



China – Sample Itinerary

Day One

Upon arrival, dive right into history and culture as you explore the Houhai Houhai Lake area from the comfort of a rickshaw (cart pulled by a person on a bicycle). As you are guided through this neighborhood, you will observe the traditional hutongs (alleys) that are fast disappearing in modern Beijing. Visit a local resident in his home and try your hand at traditional calligraphy through an interactive workshop followed by a delicious homemade lunch. In the afternoon, climb the narrow stairs of the ancient Drum Tower, and marvel at the incredible demonstration of how the drums were once used to tell time. Cap off the day with a stroll down Wangfujing Street, one of the largest shopping areas in Beijing. In the evening, food stalls open along the main drag, where a large variety of local Beijing snacks are sold... scorpions, starfish, seahorses, snakes and more!

Day Two

No visit to Beijing is complete without a visit to the famous Tiananmen Square which is the second largest city square in the world. It has great cultural significance and is best known as the focal point of the pro-democracy movement which ended on 4 June 1989 with the declaration of martial law in Beijing by the government and the death of hundreds of protesters. Next is The Forbidden City, site of the imperial palace of the Ming and Qing dynasties, filled with amazing Chinese architecture. According to folk legend, this unbelievable compound built in the 1400's, contains 9999.5 rooms. In the afternoon, you'll visit Temple of Heaven which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site was constructed in the 15th century. The emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties used to visit this temple every year to pray for good harvests. Finally at the Pearl Factory you may decide to get your mother a new string of pearls or just see the craftspeople at work. After a full day of touring, treat yourself to a massage back at the hotel.

Day Three

One of the highlights of the trip will be travelling outside of Beijing to climb the Great Wall! Be sure to dress in layers and wear comfortable shoes – as you climb the stairs of the Juyongguan Pass, one of the three greatest sections of the wall, you'll surely burn a lot of calories and work up a sweat. Next visit the Jade Factory to see how the artisans work with this stone and then go to the Cloisonné Factory. Cloisonné is a famous traditional enamel ware, known as the “Blue of Jingtai” in China, with a history of over



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500 years. It was so called because “blue” was the typical color used for enameling and “Jingtai” was the reign title of the 7th Ming Emperor. While exploring the Ming Tombs on your way back to Beijing, you'll wander through an incredible path of animal and human statues including lions, elephants, unicorns and more. The pairs of animals, both real and mythical, were said to bring the emperor good luck in his next life. In the evening, sit back and relax at an authentic Kung Fu show.

Day Four

UNESCO World Heritage describes the Summer Palace, our first stop of the day, as “a masterpiece of Chinese landscape garden design. The natural landscape of hills and open water is combined with artificial features such as pavilions, halls, palaces, temples and bridges to form a harmonious ensemble of outstanding aesthetic value.” Tea is the national drink in China so next you'll learn all about its history, culture and social significance at a traditional Chinese Tea House. After sampling a variety of local teas and being presented with its individual health benefits, choose a souvenir to drink at home. Built for the 2008 Olympics, Beijing's famous Bird's Nest and Water Cube buildings will make for amazing photos from your visit. Top off the day at the Chaoyang Theatre with an action-packed show including outstanding feats, beautiful choreography, color and excitement. Acrobats, circus performers, contortionists and more – you won't believe your eyes!

Day Five

Being the day with a visit to the Israeli Embassy to discuss the relationship between China and Israel. Learn about the developments in tourism, agriculture and other projects jointly explored by the two governments. You will then tour the Lama Temple, the most important Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Beijing. Built during the Qing dynasty, the Lama Temple is very popular with the local Chinese – many wishes and prayers made here are said to come true (sort of like the Kotel). Another shopping opportunity lays just ahead at the Silk Market which sells far more than just silk.

Day Six

Animal lovers will be thrilled with the first stop on today's schedule – the famous and adorable Panda bears in the Zoo. Next explore Beihai Park, also known as the Winter Palace. In the afternoon, visit with representatives of the local Jewish community to hear about the history of Jews in China and what it is like for them today living in a communist country. Officially an atheist state, The People's Republic of China grants some measure of religious freedom while also legally restricting some religious



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activities. After time to rest and prepare for Shabbat, go to the local Chabad House for Friday night services and dinner with the community.

Day Seven

Begin the day with an interactive Tai Chi workshop to awaken your body and mind. Those who choose may return to Chabad for Shabbat morning services and everyone will join together for Shabbat lunch. In the afternoon, window shop as you explore the trendy 798 Art District located in an old, decommissioned complex of military factories. Look out for faded Maoist propaganda slogans on the factory walls! Take advantage of some well-deserved rest and free time before Havdalah and packing up to head back to Israel.



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