

NEWSLETTER

FASHION/PERSONALCARE/LEISURE

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Shanghai Tax Refund Claims Triple Amid Inbound Travel Surge

Shanghai recorded 3.166 million inbound arrivals in H1 2026 (up 22% year-on-year), driving departure tax refund claims up nearly threefold to 253,000. The total value of tax-refunded goods surged 58% to 2.3 billion yuan (\$339 million), supported by streamlined processing and expanded digital payment options for foreign travelers. **(CGTN)**

Viking to Launch Chinese-Language Northern Europe Cruises in April 2027

Viking will expand its tailored outbound offerings by launching Chinese-language Northern Europe sailings in April 2027 aboard the 930-guest *Viking Yidun*. The new itineraries include a 15-day Oslo-to-Stockholm voyage and a 14-day Lisbon-to-Oslo route, building on the August 2026 launch of its Chinese-language Mediterranean programme to meet rising demand from Chinese overseas travelers. **(Travel Weekly)**

China Hotel Pipeline Forecasts Over 1,100 New Openings in 2026

China's hotel construction pipeline reached 3,588 projects (632,256 rooms) in Q2 2026, with 1,131 new hotels expected to open by year-end, according to Lodging Econometrics. Driven by upper-midscale and upscale developments—which make up 66% of total pipeline projects—hotel conversions also hit a record high of 245 projects. Chengdu, Guangzhou, and Shanghai continue to lead the country in project counts. **(Hospitalitynet)**

Abercrombie & Fitch Explores Strategic Options for China Business

US apparel retailer Abercrombie & Fitch Co. is considering strategic options for its China business, including a potential stake sale that could value the unit at several hundred million dollars or partnering with local operators. The review follows a broader evaluation of its Asia-Pacific operations as the company seeks to reverse regional headwinds after reporting a 17% drop in Q1 net income to \$67 million. **(Fashion Network)**

Korean Airlines Expand China Routes Beyond Major Hubs

Korean carriers including Jin Air and Eastar Jet are expanding service to regional Chinese cities following a strong travel recovery. South Korea–China passenger traffic reached 9.54 million in H1 2026 (up 22% year-on-year), while Chinese arrivals rose 27.1% to 3.21 million. The expansion is supported by relaxed visa policies and a recent aviation agreement boosting weekly passenger flight rights to 664. **(Korea Times)**