



Miles ahead: Jinshanling is the starting point of a 4.5-hour hike to Simatai

長路漫漫：由金山嶺到司馬台，需要步行約四個半小時



Off the 長城遊 by MARK GRAHAM wall

From a day-long hike to relaxing at a luxury retreat, here are five fabulous ways to enjoy China's most famous landmark

由一天的遠足旅程到入住豪華酒店，以下為你介紹五個遊覽長城的方法



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OT SO LONG ago the only way to see the Great Wall of China was to join a guided tour, enduring a bumpy coach ride from Beijing along dusty, one-lane country roads before taking a guide-chaperoned walk up the steps.

Now there are options galore to see the nation's most renowned historical treasure, including staying at luxury hotels by the Wall and self-guided tours. New highways have cut the journey time to the major Great Wall sightseeing spots of Badaling and Mutianyu to just over an hour. A private car, which can easily be arranged through hotel concierges, allows the most flexibility.

Here are five different ways to experience the historic structure, which, despite what some guide books might say, is not visible from space.

Photo (previous page): Michael Yamashita — IPNStock





Photos: Main: W. Buss - OTHK; Wall at night: China Tourism Press/The Image Bank/Getty Images. Walkers: Joseph Hoo



Rise at dawn and start your eight-kilometre hike along the Wall, visiting 31 towers along the way
起個大早，展開八公里、途經31座城樓的長城遠足之旅

1. TAKE A HIKE

Fancy a long walk along the Great Wall? It means a sunrise start and, given the distance and terrain involved, requires a decent level of fitness.

Needless to say, walking eight kilometres along the Wall is not on many tour itineraries; the majority of visitors content themselves with huffing and puffing up steep steps to one, or possibly two, watchtowers. But for those with an adventurous streak, a Beijing-based outfit offers a 4.5-hour hike from Jinshanling to Simatai, along a section that is, at times, overgrown and crumbling.

The expedition takes an entire day, beginning with the 6.30am coach departure at the Beijing Downtown Backpackers Accommodation. After a three-hour drive, passengers are more than ready for a serious Great Wall leg-stretch along a route that takes in 31 towers.

Hikers are advised to bring their own lunch and plenty of water, especially during the furnace-hot summer months, and ensure they wear sturdy footwear, comfortable clothing and a hat.

Completing the hike allows bragging rights that most Beijing visitors do not acquire and, of course, a chance to wear one of those "I Climbed the Great Wall" T-shirts with a certain smug pride.

Walking the Wall: Jinshanling to Simatai
Cost: RMB260 (about HK\$295) includes all transport and fees (bring food and refreshments).

Beijing Downtown Backpackers Accommodation

85 Nanluogu Alley, Dongcheng District
+86 10 8400 2429
www.backpackingchina.com



A renovated children's school at the Mutianyu section of the Wall (left) has been transformed into a restaurant, where diners can choose from the blackboard menu (below). The building also features glass made by local artists (right)

在慕田峪長城附近一座由小學改建而成的餐廳(左圖)，客人可從黑板上的餐牌(下圖)挑選佳餚。這裡還會展出由當地藝術家製造的玻璃(右圖)



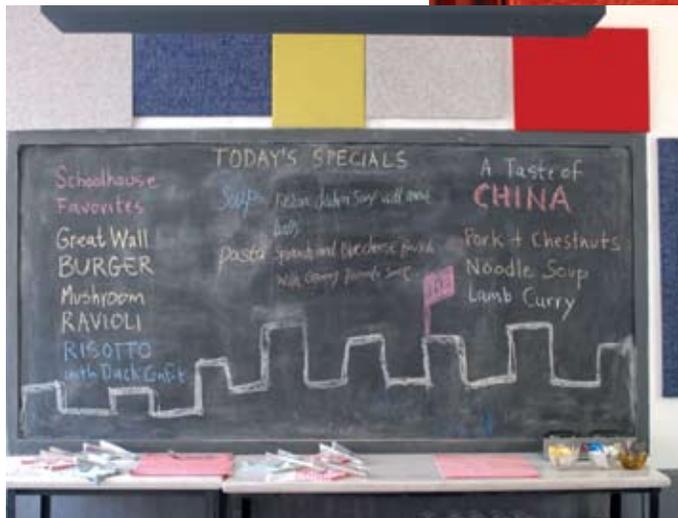
2. TASTY OPTION

Top-class restaurants located by the most popular parts of the Wall are few and far between, which is why savvy visitors plan their trips to Mutianyu. Here, it is possible to couple a morning's hiking with a delicious lunch.

Mutianyu is just over an hour's drive from Beijing, the last part along heavily forested, twisting country roads. Visitors can access the Wall by cable car or ski lift – and whizz back down by toboggan along a 1,580-metre German-built metal slide.

Mutianyu is rarely empty, so be prepared to hike some distance from the main cable-car station for peace and quiet. The left-hand section, towards the giant hillside characters that say “Long Live Chairman Mao”, tends to attract fewer people.

On the way back, have lunch at The Schoolhouse, a superb restaurant in a compound that once



educated the Mutianyu village children. It is one of many village structures converted for modern-day usage by American James H. Spear Jr. The entrepreneur also has a collection of luxurious courtyard houses that can be rented.

Great Wall at Mutianyu

Entry RMB40; cable car RMB50 round trip;
toboggan RMB40
Mutianyu Village, Huairou District
+86 10 6162 6505
www.mutianyugreatwall.net

The Schoolhouse

Mutianyu Village, Huairou District
+86 10 6162 6506
www.theschoolhouseatmutianyu.com





Photos: Schoolhouse X3; courtesy of The Schoolhouse. Wall: Nicholas Pavloff - Getty Images

3. HOT SPOT

Badaling is by far the most popular Great Wall visiting spot. Located just over an hour from the city by expressway, it was visited by United States President Richard Nixon on his ground-breaking trip to China in 1972.

When celebrities arrive the area is normally cleared, but most visitors must share the Wall with thousands of others during peak time, an experience that can induce mild claustrophobia.

It's best to arrive early by car, long before tourists have finished their hotel-buffet breakfasts, ensuring the Wall is reasonably crowd-free. Once whisked to the top by cable car, stride briskly towards a distant watchtower to ensure solitude and space – at least until the tour buses arrive.

As Badaling is so popular, authorities ensure it is in tip-top condition. It is as good a place as any to marvel at this extraordinary engineering feat, tracing its path across hills into the far distance. Much of the Ming Dynasty Wall's original 5,000-kilometre length has crumbled, or been dismantled, but Badaling has been superbly restored.

Great Wall at Badaling

Entry RMB45, cable car RMB60 round trip

+86 10 6912 1226

www.badaling.gov.cn



ALONE ON THE GREAT WALL

by **William Lindesay**

(Fulcrum Publishing)

An account of the Briton's ambitious run along more than 2,000 kilometres of the Wall, where he overcame bureaucratic obstacles, scaled hundreds of thousands of steps and got an awful lot of blisters. Lindesay subsequently made his home in China, in a farmhouse by the Great Wall.

THE GREAT WALL: FROM BEGINNING TO END

by **Michael Yamashita**

(Sterling)

Great photographs of the Wall at all times of the day, and all times of the year, from *National Geographic* regular Michael Yamashita. The accompanying text is by William Lindesay.

THE GREAT WALL: CHINA AGAINST THE WORLD, 1000 BC-2000 AD

by **Julia Lovell**

(Penguin)

The British historian and translator traces the role of the many Great Walls in China's history and their relatively recent regard within China.

THE GREAT WALL: THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF CHINA'S WONDER OF THE WORLD

by **John Man**

(Bantam Press)

The writer also penned a biography of Genghis Khan, whose marauding Mongolian troops successfully circumvented the Wall during their 13th-century conquest of China.

4. WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

Few people know more about the Great Wall than adventurer William Lindesay, who once ran more than 2,000 kilometres along its length and now makes his home close to a section near Beijing.

Lindesay, a tireless campaigner for the Wall's preservation, organises weekend hikes on and around the structure, allowing people to see it from different perspectives. Guests on the WildWall tours are picked up in Beijing on Friday afternoons and driven to Lindesay's secluded farmhouses, located close to the Wall.

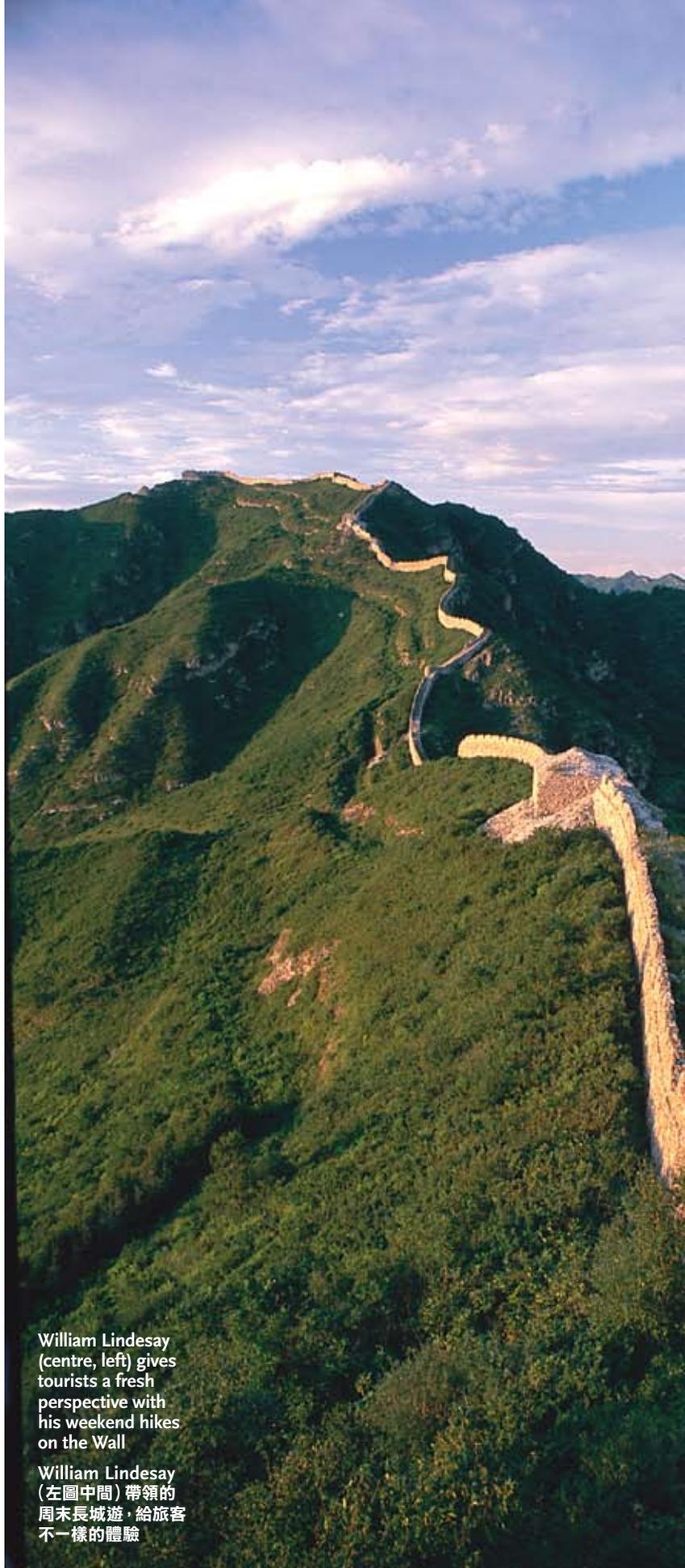
Guests can go on challenging hikes, including a walk to see the Wall at sunrise, or simply potter around the unspoiled countryside. After running much of its length and recently documenting sections close to Beijing, your host can answer any question about the Wall. All guests are given a signed copy of his latest photo book, *The Great Wall Revisited*.

Lindesay can also arrange more arduous hiking and camping trips to areas that few people are privileged to see. The Briton's tireless work on behalf of Wall preservation has won him numerous international awards and accolades including the Friendship Medal from the Chinese government and the Order of the British Empire from Queen Elizabeth II.

WildWall

WildWall weekends cost US\$550 per person including transport, meals and two nights' accommodation.

www.wildwall.com



William Lindesay (centre, left) gives tourists a fresh perspective with his weekend hikes on the Wall

William Lindesay (左圖中間)帶領的周末長城遊，給旅客不一樣的體驗

就在不久之前，參加導賞團仍是遊覽長城的唯一辦法。旅遊車在塵土飛揚、單線行車的鄉郊公路上行走，你必須先忍受顛簸的車程，幾經辛苦才能在導遊的陪同下拾級登上長城。

現在，遊覽這個中國歷史古蹟的方法，可謂五花八門。你可以入住長城旁的高級酒店，也可以自己漫步長城。以下為你介紹五種遊覽萬里長城的方式：

1. 好漢之選

喜歡自我挑戰的旅客，不妨嘗試從長城的金山嶺，步行四個半小時往司馬台。北京東堂客棧的長城一日遊旅程於早上六時半開始，首先是約三小時的旅遊巴士車程前往金山嶺，乘客下車後通常會急不及待要登上長城，讓雙腿運動一下。整個遠足旅程會經過31座城樓，參加者需自備午餐、大量食水，穿上耐用的運動鞋、輕便舒適的衣服和帽子。

完成這次遠足後，可以名正言順地穿上「不到長城非好漢」的T恤。

長城行：金山嶺至司馬台

收費為260人民幣（約295港元），包括交通費及其他費用（食物和飲料需自備）

東堂客棧

南鑼鼓巷85號

+86 10 8400 2429

www.backpackingchina.com

2. 美景佳餚

長城熱門路段一帶高級餐廳少之又少，因此許多講求美食享受的旅客都會選擇到慕田峪長城遊覽。旅客可以輕輕鬆鬆的早上到長城遠足，然後享用一頓美味的午餐。

慕田峪距離北京市約一小時車程。旅客可以選擇搭乘纜車或是索道吊車登山；下山則可選擇坐平底滑車，沿著德國製的1,580米金屬滑道飛馳而下。

慕田峪總是熱鬧非常，若想遠離人潮靜靜地欣賞長城，可朝著左邊寫上「毛主席萬歲」幾個大字的山坡走，那裡的遊客一般比較少。回程時，可以到小園餐廳用膳。

慕田峪長城

入場費為40人民幣，纜車來回收費50人民幣，下山滑道要40人民幣

懷柔區慕田峪村

+86 10 6162 6505

www.mutianyugreatwall.net

小園餐廳

懷柔區慕田峪村

+86 10 6162 6506

www.theschoolhouseatmutianyu.com

3. 最受歡迎路段

前美國總統尼克森1972年破冰訪華到過的八達嶺一直是長城最受歡迎的觀光點，因此也是修復得最好的其中一段。從北京市乘旅遊巴士，沿高速公路前往八達嶺，需時約一小時，因此這裡總是擠滿了遊客。

想避開人群，便要在大清早乘車出發，抵達後乘纜車登頂，然後趕快前往較遠的城樓。這樣，你至少可以在滿載遊客的旅遊巴士陸續到達之前，在長城上享受片刻寧靜。

八達嶺長城

入場費為45人民幣，纜車來回費用為60人民幣

+86 10 6912 1226, www.badaling.gov.cn

4. 長城秘境

旅遊探險家William Lindesay曾經沿著萬里長城行走2,000多公里，他對長城的認識和了解，相信沒有多少人可以相比。

不遺餘力推動長城保育的Lindesay會在周末舉辦Wild Wall導賞團，讓旅客從不同角度欣賞這個巍峨的建築奇蹟。參加Wild Wall導賞團的旅客，會在星期五下午由北京市乘專車，前往Lindesay設於長城附近的僻靜農舍，之後可選擇挑戰險要地段，觀賞日出；或在原始的郊野閒逛。

WildWall

WildWall Weekends收費為每位550美元，包括交通費、膳食及兩晚住宿。

www.wildwall.com

5. 豪華享受

講求享受和不惜大灑金錢的旅客，可入住「長城腳下的公社」，以豪華的方式欣賞長城美景。這個建於長城旁邊的五星級酒店共有42幢散佈四周，由12名亞洲建築師設計的別墅，每幢都設計成一間小型酒店，設有獨立客房和公共空間。部分別墅更設有露天平台，讓住客坐賞山谷的景致。

住客如想到長城走走，只要穿過酒店的專用入口，延綿不盡的長城便展現眼前。到附近的林地漫步，或是在Anantara旗下的水療中心享用各種療程也是不錯的選擇。

長城腳下的公社由凱賓斯基集團管理，提供的餐飲服務同樣是五星級。除了在酒店的餐廳享用美食外，住客如想在別墅平台燒烤，酒店亦可作出安排。

長城腳下的公社（凱賓斯基集團管理）

預訂房間，雙人房租金由140美元起

八達嶺高速路水關長城出口

+86 10 8118 1888

www.kempinski-thegreatwall.com



Villas at Commune By the Wall blend the modern and traditional, offering luxurious facilities and magnificent views

長城腳下的公社，由融合現代和傳統建築風格的別墅組成，提供豪華的設施和美不勝收的山色



Cathay Pacific Airways flies daily to Beijing, while its sister airline, Dragonair, flies there eight times a day

國泰航空每日均有航機飛往北京；其姊妹公司港龍航空則每日有八班航機飛往北京

5. THE HEIGHT OF LUXURY

A five-star haven for the discerning and well-heeled, Commune By the Wall Kempinski Beijing is the most luxurious way to experience China's famous ancient wonder. Each of the stunning 42 villas, designed by 12 Asian architects, is laid out like a mini-hotel, with shared common areas, individual bedrooms and, in some cases, decks with magnificent views across the valley.

It's a fabulous place to spend a few days, whether you're strolling in the forested grounds or taking a dip in the Anantara-run spa. The rooftop yoga area also offers guests a tranquil setting.

Management is by the Kempinski group, which ensures food at the split-level restaurant (the upper section has great terrace views) and service are

five star. Barbecues on the villa decks can also be arranged. If you want some extra pampering stay at one of the Presidential Suites and enjoy 24-hour butler service.

Strolling along the Great Wall is easy – just step through the hotel's private entrance and China's magnificent treasure stretches out before you.

Commune by the Great Wall Kempinski Beijing

Advanced booking price: doubles from US\$140
 Shuiguan Great Wall Exit,
 Badaling Highway
 +86 10 8118 1888
www.kempinski-thegreatwall.com

