

Research Handbook The Palace Museum

The Forbidden City



Ticket Purchase Information

Reservation Platform: Official WeChat Mini Program of the Palace Museum
Ticket Release Time: Reservations start at 8:00 PM every night, with bookings available up to 7 days in advance. Please fill out the ticket purchase information beforehand.

Children's Policy: Minors aged 6 years and under or with a height of 1.2 meters and below do not need a reservation but must be accompanied by an adult. A maximum of 5 tickets can be reserved per WeChat account.

Opening Hours: 8:30 AM-5:00 PM, with ticket inspection stopping at 4:00 PM.

Ticket Inspection Information: Morning tickets allow entry until 12:00 PM. Afternoon tickets allow entry starting at 11:00 AM.

Required Documents: ID card!

Opening Days: Closed on Monday (except for legal holidays).

Itinerary Changes: If there are any changes to your booked itinerary, please remember to cancel it in mini program.

Luggage Storage (Free)

Luggage Size: Suitcases larger than 20 inches are not allowed inside, and bags can not be stored.

Prohibited Items: Lighter fluid is not allowed. Pets and valuables (such as watches and computers) are prohibited from being stored.

Storage Process: Register and store your luggage opposite the Meridian Gate (open your reservation information in advance to save time). Keep your storage tag safe!

Luggage Retrieval: Retrieve your luggage with the storage tag (pick up before closing). Luggage can be delivered directly to your designated exit (approximately 2 hours).

Email chinicetravel@gmail.com or follow us on Instagram and Facebook to get detailed guides on downloading, registering, using WeChat for payments, buying tickets, and more.

Plan your Beijing trip with ease!

Tips:

Sun Protection/Warmth: Choose sun protection or warm gear based on the weather

Wear Comfortable Shoes: The Palace Museum is large, with a lot of walking, so wear comfortable shoes.

Bring Water and Snacks: Prices inside the Palace Museum are high, so bring your own water and snacks to save money and for convenience.

GO!



Palace Museum Entry Pass

Time _____

Name _____

Mood _____

PASSED

The Forbidden City

A Royal Palace Journey Through Time and Space

Hello! I'm the Forbidden City, also known as the Imperial Palace, right in the heart of Beijing. Built in 1406 during the Yongle reign of the Ming dynasty, I was the home and government seat of 24 emperors across the Ming and Qing dynasties. That's over 600 years of history right within my walls!

With more than 90 courtyards and 9,371 rooms, I am one of the largest and most intricately designed ancient palatial structures in Chinese history, and I stand proud as the world's largest surviving palace complex.

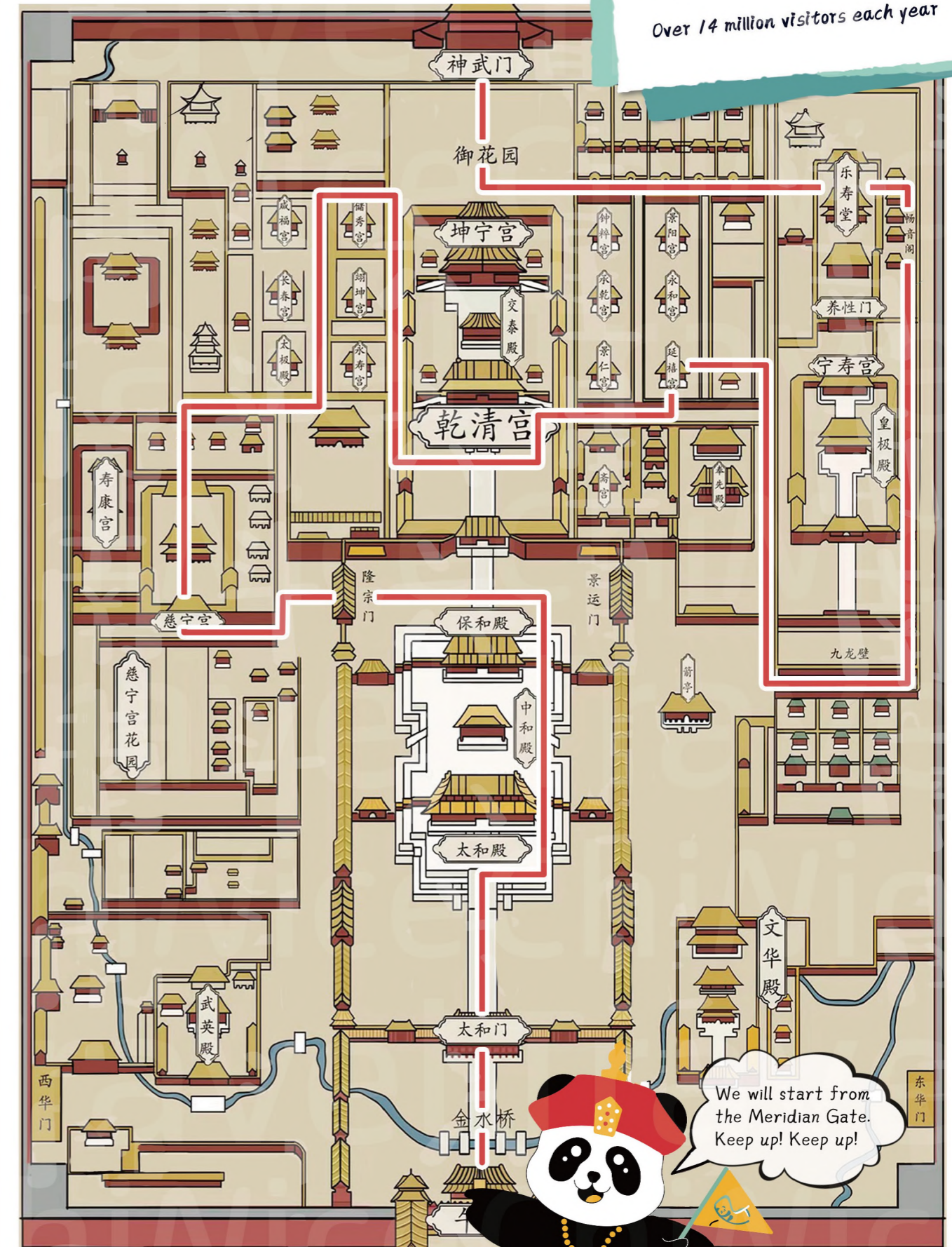
In 1925, I swung open my gates to the public, transforming into the Palace Museum. Today, let's start our journey from the Meridian Gate. Each step will take you closer to the fascinating history and royal lifestyle of China's emperors. Get ready to step back in time and explore centuries of awe-inspiring history!



Route Map

Explore Every Step of the Imperial City

Equivalent to 100 football fields
The surrounding walls are 10 meters high.
Surrounded by a 3,520-meter-long moat
Over 14 million visitors each year



ChiNice ChiNice
 Travel Travel
 ChiNice ChiNice

This is the tallest building in the Forbidden City.



Entering through this gate, we will officially enter the Palace Museum and begin our royal journey!

The Meridian Gate was also the scene of grand celebrations. When the imperial army won a major victory and returned triumphantly, captured prisoners were presented to the emperor right here. It was a moment of glory and celebration, filled with music and cheers. However, not all events at the Meridian Gate were joyful. In the Ming Dynasty, this was where the emperor would punish disobedient officials with a "court beating," known as "Ting Zhang." It was a stern reminder of the emperor's power and authority. So, as you stand before the Meridian Gate, imagine the vibrant history that unfolded here—ceremonies, celebrations, and solemn moments—all part of the rich tapestry of life in the Forbidden City!

Meridian Gate Door Studs: The door studs on the Meridian Gate are arranged in a pattern of 9 vertical and 9 horizontal rows. In ancient times, the number 9 was considered the highest yang number, symbolizing imperial power.



"Come on! Let's draw a face on the door nail!"

"jiaotu"

"jiaotu" is a mythical creature in Chinese culture, often depicted as a dragon or a creature similar to a dragon. It is one of the nine sons of the dragon in Chinese mythology, known for its association with doors and gates, symbolizing protection and guarding against evil.



During the Qing Dynasty, the empress could enter through the central gate in a sedan chair during the emperor's wedding.

East Side Gate:

The gate through which ministers enter and exit.

Central Gate:

Reserved for the Emperor's Exclusive Use

West Side Gate:

Entrance for Imperial Family and Nobility

Task: Count how many door studs are on the middle door ().



Come on! Let's enter through the middle gate.

The medial axis: The total length of the medial axis is 7.8 kilometers. It's the longest and most complete ancient urban axis in the world, known as the soul and backbone of Beijing city.

The Forbidden City is located at the center of the medial axis, and the architecture follows an asymmetrical layout. Walking from the Meridian Gate to the Shenwu Gate, it seems to pass through a thousand years of history.



Medial axis

Crossing the historical backbone of Beijing from ancient to modern times

The Hall of Union Peace

The Palace of Heavenly Purity

Qianqing Gate

The dotted line represents a road, which has a loud name called "Tianjie".

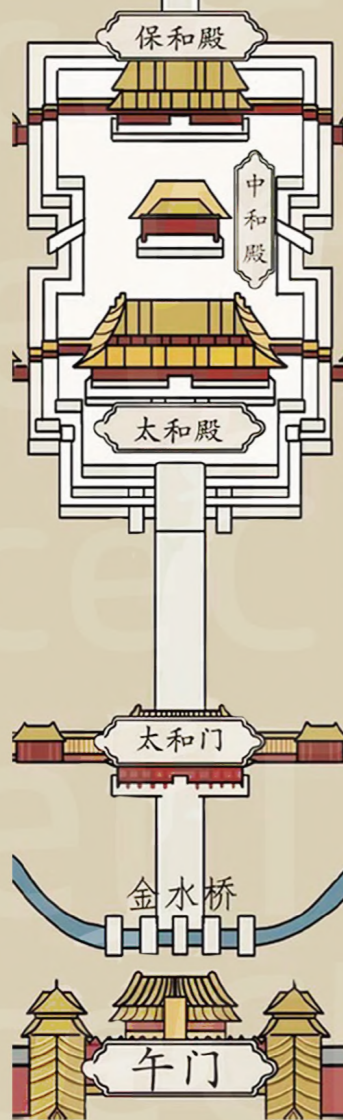
The Hall of Preserving Harmony

The Hall of Central Harmony

Hall of Supreme Harmony

Gate of Supreme Harmony

Meridian Gate



Outer court of the Forbidden City:

The center of the Outer Court is the Hall of Supreme Harmony, the Hall of Central Harmony, and the Hall of Preserving Harmony, collectively known as the Three Great Halls, which are the places where the country holds major ceremonies. For example, celebrating holidays, holding exams and other important events.

The Inner Court:

The center of the inner court is The Palace of Heavenly Purity, The Hall of Union Peace, Kunning Gong, collectively known as the Rear Three Palaces, which are the residences of the emperor and empress. There is a large garden behind, also known as the Imperial Garden. It is a place for the emperor to relax and entertain.

Jinshui Bridge

Precious and rare water-related landscapes in the palace

The Jinshui River is exclusively used by the emperor's family and runs through the Forbidden City. There are five most beautiful stone bridges in front of the entrance of the Hall of Supreme Harmony. They represent five Chinese virtues: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness.



Yuda Bridge: Exclusive for the Emperor

Wanggong Bridge: Relatives of the emperor and the imperial family

Wanggong Bridge: Relatives of the emperor and the imperial family

On both sides are grade bridges: Minister of Civil and Military Affairs

False

Shi Biela (Manchu)

The Shi Haishao is an important equipment in the alarm system of the Forbidden City. Its principle is a loudspeaker amplifier. When an intruder appears, blow it hard and the sound will quickly spread around.

Remember, only the "Shi Haishao" with holes can be sounded. No holes are all fake.



Task: How many real Shibiela did you find on Jinshui Bridge ()

Gate of Supreme Harmony

The Youngest Building in the Forbidden City

The Gate of Supreme Harmony is the grand main entrance to the Forbidden City, built during the Ming-dynasty's Yongle period and later renamed in the Qing dynasty. As the most prestigious gate in ancient China, it symbolizes the emperor's supreme power.

A dramatic event occurred on a December night in the 14th year of Emperor Guangxu's reign when an oil lamp ignited a massive fire that raged for two days, destroying many buildings. With Emperor Guangxu's wedding approaching, craftsmen quickly recreated the gate using wood and colorful fabric to ensure the wedding could proceed smoothly.

Rebuilt in the 20th year of Guangxu's reign, the Gate of Supreme Harmony has stood proudly for over 120 years.



Find me, and I will reward you with a lifetime of good luck.



Female Lion: With her paw on a cub, symbolizing prosperous offspring!

The oldest and largest bronze lion in the Forbidden City

Did you find me?



Male Lion: Standing with a paw on a ball, symbolizing the stabilization of the country!

Touch it and bring good luck home!

The Forbidden city Lions

Do you have naturally curly hair?



The gatekeepers of the Forbidden city are not dogs.

The curls on the lion's head represent auspicious meanings. The lion heads at the entrance of the imperial palace have forty-five curls, symbolizing the emperor's supreme status.



This is a symbol of good fortune.



There are six pairs of lions in the Forbidden City. Have you found them all?

Why are your ears drooping?

Did you know? The lions standing guard at the emperor's outer court are there to protect the palace, just like loyal guards! These majestic lions are always alert, watching over the emperor's home. However, in the inner court where the royal family lives, the lions have droopy ears. This special design reminds everyone inside to listen less and speak less about the affairs of the outer court.

Task: How many lions have you found in the Forbidden City? ()

Why Are Lions Guarding the Gate?

Long ago, there were no lions in ancient China. That changed in 138 BC when Emperor Han Wudi sent Zhang Qian on a mission through the Silk Road, and he brought the first lions to China. With their mighty and fierce looks, lions quickly became the emperor's favorite animals.

Hall of Supreme Harmony

The crowning masterpiece of the Forhidden city

Meet the Hall of supreme Harmony, also known as the 'Golden Throne Hal.' it was first built way back in 1420 during the Ming dynasty's Yongle era. Originally, it was called the Hall of Heavenly Reverence. Later, in the Ming dynasty under Emperor jiajing, its name changed to the Hall of imperial supremacy. Then, during the Qing dynasty under Emperor shunzhi, it got its current name. It was rebuilt once more in 1695 during Emperor Kangxi's reign.

Standing tall at 35.05 meters, including its base, the Hall of supreme Harmony is the second tallest structure in the Forbidden City, just after the Meridian Gate.



Roof: This is the highest grade design among ancient building roofs.

This building is 11 bays wide, 5 bays long, and has a total of 55

Building body: Length 64.24 meters, width 37 meters.

Base: Consists of three layers of marble, totaling 8.13 meters in height.

This isn't just any path, it's home to the magnificent Cloud Dragon stone Carving, one of the coolest sculptures in the entire Palace Museum.

Task: How many dragons did you count?

What is in front of the Hall of Supreme Harmony?

These elements together create a magnificent scene in front of the Hall of supreme Harmony. They represent the powerful majesty of the emperor and the prosperity of the nation. Plus, they have real purposes and uses too!

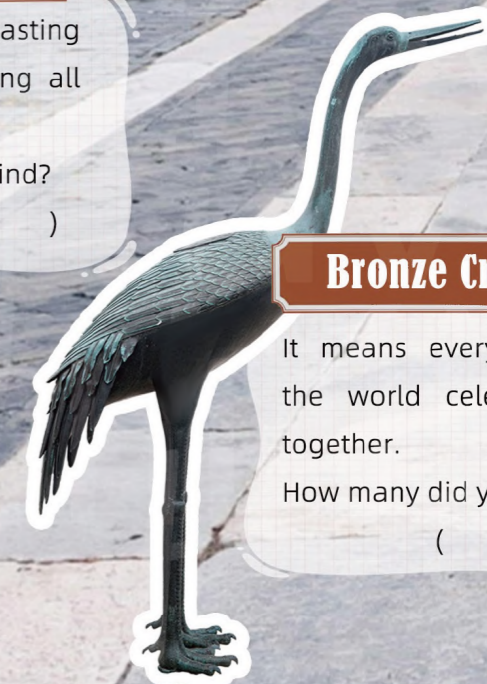


Bronze Tortoise

Symbolizing everlasting life and unity among all people.

How many did you find?

()



Bronze Crane

It means everyone in the world celebrating together.

How many did you find?

()



Sundial

An ancient tool used to tell time by the shadow of the sun.

How many did you find?

()

What is in front of the Hall of Supreme Harmony?

These elements together create a magnificent scene in front of the Hall of Supreme Harmony. They represent the powerful majesty of the emperor and the prosperity of the nation. Plus, they have real purposes and uses too!

Task: Find them and count.



Bronze Tortoise

Symbolizing everlasting life and unity among all people.

How many did you find?

()



Bronze Crane

It means everyone in the world celebrating together.

How many did you find?

()



Sundial

An ancient tool used to tell time by the shadow of the sun.

How many did you find?

()



Incense Burner

Each of the 18 incense burners stands for one of the Qing Dynasty's 18 provinces.



Dragon Head

The drainage system of the Forbidden City, with 1142 drains in the Hall of Supreme Harmony square, symbolizes a continuous flow of wealth.



Jia Liang

Ancient standard measuring device, symbolizing fairness.

How many did you find?

()



Water Jar

Used for fire prevention, there are 308 large water vats in the Forbidden City.

How many did you find?

()

Six Gurgoyles — The mysterious guardian on the roof

In the architectural form of ancient Chinese palaces, there were five upper ridges, each with six animal heads, known as the "Six Gurgoyles".

Six beasts: The beast-shaped components placed on the roof ridge are also called ridge beasts, symbolize good luck and have a decorative effect.



It symbolizes the emperor



It symbolizes the queen



It symbolizes power



It symbolizes guarding



It symbolizes reverence and awe



It symbolizes majesty



It symbolizes peace



It symbolizes fairness



It symbolizes control



It symbolizes protection

Task: Go to the Hall of Supreme Harmony and shout out their names loudly!

"My name is Qifengxian, symbolizing people's hope for world peace."



The Secret of auspicious beasts

The more auspicious beasts on palace buildings, the greater the power they represent. There are ten auspicious beasts in the Hall of Supreme Harmony, symbolizing the supreme imperial power; What about other palaces? Go and count.

Hall of Supreme Harmony Architecture

Imagine a building that's over 600 years old and has stood tall through more than 200 earthquakes, big and small! Every time, it shakes but doesn't fall down. So, what's the secret that keeps it standing strong? Let's find out!



Imagine a tiny shield shaped like a raindrop, called a 'water drop.' It hangs on buildings to catch rain and keep the walls from getting

Think of a 'Dou Gong' as a cool trick used in old Chinese buildings. It's like using special wooden blocks that lock together without any nails! These blocks stick out and fit into each other, making the building strong and looking really neat.

In ancient Chinese buildings, beams are like big, strong wooden arms that hold up the roof. People long ago loved to decorate these beams, so they carved and painted them beautifully. This is called "carved beams and painted rafters."

Chuang Ling are special window designs that look like flowers and let in light and air. They are not just useful but also beautiful!

Inside the Hall of Supreme Harmony



建極極猷

Next to the emperor's throne are six giant golden pillars, each with a dragon wrapped around it. The dragons look like they're flying through clouds.

A long time ago, the emperor had a special job. He had to listen to the heavens and help the people. It's like how companies today have a mission to do good things for everyone!



After the Qing Dynasty ended, the dragon throne from the Hall of Supreme Harmony was lost. Later, experts found it in a storage room.

Task: Count how many dragons are on the main hall! ()

Inside, there's a tiny gadget that makes it 'chirp' like a real bird. It's like having a little bird that sings just for you!



Nine-Loong Wall



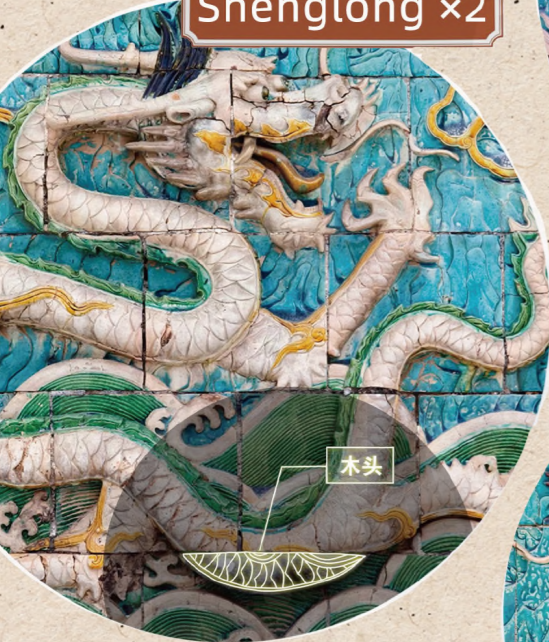
The Nine-loong wall is 29.4 meters long, 3.5 meters high, and 0.45 meters thick. It was built against the palace wall, and only one side can be seen, which is a single-sided glass screen wall.



Xinglong x2



Zhenglong x1



Shenglong x2



Qianlong x2

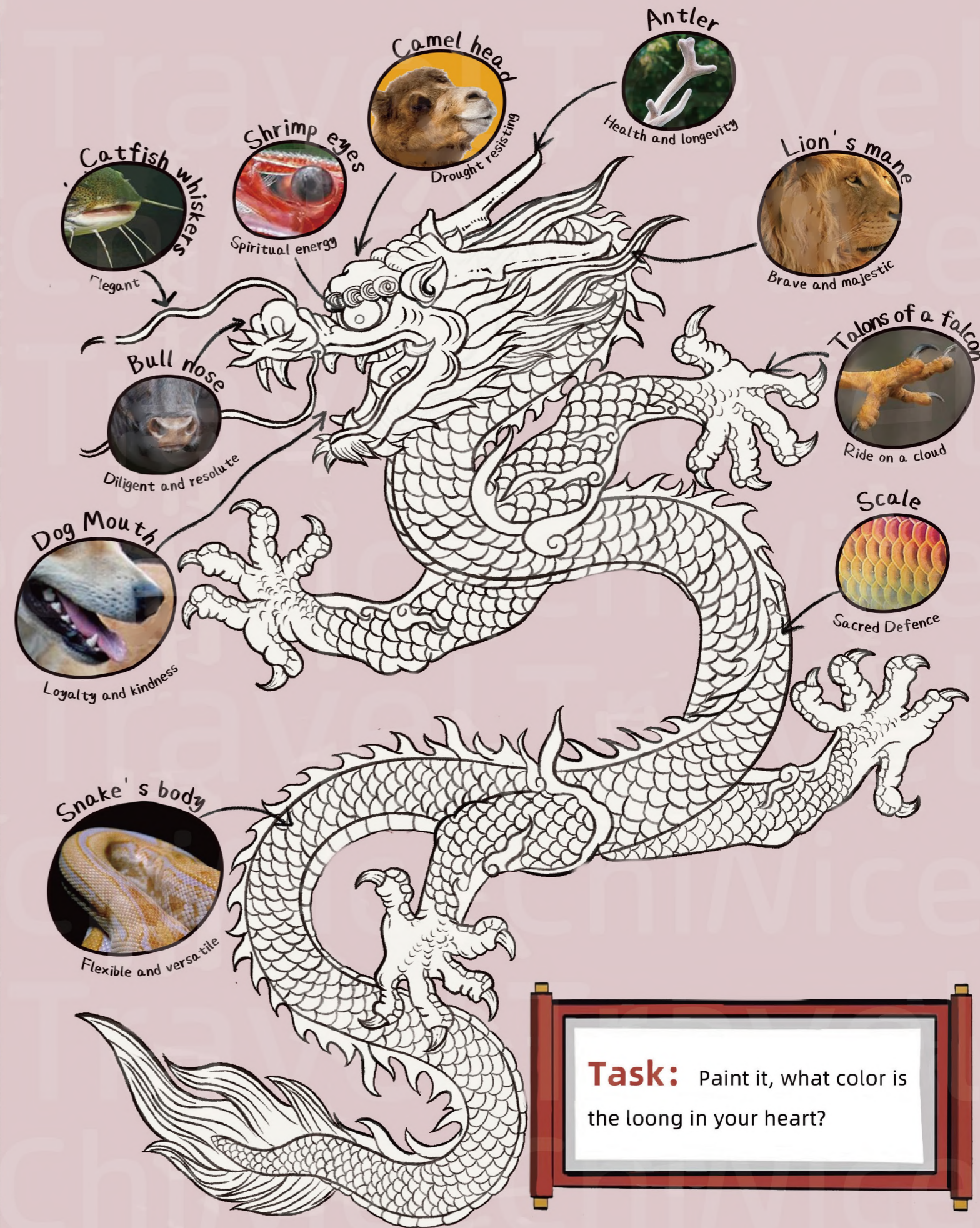


Jianglong x2

The yellow "zhenglong" is in the middle, The loong bent its body, holding the bead under its flame head, widened its eyes and opened its mouth majestic and imposing.

There are still three existing ancient glazed Nine-loong Walls in China.
 Nine-loong wall of Datong
 Nine-loong wall of Pingyao
 Nine-loong wall of Beijing

What animals make up the image of a Loong ?



Task: Paint it, what color is the loong in your heart?

The Imperial garden

The tranquility and beauty of royal gardens

The Yujing Pavilion:

The Yujing Pavilion is the place where the emperor ascended on the Ninth Double Ninth Festival overlooking the entire Forbidden City from the pavilion.

Duixiu Mountain:

The mountain is made of the Taihu Lake Lake stones and is about 10 meters high.

Task:

Go check in with the most beautiful ceiling of the Forbidden city!



Qianqiu Pavillon "Zao Jing"

Look up and take a closer look! Otherwise, you may miss the most beautiful ceiling in the Forbidden City



This is the "Zao jing" of the Qianqiu Pavilion in the Imperial Garden. This dome shaped ceiling is called the "zao jing" and is a symbol of China's feudal hierarchy! It can only be used in higher-level buildings.



ChiNice
Travel

Facebook | ChiNice Tra

Ins | CHINICE.TRAVEL

Email | chinicetravel@gmail.com

