

《中国人韩国考驾照》

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谈及韩国，很多人的第一反映就是韩国歌曲、韩剧，不过，现在又多了一项——驾照。过去三年里，将近70000人持有韩国驾照。

When South Korea is being mentioned, what immediately comes to mind is pop music, TV dramas, cosmetics and fashion. Now there appears another item can be added to that list for Chinese people: a driver's license. Nearly 70-thousand Chinese people have become holders of South Korean driving licenses in the past three years.

Chi Huiguang has the story.

In China, it can take would-be drivers anywhere from three to four months up to a year just to get a driving license. And the cost is also double that of South Korea. Because of this, Chinese people visiting South Korea are getting drivers licenses there, then coming back to China and having them converted to local licenses.

Forty-six-year-old Chinese national, Wang Yingfang, traveled to South Korea by ferry with four other hopefuls. If she gets her license, she can convert it to a Chinese one by simply passing a written test back home.

On her first day behind the wheel, the school's part-time translator, who normally sits in the back, was absent and the driving instructor had to communicate using body language. She said:

"It is easy to get a driver's license in South Korea. But I just feel nervous. I'm very happy because it is fast and easy to convert it into Chinese one."

A driving school in the suburbs of Seoul can be a buzzing operation which sees some 200 Chinese applicants a month. In the class, half of the students listens to a Korean-speaking teacher, while the Chinese students who don't understand Korean fix their eyes on a TV screen showing sample questions for written tests in Chinese.

It takes only a week to get a license at state-appointed driving schools in South Korea. The instructor spoke some Chinese words like 'clutch,' but most of the training was done with hand gestures. But these are minor obstacles for Chinese applicants who are determined to get a South Korean license.

Yuk Soon-ho is a South Korean instructor:

"These Chinese people are in a panic when they first come here. And after watching them panic, we've been thinking what we can do for them. In this sense, we are learning a little Chinese now and when we see them happy after they get the licenses, all of us are pleased."

Gao Yiai is a 35-year-old stay-at-home housewife from east China's Shandong province. She has just received her Chinese driver's license by converting her South Korean one.

"I will definitely tell my friends about the procedures I had here, like the driving test and written test. I will tell my friends to come here and study for driver's licenses. It is really easy to take the exam and it's very good."

South Korea has eased rules for getting driver's licenses, cutting the hours of training to just 13, including six hours of driving time. That's the reason why about 70-thousand Chinese have been there to get driving licenses in the past three years. Statistics from South Korea's national police agency show that the number of Chinese holding Korean licenses has tripled in that time.

According to a website offering trip packages to South Korea for Chinese looking to apply for driver's licenses and shopping, it will take about seven to eight days to get both the license and a tour in Seoul. The trip package includes training on paper and test driving on the road and applying for the tests, paper and road examinations, plus a shopping and sight-seeing tour. Actually, there can be three whole days of visiting and shopping that don't include anything regarding obtaining a driver's license.

Niu Ziming, an officer of the vehicle management station in Beijing, explains the rules of the licenses converting in China.

"As long as you have an official foreign license rather than an international driver's license, you can convert it to domestic driver's license, but you have to pass the traffic rules examination at a vehicle management station first. Actually, you don't need to go to driving school registration, or to take the road test. Of course, your age and physical condition should meet the requirements for drivers."