



Day Trips from Běijīng

Ming Tombs p175

Unesco-protected burial site for 13 of China's emperors.

Chuāndǐxià p176

Gorgeous, well-preserved Ming dynasty village, nestled in a remote valley.

Shídù p177

Picnic and play by the Jǔmǎ River in this picturesque valley.

Wǎnpíng Town p180

A unique Ming dynasty walled town with a 900-year-old stone bridge beside it.

Ming Tombs

Explore

The Unesco-protected **Ming Tombs** (十三陵; Shísān Lǐng; ☎010 6076 1643; Changchi Lu, Chángpíng; 昌平区昌赤路; per site ¥20-60, through ticket ¥100 Nov-Mar, ¥135 Apr-Oct; ⌚8am-5.30pm; 🗺872, 📍Ming Tombs) are the final resting place for 13 of the 16 Ming dynasty emperors and make for a fascinating half-day trip. The scattered tombs, each a huge temple-like complex guarding an enormous burial mound at its rear, back onto the southern slopes of Tiānshòu Mountain. Only three of the 13 tombs are open to the public, and only one has had its underground burial chambers excavated, but what you are able to see is impressive enough and leaves you wondering just how many priceless treasures must still be buried here.

Getting There & Away

The Ming Tombs are now on the subway, although the station is almost at the end of the Chángpíng Line – a long haul from central Běijīng – and is inconveniently located 3km from the entrance to the Spirit Way, requiring you either to take a taxi (¥13) there, or a bus (¥2) and then walk another 1km.

If you're catching the bus, take exit C out of the station, turn right and then turn right again at Nanjian Lu; the bus stop for the 昌53 is around 100m ahead on the right. The 昌 character stands for Cháng, as in Chángpíng. Get off at Jiàntóu Lùkǒu (涧头路口), walk ahead for 200m and then turn left at Changchi Lu – the entrance to the Spirit Way is 10 minutes ahead.

A more direct way to get there is on bus 872 (¥9, one hour, 7.10am to 7.10pm) from the north side of Dèshèngmén Gateway (p120). It passes all the sights, apart from Zhāo Lǐng, before terminating at Cháng Lǐng. Last bus back is at 6pm.

Getting Around

It's easy to bus-hop around the Ming Tombs. Get off the 872 at Dà Gōng Mén bus stop (大宫门), and walk through the triple-arched Great Palace Gate (大宫门) that leads to the Spirit Way. After walking the length of the Spirit Way, catch bus 67 from Hú Zhuāng bus stop (胡庄), the first bus stop on your right, to its terminus at Zhāo Lǐng (¥2);

walk straight through the village to find the tombs. Then, coming back the way you came, catch another 67 (¥2), or walk (1.5km; left at the end of the road, then left again) to Dìng Lǐng, from where you can catch bus 314 to Cháng Lǐng (¥2).

Need to Know

- ➔ **Location** 50km from Běijīng
- ➔ **Price** ¥20 to ¥60, combined ticket ¥135 April to October/¥100 November to March
- ➔ **Hours** 8am to 5.30pm



SIGHTS

CHÁNG LǐNG

TOMB

(长陵; ¥45 Apr-Oct/¥30 Nov-Mar, audio guide ¥50; 🗺872) The resting place of the first of the 13 emperors to be buried at the Ming Tombs, Cháng Lǐng contains the body of Emperor Yongle (1402-24), his wife and 16 concubines. It's the largest, most impressive and most important of the tombs. Like all the tombs it follows a standard imperial layout, with a main gate (陵恩门; *lǐn'ēn mén*) leading to the first of a series of courtyards and the main hall (陵恩殿; *lǐn'ēn diàn*). Beyond this lie gates leading to the **Soul Tower** (明楼; Míng Lóu), behind which

Ming Tombs

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