

# BEIJING DURING THE OLYMPICS - CROWDED AND EXPENSIVE



Only few local tourist agencies or hotels have released their prices yet. Nevertheless, it is expected that the prices will be much higher than they are now. "The prices of hotel rooms, vehicles and tour guides in Beijing during the Olympic Games will all be at least four times higher than normal," according to Yao Yuecan, president of the China International Travel Service's head office.

The athletes, officials and most of the media will be housed in Olympic villages and BOCOG, the organizing committee of the Beijing Games, has already signed service contracts with 112 star-rated hotels, which has effectively swallowed up 70 to 95 per cent of their rooms. The rooms that are left will be very expensive. For example, Wangfujing Grand Hotel will raise its rates from 699 Yuan (€67,5) to 5,700 Yuan (€ 550). A five star hotel the Kunlun will raise its deluxe room rate from 1,280 Yuan (€ 123,5) a night to 12,000 Yuan (€ 1158) during the Games which is almost 1000% jump.

Nevertheless, the officials do not plan to restrict this policy. "The hotels are fully within their rights to determine what room rates they are going to charge their guests during the Games," Beijing Vice-Mayor Ding Xiangyang said. They claim that Beijing has enough resources to accommodate all of the Olympic tourists, so the hotels cannot set their prices unreasonably high.

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