Jiangsu Information

Overview

Jiangsu is a province on the east coast of China. The capital and largest city is Nanjing. It is the country’s 24th largest province with around 61,000 square miles. The population, over 74,330,000, ranks as the nation’s 5th largest. Jiangsu province is primarily composed of Han Chinese but has an interesting history and unusual cultural mixture due to its position over the former divide between North and South China.

Jiangsu Geography

Jiangsu province is located on the eastern edge of central China where it borders the Yellow Sea and East China Sea. It surrounds most of Shanghai at the end of the Yangtze River. Low-lying planes cover the majority of Jiangsu province and a series of irrigation systems. Suzhou, in southern Jiangsu, is sometimes referred to as the Venice of the East and is circumvented by the Grand Canal of China. The canal was refreshed, reconstituted, and finished over a six year period during the Sui Dynasty (581 AD – 618 AD) and connects Beijing to Hangzhou. In addition to the many rivers, Tai Lake, the third largest lake in China, is located on the Grand Canal to the west of Suzhou and contributes to the region’s fresh water supply. Jiangsu province also covers a portion of the historical center of China, the North China Plane.

Jiangsu Demographics

Jiangsu remains vastly populated by Han who compose 99.6% of the population. Hui comprise 0.2%. Manchu are also present.

Jiangsu History

Jiangsu province first entered the dynastic history of China during the Zhou Dynasty (1122 BC – 221 BC). Here the Wu state during the Spring and Autumn period (722 BC – 481 BC) spread over modern Jiangsu. In the 4th century aristocratic Han of the Western Jin Dynasty (265 AD – 316 AD) fled the northern invasions and set up the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317 AD – 420 AD) near what is now Nanjing. During the Song Dynasty (960 AD – 1279 AD) southern Jiangsu province began its development as a center of trade. The Ming Dynasty (1368 AD – 1644 AD) established its first court and capital in Nanjing. Jiangsu province was split from Anhui and attained borders roughly identical to those it holds today during the Qing Dynasty (1644 AD – 1911 AD). As international trade increased the formerly unimportant city Shanghai began to develop rapidly. In 1927 Chiang Kai-shek made Nanjing his forces’ capital. Later, the Communists were able to defeat the Kuomintang and take Nanjing. Suzhou and Wuxi have remained important cities for trade and development and have benefited largely from Shanghai’s transformation into a special economic zone.

Jiangsu Industry

Jiangsu province is competitively situated for trade and development. Nanjing is the last major port city on the Yangtze River before Shanghai and the Yellow Sea. Although the capital is well situated for trade, Suzhou and Wuxi in the south have consistently higher annual outputs. Part of this is due to the Suzhou Industrial Park just to the east of Suzhou, which is entirely under Singaporean investment. However, the two cities’ success also has a strong connection to their long history as hotspots for industry and trade, their success being rooted in the
expansion and progress of South China. A vast array of crops and products are exported from this province, giving it the nations second highest provincial GDP, after Guangdong.