# The Best Time to Visit Shanghai

The best time to visit Shanghai is in the fall (September to November). Fewer crowds, less rain, and warm temperatures encourage locals and tourists to enjoy the outdoors and celebrate the end of heavy rains. The slew of music, fashion, and art events in fall also show off the city's cosmopolitan reputation. And on top of all that, it’s also hairy crab season!

While the fall is the best time to visit the city, Shanghai can be a fantastic vacation destination year-round with plenty of exciting events to enjoy.

## [The Weather in Shanghai](https://www.tripsavvy.com/weather-and-climate-in-shanghai-4774550)

Shanghai has a humid subtropical climate, four distinct seasons, year-round rain, and weather surprisingly similar to that of North Carolina.1﻿ There isn't a real dry season but fall is the driest time of the year while summer is the wettest. During winter, temperatures can drop to the 30s F (-1 degree Celsius), it rarely snows. Heat is more of a concern than the cold, and July and August are sweltering. Temperatures can soar into the high 90s F (37 degrees Celsius) with 100 percent humidity.

July and August are also when the famous “[plum rains](https://mandarinhouse.com/plum-rains#:~:text=The%20plum%20rains%2C%E6%A2%85%E9%9B%A8%20meiyu,move%20north%20from%20June%2DJuly.&text=July%20and%20August%20are%20Shanghai's,%C2%B0C%20%2F%2082%C2%B0F.)” occur from moist air and cool air meeting over the Pacific Ocean, creating heavy rain and drenching Shanghai (and most of eastern Asia) in the process. Be wary of flooding during this time.

## Popular Events and Festivals

Most of the important holidays in Shanghai (Chinese New Year, the Mid-Autumn Festival, and Dragon Boat Festival) are based on the lunar calendar. As such, the dates of these festivals change each year. Should you want to experience them in Shanghai, you’ll need to check the dates for your desired year.

Accommodation can fill up fast and be pricey during Chinese New Year and the National Holiday (the first week of October). These are the public holidays with the most days off for Chinese nationals, and many of them will also be traveling. Book flights and accommodation far in advance if you plan to come during one of these holidays.

## Typhoon Season in Shanghai

Typhoon season in Shanghai is from May to November, though direct hits are rare. There are four different types of signals for typhoon weather (signal blue, yellow, orange, and red). If a signal blue or yellow is broadcast, then public transportation will still run, and people will still be out on the street despite the heavy rains. If you travel during this time and one does occur, stay inside and close the windows and doors. If a signal orange is broadcast, schools are closed and people will head indoors. If a signal red is broadcast, flights and bullet trains are usually canceled and destructive force is expected, however, these signals are rare in Shanghai.2﻿ Even if typhoons do hit, they can be fairly mild and most people will just stay in watching TV, reading, or talking until it passes. Typhoons can take anywhere from an hour to a day to pass, so be prepared to wait for a while should you find yourself in one.

## January

Cold temps ranging from 35 to 45 degrees F (2 to 7 degrees C) and moderate rain leads to a lull in tourism during most of January. However, you should avoid major attractions during Chinese New Year, when the city will be crawling with local tourists.

Events to check out:

* On New Year’s Eve night, head to Longhua Temple, Shanghai’s oldest temple, to hear the bell strike 108 times at midnight. Its chimes greet the new year and locals believe the clangs bring good luck to all in attendance.
* Depending on the year, Chinese New Year will occur in January or February. To experience public celebrations, head to the Bund, Yu Garden, or Nanjing Road, but be aware that these will be packed with other revelers. Be sure to sample some of the food specific to Chinese New Year, including *nian gao* (Shanghainese New Year sticky cake), *babaofan* (rice pudding), and *tangyuan* (rice dumplings).

## February

Beware of cold winds blowing from Siberia and high levels of pollution during this month. Overcast skies keep the city fairly gray, but winter festivities and small crowds are causes for rejoicing, despite the cold.

Events to check out:

* See the city covered in lights with good wishes written on them during the Yuyuan New Year Folk Customs and Lantern Festival. Tons of handmade lanterns adorn the Mid-Lake Pavilion and Jiuqu Bridge in front of Yuyuan Garden, while dragon dancers parade on the streets below.

## March

The weather warms up slightly from February and hotel room rates are still lower than average. Plants begin to bloom and the days start to become longer.

Events to check out:

* Head to the Peach Blossom Festival in Nanhui District to walk beneath beautiful peach tree blooms, buy peach products, watch pig races, see acrobatic performances, and participate in agricultural activities with local farmers.
* The Shanghai International Literary Festival, the leading English-language literary festival in China, happens this month on the Bund connecting readers and writers from China and abroad.

## April

Temps begin to rise from 59 to 71 degrees F ( 15 to 22 C) and hotel rates rise accordingly. Shanghai springs are famously unstable weather-wise and cool days do occur. [The humidity also rises](https://www.weather-atlas.com/en/china/shanghai-weather-march#:~:text=city%20into%20two-,Weather%20in%20March,from%20fourteen%20average%20rainy%20days.).

Events to check out:

* Music festival season begins with [Shanghai Spring International Music Festival](http://www.ssimf.org/renda/n27633/n27815/index.html) taking over many of the city’s most famous music venues, like the He Luting Concert Hall, for a wide range of music from percussion groups to classical compositions.
* Strawberry Fields Music Festival begins later in the month with pop, punk, and metal bands, along with performances by singer-songwriters.

## May

Days are pleasantly warm, but May generally has a few extremely hot ones as well, especially when the humidity rises accordingly. Come for the great weather, but be prepared for high hotel rates.

Events to check out:

* The JZ Spring Festival has music, swing dancing, and a parade. If you're more into the electronic scene, go to Creamfields.
* Tea aficionados will love the International Tea Culture Festival where they can talk with tea experts, see tea ceremonies, and learn different tea brewing techniques.

## June

June is the rainiest month of the year, and temps soar to 93 degrees F (34 degrees C) on the hottest days. Muggy and with up to 43 percent cloud coverage, days can feel sticky, but the sea breeze will help you cool off.

Events to check out:

* For a fun, traditional Chinese festival go see the boat races during Dragon Boat Festival.
* Artsy types will enjoy the [International Film Festival,](http://www.siff.com/siff2017/english/) especially the short presentations by student filmmakers.

## July

One of the hottest months of the year, July brings incredible heat (up to 96 degrees F / 36 degrees C). Expect thunderstorms during this time and stick to indoor activities when possible.

## August

This month is extremely similar to July in terms of weather, except it's hotter. The city is still in typhoon season, and the plum rains persist. However, there is slightly less cloud coverage by the end of the month.

Events to check out:

* Unless there’s a pool involved, stick to the indoors during the day. See a play at the Shanghai Grand Theater or go swimming at the Mandarin City Pool.
* Qixi Festival (Chinese Valentine’s Day) occurs this month. Old traditions include stargazing and praying for cleverness, while newer festivities include getting your special someone to race through a mall while carrying you. Shoppers be warned.

## September

With the plum rains over, the weather becomes much drier. Temperatures become more comfortable (59 to 91 degrees F / 15 to 33 degrees C) and hotel rates are relatively low.

Events to check out:

* Chow down on mooncakes for Mid-Autumn Festival and visit the [JZ Jazz Festival](https://www.facebook.com/pg/jzfestival/about/?ref=page_internal), the largest of its kind in Shanghai.

## October

Rains continue to decrease, along with the temperature. With ideal weather for walking, use the time to stroll the Bund or wander through the French Concession. Beware of crowds during the first week of October for National Holiday.

Events to check out:

* Starting in late September and extending into early October, head to the International Music Fireworks Festival to see fireworks burst in the night sky set to a melodic soundtrack.
* Shanghai Fashion Week welcomes the countries top designers to the city to strut their stuff. See runway shows, fashion exhibitions, and buy their goods if you have the dough for it.

## November

With lower than average rainfall, a mix of warm and cool days, and hairy crab season in full swing, November is a great time to visit the city.

Event to check out:

* Go to the China Shanghai International Arts Festival to learn more about Chinese culture. The festival showcases different cultural activities and handicrafts from different parts of China, as well as other countries.

## December

Expect more cold and sun in this month as clouds disperse, rain lessens, and temperatures drop to range between 27 to 55 degrees Fahrenheit (-3 to 13 degrees C). Hotel prices are moderate and there are few tourists.

Event to check out:

* Stock up on Christmas goodies at one of the many Christmas markets in town. Paulaner's Christkindlmarkt and Jiashan Market are two of the city's best.