

Tian'anmen Square The Forbidden City The Great Wall

Summer Palace Temple of Heaven Ming Tombs Chinese Dragon

Festivals in Beijing Language Beijing Opera City's Gates of Old Beijing

Buddhism and Lama Temple Hutongs and Quadrangles Culture of Chinese Food

Beijing

A Panoramic Review Of Heritage and Fascination



Jiuzhou Publishing House

Beijing

A Panoramic Review Of Heritage and Fascination

by Zheng Jingqiu, Li Na

Jiuzhou Publishing House

Executive editor: Li Chunlei, Liu Jia

Compiled by: Zheng Jingqiu, Li Na

English Writer: Zheng Jingqiu, Li Na

Reviser and Proofreader: Qu Muhe

Color Photographs by: Zhang Zhaoji, Lin Jing, Wang Hui, Jingqiu

Layout designer: Qu Zhijing







內右門

CONTENTS

6	Foreword - Beijing
8	Tian'anmen Square
12	The Forbidden City -The Forbidden City -Treasures in the Forbidden City
36	The Great Wall -The Great Wall -The real length of the Great Wall
42	The Summer Palace -The Summer Palace -Empress Dowager Cixi
53	The Temple of Heaven -The Temple of Heaven -How to sacrifice and worship
60	Thirteen Tombs of the Ming Dynasty -The Ming Tombs -The Underground Palace of the Dingling Tomb
68	Buddhism and Lama Temple
76	Hutongs and Quadrangles of Beijing
91	City's Gates of Old Beijing
98	Chinese Dragon -Chinese Dragon -The other symbolizing and mythical animals in Beijing
105	Festivals in Beijing -Spring Festival -Mid-Autumn Festival -Lantern Festival
111	Culture of Chinese Food -The balance between Yin and Yang -The four cuisines -Chopsticks -Tea
123	Beijing Opera
126	Language

Foreword ---- Beijing

Beijing, the capital of the People's Republic of China, is the nation's political and cultural centre. It covers an area of 16,800 square kilometres, 38% of which are plains and 62% mountains.

Beijing possesses a continental climate with clearly defined four seasons: the spring is dry and windy, the summer is hot with frequent rain, the autumn has the best weather, with generally sunny skies, and the winter is dry and cold with little snow. The best time to visit Beijing is in May, September and October, when people can enjoy a bright and sunny sky.

Beijing has a population of over 12 million people, about 6 million of whom live in the city proper and the rest in the suburbs. It is one of the few inland capitals in the world not built on a river, owing its long preeminence to its strategic geographical position.

The history of Beijing as a human settlement dates back to some 3,000 years ago, though the remains of "Peking Man" show that human life existed in this part of China as long as half a million years ago.

The city first achieved prominence during the Warring States Period (475-221BC) when it became the capital of the Kingdom of *Yan* and was called *Ji*. At the beginning of the 10th Century, it was the second capital of the *Liao* Dynasty. From then on, the city had been the capital of the *Jin*, *Yuan*, *Ming* and *Qing* Dynasties till 1911. On October 1st, 1949, Chairman Mao proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China in Beijing.

For many foreigners coming to Beijing, sightseeing always ranks as number one attraction. The city of Beijing has long been famous for its rich and fascinating collections of history sites and scenic spots. Nothing in this world comes closer to the Great Wall of China. No one can resist the charms of the timeless Forbidden City. And where else do people see such marvelous combinations of human intelligence and the incredible beauty of nature beyond those in the Summer Palace, and the legends about Hutong. Beijing Opera,

which merges music, singing, dancing, opera and martial arts, had been born and developed in Beijing. Life of Beijing residents is a movement of interweaving ancient traditions and modern rhythms. Numerous towering apartment buildings neighbour ancient quadrangle courtyards. In the morning, when you stand beside a street in Beijing -- "the Kingdom of Bicycles", you will see the torrent of bicycles forging ahead. Yet, people still enjoy greatest rejoicings of the traditional festivals, such as the Spring Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival, when visitors surge in temple fairs and other gatherings.

To facilitate your visit to Beijing and to make your stay there more fruitful, we have the honor to present this book with the hope that it will become one of your treasures in addition to your camera, binoculars and notebook.



Beihai Park.

Beihai Park is situated in the center of Beijing City. Beihai was the royal garden in ancient times, which has a history over 800 years. It is believed to be the earliest classic royal palace-garden ever built in the world.

Tian'anmen Square

Tian'anmen square is located in the heart of Beijing, covering an area of 44 hectares - about 100 acres - to the south of the Tian'anmen Gate (Gate of Heavenly Peace) and the north of the *Qianmen* gate. The square is the biggest one in the world and it can accommodate one million people.



Tian'anmen Gate

An aerial view of Tian'anmen Square



The Tian'anmen Gate-tower rises 33.17 meters high. The gate has five archways. A moat named Golden Water River flows along the foot of the gate-tower and is spanned by five white marble bridges, one for each archway. The gate has five passages, which were usually closed and used only on ceremonial occasions in the old days. Only the emperor was entitled to pass through the central passage. On October 1, 1949 Chairman Mao Zedong proclaimed the founding of the People's Republic of China from atop this tower. Now this magnificent gate-tower is the symbol of China.

On the eastern side of the square are the Museum of Chinese History and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution, and on the opposite side is the Great Hall of the People built in 1959 to house the National People's Congress. The Great Hall has an assembly hall for 10,000 people and a banquet hall that is half the size of a football field, with seats for up to 5,000 guests. In the middle of the square is the Monument to the People's Heroes and Chairman Mao's Memorial Hall.



A girl flying kites on Tian'anmen Square.

Huabiao of Tian'anmen

In front of and behind the Tian'anmen stand two pairs of sculpted with marble columns called *Huabiao*. Each column measures 9.57meters in height. The body of the column is elegantly sculptured with beautiful cloud designs and a huge dragon entwining it. The squatting mythical animal at the top of each *Huabiao* in front of the Tian'anmen is called "*hou*", facing the south and gazing into the distance. The legend says that the *hou* kept an eye on the emperor while he was on an inspection tour. It often persuaded the emperor not to spend too much time travelling from place to place, and also reminded him to return to the capital to attend to state affairs. Therefore, it was commonly known as *Wangjungui* (expecting the emperor's return). The *Hou* on each of the *Huabiao* behind Tian'anmen faces the north, watching the emperor in the Forbidden City. The legend goes that it often advised the emperor against indulging himself in merry - making with his empress and concubines, and admonished him to leave the palace and find out the people's sufferings. Therefore, it was commonly known as *Wanjunchu* (awaiting the emperor's coming out).



Huabiao

The Forbidden City

The Palace Museum, also known as the Forbidden City, was the imperial palace of the *Ming* and *Qing* Dynasties. Now, it is famous worldwide for its striking architectures and precious collections of cultural and artistic objects.



A panorama of the Forbidden City.

In 1406, the third emperor of the *Ming* Dynasty *Yongle* began building the Forbidden City. Large-scale construction involved 100,000 craftsmen and more than one million labourers. The construction took 14 years and was finished in 1420. All buildings in the city are of a wood and brick structure. The timber used for building the palace came from remote *Sichuan* and *Yunnan* provinces. Transportation of timber was extremely difficult in those days. In *Sichuan* province the logs cut down had to be left in the mountains, waiting for mountain torrents to wash them into rivers, and then being shipped to Beijing through the Grand Canal. The bricks were made in *Shandong* province, and over 10 million bricks were required for City's construction. Tens of thousands of huge stone slabs used for building the palace were quarried from the suburban county of *Fangshan*, 70 kilometres southwest of Beijing. According to historical records, 20,000 peasants were employed to move an immense piece of stone, 10 metres long, 3 metres wide and 1.6 metres thick, over an ice-path made by pouring water on the road in severe winter. The massive stone block reached Beijing in 28 days after being pulled by thousands of horses and mules.

The Forbidden City is located in the center of Beijing, covering an area of 720,000 square metres. It is rectangular in shape, 960 metres from north to south and 750 metres from east to west, being surrounded by 10-metre-high walls and a 52-metre-wide moat. At each of the four corners stands a corner tower. There is a gate at each side: Meridian Gate (*Wumen*) in the south; East Flowery Gate (*Donghuamen*) in the east; West Flowery Gate (*Xihuamen*) in the west; and the Gate of Divine Prowess (*Shenwumen*) in the north.

The full name of the Forbidden City is Purple Forbidden City. Purple didn't symbolize the colour of its construction. Ancient Chinese believed the Emperor of Heaven lived on the Purple Star or North Star (The purple colour was symbolically attributed to the North Star), which was regarded as the centre of the universe, and the emperor was the son of the Emperor of Heaven. The palatial complex was regarded as being at the center of human society on earth and was forbidden to the common people, therefore the city was named Purple Forbidden City. In fact, most of the Forbidden City buildings have red walls and yellow glazed-tile roofs. In China, the colour red has long meant solemnity, happiness, wealth and honor. Yellow has long been considered as a pure colour in China. It represents the earth among the five elements -- metal, wood, water, fire and earth, and earth indicates the centre and symbolizes dignity. As a result, yellow, the colour of earth, was most extensively used for the emperors. The only house with a roof of black tiles is the royal library. This is because black colour represents water among the five elements and water can overcome fire, a constant danger for the collection of books inside.



**Ming Dynasty Emperor
Yongle(1360-1424).**

Yongle, the third emperor of the Ming Dynasty, was the fourth son of the Founder of the Ming Dynasty. In 1406 he issued the imperial decree to build the Forbidden City. When the construction was finished in 1420, he moved the Capital of the Ming Dynasty from Nanjing to Beijing and became the first Emperor who lived in the Forbidden City.

**Qing Dynasty Emperor
Puyi (1906-1967).**

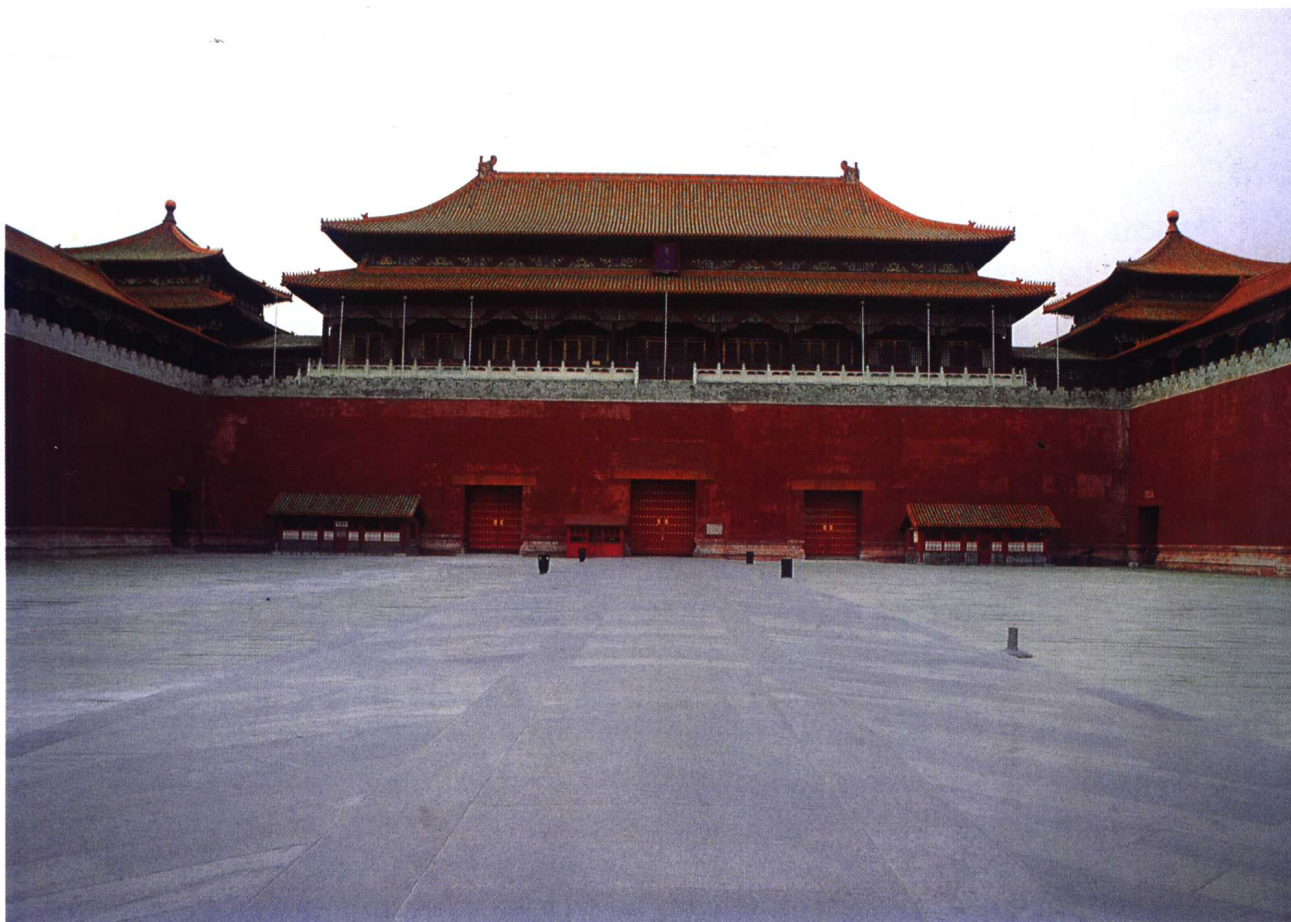
Puyi was the last Emperor of the Qing Dynasty and also was the last Emperor who lived in the Forbidden City. He came to the throne at the age of three and ruled for three years. The 1911 Revolution overthrew the Qing Dynasty, ending over 2,000 years of feudal rule in China. But Puyi stayed on in the Inner Court for another 13 years. In 1924, he was chased out of the Forbidden City.



There were buildings with 9,999 rooms in the Forbidden City. This was because the ancients regarded nine as the biggest number, to which only emperors were entitled. Also, since the numeral has the same sound as “everlasting” in the Chinese language, it best reflected the emperors’ wish that their rule would last forever.

The Forbidden City was the Imperial Palace of the *Ming* and *Qing* Dynasties, during a long period of 491 years from 1420 when Emperor *Yongle* moved the capital from Nanjing to Beijing down to 1911 when *PuYi*, the last Emperor of the *Qing* Dynasty, was overthrown. There were 24 emperors (14 of the *Ming* and 10 of the *Qing*) who lived inside and ruled the nation.

The 1911 Revolution overthrew the *Qing* Dynasty, ending the feudal system which had lasted more than 2,000 years in China. But the last emperor *Puyi* still lived in the Inner Court for another 13 years. In 1924 *Puyi* was chased out of the Forbidden City, in 1925 the complex was open to the public, and in 1947 the Palace Museum was formally established.



Meridian Gate (Wumen).

Being 36.15metres high, it is the main entrance of the Forbidden City. The layout is shaped like the letter U. There are 5 high towers with double eaves on it, very lofty and magnificent.