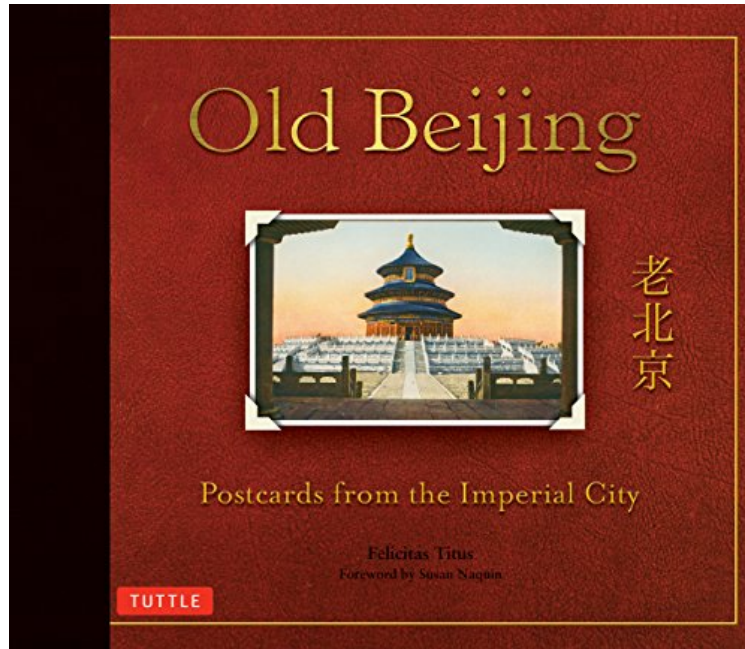


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Old Beijing: Postcards from the Imperial City

Felicitas Titus

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Felicitas Titus : Old Beijing: Postcards from the Imperial City before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Old Beijing: Postcards from the Imperial City:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Postcards from a Chinese past By Guy Benveniste, Professor Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley If you love postcards, old post cards with strange stamps and simple addresses, if you like postcards from far away places you had heard about and wished you had traveled to, if China happens to interest you because it is rapidly transforming into a super power or if you happen to live in China and want to have a glimpse at the road traveled, then, this is a must get and buy book. Felicitas Titus lived in China as a child when some of these postcards were mailed. She came to the USA in 1950 and because she missed her old childhood haunts, she began collecting old China postcards after finding a big batch in a San Francisco antique store. She gathered 6 big albums and this well bound Tuttle production is her effort to share her collection with us. The book is the right size, not too large or heavy, and well organized. After an excellent foreword by Susan Naquin, we find 25 small chapters giving us sometimes, as many as 4 postcards per page with suitable explanations. Each post card is tentatively dated and this helps us situate them in time. Thus we enter the past and visit the Forbidden City, meet the Imperial Family. We also go to the Legation Quarter, have a glimpse of luxury hotels for foreigners, come into Coal Hill and the Winter Palace. Later on, we find ourselves at Yuanmingyuan and the old Summer Palace, the Ming Tombs and the Spirit Path. We also witness the coming of the railroad, plain street life, native transportation and finish our splendid visit at the Great Wall. As you place the book down, you have the Proustian memory of your own past and how times have altered the worlds we live in. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Gorgeous Views of Old Beijing By ancient cheddar This is a beautifully presented book of postcards of Old Beijing -- what used to be called Peking, China. Many of the pictures are unusual and sometimes beautiful. There are over 300 postcards,

including the Forbidden city, the Empress Dowager's residence, the Spirit Path, an Observatory, the Catholic Cathedral, which looks a lot like Notre Dame; the Outer Wall, pagodas, arches, a bell-tower which goes back to Kublai Khan; and many other views. There is a series of illustrated cards which show a series of fanciful rococo palaces built in a part of the Garden of Perfect Clarity, also called the Old Summer Palace. The palaces were destroyed in the Second Opium War in 1860. There are also views of citizens of Beijing, showing street vendors and artisans, farmers, and children. The accompanying text by Felicitas Titus, who lived for a time in Beijing, explains the cards well with interesting detail, so you can learn about what you are seeing. Here is a quote from page 51: " We see on a postcard what seems like an interminably long Donzhimen Boulevard, an example of the geomantic east-west grid according to which the city was laid out by the builder of Beijing, the emperor Yongle.... So-called saddleback houses of the Manchus, made of gray brick with inner courts for the extended families, lined this long Tartar City thoroughfare, as can be seen on this postcard." The print quality is excellent. It makes a fine coffee table book. I only wish each card had gotten its own page, they are so beautiful. It is recommended for anyone, but especially those interested in China's history, culture and architecture. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not the Beijing of today, but as it was... By Anonymous Lots of excellent pictures. A must own for people who want to see the old buildings, and the tree-lined streets of old Beijing. Sites that are increasingly rare, or altogether gone in the Beijing of today. These seem mostly to be very detailed illustrations, or maybe colorized old photographs, but they are all of superb quality. I've been to Beijing several times, and even the two visits that boasted breathable air, the views were not as pretty as those in this book. Don't get me wrong, Beijing is a great place to visit, and is picturesque even now, but a resident who remembers it even from the 80's has lamented the loss of trees throughout the city as well as the unnecessary addition of sardine-packed automobiles cramming the streets. If you want to see what the old city looked like - with trees - this is the book for you. Hopefully, Beijing will one day look this nice with trees again.

This collection of Chinese photography contains over 350 vintage postcards from pre-communist China along with extensive historical background and commentary. Camel trains arriving at a city gate; the distinctive architecture of the Forbidden City, its pagodas, imperial buildings and temples; Manchu fashion, the Empress Dowager and the child emperor Puyi; street performers and foreign tourists—all come to life again in this extraordinary collection of rare and vintage Chinese postcards. *Old Beijing: Postcards from the Imperial City* offers a unique look at a vanished China and its storied capital once known as Peking. Containing unique black-and-white and hand-tinted cards that span Chinese history from the last years of Imperial China to the Japanese invasion of 1937, it is a treasure trove for historians, collectors, Sinophiles and anyone fascinated by Chinese culture and people from times past.

"Felicitas Titus's wonderful book not only brings us the sights of a city now greatly changed, it will help future generations understand the pleasure and excitement caused by the sending and receiving of a few words scribbled on a bright small picture from a faraway place." —Susan Naquin, author of *Peking: Temples and City Life* About the Author Felicitas Titus grew up in the foreign concession in Hankow, China, under Chiang Kai-shek, at a time when traditional Chinese culture still flourished. She visited old Beijing, then known as Peking, as a child and later studied there for two and a half years, during World War Two. She experienced the Japanese attack on Shanghai in 1937, left Hankow during the allied bombardments, and worked in postwar China until the Communist victory in 1949. She eventually completed her education in the United States and taught college there. Her nostalgia for China prompted her to begin collecting these vintage postcards. She still considers China her homeland. Foreword writer, Susan Naquin is professor of History and East Asian Studies at Princeton University, is the author of *Millenarian Rebellion in China, Shantung Rebellion, and Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400-1900*. She is also coauthor with Evelyn Rawski of *Chinese Society in the Eighteenth Century* and coeditor of *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*.