



# Wudang

6/19

A MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER



## From Sifu Paul

Greetings, everyone,

I had a long journey back from China: four separate flights, late arrivals, missed connections, standby flights, long lines in customs, and little sleep. I finally returned, only one day later than scheduled, both exhausted and exhilarated. It was a small price to pay for 24 magical days in China. In this issue, I give a brief recap of the first day of my trip in Beijing, with more to come in future issues. The new summer classes began this week, but it's not too late to jump into them. Please take another look at what's being offered. It's great to be back in Minnesota and the studio.

## A Little Help From Our Friends

I would like to express my gratitude to the studio's team of talented tutors for their coordinated class coverage and for keeping the studio running while I was in China.

There is no other T'ai Chi school in the Twin Cities with the collective experience and depth of knowledge of our teaching staff. Thank you, tutors!

### T'ai Chi:

LaVonne Bunt, Lynn Dennis, Tim Dennis, Dan Frederick (Saturdays), Tom Hautman, Linda Hermanson, Kim Husband, Christopher Knutson, Tom Reich (T, Th, days).

### Eclectics:

Tim Behm, Kim Husband, Patrick Schilling, Morgan Mae Schultz

### Liu Ho Pa Fa:

Kim Husband, Tom Hautman



## China Dream Trip 2019: Travelogue

*"Our group mission is to experience the spiritual essence of China. To meet and study with spiritually powerful Daoists; to do Qigong and Tai Chi in its most sacred and beautiful landscapes and to connect to its ancestral Qi; to deeply taste China's ancient culture and peoples, and feast on its local cuisines at sumptuous banquets; to explore its hidden secrets—before they disappear in China's mad modern rush to forget its rich history."*

—Michael Winn

### Beijing

We had a small group of 18 travelers representing six different countries: the United States, Canada, England, Malaysia, Romania, and China. We all met in Beijing for the first leg of our trip.

We arrived in Beijing very early in the morning after doing our best to sleep on the plane. We expected a smooth transition to our hotel, but one of our members didn't show up at the

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The ceiling inside the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests at the Temple of Heaven in Beijing



designated meeting spot. This started a concerted effort to locate him. Our translator, Lili Lee, eventually found him being detained by security as “suspicious looking,” as he had long hair and a long, unkempt beard and an unusual hat. He had been wandering around looking a little confused trying to locate a missing suitcase. Lili got him released with some diplomacy and assurances that he wasn’t a terrorist.

We boarded our bus for our hotel. This delayed our morning agenda and affected the mood of the group. In addition, it was raining, and there was a palpable layer of smog present in the air. I was hoping the rain would wash it away. Eventually it did. I contrasted the weather on this first day with the first day of my last trip to Beijing—a clear, smog-free, sunny day on which everything seemed to flow perfectly in sync with our itinerary. I knew once we started to practice Qigong, things would improve.



We checked into our hotel, had a quick breakfast there, and headed to Tian Tan Park for Qigong. This is the enormous park (660 acres) connected to the Temple of Heaven complex. We entered through the east gate and walked to a favorite practice spot of Michael Winn, our trip leader, and began our practice. After we warmed up, instruction was given in the Wujigong Primordial Tai Chi practice for those who didn’t know this form. I teach it at the studio, but it was great to learn it again, as I picked up some valuable details and theory. Two hours of Qigong put everyone in a better mood and unified the group.

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Translator/guide Lili  
Lee saved a Dream  
Tripper from being  
deported as a terrorist



## The Temple of Heaven

Afterwards, we walked a short distance to the Temple of Heaven complex. The temple complex was constructed between 1406 and 1420 during the reign of the Yongle Emperor,

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The Long Corridor into  
the Temple of Heaven  
stretches out of the mist

## Contact Us

For timely updates, follow Twin Cities T'ai Chi Ch'uan on **Facebook**.

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Ornate detail from  
Dragon carving on the  
stone platform leading  
up to the Hall of Prayer  
for Good Harvests







who, like all of China's emperors, was regarded as the Son of Heaven. He administered earthly matters on behalf of heavenly authority. The temple was built for the emperor to perform ceremonies mostly comprised of prayers for good harvests, which he performed twice a year.

The signature structure in the complex is the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests, a magnificent triple-gabled circular building, 118 ft in diameter and 125 ft tall, built on three levels of a marble stone base with stone carvings at each level representing Clouds, Phoenix, and Dragons. This is where the Emperor prayed for good harvests. The building is completely wooden, with no nails or crossbeams, and is beautifully, ornately, and symbolically colored. I loved viewing this structure from a variety of distances and wished I could step inside and get close to the altar, but it wasn't allowed.

The mist of our cloudy day turned to drizzle, and I was glad to be wearing a rain jacket. Occasional bursts of rain brought me into one of the other halls for shelter and to view the exhibits on display. I spent about an hour on my own revisiting the Temple of Heaven then met my group and walked to a restaurant for lunch. It had stopped raining.

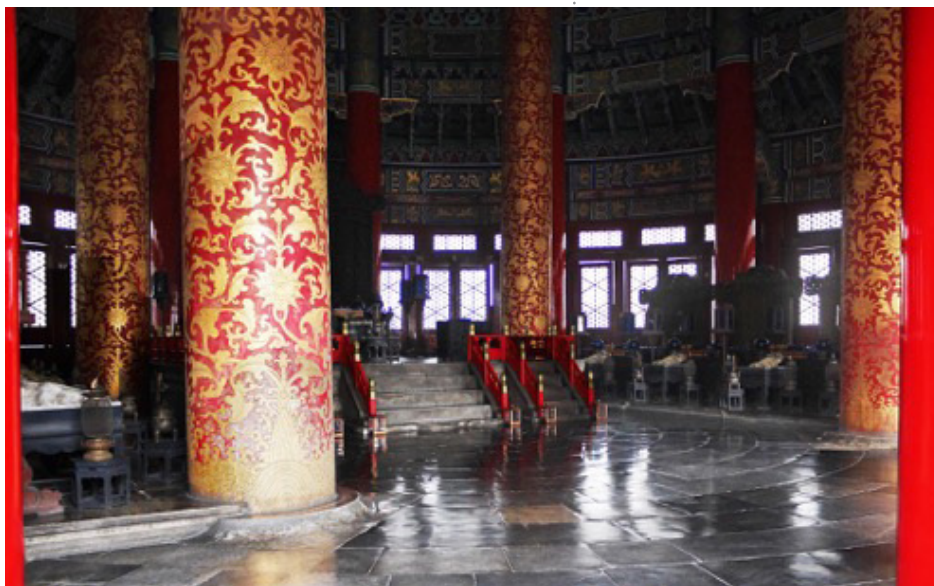
After lunch came a visit to Beijing's jade museum, pearl store, and silk store—all in one building. Each provided a mini tour and a guide who explained the basics of each of the three treasures of China: how their pearls are cultivated and what's unique about them, how silk is made, how many kinds of jade there are, and how to tell good from bad, etc. I had heard it all before, but it was still interesting. Each tour, of course, ended in a sales room, where the deals of the day were explained in detail. I was holding out for the museum in Xian, which was better, so I didn't buy anything.

Back at the hotel, I unpacked and organized my gear and reviewed the photos I had taken. I finally had some time to rest and managed to sleep a little before we walked from the hotel to a restaurant for dinner.

The first day had had a bumpy beginning but ended well. The next day would begin with Qigong and meditation at White Cloud Taoist Temple and end with Qigong on the Great Wall. My 2019 China Dream Trip had begun.

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Outside the Hall of  
Prayer for Good  
Harvests

V  
Dragon Well pillars and  
altar inside the Hall of  
Prayer for Good Harvests



## Question of the Month

The question of the month will resume in next month's issue.

If you have a question, comment, or suggestion, please put it in the box in the practice hall.



## Summer Classes and Schedule Changes

### **Monday Night Weapons Class 7:30–8:30:**

Beginning Monday, June 3, we began the study of the Double Saber Form. This is a dynamic form for building strength, coordination, right and left body symmetry, beauty and aesthetics in movement, and Brain Gym–style mental development. For those who want to learn the form, twin sticks will be provided at the studio. If you have your own double saber set, feel free to learn with it. The class has just started, so you can still join.

### **Wednesday Night Healing Tao Class 7:30–**

**8:30:** We will begin to learn the Six Healing Sounds and Five Animals Qigong. The Six Healing Sounds is one of the oldest qigong practices in China. It is a calming energy practice that uses movement, sound, and visualization to balance the emotions, working with the energy of the body's five major organs.

This class integrates seated, standing, and moving sequences. The movement practice combines the healing sounds with five animal movements to create a short, easy-to-learn practice that's perfect for summer.

This is a one-hour class that began June 5 at 7:30 and meets on Wednesday evenings. The class runs 8 weeks. Cost: \$96 for nonmembers. Free to members.

### **Saturday 12 Animals Class 10:30–11:30:**

Beginning Saturday, June 8, we began learning the Lun. The Lun is a mythological animal



that trains the practitioner to develop pull/pluck energy and power. It is a short sequence consisting of just three movements. Open to new members.

### **Saturday 43 Postures Class 11:30–12:30:**

Beginning June 8, we began to learn Symmetry 3 (Brush Left Knee #5 through Withdraw and Push).

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Beautiful blooms on  
Hua Shan—Flower  
Mountain