



CHINESE COMMUNITIES IN LONDON

Global companies and international communities are an essential part of London's social and business fabric. Locating in London is about more than realising business opportunities. It's about discovering a whole new way of life. Through our knowledge of London's communities, we make you feel at home the moment you arrive.

London's Chinese Population

The Chinese community first settled in east London in the 18th Century, before becoming established in the famous central London location of "Chinatown" in Soho. Over the last five years, London has seen the population from the People's Republic of China double and residents from Hong Kong SAR increase by one third.

Today, over 80,000 people of Chinese origin live in London – accounting for more than one third of the UK's total. Although they are relatively evenly spread throughout both Inner and Outer London, the most popular locations are Barnet, Southwark, Westminster, Ealing and Tower Hamlets.

From Soho to the East End

Since the 1950s, London's Soho has become the main focal point of the Chinese community in

London and now has a highly-developed social infrastructure including shops, restaurants, churches, a Chinese library, travel agencies and other associations. The turn of the new millennium has seen London's Chinese community increasingly return to its traditional roots in east London. By the time of the next London Census in 2011, this trend will have strengthened further.

PetroChina International One of the largest oil retailers in Asia

"London was chosen as the most beneficial city in which to expand and to reach other European countries, and benefit from London's standing as a world city." Bingjun Si, Managing Director

Chinese Investment in London grows

China is now the fastest-growing major economy in the world and, according to Ernst & Young's European Investment Monitor, the UK is by far the largest recipient of Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Europe. London alone accounts for nearly one third of all Chinese investment into the UK, reinforcing the capital's contribution to the strength of UK-China trade relations. Chinese investment also

accounts for around one third of all Think London's active work in the Asia-Pacific region.

London's dynamic Chinese community consists of more than 250 international businesses, including companies originating from Hong Kong. The City of London is by far the most popular business location. Beyond this, businesses from mainland China prefer to be based in east London, while one third of businesses from Hong Kong are based in west London.

A significant proportion of London-based Chinese businesses operate sales and marketing hubs or European headquarters, using the city as an ideal gateway to Europe. The main industries are in manufacturing and financial & business services, followed by transport & logistics.

A new and exciting development is currently being discussed for the Thames Gateway, east London, which if approved will see the creation of a dedicated Chinese business quarter. Building on east London's existing Chinese business infrastructure, it will offer an unrivalled springboard to Europe supported by a network of services that respond to the specific needs of Chinese companies in London.

Chinese Business Support

Behind London's thriving Chinese business community sits an established and highly-developed support network. Principal official support is available from the Embassy of the

People's Republic of China, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, The Government of Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, and Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

Glo Group Plc Retailers of ready-to-eat Modern European and Asian cuisine

"London is one of the most vibrant and multi-cultural cities in the world and this reflects the ethos of our company. This is why London was chosen as the site for our first outlet." Johnson Chen, Managing Director

UK representative offices have been established in London by Shanghai Foreign Investment Development Board, Guangdong Board of Investment Promotion, Shenzhen City Government, and Beijing Zhongguancun Science Park.

There are also numerous London-based organisations developing relations and providing valuable support to Chinese companies, including the China-Britain Business Council, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), and Think London itself.

Dedicated services have naturally arisen in response to the growing needs of the Chinese business community in London. Based mainly in Soho, the City and east London, these include specialist travel agencies, information and

advice centres, legal and accounting centres, banks, designers, printers, personnel services, translators and interpreters.

Travel between China and London

London is the most internationally-accessible city in the world. 43,000 Chinese visitors were attracted to the capital in 2003. Every week there are over 20 direct scheduled flights between mainland China (Beijing and Shanghai) and London Heathrow, and 50 flights between London and Hong Kong – with plans to expand these services further. Flight numbers have risen by an incredible 60% since 1999, clearly demonstrating the commercial influence of China's growing economic strength in Europe.

Living in London

Establishing a business in London is also about becoming part of one of the world's most multi-cultural societies. The Chinese community is one of the most extensive, well-established communities in London, adding its own richness and diversity through its sophisticated social network.

Chinese Community Centres exist across the whole of London, providing a variety of services ranging from language courses to cultural meetings. A new online Chinese directory is also being built at www.chinatown-online.co.uk, with every possible community topic covered, from business services to education, shopping to culture and food to travel.

Schools

There are a number of Chinese language schools offering Mandarin and Cantonese courses on Saturdays. Some of these are associated with the Chinese Church in London and tend to be concentrated in the north of London. They include The Ming-Ai Association, the Qing Hua Chinese School Charitable Trust and the Pastor Wang Memorial Chinese School.

Universities

China and Hong Kong rank as the top two most important international markets to London's higher education sector. Student numbers from China have seen phenomenal growth, with an increase of more than 800% in the last seven years (now reaching 6,300 students). Over 2,000 Chinese students graduated from London Universities in 2003/4. The growing trend for a London-based education shows no signs of slowing.

Restaurants

London is a gastronomic delight to the Chinese food lover, with a wealth of restaurants adding their own richness to the experience of eating out in London. Although they are spread throughout the capital, there is a distinct concentration of Chinese restaurants in Soho's Chinatown, and two Michelin-starred restaurants - the stylish Hakkasan in Bloomsbury and Yauatcha in Soho.

Food Shops

Many authentic Chinese food shops and supermarkets have emerged to service the

demands of Chinese restaurant owners and the Chinese community. London's largest Chinese cash and carry network is Hoo Hing with supermarkets in east, north, south and west London. Other Chinese supermarkets across the capital include the Hoi Sing, Wing Yip and Oriental City in north London, the Wing Yip and Wing Tai in south London and a variety of supermarkets in Chinatown.

Health

An organised Chinese health network in London comprises over 100 Chinese health and medical centres, a range of bilingual services and specialist treatments as diverse as acupuncture, complementary therapies and massage.

Arts and Culture

London's cultural scene benefits greatly from the contribution of Chinese art and culture. London has its own Chinese Film Society, Chinese Dance and Mime Theatre, and Chinese Orchestra, administered through the London Chinese Culture Centre. During London China Week the capital comes alive with festivities in honour of Chinese New Year, with venues across London hosting special events, films, activities and exhibitions.

Bookshops, Libraries and Media

Chinese books, magazines and newspapers can be found in abundance in Chinatown, catering for both Mandarin and Cantonese speakers. The Chinese Library in Westminster offers access to over 20,000 Chinese books and over 20 Chinese newspapers and magazines. The BBC

Chinese World Service, based in London, offers a broad range of Chinese language news, radio, education and cultural services. Spectrum Radio broadcasts programmes daily in Cantonese and both the Chinese Channel (TVB) and Phoenix Chinese News and Entertainment offer Mandarin and Cantonese services.

Places of Worship

London is home to diverse faiths from around the world and offers worship in churches, temples and mosques throughout every borough. The Chinese Church in London holds services in Mandarin, Cantonese and English.

Shanghai General Electronics Group The third-largest electronics group in China

"The reasons why we chose London are straightforward. The relatively low tax, the language advantage, market access and London's strategic importance all play their parts." Yihe Zhai, Managing Director

Think London has assisted over 200 companies from Asia Pacific in setting up, developing and expanding their businesses in London. From China we have worked with both state-owned enterprises and smaller/medium sized privately owned enterprises - we have been there to make sure their businesses succeed in London.

Please contact us for a full listing of resources for the Chinese community in London.