“All you’ve got to do is decide to go and the hardest part is over. So go!”

TONY WHEELER, COFOUNDER – LONELY PLANET
(left) Food p34 A delicious highlight of any trip to Běijīng
(above) Chinese tea p77 Traditional tea ceremony
(right) Forbidden City p54 Dragon relief carving on a city wall
The Great Wall (p170)

China’s most famous landmark, and one of the world’s superlative manmade sights, the Great Wall snakes its way across northern China for almost 9000km, but nowhere beats Běijīng as a base for mounting your assault. Scattered throughout the municipality are more than a dozen fragmented stretches, from the perfectly chiseled to the charmingly dilapidated. You can get to them by bus, by train, by taxi...even by bicycle. And the adventurous can hike along it for days. GREAT WALL AT JÍNSHÀNLÍNG

Forbidden City (p54)

The largest palace complex in the world, the Forbidden City is the be-all and end-all of dynastic grandeur, with imposing halls, splendid gates and age-old relics. No other place in Běijīng teems with so much history, legend and imperial intrigue. You could spend hours wandering its vast squares and high-walled passageways, which lead to delightful courtyards, gardens and minimuseums, and give you plenty of time to contemplate the enormity of shuffling your way around the place that 24 emperors of China called home.

Forbidden City & Dōngchéng Central
**Tiān’ānmén Square (p62)**

3 The world’s largest public square is a vast desert of paving stones at the heart of Běijīng. It’s also a poignant epitaph to China’s democracy movement, which was quashed by the People’s Liberation Army here in June 1989. The stringent security can be off-putting, but such is its iconic status, few visitors leave Běijīng without coming here. Get up early and watch the dawn flag-raising ceremony, or wander by later on to see the surrounding buildings lit up at night. GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE

Forbidden City & Dōngchéng Central

**Hūtòng (p222)**

4 The heart and soul of Běijīng are its hūtòng: the intoxicating alleyways that criss-cross the centre of the city. Still home for many locals, these unique lanes not only tie the capital to its ancient past – some lanes date back almost 800 years – but offer the chance to experience Běijīng street life in all its raucous and cheerful glory. Wandering or cycling the hūtòng during the day, and returning at night to some of the many bars and restaurants that now inhabit them, is an essential part of any visit to Běijīng.

Historic Hūtòng

**Temple of Heaven Park (p108)**

5 The ultimate expression of the eternal Chinese quest for order, Temple of Heaven Park contains sheer geometric perfection: a series of stunning shrines – including the iconic Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests – where the sons of heaven, China’s emperors, came to pray for divine guidance. Everything about them – colour, shape, sound – has an esoteric significance that’s mind-boggling to contemplate. Surrounding them is a delightfully soothing park, where locals come to stroll, sing and dance, or to just sit under the gnarled cypress trees planted here hundreds of years ago. HALL OF PRAYER FOR GOOD HARVESTS

Temple of Heaven Park & Dōngchéng South
Lama Temple (p84)

Central Beijing’s largest, most important and most atmospheric Buddhist temple, the serene Lama Temple used to be home to legions of monks from Mongolia and Tibet and was where the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama was determined. These days it is still an active temple, although tourists now outnumber the monks. There are five beautiful central halls, the last of which houses the world’s largest sandalwood Buddha.

Drum Tower & Dōngchéng North

Summer Palace (p159)

The imperial summer playground, the Summer Palace is a beguiling, superbly landscaped collection of temples, pavilions, gardens, lakes, bridges and corridors. Less formal than the Forbidden City, there is still more than enough elegance and beauty in its many structures to take your breath away. Clamber up Longevity Hill, pausing for breath at the various temples that dot it, for splendid views across Beijing, or promenade around Kunming Lake and imagine what it must have been like to have had this place all to yourself.

Summer Palace & Hǎidiàn
You can’t leave Běijīng without sampling its most iconic dish. Once reserved for emperors and mandarins, Peking duck began to feature on the menus of the lower orders at the beginning of the 20th century. Now there are a number of specialist kǎoyā (roast duck) restaurants and the dish – juicier and more flavoursome than the crispy duck you get back home – is as much a part of Běijīng’s fabric as the streets themselves.

**Eating**
Drum & Bell Towers (p86)
Standing watch over one of the most charming corners of Běijīng (although developers have their eyes on it), these two magnificent ancient towers, facing each other on either side of a small public square, used to be the city’s official timekeeper, with drums and bells beaten and rung to mark the times of the day. Climb the Drum Tower to listen to a body-rumbling performance played out on replica drums or climb either tower for a bird’s-eye view of the surrounding hútòng.

Chinese Performing Arts (p26)
Whether it’s the chance to experience the intricate, highly stylised Peking opera, or tumbling, spinning and high-wire-walking acrobats, to say nothing of shaven-headed Shàolín monks showing off their supreme fighting skills, Běijīng is a great place to catch a show. There are performances every night of the week, giving you no excuse to miss out. And don’t be put off by the language barrier: most shows are easy to follow. Acrobatics in particular is a stunning spectacle.

Hòuhǎi Lakes (p120)
These three interconnected lakes are one of the great outdoor areas in Běijīng and a prime spot to watch, and join, the locals at play. Ringed by bars and restaurants, the lakes themselves provide much of the entertainment. In the summer, flotillas of pedalos take to the water. During the winter, the lakes are the best place in the capital to ice skate. Then there’s fishing, kayaking and swimming (for the brave). But perhaps the most amenable option is simply meandering around them, enjoying the sight of Beijingers letting their hair down.

Drum Tower & Dōngchéng North

Arts

Běihǎi Park & Xīchéng North

PLAN YOUR TRIP BĚIJĪNG’S TOP 13
Pānjiāyuán Market (p154)

12 Save some time at the end of your trip to visit this treasure-filled outdoor market and head home with armfuls of unusual souvenirs. Pānjiāyuán is the best place in Běijīng to shop for arts, crafts and (mostly fake) antiques, and even if you don’t want to buy anything, it’s fun to wander through the clutter.

Sānlǐtún & Cháoyáng

798 Art District (p140)

13 Housed inside the cavernous buildings of a disused electronics factory, 798 has become the city’s premier art district. It celebrates its proletarian roots via retouched red Maoist slogans decorating gallery interiors and statues of burly, lantern-jawed workers dotting the lanes, while the voluminous factory workshops are ideally suited to ambitious projects requiring lots of space. Cafes dot the streets, making this a pleasant spot for lunch before you plug yourself in to the world of China’s leading artists.

Sānlǐtún & Cháoyáng
Běijīng Maps

Sights
- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours
- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping
- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating
- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife
- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment
- Entertainment

Shopping
- Shopping

Information
- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic
- Beach
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population
- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport
- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro/MTR/MRT station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes
- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries
- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography
- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas
- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book.
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81 Confucius International Youth Hostel E3
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### Information

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### Transport

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Our Story
A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that’s all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, Across Asia on the Cheap. Within a week they’d sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born. Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony’s belief that ‘a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse’.

Our Writers

Daniel McCrohan
Coordinating author, Forbidden City & Dōngchéng Central, Drum Tower & Dōngchéng North, Bēihāi Park & Xīchéng North, The Great Wall, Day Trips from Bēijīng, Sleeping, Plan Your Trip, Bēijīng Today, History, Architecture, Religion & Beliefs

Daniel has been living in Bēijīng for more than a decade, trying in vain to perfect his ropey Chinese, while developing a taste for raw garlic (there’s no better accompaniment to a bowl of noodles, apparently). He is the creator of the iPhone app Beijing on a Budget, a co-host for the TV series Best in China, and has written on Bēijīng for more than a dozen publications. He also builds personal itineraries for travellers to China, Mongolia, India and Bangladesh. To find out more, and to watch some of the on-the-road videos Daniel makes while researching for Lonely Planet, see his website, danielmccrohan.com, or contact him through Twitter (@danielmccrohan).

David Eimer
Temple of Heaven Park & Dōngchéng South, Dashilar & Xīchéng South, Sānlǐtún & Cháoyáng and Summer Palace & Hǎidiàn

David first came to China in 1988, when both Westerners and cars were in short supply. After becoming a freelance journalist, and inspired by return trips to China, he moved to Bēijīng in 2005 and lived there for seven years. Currently based in Bangkok, David co-wrote the previous three editions of the Beijing guide, as well as working on the last four editions of the China guide. For this book, he also wrote the Historic Hútòng and Arts chapters and the Survival Guide.