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The People's Republic of China is home to one of the busiest, most populated cities in the world. It's also one of the oldest, with evidence of human ancestry dating back over half a million years ago. You'll find a whole host of attractions to visit in this bustling metropolis. Here are just a few that you might want to make sure are on your list.

The Great Wall of China is an absolute must for those exploring Beijing. You can visit the wall at multiple locations. Badaling, about 40 miles north of Beijing, is the most well-preserved part of the wall but the Great Wall at Mutianyu is less crowded. There are city buses that service parts of the Wall and day tours from the city centre as well. Research the pros and cons of different parts of the Wall before you plan your trip – some are steeper than others and thus more appropriate for those interested in a hike. You may want to pack a picnic for the day ahead.

The Forbidden City is located in the centre of Beijing. The former palace of the Ming and Qing dynasties, the Forbidden City now holds the Palace Museum, an enormous museum spanning 175 acres. You'll learn a lot about China's history whilst viewing art and artefacts from the last 5,000 years. With more than 900 rooms, you could easily spend at least one full day here. Be prepared for crowds, as it gets very busy, especially in the summer. You can hire a guide to show you around but always check opening hours before you go, as they vary depending on the time of year.

Tiananmen Square, located in the centre of Beijing, is a definite must-see part of the city. The historic square has several attractions that you might want to check out, including Tiananmen Tower, Monument to the People's Heroes and the Great Hall of the People. You may want to set your alarm to see the daily flag raising ceremony at the Square. It usually happens around 7:30 a.m. but check times online before you go, as it does vary depending on the month. Make sure to get there early for a good viewing spot, as this is a popular attraction.

There are many, many more things to see and do while in Beijing, but hopefully this has given you a good starting point. As with any trip, plan ahead to make sure you see everything you want while in the city. Book a hotel in Beijing before you go, since they do fill up, and consider packing a lunch and bringing snacks with you when you're out for the day, this will save you time and money and will allow you to get around to more of Beijing's must-see attractions.

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