

Recommended China Books

General China History/Biography

Buddhism Plain and Simple. Steve Hagen.

Concise, straightforward explanation of the principles and practices of Buddhism.

The Burma Road. Donovan Webster.

Epic story of the China-Burma-India theater in World War II and the building of the Burma Road.

The Cambridge Illustrated History of China. Patricia Ebrey.

Lavishly illustrated book covering China's history from ancient times to present.

Chiang Kai-Shek: China's Generalissimo and the Nation He Lost. Jonathan Fenby.

Narrative biography of one of the 20th century's most influential people.

Chinese. Jerry Norman.

Comprehensive study of the origins and history of Chinese written and spoken language and dialects.

Chinese Architecture. Fu Xinian et al.

A review of 7,000 years of Chinese architecture.

The Chinese Garden. Maggie Keswick.

The mysteries and beauty of Chinese garden landscaping revealed.

From Emperor to Citizen. Aisin-Gioro Pu Yi.

Autobiography of China's last emperor in tumultuous 20th century China whose story is also told in the film *The Last Emperor*.

The Good Earth. Pearl S. Buck.

Part of the Pulitzer Prize-winning trilogy. Follows a peasant family's rise to wealth until the revolution.

Mao Zedong. Jonathan Spence.

Concise, intimate biography of the first leader of the People's Republic.

National Geographic Traveler: China. Damian Harper.

Insightful features on China's culture, history and modern lifestyle.

Street Life China. Michael Dutton.

Imaginative collection about the lives of ordinary people in contemporary China.

The Silk Road: Two Thousand Years in the Heart of Asia. Frances Wood.

A fascinating journey along the world's most historic trade route. Illustrated.

The Travels of Marco Polo. Marco Polo.

"One of the ten best adventure books of all time." –*National Geographic*

Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China. Jung Chang.

The story of three generations—from warlord’s concubine to communist supporter to communist foe.

Beijing

Beijing. Peter Neville-Hadley.

An entertaining and practical guide to all the sites and attractions in the city.

Beijing and Xian: China's Greatest Capitals. China Pictorial.

Visual tour with 48 full-page illustrations of the treasures of the five dynasties.

The Forbidden City. May Holdsworth.

Beautifully illustrated book describing the history and layout of the Imperial residence as well as vivid descriptions of what life was like in the Forbidden City.

The Great Wall of China: From History to Myth. Arthur Waldron.

The history of the amazing wall and debunking of some of its myths.

An inspirational tour of the Forbidden City. Yang Zi.

A clever comic book that provides a brief description for each stop along the tour.

The Sextants of Beijing. Joanna Waley-Cohen.

NYU professor of Chinese history reveals the myth of an isolated China.

Xian

The Terracotta Army of Emperor Qin Shihuang. Cao Lei.

Beautiful color photographs illustrating the “Eighth Wonder of the World.”

Xi'an: China's Ancient Capital. Kevin Bishop.

Comprehensive guide to and history of the glorious capital.

Yangtze River

Before the Deluge. Deirdre Chetham.

An evocative investigation of the present and future effects of the Three Gorges Dam upon some of the many villages that will be displaced by the rising waters.

The River at the Center of the World: A Journey Up the Yangtze and Back in Chinese Time.

Simon Winchester. The British author’s incredible journey along the 4,000 miles of the Yangtze.

The River Dragon Has Come! Dai Qing.

A Chinese journalist presents a collection of essays examining the effects of the Three Gorges Dam.

Yangtze River: The Wildest, Wickedest River on Earth—An Anthology. Madeleine Lynn.
A collection of writings from the Tang Dynasty to present—a vivid portrait of the river over 13 centuries.

Shanghai

Life and Death in Shanghai. Nien Chang.
The widow of a Shell Petroleum manager in China, Chang finds herself in mid-revolution, branded a spy.

Shanghai: The Rise and Fall of a Decadent City 1842-1949. Stella Dong.
The story of freewheeling, flamboyant Shanghai during its heyday as a foreign treaty port.

Hong Kong & Guilin

City of Darkness: Life in Kowloon Walled City. Ian Lambot & Greg Girard.
A fascinating, imaginatively illustrated glimpse into life inside the now-demolished walled city.

Guilin. Cao Lei.
The poetic landscapes of Guilin and its scenic spots, cultural relics and historic sites.

Nobel House & Tai-Pan. James Clavell.
Epic novels of life in Hong Kong and China.

Over Hong Kong. Magnus & Kasyan Bartlett.
Spectacular photographs illustrate the geographic, commercial and cultural diversity of Hong Kong.

Suzy Gershman's Born to Shop Hong Kong, Shanghai & Beijing. Suzy Gershman.
The “inside scoop” on shopping in China by “the world’s greatest shopper.”

Tibet

Ghosts of Everest: The Search for Mallory and Irvine. Jochen Hemmlev et al.
Describes the 1999 Mt. Everest expedition yielding the discovery of George Mallory’s body 75 years after his disappearance on the great mountain.

The Heart of the World: A Journey to the Last Secret Place. Ian Baker; intro. by the Dalai Lama.
A mix of history, wilderness exploration and Tibetan Buddhism, this true story of the search for legendary Shangri-La highlights Buddhist philosophy and Tibetan culture.

Seven Years in Tibet. Heinrich Harrer.
The story of a young Austrian adventurer who became tutor to the Dalai Lama. Also a 1997 film starring Brad Pitt.

Tibet: A Personal History of a Lost Land. Patrick French.
A travelogue, history and memoir about the English author’s journey through Tibet and meetings with the Dalai Lama.



Tibet: Reflections from the Wheel of Life. V. Carroll Dunham, Ian Baker, et al.; intro. by the Dalai Lama. A beautiful volume by respected scholars and travelers to Tibet; with Tibetan folk mythology and an insightful analysis of China's annexation of Tibet.

Cookbooks

The Intriguing World of Chinese Home Cooking. Angela Chang.
A pictographic step-by-step guide to authentic Chinese cooking.

Martin Yan's Culinary Journey Through China. Martin Yan.
Recipes from the author's homeland, including regional specialties from Beijing to Shanghai.
Yan designed Viking River Cruises onboard Chinese menus.

Films

The Last Emperor.

Seven Years in Tibet, starring Brad Pitt