

## 《UK expected to loosen visa policy for Chinese》

Britain's Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond begins two days of talks with China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi today. A liberalized visa regime is on their agenda. It is expected Hammond will announce the start of a new two-year multiple-entry visa for Chinese tourists for 130 dollars, with plans for a 10-year visa.

Currently, Chinese tourists are limited to six-month visas. Britain will also make it easier for Chinese travelers to collect their visas before departing. As Richard Bestic reports from London, the new policy is seen as the latest move from the UK to win a slice of China's high spending outbound tourism market, the biggest in the world.

Britain's pomp and ceremony of the British monarch are a big draw for China's ever-growing army of tourists, according to UK tourism bosses.

And Chinese President Xi Jinping's ride down the Mall in the summer is expected only to add to the romance of it.

"We do pomp and heritage so well and you can see that in the events we've had from pictures of the Chinese President himself taking part in that history and tradition," said Patricia Yates, strategy director of Visit Britain.

And Chinese travelers to Britain appear to agree. With shopping also high on the to do list, record numbers of Chinese are traveling to the UK.

Visitor numbers in the first six months of last year were up nearly 30 percent to 90,000, significantly, they stayed longer and spent more than tourists from any other country.

"It's the growth of the Chinese market in itself, where it's already the world's biggest outbound market. So, yes, we want to compete there," Yates said.

Visit Britain claims the number of tourists who feel welcome here has more than doubled in the last five years. And they are hoping that, coupled with a bumper two-year multi entry visa, will make the UK appear very approachable indeed for Chinese tourists.

"Hugely welcoming that. That is a real step forward. It enables us to compete. Our visa is part of our offer to the Chinese visitors," Yates said.

Tourism is Britain's seventh largest export industry estimated next year to be worth around U.S.\$50 billion. And with easier visas, China's love affair with Britain is expected only to grow.