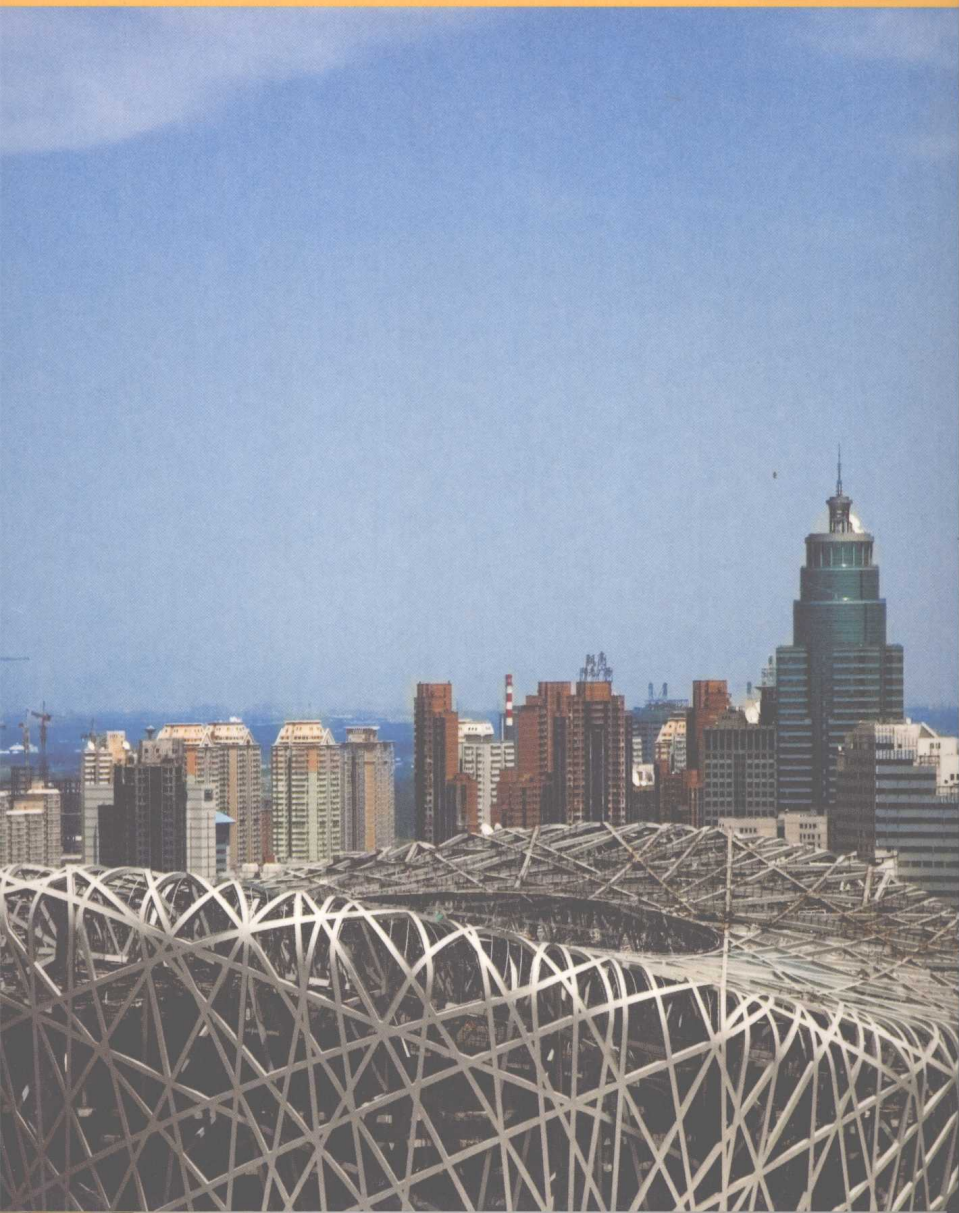


Beijing北京

2008 Olympics Edition

Fodor's



Metric

0 cm

Inches

0

1 cm

 $\frac{1}{2}$

2 cm

1

3 cm

 $1 \frac{1}{2}$

4 cm

5 cm

2

6 cm

 $2 \frac{1}{2}$

7 cm

3

8 cm

9 cm

 $3 \frac{1}{2}$

10 cm

4

0°C = 32°F 40°C = 104°F 100°C = 212°F

1 cm = 0.3937 inches

10 cm = 0.328 foot

1 kilometer = 0.621 mile

2 liter = 0.5 gallon

1 kilogram = 2.2 pound

10 yuan = 1.3 US\$ = 1 Euro (approx)

Landing in Beijing**Money** (p.206)

Currency: Chinese Yuan (CNY) aka (RMB or ¥)
 + ATMs available at the airport accept all cards
 + 100 RMB = 10 Euro = 13 USD

> **TIPPING** is not customary in China**Taxi** (p.201)

From airport: 80-100RMB to city (inc. tolls)
 Rate: 10RMB + 2 RMB/km (+20% after 11pm)
 Beijing Taxi Company: 6831-2288

Subway (p.9)

Tickets: Y3 per ride to any destination
 Y2 transfer to the lightrail

Telephone (p.204)

Dial to Beijing: +86 10 ####-####
 Dial to China mobile: +86 ###-####-####
 (Omit country and city codes when
 dialling within Beijing)

Time

China time zone: GMT +8

Emergency (p.208)

Ambulance: 120
 Fire: 119
 Police: 110
 Traffic accident: 122
 Beijing International SOS Clinic: 6462 9100
www.internationalsos.com

Information

Local Directory: 2689 0114
 International Directory: 100
 Tourist Hotline: 6513 0828

Embassies 大使馆 (address in Chinese)

Australia: 5140 4111 澳大利亚 东直门外大街21号
 Canada: 6532 3536 加拿大 东直门外大街19号
 France: 6532 1331 法国 三里屯东三街3号
 Germany: 8532 9000 德国 东直门外大街17号
 Italy: 6532 2131 意大利 三里屯东二街2号
 UK: 5192 4000 英国 光华路11号
 U.S.: 6532 3831 美国 秀水北街3号

Electricity (p.205)

220 volts (U.S. = 110 volts)

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Art

Σ



CENTRAL
p. 130

Forbidden City
Tiananmen Square
National Grand Theater
Lama Temple
Beihai and Jingshan Park
Houhai Lake and Hutongs

The historical seat of the emperor and now the location of the Chinese government, central Beijing is a veritable living museum. Beijing's greatest hits from the Forbidden City to Tiananmen Square are all here. Have your fill of cultural relics, museums, and historical sights, but don't miss central Beijing's quieter charms like Beihai Park and hutong areas.



EAST
p. 148

Worker's Stadium
Sanlitun Bar Street
Central Business District
798 Dashanzi Art District
Panjiayuan-Dirt Market

Once an entrance to the city for long-distance traders, the East is now home to the city's international business district. The majority of foreign expatriates live, work, and play here, as do embassy staff and wealthy locals. The plethora of international cuisine and lively nightlife make this Beijing's most cosmopolitan area.



WEST
p. 168

Summer Palaces
Universities
Military Museum
Capital Museum
Beijing Zoo and Aquarium
Zhongguancun Hi-Tech Zone

China's greatest scholars journeyed here to teach and study at the nation's preeminent universities, Peking University (Beida) and Tsinghua. The area is also home to Beijing's largest preserve of ancient hutongs. Emperors past and Beijingers today seek respite from the bustle of the city in the resplendent Summer Palace and its imperial gardens.



NORTH
p. 176

Olympic Park
Bird's Nest
Water Cube
Olympic Sports Center
China Nationalities Museum
Temple of Earth Park

Traditionally, the area to the north was the defense line between the empire and the wild lands beyond the Great Wall. Today, north central Beijing is home to safer pursuits: international sport. The 2008 Olympic Village dominates this part of town, and a thriving area of modern shopping malls, art zones, sporting arenas, and restaurants have sprung up in its shadows.



SOUTH
p. 186

Qianmen and Hutong area
Dazhalan Antiques Street
Liulichang Antiques Street
Muslim Quarters
Temple of Heaven Park
Pearl & Toy markets

This old artisan district is home to many of Beijing's traditional theaters and modern stages. The 150 year-old merchant guild houses, as well as the surrounding warren of old bazaars and former commoners' homes make for a particularly charismatic area. Beijing's literati today follow their forebears in seeking inspiration from its romantic parks.

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Introduction

Take it all in. See Beijing's massive boulevards and tuck into its secluded side streets. From towering new skyscrapers to charming back alley hutongs, the Chinese capital boasts a life and liveliness that is unrivaled.

Since winning the Olympic bid in 2001, Beijing has been a city on a mission. Massive building projects have transformed the city into an international metropolis. Visit the Olympic green for a look at the futuristic National Stadium and Aquatic Center, or travel to the Central Business District for more proof of Beijing's place in the architectural vanguard. Having seen its future, visit Beijing's glorious past. Tour the old imperial chambers of the Forbidden City, or ramble through the vast grounds of the Temple of Heaven. Stroll down the narrow streets of Beijing's hutongs, and greet your Olympic hosts in person. Be curious. Beijing rewards the explorer.

The Games of the Twenty-Ninth Olympiad herald 2008 as a banner year in Beijing's history. Fodor's Beijing 2008 Olympics Edition guidebook will be your definitive companion to 21st century Chinese history in the making.

Welcome to Beijing.

2008 Olympics Edition

Beijing

北京出版社
Beijing Publishing House

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About Our Book

Fodor's Travel, in conjunction with Beijing Publishing House, is proud to present the **Fodor's Guide to Beijing: 2008 Olympics Edition**. Get to know the best of the city in **This is Beijing** and travel from China's glorious past to its dynamic present in the pages of **This is China**. Our special feature on the **2008 Olympic Games** takes you on an exploration of China's Olympic history, shows how the Olympics have transformed Beijing, and provides all the critical information you need to get ready for the 2008 Games themselves.

Our **Sights & Excursions** section features practical descriptions of historical sites and other major points of interest with walking maps for your convenience.

In our **Neighborhoods** section, we have organized the city into five areas, best reflecting the way that the city is viewed by locals today. We've color-coded each neighborhood for ease of reference. Each section begins with an overview of the area and lists its top highlights with their Chinese addresses and contact information.

As travelers, we've all discovered a place so wonderful that its worthiness is obvious. These venues, sights and experiences get our highest rating, **Fodor's Choice**, indicated by stars throughout the book.

Beijing is a large and dynamic city that's not always easy to navigate without help. Our **Essentials** section offers basic tips and helpful hints for planning your trip and getting around Beijing with ease. Check out our city itineraries for suggestions on how best to manage your time (and energy) to experience all that Beijing has to offer.

Enjoy your stay!

Neighborhoods

Shop. Eat. Drink. Play. Sleep.

Central 130

East 148

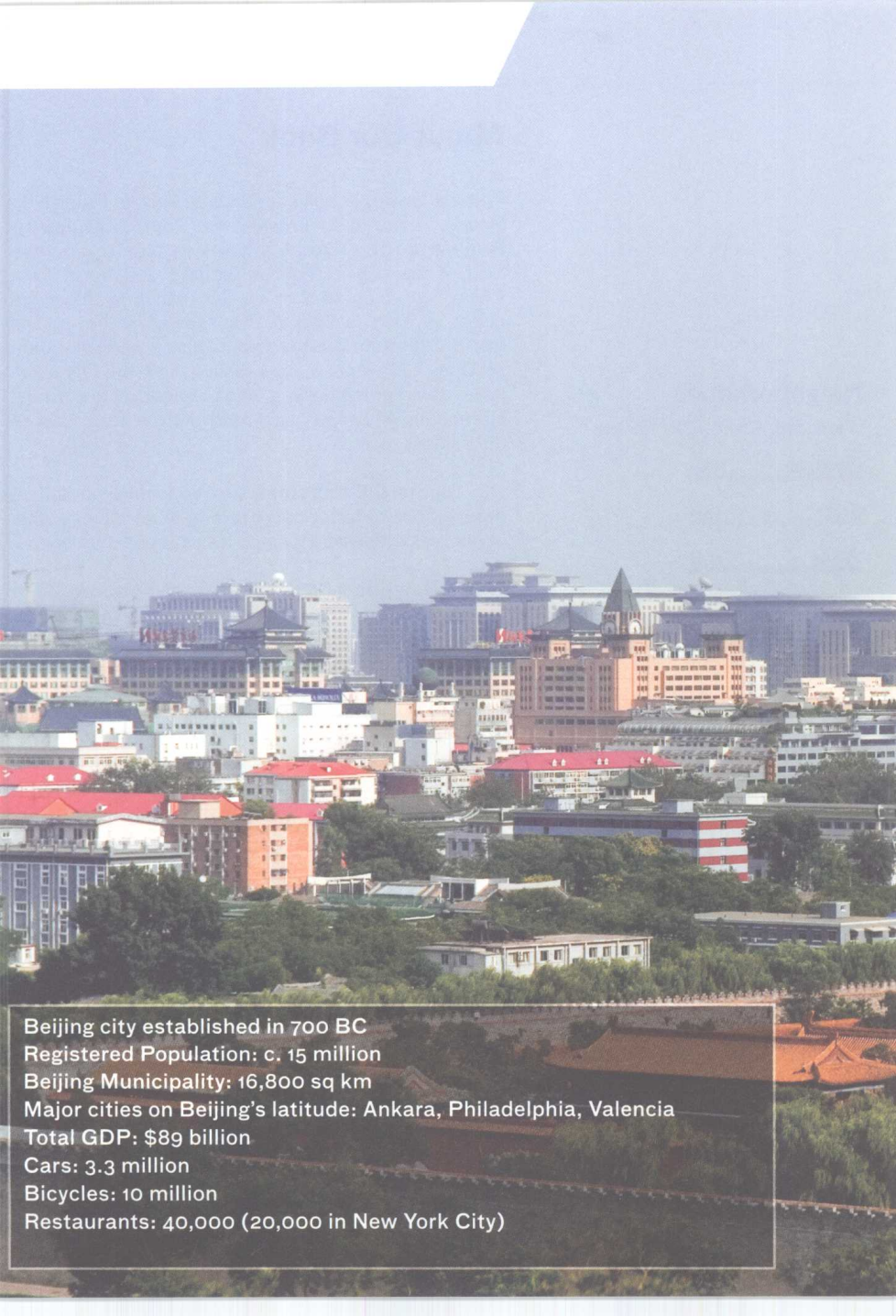
West 168

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Maps

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- Subway end leaf



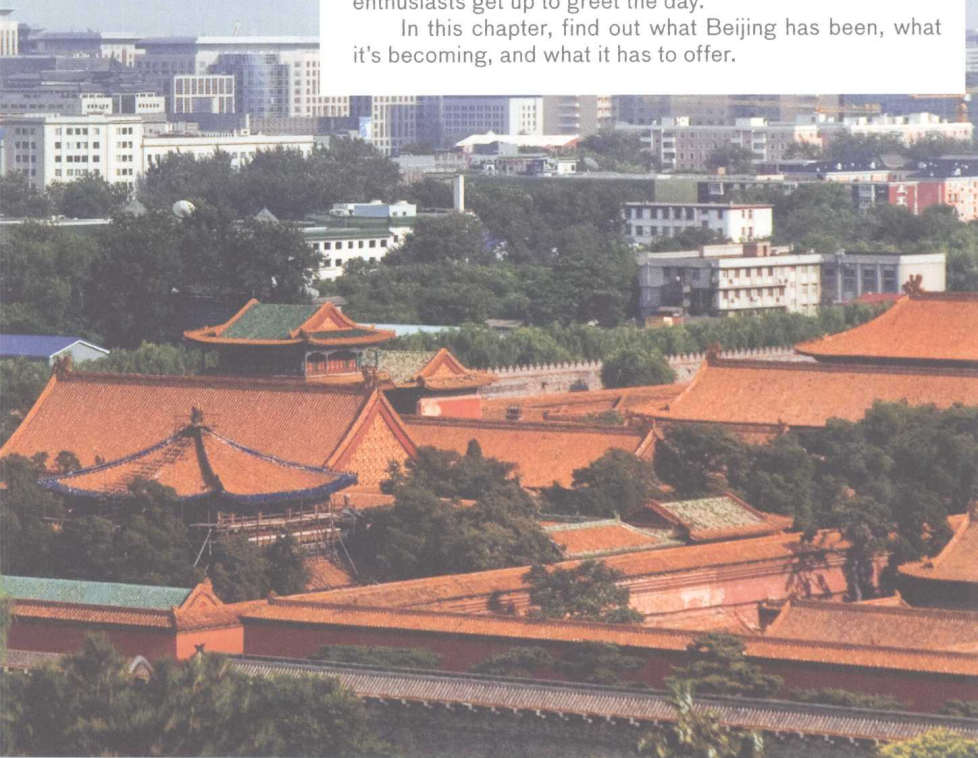
Beijing city established in 700 BC
Registered Population: c. 15 million
Beijing Municipality: 16,800 sq km
Major cities on Beijing's latitude: Ankara, Philadelphia, Valencia
Total GDP: \$89 billion
Cars: 3.3 million
Bicycles: 10 million
Restaurants: 40,000 (20,000 in New York City)

This is Beijing

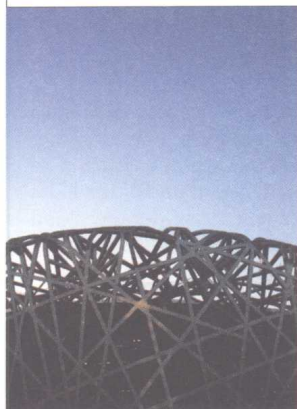
The host of the 29th Summer Olympics, Beijing is both an ancient city and a city of the future in the making. Iconic structures like the Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven and Beijing can feel like a museum dedicated to its own glorious past. Take a tour of spiring skyscrapers and advanced Olympic venues and you will see a modern city fast bridging the gap between its present and future.

Beijing's 15-million official residents—excluding 3-million migrant workers—are a fascinating mix of the capital's past and future as well. Disco dancers, old men with caged songbirds, and amateur Beijing opera crooners frequent the city's parks and squares. Cyclists fight with throngs of cars for space on crowded thoroughfares, and Beijing hipsters leave the clubs just as early morning *tai chi* enthusiasts get up to greet the day.

In this chapter, find out what Beijing has been, what it's becoming, and what it has to offer.



Beijing Planner



Holidays

Try to avoid traveling during the three "Golden Weeks" when businesses close completely and millions of Chinese travel, making it very difficult to book hotels, tours, and transportation:

2008 Chinese New Year:

February 7–21

Labor Day: May 1–7

National Day: October 1–6

When to Go

There is no better time to visit Beijing than during the Olympics. If you can't make it for the Games, come to the capital in early fall (September/October) or spring (April/May) when days are sunny and temperatures are mild. But note that spring is also the time when Beijing's famous sandstorms come blowing in from the Gobi desert. Come July, the days are hot and excruciatingly humid with a greater chance of rain. Though winters are cold, Beijing's Forbidden City (p.102) and Summer Palace (p.109) can look majestic when the traditional tiled roofs are covered with a light dusting of snow and the venues aren't overrun with tourists.

Weather hotline: 12121
(Dial 6 for English)

What to Wear

The weather in Beijing and neighboring areas is notoriously fickle, so make sure you have a range of wardrobe options and check the forecast for last-minute changes. In the summer, it's hot; travel with sunglasses, sunscreen, and a wide-brimmed hat. It gets terribly cold in the winter, so dress in layers and pack gloves, a hat, and a scarf. If you plan to do any hiking, make sure to bring sturdy, comfortable shoes.

Etiquette

China is less sensitive than, say, Thailand, about dress when it comes to visiting royal palaces and temples. Even so, it is respectful to dress modestly. Cover your shoulders and don't wear short skirts or shorts when you're visiting religious buildings. Note that indoor photography in many temples and sites like the Forbidden City is not permitted.

A foreigner traveling in the rural areas around Beijing might still be something of a sensation. The attention visitors receive may seem overwhelming, but it is usually good-natured. Chinese locals can be extremely kind, inviting you to their homes for tea, a meal, or even to stay the night. Mostly, those who invite you to their homes are doing it out of kindness (Confucius said, "To have friends come from afar, isn't that happiness?"). A gift of a small quantity of fruit or a bottle of Baijiu (a Chinese liquor) is always appreciated.

Getting Around

On a map, the city's five concentric ring roads look like a target. At the heart is the Forbidden City. The Second Ring Road follows the line of the old city walls, running above the circular subway Line 2. Note that, oddly, there is no First Ring Road. Beijing's wide main streets are laid out on a grid system. Roads run north-south or east-west with intricate networks of ancient lanes and alleys known as hutongs in between. The most important thoroughfare runs east-west along the northern side of Tiananmen Square. Generally known as Chang'an Jie, it actually changes names several times along its length (as do many other major streets). The three remaining ring roads are out too far (8, 10, and 16 km respectively) to be much use for getting around main areas of Beijing.

On Foot: Though traffic and modernization has put a bit of a cramp in Beijing's walking stride, meandering remains one of the best ways of experiencing the capital. (see walking maps pp. 104-115).

By Bike: The proliferation of cars has made biking less pleasant and less safe on major thoroughfares, but it's still the best way to navigate Beijing's hutong. If a flat tire or sudden brake failure strikes, seek out the nearest street-side mechanic. Bikes can be rented at many hotels.

By Bus: Unless you know Beijing well, public buses aren't the best choice for getting around. There are hundreds of routes, which are hot and crowded in summer and cold and crowded in winter.

By Subway: The subway is a good way to avoid Beijing's frequent traffic jams. And, with the opening of new lines, Beijing's subway service is becoming increasingly convenient. Beijing has constructed several new lines for the Olympic games. The subway runs from 5am to 10:30pm daily. Subway stations are marked by blue signs marked with a "D" (for *di tie*, or subway) inside a circle. Stations are marked in both Chinese and English, and stops are announced in both languages.

By Taxi: Be sure to check that the meter has been engaged to avoid fare negotiations at your destination. Taxis are easy to hail during the day, but can be difficult during evening rush hour, especially when it's raining. Special efforts have been made to improve the English of Beijing's cab drivers, but you should still ask your hotel concierge to write down your destination in Chinese to point and go. Be sure to take a hotel card with you for the return trip.

(see Beijing Essentials—Transportation pp. 200-201)

Below are some terms you'll see over and over again.

These words will appear on maps and street signs; they are part of the name of just about every place you'll go:

Dong 东 is east, *xi* 西 is west, *nan* 南 is south, *bei* 北 is north, and *zhong* 中 means middle.

Jie 街 and *lu* 路 mean street and road respectively. *Da* 大 means big, thus *dajie* 大街 means avenue.

Men 门, meaning door or gate, indicates a street that once passed through an entrance in the old wall that surrounded the city until it was torn down in the 1960s. The entrances to parks and some other places are also referred to as *men*.

Nei 内 means inside and *wai* 外 means outside. You will often come across streets that used to pass through a city gate. *Andingmen Nei Dajie*, for example, is the section of the street located inside the Second Ring Road (where the gate used to be), whereas *Andingmen Wai Dajie* is the section outside the gate.

Qiao 桥, or bridge, is part of the place name at just about every entrance and exit on the ring roads.



Tiananmen Square & the Forbidden City

天安门广场与故宫

Walking beneath the red flags of Tiananmen Square is a quintessential Beijing experience. It was from the Gate of Heavenly Peace that Mao Zedong pronounced the People's Republic of China in 1949. The Forbidden City (top left) has been home to a long line of emperors. The structure, which was built by more than 200,000 workers, is the best preserved and most complete example of imperial architecture in China. **See pp. 102 – 107**

The Great Wall 长城

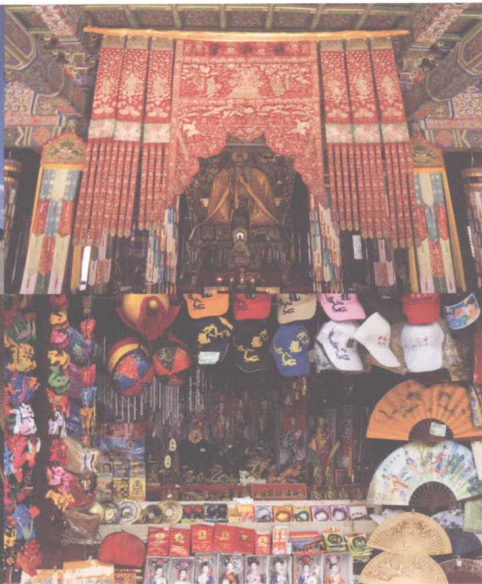
As a visitor to Beijing, you simply must set aside a day to visit one of the glorious Great Wall sites (top right) just outside the capital. In general, the farther you go, the more rugged is the terrain. So choose your adventure wisely! (See the Greater Beijing map on the front over leaf.) **See pp. 122 – 123**

Hutongs & Old Beijing 胡同与老北京

Beijing has a network of ancient alleyways that are living museums of the old city. These alleyways, called hutongs (bottom left), still packed with bustling shops and courtyard houses, are full of life. Laundry is strung out from windows and telephone poles, vegetables and flowers are planted in any available space, and old folks play chess, drink beer or tea, and sit on stools to gossip. **See pp. 26 – 29, 110 – 113**

Summer Palace 颐和园

This garden complex (bottom right) dates back eight centuries, to when the first emperor of the Jin Dynasty built the Gold Mountain Palace on Longevity Hill. Notable sights are the Long Corridor (a covered wooden walkway), and the Hall of Benevolent Longevity. At the west end of the lake is the famous Marble Boat that Qing Empress Dowager Cixi built with money intended for the Chinese navy. **See p. 109**



Temple of Heaven 天坛



The Temple of Heaven (top left) is one of the best examples of religious architecture in China. Construction began in the early 15th century on the order of Yongle. The complex took 14 years to complete. It contains three main buildings where the emperor, as the "Son of Heaven," offered prayers. The sprawling complex is a pleasant place for wandering. Watch locals practicing martial arts, playing traditional instruments, and enjoying ballroom dancing on the grass. [See p. 108](#)

Lama Temple 雍和宫



The sweet smell of incense permeates one of the few functioning Buddhist temples (top right) in Beijing. When Emperor Yongzheng took the throne in 1723, his former residence was converted into this Lamaistic temple. At its peak, 1,500 lamas lived here. The Hall of Celestial Kings houses a statue of the Maitreya, and the Wanfu Pavilion has a 23-meter (75-foot) Buddha carved from one piece of sandalwood. [See pp. 112 – 113](#)

Art Districts 艺术区

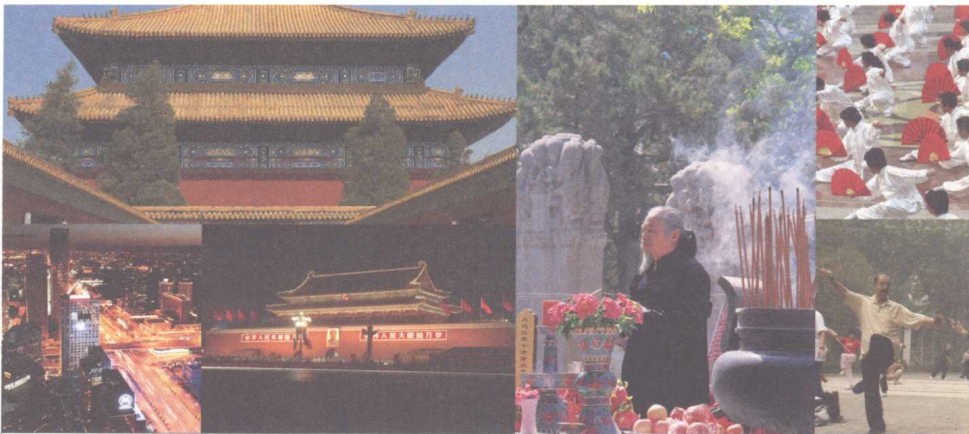


If you are keen to check out the thriving Chinese contemporary art scene, first explore the bohemian Dashanzi 798 art district's galleries (bottom left), boutique shops, cafés and artist studios. Nearby are satellite art communities in Caochangdi and beyond that boast converted warehouse and industrial spaces featuring local and international art exhibitions. [See pp. 114 – 115](#)

Markets 市场



So much to bargain for, so little time! Beijing's markets offer a wide variety of goods, from "Maomabilia" and silk slippers to furniture and laptops. Visit the Dirt Market at Panjiayuan (bottom right), where some 3,000 vendors sell factory knockoffs, antiques, Cultural Revolution memorabilia, and handicrafts. For freshwater pearls, and more knockoffs, try the Silk Alley Market or the Pearl Market. For electronics, immerse yourself in Zhongguancun, aka Beijing's "Silicon Valley." For antiques, wander the streets of Dazhailan and Liulichang and browse Curio City or the Ai Jia Market. [See pp. 86 – 89, 156, 173](#)



City Itineraries

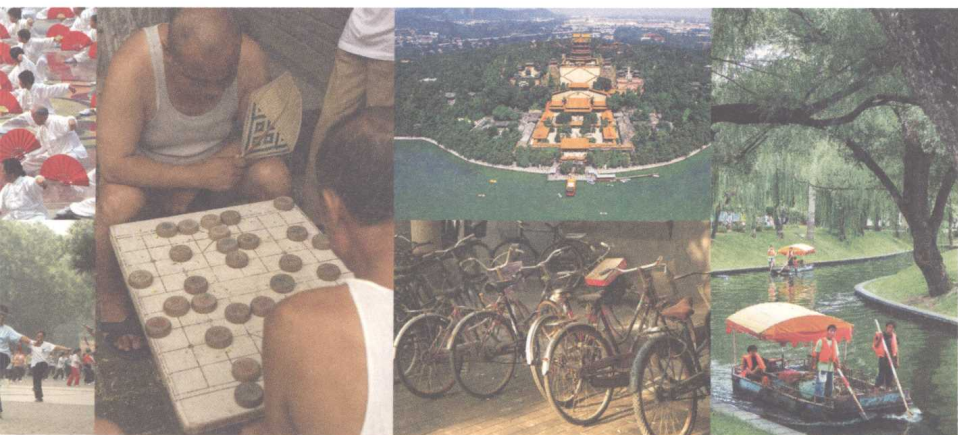
The Best of Beijing in 5 Days

On Day 1, start at Tiananmen Square (p.106), the center of modern China and the entry point to the spectacular Forbidden City(p.102). Explore the former imperial palace to your heart's content. In the afternoon, take a guided pedicab ride through a hutong to the Drum and Bell Towers (p.111). Have Peking duck for dinner, perhaps at Da Dong Roast Duck Restaurant (p.83), located by the old imperial granaries at Nanxincang. On Day 2, head straight for the vast grounds of the Temple of Heaven (p.108), one of Beijing's most important historical sights, then search for treasures at the Panjiayuan market (p.156). After lunch, visit the Lama Temple and the nearby Confucius Temple (p.113), or go for a stroll around the banks of the lake at Beihai Park (p.111). Have dinner or enjoy a nightcap in the Sanlitun area (p.157). Set aside Day 3 for a tour of the Thirteen Ming Tombs (p.124) and the Great Wall at Mutianyu (pp.123-4), where a cable car offers a dramatic ride to the summit. On Day 4, visit the rambling Summer Palace (p.109), and then spend a few hours at the nearby Old Summer Palace (p.118), an intriguing ruin. In the evening, plan to see a Beijing Opera

performance (p.94). On Day 5, hire a car and visit the spectacular Eastern Qing Tombs (p.125), where a "spirit way" lined with carved stone animals and unrestored temple-like grave sites rest in a beautiful rural setting.

Off the Beaten Path

Beijing has a glorious history, but there is much more to the city than the Forbidden City and Peking Opera. If you want to try something a little bit different, head out to the Dashanzi 798 art district in northeast Beijing (pp.114-5). The converted factories in the area have been turned into hip cafés and galleries that feature the most cutting edge contemporary art in China. Closer to the city center, head down into the Underground City near Qianmen (p. 106). Built after a Sino-Soviet border conflict in 1969, the Underground City, stretching 8 to 18 meters below Beijing, is one of the most interesting building projects of the time. In the evening take a look at a fusion of Beijing's past and present at Nanluoguxiang (pp.110, 137). The old hutong neighborhood has been renovated with scores of upscale restaurants and wi-fi cafes. After dinner, head down to Mao Live (p.138) for a chance to see some of Beijing's budding rock groups.



Itinerary on Two Wheels

A great way to explore Beijing is by bicycle. A ride between Ditan Park (p.18) and the Lake District (p.110) includes some of the city's most famous sights and finest hutongs. (See Hutong walking maps pp.110-113).

Begin at Ditan Park, just north of the Second Ring Road on Yonghegong Jie. Park your bike in the lot outside the south gate and take a walk around the park. Next, ride south along Yonghegong Jie until you come to the main entrance of the Lama Temple. Running west across the street from the temple's main gate is Guozijian Jie (Imperial Academy Street). Shops near the intersection sell Buddhist statues, incense, texts (in Chinese), and tapes of traditional Chinese Buddhist music. Browse them before riding west to the Confucius Temple and the neighboring Imperial Academy.

Follow Guozijian Jie west until it empties onto Andingmennei Dajie. Enter this busy road with care (there's no traffic signal) and ride south to Gulou Dong Dajie, another major thoroughfare. Turn right (west) and ride to the Drum Tower. From here, detour through the alleys just north of the Bell Tower. A small public square, crowded with city residents flying kites, playing badminton or chess, and chatting, links the two landmarks. If you need a rest, stop in at the Drum and Bell (p. 138), a

rustic-looking bar and restaurant on the west side of the square; it has a nice rooftop terrace with views of the two towers and the square below. Retrace your route south to Di'anmenwai Dajie (the road running south from the Drum Tower), turning onto Yandai Xie Jie, the first lane on the right. There are a number of shops and street vendors here selling handicrafts, ethnic clothing, and folk arts. You can also sample some of Beijing's famous old street snacks such as candied haw, sweet potatoes, roast corn, and much more. Wind southwest on Yandai Xie Jie past guesthouses, bicycle-repair shops, tiny restaurants, and crumbling traditional courtyard houses toward Houhai, or the Back Lake (p.111). Turn left onto Xiaoqiaoli Hutong and pass the arched Silver Ingot Bridge, which separates the Houhai and Qianhai lakes. Before the bridge, follow the trail along Houhai's north shore, traveling toward Soong Ching-ling's Former Residence. Continue around the lake until you arrive at Deshengmennei Dajie. Follow it south to the second alley, turning east (left) onto Yangfang Hutong, which leads back to the arched bridge. Ride along Yangfang Hutong past the stone bridge and follow Qianhai's west bank. Continue along the lane to Qianhai Xi Jie. Nearby is Prince Gong's Palace, 300 yards north of the China Conservatory of Music—look for the brass plaque.

Sightseeing Tours

Taking a tour will make it easier to sightsee without the hassle. However, if you're adventurous, you can easily explore the city on your own, even if you don't speak Chinese. Armed with the Chinese names in this guide, you should have little trouble getting around. If you do opt for an organized tour, keep in mind that a little research pays off.



Beijing Panda Tour

Offering a variety of private and group tours to historical sites and cultural venues in Beijing, the folks at Panda Tour also offer trips to various parts of the Great Wall. Group tours range from Y300 to Y445. Grand Rock Plaza, 5th fl., 13 Xinzhong Xili, Dongcheng District 东城区新中西里13号 6417-0468

China International Travel Service

CITS is China's largest and oldest travel agency, dating back to 1954. In Beijing, the company offers everything from customized tours to group tours and business trips, starting from around Y238. 28 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District 中国国际旅行社 朝阳区建国门外大街28号 6515-8565 or 6515-8603 www.citsusa.com

Wild China

This foreign-managed travel company is probably the best in China. WildChina has excellent guides who know the city well and who don't waste your time taking you

to souvenir shops. The company offers a three-day tour of Beijing that includes major historical sites, a hike on a wild part of the Great Wall, a visit to the hutongs, and an introduction to the cuisines of the capital. It's pricey but worth it. A 3-day tour, including courtyard hotel or 5-star hotel, costs Y6,708. Room 801, Oriental Place, 9 East Dongfang Lu, North Dongsanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District 朝阳区东三环北路, 东方东路9号 6465-6602 www.wildchina.com

• HIKING AND BIKING TOURS

Beijing Hikers

This outfitter offers guided hiking trips aimed at expat hikers and tourists. The trips are rated from 1 to 5 in terms of difficulty, and visitors are taken to the hills around Beijing. You might visit a rural village, historic temple, or the Great Wall. Groups depart from the Starbucks in the Lido Hotel. Y200, including round-trip transportation, park-entrance fees and end-of-hike refreshments. 6779-9365 or 139/1002-5516 www.beijinghikers.com

CycleChina

If a guided three-hour afternoon bicycle tour of a hutong (Y150) or a trip through Beijing sitting in a motorbike sidecar (Y795 per person) sounds like fun, CycleChina offers a number of itineraries to explore off-the-beaten-path Beijing. 139/1188-6524 www.cyclechina.com

Kingdom Bike Rental

Offering bicycle rentals and suggested itineraries covering some of Beijing's lesser