

4 Discover China



Satellite view of Earth

When inhabitants of eastern China are greeting the dawn, people in western China still face four more hours of darkness. The distance from northernmost point in China to the southernmost point is approximately 3,400 miles. When northern China is still gripped in a world of ice and snow, flowers are already blooming in the balmy south. China's maritime territory includes 5,400

islands, which have a total area of 30,888 square miles. The two largest islands, Taiwan and Hainan, cover 13,899 square miles and 13,127 square miles respectively.

China possesses 12,427 miles of land border, plus 11,184 miles of coastline. Setting out from any point on China's border and making a complete circuit back to the starting point, the distance traveled would be equivalent to circling the globe at the equator.

Due to its vast area, China experiences a range of climates. Temperature belts from south to north appear in this order: tropical zone, subtropical zone, temperate zone, medium temperate zone and frigid temperate zone. There is also a vertical climatic zone on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau in southwestern China.