

1. Why is there an application process? Any advice on maximizing my chances?

We are looking to create a supportive group that enhances the training experience of everyone involved (including the Chinese athletes). Therefore, when we open the application process we will accept applications until we have formed such a group and notify everyone at the end of the process (which may take 2-3 weeks). Due to the volume of applications and the fact that individuals' circumstances can change, we will create a waiting list. Please note the waiting list is purely due to the volume of applications and does not reflect negatively on you. The best thing you can do to maximize your chance is to answer fill out the application truthfully and sincerely. Please do not email about your status. We will contact everyone as soon as the decisions have been finalized.

2. I attended a Ma Strength camp or seminar in the past, do I still have to apply? Am I guaranteed a spot?

Since the focus is on creating a cohesive group, you must apply again despite attending prior camps. We cannot guarantee spots to past participants or individuals who have hosted/attended any other Ma Strength events.

3. Will I meet my weightlifting idols?

In the past we have been able to coordinate appearances by current or past weightlifting champions. However, such events are fluid and depend on many factors so we cannot guarantee them. If your primary reason for this trip is to meet such lifters and/or take pictures, then we strongly encourage you to not apply for this camp.

4. I have never been outside of my country. What is Chinese culture like?

Please see these links for snapshots of Chinese culture. In a nutshell, Chinese society is hierarchical, collective, and values social stability/harmony, so situations can be fluid in order to preserve these elements. This is very different from western cultures that emphasize individuality, freedom, and values the self over social stability. Therefore, remember that we are guests and that your behavior will be reflective of our group as a whole so it is very important that you internalize this information and be aware of Chinese customs in order to fully enjoy the camp. Most of the time the hosts will not directly confront you with any problems but rather bring it to our attention so we require that you respect authority, go with the flow of things, and ask questions if you are unsure:

http://www.culturalsavvy.com/chinese_culture.htm

<http://travelblog.viator.com/how-to-avoid-culture-shock-in-china/>

5. Can I bring my spouse or significant other with me?

We recommend to bring your significant other after the camp if you wish to tour China. The training, housing, meals, etc. are structured to meet the needs of camp participants and staff only. If you decide to bring your significant other during the camp, they must make their own accommodations and they are not allowed in the training halls. Additionally, you are expected to participate fully in camp training, meals, and activities regardless of the presence of your significant other.

6. How do I obtain a visa for this trip?

You will need an invitation and itinerary which we will provide once we have a group. Afterwards you can apply for a visa by:

- Booking with your local travel agent.
- Applying individually via the [Chinese embassy or consulate](#) directly. It will take about 5 business days for the process in the US.

You must have a non-expired passport to obtain a visa. Ideally you should have one prior to applying for the camp but if you do not have one, please be prepared to fast-track it so that you can apply for a visa ASAP. If you do not obtain a visa in a timely manner, you will forfeit your place in the camp without refund.

7. Do I need a certain lifting ability to attend?

Not really. Regardless of your ability, you will learn techniques and exercises that you most likely do not employ in your own training. It will help if you have the mobility to perform a stable overhead squat and front squat and already train regularly. Training sessions are about 3hrs long and about 9 sessions per week, so the closer you are to this level of work the easier you will adapt. We strongly recommend that you be injury-free prior to this camp.

8. Do I need to stay the whole 2 weeks?

No. If you need to shorten your stay, please note that in the [application form](#). Based on your needs, the costs of the camp may change but we will give preference for individuals who can stay the entire trip. If you would like to lengthen your stay, you must do so on your own but note that you cannot train in the training halls once the camp is over.

9. How much money should I bring with me?

The exchange rate between the US dollar and Chinese yuan is \$1 = 6 yuan and buying power is greater as a result. The estimates for outings are based on this exchange rate and to account for the fact that you will spend much of your time training and eating and the dining halls. If you plan on buying many souvenirs then bring more and know that it is better to have a little extra than not. It may be possible to purchase some training gear (i.e. straps, wraps, knee sleeves, etc.) at significant discounts from retailers in your home countries so you can stock up on those as well.

The estimated amount may change depending on exchange rates between now and the time of the camp. For up to date information on exchange rates, just perform the following [search](#).

10. What happens when I am not training?

You can rest or eat. We will coordinate some outings to popular tourist attractions based on interest and time. [Review this site](#) for a list of sites and information.

11. What should I bring with me?

You should bring your training gear, enough training clothes to last the trip, some non-lifting clothing for outings, walking shoes, and personal toiletries. It is hot and humid during the summer in most of China so bring light clothing with you for non-training times and outings. For a better sense of the weather, [review this guide](#).

12. Can I bring electronics?

You can bring electronics with you but make sure you purchase a plug-in converter to charge any laptops, hair dryers, etc. However, electronics are not permitted in the training hall.

13. Can I bring supplements and/or medications?

Protein powder/bars, vitamins, minerals, and liniments are fine. If you are taking any medications, please make sure to secure any prescriptions or notes you may need prior to your departure just in case you are questioned by airport security. Be careful when bringing any other supplements and check any customs laws to make sure they are allowed.

14. Should I get vaccines before my trip?

The CDC has some helpful information that you can use to consult with your doctor prior to your trip as well as information on how to avoid bird flu:
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/china>
<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/avian-flu-h7n9-china>