



GUEST ITINERARY

CURATED CHINA JOURNEY
Dragon Discover







Beijing

10 Days 9 Nights

Heritage Craft & Hutong Rhythms

BEFORE YOU GO

Key Travel Prep

-  Please book your own international flights.
 -  Check visa requirements for your destination before booking.
 -  Travel and medical insurance included. We recommend supplemental medical and evacuation coverage for international travel.
 -  Bring any personal prescriptions needed.
 -  Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.
 -  Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking.
- See the full "Prepare for Travel" section later in Before Booking.

Overview

Ten days in Beijing built around the things most group tours skip.

A TCM consultation with a bilingual practitioner, hands-on paper cutting in a courtyard house, Peking Opera with backstage costume try-on, and a night walk on the only lit section of the Great Wall. Between the major landmarks, mornings open with quieter hutong lanes, afternoons shift into workshops and local food walks, and evenings settle into themed Beijing dining. The final stretch trades the city for Gubei Water Town, where canal-side lanes, hot springs, and the Simatai night wall create a change of pace before the journey home.

Trip Snapshot

Accommodation

4-star equivalent throughout. Two standout nights: Changping hot spring hotel and canal-side Gubei Water Town.

Airport Transfers

Private airport transfers in Beijing on arrival and departure.

Guide & Transport

Bilingual guide and business-class vehicle for 10 days. Private group, no mixed joiners. TCM, opera, craft specialists.

Meals

Daily breakfast plus 16 included meals. Peking duck, ice-cellar lunch, palace-style banquet, opera-themed dinner.

Signature Experiences

TCM consultation, Hanfu photography, paper cutting, tie-dye, Peking Opera backstage, moxibustion, Simatai night wall.

Trip Style

Heritage and craft at a comfortable pace. Major sites mornings, workshops afternoons, themed dining evenings.

Where You'll Stay

4-Star Equivalent

New-Gen City Hotels

7 Nights

Not the Hiltons you know. China's new-generation hotels — smart rooms, robot delivery, fresh design. Better located for the itinerary and honestly better run.

Scenic Stay

Changping Hot Spring Hotel

1 Night

An evening soak after your Great Wall hike. Hot spring pools set in the foothills north of Beijing — a different rhythm from the city.

Scenic Stay

Gubei Water Town Hotel

1 Night

Canal-side hotel inside a restored village at the foot of Simatai Great Wall. Step outside after dark and the night-lit Great Wall ridgeline is above you — the only section open for night walks.

Itinerary


Day 1 — Arrival & Welcome to Beijing


Your guide meets you at arrivals — Beijing Capital or Daxing, whichever you fly into — and a private car takes you to your hotel in the city centre. The rest of the morning is yours to recover from the flight and settle in at your own pace.

In the mid-afternoon, a welcome briefing over tea introduces the ten-day journey ahead: the landmarks, the workshops, the dining arc, and what to expect from Beijing as a city. A short culture session traces the shape of Beijing's history — the imperial axis, the hutong grid, the rhythms that still run beneath the modern surface.

The day closes with a **welcome dinner** of **Peking duck** or Beijing-style hotpot — the group picks one, and either way it's a proper introduction to the city's table.

Day 2 — TCM Wellness & Qianmen Food Walk

 Qianmen Street

 Old Beijing Snack Tasting

 TCM Consultation

The morning begins with a **TCM consultation** — a bilingual Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner walks you through body-constitution assessment and **pulse diagnosis** (*maizheng*), explains the basics of reading your own pulse, and gives personalised wellness recommendations. The session is introductory and hands-on rather than clinical.

Lunch is a neighbourhood-style Beijing meal with the story behind each dish — what the ingredients mean, how they fit the local food calendar.

The afternoon shifts to **Qianmen Street**, the Qing-era commercial avenue south of Tiananmen. Your guide takes you off the main drag into the quieter lanes of Xianyukou and Dashilar, where century-old shopfronts still operate alongside newer studios. Along the way, you stop for an **old Beijing snack tasting** — **donkey roll** (*lvdagunr*), **sweet rice cake** (*aiwowo*), and a few others your guide picks based on the season. There's time to browse a traditional qipao shop or a craft store if something catches your eye.

The evening is free — your guide leaves a list of recommended restaurants nearby if you want to explore on your own.

Day 3 — Forbidden City & Court Photography

 Forbidden City

Jingshan Park

 Hanfu Costume Photography

An early start puts you inside the **Forbidden City** before the crowds build. A dedicated site guide (bilingual, private small-group format) takes you through the ceremonial axis and into the deeper western and eastern compounds that most visitors miss — the architectural detail tour focuses on bracket sets (*dougong*), glazed tile patterns, and the dragon-and-phoenix carvings that encode imperial rank.

Lunch is inside the palace complex at the **ice-cellar restaurant** — a vaulted brick chamber that once stored winter ice for the court, now converted into a dining space that feels nothing like a tourist cafeteria.

After lunch, the mood changes for a **Hanfu costume photography** session. A professional stylist handles hair, makeup, and wardrobe, and a photographer shoots in the palace setting with retouched digital photos delivered before the trip ends. A short “court etiquette” lesson teaches the formal greeting gestures that match the costume — useful for the photos and surprisingly fun.

Late afternoon takes you up the hill at **Jingshan Park** to the Wanchun Pavilion — the best elevated view of the Forbidden City’s 9,999-room rooftop sea, especially in the golden-hour light. After sunset, the group moves to the **corner tower** for a night-photography session: your guide shows you how to capture the tower reflected in the moat, one of Beijing’s most photogenic compositions.

Dinner rounds out a full day before returning to the hotel.

Day 4 — Great Wall Hike & Hot Spring Recovery

 Badaling Great Wall

 Moxibustion Wellness Session

 Changping Hot Spring

An early departure beats the morning rush to **Badaling Great Wall**, the most storied and best-maintained section north of Beijing. Your guide walks the history and military architecture as you follow a comfortable path up to the first watchtower — the route is chosen for scenery rather than strenuous climbing.

Lunch is a **farmhouse meal** at the base of the wall — Great Wall foothills cooking with the kind of rough-cut, flavour-forward dishes that Beijing restaurants rarely serve.

The afternoon turns restorative. A **moxibustion wellness session** (*aijiu*) uses heated herbal sticks on key acupuncture points to ease the day’s walking fatigue — the practitioner marks common wellness points on a chart you can take home for everyday use.

From there, the car heads to a **Changping hot spring hotel** for an evening soak in the foothills. Dinner and overnight here — a slower rhythm than the city, and a different kind of tired.

Day 5 — Summer Palace & Kunming Lake

 Summer Palace

 Kunming Lake Boat Cruise

+1 more




Back in Beijing after breakfast, the morning opens at the **Summer Palace** — 300 hectares of imperial garden that Empress Cixi rebuilt with the navy budget. Your guide walks you through the Long Corridor’s 14,000 painted panels, up to the Foxiangge hilltop pavilion for the lake view, and through the Paiyun Hall’s ceremonial architecture. A guided photography session helps you capture the finer details of the garden design.

A midday **tea break** inside the palace grounds replaces a formal sit-down lunch — lighter fare with herbal teas that connect back to the garden’s aesthetic philosophy.

The afternoon highlight is a **Kunming Lake boat cruise** in a traditional Chinese vessel. Your guide narrates the lake’s legends and points out the Seventeen-Arch Bridge, the Bronze Ox, and the western hills beyond the waterline. Back on shore, there’s time to browse the palace creative shop for design-forward souvenirs before heading to the city.

Dinner is a **Beijing home-style meal** — the kind of cooking locals eat when nobody’s watching.

Day 6 — Lama Temple & Wudaoying Hutong

 Lama Temple  Wudaoying Hutong  +1 more




The morning visit to the **Lama Temple** is timed to arrive with the incense smoke still rising from the morning devotions. Originally an imperial residence, then a Tibetan Buddhist monastery, the complex holds one show-stopping artifact: a **26-metre Buddha carved from a single white sandalwood trunk**, standing in a hall built around it. Your guide explains the temple's Tibetan, Mongolian, and Han Buddhist layers and the etiquette of offering incense.

Lunch nearby leans vegetarian — light, clean flavours that fit the temple atmosphere.

The afternoon belongs to **Wudaoying Hutong**, the narrow alley running along the Lama Temple's south wall. This is Beijing's most stylish hutong — independent coffee shops, ceramic studios, and bookstores tucked into old courtyard doorways. Your guide points out the architectural details of the remaining residential courtyards and helps you photograph the textures that make hutong life visually distinctive: weathered door panels, potted plants on brick ledges, laundry on improvised lines.

Dinner is a **Beijing-flavour meal** back in the city before a free evening.

Day 7 — Temple of Heaven & Peking Opera

 Temple of Heaven  Peking Opera Performance  +3 more

The **Temple of Heaven** is best in the morning, when local retirees are still doing tai chi on the Long Corridor and the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests catches the early light. Your guide walks the ceremonial route from the Round Altar through the Echo Wall to the triple-roofed hall — a masterpiece of Ming-dynasty joinery built entirely without nails. The acoustics demonstration at the Echo Wall is worth arriving early for, before the space fills.

Lunch is **Beijing comfort food** near the south gate — home-style dishes with herbal tea on the side.

The afternoon eases into a **Peking Opera culture session**: a bilingual instructor walks you through the art form's history, the four main role types, the significance of face paint colours, and the basic hand gestures and body movements that carry meaning on stage.

Then you watch a **Peking Opera performance** — selected classic scenes with English subtitles so the story lands even if the singing style is new to you. Afterwards, you go backstage to try on simplified opera costumes, learn a few of the signature poses, and take photos with the performers.

Dinner is a **Peking Opera themed meal** — Beijing flavours served to the live accompaniment of **jinghu** (*Beijing fiddle*), with stories behind each dish.

Day 8 — Hutong Rickshaw & Paper-Cutting Workshop

 Shichahai Lakes  Palace-Style Banquet  Paper-Cutting Workshop

The day starts with a **rickshaw ride** through the old hutong lanes — the traditional way to cover ground in a neighbourhood built for foot traffic, not cars. Your driver follows a route through narrow alleys where courtyard doors open onto family life still happening behind the tourist-facing surface.

From the rickshaw, you step into a **Shichahai Lakes city walk** — crossing the Silver Ingot Bridge, strolling down Yandai Xiejie (Tobacco Pipe Lane), and watching street performers practice the old Beijing skills: diabolo spinning, sugar painting, and the rest. The lake district is where the Grand Canal once ended, and the neighbourhood still carries that trading-post energy.

Lunch is **old Beijing home cooking**.

The afternoon moves indoors for a **paper-cutting workshop** (*jianzhi*) in a **courtyard house** (*siheyuan*). A professional instructor walks you through the technique — the symmetry, the fold patterns, the cultural symbolism of each design — and you make your own piece to keep. After cutting, a simple framing session preserves your work for the trip home.

The day closes with a **palace-style banquet** (*gongyuan*) — the most formal dinner on the tour, with dishes that reference imperial court cuisine.

Day 9 — Gubei Water Town & Night Great Wall

 Gubei Water Town

Simatai Great Wall

 Drone Light Show

An early departure heads northeast for **Gubei Water Town**, a restored Ming-era village at the foot of **Simatai Great Wall** — about two hours from the city. The morning is an unhurried walk through the canal-side lanes: old workshops, a traditional brewery, a **tie-dye workshop** where you learn the knotting and dyeing technique and keep your finished fabric.

Lunch is **northern water-town cooking** — hearty, unpretentious dishes built around the local larder.

The early afternoon is reserved for a **hot spring soak** at the water town — a slow reset before the evening programme.

As the sky darkens, a **cable car carries you up to Simatai Great Wall** — the only section in China open for night walks. The wall is lit but not over-lit: original Ming-dynasty stonework underfoot, the valley dropping away on both sides, and the water town glowing below. This is not a hike — it is a walk, and the atmosphere does the heavy lifting.

Back down in the town, a **drone light show** closes the evening — hundreds of drones forming patterns above the canal while music plays across the water. Dinner follows, and the night is spent at the **Gubei Water Town Hotel**, canal-side, with the lit wall ridgeline visible from the window.

Day 10 — Departure from Beijing

A final breakfast at the water town hotel, then time to pack and take a last look at the canal-side setting in morning light.

Your driver takes you back to Beijing for your onward flight or train. Depending on your departure time, there may be a brief scenic pass through the city's landmark avenues on the way to the airport — a last glimpse rather than a last

stop. Your guide sees you off at departures.

Before Booking

✓ What's Included

Transport — Private airport transfers (Beijing Capital or Daxing) on arrival and departure, plus daily ground transportation by business-class vehicle throughout the tour.

Guide — Professional bilingual guide for the full 10-day journey, with specialist instructors for TCM, Peking Opera, moxibustion, paper-cutting, and tie-dye sessions.

Accommodation — 9 nights at 4-star equivalent or above, including one night at a Changping hot spring hotel and one night inside Gubei Water Town.

Meals — Daily breakfast plus 16 included meals — Peking duck welcome dinner, Forbidden City ice-cellar lunch, palace-style banquet, Peking Opera themed dinner, and more.

Entrance Fees — All scheduled sightseeing sites, including Forbidden City, Badaling Great Wall, Summer Palace, Temple of Heaven, Lama Temple, Jingshan Park, and Gubei Water Town.

Experiences — TCM consultation with pulse diagnosis, Hanfu costume photography with professionally retouched photos, moxibustion wellness session, Kunming Lake boat cruise, Peking Opera performance with backstage interaction, rickshaw hutong ride, paper-cutting workshop, tie-dye workshop, Gubei Water Town hot spring, Simatai night Great Wall by cable car, and drone light show.

Insurance — Travel accident insurance included (500,000 CNY per person).

Extras — Souvenir gift pack including Peking Opera bookmark, paper-cutting artwork, and traditional Beijing snacks, plus an English-language travel handbook.

Pricing Promise — Everything in the itinerary is included in the tour price. Optional packages and room choices, if any, are shown clearly before payment. No hidden on-trip charges.


+ Booking Options

Single-Room Supplement — A single room is available for the full 9 nights at an additional charge. Select when booking.


Everything in the itinerary is included in the tour price. No paid activity packages apply to this route.






Prepare for Travel

 Please book your own international flights.

 Travel and medical insurance included. We recommend supplemental medical and evacuation coverage for international travel.

 Please arrange your own mobile data plan before departure.

 Check visa requirements for your destination before booking.

-  Bring any personal prescriptions needed.
-  Please inform us of any dietary needs, allergies, or restrictions when booking.
-  Most scheduled venues accept international credit cards. For smaller shops, please have local cash or a local mobile payment app ready.
-  Gentle pace with comfortable walking days. The Badaling Great Wall segment follows a level path to the first watchtower — no strenuous climbing required.
-  Beijing has hot, humid summers and cold, dry winters. Light layers in spring and autumn; sun protection and water in summer; warm coat and layers in winter.

? FAQ

Where does the tour start and end?

Starts and ends in Beijing. Private airport transfers are included on arrival and departure.

How do we get around during the tour?

By private business-class vehicle (GL8 or similar) with a dedicated driver for the full 10 days. A bilingual guide travels with you throughout.

How physically demanding is the Great Wall day?

The Badaling section is well-maintained and the walk follows a level path to the first watchtower — comfortable for most fitness levels. After the hike, a moxibustion session and hot spring soak are built into the afternoon to help you recover.

What does the TCM consultation include?

A bilingual Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner conducts a body-constitution assessment and pulse diagnosis, then provides personalised wellness recommendations. The session is introductory and educational, not a medical treatment.

What kind of craft workshops are included?

Paper cutting (*jianzhi*) in a courtyard house with a professional instructor, and tie-dye at Gubei Water Town. Both workshops are hands-on and you keep what you make.

What is the Peking Opera experience like?

You attend a live Peking Opera performance with English subtitles, then go backstage to try on simplified opera costumes and learn a few signature gestures and poses. A culture briefing before the show helps you follow the storyline.

Is travel insurance included?

Yes — travel accident insurance is included (500,000 CNY per person). We still recommend arranging supplemental medical and evacuation coverage for international travel.

What is the cancellation policy?

Our cancellation and refund policy is tiered based on how far in advance you cancel. Full details at [Terms & Conditions](#).

Should I book pre/post-tour accommodation?

That depends on your flight timing. Day 1 is arrival day with an afternoon welcome briefing and dinner, so an early-afternoon landing works well. Day 10 is departure — your transfer leaves mid-morning, so a late flight is ideal.

Can I fly a drone during the tour?

China requires all drone operators (including foreign visitors) to register with the CAAC before flying. Many heritage sites and city centres are no-fly zones. Inform your guide in advance if you plan to bring a drone.

Which currency is most widely accepted on this tour?

Local expenses in China are usually handled in RMB. International bank cards work in larger stores and hotels, but mobile payment is dominant. Your guide can help you set up local payment if needed.

Local Names

Gugong goo-GOHNG

The Forbidden City — world's largest surviving imperial palace with 9,999 rooms

Yonghegong yohng-huh-GOHNG

The Lama Temple — home to a 26-metre Buddha carved from a single sandalwood trunk

Tiantan tee-EN-tahn

The Temple of Heaven — where emperors prayed for harvest under a triple-roofed hall built without nails

Yiheyuan ee-huh-YWEN

The Summer Palace — 300 hectares of lake, hill, and painted corridor

Jingshan JING-shahn

Jingshan Park — the best rooftop panorama of the Forbidden City

Shichahai shih-chah-HIGH

Three linked lakes that were once the Grand Canal terminus of imperial Beijing

Qianmen chee-EN-men

Pedestrian avenue south of Tiananmen with Qing-era shopfronts still standing

Gubei Shui Zhen goo-BAY shway-JUHN

Gubei Water Town — Ming-era village at the foot of Simatai Great Wall

Badaling bah-dah-LING

The most visited Great Wall section — well-maintained stone path north of Beijing

Simatai sih-mah-TIE

The only Great Wall section open for night walks — original Ming stonework

Wudaoying woo-dow-YING

Wudaoying Hutong — independent shops tucked beside the Lama Temple