



Located southwest of Qianmen market, Liulichang is a market which specialises in Chinese paintings, calligraphy, rare books, and arts and crafts. The market was rebuilt in the 1980's to resemble the original street from the Qing Dynasty.



In the Ming and Qing times, Liulichang was a favourite place for scholars, painters, calligraphers and authors that gathered there to write, compile and purchase books, as well as to paint and compose poetry. By the Kangxi period (1661-1722), Liulichang had become a flourishing cultural centre. In order to support this cultural diversity, many shops were established to cater for the artisans and scholars.



During the 1700's, the street became even more prosperous. Shops were filled to the roof beams with books, and the streets filled with treasures and trinkets. Peculiar to the Liulichang market was the proliferation of goods which lined the street. The Emperor of the time ordered a complete revision of the national library and hence named the street a centre for research in textual criticism.



For visiting scholars, a book-buying trip to Liulichang, with over 30 bookstores, is one of the pleasures of a stay in Beijing. Liulichang is now a relaxing place to walk and browse in the stores. Be sure to not get carried away shopping in Liulichang. Remember that the stores are often very overpriced and there is no way to guarantee the authenticity of what they are claiming. Liulichang is easiest reached by taxi. There are tours, however with no admission price, the taxi is the cheapest option.