

中国的城市

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15 Cities in China



Fifteen Cities in China

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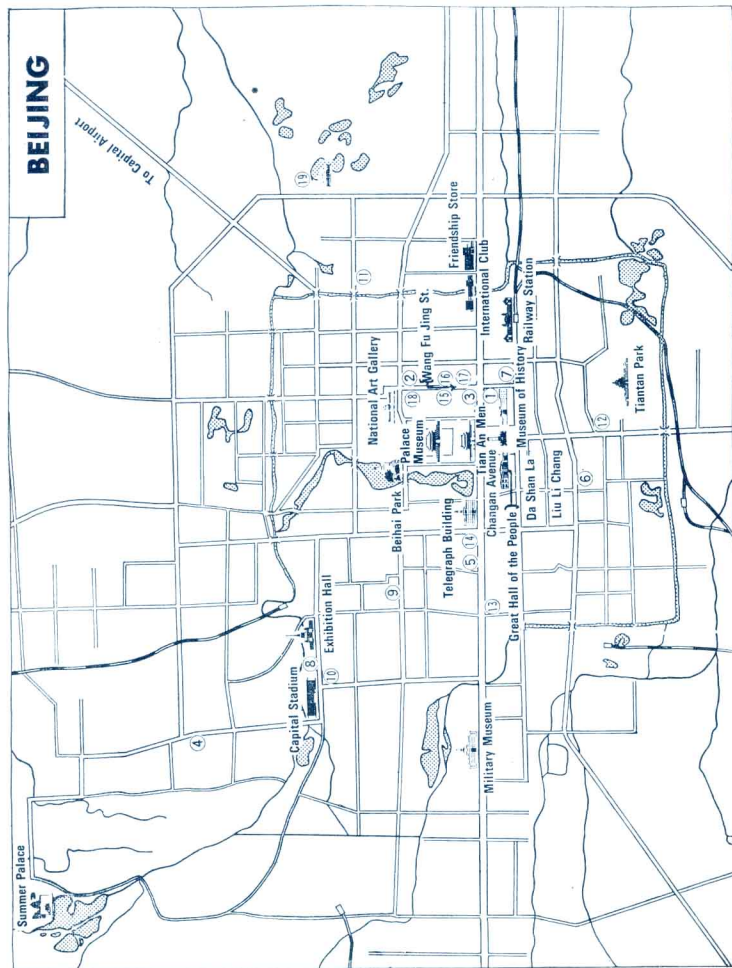
Ancient and Modern Capital

THE 17-story Beijing (Peking) Hotel affords a fine view of the capital. To the west are the palace buildings of the old Forbidden City, with their vermilion walls, yellow tile roofs and white marble balustrades. In front is Changan (Everlasting Peace) Avenue, a ten-lane artery running east-west through the city. The day's heavy motor traffic is made more colorful by 100,000 of the capital's two million bicycling residents. Old and new together create the impression of Beijing as both the serene capital of past dynasties and a vigorous new city of today.

The mountain area southwest of Beijing was the home of Peking Man some 500,000 years ago. About 4,000 years ago a small hamlet grew up on the plains in the outskirts of the present city. In the 11th century B.C. it became Jicheng (the City

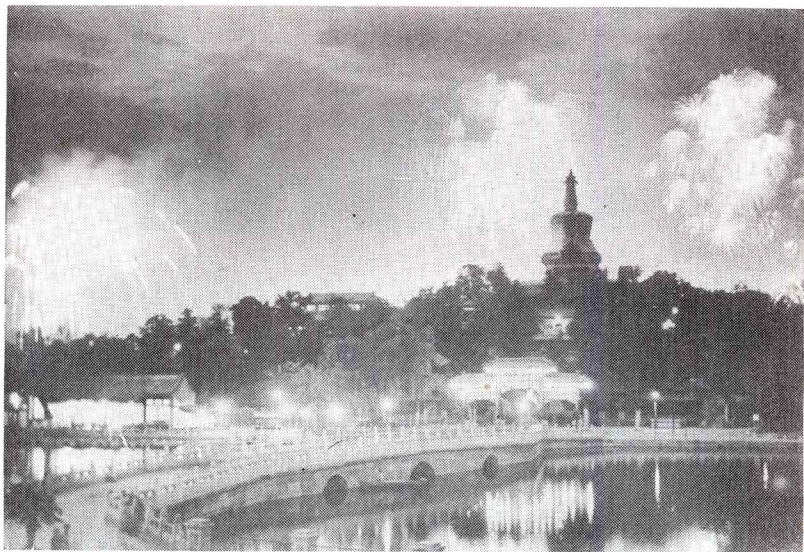
of Ji). It was the capital of the State of Yan of the Warring States period (475-221 B.C.). The city continued to grow and in the mid-12th century A.D. the Jin dynasty made it its capital, calling it Zhongdu (Central Capital). A century later it was made the Yuan dynasty capital of Kublai Khan, who named it Dadu (Great Capital). Marco Polo praised its architecture and prosperity in his famous *Travels*. In the early 15th century the Ming dynasty rebuilt the city and named it Beijing (Northern Capital).

During its 800 years as the capital of feudal dynasties, many changes made Beijing a model metropolis of ancient China. Its layout was neat and symmetrical, planned around a central north-south axis running eight kilometers through the city like a spinal cord from the Gate of Everlasting Peace in the



- 1 Head Office of China International Travel Service
- 2 International Travel Service Branch
- 3 Beijing Hotel
- 4 Friendship Hotel
- 5 Minzu Hotel
- 6 Qianmen Hotel
- 7 Xinqiao Hotel
- 8 Beijing Zoo
- 9 Lu Xun Museum
- 10 Planetarium
- 11 Workers' Gymnasium
- 12 Museum of Natural History
- 13 TV Building
- 14 Nationalities Cultural Palace
- 15 Department Store
- 16 Dongfeng Bazaar
- 17 Arts and Crafts Store
- 18 Wai Wen Book Store
- 19 Agricultural Exhibition Hall

Drawing by Qian Jinkai



Beihai Park, formerly an imperial garden, now a park for the people.

Xinhua

south through the Due South Gate, the Gate of Heavenly Peace (Tian An Men), the Imperial Palace, the middle ridge of Coal Hill, to the Drum and Bell towers.

The six main halls of the Imperial Palace were built along this axis, the thrones of the emperors in each hall exactly in line. Other groups of buildings were symmetrically arranged on either side of the axis. If the two sides could be folded, each would precisely match the other.

Tian An Men Gate breaks the center of the Forbidden City's southern wall and leads into the

Imperial Palace. Three of the palace buildings stand on a marble foundation. They were the tallest buildings in old Beijing.

People's Square

In front and south of Tian An Men Gate lies the famous Tian An Men Square. It was from the balcony of the Tian An Men Gate that Chairman Mao Zedong proclaimed the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. Since then the square, once a forbidding place with a somber feudal atmos-

phere, has taken on an entirely different appearance. In the center stands the huge Monument to the People's Heroes built of 17,000 pieces of granite and marble and bearing an inscription written by Chairman Mao: "The People's Heroes Are Immortal."

South of the monument is the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall built in 1977. On the west side of the square is the Great Hall of the People, with a floor space greater than all of the palaces in the Forbidden City. On the east are the Museum of Chinese History, with exhibits dating from primitive society to 1840, and the Museum of the Chinese Revolution showing the Chinese people's struggles after 1840. These modern buildings, with a pleasant blend of Chinese style and modern architecture, combine with Tian An Men Gate and the ancient palaces behind to form an interesting scene in the center of today's Beijing.

The square has been widened to 40 hectares, large enough to hold a million people. Since the May Fourth Movement in 1919, which marked the beginning of China's new-democratic revolution, it has been the site of rallies, demonstrations, parades and celebrations.

New City Planning

The section of Changan Avenue running past Tian An Men Gate has been widened to 120 meters. Originally only 3.7 kilometers long, the boulevard now extends 40 kilometers from east of the new international airport to the Capital Iron and Steel Complex at Shijingshan on the west. Many buildings in different Chinese architectural styles line it.

With careful planning Beijing is expanding. The eastern suburbs, downwind from the city and on the lower reaches of its water sources, have become an industrial district with electronics, textiles, machine-building and chemicals as its main enterprises. The major universities, institutes and research centers are located in the north-western suburbs.

Old Beijing's streets lay in a checkerboard pattern, well planned and regular. Most of them were narrow lanes. Today the main streets have been widened. New ones have been built to outlying areas and in a beltline pattern circling city districts. Various arteries are being connected by overpasses and cloverleaves. A modern subway grid is under construction



Morning scene. *Zhu Yongqing*

and 23 kilometers of it are already open to traffic.

Housing construction in Beijing has accelerated at an unprecedented speed and scale. In the last two years, 3,900,000 square meters of floor space has gone up — housing for 290,000 people.

Parks

The capital is famous for its parks. The Summer Palace in



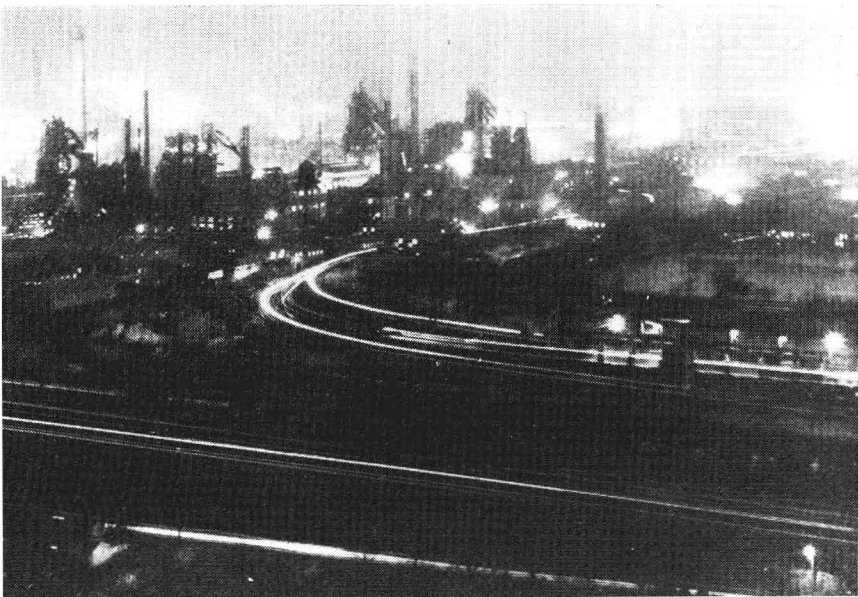
the northwest suburbs is one of the best-preserved and largest of the ancient parks in China. In 1888 the Empress Dowager Ci Xi celebrated her birthday by rebuilding it with over five million taels of silver intended for the development of the navy. Below its Longevity Hill is Kunming Lake. Towers, halls, terraces and pavilions were artistically arranged to fit the landscape. A 700-meter covered corridor links the many buildings of the Summer Palace. The ceiling beams of the corridor are decorated with several

thousand paintings, which have been restored.

The best buildings of the palace lie on the southern slope of the hill. Halfway through the corridor an arch leads to a court and on to the buildings on the hill. These bear such names as the Hall of Dispelling the Clouds, the Hall of Virtuous Light, the Pavilion of the Fragrance of Buddha and the Sea of Wisdom Temple. From the top one has a fine view of the lake below and the Western Hills in the distance. The Hall for Listening to Birds

Night view of the Capital Iron and Steel Complex.

Zhang Shuyuan



Singing Restaurant on the hillside is very famous. Imperial gowns are made available there for foreign tourists to wear for photos. Thousands visit the Summer Palace every day, the record being 100,000.

Beihai is another of the most popular parks in Beijing. An imposing white dagoba, or Tibetan-style pagoda, rises sharply

from the center of an island in its lake, the dominating landmark. On the hill overlooking the lake are many old structures, all beautifully designed and laid out. On the northern side of the island several buildings and a semi-circular veranda wind along the shore. Across the lake are the Five Dragon Pavilions. Ferry

Wading pool in Joyous Pavilion Park.

Li Changyong





Xinhua

Scene from **The Banner of King Valiant**, an opera about **Li Zicheng**, leader of a 17th-century peasant uprising, staged by the **Beijing Opera Troupe**.

boats plying between the shores enhance the view and suggest something in a poem or a painting.

Beihai Park is noted not only for its beauty but for a long history closely related with the growth of the city. A thousand years ago in the Liao dynasty (916-1125) an imperial residence stood on the site. In the Jin dynasty (1115-1234) other palace buildings were added. Kublai Khan of the Yuan dynasty lived here after he came to Bei-

jing in 1264. The Yuan government expanded the island three times and made it the center of a new city. Round City, a small fortified park outside Beihai, is today one of the few pre-Yuan dynasty structures still existing.

Today Beijing has 28 parks, each with its own distinctive characteristics. Fragrant Hill is known for its red maple leaves in autumn, Sun Yat-sen Park for its peonies, and Coal Hill Park for its roses. Many ancient trees thrive in these parks.

Beihai has the oldest, a 1000-year locust from the Tang dynasty. Sun Yat-sen Park has a cypress from the Liao dynasty. A 700-year-old lacebark pine in Round City is a veteran from the Yuan dynasty.

About 70 kilometers north of Beijing is Juyongguan, an important pass in the world-famous Great Wall. The Wall is reached from the capital by car, bus or train. Chinese visiting the Wall often recall a line from one of Chairman Mao's poems written during the revolutionary wars before liberation: "If we fail to reach the Great Wall, we are not men."

In the Streets

Strolling in the lanes of the capital, especially in the old city district, one passes mellowed walls behind which stand courtyard houses. Fine locust trees in front of the gates give shade to playing children and retired old people. Traffic noises from the streets beyond are muted and the lanes remain serene and tranquil.

One of Beijing's busiest streets is Wang Fu Jing, running north from the Beijing Hotel. Here are the city's largest department store, many shops and the famous East Wind Bazaar.

Another traditional shopping area is the old, narrow Da Sha La street south of Qian Men Gate. It boasts of several century-old stores. One of them bears characters in gold over the door said to have been written by Yan Song, a powerful minister of the Ming dynasty. The city's largest Chinese medicine pharmacy is also on this street.

West of Da Sha La through narrow lanes is Liu Li Chang, an ancient street of the arts. It is well known for shops selling valuable old books, curios, paintings, works of famous calligraphers, porcelain and pottery ware, seals and stationery. This small street seems like a museum of antiques and fine arts.

The Rong Bao Zhai shop is one of the most famous places in Liu Li Chang. It makes reproductions of Chinese traditional paintings. Such noted artists as Li Kuchan, Wu Zuo-

ren, Li Keran and Huang Yongyu sometimes do paintings here in the presence of customers.

The residents of Beijing are not accustomed to an active night life. Theaters and restaurants (except those serving midnight snacks) usually close

before midnight. But Beijing gets up early. The city begins its day at five or six o'clock in the morning. Along the streets and in the parks people jog, play ball, do *taijiquan* (shadow boxing) and other exercises before going off to work. □

The Former Imperial Palace

THE Imperial Palace behind Tian An Men in the center of Beijing, is the largest and most complete of China's existing ancient palaces, some with the original furnishings, and the priceless collections of ancient bronzes, pottery and porcelain, paintings, precious jewels and other art objects in its museum.

Residence of 24 emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911), the palace covers an area of 72 hectares, and the buildings contain more than 9,000 rooms. The entire palace is surrounded by walls 10 meters high and a moat 52 meters wide. At each of the

four corners of the wall stands a tower with a multi-eaved, multi-ridged roof covered with yellow glazed tiles.

The main entrance to the palace proper is the imposing Meridian Gate. Passing through the 8-meter-high, 35-meter-deep archway, one comes out into a vast courtyard. A waterway in the shape of an arc crosses the width of the courtyard and is spanned by five bridges of white marble. At the far end of the courtyard is the next gate, Tai He Men, guarded by a pair of bronze lions.

Through this gate are the three principal halls of the outer palace, the Hall of Supreme

Harmony, the Hall of Complete Harmony and the Hall of Preserving Harmony. These stand on three-tiered terraces of white marble seven meters high. Each tier is surrounded by a white marble balustrade carved with dragon, phoenix and cloud designs. At regular intervals along the base of the balustrades are marble waterspouts carved in the shape of dragons' heads. During a heavy rain the terraces are a magnificent sight with the thousands of dragons spouting water.

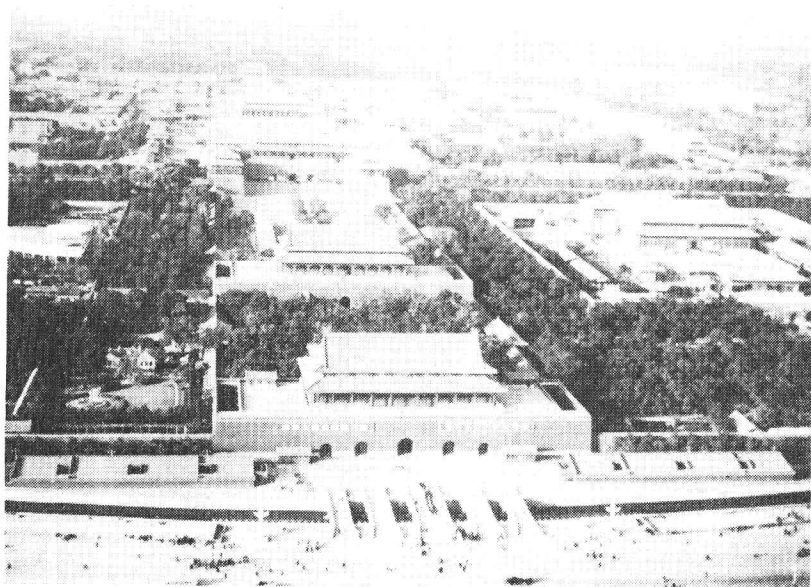
The Hall of Supreme Harmony, nine stories high and covering an area of 2,300 square meters, is China's biggest existing palatial hall constructed of wood. In the center of the hall is a throne mounted on a platform two meters high and decorated with openwork carving. It is flanked by six columns entwined with dragons painted in gold. High above the throne is a coffered ceiling with gilded designs of dragons playing with pearls. For its intricate art work this hall has been called the "gold imperial throne hall." Here emperors proclaimed their accession and held important ceremonies.

For such ceremonies, the kilometer-long "imperial road"

leading from Tian An Men to the hall was lined with imperial insignia, flags and banners. Civilian and military officials knelt in rows in the great courtyard, which could accommodate as many as 90,000 people. When the emperor ascended the throne, gongs and chimes of jade in the gallery were sounded and the smoke of incense rose from bronze cranes and tortoises and other censers and tripods on the terrace. The aura of immense majesty created by the imposing architecture was meant to keep the "Son of Heaven's" subjects in awe of him and his autocratic rule.

Behind this hall is a square and somewhat smaller hall, the Hall of Complete Harmony where emperors rehearsed for the ceremonies, and farther back is the Hall of Preserving Harmony where candidates for the rank of scholar took the imperial examinations.

These three big halls are flanked by towers, wing gates and walls arranged symmetrically on both east and west. Beyond the walls on either side are more halls also in symmetrical arrangement. With the principal buildings, these form one of the Imperial Palace's architectural groupings.



The Imperial Palace.

Xinhua

North of the Hall of Preserving Harmony is the inner palace where the Ming and Qing emperors lived and carried on their daily governmental activities and where the empresses had their state bedchamber.

On the east and west of the main line of buildings of the inner palace are 12 courtyards, six on each side, with vermilion walls and gateways of glazed tile. The palatial halls inside are furnished with sumptuous furniture, exquisitely carved or inlaid with precious stones and

other costly ornaments. In this cheerless luxury lived hundreds of imperial concubines and their thousands of attendants.

Most important of these halls is the Hall of Mental Cultivation where after 1723 the Qing emperors held private audiences, read memorials and reports and made official replies. There is a throne in the center room. In the eastern chamber are two thrones, one behind the other. The first was for the emperor. From the second, behind a screen, because women

were not supposed to be seen, the Empress Dowager Ci Xi ruled the country from 1861 to the last days of the feudal monarchy. This was the hall where many of the real decisions of her tyrannical regime were made, including some that betrayed the country. From this hall were issued the imperial edicts authorizing the signing of a series of humiliating treaties that foreign powers forced upon China for decades on end after the Opium War of 1840 to reduce her to a semi-colony.

NANJING had been the capital of the first Ming emperor and his grandson who succeeded him. In the early 15th century the Prince of Yan, a son of the first Ming emperor, who had been garrisoning Beijing, drove away his nephew, usurped the throne as the Emperor Yung Lo and made Beijing the capital. In 1406 he ordered the construction of the palace. A hundred thousand artisans and a million workmen toiled for 14 years on the principal and some of the auxiliary buildings.

Timber for the palace was brought from the virgin forests in the north. About the workmen sent to fell the timber and transport it, the *Ming Chronicle*

says, "One thousand men went into the mountains and five hundred returned." The stone blocks were quarried in the mountains of Fangshan county several scores of kilometers southwest of Beijing. To make their transport possible, wells were dug every half kilometer and water drawn from them was poured over the roads to freeze. The stones were moved on flat sledges pulled over the ice. The 16-meter-long, 200-ton stone slab carved with cloud and dragon designs that is part of the staircase at the back of the Hall of Preserving Harmony is one of those brought by such monumental labor.

The completed palace was closely guarded. Ordinary citizens were forbidden even to come near the walls and look at it, hence the name "The Forbidden City." Inside, the emperors and their families lived a life of idleness, extravagance and debauchery, dressing themselves in silks and satins and eating delicacies of every kind off dishes of gold, silver and jade. The Empress Dowager Ci Xi's every meal consisted of more than 100 dishes — enough