

Drum Tower & Dōngchéng North

Neighbourhood Top Five

1 Lose yourself in the maze-like network of historic **hùtòng** (alleyways), or follow our **hùtòng** walking tour (p89).

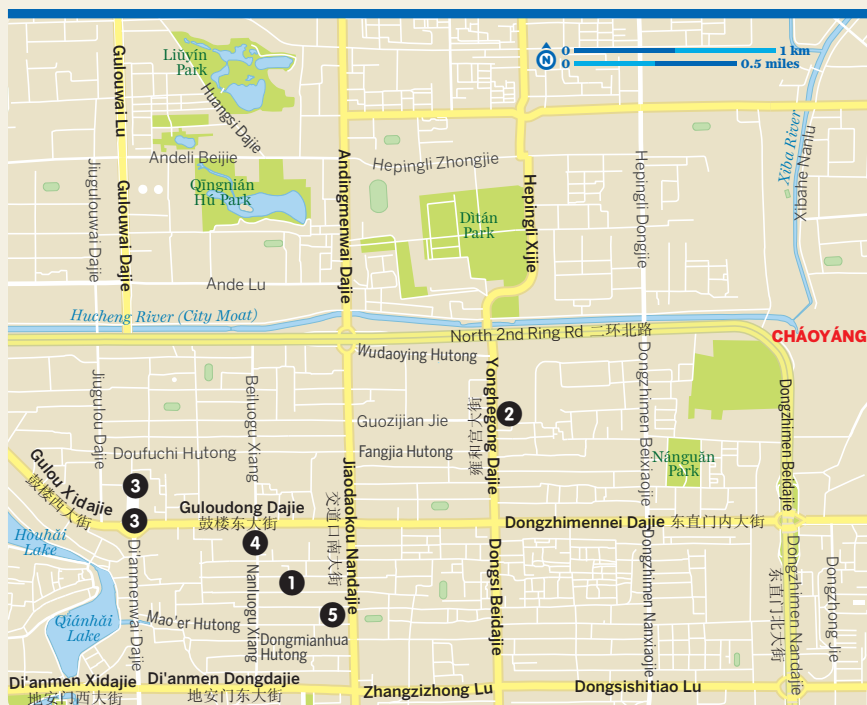
2 Stroll the incense-smoke-filled halls and courtyards of the **Lama Temple** (p82), Běijīng's largest and most impressive Buddhist temple.

3 Listen to a drumming performance inside the magnificent ancient **Drum Tower** (p84) before climbing its equally impressive neighbour, the **Bell Tower** (p85).

4 Browse the cutesy boutique shops on **Nanluogu Xiang** (p86), before sneak-

ing into a **courtyard cafe** for coffee break.

5 Catch a local band at one of the many excellent **live-music** venues in this part of town. Jiāng Hú is a good place to start.



Explore: Drum Tower & Dōngchéng North

This *hùtòng*-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, although it was facing possible redevelopment as this book went to press (p99). Book yourself into a *hùtòng* hostel or a beautifully converted courtyard hotel, and make this most charming of neighbourhoods your temporary home.

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

Shop till you drop in the cute alleyway boutiques of Nanluogu Xiang before putting your feet up in a *hùtòng* cafe or settling down for a meal in a converted courtyard.

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 *hùtòng* locations. Some of them double as live-music venues where you can catch the latest local bands.

Local Life

- ➔ **Food** To sample some authentic Běijīng grub, first check our Běijīng Menu (p91) then head to Yáoji Chǎogān (p88) for some dumplings and pig's liver stew, or to Róng Tiān (p90) for a succulent sheep-spine hotpot.
- ➔ **Drinking** If you prefer to hang out with young local drinkers, try If (p95) or Reef Bar (p95), or catch some live music at Jiāng Hú (p97).
- ➔ **Parks & Squares** Head to Dítán Park (p86) for a spot of kite-flying. Then, come early evening, visit the public square between the Drum and Bell Towers to join in with a game of *jiànzi* (shuttlecock keepie-uffies) or some formation dancing.

Getting There & Away

- ➔ **Subway** Lines 8, 2 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 Jingshān Parks, along the west side of the Forbidden City and on to Qiánmén at the south end of Tiān'ānmén Square. Bus 113 runs south from Andingmennei Dajie then east to the Workers Stadium and Sānlitún.

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 *hùtòng*.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Yáoji Chǎogān (p88)
- ➔ Yáng Fāng Lamb Hotpot (p88)
- ➔ Róng Tiān Sheep Spine (p90)
- ➔ Bǎihé Vegetarian Restaurant (p90)
- ➔ Dǎlǐ Courtyard (p90)

For reviews, see p88 ➔

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Great Leap Brewing (p94)
- ➔ El Nido (p94)
- ➔ Reef Bar (p95)
- ➔ Zǎ Jiā (p95)
- ➔ Ball House (p95)
- ➔ Mao Mao Chong (p95)
- ➔ If (p95)

For reviews, see p94 ➔

Best Places for Live Music

- ➔ Jiāng Hú (p97)
- ➔ Jiāng Jīn Jiǔ (p97)
- ➔ Yúgōng Yíshān (p97)
- ➔ Temple Bar (p97)
- ➔ Mao Livehouse (p98)

For reviews, see p97 ➔