Beijing is one of the most magnificent cities in Asia. Its history is truly impressive. The metropolis is dynamically evolving at a pace that is impossible for any European or North American city.

As is quite obvious from a glance at Tiananmen, the literal center of the city, Beijing is the seat of communist political power, with its vast public spaces, huge buildings designed according to socialist realism principles and CCTV systems accompanied by ever-present police forces. At the same time, this might be seen as a mere continuity of a once very powerful empire, still represented by the unbelievable Forbidden City.

With Beijing developing so fast, it might be difficult to look beyond the huge construction sites and modern skyscrapers to re-discover the peaceful temples, lively hutong streets and beautiful parks built according to ancient principles. But you will be rewarded for your efforts – this side of Beijing is relaxed, friendly and endlessly charming.

**Time Zone**
CST – China Standard Time (UTC/GMT +8 hours), no daylight saving time.

**Contacts**
**Tourist Contacts**
- Traffic information: 122
- Tourist information: +86 10 6513 0828
- Beijing China Travel Service: +86 10 6515 8264
- International Medical Center hotline: +86 10 6465 1561
Currency: Renminbi (RMB). 1 Yuan (元, kuai) = 10 Jiao (角)

The easiest way to obtain Chinese money is to withdraw it from an ATM belonging to one of the larger banks. Regional banks usually don’t accept foreign cards but there are always some working ATMs. Standard international charges apply and you can be sure of not getting any counterfeit bills.

Exchanging money in banks is safe too, only more difficult – it is truly a bureaucratic process with lots of forms to be filled in that can take an enormous amount of time. You need your passport to exchange money.

Exchange bureaus are very rare and they require your passport as well. Never exchange money on the street or in an unofficial bureau. Keep your exchange receipts in case you will want to exchange RMB back to your currency when leaving China.

Don’t count on using cards. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted at bigger hotels, restaurants and in better shops but that’s it. It is also always safer to pay with cash.

**Tax Refunds**

There’s no VAT except for in Hainan and therefore, no tax refunds.

**Prices**

Bargaining is essential and not just at markets; you might need to bargain even in small grocery shops – they always try to charge tourists more, even for basic goods.

At markets, don’t be afraid to ask for 15% of the suggested price and expect to bargain hard for everything. Check the prices of desired goods on the internet beforehand. Effective tactics are to state that you’ve seen it elsewhere cheaper or walking away – the price may drop significantly. If the seller agrees with your price, you are obliged to buy.

The student discounts are usually applicable only for students of Chinese universities.

- Meal, inexpensive restaurant – 30 元
- Street food – 1 – 10 元
- Meal for 2, mid-range restaurant, three-course – 180 元
- Combo meal at McDonald’s – 27 元
- Small bottle of water – 1 元
- Domestic beer – 10 元
- Souvenir t-shirt – 30 元
- Gasoline (1 liter) – 7.85 元
- Hostels (average price/night) – 50 元
- 4* hotel (average price/night) – 600 元
- Car-hire (medium-sized car/day) – 880 元

**Tipping**

Tipping is not customary in China. There is one exception though: the tour guides usually depend on tips (as a result of very competitive prices of tours for non-Chinese).

**Electricity**

The standard electricity supply in China is 220 volt – 50 Hz AC with NEMA 1-15 USA 2 pin (North American socket with flat blades) and CEE 7/16 Europlug (two round pins) in one socket. You will most probably need an adaptor or transformer, to be bought only at authorized shops.

**Languages**

The main spoken language is Chinese, with simplified characters. Expect conversational knowledge of English only in touristic areas and in the tourism industry.

The best way to get by is to phonetically learn the basic phrases and memorize basic characters (restrooms, exit, up/down for traveling with trains – the bunks in sleeper trains are marked with the characters, numbers). Always have the name and/or address of the place you are staying written in Chinese, the same applies for the sights you want to visit – this is the only way to communicate with taxi drivers. Also, learn the Chinese signs for numbers; they are different to Western ones.

**Mobile Phones**

There’s a standard mobile network (GSM 900/1800) and Chinese CDMA network that’s incompatible with American SIM cards. If coming from Europe, the probability that your phone will work there is high and it can be legally used. Needless to say, the roaming will be probably expensive and there’s a portion of randomness – you phone or operator might or might not work.

China Mobile and China Unicom are the two most popular phone operators. Their SIM cards work nationwide but roaming applies beyond the province where the SIM was purchased. SIM cards can be purchased in cell phone shops or directly with the operators but you will need your ID to buy it. The prepaid cards have usually the domination of 30, 50 or 100 元.

There are also many public phone booths. Note that you can use them only with a special pre-paid card called IC that can be purchased in newsagents or at post offices.

The country dial code is +86, the area code for Beijing is 10.

**Internet**

There is an abundance of cheap Internet cafés and almost every hostel has at least one computer for use by guests. Despite this, Internet access may be quite limited as extensive censorship is in operation. Luckily, there are many ways to outflank the protection, such as various software or VPN.

**Internet Resources**

- Official Beijing Website (www.ebeijing.gov.cn)
- Beijing Practical Information (www.beijingpage.com)
- Useful blog about travelling in China (www.china-mike.com)
HOLIDAYS

- January 1 – New Year
- 1st day of 1st lunar month – Chinese New Year
- March 8 – International Women’s Day
- 5th solar term (April) – Qingming Festival
- May 1 – Labor Day
- May 4 – Youth Day
- June 1 – Children’s Day
- 5th day of 5th lunar month (June) – Dragon Boat Festival
- August 1 – Army Day
- 15th day of 8th lunar month (September) – Mid-Autumn Festival
- October 1 – National Day

The celebration of Chinese New Year and National Day lasts three days. It is not advised to travel during those dates – the majority of shops and places are closed and it is very difficult to get train tickets and accommodation – family visits are customary during holidays.

Opening Hours

The standard opening hours for banks and post offices are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The big shops and shopping malls are usually open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and restaurants serve meals from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Expect the main sights to be open daily, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., but some stay open longer or shorter.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Public Transportation

Expect public transport to be extremely crowded during rush hours. The subway is still probably the fastest way to travel in Beijing. The streets constantly suffer from congestion and the chances of getting stuck on a bus or in a taxi is almost 100%.

Beijing Subway (bjsubway.com) – employs comprehensible maps and bilingual signs everywhere. Its network is expanding very fast; make sure you have an up-to-date map. The system is simple enough: A single ticket costs 2 ¥ and allows any interchange except for the Airport Express. Purchasing tickets is very easy; there are vending machines at every station. Don’t forget to keep your ticket as you will have to use it when leaving the subway as well.

Check out the Flash Subway Tour (www.ebeijing.gov.cn) if you’d like to learn more about the subway.

Buses (www.bjbus.com) – the bus system is quite difficult to use. For instance, there are usually no English signs and no maps of the route. At the same time, no trip to Beijing is complete without this experience and you might see places you wouldn’t have seen otherwise! You can also search for the buses marked with ✉ – these double-deckers connect tourist attractions.

During rush hours, you might encounter brightly-dressed staff near the main sights or stops who will help you find the right stop or bus. Be careful not to be led to some private (scam) minibus by fake attendants.

The fares are very cheap (usually just 1 ¥) and are usually paid to the bus attendant during the ride. Buses numbered 1 to 300 serve the city center and buses with numbers above 900 connect the rural surroundings of Beijing.

There are night buses numbered 200+ that run from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m.

If you are staying longer, you might consider purchasing the Yikatong (一通) prepaid card with 20 ¥ deposit. The cost of subway tickets is unchanged, but it significantly reduces the cost of using buses (up to 60%).

To get to the Great Wall, Ming Tombs or other sites beyond the Beijing metropolitan area, don’t be afraid to take public transport – the sites are well-connected and you will always be helped to find the right stop and line. Overall, the experience is incomparable to tour buses arranged for the foreign tourists, not to mention the difference in price.

Taxis

Taxis are inexpensive in Beijing. However, there is always the risk of being ripped off or getting stuck in traffic. Always have the name of your destination written down in Chinese – pronouncing the name correctly is very difficult and you may end up on the other side of Beijing – don’t expect drivers to speak English or to be able to decipher your pronunciation of even the most popular tourist sights. The majority of taxi drivers come from the countryside so don’t count on them knowing the city well either - always ensure they know where you want to go or take another taxi.
As soon as you get in, make sure that the meter is on. If the driver doesn’t want to turn it on, just get another taxi. At night and in remote areas, the drivers may try to set their own price. Either negotiate a reasonable sum or get another taxi willing to switch the meter on. Ask for the receipt when paying.

Avoid illegal taxis. There are also many fake taxis – you can recognize them by their license plate; it should begin with “京B”. If not, don’t get in. The fake taxis are usually stationed in the vicinity of the main sights and very rarely hailed from the street.

Hailing a taxi from the street might be quite difficult – there is a constant lack of taxis and some of them don’t want to take foreigners. Still, it is always safer to get a taxi from the street and not to take the touted ones.

The basic fee is 10 ¥ (11 at night) for the first three kilometers, and every subsequent kilometer is 2 ¥.

It is not very expensive to rent a cab for the whole day if you want to visit sights beyond the city. Let your hostel/hotel arrange it and expect to pay between 500 – 800 ¥ per day.

If you’d like to call your taxi yourself, here are some numbers:

- 96103, Yinjian Taxi
- 961001, Beiqi Taxi (www.beiqitaxi.com.cn)

**Regional Transportation**

**Trains**

There is an extensive train network – a most popular way to travel long distances. The whole system is well-organized and easy to use. There are four classes:

- **Soft sleeper (软卧)** – most comfortable, the price is usually comparable to domestic flights bought in advance. Spacious sleep compartment with two or four bunks.
- **Hard sleeper (硬卧)** – open to the corridors, three bunks in a column. Space is limited but the bunks are comfortable. Upper bunks (上铺) are the cheapest and the lowest (下铺) most expensive, but prices vary only slightly. Hard sleeper is probably the best value for what you get.
- **Soft seater (软座)** – comfortable seats found in day trains traveling on routes up to 8 hours in duration and high speed trains.
- **Hard seater (硬座)** – the most genuine experience. Padded seats, long-distance journeys as well. There are also standing tickets sold for this class so the train can get really crowded. Despite officially being non-smoking, don’t really expect this. Very cheap and adventurous, though.

Tickets can be bought up to seven days in advance. You might get English-speaking attendants at major city stations, or at least those willing to communicate despite the language barrier. Since January 2012, it has been necessary to present your ID when purchasing tickets.

**General guidelines, what to expect:**

- There is one attendant per every train. They will take your ticket and exchange it for a card with your seat number. So they will know your destination and will make sure you don’t miss your stop.
- The toilets are locked when the train is approaching a station.
- Bring enough food, as the dining cars vary and you might end up eating instant soups for an exaggerated price. Boiled water is available.

**Buses**

Using buses, even for the long distances, is increasingly popular and some routes can be equally as comfortable as trains and even quicker. It really varies, though, as some roads still remain in shocking condition and the buses may be old and crowded. Don’t be surprised by the erratic driving style or the attendant telling jokes and stories into the loudspeaker throughout the journey. The buses are also easily delayed thanks to construction works, weather conditions and congested streets.

For longer distances, you generally need to purchase your ticket at the bus station while shorter distance tickets can be paid for on board to the attendant.

**Driving**

You need to have a Chinese driving license to drive in China – the International Driving Permit is not recognized. If you want to rent a car, you also need a residence permit. Getting a provisional license is not impossible, but is expensive. The procedures and rules are subject to frequent change.

It is doubtful whether it is worth undergoing this bureaucratic process; the driving experience itself may be stressful, the Chinese drivers have their own rules that are very difficult to adjust to and there’s lots of chaos, too. You can expect almost anything to happen on Chinese roads, driving is not for the faint-hearted and may prove tricky even for those used to driving in Asia. An alternative would be to rent a car with driver, which is easy in Beijing.

- Maximum speed on city roads with single lane per direction – 30 km/h
- Maximum speed on city roads with several lanes – 70 km/h
- Expressways in cities – 100 km/h

**Walkability**

Due to its rapid development, Beijing has lost lots of its walkability mainly to the distances that one has to overcome when sightseeing. The new Beijing has been planned mainly with cars in mind – and it has yet to change. The sprawling construction sites may also get in your way.

One solution is to rent a bicycle. Apart from shortening the distances, it is also a genuine Beijing experience – the streets once used to be full of commutes on bikes. There are many biking lanes but you should not count on their exclusivity – cars and scooters like to use them sometimes as well. Just keep your eyes open and be very careful – the experience is well worth it. If staying for a longer time, it might be cheaper to buy your own bike and then sell it again, as rentals are quite expensive. Don’t forget to get a good lock, too – bike thefts are very common.
Fortunately, some of the traditional hutongs (community-centered housing neighborhoods) have survived the development fever – and it is a delight to walk there. Beijing also has many huge parks that are more than inviting for a pleasant stroll.

Beijing is not the friendliest of cities for wheelchair users. There have been some efforts to improve – for example, there are now ramps at some of the main sights. But unfortunately public transportation is not wheelchair accessible at all.

There’s no need to be afraid of Beijing food. The rule of thumb is: if the restaurant is full of people or the street stall has a queue, the food is safe. Observe whether locals buy the food or not – if they do, you are unlikely to have any problems.

Street food
- Beijing yoghurt
- Savory pancakes
- Tanghulu – candied fruits on a stick. Usually with Chinese hawthorn, cherry tomatoes or exotic fruit
- Almond tea – almond and rice paste with peanuts

Specialties
- Beijing roast duck served with chisels, cucumbers, pancakes and plum sauce
- Mutton hot pot
- Hot and sour soup – usually with mushrooms and tofu
- Sweet & sour spare ribs
- Stir-fried tomato and scrambled eggs
- Moo shu pork – pork chop, scrambled eggs and sesame seeds
- Zhajiangmian noodles – noodles with ground pork and yellow soybean paste

Drinks
- Tea – most popular are jasmine tea and green teas (for example Zhejiang Longjing). Pu-erh tea from Yunnan is also consumed a lot. Be aware of tea scams, though – when people on the street try to befriend you and then invite you for tea to a place of their choice, be wary. You might end up paying outrageous prices for just an ordinary tea.
- Beer – usually sold in 0,75 bottles. The most popular brands: Tsingtao, Yanjing beer (brewed in Beijing) and Great Leap Brewing (local microbrewery).
- Wine – most popular brand: The Great Wall. Don’t expect good quality, though.
- Baijiu – distilled from grains, the most popular liquor. Comes extremely cheap, 5 ￥ for a small bottle. Sold even in gallon containers right next to containers with water, for similar prices – don’t mix them up! Maotai is the most expensive baijiu brand – good as a souvenir.

Legal Age
The legal drinking age is 18. Officially, you need to be 18 to be able to enter a nightclub but in reality almost no-one checks the IDs.
**EVENTS DURING THE YEAR**

**January**
- Laba Festival – religious ceremony in Yonghegong Lama Temple
- Longqing Gorge Ice and Snow Festival

**February**
- Chinese New Year – the most important days of Chinese year, the largest celebrations all over the city
- Lantern Festival

**March**
- Jue Music + Art Festival (www.juefestival.com)

**April**
- Beijing International Kite Festival (www.bjkitesport.com)
- Midi Music Festival (www.midifestival.com) (rock music festival)
- Art Beijing & Photo Beijing (artbeijing.net)

**May**
- International Labour Day – celebrated on the Tiananmen square
- INTRO (acupuncture-records.com) (electronic music festival)

**June**
- Dragon Boat Festival – traditional celebration

**August**
- Beijing International Art Exposition (www.bjiae.net)

**September**
- Beijing Fringe Festival
- Fashion’s Night Out
- Beijing Nine Gates Jazz Festival
- Beijing International Music Competition (www.bjimc.cn) (classical music)
- The 48 Hour Film Project (www.48hourfilm.com) – Beijing film-makers create a film in 48 hours, the movies are then screened in the the 798 District.
- Beijing Design Week

**October**
- Celebrations of the National Day – fireworks
- Beijing Music Festival (www.bmf.org.cn)
- Jazz-E Festival (www.jazzefestival.com)
- International Film and Video Festival of Beijing Film Academy (www.isfvc.cn)

**Free Things To Do**
- Tiananmen Square
- Chairman Memorial Hall – you need to get up early and be prepared to wait in a long queue.
- Silk Street
- Panjiayuan Flea Market
- Qianmen Dajie – commercial street, a symbol of contemporary China
- Wangfujing – night markets
- Shichahai Scenic Area
- Hutongs
- 798 Art District
- National Museum
- Olympic Park (Water Cube, Bird’s Nest)

You need to pay entrance to the majority of Beijing parks, but the fee is 10元 at most.

**Shopping**

Shopping for souvenirs is easy in Beijing. There are many markets with great variety of goods and streets are full of shops where you are likely to randomly come across many interesting goods. The most classic souvenirs are: tea (either loose tea or tea discs in beautiful packages), porcelain (tea sets), silk garments, pearls, jade. You also might come across beautiful calligraphy scrolls or landscape paintings. Players will appreciate elaborately decorated mahjong sets. Very original and personal gift is the custom-made seal made of wood or a special kind of wax. Kites are often sold in the touristic areas. They are nicely decorated and really fly. Foodies will appreciate the dried Beijing duck sold in huge bags. A real curiosity to amuse your friends is the chicken feet sealed in plastic as a snack.

Remember to bargain hard for everything – unless you come to a specialised shop off the beaten path, the majority of sold stuff is made for tourists and those goods are not really expensive even though the seller will of course state otherwise.
DOS AND DO NOTS

- DO expect the Chinese not to speak English – and be prepared to cope with a few learnt phases and a notebook with things written down in Chinese.
- DO take care when crossing the street as drivers rarely stop at the green light.
- DO always ask about prices and negotiate.
- DO rent a bike to experience Beijing differently.
- DO always ask about prices and negotiate.
- DO eat on the street – street food is cheap and delicious.
- DO NOT discuss Chinese politics with the locals.
- DO NOT stick chopsticks upright into your food – it is a way to sacrifice food to ancestors.
- DO NOT get involved with any drugs – even the possession of marijuana is illegal.

Safety

This might seem surprising, but Beijing is a safe city despite its size. Tourist scams and pickpockets occur but violent crimes are very rare. Exercise your common sense and try to keep an eye on your belongings. You should also watch out on the streets – the Chinese are famous for their reckless driving style. There have been some cases of robbery at distant and abandoned parts of the Great Wall, too – avoid this risk by visiting in small groups.

Don’t be put off by the numbers of police officers, soldiers, cameras and security staff all over the city – you’re in China, after all. Expect to undergo a security check when entering the subway or the main sights.

Truthfully, there’s little chance of avoiding being ripped off. Luckily, China is a cheap country, so you will probably lose less money than you would in other countries.

Common guidelines to avoid rip offs:

- Always ask about the price and negotiate it in advance. Also, make sure that you agree on prices in yuan (kwai). This applies even for small items such as bottles of water or ice cream – if you don’t ask, the water may charge you ten times more.
- In taxis, always make sure that you are at the desired destination and pay only upon arrival.
- Never use illegal taxis and don’t accept any service that is forced upon you on the street.
- Avoid organized tours offered by hawkers at tourist sites. If interested in taking a tour, visit CTS (China Travel Service) or ICTS (International China Travel Service). The tours that are presented together with notebooks full of recommendations in various languages, and those offered by hostels you are staying in are usually alright. Nevertheless, always ask for a detailed program and agree on a price.
- If it looks too good to be true, it probably is. No exceptions.
- Always check your change – you might have received less than you should or you might have been given a 5 jiao banknote instead of 5 yuan one. Always check the 100-¥ and 500-¥ banknotes for originality. Be wary of anyone who wants to give you these bills back for obscure reasons (such as a ‘special price’). Reject bills if they are badly torn, seem thin or the watermark seems weird – it is not considered impolite.
- Double-check the prices in restaurants, especially if there’s a special English menu. Never order anything before knowing how much it costs.

The most common scams:

- Rickshaws, tuk-tuks and pedicabs – avoid using them if possible. The touts are usually very pushy and the probability of getting ripped off is high. Overall, they are more expensive than official taxis.
- English students – people who approach you on the street for the purpose of practicing English. Never agree to go have coffee or a meal with them as you will be expected to pay a hefty bill.
- Fake alcohol – if drinks are significantly cheaper than in other places, there might be a reason for it.
- Fake money – always check the texture of the bills.
- KTVs – avoid going without Chinese-speaking people. These entertainment complexes with karaoke booths are the site of many scams aimed at tourists.

If you get into an unpleasant situation, you might try to pretend calling the police – as they have a strong authority. You may also try calling your hostel for advice or assistance.

The tap water is not safe to drink. You can buy bottled water or use the thermos with boiled (and usually still hot) water available in hostels and public places.

Always use hand sanitizer.
Forbidden City / 王 / 王
An absolute must-see. Smashing palace complex that served for more than 500 years as imperial residence. A place of immeasurable beauty.

GPS: N39.91588, E116.39211

Phone: +86 10 8500 7421

Opening hours:
Apr 1 – Oct 31:
Daily: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Last entry: 4:10 p.m.
Last tickets sold: 4 p.m.
July 7 – Aug 26:
Daily: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Last entry: 4:10 p.m.
Last tickets sold: 4 p.m.
Nov 1 – Mar 31:
Daily: 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Last entry: 3:40 p.m.
Last tickets sold: 3:30 p.m.
Throughout the year 2013 the Museum is closed every Monday afternoon excluding national holidays. On these days the opening hours are from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Admission:
Apr 1 – Oct 31: CNY 60
Nov 1 – Mar 31: CNY 40
Children (under 1.20 m): free

Galerie Urs Meile
Established gallery known for promoting Chinese contemporary art in Europe and mediating contacts between European and Chinese artists.

GPS: N39.99765, E116.49642

Phone: +86 10 643 333 93

Opening hours:
Tue – Sun: 11 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Admission:
Free entry.
Tiananmen Gate / 天安门
The entrance to the Forbidden city decorated with huge portrait of Mao Zedong is the most photographed landmark in Beijing.
GPS: N39.90742, E116.39140
Opening hours: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
The reviewing stands are open on the first day of each month upon reservation.
Admission: Adult: CNY 15
Student, Senior (up to 70): CNY 5
Reservation necessary.

Tiananmen Square / 天安门
The largest square in the world. Lined with stern buildings, dotted with memorials, statues (and CCTV). Don’t miss out the flag ceremony!
GPS: N39.90525, E116.39252

Temple of Heaven / 天坛
Beautiful park dominated by Taoist temples where the Emperor used to pray for good harvest. So much to see, reserve half a day for it.
GPS: N39.88178, E116.40795
Phone: +86 10 67036062
Opening hours: Gate: 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.
The scenic spots inside the Temple of Heaven:
Mar 1 – June 30: 8 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
July 1 – Oct 31: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Nov 1 – Feb 28: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Admission: Entrance Ticket: CNY 10
Reduced Ticket: CNY 5
Through Ticket: CNY 30
The Divine Music Administration and The Palace of Abstinence: CNY 10

Jingshan Park / 景山
This artificial hill is simply the best place to overlook the Forbidden city in its entirety. A must do! The views are stunning.
4 Jingshan Front St, Dongcheng, Beijing, China
GPS: N39.92252, E116.39176
Opening hours: Jan – Mar, Nov – Dec: 6:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Apr – Oct: 6 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Admission: CNY 2/person
Some exhibitions require extra fees.

Wangfujing / 王府井
Beijing’s premier shopping street is flocked by tourists and locals alike. Rich in history, full of shops.
GPS: N39.90995, E116.40616

Summer Palace / 颐和园
Listed as UNESCO World Heritage Site, the imperial complex with its vast scenic gardens is undoubtedly a must-see.
GPS: N40.00136, E116.27018
Phone: +86 10 62881144
Opening hours:
Season:
Apr 1 – Oct 31: 6:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Off-season:
Nov 1 – Mar 31: 7 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Admission:
Combined ticket (Entrance & Attractions):
Apr 1 – Oct 31: CNY 60
Nov 1 – Mar 31: CNY 50 (no half-price tickets can be purchased)
Enterance:
Apr 1 – Oct 31: CNY 30
Nov 1 – Mar 31: CNY 20 (half-price tickets can be purchased)
**Mausoleum of Mao Zedong / 主席纪念堂**
A stately building that holds the relics of Mao Zedong. The morning queues are long but worth it – an unique experience.

GPS: N39.90155, E116.39277

**Opening hours:**
- Mon: closed
- Tue – Sun: 8 a.m. – noon
- Sep 9, Dec 26: 8 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.

**Admission:**
Free entry, but prepare to queue for about 20 minutes.

**Beihai Park / 北海公园**
Vast Chinese-style park that will overwhelm you by its great beauty and serene atmosphere. Full of interesting structures.

GPS: N39.91853, E116.38595

**Opening hours:**
- Jan – Mar, Nov – Dec: 6 a.m. – 8 p.m.
- Apr – May, Sep – Oct: 6 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- June – Aug: 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.

**Admission:**
- Adult: CNY 5
- Student: CNY 2

**Bird’s Nest / 北京奥林匹克体育场**
Modern landmark of Beijing. Unique building co-designed by Ai Weiwei for the purpose of 2008 Summer Olympics.

11 号 Tianchen East Rd, Chaoyang, Beijing, China
GPS: N39.99183, E116.38863

**Phone:**
+86 10 84373011

**Opening hours:**
- Apr – Oct: 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.
- Nov – Mar: 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

**Admission:**
- Bird’s Nest General Admission: Adult: CNY 50/person
- Child (under 18): free
- Student: half price
- Two museum ticket Bird’s Nest, Water Cube:
  - Adult: CNY 80/person
  - Child (under 18): free
  - Student: half price

**Donghuamen Night Market / 夜市**
More a touristic attraction than a real Chinese market, but well worth visiting anyway – how about a bite of fried centipede or snake?

Donghuamen St, Dongcheng, Beijing, China, 100006
GPS: N39.91394, E116.40318

**Opening hours:**
- Daily: 4 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

**Miaoying Temple / 妙应寺**
This white stupa overlooks Beihai park and the Forbidden city. Unique fairytale-like structure with great ambiance.

GPS: N39.92484, E116.38424

**Opening hours:**
- 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- Ticket office closes at 4:30 p.m.

**Admission:**
- CNY 20/person
**Nanluogu Xiang**
An interesting blend of old hutongs and retail stores. Everything from things of daily use to kitschy souvenirs.
GPS: N39.93597, E116.39198

**Shichahai**
Scenic lakeside complex consists of historical temples of serene beauty, breath-taking sceneries and quaint atmosphere.
GPS: N39.93282, E116.38737

**Badaling Great Wall**
Fully restored and probably the most visited section of the fascinating structure. A lifetime experience!
GPS: N40.35399, E116.00911
**Opening hours:**
6:40 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
**Admission:**
Apr 1 – Oct 31: CNY 45
Nov 1 – Mar 31: CNY 40
**Cable Car:**
CNY 40 (single way)
CNY 60 (round trip)
**Tour length:** 1.5h

**Beijing Zoo**
Amazing ZOO with astonishing variety of animals and marvelous historical pavilions. Its main highlight, Panda Hall, is a must-see.
137 Xizhimen Outer St, Xicheng, Beijing, China  
GPS: N39.93780, E116.33369
**Opening hours:**
Apr 1 – Oct 31: 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Nov 1 – Mar 31: 7:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
**Admission:**
Apr 1 – Oct 31:
CNY 15/each season
Nov 1 – Mar 31: CNY 10/each season
*Child (under 1.2 m): free
Senior (with a valid card): free*

**Prince Gong Mansion**
Ornate residence complex and well-manicured gardens hold Beijing opera stage and library. Unique example of the traditional Siheyuan layout.
GPS: N39.93638, E116.38014  
**Phone:**
+86 10 83288149
**Opening hours:**
High season (Mar 16 – Nov 15): 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Low season (Nov 16 – Mar 15): 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
**Admission:**
Entrance Ticket:
Adult: CNY 40
Child (under 1.2m): free
Through Ticket:
Adult: CNY 70
Child (under 1.2m): free
Water Cube / 水立方
Built for the Summer Olympics, this cuboid was recently remodeled to serve as a water park. Its pools, slides and spas are surely inviting!

11 号 Tianchen East Rd, Chaoyang, Beijing, China
GPS: N39.99188, E116.38553

Opening hours:
Visit: Adult: CNY 30
Concession (student, senior 65+): CNY 15
Child (under 1.2 m), disabled: free
Swimming: CNY 50/person
Leisure Park: Adult: CNY 200
Child (under 1.2 m): CNY 160

Admission:
Visit: May – Oct: 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Nov – Apr: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Swimming: May – Oct:
Weekdays: 12:30 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Weekends: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Nov – Apr: Weekdays: noon – 8 p.m.
Weekends: 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.
Leisure Park:
May – Oct: 10 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Nov – Apr: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

National Art Museum of China / 中国美术馆
Simply huge art museum displays a wide range of Chinese art ranging from the imperial art to contemporary approaches.

1 号 Wusi St, Dongcheng, Beijing, China, 100010
GPS: N39.92383, E116.40394
Phone: +86 10 64006326

Opening hours:
Daily (including festivals and holidays): 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
No entry after 4 p.m.

Admission:
Free entry.

Lama Temple / 雍和宫
The most popular temple in Beijing. Seat of the state-controlled branch of Tibetan Buddhism. A showcase of astoundingly beautiful architecture.

41 号 Yonghegong St, Dongcheng, Beijing, China
GPS: N39.94658, E116.41226

Opening hours:
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Admission:
CNY 15/person
Mutianyu Great Wall / 慕田峪城
This section is fully restored but offers an amazing experience nevertheless – it is remarkably less crowded than Badaling.

GPS: N40.43089, E116.56514

Opening hours:
Apr – Oct: Daily: 7 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Nov – Mar: Daily: 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Admission:
General Admission: CNY 45
Child (under 12): CNY 25
Cable Car One Way: CNY 60
Child (under 12): CNY 30
Cable Car Two Way: CNY 80
Child (under 12): CNY 40
Cableway-Toboggan: CNY 60
Child (under 12): CNY 50
Toboggan Return: CNY 80

Pearl Market / Hong Qiao
Popular shopping destination: five floors of practically everything from sunglasses to traditional silk dresses, fans and pearls.

9号 Tiantan Rd, Dongcheng, Beijing, China, 100062
GPS: N39.88513, E116.41551

Phone: +86 10 6711 7429

Opening hours: 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Old Summer Palace / 明
The palace was destroyed by French and British troops during the Second Opium War. Walk the ruins that are still entangled with powerful atmosphere.

GPS: N39.99883, E116.30761

Opening hours:
7 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Admission:
CNY 10/person

National Centre for the Performing Arts / 国家大院
Smashing architectural gem holds mind-blowing performances of traditional Chinese ballet, acrobat shows, Beijing opera and theatre.

GPS: N39.90371, E116.38311

Phone: +86 10 6655 0000

Opening hours:
Mon: closed
Tue – Sun, National Holidays: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Last entry: 4:30 p.m.

Admission:
Onsite purchase at the Ticket Hall at the North Gate: CNY 30/person
Student, Senior (with a valid card): CNY 15/person
Family (1+1): CNY 40
Family (2+1): CNY 65
Half-price tickets are only available in the box office at the North Gate.
Great Wall Museum
Exhibition covering more than 3,000 square meters illustrates the fascinating history of the Great Wall. Unnecessarily underrated.

GPS: N40.35650, E116.00482
Phone: +86 10 8119 1011
Opening hours: 6:40 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Admission:
Apr 1 – Oct 31: CNY 45
Nov 1 – Mar 31: CNY 40
Cable Car:
CNY 40 (single way)
CNY 60 (round trip)