"Tourists from China now spend more on international travel than tourists from any other country. The U.S. travel industry is slowly learning how to attract them.

According to a report released last week by the U.N. World Tourism Organization, Chinese travelers spent $102 billion on international tourism in 2012, 40% more than they spent in 2011. More than 80 million Chinese traveled internationally in 2011, outspending German tourists — the longtime leader in overseas travel spending — for the first time. Those numbers have steadily climbed since 2000, when 10 million Chinese traveled abroad.

(**MORE:** Google Fiber Heading to Austin as Cities Race to Boost Web Speeds)

This remarkable growth — largely due to relaxed government restrictions on foreign travel and the rise of a Chinese middle class with disposable income — has forced the U.S. travel industry, from hotels to restaurants to shopping centers, to adapt to this influx of Chinese tourists.

The hotel industry has perhaps been the most attentive. According to *USA Today*, Marriott has stationed 20 sales representatives in China and teaches employees in the U.S. to speak basic Mandarin phrases like
hello
and
thank you
. The Marriott Marquis in New York City has even replaced room numbers on the 44th floor with names because the number four is considered bad luck in many Asian cultures.

Hilton sends its reps to China regularly to meet with corporate travel planners and, according to the report, started a Chinese-guest program, staffed with native Chinese speakers. The company features Chinese meals and displays oranges and tangerines (often considered good luck) in 63 of its hotels.

Meanwhile, Starwood, which owns Sheraton, Westin and W hotels, has revised its amenities and services as well, according to *USA Today*: “In-room tea kettles, slippers, translated restaurant menus and welcome brochures, on-site translation services and comfort food such as congee (rice porridge) and noodles” can now be found at many of Starwood’s properties.

States around the country have also been experimenting with ways to draw more Chinese tourists. According to BBC News , the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism holds a workshop advising businesses on how to cater to Chinese tourists, and California has started a program called China Ready, which includes a learning kit that helps the state's businesses serve those travelers and understand their culture.

(**MORE:** Inside the Chinese Company America Can't Trust)

So what are Chinese travelers looking for when they leave their homeland? Mainly, luxury goods. Many tourists leave China to shop, spending an average of $1,230 per trip , and some estimates show they spend
about $3,200 per trip
when visiting New York City. Items such as clothes and accessories (many of which were made in China) are often at the top of their list. Wolfgang Georg Arlt, director of the China Outbound Tourism Research Institute,
told CNN
: "Luxury goods are 20% to 30% cheaper in other global cities. If you plan to spend $10,000 on shopping and only spend $1,000 on airfare, it's much cheaper for Chinese tourists to fly abroad to shop.""

Read more: http://business.time.com/2013/04/09/how-the-u-s-travel-industry-is-adapting-to-a-growing-wave-of-chinese-tourists/#ixzz2SEYiAXlo

Consultez la source sur Veille info tourisme: How the US Travel Industry Is Adapting to a Growing Wave of Chinese Tourists