

EVERONIA

THE IMPERIAL CAPITAL OF THE MING AND QING

Beijing

A seven-day itinerary, with practical notes for every day.

The week we would *plan for you.*

This is a real week in Beijing. The seven days are in the order we would run them, starting in Tiananmen Square and ending with a night walk under the Qianmen lights.

Treat it as a starting point, not a package. Every trip we plan is rebuilt around the people travelling: your pace, your appetite, your companions.

Each day ends with a short planning note. Tickets in Beijing are timed and tied to your passport, the Palace Museum closes on Mondays, and the Wall day turns on an early start. The notes explain what usually goes wrong, so you can plan around it, with us or without us.

THE WEEK AT A GLANCE

- 01 Imperial Beijing
CENTRAL AXIS

- 02 The Great Wall at Mutianyu
HUIAIROU

- 03 Imperial Gardens and Shichahai
HAIDIAN

- 04 Temple of Heaven and the Hutongs
OLD CITY

- 05 Modern Art and Olympic Beijing
CHAOYANG

- 06 Universal Beijing Resort
TONGZHOU

- 07 Local Beijing and Farewell
OLD CITY SOUTH

THE LATEST VERSION

Hours, prices and entry rules change through the year. For the current version of everything in this guide, see everonia.com/destinations/beijing



Day 01

Imperial Beijing

Begin in the open sweep of Tiananmen Square, then walk north through the Meridian Gate into the Forbidden City, home to 24 emperors of the Ming and Qing. Give the palace the whole morning: the great halls first, then the quieter side courtyards. After lunch, climb Jingshan for the classic view south over the golden roofs. As evening falls, join the strollers on Wangfujing, Beijing's best-known shopping street.

MORNING

- 1 Stand in Tiananmen Square as the city wakes
- 2 Walk the Forbidden City from gate to gate

AFTERNOON

- 3 Climb Jingshan for the view over the palace

EVENING

- 4 Stroll Wangfujing as the lights come on

PLANNING NOTE

Book the palace a week out

Palace Museum tickets are released seven days ahead at 20:00 Beijing time, against passport details, and the booking portal needs a Chinese phone number most overseas travellers do not have. The museum closes on Mondays except public holidays. We book under your trip in the days before arrival and plan the morning for the 08:30 opening.



Day 02 PRIVATE CAR NORTHEAST, ROUGHLY NINETY MINUTES

The Great Wall at Mutianyu

An early start beats the tour buses to Mutianyu, where the Wall climbs through wooded hills northeast of the city. Ride the cable car up and start along the ramparts while they are quiet. The afternoon is yours to walk further between the watchtowers, with the toboggan run a fun way down. Back in the city, the day ends the way Beijing ends a Wall day: Peking duck, carved at the table.

MORNING

- 1 Ride the cable car up to Mutianyu's ramparts

AFTERNOON

- 2 Walk the watchtowers at your own pace

EVENING

- 3 Return to the city for a Peking duck dinner

PLANNING NOTE

The early window is the difference

Mutianyu opens at 07:30 in peak season, and the quiet hour before the tour buses arrive is the reason this day starts early. The drive runs ninety minutes to two hours depending on traffic. There is no real fast-track, whatever the touts in the car park say. We plan the car, the cable car and the early gate as one move.



Day 03 PRIVATE CAR TO THE CITY'S NORTHWEST

Imperial Gardens and Shichahai

Spend the morning at the Summer Palace, walking the 728-metre Long Corridor beneath Longevity Hill, with a boat across Kunming Lake when the season allows. Continue to Yuanmingyuan, the Old Summer Palace, where carved stone ruins stand among quiet lakes and willows. As evening falls, the Shichahai lakes take over: cross Yinding Bridge, follow the shore around Houhai, and settle in at a waterside cafe as the lights come on.

MORNING

- 1 Walk the Long Corridor at the Summer Palace

AFTERNOON

- 2 Wander the ruins and lakes of Yuanmingyuan

EVENING

- 3 Cross Yinding Bridge at Shichahai
- 4 Follow the lakeshore around Houhai

PLANNING NOTE

The boats are seasonal

The Summer Palace boats across Kunming Lake run from roughly mid-March to mid-November; outside those months the crossing becomes a lakeside walk. Both palace grounds are far larger than they look on a map. We plan the gates and the walking order so the day flows without backtracking, and keep the evening free for the lakes.



Day 04

Temple of Heaven and the Hutongs

Begin at the Temple of Heaven, where emperors once prayed for good harvests and locals now fill the cypress park with tai chi and song. Spend the afternoon in Nanluoguxiang and the hutong lanes either side of it, where courtyard life carries on a metre from the crowds. As dusk settles, finish beneath the Drum Tower and Bell Tower, the two old timekeepers at the north end of the city's old north-south axis.

MORNING

- 1 Start early at the Temple of Heaven

AFTERNOON

- 2 Browse the lanes of Nanluoguxiang
- 3 Wander the quieter hutongs either side

EVENING

- 4 See the Drum Tower
- 5 Finish beneath the Bell Tower

PLANNING NOTE

The park is the point

The Temple of Heaven's park covers 273 hectares, and the temple buildings are a small part of it. The local layer, tai chi, choirs and chess under the old cypresses, is at its best in the early morning. We start this day early on purpose: the emperors' park first, the hutongs after lunch.



Day 05

Modern Art and Olympic Beijing

Trade imperial Beijing for the contemporary city. Spend the morning gallery-hopping through 798, an art district built into factory halls from the 1950s. In the afternoon, head to Olympic Green to see the Bird's Nest and the Water Cube, the two landmark venues of the 2008 Games. Stay as the light fades: the park is at its best after dark, when the stadiums light up.

MORNING

- 1 Gallery-hop through the 798 Art District

AFTERNOON

- 2 Walk Olympic Green
- 3 See the Bird's Nest up close
- 4 See the Water Cube

EVENING

- 5 Stay for the Olympic Park night lights

PLANNING NOTE

The galleries keep their own hours

798 is open all day as a district, but the individual galleries set their own hours and change their shows through the year. We check what is on before you fly and route the morning around the exhibitions worth your time. The Olympic park is the easy half of the day; the evening lights are the reason to linger.



Day 06 PRIVATE CAR EAST TO TONGZHOU

Universal Beijing Resort

Universal Beijing Resort fills this day. Arrive as the gates open and take the headline rides early, before the queues build. The afternoon runs at your own pace through the shows and themed lands, with time to repeat a favourite. Stay into the evening if the energy holds, then head back to the city for a late, easy dinner.

MORNING

- 1 Take the headline rides before the queues build

AFTERNOON

- 2 Follow the shows and themed lands at your own pace

EVENING

- 3 Stay into the evening, then head back to the city

PLANNING NOTE

A theme-park day runs on timing

Universal Beijing sits east of the city in Tongzhou. The day works best arriving as the gates open, with the headline rides done before the late-morning build. We arrange the tickets ahead and keep the car with you, so the evening return runs on your schedule, not a shuttle's.



Day 07

Local Beijing and Farewell

Keep the last day gentle. Spend the morning in Beihai Park, an imperial lake garden where the White Dagoba rises over the water and rowing boats drift below. In the afternoon, browse Qianmen Street, then duck into Dashilan, the old shopping lanes just off it. As night falls, take a farewell walk under the Qianmen lights, with the gate tower glowing at the head of the street.

MORNING

- 1 Spend the morning in Beihai Park

AFTERNOON

- 2 Browse Qianmen Street
- 3 Poke through the old shopfronts of Dashilan

EVENING

- 4 Take a farewell walk under the Qianmen lights

PLANNING NOTE

Keep the last day light

Most trips pack the last day too full. Beihai's lake and the Qianmen shopping streets fill a day without hurry, and the evening walk under the gate-tower lights is a better ending than a rushed extra site. If your flight leaves late, the car stays with you until the airport run.

When to visit, and how it feels.

MONTH	MAX °C	RAIN MM	CROWDS
January	2	2	● Dry, cold and quiet. Outside the first days of January, the palace courtyards are at their emptiest.
February	6	6	●●●● Chinese New Year lands mid-February in 2026, and the nine-day Spring Festival holiday fills every major site.
March	13	9	● Early spring and still quiet. The odd dust wind blows through before the parks turn green.
April	21	22	●● Warm and green at last. The Qingming holiday in early April brings one short peak.
May	27	36	●●● The May Day holiday, May 1 to 5, is one of the year's busiest windows. Late May settles down.
June	31	72	●● Hot afternoons arrive and the summer rains begin. Wall mornings stay comfortable.
July	32	170	●●● The wettest month by far on the long-term averages, and school summer holidays fill the big sites.
August	31	113	●●● Still school-holiday season, hot and humid. The lakeside evenings at Shichahai are at their liveliest.
September	27	54	●● The rains ease and the air clears. Warm days and thinning crowds open Beijing's best season.
October	19	29	●●●● National Day week, October 1 to 7, is China's biggest travel week of the year. Late October is golden.
November	10	14	● Crisp, clear and quiet. Our favourite month on the ramparts at Mutianyu.
December	4	2	● Deep winter, dry and still. Cold days, quiet palace courtyards.

Temperature and rainfall are China Meteorological Administration climate normals, 1991 to 2020. Crowd levels follow the Chinese public-holiday calendar and daily booking caps at the major sites.

Before you fly, *read this page.*

Payments

Set up Alipay or WeChat Pay before you fly. Both can bind many overseas Visa and Mastercard cards, but in-app limits and small-merchant acceptance still vary. Keep one bank card and a little cash for older courtyards, small temples and the odd hutong stall that still prefers it.

Getting around

High-speed rail links Beijing to Xi'an in about four and a half hours. Within the city, the metro is fast and cheap, but for Mutianyu, the Summer Palace and Universal, a private car and driver is the practical option.

Tickets

The Palace Museum releases tickets seven days ahead at 20:00 Beijing time, booked against passport details, and it closes on Mondays except public holidays. Mutianyu is real-name booked with a timed entry window. Book both well ahead; the early windows sell out first.

When to go

September to October is the cleanest window, with April to May close behind. Chinese New Year, the May Day holiday and National Day week, October 1 to 7, fill every major site. July is the wettest month, so summer days start early. The month-by-month calendar in this guide shows the quiet months.

ENTRY RULES POLICY CURRENT AS OF 1 JULY 2026

Beijing follows mainland China entry rules. Ordinary Australian, British, New Zealand and Canadian passports have up to thirty days visa-free, confirmed through 31 December 2026. United States passports still need a tourist visa under current rules. If your dates fall after the current window, we manage the visa application as part of your trip. Tell us your nationality before we quote, and we check the live wording for your country.

DESIGNED AROUND YOU AND YOUR COMPANIONS

You enjoy the trip, *we do the rest.*

From your first enquiry to your last airport pickup, our specialists design your trip and stay in contact every step of the way. The guides, drivers and hotels you'll meet are part of our trusted network we've worked with for years, briefed to the same standards.

START THE CONVERSATION AT

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