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(in front of the meridian gate) ladies and gentlemen:

nbsp.nbsp.nbsp. this is the palace museum. also know as the purple forbidden city. it is the largest and most well reserved imperial residence in china today. under ming emperor yongle, construction began in 1406. it took 14years to build the forbidden city. the first ruler who actually lived here was ming emperor zhudi. for five centuries thereafter, it continued to be the residence of 23 successive emperors until 1911 when qing emperor puyi was forced to abdicate the throne .in 1987, the united nations educational, scientific and cultural organization recognized the forbidden city was a world cultural legacy. nbsp.nbsp.nbsp. the red and yellow used on the palace walls and roofs are also symbolic. red represents happiness, good fortune and wealth. yellow is the color of the earth on the loess plateau, the original home of the chinese people. yellow became an imperial color during the tang dynasty, when only members of the royal family were allowed to wear it and use it in their architecture. nbsp.nbsp.nbsp. manpower and materials throughout the country were used to build the forbidden city. a total of 230,000 artisans and one million laborers were employed. marble was quarried from fangshan country mount pan in jixian county in hebei province. granite was quarried in quyang county in hebei province. paving blocks were fired in kilns in suzhou in southern china. bricks and

scarlet pigmentation used on the palatial walls came from linqing in shandong province .timber was cut ,processed and hauled from the northwestern and southern regions. nbsp.nbsp.nbsp. qing emperors used this building to announce the beginning of the new year. qing emperor qianglong changed the original name of this announcement ceremony from ban li(announcement of calendar)to ban shou(announcement of new moon )to avoid coincidental association with another emperor` s name, hongli, which was considered a taboo at that time. qing dynasty emperors also used this place to hold audience and for other important ceremonies. for example,when the imperial army returned victoriously from the battlefield ,it was here that the emperor presided over the ceremony to accept prisoners of war. (after entering the meridian gate and standing in front of the five marble bridges on golden water river) nbsp.nbsp.nbsp. the forbidden city is divided into an outer and an inner count.we are now standing on the southernmost part of the outer count. in front of us lies the gate of supreme harmony .the gate is guarded by a pair of bronze lions ,symbolizing imperial power and dignity. the lions were the most exquisite and biggest of its kind. the one on the east playing with a ball is a male, and ball is said to represent state unity. the other one is a female. underneath one of its fore claws is a cub that is considered to be a symbol of perpetual imperial succession. the winding brook before us is the golden water river. it functions both as decoration and fire control .the five bridges spanning the river represent the five virtues preached by confucius :benevolence, righteousness, rites, intellence and fidelity. the river

takes the shape of a bow and the north-south axis is its arrow. this was meant to show that the emperors ruled the country on behalf of god.(in front of the gate of supreme harmony) 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)