

Travel Journal Entry 3: Beijing!

Beijing

Well, here I am in Beijing! When I arrived at the airport, I collected my luggage and took the c-line airport shuttle to the Beijing Zhan Railway Station. The hostel I am staying at is across the street. It is called the Beijing City Central International Youth Hostel. It is in a good location near a lot of restaurants and close to many of the sites that I would like to visit. I am going to rest up tonight because tomorrow I will explore this great city.



Day 1:

I grabbed some breakfast at my hostel at the breakfast bar and picked up some snacks from the supermarket, also in the hostel. My first stop is the Forbidden City (Gu Gong).

It is called the Forbidden City because, a long time ago, only the emperors and royalty lived there and nobody else was allowed to enter. There are about 800 buildings and palaces in the Forbidden City. These buildings are really old and beautiful! It took me over four hours to wander through and explore.

Inside the Forbidden City, I visited the Lama Temple. This is the largest one in Beijing. There are beautiful gardens and lovely ornaments.

All of this exploring of palaces and buildings made me very hungry. I tried some noodles (mein) and dumplings (jiaozi) that I bought from a vendor on the street.

Here is a link to some [great pictures of the Forbidden City](#).

I sat and had lunch in Tiananmen Square, which is at the edge of the Forbidden City. In the middle of Tiananmen Square is a large monument that is dedicated to the people's heroes. There are lots of things to see in the Square: like people flying kits and even practicing Tai Chi. There are also many street vendors selling souvenirs. I bought a Beijing 2008 Olympics hat!

Here is a link to some [pictures of Tiananmen Square](#).

In the afternoon, I went at Temple of Heaven Park. This park is 660 acres and has four large gates. There are buildings in this park that are used for prayer.

Here is a link with some [great pictures from the park](#).

I spent my afternoon wandering in and out of the temples and looking at the beautiful gardens and buildings.

After all this sightseeing, I decided to do some shopping on the way back to the hostel. I went to Wangfujing Dajie, which is a shopping street and picked up some presents for some of my friends at home and a few things for me.

For dinner I went to an authentic Chinese family restaurant called: Da Xuesheng. There were some really neat things on the menu. Here is [a sample of the choices I had](#).

I decided to try something spicy. Thank goodness there was plenty of water around! I had the gong1 bao4 ji1 ding1 (which is hot, spicy chicken and ji1 dan4 chao3 mi3 fan4 (egg fried rice).

I headed back to the hostel to get some rest because tomorrow I will head off to the Great Wall of China.

Day 2:

The Great Wall of China was built over 2000 years ago and it stretches across China. There are many parts that are in ruins but it is quite a sight to see. It used to be a wall that protected China and now it is just part of the countryside and a reminder of history. Click on the link below to see some great [pictures of The Great Wall](#).

Hiking along the Great Wall sure was fun, but I was really tired by the end of the day and ready to have a quiet evening.

Day 3:

On my last day in Beijing, I decided to go to the Beijing Zoo and see some pandas. I also visited the golden monkeys and many other animals. There were also a lot of pretty plants, gardens and buildings. It was a great way to spend the morning. In the afternoon, I headed for the Ming Tombs, which is where many of the emperors of China are buried. The tombs are big and colourful. I had a craving for a burger so I went to the McDonalds close to the hostel for dinner. Tomorrow I will be taking the train to Hong Kong to see if I can meet some Guiding friends.

Days 4 & 5:

The train will take 30 hours to get from Beijing to Hong Kong. I will write you when I get to Hong Kong. I have really enjoyed my time in mainland China and am very excited to see if I can meet up with some Guiding friends in Hong Kong where there is a Girl Guide Association.

Bye for now!

Zoë