

On the Road





Běijīng

POP 21 MILLION / ☑ 010

Includes ➔

Sights	58
Activities	91
Courses	92
Sleeping	92
Eating	96
Drinking & Nightlife ..	103
Entertainment	105
Shopping	106
Around Běijīng	114
The Great Wall	114
Ming Tombs	114
Chuāndìxià	115
Marco Polo Bridge & Wǎnpíng Town	116

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Little Yúnnán (p97)
- ➔ Bǎihé Vegetarian Restaurant (p100)
- ➔ Zhāng Māma (p99)
- ➔ Duck de Chine (p102)
- ➔ Royal Icehouse (p103)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Courtyard 7 (p95)
- ➔ Graceland Yard (p96)
- ➔ Jǐngshān Garden Hotel (p93)
- ➔ Temple Hotel (p93)

Why Go?

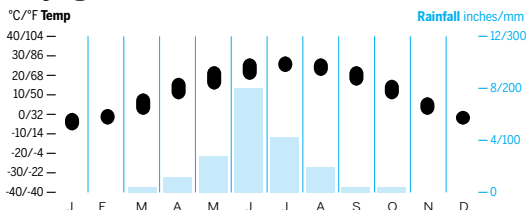
Inextricably linked to past glories (and calamities) yet hurtling towards a power-charged future, Běijīng (北京), one of history's great cities, is as complex as it is compelling.

Few places on Earth can match the extraordinary historical panorama on display here – there are six Unesco World Heritage sites in this city alone, just one less than the whole of Egypt. But this is also where China's future is being shaped: Běijīng is the country's political nerve centre, a business powerhouse and the heartbeat of China's rapidly evolving cultural scene.

Yet for all its gusto, Běijīng dispenses with the persistent pace of Shànghǎi or Hong Kong. The remains of its historic *hútòng* (alleyways) still exude a unique village-within-a-city vibe, and it's in these most charming of neighbourhoods that locals shift down a gear and find time to sit out front, play chess and watch the world go by.

When to Go

Běijīng



Sep–Oct gorgeously fresh after the scorching summer, with blue skies and fewer tourists.

May Warming up after the winter freeze. Windy but usually dry and clear.

Dec–Feb Dry as a bone and brutally cold, but the streets are pleasantly quiet.