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从景山俯瞰故宫
A bird's-eye view of the Forbidden City from the Scenic Hill





金山岭长城
Jinshanling Great Wall





北京CBD
Beijing CBD

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Majesty and all-inclusiveness seem to be the common features of almost all the great cities in the world. There is no doubt that Beijing is one of such cities.

Beijing used to be the capital of four successive dynasties, namely Jin, Yuan, Ming and Qing. This explains why the city exudes a magnificent but serene air as shown by the royal family. It has witnessed the rise and fall of the supreme power in China over the past centuries. Marco Polo (1254-1324), an Italian traveler of the thirteenth century, depicted the beauty and splendor of Beijing as capital of the Yuan Dynasty, and the civility and richness of local people in his *Travels of Marco Polo*. His praise and description of Beijing have left countless people lost in fantastic reverie about the city. A number of construction projects in Beijing remain as great attractions, the Palace Museum (also called the Forbidden City) for instance, which is acclaimed as the largest and best-preserved imperial palace in the world; the Great Wall built during the Ming period, an incredible ancient project for military defense; the Summer Palace, the imperial garden built by manpower making perfect use of the natural landscape; and the Ming Tombs, which contain the greatest number of imperial mausoleums for eunuchs and empresses. All these scenic spots have become the symbol of Beijing and of China alike, telling visitors one story after another about the royal families.



Classic Beijing 古典

雄伟和兼容似乎是世界上所有伟大城市的共性。它们或历时久远，或规模宏大，其中的建筑和街道承载了无数的历史映像。同时，它们兼收并蓄，充满着传统与现代的对比，充满着多民族甚至跨越国籍的交融。毋庸置疑，亦古亦今的北京极为恰当地诠释了这种城市气质。

北京具有宏伟沉静的帝王之气，这是因为，它作为中国四个封建王朝的都城——中都（金）、大都（元）、北京城（明）、京师（清），见证了七个多世纪以来中国最高权力中心的兴衰。13世纪意大利旅行家马可·波罗（Marco polo）的游记，记载了当时元大都的美丽辉煌和人民文明富足的生活，这些赞美诱发了无数人对北京这座文明古都的神思遐想。北京悠久的历史给今人留下了世界现存规模最大的宫殿——紫禁城，令人难以置信的伟大防御工程——明长城，虽由人作、宛自天开的皇家园林——颐和园，世界现存帝后陵寝最多的皇陵建筑群——明十三陵等。这些建筑已经成为了北京乃至中国的符号，娓娓讲述着发生在往昔的皇家故事。

The Palace Museum

从太和门看午门

The Meridian Gate seen from the Gate of Supreme Harmony

故宫

北京故宫亦称紫禁城，是明、清两朝的皇宫，建于明永乐四年至十八年（1406-1420年），曾有24位皇帝在此执政、生活和终老。

故宫是世界上现存规模最大、保存最完好的皇宫。建筑群分外朝和内廷两大部分。外朝主体建筑有太和殿、中和殿、保和殿，是皇帝举行盛大典礼、行使权力及与群臣共议国事的场所。内廷包括乾清宫、交泰殿、坤宁宫、御花园等，是皇帝处理日常政务及与嫔妃居住休闲的地方。此外，故宫还藏有几十万件艺术品，因此它也是中国最大的博物馆和珍宝馆。

除却深厚的历史含义和实用的建筑功能，故宫还带给了今人许多独特的美感体验。比如它的红墙黄瓦，就蕴含了古人审美的标准以及中国古老的五行学说理念，同时，它们又与蓝色的天空相连，因此天空仿佛也成为了建筑的一部分。

最适合观看紫禁城全景的地方是景山公园的万春亭，这里也是北京中轴线的制高点。站在此处向南眺望，紫禁城带着它与生俱来的帝王之气，一片辉煌。此外，在紫禁城外安静的筒子河边漫步，也是游览故宫不可缺少的体验。

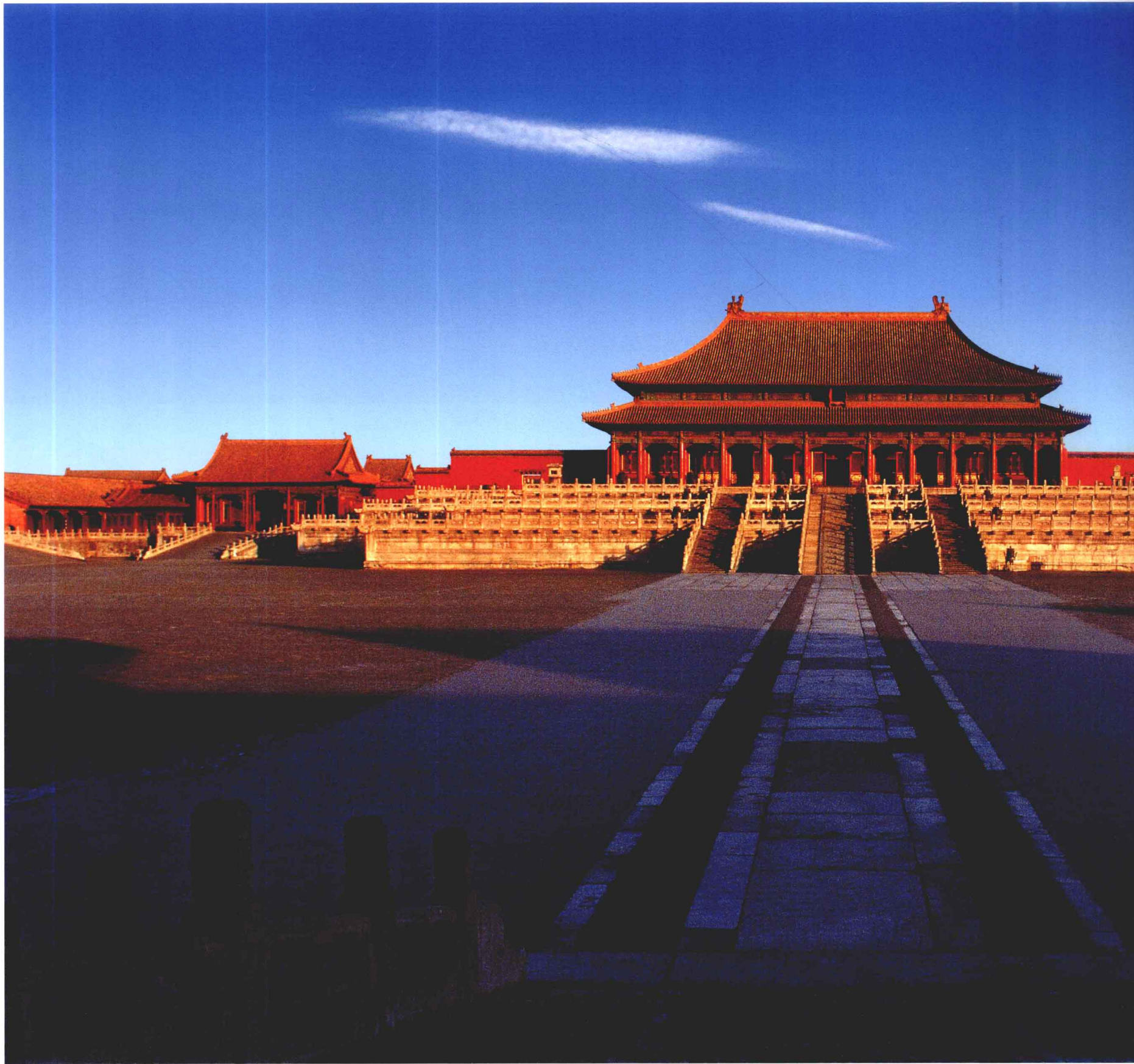
Built from the fourth year to the eighteenth (1406-1420) during Emperor Yongle's reign, the Palace Museum, also called the Forbidden City, was the imperial palace for the Ming and Qing emperors. Twenty-four emperors ruled the country and lived their life here.

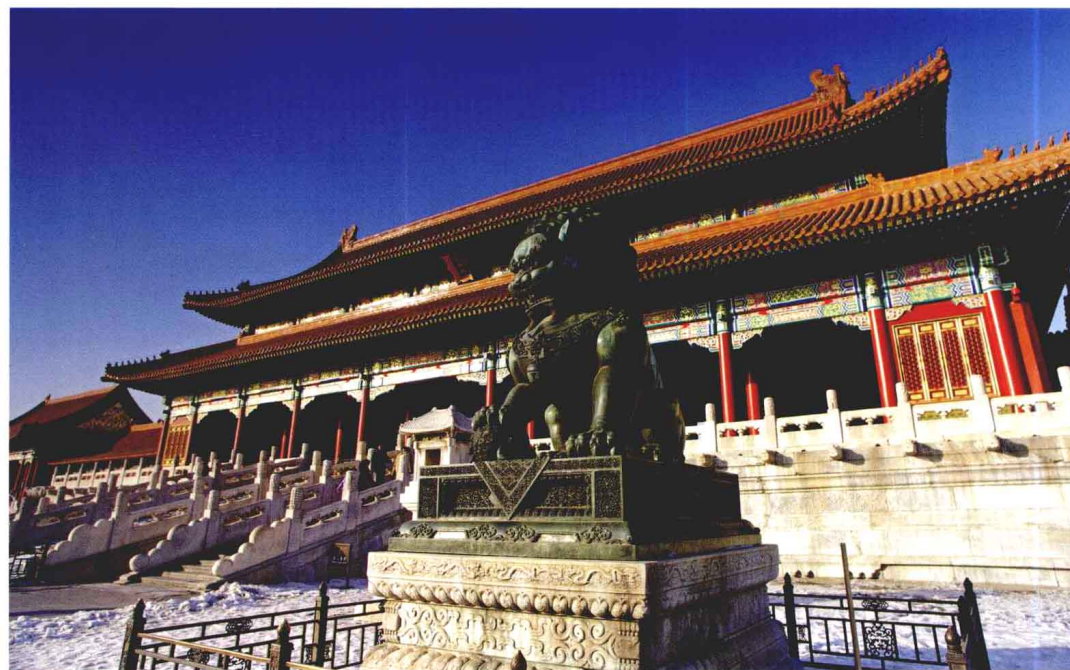
The Palace Museum is the largest and best-preserved imperial palace in the world. The palace complex consists of two parts, the "outer court" and the "inner court." Main buildings in the "outer court" are the Hall of Supreme Harmony, the Hall of Central Harmony and the Hall of Preserving Harmony, where emperors used to hold ceremonies, and discuss state affairs with court officials. In the "inner court," there are the Palace of Heavenly Purity, the Hall of Union, the Palace of Earthly Tranquility and the Imperial Garden, which provided venues for emperors to deal with daily court affairs, live and enjoy themselves with their empresses and concubines. The

Palace Museum boasts hundreds of thousands of artworks, making it the largest museum and treasure house of China.

In addition to its historical significance and practical functions, the Palace Museum also has a unique aesthetic appeal to visitors. The red walls and yellow tiles, among other things, are based on the aesthetic concept prevailing in ancient times and the Five Elements theory established in traditional Chinese culture. The ideal place for a full view of the Palace Museum is the Everlasting Spring Pavilion on the Scenic Hill, the highest point of the North-South axis of Beijing. With the panoramic view of the Palace Museum, you will be amazed by its grandeur and brilliance. Strolling along the city moat is also an experience that visitors cannot afford to miss.







- 1 | $\frac{2}{3}$ 1 太和殿广场
The square in front of the Hall of Supreme Harmony
- 2 太和门前铜狮
The bronze lions in front of the Gate of Supreme Harmony
- 3 中和殿
The Hall of Central Harmony