



Photo: Sean Pavone / Shutterstock.com



4045 / Shutterstock.com

Set along China's southern coast in Fujian Province, Xiamen offers an intriguing mix of history, trade, and island life. Much of the city unfolds on a separate island, where centuries of maritime commerce shaped its character. European and Chinese traders once passed through its bustling ports, leaving traces in the architecture and cuisine. Today, Xiamen feels both dynamic and laid-back, with its lively markets, tree-lined streets, and calming seaside — perfect for exploring at your own pace.



Brian Zhu/Unsplash



4045 / Shutterstock.com

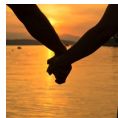
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THE CITY



claudio zaccherini / Shutterstock.com

Xiamen, often called the 'Garden City by the Sea', is a vibrant blend of history, culture, and modern commerce. Nestled at the mouth of the Jiulong (Dragon) River, it has long been a hub for international trade, drawing merchants and, occasionally, pirates whose legacy shaped its colourful past.

Originally built on an island, Xiamen is connected to the mainland by bridges and boasts a unique charm. Just a short ferry ride away lies Gulangyu Island, famed for its colonial mansions and serene atmosphere. Today, as a Special Economic Zone, Xiamen offers not only a shopper's paradise but also lush parks, inviting beaches, and botanical gardens, making it a fascinating destination for all types of travellers.

DO & SEE



Jon Naustdalslid/Shutterstock

Xiamen offers tourists a balance of cultural and historical, natural and man-made attractions. The city has miles of coastline and nice beaches to choose from. The city does not only offer historical sites like a Buddhist Temple and Huli Shan Fort but also amazing gardens like Wanshi or the Underwater Sea World.

Gulangyu Island



Gulangyu Island, just a quick five-minute ferry ride from Xiamen, is a living museum of 19th-century trade and culture. Once a hub for merchants and diplomats, it became home to grand mansions built by Chinese and foreign traders taking advantage of Xiamen's open port status. The island's car-free streets are a joy to wander, weaving through colonial-style villas, leafy gardens, and striking architecture that blends European and Chinese influences.

Ferries can get busy, especially on weekends and holidays, so booking your ticket two to three days in advance is a smart move. Once you're there, take your time exploring the quieter corners, enjoying the local seafood, or visiting attractions like the Piano Museum or Sunlight Rock for panoramic views.

Photo: 4045/Shutterstock

Address: Gulangyu Island, Siming District, Xiamen

Gulangyu Beach



When exploring Gulangyu Island, head to its western side, home to some of Xiamen's cleanest and most inviting beaches.

Gulangyu Beach seamlessly blends with Huamei Beach, creating a picturesque stretch of sand perfect for a leisurely afternoon stroll. Known for their pristine conditions, these beaches offer a serene escape from the island's busier spots. Take your time soaking in the coastal views, and don't miss the spectacular sunset.

Photo: Christian Wittmann/Shutterstock

Address: Gulangyu Beach, Gulangyu Island, Siming District, Xiamen

South Putuo Temple



South Putuo Temple is a cornerstone of Xiamen's Buddhist heritage, with its origins tracing back to the Tang dynasty. Set against the lush backdrop

of Wulao Mountain, it's a place where history and nature intertwine. The temple's pavilions and halls are steeped in tradition, while stone carvings scattered around the grounds reflect centuries of artistry and devotion.

Photo: 4045/Shutterstock

Address: 515 Siming South Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 3am-6pm

Phone: +86 592 208 8554

Xiamen Botanical Garden



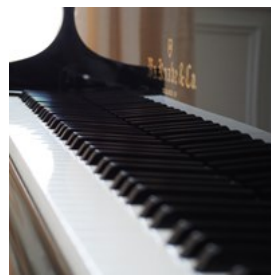
Xiamen Botanical Garden is a lush escape from the city's hustle. Home to over 5,000 species of tropical plants, the garden weaves together picturesque winding paths, ponds, and rock formations in a setting that feels both serene and expansive. There are also themed areas such as the Bamboo Forest, Bonsai Garden, and Rose Garden. The Xiamen Botanical Garden is the kind of place where you can wander aimlessly, discovering hidden corners and marvelling at the diversity of plant life. If the city buzz is starting to wear on you, an afternoon here offers a refreshing reset.

Photo: Henry Li/Unsplash

Address: 25 Huyuan Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: From May 1 to October 7, it opens from 5:30am-6:30pm, while from October 8 to April 30, the hours are 6:30am-6pm

Piano Museum



Home to a remarkable collection of over 70 pianos, this museum showcases everything from the oldest surviving quadrangular piano to the largest and most ancient vertical piano. The exhibition shows the entire development of the piano, and even the decorative candlesticks have more than one hundred years of history. Free performances are available during open time.

Photo: Lazarovic/Pixabay

Address: 7 Gangzaihou Road, Gulangyu Island, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 8:15am-6pm

Phone: +86 592 206 0238

Hulishan Cannon Fort



Built in the late 1800s, Hulishan Cannon Fort is a quirky mix of history and engineering ingenuity — believe it or not, glutinous rice was used in its construction. A highlight is the Krupp cannon, a massive 60-ton German-made cannon, said to be the best-preserved coastal gun in all of China. Wandering around the fort, you'll stumble across smaller cannons, old stone walls, and views of the coastline that make it easy to imagine its strategic importance back in the day.

Photo: Luisa Bayona/Shutterstock

Address: 2 Cuo'an Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Open daily, with hours depending on the season: from 7:30am–6pm between April and October, and 7:30am–5:30pm from November to March

Phone: +86 592 209 9603

Xiamen Undersea World



Home to over 10,000 aquatic creatures, Xiamen Undersea World offers a range of exciting experiences, including the chance to visit the feeding tank, where visitors can hand-feed turtles and baby sharks. The aquarium features a variety of marine life, from colourful fish to larger creatures, and the underwater tunnel gives you a close-up view of sea life from a unique perspective.

Photo: JimmyDominico / Pixabay.com

Address: 2, Longtou Road, Gulangyu Island, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 8am–5:30pm

Riguang Mountain



For a stunning 360-degree view of Gulangyu and the surrounding city, climb to the top of Riguang Mountain, where a lookout tower offers incredible vistas. It's a peaceful spot, especially in the late afternoon, although it can get quite crowded at times.

Photo: pavel dudek / Shutterstock.com

Address: Riguang Mountain, Gulangyu Island

Haiwan Park



Haiwan Park is a perfect spot for an evening stroll by the beach, especially as the sun dips below the horizon. The park's LED-lit pathways create a unique atmosphere after dark, and the open amusement park installations add a playful charm. As the night unfolds, the surrounding restaurants and bars come alive, drawing in locals and travellers alike with their lively ambience and variety of food and drink options.

Photo: Volodymyr Baleha/Shutterstock

Address: Haiwan Park, Siming District, Xiamen

Zeng Cuo An

Zeng Cuo An is known to be the artsiest fishing village in China. This is the place where modern meets traditional, which shines through in its array of interesting independent shops. There is also a fusion of architectural styles: you can find traditional courtyard houses, wooden fishing houses as well as Baroque mansions. When night falls, the village comes alive as countless bars open doors to welcome patrons.

Address: Zeng Cuo An Cun, Siming District, Xiamen

DINING



Patrick Foto / Shutterstock.com

Xiamen boasts a good mix of restaurants with a varied range of Chinese provincial specialities represented, from Shanghai to Mongolia. With the Straits of Formosa and the South China Sea close by, it's not surprising that many of the local delicacies are based on seafood. Fujian restaurants often specialise in crab dishes and other local dishes include ginger duck, jellyfish salad, seasoned oysters and Xiamen fried noodles.

Shuyou Restaurant



Shuyou is one of Xiamen's oldest and most renowned restaurants, celebrated for its seasonal local seafood. Its seafood buffet stands out, offering a variety of options like oysters, eels, and octopus.

Photo: adamlot/Pixabay

Address: 1 Bailuzhou East Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 11am-2:30pm / 5pm-10:30pm

Nanputuo Sucai



If you're visiting the iconic Nanputuo Temple, make sure to stop by Nanputuo Sucai, the temple's historic vegetarian restaurant.

Originally serving meals to the temple's monks, this establishment has since opened its doors to the public, offering a unique dining experience steeped in tradition. The extensive menu caters to all tastes, featuring everything from soups and noodles to sautéed dishes, fresh-baked bread, and desserts.

Photo: Robin Stewart/Shutterstock

Address: 515 Siming South Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 11am-2pm / 5pm-8pm

Tutto Ben



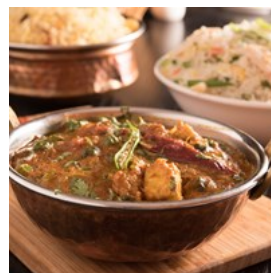
Tutto Bene is Xiamen's most beloved Italian restaurant. Helmed by an Italian chef, it offers Italian classics, including thin-crust pizzas, pasta, and seafood dishes. The cosy atmosphere strikes the perfect balance between romance and relaxed charm, making it a great choice for a date night or an unhurried dinner with friends.

Photo: Dragan Grkic/Shutterstock

Address: 1, Zhongshan Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 11am-10pm

Indiano John's Samrat



Indiano John's Samrat specialises in authentic Indian cuisine, featuring a wide selection of northern and southern dishes. Known for its bold

flavours and fresh ingredients, the menu includes staples like curries, naan, and innovative specials that blend tradition with modern influences.

Photo: Muhammed sahilu.k/Shutterstock

Address: 71-5 Jiangtou North Road, Jiangtou Centre, Huli District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 11:30am-2:30pm / 5:30pm-10:30pm

The House



Tucked away in a tranquil, tree-lined neighbourhood, The House offers classic Californian cuisine with a focus on hearty

American-style steaks. The relaxed setting is occasionally elevated by wine-tasting evenings featuring guest experts from California's renowned vineyards.

Photo: TapisRouge/Pixabay

Address: 3-9 Yundang Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 9am-1am

Chao Fu Cheng



Chao Fu Cheng is one of the most famous and long-established Hong Kong-style Dim Sum restaurants in Xiamen, offering a menu so

extensive that you'd need to visit multiple times to try everything. It's widely regarded as one of the city's most historical Dim Sum spots, drawing both locals and tourists. Be prepared for long wait times, particularly during peak hours.

Photo: leungchopan/Shutterstock

Address: 28 Hubin Beilu, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 9am-2am

Golden Olives



Golden Olives brings the flavours of Greece and its islands to Xiamen. The menu features Mediterranean staples like fresh salads, gyros, stuffed tomatoes, pita bread, olives, and feta. With its wide variety of dishes and reasonable prices, it's a great spot for anyone craving authentic Greek and Mediterranean cuisine.

Photo: Vlajko611/Shutterstock

Address: 1 Lianyue Road, Hao PanJi Center, Si Ming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 11am-11pm

Hai Tien Lo



At Hai Tien Lo, you can indulge in authentic Cantonese cuisine in an elegant setting. The restaurant offers a selection of traditional favourites, including dim sum, fresh seafood, and regional specialities, all served with impeccable service.

Photo: Nipon Laicharoenchokchai/Shutterstock

Address: 19 Hubin Bei Road, Pan Pacific Xiamen, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 11:30am-2:30pm / 5:30pm-10pm

Yuehua Sate Noodles



This noodle dish's defining characteristic is the sate soup, which is originally from Southeast Asia, and every restaurant has its own recipe and secret ingredients. The freshly boiled noodle is served with customised toppings. It is simple yet remains one of the most distinguished

dishes of Xiamen cuisine. Yuehua is one of the best sate noodle restaurants there is. They also serve amazing meat zongzi that's worth trying.

Photo: jenwong/Shutterstock

Address: 78 Zhenbang Road, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 7:30am-9:30pm

CAFÉS



Pheniti Prasomphethiran / Shutterstock.com

Xiamen is one of the first Chinese cities that was open to the world and is naturally one of the first cities that came into contact with coffee. In fact, Xiamen boasts the highest density of independent cafés in China. In the business district around Hubin Bei Lu and Yuandang Lu, there has been an upsurge of coffee shops catering mainly to guests of nearby hotels, business people and office workers.

Coffee Street



Yuandang Lu, often referred to as Xiamen's 'Coffee Street', is a bustling stretch lined with nearly two dozen coffee shops. Perfect for coffee connoisseurs and those craving something sweet, the cafés along the street offer a variety of cakes, pastries, and full menus. Many of these establishments feature outdoor seating, where visitors can enjoy their beverages while taking in scenic views of Yuandang Lake.

Photo: Nickolastock / Shutterstock.com

Address: Yundang Road, Siming Disitric, Xiamen

The Chu Family Coffee



The Chu family, originally from China, made their fortune in the Philippines during the early 20th century before returning to China in the 1930s,

where they constructed their family mansion. In 2008, the mansion was transformed into a charming café, preserving much of its historic architecture and surrounding garden. Today, The Chu Family Coffee is considered one of the iconic spots on Gulangyu Island, offering visitors a relaxing retreat with its unique blend of heritage and modern café culture.

Photo: Ramon grosso dolarea / Shutterstock.com

Address: 15 Zhonghua Road, Gulangyu Island, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 10:30am-9pm

CUPS Café



CUPS Café is a must-visit for coffee aficionados in Xiamen. With the owner's experience as a judge at the World Barista Championship, the café is

renowned for its expertise and quality. Their signature cup is a Cold Brew Irgachefe.

Photo: LightField Studios / Shutterstock.com

Address: 11 Nanhua Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 9am-9pm

FCR COFFEE



If you're eager to deepen your knowledge of coffee, FCR Coffee is the ideal destination. The café's menu thoughtfully provides detailed descriptions of each type of coffee bean and the various brewing methods. The owner is passionate about sharing insights and is happy to provide additional explanations in person.

Photo: Africa Studio / Shutterstock.com

Address: 1 Alishan Building, 2 Luling Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Zhang San Feng Milk Tea



Milk tea has always been popular in China and it has gone way further than the classic black tea plus milk. There are thousands of different milk tea varieties, each with different toppings and flavours. Zhang San Feng is a chain of milk tea specialised shops that you can find throughout the city. One of its well-known locations is on Gulangyu Island, where it continues to be a favorite among visitors.

Photo: mama_mia / Shutterstock.com

Address: 264 Longtou Road, Gulangyu Island, Xiamen

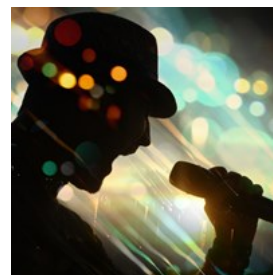
BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Sean Pavone / Shutterstock.com

Xiamen is a city that thrives by day with its fresh, artsy vibe, but as night falls, the atmosphere shifts. The city comes alive with a range of bars by the sea and lively nightclubs in the heart of town. The Haiwan Park area is a hub for nightlife, offering the perfect spot for a leisurely stroll along the coast at sunset. Afterwards, you can choose from a variety of bars to enjoy a refreshing drink while catching the summer breeze.

Me & You 2



Me & You 2 is a favourite in Haiwan Park, drawing people in with its chill vibe and prime waterfront location. This outdoor bar is the perfect place to kick back with a cold beer or a well-made cocktail. Evenings here hum with live music and lively performances, keeping the energy high. If hunger strikes, the kitchen serves up reliable favourites like freshly baked pizza and pasta dishes.

Photo: gornostay / Shutterstock.com

Address: Hou Hai Ting 1, Haiwan Park, Hubin Xi Lu, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 3pm-3am

Le Good Bar

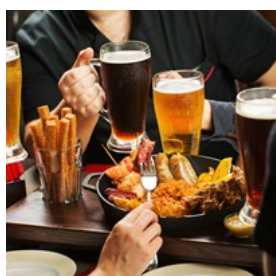


Situated on the 27th floor of the luxurious Tegoo Hotel, Le Good Bar offers a stunning panoramic view of both the sea and the city skyline, making it an ideal spot for a relaxed evening. The tranquil background music and a wide selection of drinks — ranging from expertly crafted cocktails to fine wines — create the perfect atmosphere for unwinding and chatting with friends.

Photo: KPG-Payless/Shutterstock

Address: 12 Lujiang Road, Siming District, Xiamen

The Londoner



If you're in the mood for a lively night out in Xiamen, The Londoner offers a vibrant, international atmosphere where locals and expats come together. Enjoy a cold pint while watching sports, joining quiz nights, or simply soaking up the friendly vibe.

Photo: KANIN.studio / Shutterstock.com

Address: 5-8 Guanren Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Mon-Thu noon-2am, Fri-Sun noon-3am

Paulaner Bräuhaus



Paulaner Bräuhaus not only boasts the city's first and only microbrewery, but it has also become a hotspot for locals and expats alike, known for its vibrant atmosphere and live entertainment every evening. Set within the luxurious Kempinski Hotel, this Bavarian-style brewpub offers a truly authentic experience with its

freshly brewed Helles and Dunkel beers. Pair these with classic German dishes like crispy pork knuckle, and you've got the perfect setting to unwind.

Photo: Syda Productions/Shutterstock

Address: 98 Hubin Middle Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 5:30pm-11:30pm

More Info: Located at Kempinski Hotel, 1st floor

SHOPPING



oneinchpunch / Shutterstock.com

Xiamen is a great place for shopping as it has been a foreign trading city for centuries. Today, the choice ranges from western designer shops to the smallest back street market. All are conveniently located on or around Zhongshan Lu, which runs from Zhongshan Park to the harbour area and the Ferry Wharf. The typical items you'll find here include arts and crafts, spices and olive oils, so make sure to save some time for shopping.

Zhongshan Lu



Zhongshan Road, one of Xiamen's busiest shopping streets, is partially traffic-free and lined with a mix of well-known retail outlets, offering everything from clothing to footwear. However, it's the side streets, which wind parallel to Zhongshan, where you'll find a range

of smaller, independent shops offering unique goods and a more local shopping experience.

Photo: e X p o s e/Shutterstock

Address: Zhongshan Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Taiwan Snack Street



Taiwan Snack Street buzzes with energy, drawing foodies to its tempting stalls. Here, you can sip on bubble tea, savour the bold flavours of stinky tofu, or crunch into crispy Taiwanese chicken. Adventurous eaters might take a bite of the quirky 'large sausage wrapped in small sausage' or enjoy roasted oysters straight from the grill. Souvenir shops also line the street, selling an eclectic mix of gifts and keepsakes at fair prices.

Photo: Maridav/Shutterstock

Address: Renhe Road, Siming District, Xiamen

Wanda Plaza



Wanda Plaza is one of the best destinations for shopping international brands in Xiamen, having introduced names like H&M, Zara and Uniqlo to the city. It also features a variety of dining options, a Walmart and the Wanda Plaza Cinema, home to the city's first IMAX screen.

Photo: michaeljung / Shutterstock.com

Address: 4666 Xianyue Road, Huli District, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 10am-10pm

SM City Plaza



With six floors of shopping, SM City Plaza is a sprawling retail haven where you can find a wide range of local and international brands alongside plenty of dining options. And for those looking to unwind, the mall features a cinema for the latest blockbusters.

Photo: Karramba Production / Shutterstock.com

Address: 468 Jiahe Road, Huli Disitric, Xiamen

Opening hours: Daily 10am-10pm

Longtou Lu Souvenirs Street



Longtou Lu is the bustling heart of Gulangyu Island's commercial scene, lined with numerous souvenir shops offering a wide variety of local handicrafts. From colourful pottery and traditional calligraphy to intricate jade articles, antiques, porcelain, and postcards, there's plenty to explore.

Photo: Kateryna Kon / Shutterstock.com

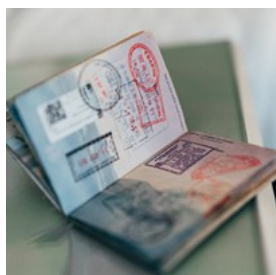
Address: Longtou Lu, Gulangyu Island, Xiamen

TOURIST INFORMATION



Thea/Unsplash

Passport/Visa



Most travellers visiting mainland China are required to obtain a visa before arrival. Tourist visas (L visas) are typically issued for stays

of up to 30 or 60 days and must be obtained in advance from a Chinese embassy or consulate.

Citizens of Japan, Singapore, and Brunei are permitted to enter China without a visa for stays of up to 15 days for tourism, business, or family visits.

Keep in mind that travellers who plan to visit Hong Kong or Macau in addition to mainland China may require separate visas for these regions, as they have different entry requirements from mainland China.

Visa and entry policies may change frequently. Be sure to confirm the latest requirements with your nearest Chinese embassy or consulate before travel.

Photo: ConvertKit/Unsplash

Best Time To Visit



The best time to visit Xiamen is during spring (March to May) and autumn (September to November), when the weather is mild and comfortable for sightseeing. Summer, though warm and perfect for beach activities, also coincides with the typhoon season, so it's important to check the forecast before planning your trip.

Photo: Charlottees/Pixabay

Internet Access and VPN in China



Due to China's strict internet policies, access to many popular Western websites and apps—such as Facebook, Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Google services (including Google Maps), Skype, and others—is restricted. These websites are blocked as part of the government's internet censorship efforts, commonly known as the 'Great Firewall'.

To bypass these restrictions, many travellers use a VPN (Virtual Private Network), which can help access blocked sites. However, it's important to note that VPN use in China is legally complicated. While some VPN services are still used, unauthorized VPNs may be subject to scrutiny, and there have been reports of foreigners experiencing disruptions to their mobile service or being asked to visit the local police station if the use of a VPN is detected. It's critical to comply with local laws and regulations regarding VPN usage. If you choose to use a VPN, ensure it's approved by the Chinese

government and used for legitimate purposes.

Since Google Maps is often unreliable in China due to restrictions on Google's services, travellers should consider using local alternatives such as Baidu Maps and AutoNavi (Gaode Maps). These apps offer more accurate and comprehensive mapping and navigation within China. However, most of these services are primarily in Chinese, so it might be helpful to familiarise yourself with their basic functions or use translation tools. Baidu Maps, in particular, is widely used and provides detailed information about public transport, routes, and traffic.

Photo: Christin Hume/Unsplash

Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport (XMN)



Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport is located about 12 kilometres northeast of Xiamen's city centre, a journey that typically

takes around 25 minutes by taxi under normal traffic conditions. Travellers can reach the city through several convenient transport options, including taxis, airport shuttle buses, or the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system.

Photo: Bao Menglong/Unsplash

Address: Xiamen Gaoqi International Airport

Phone: +86 592 96363

Public Transport



Xiamen has a well-developed public transport system, including buses, trams, and a subway network, which is expanding. The

subway is one of the best options for visitors,

linking key attractions like Gulangyu Island and the city centre. Buses are extensive and affordable, though some routes may be challenging for non-Chinese speakers. A transport card, known as the Xiamen Public Transport Card, allows easy access to buses, the metro, and even taxis.

Photo: Joshua Fernandez/Unsplash

Taxi



Taxis are readily available in Xiamen, with most vehicles being orange or yellow. In addition to traditional taxis, ride-sharing apps like

Didi, accessible via WeChat or Alipay, offer an easy and convenient way to get around, much like Western services such as Uber.

Photo: Gustavo/Unsplash

Post



In Xiamen, post offices typically operate from 8:30am to 6pm, Monday to Saturday. They offer a range of services, including domestic and

international mail, parcel delivery, and money transfers. The Xiamen International Mail Exchange is the primary location for sending and receiving international parcels and letters. For general postal services, you can visit the main post office at 34 Haihou Road.

Photo: Ali Bakhtiari/unsplash

Address: 34 Haihou Road, Xiamen

Pharmacy



In Xiamen, some of the main pharmacy chains include Yunnan Baiyao, Tong Ren Tang, and China National Pharmaceutical Group (Sinopharm). These chains are widely accessible across the city and offer a range of health products, including prescription medications, over-the-counter remedies, traditional Chinese medicine, and personal care items.

Photo: Diana Polekhina/Unsplash

Address: Tong Ren Tang - 16-18, Hubin North Road, Siming District, Xiamen

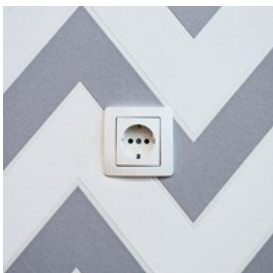
Telephone



Country code: +86 Area code: 592

Photo: Miryam León/Unsplash

Electricity



In China, the standard voltage is 220V at a frequency of 50Hz. There are three kinds of sockets widely used in Mainland China: type A, C, and I.

Type C, which has two round pins, is the one commonly seen in most European countries.

Photo: Neven Krcmarek/Unsplash

Population

Metro area: 4 million (2024)

Currency

Chinese Yuan (CNY), also known as the Renminbi (RMB)

Newspapers

China Daily
China Today

Emergency numbers

Police: 110
Ambulance: 120
Fire: 119

