

40 YEARS

OF AMAZING EXPERIENCES

lonely planet

PULL-OUT
MAP



Discover
China

Experience the best of China

Discover China

Contents 

Throughout this book, we use these icons to highlight special recommendations:



The Best...

Lists for everything from bars to wildlife – to make sure you don't miss out



Don't Miss

A must-see – don't go home until you've been there

Local Knowledge

Local experts reveal their top picks and secret highlights



Detour

Special places a little off the beaten track



If you like...

Lesser-known alternatives to world-famous attractions

These icons help you quickly identify reviews in the text and on the map:



Sights



Eating



Drinking



Sleeping



Information

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- Wander around the Summer Palace
- Gallivanting along the Great Wall
- Marvel at the Temple of Heaven
- Gawp at the National Centre for the Performing Arts

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- Marvel at the Terracotta Warriors
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- Watch the Sun Rise from Tàishān
- Temple Trekking in Wútáishān

● Shànghǎi & the Yangzi Region

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- Savouring the French Concession
- Wandering around West Lake
- Hiking up Huángshān
- Drifting through the Three Gorges

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This is China

The central civilisation of the Far East and historically the dominant culture of the region, China is a traveller's treasure box: colossal palaces, sacred mountains, cliff-top temples, roaring metropolises, spectacular scenery and much, much more. A nation enjoying an exuberant and energetic coming of age, China is the country everyone's talking about.

China is modernising at a head-spinning pace. But the slick skyscrapers, Lamborghini showrooms and Maglev trains are little more than dazzling baubles. Let's face it: the world's oldest continuous civilisation is bound to pull an artefact or two out of its hat. You won't bump into history at every turn, but travel selectively and rich seams of antiquity crowd around. Tumbledown chunks of the Great Wall, creaky historical residences, mist-wreathed and temple-strewn mountains, quaint villages and delightful water towns make travel in China both unique and astonishing.

China is vast. So you must get outside: island-hop in Hong Kong, size up awesome sand dunes in Gānsù, trace the Great Wall as it meanders across mountain peaks, sail through awesome river gorges or cycle through otherworldly landscapes of karst peaks in Yángshuò. Ponder the desiccated enormity of the northwestern deserts and the preternatural mists of China's sacred mountains. Hike into a landscape richly flecked with seasonal shades, from the crimson leaves of autumn maples to the colourful azaleas of spring Huángshān or the ice-encrusted roofs of mountaintop Buddhist temples.

China is food obsessed. Treat yourself and swap local Chinatown menus for the lavish Middle Kingdom cookbook: sample Peking duck, gobble down Lánzhōu noodles, sweat over spicy Sīchuān dishes, and don't forget what's cooking in China's frontier lands – an excuse to get off the beaten path. Impress your friends as you *gānbēi* (down-in-one) the local firewater, sip a beer in a slick Běijīng bar or survey the Shànghǎi skyline through a raised cocktail glass. Culinary exploration is the most enticing aspect of Middle Kingdom travel: you'll return with stimulated taste buds and much-cherished gastronomic memories.

“
China
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traveller's
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”

