

Most expensive visas for Australian travelers Priciest countries to enter

Australians have one of the world's most powerful passports, giving citizens the ability to enjoy visa-free access to 174 nations.

That puts us equal sixth, along with Belgium and Greece, while Singapore and Japan, with visa-free access to 180 countries, share the number one spot.

But despite ranking among the top 10, when we do have to pay for visas we often pay handsomely. Visas are still required by dozens of countries, including some of our most-visited destinations.

- **VISA requirements and forms can change weekly. In fact even if you apply for a Visa on an old form or old weblink, that could be a waste of time and money as most Embassies or Consulates will not refund fees.**
- **Axis Travel Centre is updated daily on new formalities and requirements and levy a nominal fee to assist in this process, audit your application, followup with the process and return your Visa and/or Passport to you. If we take ownership of your process-then that is what we do.**
- **Below are some excerpts of Visa costs and formalities that may surprise you.**
- **VISA Costs below are as of Jan.2019 BUT do not include courier costs, emergency processing costs or any costs that may be imposed. Costs are based on foreign country exchange rates and change daily. Take these as an estimate ONLY>**

Of these, China charges \$98.50 for a visa, though that doesn't put off visitor numbers, which according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics rose 17 per cent in 2016 to nearly half a million. You can, however, avoid China's visa fee altogether if you spend only 72 hours in the country and arrive at certain airports such as Beijing and Shanghai. You can also visit tropical getaway Hainan Island and the Pearl Delta region (which includes Guangzhou) without a visa, under certain conditions.

The cost of an Indian tourist e-visa will set you back \$US50 (\$A67). Still, nearly twice as many Aussies (around 320,000) visit India now compared with 10 years ago, lured especially by the Taj Mahal, the exotic desert cities of Rajasthan, and the Ayurvedic wellness and spa tourism of southern region Kerala. Add between \$60 to \$80 in courier fees.

Of course, there's nothing new about visa charges. Visa-like documents have a long history, the earliest example dating from 450 BC and allowing Persian court official Nehemiah to travel to Judah. Such letters and safe conducts are among the world's oldest documents. Passports and visas as we think of them today, though, only became common after World War I as larger numbers of people began to travel.

Visas are a means by which nations control who enters their territory, what they can do there, and how long they can stay. If issued in advance, they also allow time for potential security, financial or health checks. But visas are also an easy means to raise government revenue.

Strangely enough, the cheaper the destination, the steeper the visa fees. The central Africa nation of Gabon, with a fledgling tourist industry based on wildlife-dense national parks, charges \$112 plus a \$24 online fee. Uganda charges \$150, though you can apply for an East African Tourist Visa valid for Kenya

and Rwanda too. Nearly 200,000 international visitors now visit Rwanda, famous for its mountain gorillas. Add between \$60 to \$80 in courier fees.

Bangladesh relieves you of \$145. The Bangladesh high commission in Canberra comments that "visa fees are determined on the basis of reciprocity", so maybe we only have ourselves to blame. It's not the only country with tit-for-tat charges. The Chilean embassy says Australian citizens don't need visas – but they do have to pay a US\$117 (\$151) reciprocity fee, though it only applies when arriving in Santiago by air. Add between \$60 to \$80 in courier fees.

Visitor numbers to Chile have nonetheless soared, hitting a high of 6.5 million in 2017, of which 62,000 were Australians. Small wonder: the elongated country packs in towering Andes peaks, hot deserts and pink volcanoes in the north and emerald-green lakes, fjords and glaciers in the south, with Torres del Paine considered one of [the world's most beautiful national parks](#).

Neighbouring nation Argentina recently abolished its reciprocity charge. Brazil charges a reasonable US\$44 (\$57) for an e-visa, but apply by post or in person at the embassy and you'll be stiffed a shocking \$216. Gallingly New Zealanders don't need a Brazilian visa at all to shake their Carnival tail feathers or hit the beaches of Rio. Add between \$60 to \$80 in courier fees.

Entry to Mongolia will cost you \$230.

Happy the non-Australian citizens too that holiday in Ukraine: they pay just \$85 for a tourist visa at the Ukrainian Embassy in Canberra, while (mysteriously) Australians are slugged \$130, or a whopping \$260 for a seven-day service. Other countries on the hit parade of expensive visas are Russia at \$135, Burkina Faso at \$180 and Nigeria at \$182, though virtually no Australian tourists visit that troubled nation. Add between \$60 to \$80 in courier fees.

The most expensive tourist visa of all? If you're off to adventure destination Mongolia or to explore the Persian culture of Iran then a single-entry, 30-day visa will cost you \$230 plus about \$80 in Courier fees. For Iran you must pay the fee in euro, in cash, upon arrival. Start saving.

PRICEY COUNTRIES FOR AUSTRALIANS TO ENTER

- Mongolia \$230
- Iran \$230
- Sudan \$199
- Nigeria \$182
- Burkina Faso \$180
- Paraguay \$174
- Chile \$151
- Uganda \$150
- Bangladesh \$145
- Gabon \$136

Add between \$60 to \$80 in auditing/courier fees per person.