

Beijing

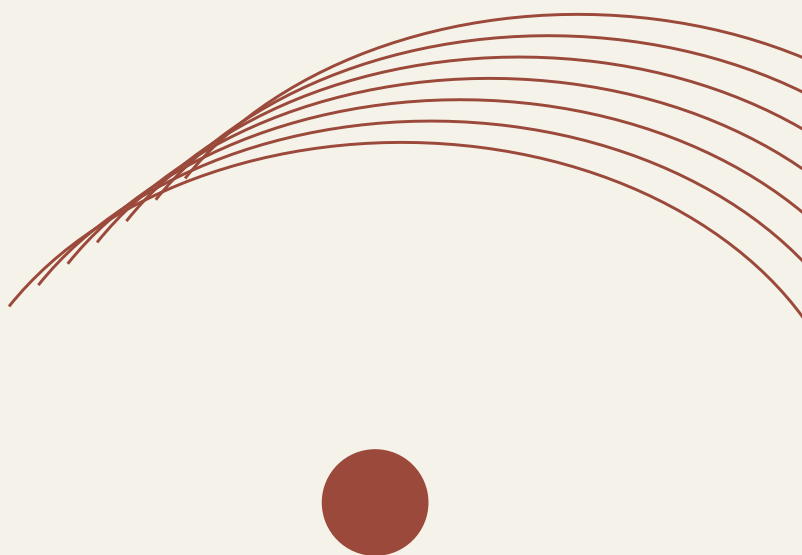
Beijing, beyond the checklist

Three days of imperial space, hutong streets and a Great Wall day

Independent routes. Practical decisions. Space to explore.

Inside: a usable plan, transport decisions, budget worksheet, Chinese search names and official source links.

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CHINA SIDEWAYS / 01 / ORIENTATION

Choose your base, then your days

This guide fits

First-time visitors who want the major landmarks without spending every evening in transit.

The route logic

Beijing rewards grouping sights by area. The palace axis, northern hutong neighbourhoods and the Great Wall belong to separate days. Trying to put them all into one day turns the visit into a sequence of queues and transfers.

Dongsi / Dongcheng

A useful compromise for hutong walks and central sightseeing. Choose a property close to an actual metro entrance; a pin inside a hutong can still mean a long luggage walk.

Wangfujing / central Dongcheng

Useful for a first visit if you value central hotels and straightforward transport. Ask about street access and the nearest permitted vehicle drop-off.

Sanlitun / Chaoyang

Choose for evenings and contemporary city life. Allow extra travel time to the historic centre; it is not the best base for walking to the palace.

Three full sightseeing days are assumed. If arrival/departure uses one of them, remove a day or extend your stay.

CHINA SIDEWAYS / 02 / DAY 1

The palace axis

MORNING / Forbidden City

Reserve your visit before locking this day into the plan. Start with the central sequence of courtyards, then choose a limited number of side galleries. Do not try to see every collection. Keep the visit as the main event, with water and a proper lunch afterwards.

AFTERNOON / Jingshan Park

After leaving the palace area, use Jingshan as the change of scale: a garden, a climb if comfortable, and a view back toward the roofs. If heat, rain or mobility makes the climb unsuitable, stay in the lower park and shorten the afternoon.

EVENING / A meal near your base

Choose dinner around the hotel rather than adding a distant landmark. This is a useful evening to test payments, pick up breakfast supplies and check tomorrow's route. Treat any square or restricted-area visit as a separate reservation check, not an automatic extension of the palace ticket.

Decision before you go

Palace access, booking requirements, identification and closures must be checked with the Palace Museum. If unavailable, move the hutong day here; do not buy an unverified promise of guaranteed entry.

Pacing rule: one main activity per half-day. Add lunch, rest and the actual transfer between areas. The order is a suggestion, not a timed booking.