

# the Beijinger

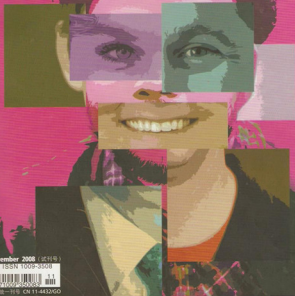
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## Who is the Beijinger?

The many faces of our city



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Tsumori Chisato Aida Ourselves Beside Me Jeff Samuel DJ Krust DJ Shadow James Pants Wax Tailor Kylie Minogue

## WHEELY GOOD

A handy guide to cycling in Beijing

by Jonathan White

Although professional cycling has been tarnished in the public's eyes through widespread drug abuse, recreational cycling has experienced a worldwide resurgence. Cycling, no longer confined to transport, has become a popular sport. Even Lance Armstrong can't stay retired – his return to the sport means it's never too late to saddle up.

Bike-heavy Beijing is a hub for all three categories of the sport of cycling: road, track and mountain biking. Fans even have access to the Olympic cycling venues.

Most people think of cycling as a fair-weather pursuit, but you can freeze-dry through the winter if you're prepared to wrap up warm and brave the elements. Besides, you'll need to build up those thighs to comfortably handle the distances routinely covered by the groups listed below.

**Why cycling?**

- Cycling is great cardiovascular exercise and is a handy form of transportation that requires none of the self-discipline of gym attendance
- Cycling while seated is not load-bearing, which makes it ideal for sufferers of lower limb troubles (e.g. arthritis, rheumatism, knee injuries) as there is no impact on the joints
- It is accessible as a group or solo endeavor and thus equally suited for introverts and extroverts
- If you're willing to travel a little further afield, you can leave behind the smog of Beijing and enjoy fresh air and scenery
- Men, women and children can partake in the same recreational rides. Grab the family and a random for a great day out
- All you need is a bike and a map (or a sense of adventure)

**Where to play:**

The Beijingers select five options around town for cycling enthusiasts to get their wheels spinning. There are also a large number of businesses that can provide you with the equipment that you need to get started (both for sale and for hire); they're listed in the directories starting on p.137.

**Beijing Fixed Gear**

Fixed gear refers here (not gear, reference the back wheel) to a station bike pedals are harnessed. This means they also have no need for brakes, as you pedal backwards to slow down. This form of cycling, which is growing in popularity around the world, is suited to performing bike tricks as well as more traditional pursuits. The Beijing Fixed Gear group arranges rides for like-minded riders. [www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=171118864133151&sk=info](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=171118864133151&sk=info)

**MOB (Mountain Bikers of Beijing)**

Beijing's very own group of intrepid mountain bikers arranges weekly meets for its members, the majority of which are cross-country encounters on the outskirts of the capital. They have also been known to arrange trips as far away as Fuzhou and Lebanon. Typical rides are 60-120km and include 80%+ single track. Bikers of all ages and abilities are welcome. <http://groups.google.com/group/beijingmob>

**Beijing Golden**

800km is a great smoking mounty of Chinese cyclists, but foreigners are welcome. Weekly rides tend to cover 100-200km and leave from Chaoyang District. Membership (RMB 100/year) is mandatory, but that covers all rides for the year. [www.beijinggolden.com](http://www.beijinggolden.com)

**Peloton**

Slightly more competitive than other local groups, with 50-100km distances covered in three to six hours. Beginners are welcome and bikes can be arranged but be aware that these guys take their cycling seriously: many use the group as training for races. Depart from Chang's Innside Plaza every Sat and Sun. [www.cyclingpeloton.com](http://www.cyclingpeloton.com)

**London Velodrome and Mountain Bike Course**

The venue which hosted the track cycling events of the Beijing Olympics is now open to the public, as is the Olympic mountain biking course. Get on down to see where records were broken – and then try for yourself. Free. Opening hours from 9.30pm.

