

# Travel in

# TAIWAN

2021  
JAN & FEB

No. 103

## GOOD FOOD

A PARADISE FOR SEAFOOD LOVERS

## LOCAL LIFESTYLE

TOM ROOK: DRAWING TAIWAN  
MAPS BY HAND

## CYCLING IN TAIWAN

EASY BIKE ROUTES IN KAOHSIUNG

# Tainan

HISTORY AND CULTURE

BUSINESSES IN OLD BUILDINGS

ECCENTRIC HOTELS, INNS, AND HOSTELS

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Website





# MICHELIN Guide 2020

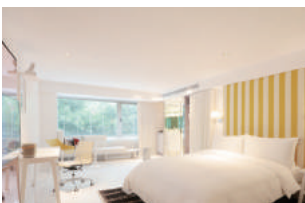
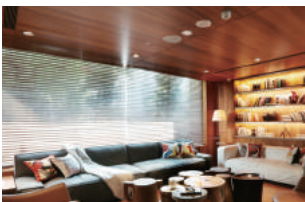


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# Welcome to Taiwan!



## Publisher's Note

Dear Traveler,

In the winter, northern Taiwan can be a bit cool, rainy, and even clammy, so in this issue we're vacationing in the sunny south, where the sun seems to almost always be out on parade. While southern summer temperatures will commonly be over 30 degrees Celsius, winters are soothing and easy on the traveler, providing you with low- to mid-20s comfort, perfect for spending full days outside.

In our main-article section we explore the old city of Tainan (the name translates literally as "Taiwan South"), Taiwan's Chinese imperial capital for over two centuries. In the first article, you're provided with an overview of the city's harmonious old-and-new mix, notably its most representative architecture, the local people's passion for preservation of their heritage buildings, the distinctive laid-back local lifestyle, and the must-try signature foods.

This is followed by a dedicated article on the forest of private cultural-creative enterprises being birthed in renovated old buildings. The first takes you on visits to interesting sellers of vintage and retro goods, dining spots offering classic Tainan rice cakes, Taiwan teas and tea drinks, and "Taiwan hamburgers," a beerhouse/BBQ bistro, and a ceramic-arts studio/museum. The next introduces you to one-of-a-kind places to overnight; have you ever overnights in a bookstore, or in an inn or single-story private residence dating back to Taiwan's Japanese colonial period, perhaps?

In this issue's *Cycling in Taiwan* department we head further south, to the strapping-shouldered harbor city of Kaohsiung. Though a big city, Kaohsiung has few tall buildings and is quite spread out, with lots of room to roam. Its growing network of dedicated bikeways, inexpensive public bike-rental facilities, and consistent sunny weather is a great combo for urban-exploration enthusiasts.

The fishing ports of Tainan and Kaohsiung spawn great seafood harvests, so deliciously fresh and inexpensive seafood is a big draw for travelers. In our *Good Food* section we present the island's full bounty in a file entitled *A Seafoodie's Paradise*, suggesting the tastiest treasures found at places like local night markets, high-end Japanese-style bars, and rustic dockside eateries at the island's many small and charming fishing harbors.

In *Local Lifestyle* we offer you another wholly different way to explore Taiwan, through the beautiful, exquisitely detailed city maps crafted by British expatriate resident Tom Rook, which have become collectors' items.

Have a happy, hope-filled, sun-drenched 2021 in Taiwan!

**TAIWAN TOURISM BUREAU**  
MOTC, R.O.C.

*Chang Shi Chung*

### ON THE COVER



The Book Inn in Tainan  
(photo by Ray Chang)

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# Travel in TAIWAN

## 台灣觀光雙月刊 Travel in Taiwan

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and Events in 2021



# A New Year of **Festivals & Other Celebrations**

Upcoming Activities of Unique Color and Spectacle

**1** KAOHSIUNG CITY February ~ March

## SONG-JIANG BATTLE ARRAY IN NEIMEN, KAOHSIUNG 高雄內門宋江陣

Not much of tourist interest goes on in Kaohsiung's quiet rural district of Neimen for most of the year, but there is one exception, the annual Song-Jiang Battle Array extravaganza. This week-long festival, a mix of religious rituals and sports-like competition, brings together groups of young performers from around Taiwan, who converge on Neimen to show off their troupe-array martial-arts skills and compete against each other. The festival is a fantastic spectacle, packed with exciting and at times highly acrobatic performances that are accompanied by the sound of drums and other traditional instruments.

**Website:** [www.who-ha.com.tw](http://www.who-ha.com.tw)

**2** TAINAN CITY March

## TAIWAN INTERNATIONAL ORCHID SHOW 臺灣國際蘭展

Orchids have been cultivated in Taiwan for more than a hundred years, and over the last two decades local production has increased significantly, making the island one of the world's most important orchid exporters. More than 90% of Taiwan-grown flowers shipped abroad are orchids, with moth orchids being the most important. This orchid show is not only an important event for international orchid buyers, but also a great exhibition of all types of orchids for the average flower lover.

**Website:** [www.tiostw.com](http://www.tiostw.com)

**3** AROUND TAIWAN April ~ May

## THE HAKKA TUNG BLOSSOM FESTIVAL 客家桐花祭

This festival celebrates the bloom of the tung tree and also the culture of the Hakka people. There is a strong connection between the tree and the Hakka; the tung tree was planted in great number for commercial purposes in the hilly areas that the Hakka inhabit starting around the time of the Japanese occupation (1895-1945). Because of their bright-white petals, the tung tree bloom is often referred to as "May Snow," and indeed from a distance the trees and surrounding ground can be mistaken for being covered in a layer of snow. Both the Hakka people and the tung trees are concentrated in the counties of Taoyuan, Hsinchu, and Miaoli in Taiwan's northwest, and this is where most of the events related to this festival take place.

**Website:** [tung.hakka.gov.tw](http://tung.hakka.gov.tw)

**4** TAICHUNG CITY Until May

## TAICHUNG MAZU INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL 臺中媽祖國際觀光文化節

This is by far the most important annual religious event in Taiwan. Mazu, the Goddess of the Sea, is the most revered deity of the many deities worshipped in thousands of temples around the island. The festival is centered around a multi-day pilgrimage that starts and ends at the Zhenlan Temple in Taichung City's Dajia District, and takes the Mazu icon of that important temple on an "inspection tour" of other Mazu temples in central Taiwan. This is one of the best events for witnessing how passionate and dedicated the local faithful are when it comes to worshipping their beloved goddess.

**Website:** [culture.taichung.gov.tw](http://culture.taichung.gov.tw)





4



5



6



2

Photo courtesy of Taiwan Orchid Growers Assn.



7

**5** TAIPEI CITY | March~June

**BAOSHENG CULTURAL FESTIVAL**

保生文化祭

This is another vibrant and colorful event you don't want to miss if you are interested in religious celebrations. The meticulously restored Dalongdong Baoan Temple in Taipei is one of the best examples of traditional temple architecture you will find in Taiwan. It is dedicated to the Baosheng Emperor, also known as the God of Medicine, and the festival is staged to celebrate the god's birthday. While activities take place over a period of three months, the main events, including a street parade with martial-arts performances and a ritual involving walking across burning coals, happen close to the 15th day of the 3rd lunar month, the Baosheng Emperor's birthday.

**Website:** [www.baoan.org.tw](http://www.baoan.org.tw)

**6** TAINAN CITY | March-June

**ZHUZIHU CALLA LILY FESTIVAL**

竹子湖海芋季

While some withered blossoms on Yangmingshan National Park's cherry trees and azalea bushes still hang on to branches after their early-spring bloom, in March and April flower lovers turn their attention to a different type of floral beauty in this mountainous area. Their pure-white petals and elegant shape make calla lilies a favorite among flower aficionados and sweetheart couples. Many visitors flock to the flower fields of Zhuzihu, a small basin area within the national park used for agriculture, to pick their own flowers, take photos, perhaps have a meal at one of the tourist-farm restaurants, and enjoy the enchanting scenery.

**Website:** [www.callalily.com.tw](http://www.callalily.com.tw)



Taiwan Tourism Events  
Calendar Website

# HAPPENING in TAIWAN Now

The first few months of the year are perfect for flower and blossom gazing in Taiwan. Much is going on in the travel industry this year with new hotels being opened, public transport becoming more convenient, and new tourist attractions being discovered.



## This is the SEASON FOR... FLOWER GAZING!

1. Cherry trees in **Alishan area**  
🌐 [www.ali-nsa.net](http://www.ali-nsa.net)
2. Azaleas in **Yangmingshan National Park**  
🌐 [www.ymsnp.gov.tw](http://www.ymsnp.gov.tw)
3. Tung tree blossoms **around Taiwan**  
🌐 [tung.hakka.gov.tw](http://tung.hakka.gov.tw)
4. Tulips at Taipei's **Shilin Residence**  
🌐 [2020flower.travel.taipei/en/tulip](http://2020flower.travel.taipei/en/tulip)

## Tips for the SPRING



**Pick Strawberries!**  
December to April is strawberry season in Taiwan. Pick your own fruit on tourist farms (for example in Neihu District in Taipei City and Dahu Township in Miaoli County!)

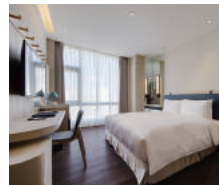


**Visit the Laomei Green Reef!**  
One of the best natural sights on the North Coast, the algae-covered rocks at Laomei Beach are at their most beautiful during March and April!

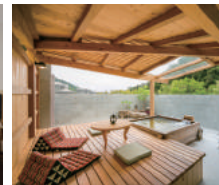


**The Great Outdoors Is Calling!**  
Take advantage of the mild temperatures and low chances of rain in the springtime. Bicycling, hiking/ nature exploring, kayaking/rafting, camping/picnicking... There is a whole wide natural world out there waiting for you to discover!

## New HOTELS +



**Jasper Hotel  
Banqiao Taipei**  
Banqiao District,  
New Taipei City



**Sui Spring  
Retreat & Spa**  
Jiaoxi, Yilan County



**Moxy Hotel**  
Taichung City





Photo courtesy of Penghu County Gov't

## New Tourist Attraction

Unlike the islands of Kinmen and Matsu, the Penghu archipelago is less known for its military history, but there are in fact a number of sites that will delight history buffs. A site recently opened to the public is an underground military command center located to the southeast of Longmen Harbor on Penghu Main Island. The site, officially named the **Nankan Enclosed Encampment**, consists of a 700m-long tunnel, just 60cm wide and 1.8m high, pillboxes, ammunition warehouse, kitchen, war room, and other facilities. The complex is inside a hill overlooking Longmen Harbor; there is a boardwalk path to the top, from where you have great views over the harbor. It's especially attractive during sunset and when the fireworks shows take place during the annual Penghu International Fireworks Festival. [www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw)

## New Museum in Chiayi

The old city of Chiayi has a new museum! The **Chiayi Art Museum** opened last year, and is in a restored building dating from 1936 that originally housed the Chiayi branch of the Taiwan Tobacco and Wine Monopoly Bureau. The complex, comprising one main building and two warehouses, is now used for exhibitions and art classes. There is also a library, shops, eateries, and a large garden. [chiayiartmuseum.chiayi.gov.tw](http://chiayiartmuseum.chiayi.gov.tw)



## Taiwan Tourist Shuttle

Check out the latest additions to the **Taiwan Tourist Shuttle** network: the **Dongyanshan Route** (from the town of Daxi to the Dongyanshan National Forest Recreation Area in Taoyuan City); **Qingjing Route** (from the town of Puli to the Qingjing area in Nantou County); and **Dongpu Route** (from the town of Jiji to the hot-spring village of Dongpu in Nantou County). Find these and many more routes at [www.taiwantrip.com.tw](http://www.taiwantrip.com.tw).



## Transportation

New Taipei City's **Tamsui District** is among north Taiwan's most popular day-trip destinations. Getting there is easy by taking the Taipei Metro's Xinyi-Tamsui Line to its northern terminal station. If you want to visit the popular **Fisherman's Wharf** (seafood and glorious sunsets!) at the mouth of the Tamsui River, you can now circumvent central Tamsui by transferring to the **Danhai Light Rail Transit** (Danhai LRT) system at the Hongshulin Station and get off at the Fisherman's Wharf Station. [www.metro.taipei](http://www.metro.taipei)



# Culture

Concerts, Theater, Exhibitions,  
Festivals, Shows

Photo by Pamela Littky



★★★  
**EDITOR'S CHOICE**

## Concert

### Green Day

年輕歲月

March 16

Taipei Arena [Taipei City]

Five-time Grammy Award-winning Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees Green Day are coming to Taiwan for the very first time! Formed in 1986 in Berkeley, California, Green Day is one of the best-selling bands of all time. [www.arena.taipei](http://www.arena.taipei)



## Show

### Baby Shark Live! the Hidden Treasure

尋寶歷險記舞台劇

March 13 ~ 14

Taipei International Convention Center  
[Taipei City]

With more than 7 billion views on YouTube (currently the most viewed video ever), the Baby Shark Dance has been resonating in the heads of people around the globe for several years now. This viral success has spawned a wide variety of Baby Shark products and productions, including this colorful sing-along and dance-along show for the whole family.

[www.ticc.com.tw](http://www.ticc.com.tw)

## Festival

### Taiwan Traditional Theatre Festival

臺灣戲曲藝術節

Until July 11

Taiwan Traditional Theatre Centre  
[Taipei City]

Due to the global pandemic, this festival was cancelled in 2020. For this year's edition, the organizers have therefore arranged an especially rich and lengthy program of performances by Taiwan's leading traditional theatre troupes. [festival.ncfta.gov.tw](http://festival.ncfta.gov.tw)



## Concert

### Maksim Croatian Rhapsody Concert

邁可森克羅埃西亞狂想音樂會

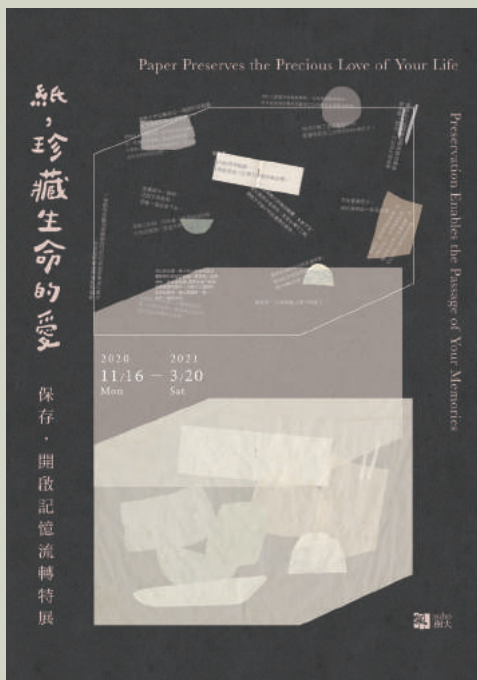
March 18

National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts  
[Kaohsiung City]

Highly popular piano virtuoso Maksim Mrvica, hailing from Croatia in southeastern Europe, is known for playing with lightning speed and combining a wide range of genres, including classical and modern.  
[www.npac-weiwuying.org](http://www.npac-weiwuying.org)



Photo courtesy of Harmonie Music Centre



## Exhibition

### Paper Preserves The Precious Love Of Your Life – Preservation Enables The Passage Of Your Memories

紙，珍藏生命的愛——保存，開啟記憶流轉特展

Until March 20

Suho Memorial Paper Museum  
[Taipei City]

This exhibition, curated by the Suho Memorial Paper Museum and Fenko Catalysis Chamber, shows ways of using and preserving paper in our daily lives with the aim of fostering a greater appreciation for paper. The small museum also introduces you to traditional papermaking techniques and offers DIY classes.

[www.suho.org.tw](http://www.suho.org.tw)



\*\*\*  
EDITOR'S  
CHOICE

## Exhibition

### Story Of An Artistic Style: Imperial Porcelain With Painted Enamels Of The Qianlong Emperor

風格故事—乾隆年製琺瑯彩瓷特展

Until June 30, 2022

National Palace Museum  
[Taipei City]

Among the countless treasures of the National Palace Museum, porcelain items are especially liked by visitors. In this exhibition, fine pieces from the Qianlong period (1736-1795) are on display, among them bowls, cups, and vases decorated with intricate *shan shui* paintings and poems rendered by the emperor himself, written in stylish calligraphy. Among the displays are surprisingly innovative pieces, including a vase adorned with a portrait of a Western lady and her child. [www.npm.gov.tw](http://www.npm.gov.tw)

# Tainan

## A Taiwan Southern Jewel

### City of the Past Now Also a City of the Future

**TEXT** | RICK CHARETTE    **PHOTOS** | RAY CHANG, ASKA CHI, VISION

*Tainan, this island's first urban center, provides the most powerful introduction to "yesteryear" Taiwan for a visiting traveler. It is filled to bursting with historic sites of national importance, and famed especially for its thick cluster of centuries-old temples. Now, the city's people are also busy taking old places of lesser rank and refitting them for new, more modern missions, and also merrily creating futuristic buildings and other sites that celebrate the most advanced in modern thinking. The delicious, harmonious mix of revered and lovingly preserved old, rejuvenated and repurposed old, and futuristic spanking-new that has arisen is an international traveler's dream.*

## TAINAN ART MUSEUM BUILDING 2

This museum is a purpose-built new work of architecture with a bold cutting-edge design

**I** proudly lay claim to being a legitimate, true-blue, card-carrying “old Taiwan hand.” I came here for a visit, and decided to stay, in Taiwan’s “ancient times” – no second north-south freeway, no high-speed rail, no subway lines, no mobile phones, no Internet. Not even cable TV! It was after the horse-and-buggy era, however. For geo-cultural accuracy, let’s make that the coolie-and-rickshaw era.

A month or two after landing, mea culpa, I still knew little more of Taiwan geography than my Taipei residential and work neighborhoods. I then learned of a southern city dubbed “Taiwan’s Kyoto.” Train trip! I spent the five glorious days of my first out-of-Taipei foray exploring hoary Tainan’s overflowing jewel house of temples, fortification ruins, and other historical-cultural gems. The story of Taiwan’s modern history laid out in a giant bricks-and-mortar exhibit spread out over the city’s sprawling old quarter.

Tainan was Taiwan’s first walled city, and its capital for over 200 years, until the late 1800s. The Dutch claimed Taiwan in the 1620s, and stayed until the 1660s. We’ll be visiting the ruins of their Tainan fortifications, today key tourist draws, momentarily. The Netherlands attracted Han Chinese by the tens of thousands to come across the treacherous Taiwan Strait and work the land. In 1662 a Chinese political and military leader, Koxinga, tossed the Dutch overboard, and Taiwan found itself under Chinese imperial rule until 1895, when the Japanese took their turn at colonial adventuring, returning to Mother Nippon with its WW II defeat in 1945.

My impression back then was that Tainan didn't seem much to care about taking part in the 20th century. While its main city competitors, Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung, were rushing pell-mell in the pursuit of material wealth, Tainan folk seemed content to dwell in the past. It was then still commonplace to call it Taiwan's "cultural capital." Tainan's long-running role as imperial capital had made it a center of learning and the center of Taiwan's temple culture.

Today, few would not agree that that ultra-modern powerhouse, Taipei, has assumed the "cultural capital" crown. Nevertheless, as an old Tainan friend says, his city has in the past two decades "invited the modern world in with a vengeance." Valuable works of heritage architecture have been renovated, beautified, and made more tourist-friendly. Other old structures have been saved, spruced up, and given new roles as cultural-creative hubs, eateries, boutique hotels, etc. New building is also going on at a brisk pace, creating novel spaces of chic and sleek personality.

Come on along with me for a "new" look at this old city's makeover. I'll also be presenting a quick-dive into the laid-back local lifestyle and Tainan's renowned snack-food culture.

# Architecture Of Difference

## ◎ Historic Sites

Go to Google Maps and look down on old Tainan from on high. Locate two sites: the Chikan Tower and Anping Old Fort. Between them, to the south you'll see the Anping Canal winding its way through the district. To the north you'll see an expansive patchwork of aquafarms. These two are vestiges of the Inner Sea that greeted the Dutch, which over the centuries largely silted over.

The west side of this shallow saltwater sea was formed by a north-south string of thin, silt-created barrier islands. The Dutch built their mighty Fort Zeelandia at the north tip of one, looking over what they mistakenly thought was the only passage deep enough for larger (i.e., military) sailing craft to exit/enter. Koxinga found a high-tide alternate to the north to slip his armada through, and that was that for the fair-haired Europeans. His troops first took smaller Fort Provintia, on the

mainland looking directly across the waters at Fort Zeelandia, now completely cut off from assistance from sea or mainland. It surrendered after a nine-month siege.

In a later section we'll be visiting the Fort Zeelandia site, now known as the Anping Old Fort site, and other neighborhood heritage attractions. In this section we stay in the Fort Provintia neighborhood that took shape, taking in the fort ruins and a couple of other important works of Taiwan-story heritage architecture that date from the same period.

The site where the Fort Provintia ruins are found is now called the **Chikan Tower**. The fort was erected in 1653, less than 20m from the Inner Sea's shore. It remained largely intact until the Sino-French War in the late 19th century, when the Qing Dynasty governor ordered its demolition, fearing the French would seize and use it

Chikan Tower



### CHIKAN TOWER (赤嵌樓)

- ☎ (06) 220-5647
- 📍 No. 212, Sec. 2, Minzu Rd., Central West District, Tainan City  
(台南市中西區民族路二段 212 號)
- 🕒 8:30am ~ 9:30pm



Koxinga Shrine

# ent Eras



- FIRST CLASS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITES IN TAINAN**
- Confucian Temple
  - Grand Matsu Temple
  - Chikan Tower
  - Temple of the Five Concubines
  - Koxinga Shrine
  - Official God of War Temple
  - Anping Old Fort
  - Eternal Golden Castle

as a base. Two classical Chinese-style pagoda-like buildings – the “tower” – were later built atop the raised foundation. Inside you’ll find historical paraphernalia from the imperial period along with intriguing period photos. The surrounding grounds are today a Chinese garden sporting manicured trees/shrubs and carp-busy ponds. Archeological digs have proven that a long-rumored Dutch tunnel connecting this site and Fort Zeelandia was, indeed, mere fantasy.

The **Tainan Confucius Temple** is Taiwan’s oldest temple dedicated to the Great Sage and Teacher. Also serving as the island’s first – and long its premier – educational institution, it was built in 1665 by Koxinga’s son as a center for a Chinese cultural renaissance in Taiwan. Restored numerous times since, it remains Taiwan’s foremost shrine to this cultural icon, reflecting a classical architectural style otherwise seldom seen on the island. Set in a tranquil garden compound, arched gates and corniced walls divide the complex into a series of courtyards, each with its own halls and special functions. These courtyards originally served as schools for the different branches of classical Chinese studies. Confucius is honored in the central Hall of Great Success, represented by a simple gilded stele of stone. Plaques bearing honorific inscriptions to Confucius from various Qing Dynasty emperors also hang here. Ancient costumes, books, and musical instruments, used in formal ceremonies each year marking Confucius’ birthday, are also on display in the temple.

The **Koxinga Shrine** complex, sitting within a garden compound of tropical trees and breezy pavilions, was created in 1875 by imperial edict from the Manchu Qing court in Beijing. The main building was built in 1662 as a temple dedicated to Koxinga after his death. A statue of Koxinga stands in the central shrine hall, flanked by sculptures of his two most trusted generals. In the colonnades are enshrined the 114 loyal officers who followed him to Taiwan. An attached museum displays antiques, pottery, paintings, documents, and costumes depicting the great man’s life and times. Left in ruins following the Japanese occupation, the shrine was fully restored after World War II, with major follow-up work in 1962.



**TAINAN CONFUCIUS TEMPLE ( 臺南孔廟 )**

- 📞 (06) 221-4647
- 📍 No. 2, Nanmen Rd., Central West District, Tainan City ( 台南市中西區南門路 2 號 )
- 🕒 8:30am ~ 5:30pm

**KOXINGA SHRINE ( 延平郡王祠 )**

- 📞 (06) 213-5518
- 📍 No. 152, Kaishan Rd., Central West District, Tainan City ( 台南市中西區開山路 152 號 )
- 🕒 8:30am ~ 5:30pm



## ◎ Modern Sites

In the city's dedicated efforts at modernizing, elderly architectural works are being redefined and given new functions. As well, visually magnetic brand-new creations that are purpose-built are steadily coming on-line. These add new landscape flair to the city while blending comfortably with the architectural past.

A prime example in the first category, repurposed works of older architecture, is the **Tainan Art Museum Building 1**. This is the converted former Tainan Police Department building, designed in Art Deco style by a Japanese architect and built in 1931. The appealing façade features ochre-hue bricks and tiles. This property, an official city heritage site, is the oldest police station building in Taiwan.

After Taiwan was handed over from Japan to the Republic of China in 1945, the facility was renamed as the Tainan City Police Department. The city police vacated the site in 2011. The refurbished work is home to a total of 16 museum galleries (this includes display space in a new building directly behind the main building, the two attached to each other in a high-ceilinged transition space defined by floor-to-ceiling glass). The main focus of the Tainan Art Museum is preservation of the artistic and historical legacy of Tainan, with the aim of integrating this art so it becomes a seamless element in modern daily life.

Another prime example in the first category is **The Spring**, which is a most unusual public plaza. In this instance, it was decided that an old building did not have heritage value, and the space has been reoriented for a new function with some useful elements of the original facility retained. The Spring is a 1.54ha

open-air public space – a sunken park and public wading pool with tree-dotted islets – created below street level in what was once the below-ground parking facility for a 1980s-built mall. The city government decided to demolish the vacated shopping center, and wanted to replace it with something that introduced more greenery into a neighborhood environment thought overly defined by concrete.

The architecture firm that handled the case redesigned the space as a “lush lagoon,” introducing plant life that will “develop into a lush jungle” over time. Visitors quickly forget the urban busyness above them; the surrounding road traffic is completely out of view, and for the most part unheard. A skeletal framework of original columns and beams (all now whitewashed) has been left in place, primarily for aesthetic effect. The arcades along the sides provide shade when a strong sun is out, and in summer water-mist spray helps keep the alfresco area cool.

A leading example in the second category, purpose-built new works of architecture with bold cutting-edge designs, is the **Tainan Art Museum Building 2**. As another Travel in Taiwan writer so aptly put

it in a previous article on Tainan, this “is a striking purpose-built structure. It's been variously likened to a mockup for a base on Mars and to a ziggurat. Some say the external stairways make them think of the drawings of M.C. Escher.” The inspiration for the exterior design was the flamboyant flame tree (*Delonix regia*), which was brought to Taiwan during the Japanese colonial era and is Tainan's official tree.

The conspicuous pentagonal contours, building block-style layered exhibition spaces, and dramatic fractal roof canopy immediately made the building a Tainan architectural landmark. Travelers with an especially keen interest in Chinese temple art should take note that the museum has a superb exhibit showcasing preliminary sketches crafted by artist Pan Li-shui, a Tainan native son, recognized by many as perhaps the greatest temple painter of the 20th century. This new facility houses a total of 17 museum galleries.

MAP



Tainan Art Museum Building 1



### TAINAN ART MUSEUM BUILDING 1

(台南市立美術館一館)

☎ (06) 221-8881

📍 No. 37, Nanmen Rd., Central West District, Tainan City (台南市中西區南門路 37 號)

🌐 [www.tnam.museum](http://www.tnam.museum) (Chinese)

### TAINAN ART MUSEUM BUILDING 2

(台南市立美術館二館)

☎ (06) 221-8881

📍 No. 1, Sec. 2, Zhongyi Rd., Central West District, Tainan City (台南市中西區忠義路二段 1 號)

🌐 [www.tnam.museum](http://www.tnam.museum) (Chinese)



**THE SPRING (河樂廣場)**

📍 At the intersection of Sec. 3, Jinhua Road and Zhongzheng Road

🌐 [www.facebook.com/TheSpring.Tainan](https://www.facebook.com/TheSpring.Tainan)



Tainan Art Museum Building 2



# Past And Present Of Anping



Exploring Tainan's Anping District

The west side of the Anping area, today formally called the Anping District, borders the Taiwan Strait. A short distance inland is its heart, a heritage-rich neighborhood where Taiwan's modern history began. This was the first urban area to form on the island. Anping is officially a Taiwan Top Ten Tourist Town (a list based on public voting compiled by the Taiwan Tourism Bureau).

At the center of it all is the expansive **Anping Old Fort** tourist attraction, home of the remains of Fort Zeelandia. The fort was begun by the Dutch in 1624, then heavily reinforced between 1627 and 1634. Bricks were held in place with a unique mortar made of sugarcane syrup, glutinous rice, and crushed oyster shells. Over time the great structure slowly became a ruin, the result of earthquakes, typhoons, and the pilfering of bricks by local residents – and Qing Dynasty soldiers building the nearby Eternal Golden Castle, which we'll visit in a moment. A large section of one wall, covered with banyan

roots, is still intact. Local authorities have identified other remnants long hidden away on surrounding private property, and have made some of these accessible to the public.

Other on-site features include a former customs house built by the Japanese atop a tiered base, and an observation tower built in the 1970s. Though the shore of the Taiwan Strait is now kilometers away, the enlightening area views make the steep tower climb well worth the effort. In the museum facilities are period paintings, maps, and relics of Tainan's colonial past, as well as a fine model of the site as it looked in the 1650s.

Immediately north of the Anping Old Fort is a highly popular heritage-attraction duo, the **Old Tait & Company Merchant House** and, directly behind, the **Anping Tree House**, that have only been opened to the public in recent years. Built by a British trading firm after





Eternal Golden Castle



Anping Old Fort

Sightseeing cruises on the old **Anping Canal** were launched a few years back. The 1-hour outings begin at the Anping Fisherman's Wharf, and take you on a giant 10km loop around the district, along the way passing the Eternal Golden Castle and crossing busy Kunshen Lake (Tainan's ship harbor). Along the way, a bonus thrill is the repeated call to dive below gunwale level before your craft tucks, barely, underneath three low-slung older bridges.

China was forced to open ports to Western trade in 1858 after the Second Opium War, the merchant firm vacated the site after the colonial Japanese moved to dominate the lucrative camphor and opium trades. Inside the breezy, graceful arcaded colonial-style trading house are displays on the area's imperial-era history. The treehouse, originally conjoined warehouses, has been completely overrun by massive banyan trees, sculpturing a fairyland warren.

Not far south of Anping Old Fort is the **Eternal Golden Castle**, which stands alongside the Anping Canal. It was built by the Chinese in the 1870s, fearful of the Western colonial powers and a strengthening, confident Japan. Designed by a Frenchman, massive bastions are found at the ends of the four high, thick walls, surrounded by a moat making enemy access even more problematic. On display inside are giant cannons and archeological digs. Paddleboat rentals are available for moat rides.

#### ANPING OLD FORT (安平古堡)

- ☎ (06) 226-7348
- 📍 No. 82, Guosheng Rd., Anping District, Tainan City  
(台南市安平區國勝路 82 號)

#### OLD TAIT & COMPANY MERCHANT HOUSE (德記洋行)

- ☎ (06) 391-3901
- 📍 No. 108, Gubao St., Anping District, Tainan City  
(台南市安平區古堡街 108 號)

#### ETERNAL GOLDEN CASTLE (億載金城)

- ☎ (06) 295-1504
- 📍 No. 3, Guangzhou Rd., Anping District, Tainan City  
(台南市安平區光州路 3 號)

MAP



# Restoration Of Historic Sites

Up until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, when major work was required on temples in Taiwan it was the norm to call in masters from China. Many if not most of these temples had in fact been built by imperial-era Chinese master craftsmen.

Things have since changed. Under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party the cultural inheritance on the mainland was devastated, with the Cultural Revolution the most infamous period of destruction of bricks-and-mortar treasures and of knowledge. While there have been signs of recovery, the restoration work in that environment is often driven by considerations well removed from historical honesty/accuracy.

Taiwan, in contrast, has been the main bastion of the true, unadulterated Chinese cultural inheritance. Local temple-arts masters are now the standard bearers when expertise is required in such places as Singapore, Hong Kong, and beyond. It should be no surprise that Tainan, the imperial-era capital and still the core of Taiwan temple culture, is where the best of the best and the densest cluster of these national treasures are found. Let's meet one.

**Cai Shun-ren** came to temple-restoration work from his artist studio work. When things needed repair in his studio, he learned to handle everything himself, and became ever more interested and more adept, at the same time learning ever more about temple art. After spending 10 years abroad, he returned to Taiwan in 2012 and quickly found there was a generational gap here. The younger generation did not understand the art and technique involved, the attitudes required for this craftwork industry, and the precious value of this technology inheritance. He sees himself as a bridge between the generations, preserving this heritage and ensuring it is passed on to future generations.

Cai engages on a wide range of temple-restoration work, from deity statues to horizontal inscription plaques. Among his major projects in Tainan have been the Baihe Daxian Temple, a major Buddhist temple over three centuries old in Tainan's rural Baihe District, and the Guandi Temple of Bajijing in the city's old quarter, also over three centuries old and home to door gods and frescoes painted by the earlier-mentioned Pan Li-shui.

During each project, the most difficult element is not the actual restoration work that he himself does, but the communication and negotiation required with

the full team participating in the project, to ensure all work is done correctly. The key is for Cai to first make enlightened, accurate judgments on all required work, by pulling together reliable pictures and historical details.



**Cai Shun-Ren**  
The master sees himself as a bridge between the generations, preserving Taiwan's temple heritage and ensuring it is passed on to future generations

Photos courtesy of TSJ Studio





As to what projects he takes on, and which have the highest cultural value, he states that the public perception that the oldest and most famous must be of the greatest value in restoration is not entirely accurate. For a true professional, every project is taken seriously. Everything that is broken or has deteriorated deserves to be fixed properly, and so as long as there is sufficient information for him to trace an item back to its origins, he will be able to bring his best in fixing it. To him, every creation that has been passed on by earlier generations that have now themselves passed on, helping to create the homeland he so deeply loves, is priceless.

His desire for the future is that his professional attitude will help educate people in Taiwan on correct concepts regarding heritage restoration, and to establish SOPs so that such work is not hindered by people's personal ideas and preferences. "Right attitude" is key in this industry. As well, by establishing international-caliber standards with his crew, his studio will stand ready to support projects in other regional countries when they have buildings or historical items that need fixing.



# Local Lifestyle, Traditional Foods

The city is known for its relaxed, easygoing personality. While the two cities at the north and south ends of the western plains, Taichung and Kaohsiung, were long known primarily for their dense cluster of light- and heavy-industry enterprises, respectively, Tainan was associated with more cultured living – scholastic institutions, cafés, temples, night markets, and so on. Perhaps more than anywhere else in Taiwan, Tainan folk love long and leisurely evenings spent with friends at genteel public gathering spots. As a general statement this today still includes the younger crowd, which save for the night markets seems to have more of a preference for laid-back cafés, bars, and eateries than for nightspots with bright lights and thumping music, as is common in Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung.

Among the hottest destinations is old, narrow **Shennong Street**, tightly packed with two-story heritage shophouses from the Qing Dynasty and Japanese colonial eras. In imperial times transport canals ran parallel to the street on either side. Today the artery is home to an alluring mix of old-time residents and Tainan-local newcomers who run cafés, eateries, bars, teahouses, and cultural-creative enterprises. The road surface has been redone in brick, retro-style streetlamps provide a romantic nighttime glow, and the beautified façades are fetchingly iconoclastic. Be sure to drop in for the hand-made treats at **Win Win Dessert** shop, at no. 88, where the signature creation is *xiancao* (herbal jelly), an old-time Taiwan snack cooling/warming favorite.



Beef soup and Tainan-style ice cream



Shop On Shennong Street

While it was Taipei that applied for UNESCO City of Gastronomy status about a decade ago and that was granted a Michelin Red Guide edition in 2018 (expanded to include Taichung last year), it is Tainan that has long been known among islanders as Taiwan's culinary capital. In the culinary sphere, its special claim to fame are its many distinctive snack delicacies. Snack vendors seemingly without end are set up within the **Yongle Market**, among the city's most venerable and beloved traditional markets, which does double-duty as a big tourist draw. Bring the biggest appetite you can muster for a food crawl; here are just a few of the Tainan snack-food classics you can hunt down:

## ◎ Shrimp rolls/biscuits

Long Taiwan's major port, it will be no surprise that seafood is a major player on the Tainan snack stage.

## ◎ Cuttlefish vermicelli

Most vendors offer thick/thin vermicelli options. The soup base is slightly sweet. South Taiwan adds sweetness to many savory culinary creations, the legacy of its sugarcane-production days (see box below).

## ◎ Guoshao ("pot burn") noodles

Especially popular during the cooler months; the key ingredient is fried eel, along with other seafood, meat, and veggie goodies.



Dan Dan noodles and Zongzi are the must-try snacks in Tainan



As well, don't miss out on two other Tainan culinary stars with creative monikers, *danzai* ("shoulder pole") noodles and coffin bread. Why so named, you ask? Why, we'll leave that up to your own in-Tainan culinary sleuthing. Claiming writer privilege, special mentions must also be given to the *dan dan* noodles, beef soup, rice cakes, and fruit ice. 📌



Yamuliao Market



### RECOMMENDED GIFT PURCHASE PENG CAKES

These tasty snack treats, created somewhere around a century ago, are a favorite Tainan gift buy. They are puffed-up pastries with a very thin outer layer that is crunchy and crumbly and, inside, a "hollow" inside the rounded top and caramelized brown sugar on the bottom. The word *peng* means "puffed up" in Taiwanese. Think of the onomatopoeia involved – the "peng" sound evokes the act of puffing up. In the past the Tainan region was an important sugarcane-cultivation area, with the Japanese creating industrial-scale cultivation and refining during their period of rule. Today, numerous Japanese-built sugar refinery complexes around the island have become tourist attractions, home to varied cultural-creative enterprises. Taiwan's brown sugar is more flavorful, more aromatic, and less refined than what is generally consumed in the West. Think instead of a medley of flavors – brown sugar, molasses, maple syrup. Try out the *peng* cakes and other old-style baked goodies at **Bao Lai Xiang** bakery, in business 70-plus years, at No. 8 Shennong Street in the hallowed old-fashioned Shuixian Temple Market.



#### BAO LAI XIANG (寶來香餅舖)

☎ (06) 227-6886  
 📍 No. 8, Shennong St., Central West District, Tainan City  
 (台南市中西區神農街 8 號)  
 🌐 [www.facebook.com/baolaixiang](http://www.facebook.com/baolaixiang)

#### MORE INFO

The following online destinations are recommended as especially valuable "all things Tainan" knowledge sources: Tainan City Govt. ([twtainan.net](http://twtainan.net)), Taiwan Tourism Bureau ([eng.taiwan.net.tw](http://eng.taiwan.net.tw)), Southwest Coast National Scenic Area ([swcoast-nsa.net](http://swcoast-nsa.net); coastal area north of city core).

As well, check out our numerous articles on the city over the years in our Travel in Taiwan back issues ([issuu.com/travelintaiwan](http://issuu.com/travelintaiwan)).

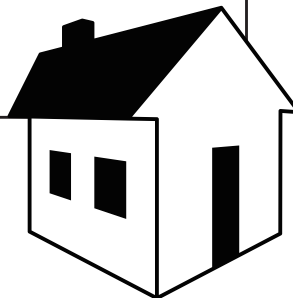
#### ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Anping Canal 安平運河  
 Anping Fisherman's Wharf 安平漁人碼頭  
 Anping Old Fort 安平古堡  
 Anping Tree House 安平樹屋  
 Baihe Daxian Temple 白河大仙寺  
 Cai Shun-ren 蔡舜任  
 coffin bread 棺材板  
 cuttlefish vermicelli 小卷米粉  
 dan dan noodles 擔擔麵  
 danzai noodles 擔仔麵  
 Guandi Temple of Bajijing 八吉境五帝廟  
 guoshao noodles 鍋燒麵  
 Koxinga Shrine 延平郡王祠  
 Pan Li-shui 潘麗水  
 peng cakes 椪餅  
 rice cakes 米糕  
 Shennong Street 神農街  
 shrimp rolls/biscuits/rolls 蝦捲 / 蝦餅  
 Shuixian Temple Market 水仙宮市場  
 xiancao 仙草  
 Yamuliao Market 鴨母寮市場  
 Yongle Market 永樂市場

# THE GREAT TAINAN CULTURAL-CREATIVE BLOOM

TEXT | RICK CHARETTE    PHOTOS | RAY CHANG, VISION

## An Explosion of New-Blood Tourism-Friendly Businesses in the Old City's Old Buildings



*They're everywhere, another one popping into view almost every time you turn a corner, whether on wandering exploratory perambulations along the city's age-old high streets or on wonderful serendipity discovery dips into its neighborhood webs of slim-width lanes and alleys. Energetic entrepreneurs, mostly younger in age, are breathing new life into vintage buildings and hoary tight-knit Tainan communities, their colorful modern cultural-creative ventures adding bold splashes of color amidst the dense population of seemingly forever-in-place traditional hot-snack vendors, bakeries, temple-worship paraphernalia suppliers, hardware suppliers, furniture sellers, barbershop and hairdresser operations, mom-and-pop sundry merchandise stores, and myriad other types of run-by-proprietor-family small businesses.*



**D**uring the famed Taiwan Economic Miracle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, modern industry and finance dramatically changed the landscape of Taiwan's cities on its west side, except for Tainan. The old capital never took to knocking down its old to make way for the more financially remunerative new with the alacrity its urban brethren did. This has left it with a vast treasure-trove of venerable low-rise architecture in its old quarter.

However, as initially discussed in our main article this issue, three new cultural/architectural currents are flowing powerfully through Tainan City as the year 2021 breaks. The first is the building of bold-

design new works of large-scale architecture, such as the Tainan Art Museum Building 2, in the old quarter. Another example of this are the scores of sleek new modern buildings going up in the rapidly growing Tainan Technology Industrial Park, just north of the old quarter. A second trend is the renovation and repurposing of large-scale heritage works, such as the Tainan Art Museum Building 1. The third, which we dive into deeper as this article continues, is the gleeful remodeling of smaller senior buildings for cultural-creative enterprise use. The people of Tainan are in love with their heritage, and take great joy in saving familiar old places by giving them new looks, new life, and new direction.





## Art Studio

### Xiao Ban Lou

The cozy, quaint, and miniscule Xiao Ban Lou, in a side lane off Minquan Road, is very close to three bigger works of heritage architecture, the Tainan Confucius Temple, Tainan Art Museum Building 1, and National Museum of Taiwan Literature. This is a small cultural-creative studio/museum dedicated to the ceramic arts, established by a well-known Tainan ceramic artist and tea master and his wife. It is a space for artist-cum-teacher and his pupils to display their works, as well as his work and teaching space. He has taught for over 30 years.

The compact one-and-a-half-story building, constructed about 70 years ago, was originally the home of a Western-medicine pharmacy. Many of the elements of the original décor have been faithfully retained, exhibiting a combining of simple Taiwanese and elegant Japanese aesthetics. The many antique furnishings, paired with the racks of earth-tone pottery works, evoke a strong nostalgic air.

The site is a popular pilgrimage site for TV buffs because of its repeated appearance in a hit Taiwan drama series called *Someday or One Day*, aired in 2019-2020. It played the role of a record store in segments set in the 1990s. While visiting, you may well see other visitors retro-dressed as the show's characters happily taking selfies.



#### XIAO BAN LOU (小半樓)

☎ 0982-816-009

📍 No. 7, Ln. 199, Sec. 1, Minquan Rd.,  
Central West District, Tainan City  
(台南市中西區民權路一段199巷7號)

🌐 [www.facebook.com/tainan1997](http://www.facebook.com/tainan1997)



**SERENDIPITY DISCOVERIES**  
Explore the shops in Tainan's  
neighborhood webs of slim-width  
lanes and alleys





# Vintage and Retro Goods

The concomitant to their cherishing of the old architecture that they have grown up with, and in, is that the folks of Tainan also have a deep fondness for surrounding themselves with antiques, vintage items, and retro curios. As an offshoot of this, some of the new cultural-creative retailer entrepreneurs are opening up chic old-building shops that save you shopping time by doing initial treasure-hunting for you, gathering the best of the best on their premises, waiting for your drop-by.

## PARIPARI

PARIPARI is in a renovated three-story commercial building in a lane/alley grid off Zhongyi Road. The National Taiwan Museum of Literature is just to the southeast, Great Queen of Heaven Temple to the west. Though one of the two entranceways is adorned with auspicious Chinese tiger god images, and the vintage Tainan terrazzo floors, ceramic tile walling/flooring, and significant original woodwork has been preserved, you step inside to a Paris 1930s world. “PARIPARI” is “Paris Paris” twice – think of the French pronunciation, the “s” silent.

On 1F is the PARIPARI Shop, filled with retro-style items referencing Taiwanese culture. International travelers especially like the coasters with old Tainan lane/alley images, scented candles that look like chunks of Hualien marble, jade, and other locally valued stones, and handcrafted vintage-style baskets, handbags, etc. The 2F café, featuring dark woods and exposed-ceiling piping and wiring, offers imported/Taiwan coffees and teas and Western-style hot foods and sweet treats.



### Must Try

Head back into days gone by with serendipity discovery of treasures such as old music cassettes

A few doors down from PARIPARI is **Asuka Antique**, run by the same entrepreneur. Here, two old street-level shop spaces have been gutted and joined, fully exposing the cement walls. Matched with the interior’s dark-hue woods and metal furnishings and the cornucopia of antiques and vintage items on display, the visuals are dramatic. I kept thinking of Victorian-era Dickensian curio shops brimming to bursting with rarities and oddities. There are far too many item types to describe; I was most taken with a series of handcrafted rectangular glass vials each containing representative Taiwan plant specimens, their back panels made of stained patterned glass taken from Tainan old-home windows, and a set of old, battered green-painted Japanese field-trip plant collection boxes that looked like WW II metal mess kits.



### PARIPARI & ASUKA ANTIQUE

- ☎ (06) 221-2866
- 📍 No. 1, No. 62, Ln. 158, Sec. 2, Zhongyi Rd., Central West District, Tainan City (台南市中西區忠義路二段 158 巷 62 號 1 樓)
- 🌐 [paripariapt.co](http://paripariapt.co) / [asukaantique.co](http://asukaantique.co) (Chinese)



## Art 11 Vintage

Art 11 Vintage is the tiniest of cubbyhole shops, with the feel of two stacked treehouses. It is hidden away in a lane/alleyway maze off Zhongzheng Road, immediately east of Hai'an Road Art Street and, just beyond that, The Spring (see our accommodation and main articles, respectively). An unusual feature of this neighborhood is that along Zhongzheng Road the buildings have been extended right over the lane entrances, creating a tunnel effect and, once inside the warren, a bottom-of-crevasse ambience.

The shop is a font of 1950s apparel and adornments – American, not Taiwanese – sourced from the US of A by the fresh-out-of-university proprietary team. These are non-Tainan fellows who wanted to stay after graduation. They also sourced



**ART 11 VINTAGE (白木 11 VINTAGE)**  
 📍 No. 8, Ln. 209, Sec. 2, Zhongzheng Rd., Central West District, Tainan City (台南市中西區中正路 209 巷 8 號)  
 🌐 facebook.com/art11vintage



**BACK TO THE 50S**  
 Art 11 Vintage specializes on apparel from a different time and a different country



expert craftsmen to return this long-abandoned space, 70-plus years old, as close as possible to its original look. Their choice of classic Americana attire and paraphernalia stems in part from the sense of nostalgia induced in local folk, because US military personnel were stationed in Taiwan from the '50s to late '70s. Looking around the two ultra-compact, ultra-goods-stuffed floors, the second reached by narrow ladder-like stairs, I was reminded of my father and his five brothers back in my North America youth, who seemed to prefer living in the 1950s well into the 1970s, decked out in the exact-same '50s-era denim, leather jackets, and decals like a retro music band.



## Tainan Delicacies

### Nuofu Rice Cake

The Nuofu Rice Cake eatery's setting is a bit different from the other enterprises presented in this file. It is visible through an ornate temple gate inside a lane/alley grid from a main thoroughfare, Fuqian Road, standing right beside a classically ostentatious temple on its plaza. Immediately east along Fuqian is the Tainan Art Museum Building 2 and Tainan Judicial Museum.

*Migao*, or rice cakes, was one of the signature Tainan snack treats mentioned in our main article. Served hot in a bowl, the classic Tainan version is made with glutinous rice and contains soy-braised minced pork, mushroom, peanuts, fish floss, and often dried Sakura shrimp. The Nuofu Rice Cake version is made using the recipe of the mother-in-law of one of the young owners; she spent decades selling her edition from a peddler's cart. Her "secrets," shared freely by the owners, are the added use of rock sugar made with Tainan-region sugarcane and *jijiu* ("chicken wine"), made with rice wine, which gives a light flavoring akin to sesame-oil chicken, another classic Taiwan hot treat.

Enough *migao* for just 100-plus bowls is made daily. The place opens at noon, and the 100 go quickly. Get there early, for no matter how early you do get there you'll find eager hungry folk already lined up across the temple mouth. The Nuofu Rice Cake home is an old two-story former private residence that the owners have renovated and much beautified, giving it a kiosk-style first-floor façade. It is owned by and rented to them by the temple – "not the management," say the owners, "our landlords are the gods." When deciding on which competing entrepreneurs to rent the place too, management let the resident main deity decide using divining blocks. "With the gods smiling on us," say the owners, "how could our business not thrive?"



#### NUOFU RICE CAKE (糯夫米糕)

📍 No. 22, Ln. 359, Sec. 1, Fuqian Rd.,  
Central West District, Tainan City  
(台南市中西區府前路一段359巷22號)

🌐 [www.facebook.com/nuofuliou](http://www.facebook.com/nuofuliou)



## Must Try

Try *guabao*, a cut-open steamed bun stuffed with soy-braised pork, pickled mustard greens, peanut powder, and cilantro.



## Momocha

Momocha, a rustic teahouse/eatery, is steps down a lane off Beimen Road just south of the Tainan Railway Station. The owner rents this space, a narrow-width two-story former private residence built in 1967, from one of his former high-school teachers. “No,” he states, “he didn’t give me especially good grades back then.” Before he set up, the building had been abandoned for 15 years and leaked badly. He spent 18 months fixing up the place, completely redesigning the interior with a friend’s help. The main dining area is on the wood-theme second floor, filled with period furnishings. There are also a couple of tiny tables on the first floor before the sales counter, with the kitchen in view behind.

The menu is the simplest of simple: teas and cold tea drinks, *guabao*, and tea-flavored brownies. His parents have run a tea shop for 30 years, specializing in high-mountain oolong teas. He wanted to differentiate his spot from other chic teahouses, which he feels too much emphasize Western-style teas and afternoon tea-type snacks, with more quintessentially Taiwanese offerings. “Mocha, better known as matcha to Westerners, is actually from Tang Dynasty China, not Japan. I have paired mocha/matcha beverages with *guabao*, or ‘Taiwanese hamburgers,’ as a classic Taiwanese duo.”

*Guabao* is a cut-open steamed bun stuffed with soy-braised pork, pickled mustard greens, peanut powder, and cilantro. Here, Dongpo pork is used, and there are also chicken and fried chicken versions. There are three types of cold drinks: high-mountain mocha original and mocha with either Taiwan strawberry or passionfruit. The owner learned to make brownies simply because he loves them; he offers two mocha-flavored creations, with either white chocolate or coffee flavoring, both truly mouthwatering. All the mocha used is fresh-ground daily using a traditional mortar and pestle, with demonstrations and, if you like, DIY opportunity.

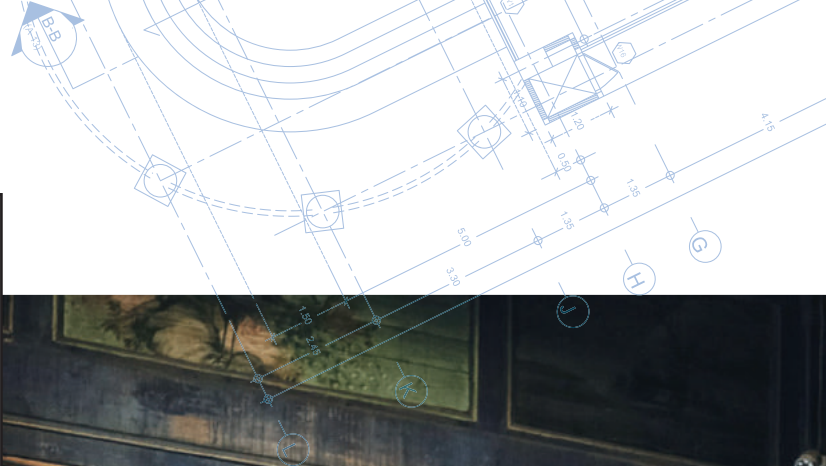


### MOMOCHA (磨磨茶)

☎ (06) 223-4093

📍 No. 2, Ln. 161, Sec. 1, Beimen Rd., Central West District, Tainan City  
(台南市中西區北門路一段 161 巷 2 號)

🌐 [www.facebook.com/momochadrink](http://www.facebook.com/momochadrink)



## Lao Cuo 1933

This is, the owners say, a unique Taiwan take on the bistro concept – a combination of traditional Taiwanese-style beerhouse and BBQ joint and located in a *sanbeyuan* heritage structure. It is located off Minquan Road very close to the above-presented Xiao Ban Lou and Tainan City God Temple.

A *sanbeyuan* is a traditional Chinese three-sided courtyard residence. The chosen name for today's in-residence enterprise, Lao Cuo 1933, translates as "Old Residence 1933," with the number referencing the year the facility was built. This type of architecture is usually found in the countryside, the courtyard area used for sun-drying harvest riches. This place is unusual in two significant ways – built so late in the modern era, and built right in a city. It sat abandoned for many years before the young Lao Cuo 1933 team, two Tainan brothers, purchased and thoroughly renovated it. Much of the original structural and decorative woodwork has been saved; the wood is primarily the highly prized cypress from Taiwan's high-mountain Alishan region. Various wall-inlaid artworks were also saved as well, and period paintings, old merchandise signs, and other adornments have been brought in. The vintage furnishing and retro seating in the interior and courtyard, the latter old-look wooden tables and benches, have been newly introduced.



A traditional wood-fired brick hearth is on display in the restaurant

### LAO CUO 1933 (老厝一九三三)

☎ (06) 222-1466

📍 No. 27, Ln. 51, Sec. 1, Beimen Rd., Central West District, Tainan City  
(台南市中西區北門路一段 51 巷 27)

🌐 facebook.com/oldhouse1933



The menu is extensive, filled with inexpensive savory goodies. Specially recommended are the pork/chicken/duck kebabs, lettuce-wrapped beef/pork slices, bacon rolls with shrimp, sausage stuffed with onions, chitterlings, fish chin, roast king oyster/shiitake mushrooms, tempura, fish-paste bars, and shrimp rolls – all roasted. The accompanying sauces have a pleasant and harmonious hint of sweetness, in the traditional southern Taiwan manner. Taiwan Beer offerings dominate on the libations front, and there are also Taiwan craft beers, imports, and of course non-alcoholic choices. 📌

#### 📌 MORE INFO

Recommended for more info on the type of Tainan places described above: the Taiwan Tourism Bureau website ([taiwan.net.tw](http://taiwan.net.tw)); Tainan City Government's Travel Tainan site ([twtainan.net](http://twtainan.net)); and its Old Is Good website ([oldisgood.tainan.gov.tw](http://oldisgood.tainan.gov.tw)). Though the last unfortunately has no English, it's an invaluable resource on the specific type of renovation/repurposing project discussed here. Also recommended are Tainan files in our Travel in Taiwan back issues ([issuu.com/travelintaiwan](http://issuu.com/travelintaiwan)).

#### 🗺️ ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Dongpo pork 東坡肉  
Great Queen of Heaven Temple 大天后宮  
jjiu 雞酒  
migao 米糕  
sanheyuan 三合院  
Someday or One Day 想見你  
Tainan Judicial Museum 台南司法博物館

OLD BUILDING, OLD FOOD  
In Tainan you can indulge in traditional foods amidst traditional trappings

MAP



10-000  
10

# Sleeping in Old Tainan

A Legion of Eccentric Mini-Hotels, Inns, Hostels,  
and Homestays Awaits You

TEXT | RICK CHARETTE    PHOTOS | RAY CHANG



*In Tainan, the small cultural-creative hotels, inns, hostels, and homestays found snuggled away within its close-knit community grids of side lanes and alleys do double-duty as time-travel devices. Located in old architecture lovingly restored, each has a highly individual backstory, and a highly eclectic interior design that invariably reflects the personality of its owner/operator. Many are filled with carefully selected period furniture pieces and paraphernalia – often items that have been part of the life of the proprietor – and all allow you to become an intrinsic, almost unseen element of the neighborhood culture for a few days, watching life roll by as it has for decade upon decade.*

# NEAT HOSTEL



**Did you know?**  
Tainan abounds with quirky tiny places of accommodation

Why come all the way to island Taiwan, and then make the local trip to Tainan, to stay in an old building? Well, as you well know, the more stars attributed to a place of accommodation, the more distant you'll be transported from the authentic daily lives of the local people. If you're looking for more than just comfort and luxury and share the goal of the true international explorer – immersion, understanding, enlightenment, and intellectual/emotional broadening – then back alley, off-the-beaten-track inns and homestays might suit you better.

Taiwan's alleyway culture is considered a national treasure. In the cities, stepping off a major street or road into the awaiting labyrinth of old narrow lanes and alleys is to step into a separate world, each high-density neighborhood community of low-rise buildings possessing a unique story, a unique culture. The lanes and alleys in the old-time capital area of Tainan are even narrower than elsewhere – think of two passing rickshaws barely able to squeeze by each other. The city abounds with quirky tiny places of accommodation down these arteries, neighbored by households in place for generations, the residents going about their daily business in their comfy, familiar age-old ways.

Stay at the Neat Hostel and you stay in the house that the owner grew up in. Well, not exactly; this is the inn the owner grew up in.

It's located just steps away from the modern shops along busy Chenggong Road, and is just two-plus blocks along Chenggong from the Tainan Railway Station, a heritage structure built by the Japanese. "Chenggong" is from "Zheng Cheng-gong," the given name of Koxinga (see main article). It's also just steps from Gongyuan ("Park") Road. Less than two blocks away along this road is the beautiful full-block Tainan Park, defined by the tall, proud tree specimens given birth when the Japanese used the park as a testing ground for tropical species. Across Gongyuan Road from the park is the 321 Art Alley Settlement, created as a dormitory-residence for Japanese army officials in the 1930s, today an artist/performance troupe enclave.

The facility is actually two now-interconnected buildings – the main building, which was built as an inn during the Japanese era, and a residential building behind. Today the main level houses a pastry shop and photography studio. The rambling second and third floors are the hostel quarters, centered on a commons area with kitchen facilities and light snack treats and coffee/tea. The entire place brims with antique pieces, some from the original inn. Two of the most unusual items are an ancient plug-in telephone switchboard and a dining table with top crafted from the original inn's large Chinese-character signboard. Rooms range from those with a single bed for two to a large tatami room for families/groups.



**PRECIOUS HERITAGE**  
Taiwan's alleyway culture is considered a national treasure

### NEAT HOSTEL (新東亞旅程)

☎ 0937-663-928

📍 No. 45, Ln. 68, Chenggong Rd., North District, Tainan City (台南市北區成功路 68 巷 45 號)

🌐 [www.facebook.com/neaty01](http://www.facebook.com/neaty01)

## BOOK INN

Ever slept “inside” a bookshelf wall? This experience, possibly unique in this world, awaits you at the Book Inn.

This choice is different from the other selections in this article in that it is on a main street. It’s on Nanmen Road, looking across at the Tainan Confucius Temple complex. “Nanmen” means “South Gate,” meaning you are in the south section of the old walled city. From its top-floor patio, adorned with picnic tables, patrons enjoy a splendid overview of the temple grounds before and the alleyway neighborhood behind, overlooking a small tucked-away heritage temple completely unseen from the main street.

The inn is actually made up of three now-conjoined side-by-side buildings constructed in the classical shophouse style, long and rectangular with narrow facades. The key building started as a private residence built in the Japanese period, then saw long duty as a secondhand bookstore, run by a friend of the Book Inn proprietor. The main floor is today operated as a public bookstore/café. Inn residents access the next three floors by entry passcode. Sleeping bunks resemble those in railroad sleeping cars, except you are “inside” floor-to-ceiling walls of books. There are two private rooms with bunk beds on the third floor. The fourth floor (top floor) common room has a superb modern kitchen/dining area with full cooking facilities.



### BOOK INN ( 艸祭 )

☎ (06) 222-2909

📍 No. 71, Nanmen Rd., Central West District, Tainan City  
(台南市中西區南門路 71 號)

🌐 [www.caoji.com.tw/caiji](http://www.caoji.com.tw/caiji)

📘 [www.facebook.com/caojiBookinn](https://www.facebook.com/caojiBookinn)



### Tip

Sleep inside a book shelf for a unique experience!

**Top 3**

The most popular three homestays in Tainan according to a recent online poll are: Book Inn, Shennong Guesthouse, and Old Tainan

**LOKU TAINAN MINSHUKU**

Many if not most of these places of accommodation actively immerse themselves in the lives of their surrounding community. A stellar example of this is Loku Tainan Minshuku, a combination teashop/inn run by a Taipei transplant who fell in love with the relaxed Tainan lifestyle, who stages tea-theme parties, mini-concerts, and other activities for local residents (and visitors) in the tiny temple plaza directly before her business.

Its location is at the west end of short Xinyi Street, which is just wide enough for an economy car to squeeze through. Right beside it is the old, small Duiyue Gate (built 1836), the only Tainan walled city gate still in use. Two hundred years ago this was an important commercial artery; today it is home to a rich mix of old-time residents and newly arrived entrepreneurs running cultural-creative enterprises such as restaurants and boutiques. Shennong Street (see main Feature article) is just a short walk away. The teashop is in a two-story former inn that dates to the old walled city days, used by travelers entering the city from the nearby port. The Loku Tainan Minshuku rooms are in the top

two floors of a renovated three-story former private residence right behind the teashop, reached by an old outdoor cement stairway that climbs up beside it. The rooms are retro stylish, made to look like upscale inn rooms in the early 1900s.

**LOKU TAINAN MINSHUKU (老古石渡)**

☎ 0984-260-256

📍 No. 1, Ln. 122, Xinyi St., Central West District, Tainan City (台南市中西區信義街 122 巷 1 號)

🌐 loku.tw (Chinese)

📘 www.facebook.com/Loku.tainan

**DUIYUE GATE**

This is the only Tainan walled city gate still in use



## CATCH PHOENIX

The east end of Xinyi Street leaves you just one block away from Catch Phoenix, which is down another narrow lane just off Haian Road. Not far along Haian in one direction is perhaps the most beloved of Tainan's famous night markets, the mammoth Garden Night Market, which has 400-plus stalls. Along Haian in the other direction is the nearby Shennong Street and highly visually entertaining Haian Art Street section.

“Haian” means “sea side,” reference to the fact that this artery originated beside the long-gone Inner Sea discussed in our main Feature article. If any of the places mentioned in this file deserve the adjective “quirky,” it is Catch Phoenix. The owner has renovated a long-abandoned single-story residence with a high pitched roof, filling it up inside with two modern-style suites, both of which have sleeping lofts in what was the attic area, a tiny common area inside the front door, a narrow hall that takes you to the rooms – and nothing more. You access the building via entry passcode. The door-facing decorated wooden wall of the first suite, which soars from the floor to within inches of the roof, is an eclectic visual delight. It reminded both myself and the *Travel in Taiwan* photographer of the decorative wall and windows of the Kumari Ghar palace in Nepal's Kathmandu, through which Kathmandu's secretive living goddess watches the mortal world go by, unseen.



HAIAN ROAD  
 "Haian" means "sea side,"  
 reference to the fact that this  
 artery originated beside the  
 long-gone Inner Sea

### Tip

Don't forget to visit Tainan's  
 Garden Night Market

### CATCH PHOENIX (捉鳳凰)


- ☎ 0905-926-279
- 📍 No. 11, Ln. 296, Sec. 2, Haian Rd., Central West District, Tainan City  
 (台南市中西區海安路二段 296 巷 11 號)
- 🌐 phoenix.mmweb.tw (Chinese)
- 📌 www.facebook.com/catchphoenix



**CATCH POENIX**  
Inside the single-story residence are two attractive suites with sleeping lofts

## ADORE TAINAN – ADORE SPACE



A special mention must also be given to **Adore Tainan – Adore Space**, off Minsheng Road near Haian Art Street. This is a two-story former private home with rooftop deck that has one of the most beautifully preserved traditional upscale residence facades in Taiwan, with Hualien marble slabs above the ground and cast-iron latticework grates protecting the windows. Inside, the rooms are retro chic, and the original terrazzo and decorated-tile floors and walling, as well as the colored-tile bathtubs, have been preserved. 

 **ENGLISH AND CHINESE**

Chenggong Road 成功路  
Duiyue Gate 兌悅門  
Garden Night Market 花園夜市  
Gongyuan Road 公園路  
Haian Art Street 海安路藝術街  
Haian Road 海安路  
Nanmen Road 南門路

**MAP**



**ADORE TAINAN – ADORE SPACE (兜台南)**

☎ 0976-399-749

📍 No. 7, Aly 11, Ln. 181, Sec. 1, Minsheng Rd., Central West District, Tainan City (台南市中西區民生路一段181巷11弄7號)

🌐 [www.facebook.com/AdoreTainan](http://www.facebook.com/AdoreTainan)

*With each resident consuming an average of 30kg of seafood per year, the island of Taiwan is a bona fide paradise for diners who enjoy feasting on marine catch. From beloved snacks such as oyster omelets at a night market to sashimi at a high-end Japanese bar, visitors can enjoy saltwater produce in all shapes and forms all across the island, which is famed for its diverse cuisine. Eat your way through Taipei's impressive array of offerings or head out to explore the eateries at one of Taiwan's many charming fishing ports, where you can enjoy all sorts of regional and seasonal specialties while breathing in the local history.*

A vibrant night market scene in Taiwan. In the foreground, a man wearing a striped polo shirt and a cap is riding a motorized cart with a red sign displaying the number '28'. The cart is loaded with boxes and other items. The background is filled with people walking through the market, illuminated by warm streetlights and shop signs. One sign in the background reads '明月修改衣服' (Mingyue Tailor) and '冷饮' (Cold Drinks). The overall atmosphere is bustling and lively.

# A SEAFOODIE'S PARADISE

**FOREIGN SURF-CUISINE LOVERS WILL FEEL RIGHT AT HOME IN TAIWAN**

TEXT | HAN CHEUNG PHOTOS | VISION



One of my favorite day-trips from Taipei is to **Daxi Fishing Harbor** on the northern coast of Yilan County. It's easily accessible by bus, train, or car. I prefer heading first to **Dali**, another fishing village to its north, and from there hiking the mesmerizing **Taoyuan Valley Trail** to Daxi. The highlight of my stay is always sampling the fresh-caught seafood hauled in by the bright-colored fishing vessels that line the bustling harbor.

From grilled rosy sea bass to steamed lobster to marinated barnacles, sautéed clams, and shrimp fried rice, I have yet to leave Daxi with my stomach disappointed. A cold Taiwan Beer makes the meal complete.

Wherever you are in Taiwan, as long as you're near the coast you are likely to find a fishing harbor like Daxi – or a larger one – within reach, where you can buy your own seafood ingredients from a vibrant fish market, a stroll through which is a worthy experience in itself. In addition to the lively atmosphere, you'll come across a dizzying array of sea creatures, many of which you've probably never seen before. Most of these locales boast multiple live-seafood restaurants lining quaint streets, selling different local specialties according to season. Some will take the produce you buy at the market and whip up a delicious feast. It's worth staying a while at these harbors to watch the non-stop activity as people unload their catch, repaint their boats, repair their nets, and engage in other work.

One of the best things about Taiwan is that, as an island, seafood is an essential part of the local cuisine – excellent fresh-catch seafood restaurants are readily available in big cities like Taipei and Kaohsiung where diners pick out what they want from large tanks. Japanese cuisine is also immensely popular, from sushi-on-the-go places at metro stations to conveyor belt restaurants to upscale sashimi bars. If you visit a night market, you'll notice that marine bounty is also ubiquitous among the street snack offerings. You can even give indoor recreational shrimp fishing a whirl; the staff of these establishments will cook your catch for you right away.

In addition to local enjoyment, Taiwan has a massive seafood export industry, shipping over US\$1.3 billion of produce per year. Due to overfishing, experts have been urging people to eat locally and seasonally as well as consuming the entire fish instead of just fillets. Before making a purchase, try to find out more about where your ingredients come from, and how they've been caught.

#### SEAFOOD MARKET

Strolling through a vibrant seafood market with its dizzying array of sea creatures is a worthy experience in itself



## WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO EAT FOR A JOYFUL SEAFOOD FEAST

### ADDICTION AQUATIC DEVELOPMENT

If you're in Taipei, this is the place to go if you have a hankering for seafood. Touted as a dream come true for seafood aficionados, the place is like a marine produce mall. It is divided into 10 sections, including a live wholesale seafood market, stand-up sushi bar, hotpot joint, charcoal-grilled barbecue spot, supermarket selling fresh and cooked morsels, and the latest addition – the fine-dining establishment **Trésors de la Mer**.



### LOW-COST SEAFOOD AT A FISHING HARBOR

As mentioned earlier, the most cost-efficient way to enjoy fresh seafood is to head to one of the fishing harbors dotted along the coast. Many of them are quite picturesque and are steeped in history, and it's also an enlightening cultural experience to visit the bustling markets and learn about the local way of life. There are too many to list, but the bluefin tuna sashimi in Pingtung County's **Donggang** is a must-try in May and June, while the cuttlefish rice noodles at **Mao'ao** village on the Northeast Coast is also a favorite with island foodies.



### SMART FISH

This Chiayi mainstay has been serving up its famous fish head stew for three generations, starting from a roadside stall in 1953 to become one of the best-known restaurants in the city. Last year, the establishment was prominently featured in a segment of the Netflix series *Street Food*, in which current owner Grace Lin discusses how the restaurant has modernized without sacrificing traditional taste and quality. The fish of choice is the bighead carp, which is lightly coated with sweet potato flour, fried, and served with a rich soup topped with a special *shacha* sauce for an extra kick. This place also generally has long waits, so plan your visit accordingly. 📌

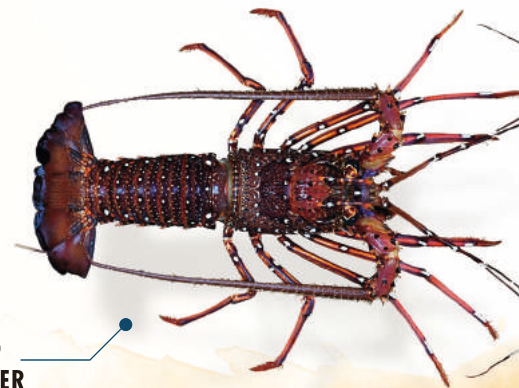


#### SMART FISH (林聰明砂鍋魚頭)

- ☎ (05) 227-0661
- 📍 No. 361, Zhongzheng Rd., East Dist., Chiayi City  
(嘉義市民東區中正路 361 號)
- 🌐 [www.smartfish.com.tw](http://www.smartfish.com.tw)

**FINE SEAFOOD**

The variety of seafood available in Taiwan's harbor-side fish market is astonishing. If you are not sure what to buy in the market (or order in a seafood restaurant), it is advisable to consult with a local friend who knows his/her seafood. The marine harvest includes a wide selection of fish and cephalopods (squids, octopi, and cuttlefish), shellfish such as clams and oysters, and crustaceans (shrimp, crabs, and lobsters), as well as oddities like sea cucumbers, urchins, and various seaweeds.

**MILKFISH****GIANT MUD CRAB****LONGLEGGED SPINY LOBSTER****PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA****CHINESE SILVER POMFRET****SWORDTIP SQUID****GIANT TIGER PRAWN**

*Photos courtesy of Fishery Agency*

**ENGLISH AND CHINESE**  
 Dali 大里  
 Daxi Fishing Harbor 大溪漁港  
 Donggang 東港  
 Mao'ao 卯澳  
 oyster omelet 蚵仔煎  
 Street Food 世界小吃  
 Taoyuan Valley Trail 桃源谷步道  
 Trésors de la Mer 煮海

# Visual Diaries



TEXT | OWAIN MCKIMM PHOTOS | VISION

## The Incredibly Detailed Hand-drawn Maps by Taiwan Expat Tom Rook

*Taiwan's cities are by their nature often overwhelming – sprawling, crowded, streets dense with neon signs, street vendors, noise and bustle. The work of British artist Tom Rook – a long-time resident of Taiwan – offers a different perspective on the island's urban landscapes. At once meticulously intricate and grandly sweeping in scope, Rook's hand-drawn maps of Taipei and other major cities on the island offer a serene bird's-eye view of Asian municipalities while inviting the curious to look closer, to see in intimate detail the environments where local life is lived.*

Hailing from Exmouth, a small port town in the bucolic southern English county of Devon, Rook grew up on a hilltop, in a house overlooking the town, the River Exe, and the moorland beyond – a view of the world that was formative for his artistic vision: “I feel like that perspective perhaps switched my brain into thinking from these angles,” Rook says. He started drawing at a young age, but has never received any formal training in art. He believes his fondness for

cartography may have come from his grandfather – a worker for the local electricity board, whose house was filled with large technical maps of the local and national grid. While studying at university in Nottingham, he began drawing maps of the city, both as a way to discover new places and to serve as a record of his time there. “I have a very visual memory, so I could look at part of a map and remember an experience I’d had there. It was like a diary, but in visual form.”

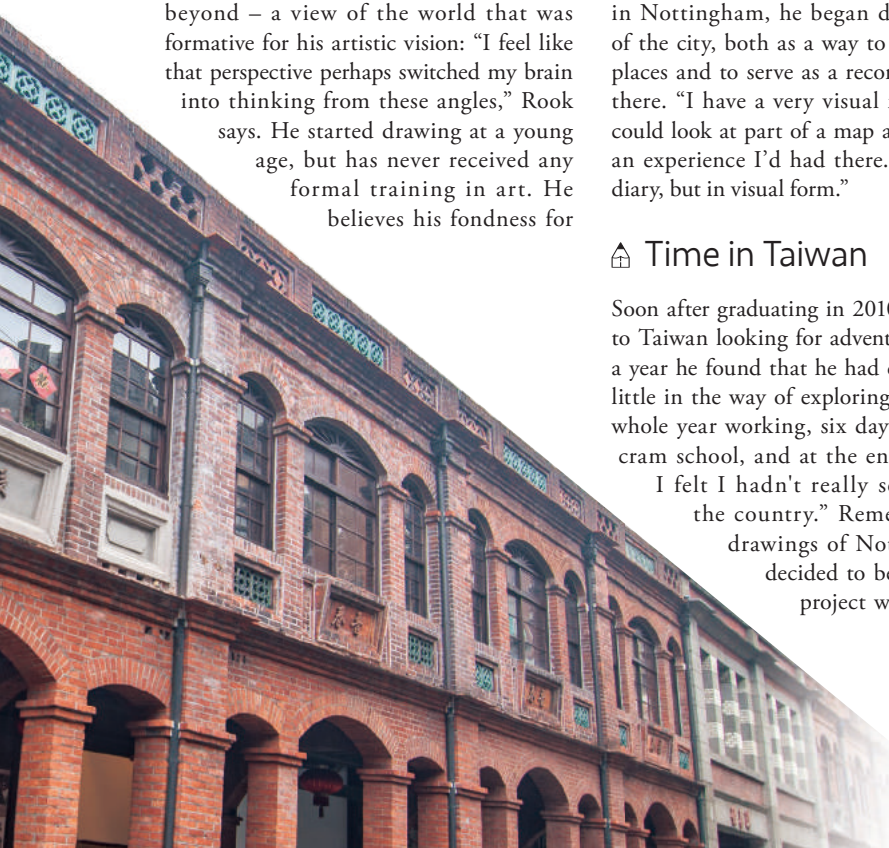
### 🏠 Time in Taiwan

Soon after graduating in 2010, Rook came to Taiwan looking for adventure, but after a year he found that he had done precious little in the way of exploring. “I spent the whole year working, six days a week in a cram school, and at the end of the year

I felt I hadn't really seen much of the country.” Remembering his drawings of Nottingham, he decided to begin a similar project with Taipei. “I

hadn't planned on staying in Taipei long-term. At that time I thought that at some point I was going to leave, and I wanted to have a large drawing of the places where I'd spent my time. I also felt I didn't know Taipei very well, that I was just popping up out of metro stations like a groundhog – nothing really connected. So I started to walk between the stations, piecing the city together.” Working in the mornings before his teaching job, on a small table in his shared apartment, Rook began to draw the city, in pencil, on twenty-eight panels of drawing paper.

Since then, Rook has completed maps of some of Taiwan's major cities – including Taichung and Hsinchu – as well as detailed maps of some of Taipei's most characterful districts and historical maps showing Taipei and Tainan in 1945. Now a full-time artist, Rook has had over ten exhibitions in the last decade, regularly takes private commissions, and is currently in the process of publishing a book of his work that combines his map-work with interesting snippets of local history.



Shi Lian Dong, a row of old houses in Taipei's Dadaocheng neighborhood

## URBAN EXPLORER

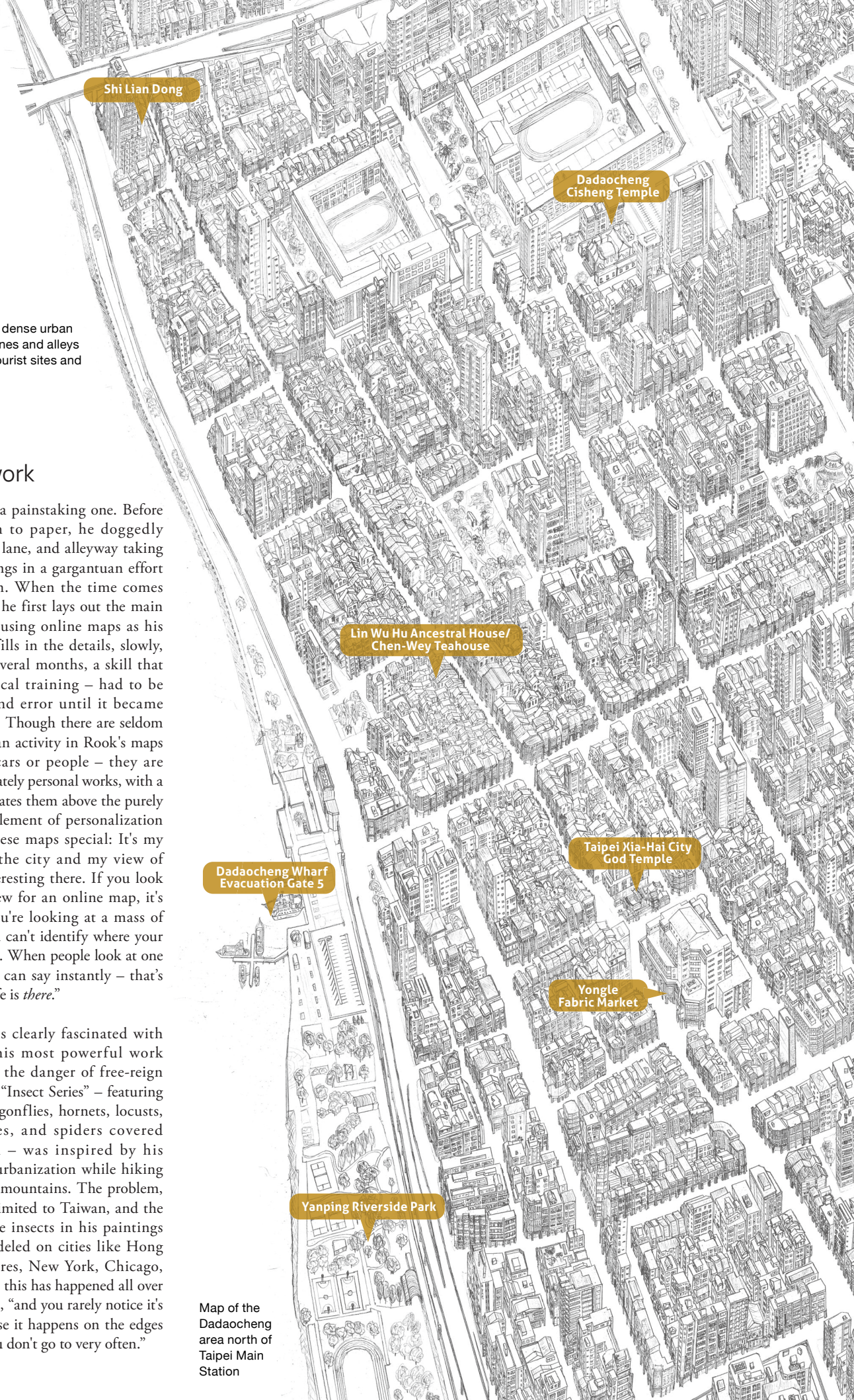
Rook is attracted to dense urban zones with lots of lanes and alleys away from the big tourist sites and landmarks

## △ The Artwork

Rook's process is a painstaking one. Before even setting pen to paper, he doggedly walks each street, lane, and alleyway taking pictures of buildings in a gargantuan effort at documentation. When the time comes to draw the map, he first lays out the main streets and lanes using online maps as his guide, and then fills in the details, slowly, over a series of several months, a skill that – with no technical training – had to be honed by trial and error until it became almost instinctive. Though there are seldom any signs of human activity in Rook's maps – there are few cars or people – they are nevertheless intimately personal works, with a character that elevates them above the purely technical. “The element of personalization is what makes these maps special: It's my journey around the city and my view of what I found interesting there. If you look at the satellite view for an online map, it's very chaotic – you're looking at a mass of buildings and you can't identify where your life is taking place. When people look at one of my maps, they can say instantly – that's where I live; my life is *there*.”

Although Rook is clearly fascinated with cities, some of his most powerful work in fact confronts the danger of free-reign urbanization. His “Insect Series” – featuring silhouettes of dragonflies, hornets, locusts, praying mantises, and spiders covered in urban sprawl – was inspired by his encounters with urbanization while hiking Taiwan's forested mountains. The problem, of course, is not limited to Taiwan, and the cities covering the insects in his paintings are variously modeled on cities like Hong Kong, Buenos Aires, New York, Chicago, and Detroit. “I see this has happened all over the world,” he says, “and you rarely notice it's happening, because it happens on the edges of cities, where you don't go to very often.”

Map of the Dadaocheng area north of Taipei Main Station

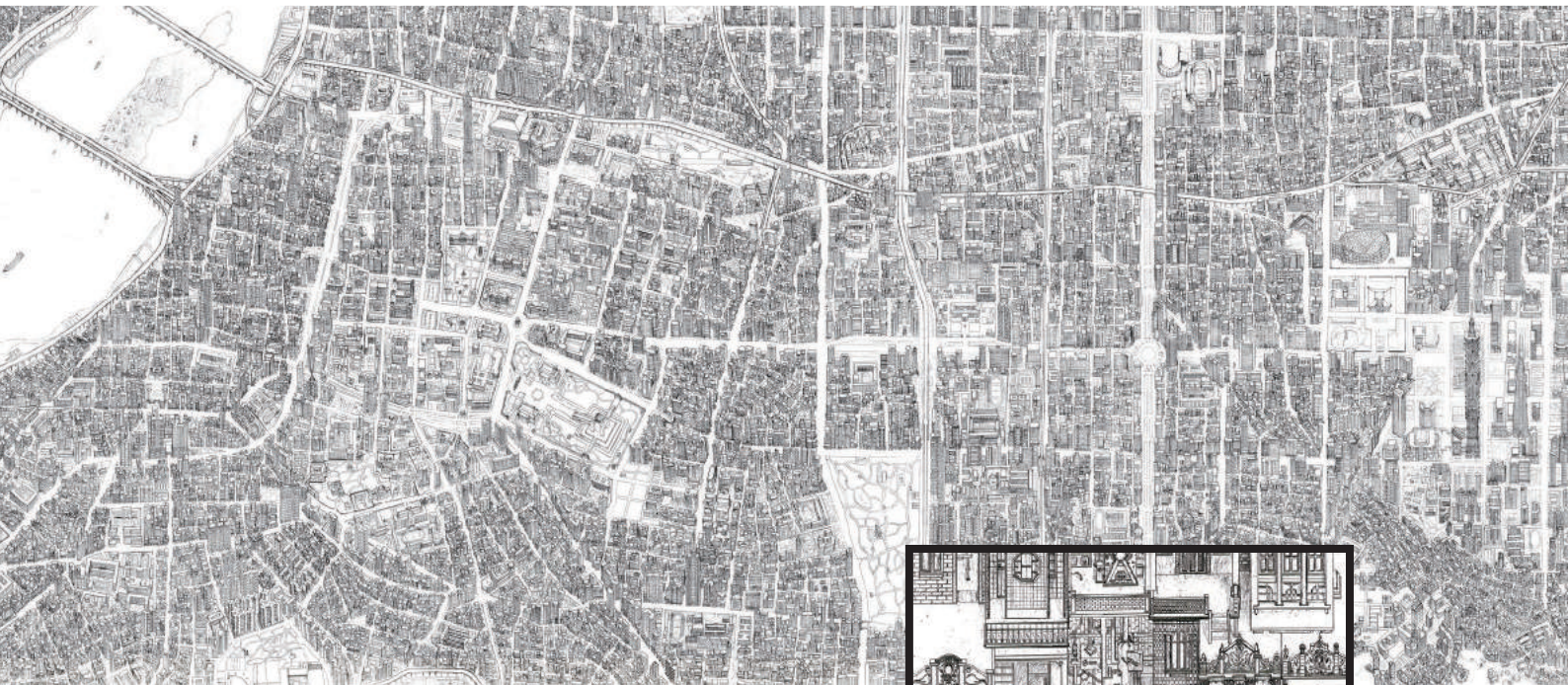


## Favorite Places

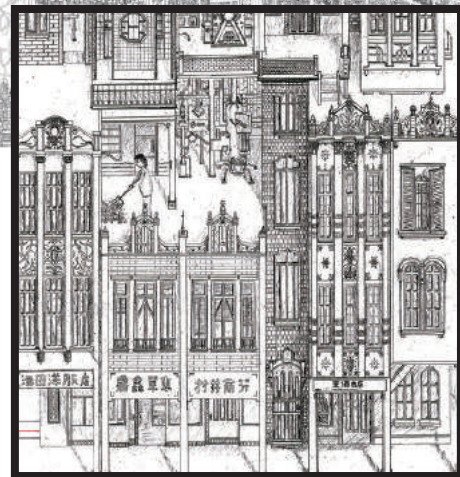
A natural urban explorer, Rook's interests are perhaps a little different from most travelers. Attracted to dense urban zones with lots of lanes and alleys away from the big sites and landmarks, Rook speaks enthusiastically about areas most travelers seldom, if ever, visit. One area of fascination is Nanjichang in Taipei's Wanhua District, one of Taiwan's first modern social housing communities, built back in the 1960s. A model of its kind in its prime, it is a fascinating maze with hidden courtyards and spiral staircases. The closely packed buildings and one-of-a-kind architecture make it a tempting future project for Rook, and indeed a wonderful place for any urban photographer or connoisseur of daily city life to explore, though it's unlikely to feature in any guidebook. Indeed, Rook's advice for travelers to Taipei is to not be afraid of the city's intricate web of backstreets. "I would say some of the coolest stuff I've found has been down little alleyways. I remember going down an alleyway near Daan Park and in the middle of the block, hidden from the street, was a 150-year old farmhouse that had been converted into a temple, in a big built-up modern area! It's wonderful when you come across things like that. Taipei is a very safe city, so you don't need to be afraid of exploring its nooks and crannies."



Presidential Office Building



Map of central Taipei City



### PERSONAL WORKS OF ART

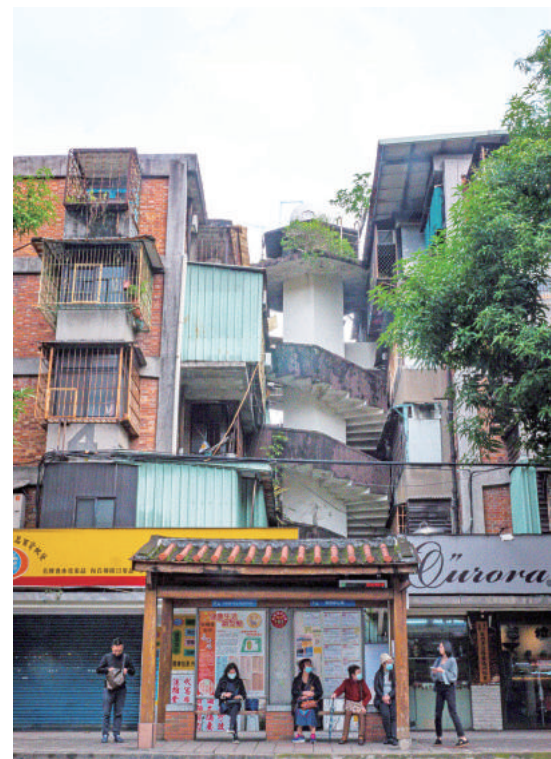
Though there are seldom any signs of human activity in Rook's maps – there are few cars or people – they are nevertheless intimately personal works



Bangka Longshan Temple



Homes in the Nanjichang community in Taipei's Wanhua District



For those interested in exploring the way Rook does, note that he keeps a blog called *Hidden Taiwan* (address below) detailing some of the more interesting places he's explored or discovered around the island, along with a map pinpointing some of Taiwan's most interesting areas for urban exploration. Rook's writings and sketches of these places – many of which are abandoned or close to ruin but nonetheless have fascinating histories – play an important part in their survival, sometimes in the physical as well as in the abstract sense. In the case of the Losheng Sanatorium – an abandoned Japanese-era medical complex on the border of New Taipei and Taoyuan cities – Rook's detailed hand-drawn map of the area (viewable on his blog) has been used as part of awareness exhibitions by the team fighting for the site's preservation in the face of erasure. **T**

#### INFO

You can find more information about Rook's work, as well as his travel blog, on his website at [www.overthecity.asia](http://www.overthecity.asia). You can also follow him on Instagram and Facebook at @tomrookart.

#### ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Daan Park 大安森林公園  
Nanjichang 南機場  
Losheng Sanatorium 樂生療養院  
Wanhua District 萬華區



# RIDING IN THE HARBOR CITY

## Easy Bicycle Routes in Kaohsiung

TEXT & PHOTOS | VISION, KAOHSIUNG MUSIC CENTER

*Bicycling is a great way to explore a city. Kaohsiung, in southern Taiwan, has a number of bike routes ideal for relaxed exploration tours. Let's hop on a bike and pedal about on perambulations through this harbor city!*

**K**aohsiung\* has some highly favorable conditions for bike outings. While it can be quite hot during the daytime in the summer, for most of the year the weather is perfect for cycling jaunts, with low chances of rain. The city is also mostly flat, there is a growing network of dedicated bikeways, main roads are mostly wide with relative low traffic density, and there are quite a few scenic and cultural attractions easily reached on iron steeds from points throughout the city core. Like other major cities in Taiwan, Kaohsiung also has set up a branch of the immensely popular and fast-growing YouBike public bike-rental system ([kcg.youbike.com.tw](http://kcg.youbike.com.tw)).

*\* In this article we focus on the city's urban center, specifically the area close to the harbor.*

The harbor is Kaohsiung's dominant feature, and riding along the city's bodies of water, including the harbor, the sea, its main river, and a pretty "pond" that is in truth a lake, is the best way to see many of the city's top attractions. While getting to know this city riding a bicycle, you will discover its ultra-modern side as well as its charming old neighborhoods. Two routes are especially recommended: Qijin Island and Love River, both easy to follow, with many interesting sights to be found along the way. Also high up on the list of must-rides are the routes along the harbor and around Lotus Pond.

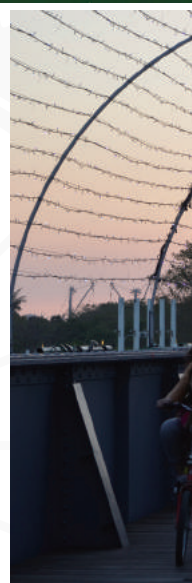




Photo courtesy of Kaohsiung Music Center



**ALONG BODIES OF WATER**  
Riding a bicycle in Kaohsiung, you are never far away from water, be it the harbor, the Love River, a lake, or the Taiwan Strait

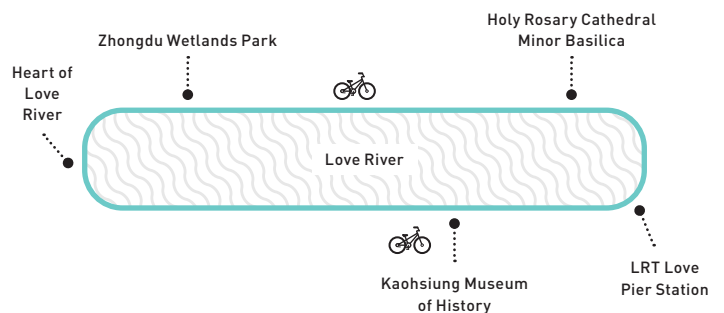


## Love River

The Love River is one of the best known of Kaohsiung's many tourist attractions. The slow-flowing waterway, in the 1960s and '70s resembling a smelly sewer more than a river, underwent a decades-long clean-up that lasted until the late 1990s. Since then it has become the venue for the city's annual Lantern Festival celebrations and exciting dragon-boat races. During the late afternoon and evening, people come to the river to go on long – quite often romantic – walks, fun cruises (electric boats and even “gondolas”; NT\$150/25min.) on the river, and rides on the riverside bike paths.

Between **Kaohsiung Bridge**, close to the harbor, and **Bo'ai Bridge**, about 6km to the northeast, there are over a dozen YouBike rental stations close to the river, making it easy to start and end a riverside bike ride at locations convenient for you. A good place to begin is at the **LRT (Light Rail) Love Pier Station**, close to where the river enters Kaohsiung Harbor. From there you can follow the left bank of the river all the way north to Bo'ai Bridge, then return south on the right bank (or do the trip in reverse order). Places of interest you will come across along the way include the Kaohsiung Film Archive, Kaohsiung 228 Peace Memorial Park, Kaohsiung Museum of History, Heart of Love River park, Tower of Light, and Zhongdu Wetlands Park.

Two weeks after the Lunar New Year (Chinese New Year), the city stages the annual **Lantern Festival** with the banks of the Love River as venue. This year the festival is at the end of February. This is a great time to visit the river, especially during the evening, with lanterns and other lights painting the riversides and the river itself in myriad colors, creating a festive atmosphere.



**ROUTE** LRT Love Pier Station → Kaohsiung Film Archive → Kaohsiung 228 Peace Memorial Park → Kaohsiung Museum of History → Heart of Love River → Tower of Light → Zhongdu Wetlands Park



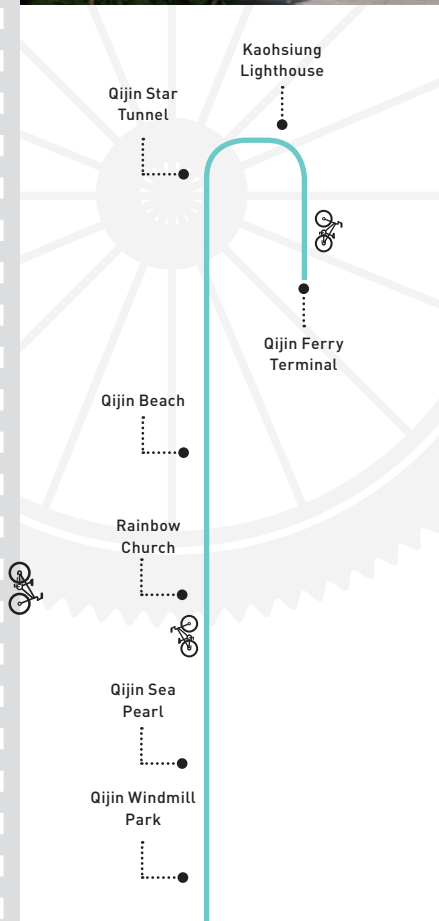
Northern tip of Qijin Island

## Qijin Island

Qijin Island (often spelled Cijin Island) is a long (8.5km) and narrow (400-500m wide on average) strip of land that acts as a natural buffer between the waters of the Taiwan Strait and Kaohsiung Harbor. The most common way to get to the island is by taking the ferry from the **Gushan Ferry Terminal** (takes less than 10 minutes; tickets are NT\$40; bicycles [NT\$10] and even scooters [NT\$40] are allowed on the ferry). There is also a ferry service (NT\$30) connecting the island with the **Banana Pier**, which is close to the popular Pier-2 Art Center.

After arriving at the ferry terminal on the island, you won't have trouble finding bike-rental operations renting out different types of vehicles, from standard bikes to electric four-wheelers with roof seating four. Start your ride by the ferry terminal and head north to the island's northern tip. There, you can have a look at the northern entrance of Kaohsiung Harbor, with a high probability of seeing big vessels entering and exiting through the exceedingly narrow mouth. On top of a 48m-high coral-rock hillock (Mt. Qihou) there, you'll also spot the picturesque **Kaohsiung Lighthouse** (aka Qihou Lighthouse). After rounding the island's northern end, head south and you'll soon enter a long, narrow tunnel, the Qijin Star Tunnel, which has a beautifully lit ceiling with sparkling stars.

After emerging from the tunnel, you'll soon find yourself riding along a long dark-sand beach. There are a number of interesting installation-art objects to see here, including the Rainbow Church, a giant seashell (Qijin Sea Pearl), and windmills inside the Qijin Windmill Park. The southern part of the island mostly consists of industrial areas, and unless you have a deep interest in container storage facilities you want to end your southbound venturing when you reach the Fuxing Temple and start your ride back up north.



Gushan ferry



Qijin Beach

ROUTE

- Ferry Pier → Northern Tip →
- Qijin Star Tunnel →
- Qijin Sea Pearl →
- Rainbow Church →
- Qijin Windmill Park



Kaohsiung Harbor with the new Kaohsiung Music Center

## Riding Further

Combining the excellent public transport network of Kaohsiung and the convenient public bike-rental system of the city, there are many more areas you can explore.

Riding along **Kaohsiung Harbor** you'll come across a number of piers which have been turned into popular tourist attractions. Start your ride at Xingguang Riverside Park, between the Kaohsiung Exhibition Center and LRT Kaohsiung Exhibition Center Station, and work your way up north along the harborfront. You'll pass such beautiful spots as the bridge across the Love River, Love Pier, Pier-2 Art Center, and Banana Pier. After passing the Gushan Ferry Terminal, ride around the peninsula at the northern side of the harbor entrance to reach **Xizi Bay**, known for glorious sunsets.

The cycling path around **Lotus Pond** is a bit more than 3km long, and you can circle this pretty body of water in less than half an hour. If riding counter-clockwise around the pond starting in the southeast corner you'll first come to the Zhouzi Wetland Park (a large natural area great for waterbird watching), then to Kaohsiung Confucius Temple (the largest Confucius temple in Taiwan), then to the Zuoying Yuandi Temple (best known for a large statue of Xuanwu, a Daoist deity), then the Spring and Autumn Pavilions (a pair of octagonal 4-story pagodas built over the pond), and finally the Dragon and Tiger Pagodas (two 7-story structures you can enter by walking through a dragon and a tiger, respectively). 📌



Kaohsiung 85 Sky Tower



Heart of Love River



Pier-2 Art Center



Rainbow Church

### ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Banana Pier 香蕉碼頭  
Bo'ai Bridge 博愛橋  
Gushan Ferry 鼓山渡輪  
Kaohsiung Bridge 高雄橋  
Kaohsiung Lighthouse 高雄燈塔  
Lotus Pond 蓮池潭  
Love Pier 真愛碼頭  
Love River 愛河  
Qijin Fishing Harbor 旗津漁港  
Qijin Island 旗津島  
Xizi Bay 西子灣

## Tips

- If you ride your own bike, note that you can take bikes onto the KMRT (Kaohsiung Metro) trains. Tickets (person+bike) are NT\$60 (foldable bikes inside bags can be taken on the trains free of cost). Bikes are only allowed on the first car of each train (max. four bikes). For more info, visit [www.krtc.com.tw](http://www.krtc.com.tw).
- Before renting a bike at a station, check the condition of the bike. If the seat is turned backwards, it means the bike is in need of repair. Check the brakes and the tire pressure, and see if the seat can be adjusted to the desired height. Note that there is a time limit of 15 minutes between returning a bike and renting a new one.
- For information about renting a YouBike, including registering, locations of rental stations, availability of bikes, etc., please refer to the Kaohsiung YouBike website ([kcg.youbike.com.tw](http://kcg.youbike.com.tw)) or download the easy-to-use app.

# Pedaling Around Taiwan

## Exciting Bicycling Activities and Events in 2021

*2021 has officially been declared a Year of Cycling Tourism in Taiwan, and there will be a host of bicycling-related activities and events around the island this year, meaning joyful times for cyclists of all age groups and physical abilities.*

TEXT & PHOTOS | VISION, TAIWAN CYCLIST FEDERATION

**B**icycling in Taiwan is a whole lot of fun, and there are a number of good reasons to go on bicycle journeys to explore this wonderful land, including countless dedicated bikeways, convenient bike-rental services, and amazingly diverse scenery.

Circling the whole island on two wheels is high on the list of must-dos for local riders and for cyclist enthusiasts visiting from abroad. It can be done at a leisurely pace in about 10 days by following the clearly marked **Cycling Route No. 1**.

Many cyclists in Taiwan dream of achieving another special feat, riding all the way up to the island's highest highway point, **Wuling** (3,275m). To make this ride extra-special, you can start in Hualien, riding through Taroko Gorge and then climbing up the steep mountains. Since 2012, a special bike-race event, **Taiwan KOM Challenge**, which takes place every October, has allowed ambitious riders to take up this challenge while competing against each other.



The route around Sun Moon Lake in central Taiwan is regarded as one of the best cycling routes on the island. Once a year the **Sun Moon Lake Come! Bikeday** event attracts around 1,000 riders, who come to circle the lake clockwise, starting and finishing at the Xiangshan Visitor Center.

During **Light up Taiwan** cyclists are taken to four of Taiwan's many picturesque lighthouses, one for each cardinal direction: Fugui Cape (North), Sandiao Cape (East), Eluanbi (South), and Guosheng Harbor (West). For each lighthouse a large-group ride is organized.



The annual **Formosa 900** is a 9-day round-the-island trip undertaken by numerous local and international riders, with groups starting at different locations along Cycling Route No. 1.

For more info about the above and other cycling events visit: [taiwanbike.tw](http://taiwanbike.tw).

### ENGLISH AND CHINESE

- Formosa 900 騎遇福爾摩沙 900
- Light up Taiwan 臺灣極點慢旅
- Sun Moon Lake 日月潭
- Sun Moon Lake Come! Bike Day
- 日月潭 Come!Bikeday 自行車嘉年華
- Taiwan KOM Challenge 臺灣 KOM 登山王之路
- Wuling 武嶺

# HOTEL INFORMATION

Visitors to Taiwan have a wide range of choice when it comes to accommodation. From five-star luxury hotels that meet the highest international standards, to affordable business hotels, to hot-spring and beach resort hotels, to privately-run homestays located in the countryside there is a place to stay that satisfies every traveler's needs. What all hotels of Taiwan — small and big, expensive and affordable — have in common is that serve and hospitality are always of the highest standards. The room rates in the following list have been checked for each hotel, but are subject to change without notice. Room rates at the hotels apply.

## THE GRAND HOTEL Taipei 台北



**NO. OF ROOMS:** 500 (Suites: 57)  
**ROOM RATES:**  
 Single/DBL NT\$ 8,800-15,800  
 Suite NT\$ 22,000-36,000  
 (All rates are subject to 10% service charge.)

**DESK PERSONNEL SPEAK:**  
 English, French, Spanish, and Japanese

**RESTAURANTS:**  
 Western, Cantonese, Northern China Style Dumplings, tea house, coffee shop, steak house

**SPECIAL FEATURES:**  
 Grand Ballroom, conference rooms for 399 people, 10 breakout rooms, business center, fitness center, sauna, Olympic-size swimming pool, tennis courts, billiards

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 Fax: +886-2-2885-2885

[www.grand-hotel.org](http://www.grand-hotel.org)

## TAIPEI GALA HOTEL Taipei 台北



**NO. OF ROOMS:** 160  
**ROOM RATES:**  
 Standard Single NT\$ 6,600  
 Deluxe Single NT\$ 7,200  
 Deluxe Triple NT\$ 9,800  
 Elegant Suite NT\$ 13,000

**DESK PERSONNEL SPEAK:**  
 English, Japanese, Chinese

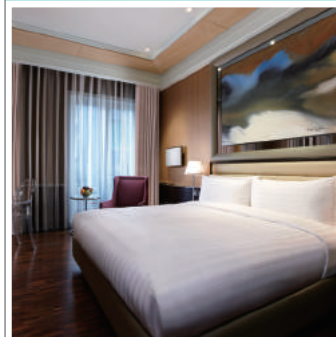
**RESTAURANTS:**  
 Golden Ear Restaurant (Western semi buffet); Golden Pot (Chinese Cuisine)

**SPECIAL FEATURES:**  
 Business center, meeting rooms, airport transfer service, parking lot, laundry service, free Internet access, LED TV, DVD player, personal safety box, mini bar, private bathroom with separate shower & bath tub, hair dryer

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## ECLAT HOTELS Taipei 台北

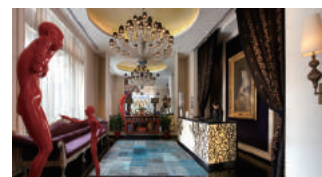


**NO. OF ROOMS:** 60  
**ROOM RATES:**  
 NT\$12,500-NT\$38,000

**DESK PERSONNEL SPEAK:**  
 Japanese, English, Chinese

**FACILITIES:**  
 Eclat Lounge, mechanical parking space, meeting rooms

**AWARDS:**  
 2020 DESTIN ASIAN Reader's Choice Award  
 2019 Michelin Guide Preferred Hotel  
 2020 Hotels.com Loved by Guest Award



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-  Taipei City Tour NT\$1,300  
台北市區觀光
-  Wulai Aboriginal Village Tour NT\$1,500  
烏來高砂族部落觀光
-  Taipei Night Tour NT\$1,500  
臺北夜景觀光
-  Northern Coast Tour NT\$1,200  
基隆港、野柳、北海岸公園觀光
-  Folk Arts Tour (Sanxia & Yingge) NT\$1,300  
民俗藝術觀光 (三峽、鶯歌)
-  Yangmingshan National Park & Hot-Spring Tour NT\$1,500  
陽明山國家公園及溫泉觀光
-  Jiufen Village & Northeast Coast Tour NT\$1,300  
九份、東北角海岸觀光

-  Pingxi Sky Lantern Experience & Old Street Walk NT\$1,500  
平溪天燈體驗、老街漫步
-  "Thousand Island Lake" & Pinglin Tea Plantation NT\$1,500  
千島湖、坪林自然美景 茶飄香
-  1-Day Taroko (Marble) Gorge Tour NT\$4,200  
花蓮太魯閣 (大理石) 峽谷觀光
-  2-Day Sun Moon Lake, Puli & Lukang Tour (Stay at Sun Moon Lake) NT\$6,600  
2天1夜 日月潭、埔裡鎮、及鹿港觀光 (住日月潭)
-  2-Day QingJing & Fruit Picking Tour (Stay at QingJing) NT\$6,900  
2天1夜 南投清境 世外桃源採果趣 (住清境)
-  3-Day Tour to Sun Moon Lake & Alishan NT\$12,500  
3天2夜 日月潭、阿里山觀光

-  3-Day Southern Taiwan Tour NT\$14,500  
(Tainan, Kaohsiung, Kenting)  
(Taiwan High-Speed Rail - Bullet Train Ride)  
三天二夜 台南・高雄・墾丁深度之旅 (含台灣高鐵體驗)
-  4-Day Central & Southern Taiwan Tour NT\$14,000  
(Sun Moon Lake, Kaohsiung, Kenting)  
四天三夜 台灣中南部觀光 (日月潭、高雄、墾丁)
-  4-Day Eastern Taiwan Tour NT\$15,500  
(Yilan, Hualien, Taitung)  
(Taiwan Railway Train Ride)  
四天三夜 海岸・縱谷豐富之旅 (宜蘭、花蓮、台東)  
(含臺灣鐵路體驗)
-  5-Day Round Taiwan Island Excursion NT\$16,900  
(All hotels are 5-star hotels)  
五天四夜 台灣環島巴士之旅 (全程五星級旅館)



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### Semester Dates and Application Information

Semesters	Application Period	Announcement of Admission Results	New Student Registration
Spring 2022	March 1-April 30, 2021	June, 2021	February, 2022
Fall 2022	From October, 2021	April, 2022	September, 2022
Spring 2023	From June, 2022	October, 2022	February, 2023

- For the specific application schedule, please refer to the admission prospectus of the year.
- **Online application only**, Please refer to International Students Application website for details: <https://ap.itc.ntnu.edu.tw/istudent/apply>

### Popular and Recommended Departments/Institutes for International Students

Colleges	Departments/Institutes	Bachelor	Master's	Doctoral
Education	Education		●	●
	Educational Psychology and Counseling	●	●	●
Liberal Arts	Translation and Interpretation		●	●
	English	●	●	●
International Studies and Social Sciences	Chinese as a Second Language	●	●	●
	International Human Resource Development		●	
Arts	Fine Arts	●	●	●
	Design	●	●	●
Music	Music	●	●	●

### Applications to Degree Programs - Office of International Affairs

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