

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Luxury hotels cater to China's solo female travelers

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*Luxury hotels are acknowledging the newly empowered solo Chinese woman traveler. Image credit: Unsplash*

By [Lin Wang](#)

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It is no secret that Chinese women hold a great deal of decision-making power when it comes to picking a travel destination.

Surprisingly, they are increasingly indulging in their wanderlust alone, according to a [Trip study](#) released this March.

Six out of 10 independent travelers from China are women, and this accounts for more than 58 percent of bookings made on the travel aggregator.

Cities where most of these female solo travelers come from include Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, Chengdu, Chongqing, Xi'an, Wuhan, Tianjin and Xiamen.

Just like in ancient wuxia (martial arts) novels where a swordswoman sets out on an adventure to discover herself, today's generation of highly educated, financially empowered Chinese women aspire to see the world even without companions.

The pursuit of freedom and independence drive them. This is further compounded by the comparatively higher degree of financial freedom they have compared to their male peers, who are faced with the additional societal pressure of saving up for marriage and a family.

Also, with the total number of singles in China now hitting almost [200 million](#), the notion of solo travel is no longer frowned upon.

A growing number of luxury hotels have already started adapting their offerings to this emerging class of travelers.

"We believe that a female solo traveler should not be singled out, as she should enjoy Amanpuri like any other guest," said Nicolas Beliard, general manager of [Amanpuri](#), the Aman Hotels & Resorts Group's property in Phuket, Thailand.

"Empathy and attention to detail are key factors in our approach to hosting female solo travelers from China," he

said.

#### Instagrammable hotels

For social media-savvy Chinese female travelers, the hotel also doubles up as a photo-shoot destination.

On online travel review and social commerce platform Xiaohongshu (RED), The Salil Hotel in Bangkok, Thailand, is one such popular destination with nearly 1,500 reviews.

With its spiral staircases, birdcage chandeliers and flowered wallpaper, it even served as the backdrop for a Chanel ad campaign.

Following the launch of that ad, girls flocked to the picturesque property for a chance to recreate those images and star in their own Chanel fantasy.

#### Love affair with food

**Studies** have shown that women are more willing to spend time and money on sampling local delicacies compared to their male counterparts, and often make it the top of their travel to-do lists.

Fresh bamboo shoots and fish head soup are popular at the **Alila Anji**, which overlooks a picturesque lake and is surrounded by lush bamboo groves.

Easily accessible from major Chinese cities such as Shanghai, Hangzhou and Suzhou, Anji offers an ideal escape for busy urban women.

"Our creative dining concept, 3D Le Petit Chef, has been quite popular among female guests," said Jack Widagdo, general manager of Alila Anji. "It's an animated six-course dinner."

With the help of visual technology, a little animated chef comes to life on diners' plates and "cooks" up a storm in front of guests. Who does not love such an imaginative and entertaining culinary experience? And it is perfect for sharing on social media.

#### Travel alone, but not lonely

While Chinese women travel alone, most definitely do not want to feel lonely.

A 2018 **survey** by British Airways revealed that experiencing new activities, making new friends and even encountering an unexpected romance are some of the secret wishes harbored by Chinese women when they set off on a solo trip.

Hence social events for example, bonfire nights in intimate settings and even curated nightlife recommendations for female solo travelers is something highly appreciated by this crowd.

"Those ladies who come to Alila Anji are noticeably successful yet very low key," Mr. Widagdo said. "They want to enjoy the serenity but also be more engaged. They would try various activities on offer, including white tea picking, bamboo shoot digging, or simply singing the heart out in a karaoke box."

"This summer we [are] offering a kung fu class, inspired by the epic bamboo battles filmed in Anji for the Oscar-winning movie Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," he said.

"It is worth mentioning that our female solo guests do come with their beloved pets. So we offer pet amenities and a pet menu as well."

#### From feeling safe to feeling alive

Compared to older generations, bold post-90s girls are actually less concerned about safety, as revealed in a **study** by Chinese travel aggregator Qunar.

"Safety is important, but people don't choose a destination because of safety," Amanpuri's Mr. Beliard said. "They want to be in a lively atmosphere and feel more alive."

Female solo travelers are also taking holidays as a chance to rejuvenate themselves, making spa and wellness options rather popular.

"Following the launch of our new holistic wellness center at Amanpuri, female solo travelers can treat themselves to individual wellness immersions, focusing on detox and cleansing, as well as mindfulness and stress management," Mr. Beliard said. "It all begins with a thorough consultation to understand clearly the needs and

expectations."

THE TREND OF females traveling solo shows no signs of abating and beyond expanding their offerings.

Hotels are also looking into different marketing channels that would best appeal to this group of travelers.

"In China, there are more female travel influencers than male ones," Mr. Beliard said.

"Their content is not only limited to hotels, but also includes fashion, gourmet, spa, boutique shopping and more," he said.

"So we are thinking of a tailor-made trip for female influencers to experience the best Aman destinations have to offer with beauty, wellness, art, female power elements, et cetera. It's a full lifestyle experience."



*Lin Wang*

*Lin Wang is an Amsterdam, Netherlands-based contributing writer for **Luxury Society**, a division of the **Digital Luxury Group**.*

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