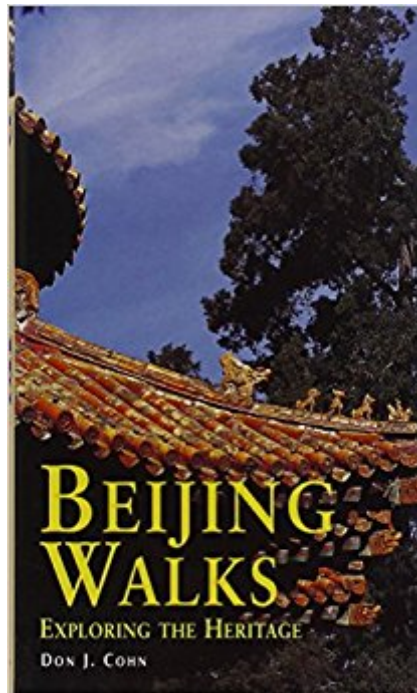




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Beijing Walks: Exploring The Heritage (Odyssey Illustrated Guides)



Synopsis

Beijing Walks presents six detailed walking tours of the most important historic quarters of the Chinese capital: the Forbidden City, the former Legation Quarter, Beihai Park, the Temple of Heaven, the Confucius Temple, the Summer Palace, Tiananmen Square,

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Don J. Cohn lived in Beijing for five years and has visited the city over 200 times since 1979. As a China scholar, he has written, edited, or translated over 50 books, articles, and reviews on many aspects of Chinese culture. He now divides his time between New York, Beijing, Shanghai, Tokyo, and Hong Kong.

I hesitated to purchase this book because the publish date was early 2008, which predated a lot of change in Beijing in preparation for the Olympics in August of 2008. And to be honest, we only used two of the walks listed in the book; Forbidden City and the Summer Palace, mainly due to time constraints. That said, the writing was fantastic! The author imparted information above and beyond what typical guidebooks offer, going into a brief historical summary of the site before talking the reader through an impeccable walking tour. And all I can say is that his dry asides about daily life in the Forbidden City had my friend and I in stitches throughout the day.

I took several of the walks in this book. The directions were easy to follow. The book points out

interesting details along the walks. My favorite was in the hutongs in Beijing. It really was a fabulous chance to see a non-tourist neighborhood. I found some great ink drawings while on this walk. The book really gave me details I did not find in the travel guides.

I purchased the book for a dear friend traveling to China in May. She is a walker and Tai Chi lover. She found the book very helpful and the book actually directed her to a Tai Chi class in Beijing. That photo of my friend is truly worth the 1,000 words! My only request was to find time to shop for a REAL nice high end handbag for me. We are both very happy she went to China!

In October 2008, we took this book with use to Beijing and I am so glad we did. It gives specific information on 6 very different areas of the city, including how to get to the starting point and to leave from the ending one. In addition to the specific sites involved in each walk, it often gives information on nearby attractions, and a section in the back describes places to eat nearby with candid reviews by the author. The best part is the actual material for each walk: about half of each section gives context, usually both historical and social, and the other half describes the walk itself and what you are seeing along the way. Given that Beijing is changing by the hour, it has valuable warnings about things that may have changed since the book was written (crucial information for one walk we did, even though this book is copyright 2008!). We ended up going to 4 of the 6 recommended areas, and following the book fairly closely for 3 of them. My only regret is we didn't use the book more for the 4th walk - I realized later we missed out on a lot! If you enjoy spending a little extra time understanding what you are seeing, and if you are relatively unfamiliar with Beijing, then you will find this book very rewarding, particularly if you prefer to tour on your own without a guide. This book also has beautiful photos.

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