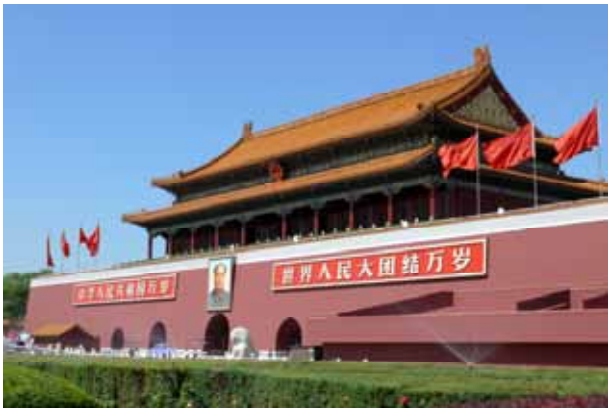




Tian An Men

fact sheet

Tiananmen Square is the heart, soul and symbol of Beijing. The Square gets its name from the gate to the north, Gate of Heavenly Peace. The gate was originally the entrance to the imperial city of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, constructed in the fifteenth year of Ming Yong Le. The Square itself was constructed in the 20th century, with much of the work done in 1949 when Chairman Mao Zedong stood on the Rostrum and proclaimed the People's Republic of China.



The Square is flanked by 2 Russian style buildings. The one to the west is the Great Hall of the People, and on the east lies the National Museum. These 2 buildings cast an imposing shadow on the mood in the Square, being ever reminded of the weight of history and the role of the government in the lives of everyday Chinese people.



In the centre of the Square lies the tomb of Chairman Mao, known as the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall. If you have time, you can line up and file through to view his body, lying in state. Various other monuments and statues lie around the Square, reminding people of important events in Chinese history.



The Square, despite its considerable size, can get quite crowded. The local Chinese enjoy the open space on the weekend, going to the Square to fly a kite or just sit and watch the passers-by.