Before we get in, I’ll let you know that I strongly considered taking the subway to the garden. Two steps out of the hotel is Xidiaoyutai station, for line 10, which goes through Bagou. You can change to the Xijiao line to the west suburbs. I choose not to because it was rush hour and it gets crowded very fast on the subway, especially line 10. It’s a ring line… with the perimeter (read: length) being over 35 miles!

Taxis in Beijing are getting easier to call with the introduction of Didi. It’s a ride-hailing/ridesharing app that’s used widely by the population and the hotel staff. I choose not to go through the hassle of installing the app as I don’t like giving my personal information over public wireless networks. I asked for Concierge to call a taxi. They just grabbed one off Didi.

Paying the fare was easy enough to do with your phone. I had cash on me (I know. I’m an old man), but I don’t have their apps. So it was a little tricky with the driver as he had little change. To be kind, I gave him a tip (it came down to this: pay him less or tip him).

I swiped my bus/subway card as I entered the park, and walked all the way down to Cherry Valley.

There are two choices of paths – the main road that just looks plain, or the wooden bridge. I choose the former on the way in for pictures.

Did I mention it’s tempting to buy a snack? I saw at least four pavilions with a store at each selling snacks ranging from Ice Cream to potato chips to Ramen (!) noodles. And water.

Always drink plenty of fluids. Water is the best, so that was my purchase at the first store I saw. A cold bottle of water, 550 ml (~18.6 fl.oz)!