

## THIS MONTH Beijing

BY TOM PATTINSON

### GETTING AROUND

Cabs are plentiful. They're also cheap, starting at 10RMB, with few journeys in the town centre costing more than 25RMB. But be warned. Most taxi drivers don't speak a word of English and invariably don't know the city particularly well either. Make sure you have the address of your destination written in Chinese and ideally a phone number too. Private car hire with a driver starts at around 800RMB per day and is worth the investment if you've got a packed schedule. Apart from the very centre, Beijing isn't a city you want to be walking around, but at just 2RMB per journey the easy-to-use metro is a bargain.

### WHERE TO STAY



Stick to the north east of the city where the vast majority of international companies are located, as well as the embassies and the best of the city's bars and restaurants. **The Opposite House** ([www.theoppositehouse.com](http://www.theoppositehouse.com), +8610 6417 6688) is a trendy luxury hotel in the embassy district and slap bang in the middle of the action. Good rates and some of the best F&B outlets in the city make this a first choice stay. The well-located **Westin Chaoyang** (+8610 5922 8888) gives you the service and standards you'd expect from the Westin brand, or for those on a budget try the **Red Hotel** ([www.red-hotel.com](http://www.red-hotel.com), +8610 6417 1066).

### NIGHTLIFE

The city's quality nightlife scene may be well hidden behind the plethora of neon-laden hip-hop clubs, but there's an increasing number



of classy lounge bars and after hours clubs. Try **d-Lounge** (+8610 6593 7710) to hang with Beijing's beautiful people, or brave **Mix** (+8610 6506 9888) if you want to see how the newly minted roll (their dice).

### WHERE TO EAT

You can find cuisine from every corner of the globe in the Sanlitun Village area, but if you're after something more Chinese, head to **Duck de Chine** (+8610 6501 8881) for a modern take on Peking Duck, or **Three Guizhou Men** (+8610 6551 8517) if you like succulent pork ribs that come with a spicy kick. Make sure

to try some street food – the best dumplings, noodles and kebabs can all be found around the hutong back streets of **Jiaodaokou** and **Houhai**.

### DON'T GO WITHOUT:

[www.bespokebeijing.com](http://www.bespokebeijing.com)

will be your friend on standby whilst you are in Beijing. Sign up before you arrive to get advice on hotels, book an airport pick-up, and get a pre-paid and pre-programmed local mobile phone with direct access to advice, translation and concierge-style services. You'll hit the ground running and never be lost or unsure how to spend your free time.

### BUSINESS ETIQUETTE

● Bring name cards galore. Make sure you offer and receive these with both hands.

● Business is rarely done on economic reasoning alone. A trusted friend will win the deal over a better offer from an unknown. Socialising and building relationships is therefore more important than the price on the table. And don't worry, boozy banquets have now been replaced by sophisticated meals in most circles.

● A presentation is not a presentation in China unless

it is packed with facts, figures, tables and graphs. A nice "ideas driven" presentation will be seen as under-prepared. If you don't have the figures then do as the locals sometimes do and make them up.

● Yes means yes... or no... or maybe. Direct confrontation is a no-no and saying no is impolite so be warned: "Yes we can" may mean "no bloody chance".

● And don't bow. This is China, not Japan. A handshake will do the job.

### FREE TIME



Beijing is arguably one of the most culturally exciting cities in the world right now. As well as the usual tourist sites there's a glut of cultural goings-on. Head to the **798 Art Zone** or **Caochangdi** to see the latest in contemporary art, stroll up the trendy **Nanluoguxiang**, filled with boutique shops and cafés, or walk around the **Drum and Bell Tower** to see what the city looked like before it won the Olympics. Music fans should head to Mao Livehouse (+8610 6402 5080) or Yugong Yishan (+8610 6404 2711) to see some Beijing punks in action. ☹