

Beijing Old City Day Tour

Tour Type: A private tour our group exclusively

Departure: Daily

Duration: Approx.8 hours (include lunch)

Pick-up point and time: International Bamboo and Rattan Tower (IBRT) around 9:00am

Finishing point and time: IBRT around 5:00pm

Hiking Level: Beginner

Attraction: Panda House, Lama Temple, Confucian Temple, Hutong rickshaw tour, Drum Tower, Nanluoguxiang
English Guide

Cost: \$75

Itinerary:

Pick-up from IBRT around 9:00

1. Start your trip with Beijing Panda House which is located in Beijing Zoo southwest of Beijing. There you can see the lovely Giant Pandas. The Beijing Zoo was built in 1906 and opened to the public in 1908 with an area of about 10 hectares and a few humble pavilions to house the animals. Located to the west of Beijing City (2km west of XiZhiMen subway station), next to the Beijing Exhibition Hall, Beijing Zoo has both rare Chinese animals, such as the Giant Panda and the Golden Monkey, and also a strong selection from around the world - from Polar Bears to Kangaroos.

Visitors usually go to Beijing Zoo to see the famous Giant Pandas, but there are many other interesting animals to see, including the Red Panda, Sichuan golden monkey, Manchurian tigers, yaks from Tibet, enormous sea turtles, Indian elephants, and zebras and giraffes from Africa. Beijing Zoo now houses over 10,000 animals of 800 different species.

The grounds of Beijing Zoo combine cultivated flower gardens with stretches of natural scenery, including dense groves of trees, streams, stretches of grassland, lotus ponds and small hills dotted with pavilions, some built during the Qing Dynasty. Beijing Zoo combines the garden arts of the East and West and adapts to the environment of the animals living in a particular area.



2. Then head to Lama Temple (Yonghe Temple). It is a temple and monastery of the Geluk School of Tibetan Buddhism. Lama Temple is one of the largest and most important Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in the world. The building of the temple is a blended Han and Tibetan style. The only temple in Beijing to have its own subway stop, the Yonghe Lamasery, or Yonghegong, or lama Temple is the most handsome and impressive Buddhist temple in the city. Lama Temple (Yonghe Lamasery) was built in the 33 Qing Kangxi year (1694) and it is now the largest and best-preserved Lamasery of Yellow Sect in Beijing. It was the residence of Emperor Yongzheng before his ascending to the throne. Built initially in 1694 during the Qing Dynasty, this building was the residence of Emperor Yongzheng when he was just a prince. However, in 1744 the Qing Dynasty formally changed the status of the dwelling to that of a lamasery, and so Yonghe Lamasery became the national centre of Lama administration.

The whole temple sits from north toward south. The following architectures line from south to north orderly- the Arch Courtyard (Pailouyuan), the Gate of Zhaotai (Zhaotaimen), the Hall of Heavenly Kings (Yan wangdian), the Hall of Harmony and Peace (Yonghegongdian), the Hall of Eternal Blessing (Yongyoudian), the Hall of Dharma Wheel (Falundian), and the Ten-Thousand-Happiness Pavilion (Wanfuge) etc. 500 Arhat Mountain in the Hall of Dharma Wheel (Falundian) is carved with rosewood, 3 meters wide, 5 meter high and thirty centimeters thick. The Five-hundred-arhat Mountain is carved with rosewood, which is 3 meters wide, 5 meters high and 30 centimeters thick approximately. The five hundreds arhats is made of five metals-gold, silver copper, iron and tin-and it is one of "three masterpieces" of Lama Temple. The huge wood-carved "Maidala Buddha" worshipped in the Ten-Thousand-Buddha Pavilion (Wanfuge) is 18 meters high, and 26 meters high all together if plus with the 8 meters buried under the earth. It is also one of the "three masterpieces" of Lama Temple. The rosewood huge Buddha has been listed into the Guinness World Record in 1990.



3. Then move on to Confucian Temple (Kongmiao), one of the most important Confucian temples, just after the one in his hometown of Qufu in Shandong Province. The confucius temple was built to pay tribute to confucius in Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. It was first built in 1309 with a history of more than 600 years. Inside the temple complex there are more than 100 ancient trees and 198 steles in Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties. The Temple of Confucius, the present site of the Capital Museum is located in Guozijian Street. It is here that Confucius was worshipped during the Yuan , Ming and Qing dynasties .The temple was first built by Kublai Khan in 1302 in the Yuan Dynasty, and was restored and rebuilt on several occasions during the Ming and Qing dynasties. In 1737, during the reign of Qing Emperor Qianlong, the major hall was renovated and was covered with magnificent yellow glazed roof tiles. In 1906, when the worship of Confucius was further emphasized by the Qing Government , the temple underwent extensive restoration which lasted until 1916.

The Confucius Temple covers an area of 22,000 square meters with its construction acreage of more than 6,000 square meters. It has three courtyards that focused on Dacheng Palace. The two left and right Wu Palaces stand symmetrically and are divided by a middle axle line in the north and south direction. Xianshi Gate is now the entrance door of Beijing Capital Museum. Dacheng Gate, Dacheng Palace, Chongsheng Gate, and Chongsheng Memorial Temple are located northward in sequence.

The Confucius Temple preserved the world famous Jinshi (the title of successful candidate who passed through the highest imperial examination) nomination monument, the handwritings of Gongche (the title of successful candidate who passed through the imperial examination) and other celebrities' handwriting works. You can find the familiar names like Liu Yong, Ji Xiaolan and etc there. It also exhibits the vast Thirteen Inscriptions Monuments. They are excellent writing and engravings and brilliant articles. And it is the sole completed Thirteen Inscriptions Monuments in China. The ten stone drums imitated in Qian Long Period of Qing Dynasty and Han Yu's stone drums and song monument are also a series of treasure cultural relics that is preserved in good condition and has the clear handwriting on it. In the sacrifice main palace, it exhibits the sacrifice vessels and music instrument in accordance with its original arrangement. It revokes our memories to the solemn scene with the sound of bells and drums at past.



4. After Chinese lunch (include din your cost), head to to Shichahai area behind Beihai Park for Hutong tour. First take rickshaw going around the deep Hutong in Shichahai area, visiting an ordinary family in a courtyard. When traveling the old hutong in the Shichahai area, two people are arranged to share one pedicab. Local rickshaw company will arrange an English tour guide to escort you for the short pedicab trip. The pedicab drivers are very willing to stop for your taking photos. This Old Beijing tour will give you some insights into a "real"Beijinger"s life. The pedicab drivers are pleasant and work very hard to make a living. Please tip the pedicab driver. They don't make much and depend mainly on tips.

5. Then ascend the drum tower and have a bird's eye view of the old Beijing - Shichahai area. The Shichahai area is the ideal destination. It is located situated in the west of old Beijing. It used to be part of the old Grand Canal of the Yuan Dynasty 600 years ago. And now it is circled by the former palaces of ministers, temples, well-kept Siheyuans (quadrangle) as well as residences of celebrities in the past. Shichahai area still has the ambience of an ancient city, despite its modern setting. Its lake waters ripple and glitter around the many lotuses floating on its surface. Willows line the bank like a misty green curtain, as a trickle of people cross the 1,000-year-old bridge. The lakeshore is packed with young people chatting, drinking and generally relaxing as wood pigeons coo overhead. The place is well known a night spot as eastern Beijing's Sanlitun bar street in the embassy district. The view from Shichahai bar resembles a watercolor. "Shichahai" literally means "ten temple lakes". Shichahai area oe Shichahai Lake is also the name of three connectd lakes - Qian Hai Lake, Houhai Lake and Xihai Lake. It used to be 10 temples around the lakes, hence

Shichahai Lake. The Silver Ingot Bridge (Yinding Bridge), a narrow channel joining Qianhai Lake and the Houhai Lake, the hub of Shichahai area with surrounding quiet hutongs. Lots of pubs or bars are built along the three lakes



6. Finally walk from Drumm Tower to Nanluoguxiang, a lane or hutong with a history of over 700 years dating back to Yuan Dyansty in 13th and 14th century. Running from north to south, this lane is about 800 meters long with 16 hutongs - 8 hutongs on each side of the lane. The lane is now famous for the cafes and bars and clothing and handcraft shops that line its hutong laneways as well as its traditional hutong and courtyards (siheyuan).



After your tour of Nanluoguxiang transfer back to IBRT in Beijing.

When traveling the old hutong in the Shichahai area, two people are arranged to share one pedicab. Local rickshaw company will arrange an English tour guide to escort you for the short pedicab trip. The pedicab drivers are very willing to stop for your taking photos. This Old Beijing tour will give you some insights into a "real"Beijinger"s life. The pedicab drivers are pleasant and work very hard to make a living. Please tip the pedicab driver. They don't make much and depend mainly on tips.