

Beijing Breakaway

5 days | Starts/Ends: Beijing



Enjoy a city break with a difference. Explore Tiananmen Square, enter the Forbidden City, climb the Great Wall, sample traditional Peking Duck and test your bartering skills in the Silk Alley Markets. Many nationalities are able to undertake this holiday Visa Free, see our visa info section for more info.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Tiananmen Square
- Forbidden City
- UNESCO-listed Great Wall
- UNESCO-listed Ming Tombs
- Silk Alley markets
- Cloisonne Factory

What's Included

- Breakfast daily
- 1 lunch, 1 traditional Peking Duck dinner
- 4 nights 3 - 4 star hotels
- Airport arrival and departure transfer on day 1 and day 5 (Beijing Capital Airport)
- Touring and excursions as per itinerary
- Guided sightseeing - on days 2 and 3 with an English speaking guide
- All relevant transfers and transportation
- Entrance fees to all included sites

What's Not Included

- International flights and visa
- Laundry, drinks, items of a personal nature
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Beijing

Welcome to China and the start of your city break! Enjoy an arrival transfer to our hotel.

Overnight - Beijing

Day 2 : Tiananmen Square



Capital of the People's Republic, Beijing is China's political, economic and cultural centre. With an awesome history, Beijing was established in 1045 BC and for 800 years served as the capital of several dynasties. Today, a sightseeing tour takes in Tiananmen Square, a public square that also happens to be the world's largest. Everything is large in China, including the former imperial

residence of the imperial emperors of China. The Forbidden City, once forbidden to all but individuals on imperial business is a 720,000 sq m concoction dominated by vast gates, temples, halls and palaces replete with imperial yellow tiled roofs. Surrounded by a protective moat, it is said the Forbidden City comprises some 9999 rooms!

At Silk Alley, there's a chance to splash some cash in a retail haven that is a Beijing institution. Some bling jewellery for the lady and perhaps a genuine copy Rolex watch for the gent? Tonight, enjoy a traditional Chinese Peking Duck dinner. **Overnight - Beijing (B, D)**

Day 3 : The Great Wall



Some say it can be seen from space, but unless you're a top gun at NASA, perhaps you'll never know. Instead, experience the real deal. Today, an excursion beyond Beijing to Badaling takes in an imposing section of the Great Wall. The sometimes steep walk is made all the more breathtaking by the

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Beijing Breakaway

stunning views and the realisation that this 2,200 year-old wall isn't just a common or garden wall, but a 6700 kilometre wall that at one time served to protect the new China from marauding invaders from the north. Today's excursion then continues to the imperial Ming tombs, where some 13 emperors were interred in elaborate mausoleums, a couple of which can be seen. **Overnight - Beijing (B, L)**

Day 4 : Beijing



A free day to enjoy Beijing your way. Located in an area between Wanfujing and the east wall of the Forbidden City, perhaps head to the hutongs, where the hire of a rickshaw will take you through Beijing's old back lanes that are lined with courtyard homes and offer a fascinating snapshot of the city's traditional domesticity. In the Qianmen area, south of Tiananmen Square, you'll find many shops with original facades, selling Mongolian hot pots, silks and other items, not to mention Chinese apothecaries offering a selection of traditional medicines comprising deer antler, fungus and other unusual ingredients. Also consider visiting Wanfujing Street, one of the busiest retail streets in the city. **Overnight - Beijing (B)**

Day 5 : Beijing

Hotel check-out and included onward transfer to airport.(B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Jiangxi Grand Hotel

The contemporary Jiangxi Grand Hotel offers spacious, well lit and comfortable rooms. The hotel is located just a 15 minute walk from Liujiayao Subway Station which links you to the rest of Beijing on Line 5 of the Subway. There are 2 restaurants located within the hotel serving local and international cuisine, as well as there being numerous restaurants in the surrounding area. Complimentary WIFI is offered in the hotel along with gym facilities.



[new point]

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Entrance fees

Entry fees to most sites are not included although reasonably priced. In China, we'll collect the entrance fees on Day 2 of the tour at the Welcome Meeting (the amount is noted under exclusions on the first page of this document). A comprehensive breakdown of the entrance fees is provided upon arrival. All funds collected in China for entrance fees and optional excursions (that you may wish to undertake) are payable in local currency - Chinese Yuan (CNY).

Note: If you are over the age of 60 at time of travel, a discounted ticket or free entry to some sites may be possible (subject to change by the government). Entrance fees will be collected in full on day 2, and your guide/s will attempt to get a discount at each site on your behalf. If a discount is obtained your guide will issue a refund at this time. Please make your guide aware of this (if you are eligible) at the Welcome Meeting so that the discount can be requested throughout the tour.

Tipping kitty

At the start of your tour at the Welcome Meeting, we'll collect a small tipping kitty

(the amount is noted under exclusions on the first page of this document) from all tour participants to cover tips throughout your holiday. This saves you the hassle of knowing when and how much to tip bellhops, luggage handlers, bus drivers, train conductors and other support staff throughout the tour.

This amount does not include a tip for your tour guide. For a job well done, we suggest USD\$3-5 per traveller, per day. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Groups & guides

Some of our group tours are sectors of a larger tour. Some travellers on your trip may only travel with you for part of your tour. It also might be that you end your holiday part way through a longer tour and others in the group continue on.

Guides: We believe the best way to see a country is through the eyes of a local and as such we only employ tour guides native to the country you are visiting. Our guides are passionate, caring, knowledgeable and fun, and by travelling with a local you get to see the wonders of the country through their eyes. Tour guides will remain with groups of 6 or more. Where groups are 5 or less, travel between cities will be unescorted with transfers at either side of the airport/train station and a local guide will conduct the scheduled sightseeing within each city.

China Country Guide

Welcome to China - Arrival transfer

For tours starting in Beijing A complimentary airport arrival transfer is included when arriving into Beijing Capital Airport. After attending to immigration and customs formalities, please proceed to the arrival hall. If arriving to Beijing into Terminal 2, when exiting immigration to the arrivals hall, please turn right where our representative will be waiting. If arriving into Terminal 3 you will be met just outside the restricted area. The prominent sign depicting our company logo easily identifies our representative. Please have your Tour Voucher handy and

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Beijing Breakaway

make it available to our representative. Our representative will assist you with your luggage and escort you to our vehicle, for your transfer to your hotel.

If, for any reason you have trouble locating our representative after waiting 20 minutes (remember Beijing is a busy International Airport) or your flight to China is delayed, please call or send a text message (standard text message, not Messenger or WhatsApp) to the emergency contact number as stated on your Tour Voucher.

If you require a transfers from Daxing International Airport, this can be arranged at an additional fee, please speak with your reservations consultant for further details.

Visas & passports

Visa requirements are subject to change and visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from China.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book all services. Please be advised visa requirements are subject to change, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. For information about visas, head to www.onthegotours.com/China/Visas

Please note: If you plan to renew your passport between now and your departure date, please let us know as soon as possible (not your soon to be old passport details). When booking accommodation, trains or flights, we must have the details of the passport that you will be carrying with you on your trip.

Health requirements & water

You should seek medical advice for vaccinations and about medications before travelling.

As tap water is not safe to drink in China, only drink bottled mineral water which is readily

available from hotels, shops and restaurants. Make sure bottled water is sealed.

Essential packing

Please check local temperatures so you can pack accordingly. Visit www.worldclimate.com

- Food in China is very different and arguably better than your local takeaway! If you prefer western snack food, consider bringing a supply
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume, basic torch/flash light and umbrella for sun or rain
- Comfortable closed in walking shoes for climbing the Great Wall etc
- DEET based mosquito repellent and antihistamine cream
- Universal travel adaptor
- Tour Voucher and a copy of your travel insurance policy, spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport
- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
- Plastic poncho to go over your jacket. Whilst site-seeing, you can be in the rain for an extended period and even a rain jacket can get soaked. You can purchase a cheap one locally, but we suggest taking one from home of a better quality that doesn't rip easily
- If your tour includes an internal flight, most airlines have a 20kg baggage limit
- Note: The government has introduced a policy for the purpose of environmental protection, whereby hotels no longer supply disposable items such as slippers, shower caps, tooth brush/paste, etc

Porterage

Pack as light as possible! In China, most often porterage is not available at railway stations and you will need to carry your own luggage. Bags with wheels can be a hindrance when climbing several flights of stairs, though are a blessing when walking lengthy distances to reach our awaiting transportation.

Media restrictions

There are restrictions on all media, including social media and free press throughout China. Whilst on holiday, you will have limited or no access to social media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Google Plus

- so no Google Maps and no Play Store. To bypass the firewall, you could look at downloading a VPN, which is much easier to do before you go to China.

WeChat:

Communication between the group and Tour Guide or Leader is best via the app: WeChat. Please install this App prior to your holiday as it is very hard to download the app once you have arrived in China. If you opt to open the WeChat account prior to arrival and it requests that you have to be contacted by someone already on WeChat before opening your account, don't worry, this can be done locally with your guide (just have the app downloaded ready to finalise opening your account locally).

There is also limited international calling options, so please check with your local provider before leaving home, to source the best roaming or online options to keep in regular contact with family and friends during your travels.

Travelling by train

Fast and efficient, China's first rail lines were laid in the 19th century, and today the government continues to invest heavily in this crucial mode of transport which connects many parts of the country. When travelling during the day, 'soft' seats, that is to say 'upholstered' seats are provided.

For overnight travel on some of our "Signature Range" tours, clients are accommodated in 'soft class' sleeper cabins. Aboard each wagon are 9 compartments that comprise of 4 bunks per compartment. Four people of mixed gender share one compartment. On occasion, dependent upon group size, you may be sharing with local people on the overnight journey, though sometimes dependent upon how the Chinese Railways Booking Office configure the bookings, the cabin may be filled with four of our passengers.

A dining wagon serves reasonably priced Chinese food of the noodles and rice variety, along with snacks and drinks. A very simple menu is published in English. Each wagon offers a WC and hand basin facility. At one

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Beijing Breakaway

end, is a Chinese squat-style WC, whilst at the other end is a modern Western-style WC. Cabins are lockable from the inside and luggage is stowed in overhead compartments and under the bottom bunk. Bed linen and slippers are supplied, and often there is a TV mounted on the wall at the end of each bed that may even work. Most channels are broadcast in Mandarin, excluding one English Channel, which has little of interest on it!

For overnight travel on budget "Essentials Range" tours, clients are accommodated in "open" 6 berth bunks. We try to get all of our travellers in the same compartment/seating area so that you can have fun getting to know each other better, playing games etc. It is possible to upgrade to a four-berth soft sleeper on your trip, please contact us at time of booking for rates (upgrades are only possible if the open class ticket has not already been purchased and please note that you will be sleeping in another carriage to that of those in the 6 berth carriages).

Shopping in China

China is a virtual Aladdin's Cave. Government-run Friendship Stores in almost all cities stock a range of fixed-price souvenirs and handicrafts and can offer a reasonable idea of what is acceptable in terms of quality and price. After a visit to the Friendship Store, visit private stores, craft shops and local department stores. However, the best shopping is often at public markets. If you see something you want, buy it when you see it - prices don't vary greatly, but selection can vary from location to location.

In the tourism industry it's common practice for commission to be offered in exchange for recommending particular shops or suppliers. This can become an issue when clients feel obliged to purchase. We do our best to avoid this by monitoring all shopping experiences offered.

All shopping experiences on your tour have been noted in the itinerary and they have been carefully selected based upon positive feedback from On The Go travellers. You are under no obligation to partake in a listed shopping experience and you are

most welcome to wait inside or outside the premises.

Although we only visit reputable retailers, please note that we cannot explicitly guarantee the quality of their products. All purchases made whilst on holiday with us are at your own discretion. Please make sure that you are completely happy with your purchase. On The Go cannot be held responsible for any items that you buy if they fail to meet expectation, or any shipping arrangements. Proceed with caution.

Holidays & events

China has many important National Holidays and events that are celebrated throughout the country. During these times (the lead up to them and afterwards) there can be delays to public transport, the roads can be much busier and many sites are a lot more crowded as the locals take this time to visit family, celebrate the holiday and experience the wonders and amazing places within their own country.

During this time you'll likely to encounter a celebratory atmosphere, but an additional level of patience, flexibility and understanding goes a long way so that you may enjoy your holiday.

As tourists, you will be generally be unaffected and your tour guide will do their best to plan around these events. Though when initially planning your holiday, if you prefer not to travel when sites are crowded or are concerned about delays, then travelling during these holidays is possibly not for you. For more information: www.timeanddate.com/holidays/china/2021

It's not like home!

Travel to far - flung corners of the earth involves lifestyles and conditions that are sometimes very different from what you are used to back home. You must come prepared to cope with unusual situations, local inadequacies and unpredictable events as and when they occur. Foreign travel is definitely not suitable for people who expect or demand everything to go exactly as planned. With the greatest respect and in the interest of your ultimate enjoyment you must

understand this. Things can and do change in foreign countries.

Please visit www.onthegotours.com/China/Travel-tips-and-useful-info for what to wear, local customs, currency, WiFi and other helpful information to prepare for your holiday.

- Be prepared as the locals smoke everywhere in China
- The Chinese don't have an awareness of personal space, be ready to have people standing very close to you, nudge you or even walk into you, they are not being rude, it's just a very different culture
- Many tourists report scams in Shanghai, so be friendly but careful. Never ever follow a stranger anywhere
- Spitting and snorting is common in China as they see the use of tissues as unhygienic
- Some locals won't queue and will often walk straight to the front of a line with no awareness or care of what they have done wrong
- Chinese people are delighted if you make any attempt to speak Mandarin, even if it's only a couple of words

Toilets/washrooms

Public toilets, when found, are usually 'squats' - holes in the ground with footrests at either side and often don't possess a door! They can be a novelty and are easy to use. The custom is to wash with water from a jug or little pipe attached to the toilet using your left hand. Doesn't appeal? Here are some hints!

- Time yourself with the accommodations you are staying at
- If you are out and about, find the nearest hotel, restaurant, fast food outlet, or toilets at tourist attractions, which all tend to have Western style facilities
- Ask your tour guide to make a stop
- Always take some antiseptic hand gel or antibacterial hand wipes with you and BYO toilet paper as its rare in public toilets

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