

# Drum Tower & Dōngchéng North

## Neighbourhood Top Five

**1 Hùtòng** (p91) Lose yourself in the maze-like network of historic *hùtòng*.

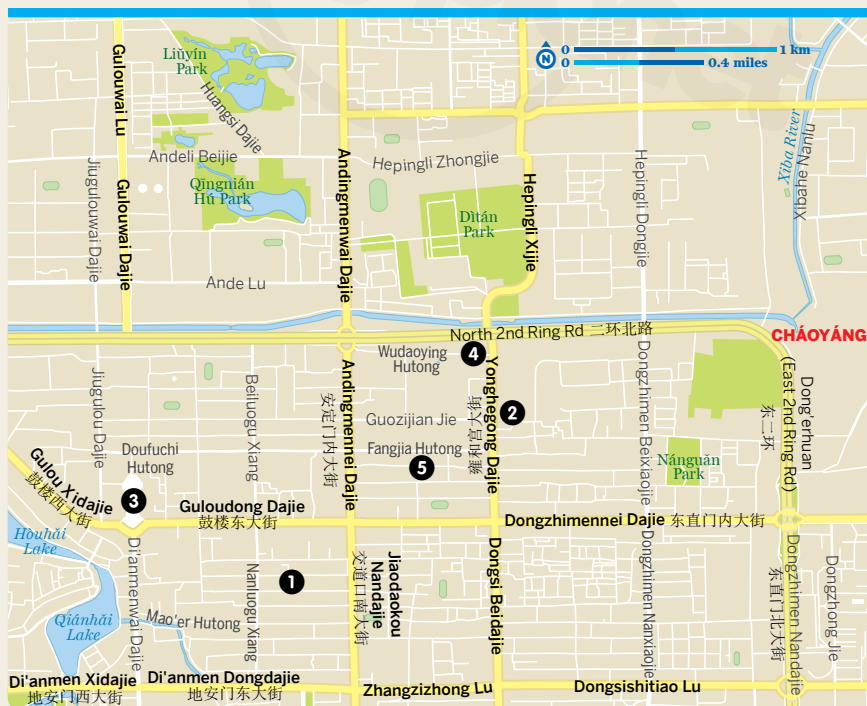
**2 Lama Temple** (p85) Stroll the incense-filled halls and courtyards of Běijīng's largest and most impressive Buddhist temple.

**3 Drum Tower** (p87) Listen to a drumming performance inside this magnificent ancient building,

before climbing its equally impressive neighbouring Bell Tower.

**4 Beijing Cultural & Art Centre** (p89) Wander down the hipster enclave of Wudaoying Hutong and pop in to check out some contemporary art in a converted courtyard gallery.

**5 Hot Cat Club** (p100) Catch a local band at one of the many excellent live-music venues in this part of town. This venue offers a bit of everything.



For more detail of this area see Map p274. ➔

## Lonely Planet's Top Tip

Rent a bike while you're here, or even buy a cheap secondhand one; you can give it away when you leave. Cycling is the best way to see the city, and is especially good for exploring this area's *hútòng*.



### Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Bǎihé Vegetarian Restaurant (p94)
- ➔ Georg (p95)
- ➔ Dàlǐ Courtyard (p96)
- ➔ Punk Rock Noodles (p90)
- ➔ Toast (p94)

For reviews, see p90. ➔



### Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Capital Spirits (p97)
- ➔ Tiki Bungalow (p97)
- ➔ Great Leap Brewing (p97)
- ➔ Distillery (p97)
- ➔ Modernista (p98)
- ➔ 8-Bit (p98)
- ➔ Voyage Coffee (p98)

For reviews, see p97. ➔



### Best Places for Live Music

- ➔ School Bar (p100)
- ➔ Hot Cat Club (p100)
- ➔ Jiāng Hú (p100)
- ➔ Yúgōng Yíshān (p100)
- ➔ Temple Bar (p100)

For reviews, see p100. ➔

## Explore Drum Tower & Dōngchéng North

This *hútòng*-rich neighbourhood incorporates the northern section of Běijīng's historic Dōngchéng (东城) district and is the most pleasant area in which to base yourself during your stay in the capital. Book yourself into a *hútòng* hostel or a beautifully converted courtyard hotel, and make this most charming of neighbourhoods your new temporary home.

While there are fewer top-name sights here than in Dōngchéng Central, there is still some sightseeing to be done, although the main attraction is the chance to simply wander around the lanes getting lost.

Nanluogu Xiang is the most famous of the *hútòng* strips, and while it's worth a look, it's lost most of its charm since becoming so popular with tourists. There are much better options, such as happening Wudaoying Hutong, Beiluogu Xiang and Fangjia Hutong with cool cafes, coffee roasters and galleries in converted courtyards.

At night, this neighbourhood is the city's most enjoyable place to drink. Bars here are cool rather than brash and are often tucked away in hard-to-find *hútòng* locations, perfect for the number of speakeasies opening here. It's also the place to catch Běijīng's live-music scene, with a number of venues scattered around these backstreets.

## Local Life

➔ **Food** To sample some authentic Běijīng tucker, first check our Běijīng Menu (p96) then head to Yáojiè Chǎogān (p93) for some dumplings and pig's liver stew, or to **Róng Tiān Sheep Spine** (容天土锅羊蝎子馆; Róngtiān Tǔguō Yángjiézi Guǎn; Map p274; 8 Jingtū Hutong, off Beiluogu Xiang; 北锣鼓巷净土胡同8号; sheep spine per jin ¥38, other ingredients ¥6-12; ☎10am-10.30pm; 5 Lines 2, 8 to Guloudajie, exit G) for a succulent sheep-spine hotpot.

➔ **Music** Tap into the city's underground music scene at live-music venues such as School Bar (p100), Jiāng Hú (p100) or Hot Cat Club (p100).

➔ **Parks** Head to Dítán Park (p89) for a spot of kite flying, before cooling off with the masses at the outdoor swimming complex in Qīngnián Hú Park (p103).

## Getting There & Away

➔ **Subway** Lines 8, 2, 6 and 5 all serve this neighbourhood well.

➔ **Bus** Bus 107 links the Drum Tower with Dongzhimen Transport Hub. Bus 5 runs south from the Drum Tower, past Běihǎi and Jīngshān Parks, along the west side of the Forbidden City and on to Qiánmén at the south end of Tiān'ānmén Sq. Bus 113 runs south from Andingmennei Dajie then east to the Workers Stadium and Sānlitán.