5-Day Badaling to Huangyaguan Great Wall Hiking Tour

Trip overview

Conquer 37 kilometers (23 miles) of ancient mountain ramparts on this **5-Day Beijing Great Wall Hiking & Camping Tour**, an immersive private trekking expedition linking China's most dramatic wild, semi-restored, and classic Ming-era fortifications. Journey far beyond standard tourist gates as you traverse rugged stone ridges from **Badaling Ancient Wall** and untamed **Shixiaguan** to the jagged limestone crests of **Jiankou**, where you will pitch camp beneath the stars and wake to sunrise over **Zhenbeilou Watchtower**. Cross the legendary **Ox Horn Edge** into finely restored **Mutianyu**, trace rural footpaths and battle-scarred battlements from **Gubeikou** to photogenic **Jinshanling** and **Simatai West**, and cap your adventure along the steep cliffs and rare circular watchtowers of **Huangyaguan**—supported throughout by an expert trekking guide, private chauffeured transfers, and charming countryside stays at **Gubei Water Town**.

- **Durations:** 5 Days
- **Destinations:** Beijing
- **Tour inquiry:** https://asiachinatour.com/5-days-beijing-great-wall-hiking-tour/

Itinerary

Day 1: Hike the Hidden Great Wall — Badaling Ancient Wall to Shixiaguan & Jiankou Great Wall Camping

Meet your private English-speaking trekking guide and driver in your downtown Beijing hotel lobby at approximately 8:00 AM, then head northwest out of the city toward the **Badaling Ancient Great Wall**. Far removed from the crowded main Badaling tourist section, this semi-restored stretch offers an ideal balance of accessibility and rugged wilderness charm. Set off on a rewarding **5 km (3.1 miles)** hike along weathered, crenelated stone battlements, taking in sweeping panoramic vistas of rippling mountain peaks and the shimmering expanse of the Guanting Reservoir below.

Continue directly onto the untamed **Shixiaguan Great Wall** for a thrilling **2 km (1.2 miles)** adventure along raw, unrestored Ming-era masonry. Here, crumbling stone steps, steep inclines,

and brush-covered slopes demand careful footing and reward you with an authentic sense of discovery across **7 km (4.5 miles)** of total trail. After completing your trek, rejoin your guide and driver for the scenic transfer east to **Jiankou Village**, where you will ascend to a dramatic, secluded watchtower ridge to set up camp for an unforgettable overnight camping experience beneath the stars on the Great Wall.

Meals: On your own (Trail picnic lunch and camp dinner arrangements available)

Accommodation: Great Wall Camping near Jiankou Village

Expert Hiking & Camping Insights:
Because the transition from Badaling Ancient Wall into Shixiaguan involves loose gravel, steep stone stairways, and uneven footholds, wearing high-ankle hiking boots with aggressive tread and bringing collapsible trekking poles will significantly improve stability. Mountain ridge temperatures drop sharply after sunset even outside of winter, so pack insulated base layers, a windproof outer shell, and a headlamp for navigating around camp at night. Be sure to carry at least two liters of drinking water and high-energy trail snacks in your daypack for the 7 km hike, while your guide and support team handle the heavier camping gear, sleeping bags, and tent setup at Jiankou.

Day 2: Wild-to-Restored Great Wall Traverse — Jiankou Sunrise to Mutianyu Great Wall

Wake early to witness a breathtaking sunrise painting the rugged mountain crests in warm golden light directly from your camp along the Wall. Climb up to the iconic **Zhenbeilou Watchtower** to take in sweeping, dramatic views of the jagged **Jiankou Great Wall** snaking along knife-edge limestone ridges. After breaking camp, set off eastward on a challenging **10 km (6 miles)** ridge traverse toward the **Mutianyu Great Wall**, scrambling over weathered Ming-era brickwork, steep stairways, and overgrown mountain passes where ancient masonry blends seamlessly into wild forest.

As you cross the legendary **Ox Horn Edge** and transition from the raw, unrestored battlements of Jiankou onto the **Mutianyu Great Wall**, experience a striking visual and architectural contrast—stepping onto finely restored stone pathways, crisp crenelated parapets, and stately Ming watchtowers framed by lush mountain greenery. Continue strolling along the well-preserved ramparts before descending from the Wall to the valley below. Reward your trekking accomplishment with a hearty late lunch at a local countryside restaurant near the base of Mutianyu, then check into a peaceful boutique inn or resort nestled right at the foot of the Great Wall for a restful overnight stay.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel / Boutique Inn at the Foot of Mutianyu Great Wall

Expert Hiking & Trail Insights:
The 10 km traverse from Jiankou to Mutianyu features steep, loose rock scrambles—particularly around the Ox Horn Edge bypass—so wearing supportive hiking boots with strong ankle grip and carrying trekking poles is essential. Because lunch is served late after your descent, pack high-protein trail snacks and at least two liters of water before leaving camp to keep your energy steady throughout the morning climb. Once you reach the restored Mutianyu section, you can choose to walk down the stone steps or take the scenic cable car or toboggan slide to the valley floor to save tired knees after your trek.

Day 3: Historic & Rural Great Wall Trek — Gubeikou to Jinshanling Great Wall & Gubei Water Town

Begin your morning around 8:00 AM after breakfast with a scenic drive northeast to the historic **Gubeikou Great Wall**, a pivotal strategic pass that witnessed countless battles from the Northern Qi Dynasty through the 1933 Great Wall Defense against Japanese forces. Compared with the rugged, steep climbs of Jiankou, today's **10 km (6 miles)** trek unfolds at a steadier, more leisurely pace over roughly five hours. Spend the first two hours hiking along Gubeikou's weathered, bullet-scarred brick ramparts, absorbing the deep military history preserved in its crumbling watchtowers and quiet mountain ridges.

Around mid-morning, descend from the wall onto a peaceful rural footpath to bypass an active military zone, walking for approximately 1.5 hours through quiet countryside orchards and terraced cornfields. This scenic detour leads you straight back onto the ramparts at the **Jinshanling Great Wall**, renowned among photographers and trekkers for its dense concentration of uniquely styled Ming watchtowers and sweeping, uninterrupted mountain panoramas. After completing your hike, enjoy a well-earned lunch at a local countryside restaurant near Jinshanling before transferring a short distance to **Gubei Water Town (Gubeikou Water Town)**, where you will check in for a relaxing overnight stay beside illuminated canals and mountain views.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel / Boutique Inn at Gubei Water Town

Expert Hiking & Trail Insights:
Because the 1.5-hour countryside detour between Gubeikou and Jinshanling passes through open farmland and dirt trails with minimal tree cover, wearing a sun hat, breathable sun-protective clothing, and sunglasses is strongly recommended alongside sturdy trail shoes. Keep your camera readily accessible as you re-enter the Jinshanling section, where closely spaced watchtowers with double-eaved roofs and barrier walls create some of the most photogenic compositions anywhere along the Great Wall. After checking in at Gubei Water Town in the late afternoon, take an evening stroll along the lantern-lit stone bridges and canal-side courtyards to unwind and admire the illuminated Simatai Great Wall glowing on the ridge above.

Day 4: Photogenic Great Wall Ridge Walk — Jinshanling to Simatai West & Gubei Water Town

Depart your hotel around 8:00 AM after breakfast for a scenic 30-minute drive to the **Jinshanling Great Wall**, widely regarded by landscape photographers as the most visually captivating stretch of the entire wall. Set off on a rewarding **6 km (4 miles)** trek eastward toward **Simatai West**, the historic junction where the Jinshanling and Simatai sections meet. Over roughly 3.5 to 4 hours of steady ridge walking, immerse yourself in a striking architectural dialogue between the past and present—traversing finely restored stone battlements beside weathered, unrestored Ming-era watchtowers that stand much as they did centuries ago.

Every turn along this half-restored corridor reveals sweeping, uninterrupted vistas that shift dramatically with the seasons—from vibrant spring wildflowers and lush summer ridges to fiery autumn foliage and crisp winter snow. After reaching the junction at Simatai West and soaking in the panoramic views across the mountain valleys, descend from the ramparts and meet your

private driver for the comfortable transfer back to **Gubei Water Town (Gubeikou Water Town)**, leaving your afternoon and evening free to relax by the waterways, sample local courtyard snacks, or soak in natural mountain hot springs.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel / Boutique Inn at Gubei Water Town

Expert Hiking & Photography Insights:
Starting promptly at 8:00 AM places you on the Jinshanling ridge while low morning sunlight casts long, dramatic shadows across the brickwork and illuminates the intricate double-eaved watchtowers before midday haze sets in. Although today's 6 km route is shorter than previous traverses, the semi-restored sections near Simatai West still feature steep, uneven stone steps and missing parapets, making slip-resistant trail shoes and trekking poles highly worthwhile. Upon returning to Gubei Water Town in the afternoon, consider booking a soothing hot spring bath at one of the town's mountain resorts to ease tired muscles ahead of your final trekking day.

Day 5: Architectural Finale on the Wall — Taipingzhai to Huangyaguan Great Wall & Return to Beijing

Set off early around 8:00 AM after breakfast for a scenic drive into the dramatic mountain cliffs of Jizhou to explore the **Huangyaguan (Yellow Cliff Pass) Great Wall**, globally celebrated as the dramatic course of the annual International Great Wall Marathon. Beginning at **Taipingzhai**, embark on a rewarding **4 km (2.5 miles)** ridge trek lasting approximately three hours across steep stone stairways and precipitous cliffside battlements toward Huangyaguan Pass. Unlike other sections along the northern frontier, this stretch showcases rare architectural diversity, pairing classic rectangular Ming watchtowers with distinctive circular towers—most notably the famous **Widow's Tower**—set against sheer ochre cliffs that glow warm gold in the morning sun.

As you make your way toward the fortress gate at Huangyaguan, admire the intricate defensive layout including the Bagua (Eight Trigrams) labyrinth design and well-preserved beacon platforms overlooking the valley floor. After descending from the wall, reward your final day on the ramparts with a hearty late lunch at a welcoming countryside restaurant near the pass before settling into your private vehicle for the comfortable transfer back to downtown Beijing, bringing your multi-day Great Wall trekking expedition to a memorable close.

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: End of Service

Expert Hiking & Architectural Insights:
The descent from Taipingzhai toward Huangyaguan features some of the steepest stone steps of the trip—famous among Great Wall Marathon runners—so using trekking poles and planting your feet sideways on steep risers will help protect your knees. Keep an eye out for the rare cylindrical watchtowers built during the Northern Qi and Ming eras, as their rounded stone masonry offers a fascinating structural contrast to the square towers you hiked past at Jiankou and Jinshanling. Since lunch takes place after your three-hour hike, packing a light mid-morning energy bar and plenty of water will keep you fueled until you sit down at the table.

Booking Policy

Cancellation Policy

Cancellation by Customer

- Cancellation received before 60 days: FREE of charge
- Cancellation received from 30 days to 59 days prior arrival date: 20% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 15 days to 29 days prior arrival date: 40% of total rate
- Cancellation received from 7 days to 14 days prior arrival date: 70% of total rate
- Cancellation received less than 7 days prior arrival date or No show: 100% of total rate

Children Policy

The rate for children applicable for one child sharing a twin or double cabin with two adults.

- For infant (<04 years old): Free of Charge
- 04 - 11 years old without bed: 50% adult rate
- 04 - 11 years old with extra bed: 75% adult rate
- Above 11 years old with extra bed: 100% adult rate

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