

Hangzhou

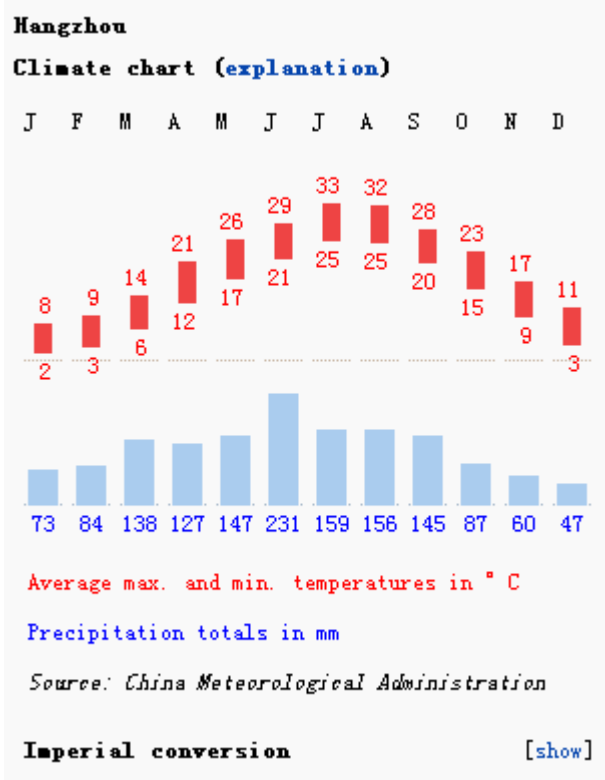
Hangzhou, formerly romanised as Hangchow, is the capital and largest city of Zhejiang Province in Eastern China. It sits at the head of Hangzhou Bay on China's coast between Shanghai and Ningbo. Hangzhou grew to prominence as the southern terminus of the Grand Canal and has been one of the most renowned and prosperous cities in China for much of the last millennium, due in part to its beautiful natural scenery. The city's West Lake is its best-known attraction.

Hangzhou is classified as a sub-provincial city and forms the core of the Hangzhou Metropolitan Area, the fourth-largest metropolitan area in China. During the 2010 Chinese census, the metropolitan area held 21.102 million people over an area of 34,585 km² (13,353 sq mi). Hangzhou prefecture had a registered population of 8.7 million and the built-up area (including the 9 urban districts and the Keqiao and Yuecheng districts of Shaoxing) held 8,874,348.





Geography and climate

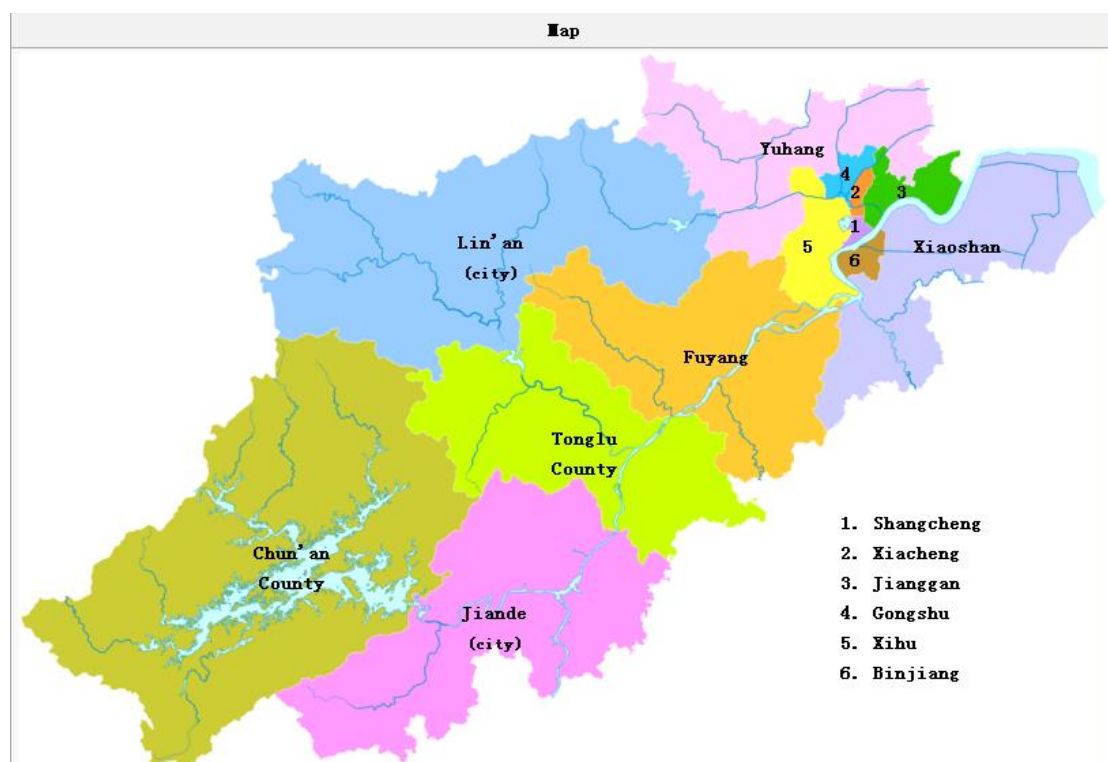


Hangzhou is located in northwestern Zhejiang province, at the southern end of the Grand Canal of China, which runs to Beijing, in the south-central portion of the Yangtze River Delta. Its administrative area (sub-provincial city) extends west to the mountainous parts of Anhui province, and east to the coastal plain near Hangzhou Bay. The city center is built around the eastern and northern sides of the West Lake, just north of the Qiantang River.

Hangzhou's climate is humid subtropical with four distinctive seasons, characterized by long, very hot, humid summers and chilly, cloudy and drier winters (with occasional snow). The mean annual temperature is 17.0 °C (62.6 °F), with monthly daily averages ranging from 4.6 °C (40.3 °F) in January to 28.9 °C (84.0 °F) in July. The city receives an average annual rainfall of 1,438.0 mm (56.6 in) and is affected by the plum rains of the Asian monsoon in June. In late summer (August to September), Hangzhou suffers typhoon storms, but typhoons seldom strike it directly. Generally they make landfall along the southern coast of Zhejiang, and affect the area with strong winds and stormy rains.[38] Extreme temperatures have ranged from −10.5 to 42.1 °C (13 to 108 °F).[39] With monthly percent possible sunshine ranging from 30% in March to 51% in August, the city receives 1,709.4 hours of sunshine annually.

Administrative divisions

The sub-provincial city of Hangzhou comprises 9 districts, 2 county-level cities, and 2 counties. The six central urban districts occupy 683 km² and have 3,560,400 people. The three suburban districts occupy 4,193 km² and have 3,399,300 people.



Subdivision	Chinese	Pinyin	Population (2010)	Area (km ²)	Density
City Proper					
Shangcheng District	上城区	Shàngchéng Qū	344,594	18.30	18,830.27
Xiacheng District	下城区	Xiàchéng Qū	526,096	31.46	16,722.70
Jiangan District	江干区	Jiānggān Qū	998,783	210.22	4,751.13
Gongshu District	拱墅区	Gǒngshù Qū	551,874	87.49	6,307.85
Xihu District	西湖区	Xīhú Qū	820,017	308.70	2,656.36
Binjiang District	滨江区	Bīnjiāng Qū	319,027	72.02	4,429.70
Suburban					
Xiaoshan District	萧山区	Xiāoshān Qū	1,511,290	1,420.22	1,064.12
Yuhang District	余杭区	Yúháng Qū	1,170,290	1,223.56	956.46
Fuyang District	富阳区	Fùyáng Qū	717,694	1,831.20	391.93
County					
Tonglu County	桐庐县	Tónglú Xiàn	406,450	1,825.00	222.71
Chun'an County	淳安县	Chún'ān Xiàn	336,843	4,427.00	76.09
County-level cities					
Jiande	建德市	Jiàndé Shì	430,750	2,321.00	185.59
Lin'an	临安市	Lín'ān Shì	566,665	3,126.80	181.23

Economy

Hangzhou's economy has rapidly developed since its opening up in 1992. It is an industrial city with many diverse sectors such as light industry, agriculture, and textiles. It is considered an important manufacturing base and logistics hub for coastal China.

The 2001 GDP of Hangzhou was RMB ¥156.8 billion, which ranked second among all of the provincial capitals after Guangzhou. The city has more than tripled its GDP since then, increasing from RMB ¥156.8 billion in 2001 to RMB ¥701.1 billion in 2011 and GDP per capita increasing from US\$3,025 to US\$12,447.

The city has developed many new industries, including medicine, information technology, heavy equipment, automotive components, household electrical appliances, electronics, telecommunication, fine chemicals, chemical fibre and food processing.



Hangzhou International conference center



Qianjiang guoji shidai plaza



Alibaba's Binjiang Campus in Hangzhou, headquarters for Alibaba's B2B service

Tourism

Hangzhou is renowned for its historic relics and natural beauty. It is known as one of the most beautiful cities in China, also ranking as one of the most scenic cities. Although Hangzhou has been through many recent urban developments, it still retains its historical and cultural heritage. Today, tourism remains an important factor for Hangzhou's economy. One of Hangzhou's most popular sights is West Lake, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The West Lake Cultural Landscape covers an area of 3,323 ha (8,210 acres) and includes some of Hangzhou's most notable historic and scenic places. Adjacent to the lake is a scenic area which includes historical pagodas, cultural sites, as well as the natural beauty of the lake and hills, including Phoenix Mountain. There are two causeways across the lake.

The famous ten scenes in West Lake:

1. Spring Dawn on the Su Causeway (苏堤春晓) It is a thin strip of land nearly three kilometers covered with peach and weeping willow trees. In spring, with the lakeside sparkling in the morning dew, birds cheerfully chirping among swaying willow branches, the scent of peach blossoms wafting through the air, you will ask whether you are in the midst of paradise.

2. Orioles Singing in the Willows (柳浪闻莺) An imperial garden built in the southern song dynasty. Now the once-imperial garden has been turned into a park open to public. Featuring green willows and singing orioles, there are lawns, pavilions, and bridges that are very impressive, as well.

3. Viewing Fish at Flower Pond (花港观鱼) Flowers Pond Park occupies an area of twenty-one hectares on a peninsula in the southwest corner of the lake. In its heart is the red fish pond, where people can relax to the sight of brightly colorful fish swimming around and to the brisk melody of chirpy birdsong. To stay with nature is a highly enjoyable experience.

4. Winery Yard and Lotus Pool /Breeze-ruffled lotus at Quyuan garden (曲苑风荷) This typical west lake scene has earned its fame since Song dynasty, when the lakeside area with an abundant growth of lotus off its shores was known as Crooked Courtyard., and was a location of a brewery. People said the smell of the lotus flowers and wine blended by the cool lake breezes was intoxicating. There are plenty of lotus plants still bloom off its shores. They stand gracefully erect in the lake, as if they know they has visitors coming to admire their beauty.

5. Evening Bell Ringing at the Nanping Hill (南屏晚钟) Nanping mountain stretches along the southern bank of the lake. At dusk, with the sun slowly drifting into the lake on the west, a huge bell at Jingxi temple, will ring its farewell to the last sunbeam of the day with the prolonged bell sound reverberating across the lake the peaceful and scared air offers you a perfect occasion for meditation.

6. Autumn Moon over the Calm Lake (平湖秋月) At the western end of Bai Causeway is located a lakeside park which houses a stone tablet bearing the etched calligraphy of Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty, which reads: "Autumn Moon on Calm Lake". The lake is a special place to appreciate the moon and the effect of moonlight on the land. The moon seems especially bright over the waters. The hills look purplish bathed in the moonlight. The best time for nighttime viewing is on Mid-Autumn Day.

7. Leifeng Pagoda in Evening Glow (雷峰夕照) Leifeng pagoda is another renowned scenic spot in Hangzhou, Originally built in the 10th century. Leifeng pagoda used to stand in front of Jingxi temple on nanping mountain, though failed to stand the test of time, the pagoda collapsed in early1900s. In 2002, leifeng pagoda was reconstructed; then comes back the typical sunset Glow over leifeng pagoda.

8. Three Pools Mirroring the Moon (三潭印月) "There are islands in the lake and three are lake on the islands." On the south side of the largest of the three manmade islands in the Outer Lake, there are three hollow stone pagodas rising from the water, each with five openings. The three stone towers were first built in Yuanyou 4th year (1089) of the Song Dynasty, with the wonderful scenery of "one moon in the sky having three reflection in the lake", it is one of the wonderful scenes of the West Lake.

9. Lingerig Snow on the Broken Bridge (断桥残雪) It is the most romantic scene of the ten mat-see. The stone arched broken bridge is where the character of a famous Chinese folktale Xu Xian and a beautiful girl, who is actually a white snake, first met and fell in love with each other. After a snowfall, when the snow on the more exposed side has melted, with the shade side remaining white, it looks as if a long white belt has been ripped apart on the thus earning the name" melting snow on the broken bridge" .

10. Twin Peaks Piercing the Clouds (双峰插云) Graze at the skies above the west lake, you will be rewarded with the sight of tow limestone mountains past the northern edge of the lake one to the northeast and one to the northwest, five kilometers apart. On a drizzling day spring or autumn, the tow peaks come and go amongst drifting rain clouds. There are many other scenes to see. If you walk around the lake, everywhere is a beautiful scene. The West Lake is like a shining pearl inlaid on the vast land of China, with beautiful scenery, a multitude of historical sites, brilliant cultural relics, and a profusion of native products. Legend has it that the West Lake was a heavenly jewel fallen to earth. Pragmatists insist that it is a mere lagoon on Hangzhou's western fringe. In any case, West Lake is both a great tourist attraction and Longjing (Dragon Well Spring) in Hangzhou, famous for the Longjing tea cultivated in the surrounding plantations.

Large statue of Guanyin and carved images of 150 Buddhist personalities in the Grand Hall of the Great Sage in Lingyin Temple

Culture

Language

The native residents of Hangzhou, like those of Zhejiang and southern Jiangsu, speak a Wu dialect. However, the Wu dialect varies throughout the area where it is spoken, hence, Hangzhou's dialect differs from regions in southern Zhejiang and southern Jiangsu. As the official language defined by China's central government, Mandarin is the dominant spoken language.



Museum

There are several museums located in Hangzhou with regional and national importance. China National Silk Museum (中国丝绸博物馆), located near the West Lake, is one of the first state-level museums in China and the largest silk museum in the world. China National Tea Museum (中国茶叶博物馆) is a national museum with special subjects as tea and its culture. Zhejiang Provincial Museum (浙江博物馆) features collection of integrated human studies, exhibition and research with its over 100,000 collected cultural relics.

Food

Hangzhou's local cuisine is often considered to be representative of Zhejiang provincial cuisine, which is claimed as one of China's eight fundamental cuisines. The locally accepted consensus among Hangzhou's natives defines dishes prepared in this style to be "fresh, tender, soft, and smooth, with a mellow fragrance."

Dishes like Pian Er Chuan Noodles (片儿川) West Lake Vinegar Fish (西湖醋鱼), Dongpo Pork (东坡肉), Longjing Shrimp (龙井虾仁), Beggar's Chicken (叫化鸡), Steamed Rice and Pork Wrapped by Lotus Leaves (荷叶粉蒸肉), Braised Bamboo Shoots (油焖笋), Lotus Root Pudding (藕粉) and Sister Song's Fish Soup (宋嫂鱼羹) are some of the better-known examples of Hangzhou's regional cuisine.







There are many restaurants in Hangzhou where you can taste the typical Hangzhou dishes. Lou Wai Lou is a famous restaurant located near the beautiful West Lake, which services the traditional dishes like Beggar's Chicken, West Lake Vinegar Fish. Zhi Wei Guan Restaurant is famous for the traditional dishes and sacks like Xiao Long Bao, Streamed Buns, Cat's Ear Noodles. Kui Yuan Guan's noodle is a must-do for tourists to Hangzhou. There are also restaurants like Granma's Kitchen which provide local dishes with real value-to-money experience.

Arts

There are lots of theaters in Hangzhou showing performance of opera shows. Yue Opera, originated from Shengzhou, Zhejiang Province, is the second-largest opera form in China. Also, there are several big shows themed with the history and culture of Hangzhou like Impression West Lake and the Romance of Song Dynasty.

Specialty

Tea is an important part of Hangzhou's economy and culture. Hangzhou is best known for originating Longjing, a notable variety of green tea, the most notable type being Xi Hu Long Jing. Known as the best type of Long Jing tea, Xi Hu Long Jing is grown near Xi Hu in Hangzhou, hence its name.[citation needed]

The local government of Hangzhou heavily invests in promoting tourism and the arts, with emphasis placed upon silk production, umbrellas, and Chinese hand-held folding fans.