

Chinese Get Tested Before Allowed Entry in Japan

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Surge (Verb) /sɜːdʒ/ to increase suddenly and greatly
Example: Oil prices surged after the Russia-Ukraine War broke out.
2. Measure (Noun) /'meɪʒər/ a plan or action done in order to achieve a particular goal
Example: We have to follow safety precautionary measures to avoid being infected by the disease.
3. Restriction (Noun) /rɪ'strɪkʃən/ a law or rule that limits what is allowed to happen or be done
Example: They are imposing restrictions on the tourists who would like to visit the country.
4. Proportionate (Adjective) /prə'pɔːʃənət/ correct or suitable in size, amount, etc. in relation to something else
Example: The citizens don't think that the punishment for the accused is proportionate with the crime he committed.
5. Ensure (Verb) /ɛn'ʃʊr/ to make sure that something happens or exists
Example: To ensure the convenience of the tourists, the company provided a transportation service to all the places that they will be visiting.
6. Comprehensive (Adjective) /ˌkɑːmprɪ'hensɪv/ including or dealing with many aspects of something
Example: This travel guide includes a comprehensive list of the best tourist attractions in Germany.



Japan started requiring COVID-19 tests for all passengers arriving from China on December 30, as an emergency measure against the dramatic increase in infections there. Chinese visitors who test positive will be quarantined for up to seven days. Direct flights between China and Japan will be limited to four major Japanese airports for now, government officials said.

Flights from Hong Kong and Macao will be allowed to land at three other airports — New Chitose Airport in Hokkaido, Naha Airport in Okinawa and Fukuoka Airport — if no passengers have been to mainland China within seven days before the flight. Hong Kong authorities called the restrictions "unreasonable" and requested Japanese authorities remove them.

China recently removed the COVID-19 controls that kept the country in isolation for nearly three years and announced plans this week to reissue passports and visas for overseas trips. This could send many Chinese abroad for the Lunar New Year holiday in January, raising concerns about possible virus spread. On December 30, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said China hopes Japan will "take science-based and proportionate measures to ensure normal cross-border exchange between the two peoples."

World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has said that the WHO needs more detailed information to assess the COVID-19 situation in China. "In the absence of comprehensive information from China, it is understandable that countries around the world are acting in ways that they believe may protect their populations," he said on Twitter.

The United States will begin testing all travelers from China beginning on January 5. India, Italy, Taiwan and South Korea have also responded to the Chinese rise in infections by requiring virus tests for visitors from China. South Korea will also restrict the number of flights from China and restrict short-term visas for most Chinese nationals, at least until the end of February.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on Japan's restrictions on travelers arriving from China?
2. Did you have to change or cancel any of your travel plans because of COVID-19?
3. Has your country introduced any measures or restrictions during the pandemic that you'd describe as unreasonable?
4. Have you traveled overseas since the pandemic began?
5. What countries would you be most reluctant to visit at the moment?