

A mobile guide for Chinese travellers in Helsinki - Case:  
CreateTrips

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<p>Chinese inbound tourism is growing rapidly as well as in Europe, also in Finland. Helsinki as a tourism destination for them is a hot topic. However, the information for Chinese travellers in Helsinki is still limited and often Chinese travellers find it difficult to enjoy their time in the city. This is mostly due to lack of information on their own language.</p> <p>This thesis described how the author made a mobile travel guide for Chinese travellers in Helsinki.</p> <p>The aim of this thesis is to help Chinese travellers have a better travel experience in Helsinki. And make them enjoy their time in the city.</p> <p>The theoretical framework included the consumer behaviour of the Chinese tourists, Helsinki as a destination to Chinese tourists and what mobile applications are.</p> <p>The thesis is product-based from the author's commissioner CreateTrips. The project part displayed overview of the mobile travel guide which includes 8 different segmentations: Helsinki Top 5 Chinese restaurant, Helsinki Top 5 museums, Helsinki Top 5 cafes, Helsinki Top 5 souvenir shops, Helsinki Top 5 shipping malls, Helsinki Top 5 brand stores, Helsinki Top 5 hotels and Helsinki Top 5 churches. The data for the application was collected from September to November 2015.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Chinese travellers, mobile travel guide, Helsinki.	

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# 1 Introduction

What are the needs and motivation for Chinese tourists when traveling abroad? What do they want to eat, what do they want to do and what kind of traditions do they have when travelling abroad, or more specified, to Helsinki?

Chinese tourists as a group is one of the largest tourist groups coming outside of Europe to Europe nowadays, as well as to Finland. There are several daily direct flights operated from Helsinki to China and vice versa. Chinese tourists flying to Helsinki either visit Finland or transfer their flights to other European countries. When staying in Finland most of them spend one to three days in Helsinki or in some other city in Lapland. However, when Chinese tourists are planning their visit to Helsinki they hardly have any specific practical information on their hands for a successful stay even the internet is full of tips and information.

The aim of the thesis is to create a mobile travel guide for the Chinese tourists visiting Helsinki. The mobile guide will introduce local restaurants, cafés, gift shops and shopping malls to the Chinese tourists according to their special tastes and needs. The selection of venues is based on a study of written sources regarding the characteristics of the Chinese tourists.

The mobile guide has a shortcoming of limited regional usage. So far there is only one version of CreateTrips app with only one language available for downloading on App Store or on Google Play store. The language in the mobile guide is Mandarin Chinese. This could be an issue for tourists from Hong Kong, Macau or Taiwan where traditional Chinese is used as their mother language.

The thesis first presents the consumer behavior of Chinese tourists. Next, Helsinki as a destination for Chinese tourists is introduced. Moreover, the role of mobile travel guide in modern tourism is discussed. In project part the making of the mobile guide is introduced for Chinese tourists in Helsinki. The mobile guide is going to present variety of hotels, restaurants, luxury shops, churches, gift shops, museums, cafés, and shopping malls in Helsinki which fit to Chinese tourists' taste.

## **2 Chinese tourists**

According to the statistics of China National Tourism Administration, The Chinese outbound tourists are more than 100 million by the end of November on 2014. Among outbound travelling people, 3.5% travellers went to Europe, which almost were 3.5 million people, and according to calculation, a single Chinese tourist spent average 1000 euros during one day of their trip. The estimated total consumption of Chinese tourists in Europe were around 140 billion euros in 2014. There is huge potential profits hide behind the European tourism market for Chinese customers. And the fact is the European tourism market can be still developed for Chinese tourists to have more potential consumptions by finding what Chinese tourists really want. (Finnish Tourist Board 2014)

As Chinese population is growing immensely, China's outbound travel also remain to arise as more Chinese citizens can afford the luxury of outbound tourism experiences. There have been a growing number of Chinese taking outbound trips every year. Nowadays, China has even been acknowledged as one of the main outbound tourist generating country in the world. China's outbound tourism and Chinese tourists are playing a more and more important role in global tourism market. (Griffith University 2009, 3)

### **2.1 Tourism development in China**

Historically speaking, before the age of independence of People's Republic of China, traveling for leisure-seeking purpose only belongs to the privilege of some majors groups, for example, ruling classes, wealthy classes or intellectual classes. Regarding to all other normal Chinese citizens, they either travel to a particular cities for merchandize or to some religious sites (Wolfgang 2006, 84).

At early age of China's independence time. Chinese outbound travel were mostly for Chinese government, group trips or business trips by using public funds. The Chinese outbound policy has restrain the Chinese tourists to travel outside mainland China due to three reasons: 1. protecting the domestic tourism market 2. Limiting the outflow of foreign currency 3. control the social stability after independence. During that time, neither were Chinese tour operators allowed to operate tourism groups outside mainland, nor were foreign tour operators allowed to organize tourism office in China to promote tourism activities. Even foreign airlines were limited during the time (Wolfgang, 2006, 33).

In 1995, The Chinese government loosen its restriction of outbound tourism market by create an Approved Destination Status system (ADS). Which it is a governmental

measure that allow Chinese residents to travel to those permitted destination approved by Approved Destination Status (ADS) only for personal and leisure purpose. (Wolfgang 2006, 47)

During the time of independence of the country, tourism activities and infrastructures in China has developed a lot. However, Traveling was still be seen as a potentially dangerous way to get out of control of Chinese Communist Party. In the 1950s and early 1960s even local Chinese were easily suspected of being a spy when they travelled, the desire to travel abroad was essentially committing to treason or turning to the enemy's traitor (Wolfgang 2006, 85).

It was almost impossible to travel out of local citizen's birthplace which the household registration book has written. During independence time, almost all the travel had to be approved by personal work authorities, major national companies or priorities of governments, with the stamp of the working place or signature from the boss, train and bus tickets can be approved to purchase. (Wolfgang 2006, 85)

During the 'Reform and Opening' period, which was started from 1978, China changed its policy of its economic development and opened its economic market to the world, many foreign companies joined Chinese economic market, the mainland businessman started to travel to the popular nearby areas like, Hong Kong, Macao or some southern Asian countries to do their business. That was the first period of Chinese outbound traveling for personal purpose. (Wolfgang 2006, 83)

With the increasing development of income for urban and rural areas in China, the travel restriction also gradually disappeared, more and more Chinese mainland citizens can afford to travel to boarder countries nearby China. From 1989 to 2000, there was a transition period for outbound tourism in China, majority Chinese outbound travellers go aboard for the purpose of holiday and leisure. As the rapid economic development of China and the raise of Chinese middle class nowadays, individuals travelling aboard has already been seen as a "birth right" for Chinese people. Moreover, the number of ADS destinations has continues to increase for Chinese outbound tourists. By the end of 1 January, 2008, the Chinese had granted ADS destinations to 92 countries, including United States and Taiwan. (Griffith University 2009, 3.)

## 2.2 Chinese tourist in different regions



Figure 1: Administrative map of China (Central Intelligence Agency 2015.)

Geographically China has grand territory and within huge amount of population.

Therefore, people in different regions has different inhabitation, if we divided China into seven different zones (Figure 1) due to local people's similarities: South China, East China, North China, Central China, South-west China, North-east China and North-west China. We can easily tell the difference from each part of Chinese people's life-goal. (Central Intelligence Agency 2015)

Apparently, among all the zones, South China and East China are the most developed area, people who lives in East China, for example, Shanghai, Jiangsu province, Zhejiang province and people who lives in South China, for example, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Zhuhai are living a more wealthy life than the rest part of zones, people who live there have higher goal of living their own life and favoring foreign brands, Traveling aboard for these areas' citizens certainly been treated most popular and necessary in their normal life. Additionally, there are also some advantages for the location of the East and South area. For example, people from East China normally travel to Japan due to relatively short flight, it only takes up to 4 hours to fly from Shanghai to Tokyo. People from South China travel to Hong Kong, Macao and East-south Asian countries also due to short transportation distance, For example. People from Shenzhen, a city in Guangdong province, only take half an hour to drive from their city to Hong Kong and Macao and they can even stay there without spent overnight because of the short distance between two cities. Therefore, it is

much easy for citizens of East China and South China to travel aboard and after their first time outbound travel experience to nearby countries, they will mostly like to try some further and exotic destination as their second time. (Wolfgang, 2006, 93)

Compare to East China and South China zone, the citizens from Central zones, North zones, North-west zones and South-west zones are living a life with the purpose of working hard and getting rich, people from Central China, North-West China are relatively less demanding for living their own life as the lower development and low salary there. Most of citizens from those zones tend to satisfied with their current situation as they make a living with their salary, Traveling aboard for them still is not a have-to-do event in their life-goal. (Wolfgang, 2006, 93)

Besides, boarder tourism is also highly developing as there are large amount of outbound tourists in boarder areas in China. For example, Yunnan province of South-West area, is boarded with Myanmar, Vietnam and part of Thailand. Inner Mongolia of North-west area, connected with Mongolia and Russia. Heilongjiang province of North-East area is connected with Russia. According to statistics, in 1997, 99 percent of travelers from Inner Mongolia traveled to either Russia or Mongolia. 88 percent of travelers from Heilongjiang province traveled to Russia. Among all the population of whom went aboard of Yunnan province, 84 percent traveled to Myanmar, 8 percent to Vietnam and 6 percent to Thailand. (Wolfgang, 2006, 94)

In terms of outbound leisure tourism besides Hong Kong, Macao and neighboring boarder areas, Beijing, Shanghai, Guangdong are still the most important provinces of China. However, there are some kind of difference comparing to these three areas of tourists. (Wolfgang, 2006, 95)

Beijing is the capital of China, hence there are large amount of government people and administrators travel aboard every year. The atmosphere in Beijing supposed to be more conservative and tradition than Shanghai and Guangdong, therefore, tourists from Beijing have been thought are more interested in culture and history and they have a love for socializing just in order to improve their relationship tree, also giving high value to their families and friends, that is why they like to buy more expensive gifts for their families and friends. (Wolfgang 2006, 95)

Shanghai is the biggest commercial city in China with more than 16 million population. Shanghai has been developed into the financial center of China. According to GDP and salary rate, Shanghai is the richest city in mainland China. Practically, people from



Shanghai are paying more attention to benefits calculation and money value. Therefore, they are seen as not enthusiastic as when they travelling. As in outbound tourism, they were told to be behavior as astute travelers whom looking for value of their money and shopping chances. Sometimes tourists from Shanghai tend to be anti-risk on buying items because they worried of being cheated and don't want to take the risk. (Wolfgang 2006, 95)

Guangdong Province is located at southern part of China and has most overseas Chinese. Because of its special location: close to Hong Kong and Macao, so Western cultures has a very big affection through Guangdong society. Shenzhen and Zhuhai were even those first cities opened to Western capital market since "Reform and Open" policy in 1978. All those factors make people in Guangdong province more independence and multicultural. Tourist from Guangdong are always enthusiastic and looking for adventures during the trip, they always would like to try new things or having unusual experience as well as they want to get entertained by any simple things like, good food, local bar or exciting night life. (Wolfgang 2006, 95).

### **2.3 What Chinese tourists want**

*"Different spoken Chinese dialects are incomprehensible for Chinese from outside the respective part of the country, but written Chinese does not differ from Mainland China, making it possible to communicate in writing with all Chinese regardless of their origin"*(Wolfgang 2006, 201)

Chinese language is more like a written communication system, the usage of Chinese language is necessary in support of all services and products for Chinese tourists oversee. The more important part is, the usage of Chinese language, written information or just some Chinese direction signs are not only very useful to every Chinese traveller aboard but also are highly appreciated by all Chinese people, Chinese people will take it as a sign of showing respect to them and their country, and also be proud of the importance of Chinese language in the world. Providing all kinds of these Chinese written information, guiding signs in public places and infrastructures aboard will sharply improve the service quality and satisfaction of Chinese tourists. After all, Using Chinese language outside China make Chinese tourists feel welcome, and it is the first important step to start with. (Wolfgang 2006. 202)

Like most Asians, Food is another important part of the way of life for Chinese people. "Chinese people not only enjoy eating but believe eating good food can bring harmony

and closeness to the family and relationships.”(Ethnomed 2000) Not like the fast food culture in American, grocery shopping for fresh food materials is necessary for all Chinese cooking. Sometimes, even prepared food must be keep in good condition, keep it fresh, warm as it is just take out of over so that people can enjoy it with best quality. Chinese people are less worried about nutrition in their food cuisine, but they are more concerned with the food flavour, texture, colour and the smell. These are the crucial standard to judge if the food is good to Chinese or not. In terms of flavour, most Chinese like hot and spicy food, but also many Chinese like sweet food or seasoned food. The texture of the food should be always tender, fresh and maybe eye-catching, Chinese people don't like the food which is hard to chew or in very bad shape. Western desserts are only served in special events in China, like birthday party, wedding or after dinner time. As desserts, Chinese people like to eat seasonal fresh fruits after their meal.

(Ethnomed 2000)

There is a Chinese word to describe fun atmosphere for most Chinese tourists: Re Nao. If dividing this word to two letters literally, Re means Hot and Nao means noisy. Chinese tourists like to make “noisy” by talking loudly or chatting to each other, it is a cultural tradition and they do enjoy this “noisy”. So most Chinese tourists also expect the place they visit should be of certain “noisy” which in the situation is having more activities or experience happenings can let them discuss and loudly comment to express their ideas. They think it is fun to comment or discuss with each other: No matter what food they eat, what grand scenery they see, products they don't usually see in the market, and strange things on the street or even about people's dressing. The discussion raises the atmosphere of the trip to everyone. By doing this Chinese tourists feel they are participating in the interaction of the trip. The word “Re Nao” represents an image for most Chinese tourists who enjoy their trip, which is what Chinese tourists are truly looking for when they travelling. ((Wolfgang 2006, 99)

The Chinese cannot adhere to their strong Confucian beliefs and other age-old traditions without their business culture being affected. Some of the consequences include the following:

- ◆Power distance is large; inequalities are expected and desired.
- ◆Less powerful people depend on the powerful to protect them and take care of their careers and welfare.
- ◆Parents, teachers and bosses must all be obeyed.
- ◆Age brings seniority.
- ◆There is a wide salary range between the top and bottom of the organization.
- ◆The ideal boss is a benevolent autocrat.

- ◆Privileges for managers are expected and popular.
- ◆Subordinates expect to be told what to do.
- ◆Individualism is taboo.
- ◆Relationships are more important than tasks.
- ◆Confrontation is avoided; harmony and consensus are ultimate goals.
- ◆The search for virtue is more important than the search for truth. A and B can both be right if both are virtuous.
- ◆Long-term orientation and goals are advisable.

(Lewis 2006, 490-491)

One aspect of Chinese culture that affecting Chinese tourists is guan xi, the connecting of two people in a relationship of related dependence, Guanxi implicates give-and-take gifts and favors, as the receiver of a remarkably costly gift will nearly be asked soon for a big personal favor. Guanxi represents the relationship net in Chinese society. In Chinese people's life and career, sometimes it is even considered that guan xi is more important than the job itself or have so much influence on the person's future development, This is why every Chinese people think buying gifts when they travelling aboard are so important in order to maintain and improve their guan xi, to give gifts to their bosses for leaving a good impression in order to get promoted, to buy gifts to their friends, colleagues, relatives in case of someday need to ask a favor from it. So, this is also why Chinese tourists would like to spend time on choosing gifts, even spend a decent amount of money buying luxury brand gifts. It all shows how deeply they think guan xi is in their career and life.

(Lewis 2006, 491)

### 3 Helsinki as a destination for the Chinese tourists

Helsinki is the capital of Finland and also the largest city of the country, it has a population of approximately 600,000 people (31 December 2013). Helsinki was chosen to be the World Designed Capital for the year of 2012. If you ever been to Helsinki you will find out that every Helsinki's building are organised in very compact style (Figure 2). In Helsinki, tourists can easily spend one day visiting almost everywhere in the town by walk. However, the city has gather everything you need together. (WIKIPEDIA 2015).



Figure 2: Helsinki city organized in a compact style (Vilhunen 16 June 2014)

From many perspectives Helsinki attracts Chinese tourists to visit here, such as landscape, design, style of buildings, Finnish culture and brand shopping. And it appears places as below has been always the most popular attractions for tourists first come to Helsinki. (Visit Finland 2014a)



Figure 3: Helsinki Senate Square and Helsinki Cathedral church by sea (Visit Finland 2014b)

Senate Square and Helsinki Cathedral area (Figure 3) are not only the central area for Helsinki citizens to have different activities, but also are the symbol of neo-classical buildings of Finland where most Chinese tourists come here to take pictures of themselves. Standing on Senate Square, tourists can also see 3 masterpieces of construction master Carl Ludwig Engel: The government parliament, university of Helsinki and Helsinki Cathedral. So it is easily become the first stop for most Chinese tourists whom come to Helsinki. (Visit Helsinki 2015a)



Figure 4: Helsinki Rock Church (Project U 2015)

This UFO-looking building is called Temppeliaukionkirkko (Figure 4), also called rock church. Helsinki Rock Church is one of the typical inspire-designed structures of Helsinki. The base of the church are built of rocks. Because of its unique design rock church has been one of the most popular attractions among tourists and due to its special rock wall, it is good of spreading the sound, thus rock church also often be used for hosting music show or concerts. It is not hard to find some other famous designed buildings in Helsinki like Kamppi Chapel of Silence, Museum of Contemporary. (Visit Helsinki 2015b)





Figure 5: Kamppi Shopping centre (Visit Finland 2014c)

Kamppi (Figure 5) is a shopping mall in Helsinki downtown, next to Narinkka square, there are all different kinds of shops, restaurants, bars, cafes, markets and central bus station. Because of its perfect location and transportation. Kamppi Shopping centre has attracted lots of visitors every day. (Visit Helsinki 2015c)



Figure 6: Kamppi Chapel of silence (Helsingin kirkot 2012)

Next to Kamppi shopping mall, at Narinkka square there stands Kamppi Chapel of Silence (Figure 6), a newly designed church out of all the noisiness of Kamppi shopping area. The whole church is well design and made of wood, in 2010, Kamppi Chapel of Silence has awarded International Architecture Awards. (Visit Helsinki 2015d)



Figure 7: Helsinki Cathedral (Visit Helsinki 2015e)

Helsinki Cathedral (Figure 7) has been seen as a symbol of Helsinki, within its grand structure and Empire-style out-looking, Helsinki Cathedral is more than a typical kind of grand view for Chinese tourists. Most Chinese tourist said it's the most beautiful church in Finland. (Visit Helsinki 2015f)



Figure 8: Helsinki Market Square (The Telegraph 2015)

Helsinki Market Square (Figure 8) probably will be one of the favourite attractions for Chinese tourists. It gathers both Finnish culture experience and the atmosphere which Chinese tourists like the most. During the summer, they can taste local street food, like smoked salmon, fried herrings, fresh picked berries or just enjoy some ice-creams from



here, even in winter time, it is also a good memory to have a warm coffee in hands under the café tent here. And most importantly, The Market Square are always attracting a lot visitors, people from all over the world here shopping, eating, talking which make it feels very prosperity and lively, For Chinese tourists they like this kind of atmosphere and enjoy the “noisy”. (Visit Helsinki 2015g)



Figure 9: Helsinki Old market (Wikimedia Commons 2014)

Hunting for delicious food and different recipes is another big hobby for Chinese tourists. Next to the market square there is a market hall which sells different kinds of Finnish cuisines, it is said that the Kauppahalli is the oldest market place in Helsinki so basically you can find any ingredients or traditional cuisines there.(Figure 9) Chinese tourists love food and eager to taste new cuisines, they would definitely excited to come here to find those delicious bakeries like Runebergin torttu, laskiaispulla, or some fresh strawberries, blueberries, wild growth cloudberries or even some chanterelle mushroom. Helsinki Old Market are not only full of fresh vegetables, fruits and berries, but also very popular for meat lovers to come here buying different kinds of meat, fishes and seafood. From March to December you can find all kinds of product: European perch, white salmon, Zanders, salmon, smoked sausage, Pacific herring, ducks, crayfish, wild rabbit, lamb, moose, reindeer, goose, ginger bread and glögi which is a typical Finnish drink during the Christmas. (Visit Helsinki 2015h)



## **4 Mobile travel guide**

The increasing chances for travellers to use the Internet during the trip, the growth usage of social media, in addition to all the convenience in mobile technologies have a great affection on modern travel experiences and tourist behaviours. (Tussyadiah & Inversini 2015, 507)

Mobile technologies along with social media has intensely affected travellers' routine, decisions and behaviours through different stage of travelling: Before the trip, during the trip and after the trip (Sigala, Christou & Gretzel 2012, 171)

### **4.1 Mobile applications**

A mobile application also known as an app in technology phrase. It is a type of application software designed to operate on smart mobile phone or similar devices like tablet. Mobile application works the way like computer software works, the only difference is mobile application offers restricted and separate functionality, for example, mobile web browser, chat programme or games. The convenient part of mobile application are that they are easy to download from application store and also easy to carry with mobile phones or portable devices. The limitation of mobile application could be there are not enough resources in the store as the use of mobile software has been promote mostly in Apple and its Apple store, the other big application store is Android. Besides these two main companies there is rare access of other system mobile devices to use application. Nowadays there are not only smartphone app but also online app, Web app and more different application system platform are being built in order to adjust more different applications (techopedia 2015).

### **4.2 Mobile applications in the travel industry**

So, what is a mobile travel guide? Basically, it is a mobile application developed to help travellers get more detail information of their destination, customize travellers' trip itinerary and offer them offline traveling tools like city maps and or road route. (techopedia 2015)

Considering the products and services for tourism environment, information is extremely important to tourists during planning, booking and during the trip. It has same important effect after the trip that travellers may want to share their travel experience on social media. Mobile application technology, make it possible to combine both online and offline networks in tourists' decision making, purchasing and post experience. New mobile

applications based technologies plays a very important role in three stages: as planning stage, it become much easier for tourists look for information needed for planning their trip, comparing the different, selecting what interest them. Once the suppliers noticed the services or products customers has chosen, it will enter the consumption stage and tourists can access to the internet page to find detail information on specific activities or recommend venues. And in post-consumption stage, tourists share their pictures, videos, comments or other sources on social Medias like Facebook, Tweeter, Blog, Vlog or Websites, which will have great effect on other potential tourists. (Sigala & Christou & Gretzel, 2012, 175)

## **5 Project description**

In this chapter, the process of developing the mobile guide will be explained. This chapter starts with the presentation of the commissioner, CreateTrips.

### **5.1 CreateTrips**

CreateTrips is a start-up mobile travel company found in Helsinki, which providing their application through mobile device to create personal travel experience among users of the application. (createtrips.com 2011)

CreateTrips is an International trip planning company locate in Helsinki, by sharing advices of other social trip planners, travel tips and photos of local destinantons, to gather all kinds of information together for people who travel to those destinations. (createtrips.com 2011)

CreateTrips is in the top 10 of travel apps in over 80 countries and it is aiming to offer customize travel destination experience for planning trips. Users can even upgrade to premium subscription to get free offline travel maps download. It makes users easy to plan their own trips, For example, they can access popular venues of the destination just by typing on the search engine for advices and tips from locals or compatible travellers (figure 11). Users can saved information includes almost everything from your favourite bar to famous shopping malls in your travel app (figure 12). Because the content of CreateTrips are all created by users, so it gets more popular and informative as there are more users are using the application. (createtrips.com 2011)

By far, CreateTrips only available in App store for IOS version, Android version is still under building and it will be published until December 2015. (createtrips 2011)

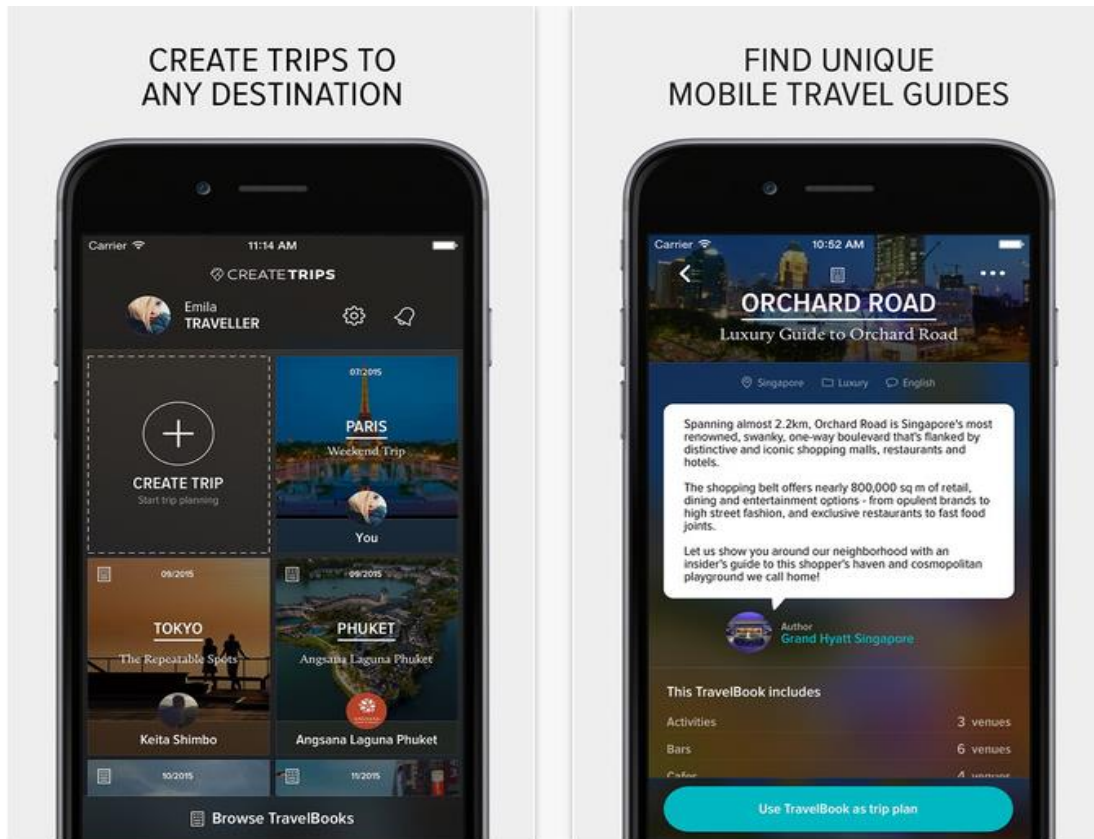


Figure 10: Searching engine of CreateTrips (topdeck.travel 2015)

It is easy to find any destination all over the world just by typing the name of the location into searching blank figure 11), the result will show how many attractions and venues the travel book includes.

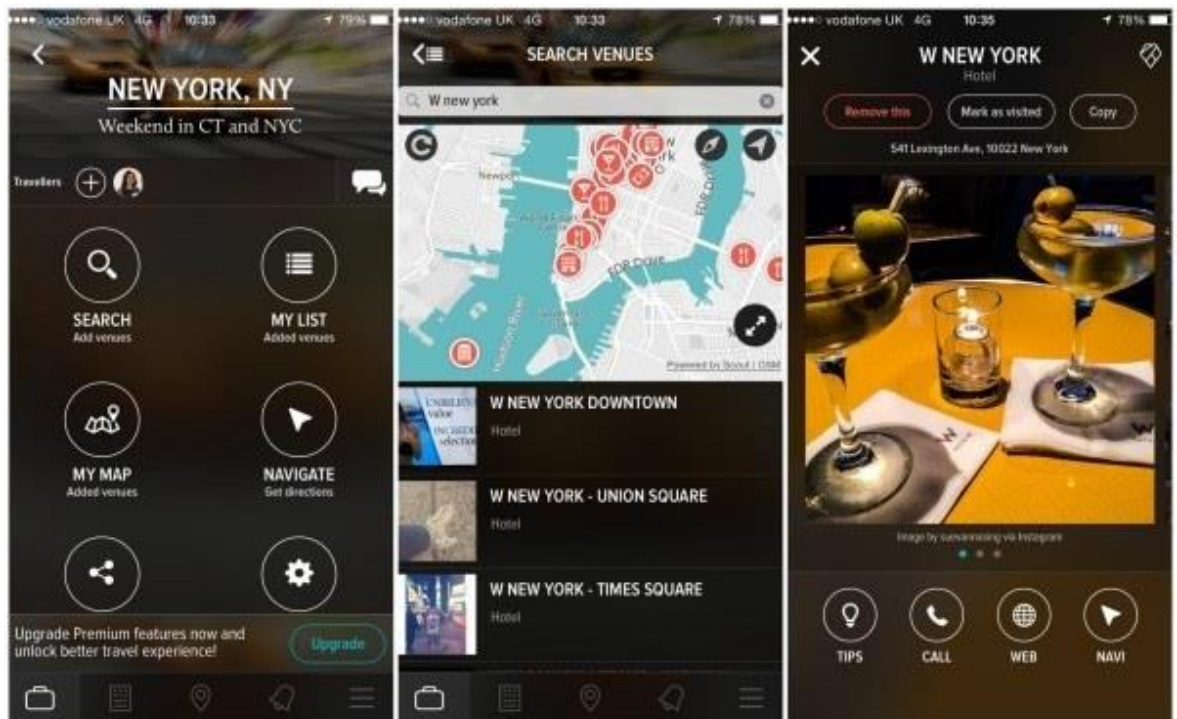


Figure 11: New York as the destination (mrs O around the world 2015a)

When user found a particular destination, For example, New York, all the interesting places will show on the map, if click on the map, a more detail information will be shown like on the picture (figure 12) :the W New York bar.

When travellers created their own travel book, they can share their own adventures or stories in CreateTrips with their friends through other social media channel like Facebook, Instagram to attract their friends' eye to their adventures and interact with them for every surprises of the trip. Users can make a reasonable price for each of their trips for the subscription (figure 13). It also support offline use for downloading the destination's maps for navigation, which is very useful because it saves data roaming costs. (Ana Silva O'Reilly 2011)

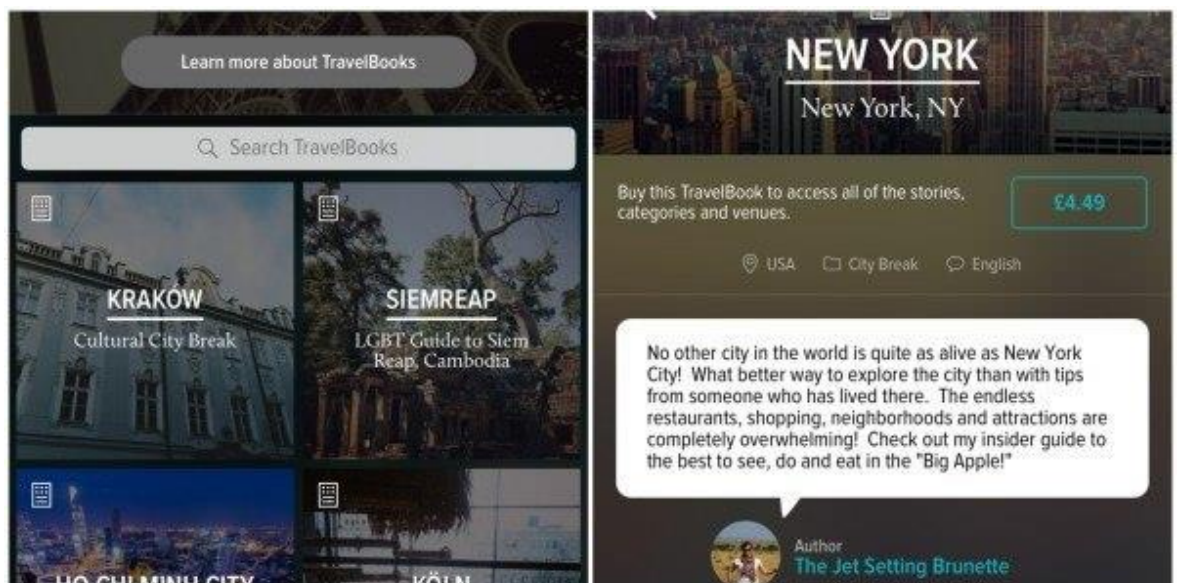


Figure 12: Travel Books, a complete personal trip itinerary purchase service (Mrs O around the world 2015b)

## 5.2 Planning and collecting material

Due to Chinese tourists' complaint about nothing to see and nothing to do in Helsinki. The author first searched the Chinese outbound travel agency's website and found Chinese tourists' comments about their trips in Helsinki - what kind of experience pleased them and what kind of experience disappointed them. Then the author checked the feedback of different venues of Helsinki from Facebook and reviewed several peer review sites on the internet for example, Visit Helsinki, Tripadvisor. At last the author discussed with his commissioner, friends in Helsinki and his cohabitation partner who has been working in Helsinki regional tourist information. Based on the interest of Chinese tourists, website's feedback and the discussion, for example, the Chinese tourists have a big favour of Asian

cuisines or at least some strong flavour cuisines that fit to their taste; Chinese tourists want their hotel not to be too expensive but within a good view from the window. Chinese tourists like to buy some expensive gifts like watch, jewellery and luxury brands for their bosses and relatives; Chinese tourists also like shopping for some high quality Western items because of they are lacking in China. The author classified 8 different categories of practical information for travel application including Helsinki top 5 restaurants for Chinese, Helsinki top 5 museums for Chinese, Helsinki top 5 cafes for Chinese, Helsinki top 5 souvenir shops for Chinese, Helsinki top 5 shopping centres for Chinese, Helsinki top 5 brand store for Chinese, Helsinki top 5 hotels for Chinese and Helsinki top 5 churches for Chinese.

The author made a particular plan to take different pictures of venues according to the particular route and the whole process of picture taking was successful and smooth. The first photographing time was 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2015, and second time was 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2015, author got all the pictures he needs except the second time when taking picture of the hostel CheapSleep Helsinki, it was hard to find the location which it is inside the building. The author has sent email to CheapSleep Helsinki to ask permission to get access of their hostel pictures.

### 5.3 Content and categories

Before uploading every contents to the application we need to create an account on CreateTrips. It only takes 5 minutes to register with email or you can even link your Facebook account to log in.

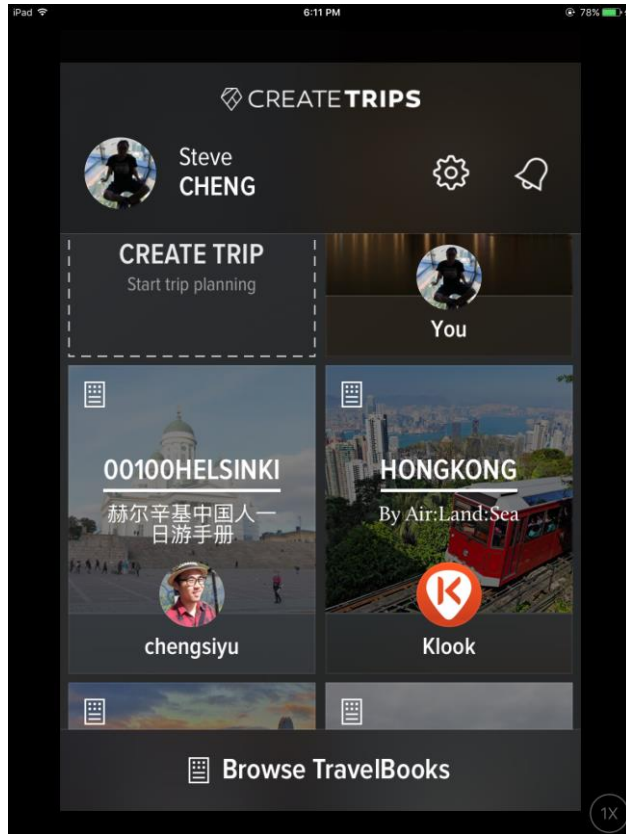


Figure 13: The author's account of CreateTrip (Cheng, Siyu. 11 November 2015)

Click the title “00100HELSINKI” into the application main page, there will be a short introduction (Figure 14) about Helsinki in Chinese. The text translate into English like below:” Helsinki as the capital of Finland is also the biggest city in Finland, Helsinki has a unique style of North-Europe city: clean, compact and eco-friendly. Helsinki not only has a lot of beautiful natural landscapes like, forests, seaside and lakes. But also gather many places of historic figures and cultural heritages like, churches, museums and so on. ”





Figure 14: CreateTrips main introduction page (createtri.ps 2015)



Scroll down the main page there will be Top 40 segmentations of different venues. Following are: Helsinki Top 5 Chinese restaurant, Helsinki Top 5 museums, Helsinki Top 5 cafes, Helsinki Top 5 souvenir shops, Helsinki Top 5 shipping malls, Helsinki Top 5 brand stores, Helsinki Top 5 hotels and Helsinki Top 5 churches.



Figure 15: Segmentations of different venues (createtr.ps 2015)

## Top 5 recommend Helsinki restaurants for Chinese tourists

Click the first segment of Top 5 Helsinki restaurant for Chinese, it will show five restaurant on the page like this:

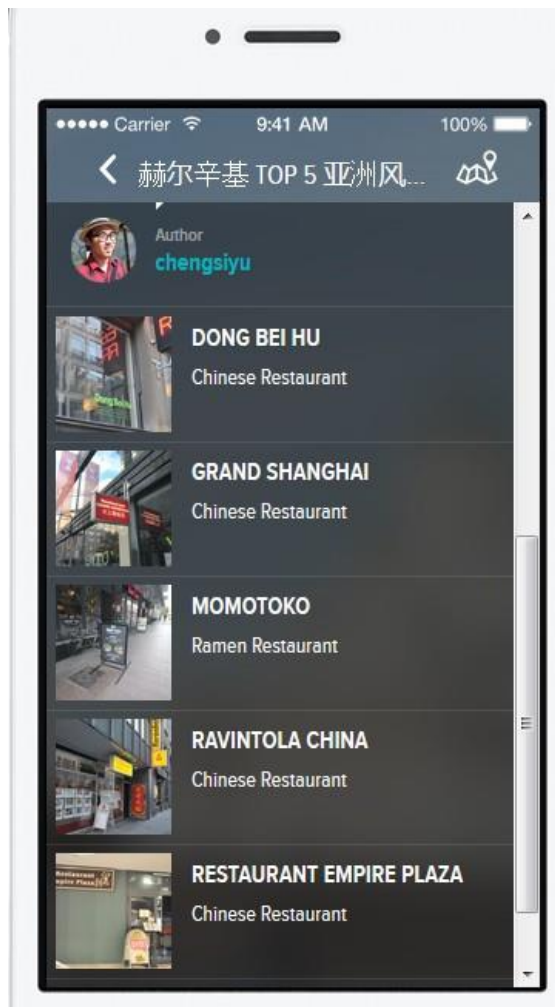


Figure 16: Top 5 Helsinki restaurants for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

Chinese tourists always complain about missing home traditional food when traveling abroad, Author think it is because of their special flavour needs, mostly spicy and hot but also sometimes sweet or just normal Asian cuisine will make them happy. Therefore, after author done the research for restaurants in Helsinki for Chinese tourist, these five restaurant have been chosen as most popular for Chinese tourist. For every recommended restaurant, there are some reasons behind recommendation, Author going to explain individually.

Dong Bei Hu restaurant is famous for its northern Chinese cooking style and recipe. As in China, northern areas are very cold in winter, so their recipe normally has bigger portion

and serve mainly warm food like boiled noodles or dumplings. So imagine in Finnish winter, Chinese tourists definitely need some tasty food and to warm them up in the same time. (Dongbeihu 2015)

Grand Shanghai restaurant is located in Helsinki heart area next to central railway station, it is convenient to find the restaurant from all different locations of Helsinki central area. Grand Shanghai restaurant is famous for its spicy Sichuan cuisine. The restaurant trying to keep the cuisine authentic so it appeals to Chinese customers' taste. In Grand Shanghai restaurant there is buffet lunch but customer can also order their food according to their favour.

MOMOTOKO restaurant is a new ramen restaurant opened in Helsinki on August 2015. It attracts a lot of customers to try their food. Author has once been there to try the ramen, and due to author's opinion the ramen taste delicious and spicy. The flavour of this ramen restaurant will attract lots of Chinese customers since Chinese like spicy food and noodles. The portion of the food is also considerable and most important, MOMOTOKO restaurant has very authentic atmosphere to eat ramen like in a Japanese ramen restaurant.

(Momotoko 2015)

Ravintola China restaurant opened in Helsinki at 1973, it was first Chinese restaurant opened all over the Finland. The restaurant is famous for its Yue cuisine which is from southern part of China like, Guangdong, Hong kong or Macao. It also offers Cantonese dim sum, grilled duck, tofu and seafood as typical food from that region.

(Ravintolachina 2015)

Empire Plaza restaurant located inside Kamppi centre, the restaurant has been renovated and has traditional Chinese style of decorating everywhere inside. From Empire Plaza here is not only luxury facilities but also famous delicious food like Peking duck, Sweet and Sour Pork with Fat Guangdong style. However, there are not that many spicy or hot cuisine in this restaurant compare to the other Chinese restaurants in Helsinki.

(Empireplaza 2015)

## Top 5 recommend Helsinki museums for Chinese tourists

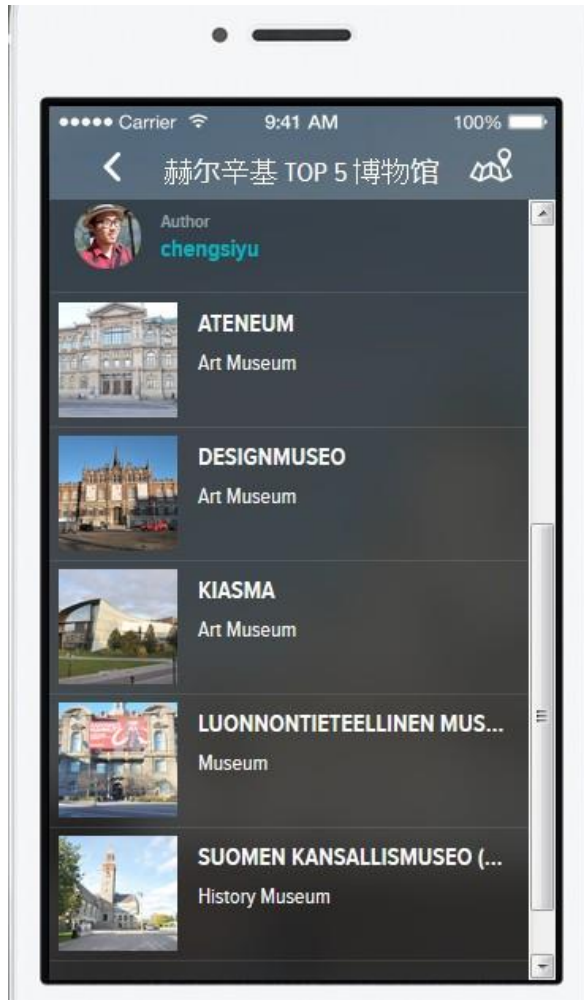


Figure 17: Top 5 Helsinki museums for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

As the capital of design of the whole world in 2012, Helsinki museums never miss any design factors. According to statistics, Helsinki has more 80 museums, tourists from all different ages can find some theme that attract them.

Author think Chinese tourists have a complex of huge buildings, anything that big enough can be a symbol to take pictures as background, It also give them a feeling of majestic and proud when in front of those huge buildings, that's why every public buildings, railway stations, airport are so huge in China. Of course, most of Chinese people also like real design art and history. So these five museums below are chosen by author to recommend for Chinese tourists.

Ateneum Art Museum is one part of national museum of Finland, It is designed by Theodor Höjjer and it has 127 years history already. The museum has collected Finnish arts from 1750s until 1960s and some western countries arts from 1850s until 1950s include several Finnish national treasure arts. (Ateneum 2015)

Design Museum displays different kinds of arts and crafts, history of the development of industry design from 1850s until now. It was built in 1894 and there are always some interesting theme design shows here now and then includes Iittala, Arabia and some famous brands. (Designmuseum 2015)

Kiasma art museum also called Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, it was opened in 1998 and every year there will be three main exhibitions of theme art show from Finnish or Western modern artists. Besides all this, the building itself has a unique appearance, within the huge and outstanding structure, it is attracting all the tourists to visit and take pictures. (Kiasma 2015)

Museum of Nature History is more for family visit, however, the museum also displayed Finnish nature and environment. Therefore, it will be popular for Chinese tourists who interest in nature science and environment of Northern Europe. (Luomus 2015)

National Museum of Finland displays mainly the history of Finland from hundreds years ago until today. The museum was designed by Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen and built in 1910. The museum looks like a majesty castle, that's why many tourist like to come here visit the museum and take picture of it. (Kansallismuseo 2015)

## Top 5 recommend Helsinki cafes for Chinese tourists

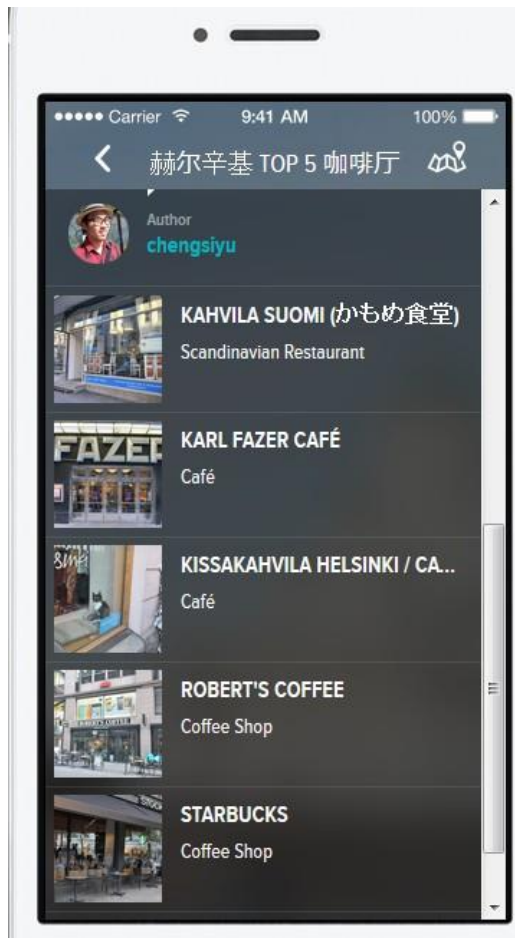


Figure 18: Top 5 Helsinki cafes for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

Author think cafes were not that popular among Chinese tourists before as Chinese mainly enjoy “eating” atmosphere but not drinking. However, since all different kinds of western brand cafes and bakery shop opened in China, it is become a common place to go and chilli even during the travelling. Especially for young generations and middle age people, going to cafes to use Internet or just to enjoy a cup of drink is more than a pleasant thing to do.

Kahvila Suomi is from a Japanese movie filmed in Finland in 2006 called Kamome Shokudo (means seagull cafeteria), which tells a story of a Japanese woman lives in Helsinki who opens this café and met other two Japanese tourists visiting to Finland, they became friends and help the owner of cafes to make delicious coffee and Japanese cuisines. After the movie became popular in Asian, there were a lot of Japanese visitors

came here and nowadays even young Chinese tourists know this place very well.  
(Kahvilasuomi 2015)

Karl Fazer café is the famous café in name of national chocolate brand of Finland: Karl Fazer. In the café tourists can not only find different kinds of chocolate, sweets, cakes for sale, but also the café offers different kinds of bakeries and coffee drinks. For Chinese tourists, here is the best place to come to relax their feet, feed their stomach and buy some chocolates as gifts for their families. (Fazer 2015)

KissaKahvila (Cat café) is a newly opened café in Helsinki which customers will enjoy their time with cats here. One of the famous Cat café is in Tokyo, Japan and it attracts large amount of cat-lover travellers in Asia. So many young Chinese tourists went to Tokyo just want to see Cat café. Therefore, this café may also gather Chinese cat-lovers travellers to come over. (Kissakahvilahelsinki 2015)

Robert's café is from the biggest coffee chain in North Europe. Robert's café offers self-made pure coffee, self-made blend coffee, espresso, flavoured coffee, the coffee without caffeine and even different kinds of tea. It is a perfect place for Chinese tourists to experience some local coffee or just some tea which are more popular among Chinese. (Robertscoffee 2015)

Starbucks is the most popular café in China among young people and teenagers, thus it also became well-known for the rest group of people because of its advertisement. When travelling aboard, Chinese tourists always go to Starbucks immediately when they see it. The reason is just simply they get used to Starbucks' menu and order process. (Starbucks 2015)

## Top 5 recommend Helsinki souvenir shops for Chinese tourists

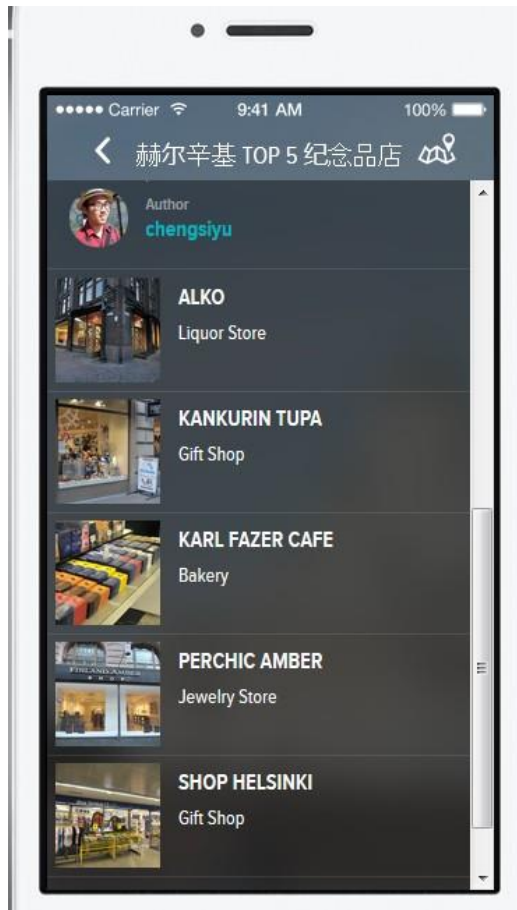


Figure 19: Top 5 Helsinki souvenir shops for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

ALKO is the Finnish state-own alcohol store and customers cannot purchase any alcohol anywhere else. Not like in China alcohol can be purchased almost anywhere on the streets. However, Chinese customers come to Finland and always ask where can they buy alcohols here? Because of In China, alcohol can be also give as gift especially some famous western red wine or Champagne. So, author recommend ALKO as a gift shop for Chinese tourists in Helsinki. (Alko 2015)

As more and more Chinese tourists know Santa Christ is from Finland, they are surprised and exciting to do some Christmas gift shopping for their friends and families. This shop KANKURIN TUPA offers all different kinds of gift include Finnish cartoon characters



Moomin, winter hats, scarfs and gloves, postcards, designed arts and even all kinds of Christmas gifts.

Karl Fazer chocolate factory has more than 100 years history, it is famous for its different kinds of chocolate products and the taste of its chocolate. People who ever tried Fazer chocolates love its milky-silk taste, even dark chocolate can taste a bit sweet out of bitter. There are even some unique flavours chocolate products like blueberry flavour, pop-corn flavour or chilli-pepper flavour. Fazer chocolates has always been the first options for Chinese students whom study in Finland to bring as gift back home. So, it will be also famous for Chinese tourists coming here as well. (Fazer 2015)

As some rich Chinese people like buying Jade, gold and diamonds when travelling aboard. Ambers has also become a popular souvenir recent years for Chinese tourists to bring back from Baltic countries. It is said that forests around Baltics sea area are enormous and ambers here were formed 4 thousand and 4 hundred years ago. Therefore, several countries around this area are famous for producing Baltic ambers, (also called Succinite) nowadays, Helsinki tend to have more and more this kind of shops.

Shop Helsinki is a typical souvenir shop under the tunnel between Helsinki Kamppi shopping centre and Forum shopping centre. There are all kinds of t-shirt with Finnish traditional or fashion pictures on it, winter hats and scarfs, postcards, fridge magnets and so on. (Shop Helsinki 2015)

## Top 5 recommend Helsinki shopping malls for Chinese tourists

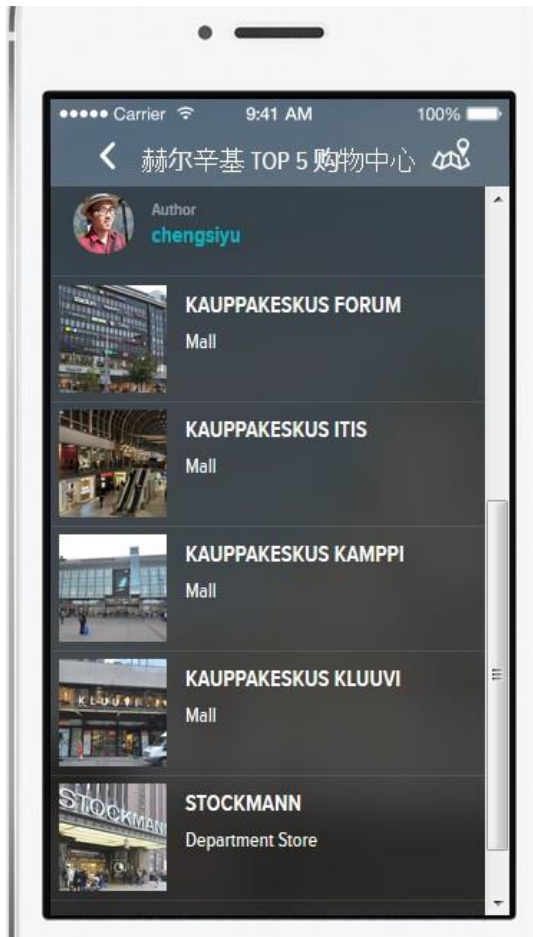


Figure 20: Top 5 Helsinki Shopping malls for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

Forum is said to be the oldest shopping centre in Helsinki, it was built 60 year ago for the Helsinki Olympic game. But nowadays the shopping centre has been decorated carefully from Inside. It is more like an advanced shopping mall now, there are different kinds of brand shops, fashion cloth shops, sport shops and restaurants. (Forum 2015)

Itis shopping centre locates at Itakeskus in the eastern part of Helsinki, It takes only fifteen minutes from City centre to go there by metro. Inside Itis, shops are all locate in two shopping streets on the each side of the way, most of them are brand shops, design products or market stores. (Itis 2015)

Kamppi was built in 2006, for most of Chinese tourists here is the most popular shopping mall, because it is easy to find the place which is just 5 minutes' walk to railway station.

The other reason is the segmentation of the shopping area attracts Chinese tourists, like fashion cloth shops, outdoor sports shops, and shop for kids, even different kinds of Asian restaurants. (Kamppi 2015)

KLUUVI shopping centre mainly attracts tourists those who like fashion and superiority western brands, for example, Fred Perry, G-Star RAW, Superdry and Tiger of Sweden. There are also some self-design shops in the shopping centre selling all kinds of cloth and accessories which young people like. For example, Maranello and Showroom8. (Kluuvi 2015)

Stockmann is the biggest department store company in whole Nordic countries, and as well as the biggest department store in Helsinki. Within 538.000 kilometre square space, this department store has everything you want, from groceries to electronics, from brand clothes to books, from furniture to Jewelleries. There are even some branch stores in Itäkeskus, Tapiola and Jumbo. (Stockmann 2015)

### Top 5 recommend Helsinki brand stores for Chinese tourists

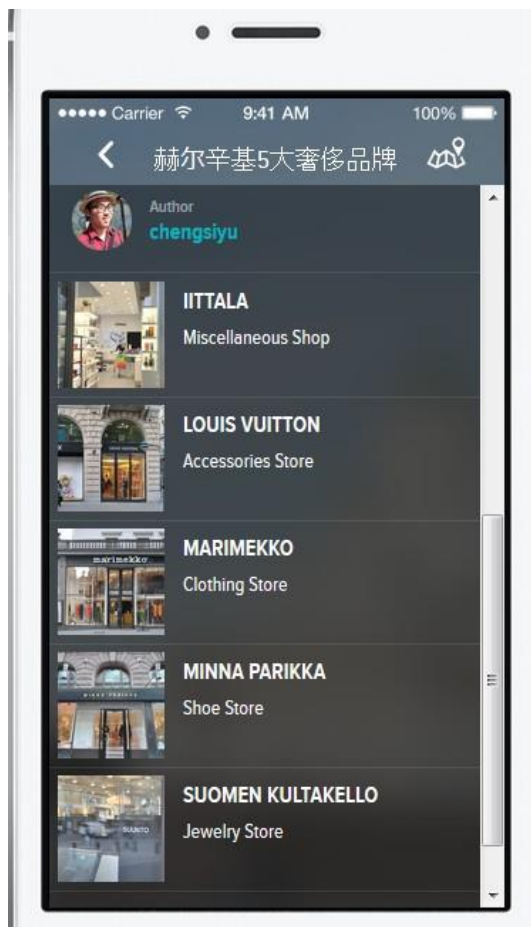


Figure 21: Top 5 Helsinki brand stores for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

Author think Helsinki as a design-famous city not only has a lot of classic western luxury brands, but also has its own fashion brand. Chinese tourists love to buy all kinds of western luxury brands, some are for themselves, some are for their bosses or colleges, and what is more, some local design brand shop can be even better choice for them to give as gifts to their friends and families.

Iittala is a famous Finnish brand of making different kind of design glass products include glass containers, plates and table-wares products. Actually Iittala is a small town in the south east part of Finland. Iittala is famous for producing the best quality glass all over the Finland, all the best glasses makers gather here design and produce glass relative product. This high quality glass manufacturing skill has been keep more than 100 years here. Any products here are designed carefully and delicately made, For example, even an ashtray has different colour and creative shape.

Marimekko is a Finnish fashion clothing brand and also offering fabric materials for home decoration design. Marimekko is famous for its typical colourful fabrics and simple creative flower shapes. In some country, like Japan, Marimekko is being seen as a symbol of fashion.

Minna Parikka is a famous Finnish shoes designer, when Minna was still 16 years ago she has already fell in love with shoes and decided she will design shoes as her lifetime career. Today, Minna Parikka is not only famous brand in Finland but also a world famous luxury brand all over the world. Many celebrities, singers include Lady Gaga, Taylor Swift, has made orders from Minna Parikka.

Suunto is Finnish smart watch brand, by using Bluetooth technologies to supervise user's heartbeat and upload the statistics of user's workout condition on their watch screen so that it gives feedback of users energy consumption condition. Nowadays there is even a new type of Suunto watch that users can go swimming with it and check their body condition under the water.

Louis Vuitton is always a classic luxury brand for Chinese tourists no matter where they go. It is tax free to buy this kind of luxury brand in Europe than buy them in China, therefore, it attracts large amount of Chinese tourists to bring back for their friends and relatives.

## Top 5 recommend Helsinki hotels for Chinese tourists

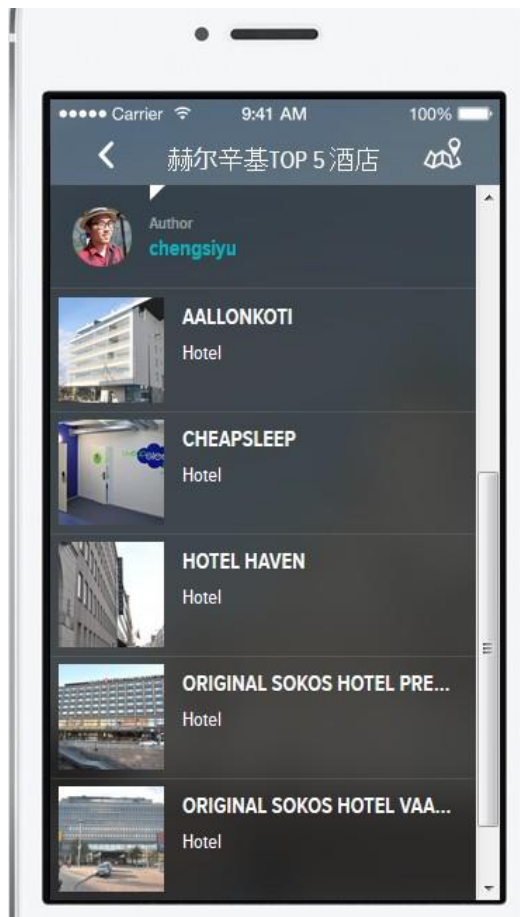


Figure 22: Top 5 Helsinki hotels for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

Aallonkoti is an advanced apartment hotel located next to city centre area of Helsinki, for some small group of Chinese tourist they like to have family apartment and doing grocery, cooking, having dinner together, and most importantly they don't need to worry about making too much noisy all the time like in public hotel, because in Aallonkoti every room has been carefully decorated with sound-proof wall, and the hotel environment is very self-service friendly just like living in customer's own apartment. (Aallonkoti 2015)

For some Chinese tourists they think it is overpriced to stay in star hotels, and they would like to stay in hostels just considering its price. CheapSleep Helsinki is a hostel locate at Vallila area of Helsinki. Comparing to hotels, the price of this hostel is affordable and the environment is clean, Wi-Fi signal are through all over rooms, there is even kitchen and

laundry in the hostel. Around hostel, tourists can easily find metro and bus station. (Cheap sleep 2015)

Hotel Haven, locate behind the Helsinki eastern harbour, Hotel Haven is famous for its excellent hotel view, high quality service and first class food. From Hotel Haven's room customers can overlook the whole view of Helsinki harbour area. For some Chinese tourists who are looking for luxury hotel with grand view, Hotel Haven can be the best choice.

(Hotel Haven 2015)

Original Sokos Hotel presidential is a local Finnish brand hotel in Helsinki, it has the best location just next to Kamppi shopping centre, there are all kinds of cafes, restaurants, bars and shops around this area. The transportation is also very convenient to go to any attractions or shopping areas. For tourists who like shopping it is highly recommended to stay in this hotel. (Sokos hotels 2015a)

Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna Helsinki was built in 1952 and just locate in front of Helsinki centre railway station. Technically it is close to everything in Helsinki and Chinese tourists consider it as absolutely important thing when travelling. Hotel Vaakuna Helsinki offers first class services, there are all kinds of facilities in the hotel from bars to Sony Playstation room, even on 10<sup>th</sup> floor there is a restaurant with rooftop panoramas view. (Sokos hotels 2015b)

## Top 5 recommend Helsinki churches for Chinese tourists

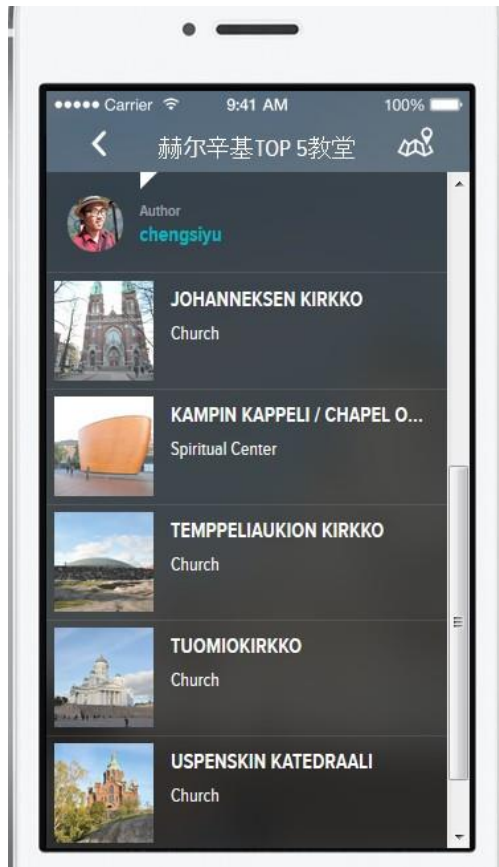


Figure 23: Top 5 Helsinki churches for Chinese (createtr.ps 2015)

There is a funny saying goes like this in China, travelling in China, tourists always go to see temples when they are out of bus, and travelling aboard, tourists always go to see churches when they are out of bus. Author think this saying has nothing to do with religion, since most Chinese people don't have a religion even though they went to temple or church. However, they do think churches are an important part of their visiting because they can learn histories of the local place from churches and taking pictures with churches as they like "exotic building" as their background in the picture.

Helsinki Cathedral has been seen as the symbol of Helsinki by many people, it was built in 1852 by Carl Ludwig Engel. The structure of Helsinki Cathedral is carefully designed and organised, many Chinese tourists are amazed by its grand looking and holy atmosphere.

St. John's church represent new Gothic style architecture of Helsinki, It was built in 1891 and designed by Adolf Emil Meander. St John's church also attracts large amount of Chinese because of its gothic appearance.

Uspenski Orthodox Cathedral was built in 1868 by Aleksei M. Gornostajev and it is said it has mixed both western and eastern factors with its golden round roof and red brick wall. The church was built at the period when Russia ruled Finland, so it has also big effect from Russia.

Rock church was built in 1969 designed by Timo and Tuomo Suomalainen, The whole structure of the church is made of rocks, because of its unique design and structure, and even the good quality of sound spread, Rock church has been always one of the most popular attraction to visit in Helsinki.

Kamppi Chapel of Silence was designed by Mikko Summanen and it was awarded for 2010 The International Architecture Awards. Due to its special creative wooden design and structure, inside the church it always feel silence. The church is not big but it is locate in the centre area of Kamppi and it attracts large amount of tourists come to visit every day.



## **6 Summary and conclusion**

This chapter will present the main goal of the mobile travel guide, analysis the product producing process and strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of the mobile travel guide for Chinese tourists. The chapter will also describe personal learning from making this mobile travel application. And at last, there are some improvement suggestions to the commissioner.

### **6.1 Evaluating project goals and process**

The aim of the thesis was to find out what Chinese tourists really want during their trip in Helsinki, and introduce different venues from Helsinki to Chinese tourists according to their taste.

The author has meet his objectives. The mobile travel guide has been made and uploaded to the CreateTrips application, it was available for downloading in Apple store from 12<sup>th</sup> of November 2015. The commissioner was quite satisfied with the author's work, however, the author haven't got any feedback from the application customers because it will take a long time to collect feedback for the outcome of the mobile travel guide from Chinese tourists in the future.

The idea of creating this mobile travel guide originated from the author's summer job experience in Tallink Silja line when guiding Chinese tourists from Helsinki to Stockholm and also from Stockholm to Helsinki. During the whole working period, time to time there were Chinese tourists came to author and complained about different issues when visiting Helsinki: "no interesting place to see", "no activities happen", "food are not tasty", "could not understand the culture when there was no translator or Chinese guide", "don't know what to buy for gifts". Therefore, author started to think even though Helsinki tourist information offered many flyer and booklet for the Chinese tourists, they did not necessary read them as most Chinese tourists get their information directly from Internet or from their tour guides' oral description. However, tour guides were not always with them while visiting to Helsinki city. The next year, author has known CreateTrips Company from a student who came to give speech about her future career after graduate from Haaga-helia

Porvoo campus, so author came up an idea of using mobile application to cover all information of Helsinki tourism market just for Chinese tourists.

During preparing process, the author first made a list of Helsinki Top 80 places for Chinese tourists include: Top 10 restaurants, Top 10 cafes, Top 10 hotels, Top 10 attractions, Top 10 luxury brands, Top 10 gift shops, Top 10 shopping areas, and Top 10 sightseeing outside Helsinki town. However, the author found it was hard to collect enough resources for these venues so author made a new list of Helsinki Top 40 places for Chinese tourists which include: Top 5 restaurants for Chinese tourists, Top 5 cafes for Chinese tourists, Top 5 hotels for Chinese tourists, Top 5 churches for Chinese tourists, Top 5 brand stores for Chinese tourists, Top 5 souvenir shops for Chinese tourists, Top 5 shopping malls for Chinese tourists and Top 5 museums for Chinese tourists.

The Author went to take pictures of different venues twice in Helsinki, first time was 13<sup>th</sup> of October 2015, and second time was 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2015, both times author has got the content successfully except one hostel which cannot be seen inside the building.

When all the pictures were collected, the author started to make travel guide. The author made 8 different segmentations and upload several pictures to them, for each venue author has searched addresses, opening and closing time, also placed short description and author's personal advices and tips.

After travel guide was made, the author put it to CreateTrips app and set the price for free for downloading due to the reason of improve its reputation and popularity. Author may consider to change the price when more and more Chinese tourists start to use this travel guide in the future.

## **6.2 Personal learning**

From the mobile travel guide producing process, the author has learned how to plan the trip to attract Chinese tourists to Helsinki as a destination: to find what Chinese tourists really want and need during the trip is very important, the search from the destination of what already exist in Helsinki or still potentially can be found from Helsinki will interest Chinese tourists, is also a big subject to analysis. According to the study of Chinese tourists' behaviour and motivation of travelling, author can effectively place interesting venues and activities in mobile travel guide for Chinese tourist.

The author also learned how to use CreateTrips as an application to build up mobile travel guide and modify contents. During the thesis writing period, the author went to meet his commissioner and had a discussion about how to use the mobile application as a creator, commissioner has created a credential account for author after the discussion and sent it to the author the next day. Fortunately, it is not hard to learn the technical skill of building this mobile travel guide, CreateTrips offers the platform and what author needs to do is simply just follow the form and build up contents, choose titles and segmentations, posting pictures and setup a price for travel book, it is more or less like writing a blog but with more technical editing work.

The most interesting part of making this travel mobile guide was to take pictures in different venues in Helsinki, the author got the chance to go to different interesting venues in Helsinki, for example, like cat café, MOMOTOKO Ramen restaurant and Design museum so on. The author went to Asian restaurants to talk to their bosses, after heard the author's purpose and they were all very welcome author to take pictures there and the author tried almost all those Asian restaurants' food.

The hardest part of this thesis can be the theory part of the mobile application and travel industry, due to this part is highly technical-based knowledge but there are limit resources from Haaga-helia Porvoo campus library. Even most of relative resources from Internet are thesis-based, fortunately, the author found the book "Drivers and Barriers of Mobile Travel and Tourism Service Adoption" and ordered it immediately. However, the information collected from this book was still limited because the book is talking mostly about Internet and mobile technologies issues.

### **6.3 Future suggestions for commissioner**

Regarding of the professional development for the CreateTrips marketing, there is a language limitation. Because of this is first time author create another language version of the mobile travel guide instead of English and Finnish language for CreateTrips. As more and more Asian tourists coming to Helsinki for visiting, CreateTrips has only English and Finnish speaking tourist travel guide which certainly will limit its Asian market area, even author's mandarin version travel guide can be "unpopular" to tourists from Taiwan, Hong Kong or Macao, in their region, tradition Chinese are wildly used rather than mandarin Chinese. Therefore, a multi-language system should be available in CreateTrips.

On the other hand, CreateTrips has only available to download in European and American Apple store, but it is still not available to download from Chinese Apple store, however, the

only option is to change Chinese Apple store address to European one or American one to download this application, for some inexperienced Chinese Apple users it could be a problem.

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