



GUEST ITINERARY

CURATED CHINA JOURNEY
Dragon Discover







Beijing

5 Days 4 Nights

Imperial Classics & Hutong Stories

BEFORE YOU GO

Key Travel Prep

-  Please book your own international flights.
-  Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance.
-  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.

See the full "Prepare for Travel" section later in Before Booking.

Overview

Five days built around the landmarks that made Beijing an imperial capital and the neighbourhood life that still runs between them.

The Forbidden City, Jingshan Park, Mutianyu Great Wall, Summer Palace, and Temple of Heaven anchor the itinerary, but the days also turn into hutong lanes by rickshaw, a courtyard house visit where crickets still chirp in cages on the windowsill, a VIP acrobatics show, and an evening cruise on the Liangma River when the embassy district lights up along the water.

Trip Snapshot

Accommodation

4-star equivalent in central Beijing, within the 2nd Ring Road. Four nights at the same hotel for easy settling in.

Airport Transfers

Airport transfers are not included. Meet at the designated hotel in Beijing. The tour ends at the same location.

Guide & Transport

Bilingual guide and private vehicle for 5 days. Private group, no mixed joiners. Up to 4 guests per vehicle.

Meals

Daily breakfast plus 3 included dinners. Peking duck, copper-pot hotpot, and zhajiangmian noodles.

Signature Experiences

VIP acrobatics show, courtyard house visit, rickshaw hutong ride, Bird's Nest rooftop, Liangma River cruise.

Trip Style

Classic highlights at a comfortable pace. Major sites by day, themed dining and city experiences by night.

Where You'll Stay

4-Star Equivalent

Central Beijing City Hotel

4 Nights

Inside the 2nd Ring Road — walkable to hutong lanes and metro stations, with the major sights a short drive away. Modern Chinese city hotel with clean rooms and reliable service.

Itinerary

Day 1 — Arrival & Settling In

Arrive in Beijing and make your way to your hotel in the city centre, inside the 2nd Ring Road. Check in, drop your bags, and take the rest of the day at your own pace.

If you arrive early enough, the neighbourhood around the hotel is worth a first wander — street-side noodle shops, corner parks where retirees play cards under the trees, and the low-rise texture of central Beijing before the itinerary begins in earnest tomorrow. Your guide is available by phone if you need restaurant suggestions or help getting oriented.

Day 2 — Forbidden City · Jingshan · Acrobatics

 Forbidden City  Jingshan Park  Brilliant China Acrobatics Show  +2 more

The day opens at **Tiananmen Square** — the ceremonial heart of the capital, where the scale of the space itself is the first thing that hits you. Your guide walks you through the history layered into the square before you cross north into the **Forbidden City**, the world's largest surviving imperial palace complex with 9,999 rooms behind its red walls.

Inside, the route follows the central ceremonial axis through the Hall of Supreme Harmony, the Hall of Preserving Harmony, and the inner court, then turns into the quieter eastern or western compounds that most visitors walk past. Your guide reads the architecture — the bracket sets, the glazed tile colours, the dragon-count hierarchy that told you exactly who lived where.

After the palace, a short walk north leads up the hill at **Jingshan Park** to the Wanchun Pavilion — the highest point on Beijing's imperial axis and the best elevated view of the Forbidden City's golden rooftop sea stretching south to Tiananmen.

In the evening, you take VIP seats for the **Brilliant China Acrobatics Show** — a professional Beijing acrobatics company performing aerial silk work, precision plate-spinning, contortion, and group tumbling acts that trace a Chinese performance tradition older than the European circus.

Dinner is **Peking duck** — carved tableside, wrapped in thin pancakes with scallion and sweet bean sauce, the way Beijing has been eating it for six centuries.

Day 3 — Mutianyu Great Wall & Summer Palace

 Mutianyu Great Wall  Summer Palace  Old Beijing Copper-Pot Hotpot  +1 more

An early start heads north to **Mutianyu Great Wall**, one of the best-restored sections and far less crowded than Badaling. The wall runs along a forested ridgeline with watchtowers every few hundred metres — you can walk the parapets between towers at your own pace, or take the cable car up and walk a shorter stretch along the top. The

views open in every direction: mountains folding into mountains, the wall snaking across the ridgeline ahead and behind you.

The drive back to Beijing passes through the northern foothills. In the afternoon, the pace shifts to 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, past the lakeside pavilions, and up to the hilltop for the **Kunming Lake** panorama. The mood here is the opposite of the Great Wall — water, willows, and architectural refinement designed for leisure rather than defence.

Dinner is **Old Beijing Copper-Pot Hotpot** (*shuanyangrou*) — thinly sliced lamb swished through boiling broth in a charcoal-fired brass pot, dipped in sesame paste. It is the meal Beijingers eat when the temperature drops, and one of the most sociable dinners on the tour.

Day 4 — Temple of Heaven · Hutong Life · River Cruise

 Temple of Heaven

 Courtyard House Visit

Liangma River Cruise

+3 more

The morning begins at the **Temple of Heaven**, where Ming and Qing emperors performed the most solemn ritual in the Chinese calendar — praying for a good harvest. The Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests is a masterpiece of joinery, built entirely without nails, and the circular Echo Wall and Triple-Sound Stones still work their acoustic tricks if you arrive before the crowds fill the space. Around the altar complex, the surrounding park is alive with local retirees practising tai chi, sword dancing, and choir singing — an unscripted layer of Beijing life that makes the site feel lived-in rather than museum-frozen.

From the temple, you drive into Beijing's old hutong quarter for a **Courtyard House Visit** (*siheyuan*). The host opens the doors on a way of life that's disappearing fast — old household items displayed on shelves, singing insects (*guoguo*) chirping in ceramic cages, and a demonstration of **cricket fighting** (*douququ*), a folk pastime that goes back to the Tang Dynasty. It is not a museum reconstruction; it is someone's home.

Next, a **rickshaw ride** through the **Shichahai** hutong lanes — the traditional way to move through a neighbourhood built for foot traffic. The three-wheeled pedicab threads past courtyard doorways, corner shops, and narrow alleys where neighbours still share a single tap and hang laundry across the lane.

The afternoon shifts to the **Bird's Nest**, the 2008 Olympic stadium, where a rooftop sky corridor lets you walk above the steel lattice and look down into the arena — a very different kind of Beijing landmark.

Dinner is **Beijing zhajiangmian** — thick hand-pulled noodles topped with savoury meat sauce and julienned vegetables, mixed at the table. Simple, local, and the meal Beijingers grew up eating.

The evening closes with a **Liangma River Cruise** — a boat ride through Beijing's embassy and business district as the riverbanks light up. Modern architecture, landscaped promenades, and bridge reflections on the water — a contemporary side of the city after four days of imperial heritage.

Day 5 — Free Morning & Departure

A final breakfast at the hotel, then the morning is yours. Browse a neighbourhood market for last-minute gifts, revisit a favourite hutong lane, or simply sit in a park and watch the city wake up.

Check out when your departure timing requires and make your way to the airport. Your guide is available by phone for any last-minute help with transport or directions.

Before Booking

✓ What's Included

Transport — Daily ground transportation by private vehicle throughout the tour.

Guide — Professional bilingual guide for the full 5-day journey.

Accommodation — 4 nights at a central Beijing hotel (2nd Ring Road area), 4-star equivalent.

Meals — Daily breakfast plus 3 included dinners: Peking duck, old Beijing copper-pot hotpot, and Beijing zhajiangmian noodles.

Entrance Fees — All scheduled sightseeing sites, including Forbidden City, Jingshan Park, Mutianyu Great Wall, Summer Palace, Temple of Heaven (combo ticket), and Bird's Nest rooftop walkway.

Experiences — VIP acrobatics show (Brilliant China), courtyard house visit with folk culture demonstrations, rickshaw hutong ride through Shichahai, Bird's Nest rooftop sky corridor, and Liangma River evening cruise.

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 4 nights at an additional charge. Select when booking.


Everything in the itinerary is included in the tour price. No paid booking options apply to this route.

Prepare for Travel


 Please book your own international flights.


 Please arrange your own travel and medical insurance.


 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.

 Moderate pace with full sightseeing days. The Mutianyu Great Wall involves some stair climbing — cable car is available for those who prefer it.

 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. Airport transfers are not included. Meet at the designated hotel in Beijing. The tour ends at the same location.

How do we get around during the tour?

By private vehicle with a dedicated driver for the full 5 days. A bilingual guide travels with you throughout. The Mutianyu Great Wall day involves about 90 minutes each way from central Beijing.

How physically demanding is the Great Wall day?

Mutianyu is well-maintained with both stairs and cable car options. You can walk as much or as little as you like — the cable car handles the steepest section. The rest of the day at Summer Palace is gentle lakeside walking.

What is the acrobatics show like?

Brilliant China is a professional Beijing acrobatics show with VIP seating. The performance features aerial acts, contortion, juggling, and precision group routines — a distinctly Chinese performance tradition that predates the circus.

What meals are included?

Daily breakfast at the hotel plus three included dinners: Peking duck on Day 2, old Beijing copper-pot hotpot on Day 3, and zhajiangmian noodles on Day 4. Lunches are at your own arrangement — your guide will recommend nearby options each day.

What is the courtyard house visit?

A visit to a traditional Beijing courtyard house (*siheyuan*) where the host shows old household items, keeps singing insects (*guoguo* crickets), and demonstrates folk pastimes like cricket fighting. It is a window into everyday Beijing life before the high-rises.

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?

Day 1 is arrival day with no scheduled activities, so any arrival time works. Day 5 is departure — the morning is free, so aim for an afternoon or evening flight.

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.

What is the Liangma River cruise like?

An evening boat ride along Beijing's Liangma River through the embassy and business district. The riverbanks are lit up at night with modern architecture and landscaped promenades — a contemporary side of the city that balances the heritage-heavy daytime touring.

Local Names

Mutianyu moo-TYEN-yoo

Forested ridgeline wall north of Beijing — fewer crowds, better views

Jingshan JING-shahn

The hilltop viewpoint over the Forbidden City's rooftop sea

Tiantan tyen-TAHN

Where emperors prayed for harvest — no nails in the entire building

Siheyuan suh-huh-YWEN

Traditional four-sided Beijing home — the building block of hutong life

Shichahai shuh-chah-HIGH

Three connected lakes where the Grand Canal once ended

Liangma He lyahng-MAH huh

Embassy-district river lit up for evening cruises

Shuanyangrou shwahn-yahng-ROH

Copper-pot hotpot — the meal Beijingers eat when it gets cold

Zhajiangmian jah-jyahng-myen

Hand-pulled noodles with savoury meat sauce — Beijing comfort food