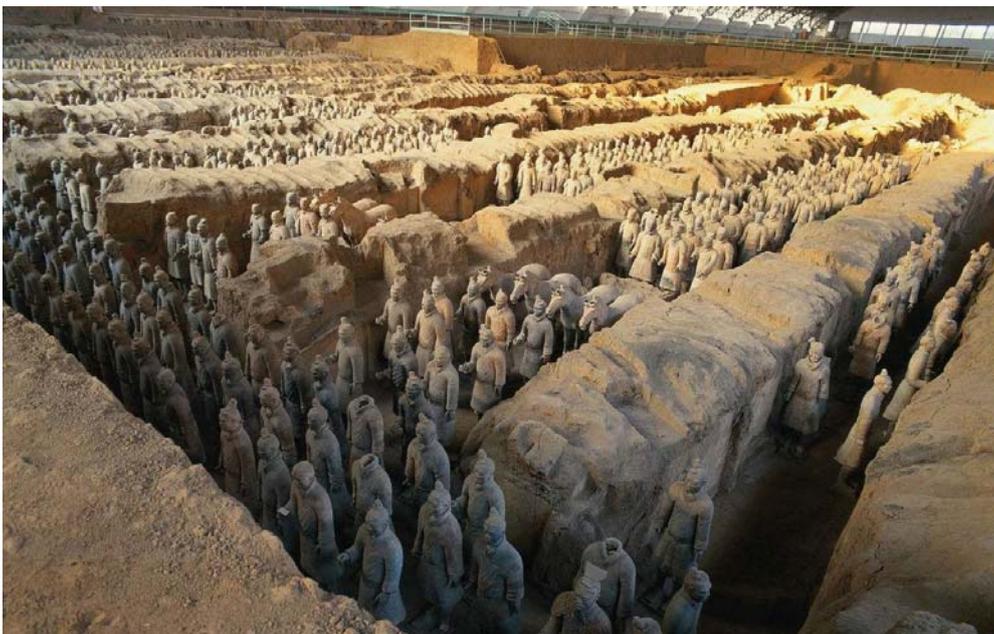
Autumn: The weather becomes cool and cloudy in autumn, with a fair amount of precipitation, but it gradually turns dry and sunny in late autumn.

Winter: Winter (December to February) is cold, dry and overcast with a good amount of foggy days. There are occasional snowfalls, but they rarely settle for long. There are a few ski resorts around the city, but they are mainly used by the local people. If you plan to add a skiing experience to your tour of Xi'an, we recommend you use Cuihuashan Ski Resort, as it is the best one there.



Travel Attractions

Museum of Qin Terra-cotta Warriors and Horses: The Terra Cotta Warriors and Horses are the most significant archaeological excavation of the 20th century. Work is ongoing at this site, which is around 1.5 kilometers east of Emperor Qin Shi Huang's Mausoleum, Lintong County, Shaanxi province. It's a sight not to be missed by any visitor to China.



Qianling Mausoleum: It is a tomb shared by Tang Emperor Gaozong and Empress Wu Zetian and a cultural site under key national protection. The 124 large stone carvings left in the museum such as ornamental pillars, winged horses, scarlet birds, stone horses, stone lions and stone figures look exquisite and vivid.

Xi'an Forest of Steles Museum: Xi'an Forest of steles. Museum houses numerous steles which look like a towering forest, hence its name. It has been over nine hundred years since it was originally built in Northern Song dynasty (1090 A.D.) when a large Confucian collection of steles cut in A.D. 837 - the oldest existing texts of the Confucian classics - was moved here for safekeeping. It gained the present name in the 18th century and boasted the largest collection of its kind in China.

Xi'an City Wall: the Ming Dynasty imperial city of Chang'an City in the building up on the basis of it is the late medieval city wall in China's most historic buildings is one of the best preserved in China so far the only, largest walls.



Tang Paradise: The park is at or near the site of an earlier garden complex in the Tang Dynasty, but consists almost entirely of modern construction. The park features numerous buildings, squares, and gardens, all incorporating features of traditional Chinese architecture, such as eaves and cornices. Some features are named after historical sites or buildings.

Big Wild Goose Pagoda situated in the Da Ci'en Temple, is one of the famous Buddhist pagodas in China about 4 kilometers from the urban center. Originally built in 589 A.D. in the Sui dynasty, the temple was named Wu Lou Si Temple till 648 A.D. when Emperor Li Zhi, then still a crown prince, sponsored a repair project on the temple. This was a symbol of thanksgiving to his mother for her kindness, after she had suffered an early death. The temple then assumed the present name Temple of Da Ci'en (Thanksgiving). The Emperor Gaozong was said to pay homage to the temple twice a day by looking in its direction from the Hanyuan Palace. The temple, with 13 separate

courtyards, contained 1,879 magnificent-looking rooms altogether and was a place of grand extent in the Tang dynasty. However, it went into gradual decay after the downfall of the Tang dynasty. The halls and rooms that have survived the age are structures that were built in the Ming dynasty.



Today, Xi'an, a time-honored ancient capital, has become a vigorous modern city and a hotspot for investors. We sincerely welcome friends from all over the world to visit and study in Xi'an!