

Travel in

2023
JUL & AUG

TAIWAN

No. 118

LOCAL STAY

STAYING OVERNIGHT
IN KEELUNG

GOOD FOOD

UPSCALE FUSION
CUISINE IN TAIPEI CITY

EXPERT TALK

PRESERVING TAIPEI TRADITIONS

Northern Taiwan

North Coast Day-Tripping
Yangmingshan Eco Discoveries
Hiking and Biking in Ruifang





JIU ZHEN NAN
SINCE 1890

JIU ZHEN NAN

Rich Flavor, Rich Tradition

Handmade Taiwanese pastries since 1890

Founded in 1890, we have been devoted to handcrafting luxury Han Pastry for over 130 years. While we began as a humble one-store bakery, today Jiu Zhen Nan has become a household name across Taiwan, associated with celebrating life's most meaningful moments.

Steeped in Taiwanese tradition, our beloved cakes and pastries are packed with fresh and flavorful ingredients, which over the centuries represented wealth and wellness, making these gourmet delicacies the customary gift for all occasions. It is for this reason we take the utmost care when hand-making each and every one of our delectable cakes and pastries, as we recognize their leading role in traditional Taiwanese etiquette.



Jiu Zhen Nan Han Pastry House

As the leading brand of Taiwanese Pie (Han Bing) in Taiwan, in order to increase people's understanding of Han Bing's value and culture, Jiu Zhen Nan has specifically launched the JZN Han Pastry House in 2016. The space, 4,421 m² in size, houses the corporate headquarter, JZN Story Pavilion, Pastry Shop, JZN Cooking Lab and Book Tower, offering visitors a comprehensive experience to see, read about, make and taste Han Bing. Through the comprehensive experience that engages the five senses, it is hoped that all can enjoy the great flavors of this enduring and delicious pastry and understand the significant culture of seasonal diet that emphasizes the importance of "eating seasonal food according to the solar terms".

Locations of Pastry Baking Course:

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- Monday - Sunday: 10:00-21:00
- regent@jznpastry.com

TAINAN STORE

- +886-6-238-7666
- No. 184, Sec. 2, Linsen Rd., East Dist., Tainan City 701, Taiwan (R.O.C.)
- Monday - Sunday: 9:30-21:00
- tn@jznpastry.com

JZN COOKING LAB

- +886-7-701-8586
- No. 298, Jiexi Rd., Daliao Dist., Kaohsiung City 831, Taiwan (R.O.C.)
- Tuesday - Sunday: 10:00-18:00
- pastryhouse@jzn.com.tw



Facebook



Website



Pastry Baking
Course Reservation

Welcome to Taiwan!



Publisher's Note

Dear Traveler,

In the heat of Taiwan's summer, get yourself to the island's cooling places – in this issue we deliver you to breezy tourist locations by the sea and up in the mountains. The suggested outings in our main articles are concentrated in the north, all easy day-trip forays from downtown Taipei City.

Meander the ruggedly beautiful North Coast in our feature file, which swings in an arc from the port town of Tamsui in the west to the harbor city of Keelung in the east, along the way enjoying its white-sand beaches, nature-crafted stone sculptures, watersports such as SUP and surfing, comfy coast-side cafés and eateries, and a wealth of other attractions.

From wherever you are on the North Coast the powerful Yangmingshan massif is in view, Taipei City on its other side to the south. Fondly called Taipei's "secret garden," in a sister article you're introduced to some of the umpteen nature-garden gems of popular Yangmingshan National Park. And in another sister article we're off to Ruifang District, a mountainous area just east/southeast of Keelung City with a long and much-indented ocean coastline, where we mine its old mining towns – today transformed into tourist hubs – for "nuggets of travel joy."

Our focus on the fun found in the north is extended into our regular *Local Stay* article with recommended selections from among Keelung's wide range of accommodations, which run from 5-star hotels to chic designer lodgings to barebones backpacker inns. Though, as said, all the north-region attractions we cover this issue are within easy transport reach of central Taipei, overnighting in Keelung will allow you to pack in that much more on-site adventuring.

Elsewhere in our pages, in *Good Food* you'll be tucking into Taiwan's deliciously burgeoning fusion cuisine scene with sit-downs at Taipei spots where inspired local chefs are melding iconic traditional Taiwan cuisine "ingredients and foodways with fine dining, transporting distinct flavors from such places as night markets and mountain villages into elegantly designed spaces."

And over in the *Expert Talk* department you'll meet Chen Jie-fu, a former broadcaster now dedicated to preserving traditional culture in Dadaocheng, one of Taipei's best-preserved historic neighborhoods, where he runs a restaurant and a teahouse located in a quintessential heritage residence.

Your Taiwan summer awaits, time to get traveling!

TAIWAN TOURISM BUREAU
MOTC, R.O.C.

Chang Shi Chung

ON THE COVER



Heping Island
(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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IN TAIWAN

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TONGAN HAPPINESS
Preserving Traditional Culture
in One of Taipei's Oldest
Neighborhoods

Summertime

Exciting Events and Happenings During the Year's Hottest Months



1 ©Taiwan Tourism Bureau

1 AROUND TAIWAN UNTIL NOVEMBER

TAIWAN CYCLING FESTIVAL

臺灣自行車旅遊節

Bicycling has become hugely popular in Taiwan in recent years, and with a cycling environment that is constantly being improved around the island, the number of cycling enthusiasts is ever-growing. Staged annually since 2010, this festival brings bicycling fans together through a number of attractive events, among them the Taiwan KOM Challenge (this year taking place October 27), Formosa 900 (taking place November 11-19), and Come!Bikeday (November 11).

taiwanbike-international.taiwan.net.tw
www.taiwankom.org
formosa900.giant.com.tw

2 TAIWAN REGISTRATION: UNTIL JUNE 30, STAY: SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER

SPEND A NIGHT AT TAIWAN'S PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE BUILDING

來去總統府住一晚

Would you like to spend a night at Taiwan's Presidential Office Building? Four years after this was made possible for visitors from abroad for the first time, the central government is now once again inviting interested foreigners to experience an overnight stay at this important and iconic building. As this is not your usual tourist accommodation, there is of course an application process to go through. Find all the relevant information on the official website below.

www.nightattaiwan.tw

3 TAIPEI CITY AUGUST 4~7

TAIWAN CULINARY EXHIBITION

台灣美食展

Each year, this exhibition held in the Taipei World Trade Center gives food lovers a comprehensive overview of what Taiwan's culinary world has to offer, from simple night-market snack foods to exquisite 5-star hotel banquets. Visitors have the chance to sample local specialties, enjoy entertaining stage performances, watch chefs demonstrating their cooking skills, marvel at food art, and also learn about cuisines from around the world.

www.tcetva.tw

4 KEELUNG CITY JULY/AUGUST

KEELUNG MID-SUMMER GHOST FESTIVAL 雞籠中元祭

This event, lasting a full month, is one of Taiwan's major annual festivals. It takes place during the 7th lunar month (August 16-September 14 in 2023), referred to as "Ghost Month." According to folk belief, at this time of year the gates separating the realms of the living and the dead open and ghosts return to wander the earth. In order to appease these wandering souls, lavish offerings are made in front of temples in the port city of Keelung and a plethora of rituals and ceremonies is celebrated. Among the numerous highlights of the festival are the Door-Opening Ceremony at Laodagong Temple on Day 1 and the Water Lantern Parade and Releasing of Water Lantern on Day 14 of the lunar month.

tour.klcc.gov.tw

5 TAOYUAN CITY AUG. 11~OCT. 15

2023 HAKKA EXPO

2023 世界客家博覽會

The aim for this expo, with the theme "Travel to Tomorrow," is highlighting the migrations of the Hakka people around world and creating a platform for international Hakka cultural exchange. The main element of the event will be showcasing the beauty of Hakka crafts, opera, literature, music, architecture, food, industries, people, and language in a comprehensive manner. Activities will be held in 10 exhibition halls, including the World Pavilion, all situated within Taoyuan's newly developed Qingpu Special District centered around Taoyuan High Speed Rail Station.

www.hakka.tycg.gov.tw

6 TAIPEI CITY JULY 1~ AUGUST 20

DADAOCHENG SUMMER FESTIVAL

大稻埕夏日節

The annual Taipei Dadaocheng Fireworks Festival, previously held over one weekend, will this year take place over a 51-day period as the Dadaocheng Summer Festival. There will be a low-altitude fireworks display on Wednesday at 8:30pm and one grand fireworks show in the evening of August 20, two days before Lovers' Day. The venues are Dadaocheng Wharf and Yanping Riverside Park, both on the eastern bank of the Tamsui River.

www.travel.taipei/en/event-calendar/details/41787



來去總統府

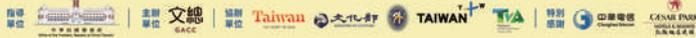
REGISTRATION PERIOD

20 APR.21
|
23 JUN.30

www.nightattaiwan.tw



住一晚



2



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©Taiwan Visitors Association 3



HAKKA
2023 HAKKA EXPO

5



©Taipei City Government 6

臺灣觀光年曆
Time for Celebration
TAIWAN TOURISM EVENTS



Taiwan Tourism Events
Calendar Website

HAPPENING in TAIWAN Now



Another summer has arrived! The sun is out and there is so much fun to be had around Taiwan. What are you waiting for! Explore!



©Taoyuan City Govt.

Scenery New Zhongzhuang Suspension Bridge

The town of Daxi in Taoyuan City is best-known for its Old Street filled with heritage houses and shops selling dried tofu, but it's also an excellent place from which to go on a bike ride. Rent a bike (there are two YouBike stations in Daxi) and head north, following either the west bank (Daxi Riverside Park) or the east bank (Yuemei Wetland Eco Park) of the Dahan River. Then cross the river on the brand-new 400m-long Zhongzhuang Suspension Bridge and return to Daxi to complete the loop. At the western end of the bridge is the Zhongzhuang Retention Basin, where you can take cool photos on a glass-bottom platform.

travel.tycg.gov.tw



©Taipei City Public Works Dept.



©Taipei City Public Works Dept.

Scenic Spot "North Eye Platform"

The best views of central Taipei City from high up (excluding manmade structures such as Taipei 101) are arguably from lookout platforms on Elephant Mountain (Xiangshan) in Xinyi District. For a different perspective, head to the opposite (north) side of the Taipei Basin and walk the trails of Mt. Jiantan (trails start behind the Grand Hotel Taipei). A great panoramic

view is from the Old Place Observation Deck (encompassing airplanes landing at Taipei Songshan Airport). Another great lookout spot on the mountain is the recently built North Eye Platform, from where you can take in Shilin District, with MRT Jiantan Station and the iconic Taipei Performing Arts Center in full view.



©Noke Shopping Mall

Shopping Noke Shopping Mall

Located across the street from Miramar Entertainment Park in Taipei City's Zhongshan District, NOKE is a very stylish, upscale shopping mall with art exhibitions and recreational facilities. Designed by Germany-based Taiwanese architect Yu-han Michael Lin, the mall was named "NOKE" in reference to its location ("NORTH of the KEelung River"). The medium-sized mall is home to branches of such well-known lifestyle brands as Tsutaya Bookstore, Omnibus Coffee, and Sakimoto Bakery, as well as the fine-dining restaurant La Vie of Michelin-starred chef Thomas Bühner. Another highlight is the 12m-ceiling Aurora Ice Rink.

www.facebook.com/jutnoke

New Hotels

1. Anna King Hotel | 安娜與國王酒店

Located in central Chiayi City; 51 guestrooms; Thai-style interior design; grand opening January 2023
annakinghotel.com

2. Hyatt Place New Taipei City Xinzhuang | 新北新莊凱悅嘉軒酒店

Located in New Taipei City's Xinzhuang District; 278 guestrooms; grand opening September 2022
bit.ly/3Bhx0Kq



1



2

Photos courtesy of hotels

Tourist Shuttle Buses

Half-price with E-tickets

Good news for travelers relying on public transport while exploring Taiwan! Taking buses of the highly popular and convenient Taiwan Tourist Shuttle network, you can now enjoy half-price fares when paying with an e-ticket (EasyCard, iPASS, and iCASH). The network, which connects major transportation hubs such as conventional and high-speed railway stations with tourist attractions around Taiwan, has a total of 64 routes operated by 35 different bus companies.

www.taiwantrip.com.tw



Ferry Service New Penghu Ferry

The fastest way of getting to the islands of the Penghu archipelago from the Taiwan mainland is flying from Taipei, Taichung, Tainan, or Kaohsiung (less than an hour flight time for each route). A slower way is taking a ferry, either from the town of Budai in Chiayi County or from Kaohsiung Port (about four hours one way). If you opt for the latter route, starting this August you will enjoy the trip on a brand-new vessel, the *Penghu Ferry*. The new ferry has replaced the *Taihua Ferry*, which served on the route for more than 30 years.

tnc-kao.com.tw/schedule/ticket (Chinese)



©Min. of Transp. and Comm.

Culture

Concerts, Theater, Exhibitions,
Festivals, Shows



Percussion

STOMP
破銅爛鐵

September 15~17
Taipei Music Center
(Taipei City)

Since the early 1990s, the English percussion group Stomp has shown audiences worldwide how ordinary objects, such as trash cans and brooms, can be used to create riveting percussion performances. Among the group's accolades are an Obie, and Emmy, and an Olivier award, as well as special performances at the Oscars, the Emmys, The Royal Variety Show, and the closing ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics.

tmc.taipei



Musical

EDITOR'S CHOICE

CATS
貓

July 6 ~ 9 (National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts [Weiwuying]; Kaohsiung City)
July 13 ~ 16 (Taichung Zhongshan Hall; Taichung City)
July 20 ~ 23 (Taoyuan Arts Center; Taoyuan City)
July 27 ~ August 6 (National Theater; Taipei City)

Since its opening in the New London Theatre in 1981, the musical CATS has brought joy to millions of musical fans in London's West End, on New York's Broadway, and on tours around the world. Based on T. S. Eliot's whimsical collection of poems, *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*, Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical brings together a tribe of Jellicle Cats on a moonlit evening, who must make the "Jellicle choice" to decide which of them will ascend to the mysterious Heaviside Layer to be reborn.

www.catsmusical.com

Exhibition

LIVING WITH FIRE
同火的日子

Until February 25, 2024
National Museum of Natural Science
(Taichung City)

This exhibition explores the role fire has played in the history of humankind. It introduces you to legends surrounding the first use of fire by humans, how the availability of fire has allowed humans to change their ways of living (including consumption of different foods, moving during the night, living in colder climates, etc.), and to different techniques of creating and maintaining fire, what type of fuels have been used, and so on.

nmns.edu.tw



Festival

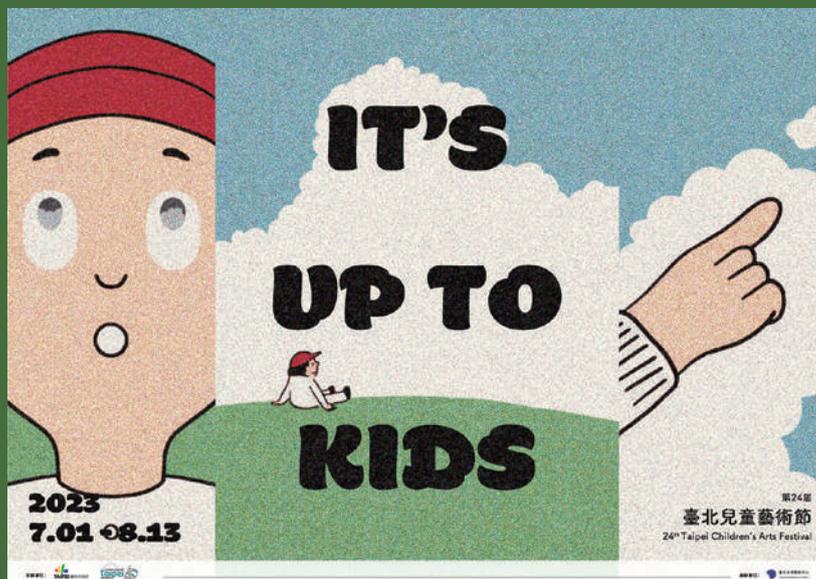
TAIPEI CHILDREN'S ARTS FESTIVAL

臺北兒童藝術節

July 1~August 13
Taipei Performing Arts Center
(Taipei City)

First held in the year 2000, this festival is eagerly awaited each year by children and parents alike. This year there will be over 200 shows, inside and outside the brand-new Taipei Performing Arts Center, and also at other venues around the city. Shows include theater, dance, and music performances, puppet theater, clown and magician entertainment, acrobatic acts, and much more. Many shows are interactive affairs that allow kids to participate and play active roles to get a taste of expressing themselves in artistic ways.

www.tpac-taipei.org/festival-tcaf



EXHIBITION

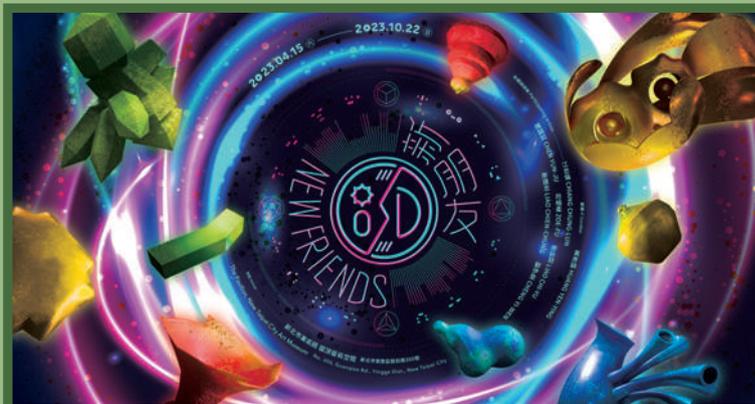
OUTSIDE THE BOX! WHEN MACHINE MEETS ART

跳出格子吧! 機器 X 材料 X 藝術超展開

Until February 29, 2024
Chimei Museum
(Tainan City)

Thinking outside the box has always been the motto that Chimei Group and Chimei Museum founder Wen-Long Shi has lived by, his innovative approach bringing him success in business and enabling him to realize his childhood dream of building a museum. This exhibition showcases works of eight artists from six countries who have drawn inspiration from machines and industrial materials. Many items from the museum's rare collection of industrial machinery and tools dating from the turn of the 20th century are also on display.

www.chimeimuseum.org



Concert

NEW FRIENDS

新朋友

Until October 22
New Taipei City Art Museum
(New Taipei City)

New Friends is a participatory art exhibition initiated for the opening of the New Taipei City Art Museum, located in New Taipei City's Yingge District. The concept of this entertaining and educational exhibition is to symbolize the new role the museum is expected to play in the cultural community, bringing people together. Using six family-friendly installations co-created by seven artists, visitors are given the opportunity to make new friends through novel games and experiences.

ntcart.museum

★★★
EDITOR'S
CHOICE

North Coast Day-Tripping from Taipei

Soaring Green Mountain Backdrop,
Sweeping Blue Ocean Foreground

TEXT | RICK CHARETTE PHOTOS | RAY CHANG, VISION

The North Coast. Pounding surf on rugged rocky shores. Artistic nature-chiseled stone sculptures. White-sand beaches. Stylish seaside eateries and cute mobile back-of-the-van cafés. Exposed reefs teeming with marine life. SUP, surfing, and other watersports. Raptor spotting. And much other entertainment beyond. All within easy day-trip reach of central Taipei City.



An ocean of happy adventure awaits the international traveler just an hour or so from the dense busyness of downtown Taipei. Look up, and north, from points all around the city and you'll see the hulk of the Yangmingshan massif, a mountain playground for the local citizenry. Directly behind this is the North Coast, a 30km oceanside playground extending in an arc from Tamsui town on the west to Keelung City on the east.

In this article we're taking you on a quick tour of many of this area's most popular enticements, almost all right on the coast along Provincial Highway No. 2.



Ocean Viewing Platform at Qianshui Bay

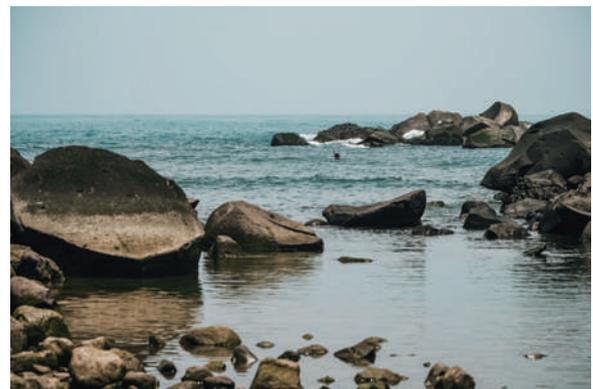
From Tamsui to Baishawan

New Taipei City's Sanzhi District is just northeast of Tamsui town. Between Tamsui and Keelung the population density is low, with just a sprinkling of towns. Heading north from Tamsui on Highway 2, for a time you're too far inland and the sea is out of sight – then, suddenly, as you lean into a curve at a point where only the sky has been in view dead ahead in the moments before, there it is laid out directly before you. Just moments later you're at **Qianshui Bay**, our first destination.

“Qianshui” means “shallow water”; this bay is an intertidal zone. Many structures in the long line of buildings that stands between the highway and bay's edge have been transformed into beachfront-oriented cafés and bars. Each evening sunset-watchers crowd their outdoor seating areas and the boardwalk in front. At low tide the water curtain is drawn back on the bay's rich mini-ecosystem, and visitors spread out among the large rocks encrusted with clam shells and the many tidal pools, each an isolated neighborhood of tiny black fish and scuttling crabs. At this time the ever-present school of local fishermen have all moved out to the exposed algae-covered reefs by the receded deeper waters, adding to the charm of your photo mise-en-scenes.



Qianshui Bay beach



Volcanic ventifacts (windkanTERS) on Linshanbi Cape

At the bay's east end is **Zhilan Park**. The main attraction here is its charismatic-design **Ocean Viewing Platform**, dubbed the North Coast's "most beautiful runway." Its lookout, at the end of a bridge corridor with a striking aqua blue design, juts out 57m into the bay. On it is a large wedding ring-sculpture installation artwork. The site is at its most romantic when the tide is in and the sun is setting/rising, the shiny rings reflecting the water's blues and sun's red-range pastel hues.

The **Shuangwan Bikeway**, following the coastline, perambulates east about 8km from Qianshui Bay, ending at Baishawan ("White Sand Bay"), which we're visiting momentarily. "Shuangwan" means "twin bays," referring to the east and west launch points. There is tree shade among much of its length, as well as a wonder-teeming temporarily revealed underwater world of rocks alongside you at low tide. The pathway is paved and very flat, the environs generally quiet, though of course the noise level picks up on weekends/holidays when day-tripper numbers pick up noticeably. Easy-pedal sorties take about an hour to complete (one way).

Along the way you traverse the pretty-as-a-picture **Linshanbi Recreation Area**. This attraction and Baishawan are in the northwest corner of Shimen District, which is on Sanzhi District's east. Linshanbi, or Linshan Cape – the "bi" literally means

"nose," referring to the cape's jutting geo-shape – sports a mini-web of appealing trails and family-fun beach-ecology explorations. Black volcanic rock is prominent here; view this and Fugui Cape immediately east on Google's satellite view and you'll clearly see the paths of lava flows from days long gone when the Yangmingshan massif was volcanically explosive.

Crescent-shaped **Baishawan** is tucked into the crook formed by Linshan Cape and another less geo-dramatic promontory on the east. This is perhaps the most popular North Coast beach with Taipei City dwellers, and definitely so with its expatriates. Defined by consistent calm waters with minimal tide effect, among the panoply of for-rent fun gear here are iconic white cabanas, rattan beach mats, boogie boards, standup paddleboards, and big unicorn floats. There's also brick-and-mortar and mobile refreshment vendors galore.



Baishawan Visitor Center



Shuangwan Bikeway

From Fugui Cape to Shimen Arch

As with Linshan Cape and Baishawan, the destinations in this section are all within Shimen District, named after our last district stop, the Shimen (“Stone Gate”) Arch.

Fugui Cape is the island of Taiwan’s northernmost point. The compact **Fuji Fishing Harbor** is found at the cape’s west-side base. Known for ultra-fresh seafood, the narrow roads leading up away from the waterfront are packed like a sardine can with simple restaurants. The wide-ranging edible marine harvest includes curiosities such as roe, sea cucumbers, urchins, and varied seaweeds. If desired you can

point out your food, still swimming in tanks at the eatery’s front, before sitting down. The local fishery association has also developed a comely sales center displaying high-quality products available to individual consumers.

The octagonal **Fugui Cape Lighthouse** is in a windswept park that takes up the majority of the cape, with paved paths leading to scenic outlooks. The lighthouse itself is on a small air force radar base, with access limited to weekends. The original phare here, constructed in 1896, was destroyed by the Allies for strategic reasons during World War II. The current

Fugui Cape Lighthouse (©North Coast and Guanyinshan NSA Admin.)





Formosan lilies



Shimen Arch



edition, erected in 1949, has conspicuous black-and-white stripes for augmented discernment in fog.

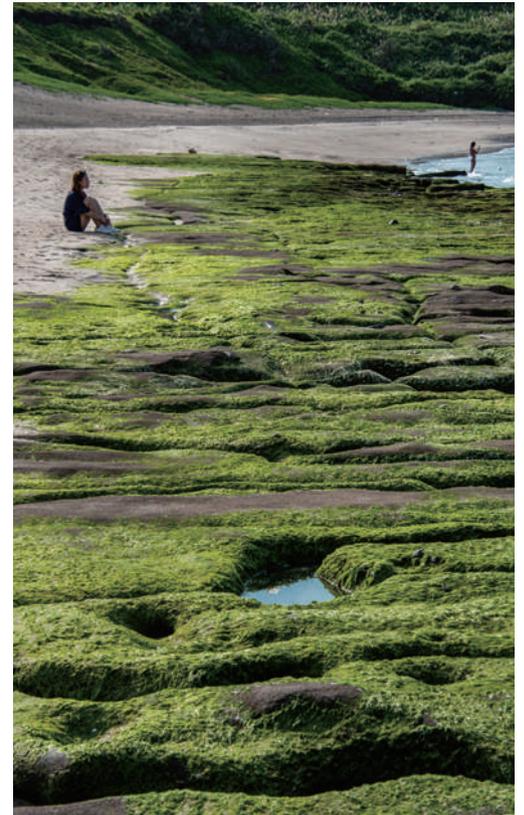
One of the distinctive natural features that will prominently feature in the photos you take when meandering the park are ventifacts – i.e., here, large shoreline rocks peculiarly “decorated” by the artist Mother Nature using wind-driven sand. And just south of this bulging water’s-edge collection, at the cape’s east-side base you’ll find an assemblage of sand dunes. This is the start of **Laomei Bay**. These are backed by a mini-forest of stunted “wind-cut” trees, and the dunes themselves are populated by resilient deep-rooted beach plants that help to hold the dunes in place.

The iconic visual at Laomei Bay, however, is the mystical, magical **Laomei Green Reef**. The material that constitutes the reef is derived from Yangmingshan’s past volcanic activity. Over time the sea has eroded soft sections, leaving a pattern of long, zigzagging, roughly parallel trenches. During the northeast monsoon season from February through May, wave action brings in sea lettuce and green hair algae, turning the reef formation a lush green. This magnetic coloring, matched with the changing palette of blues/greens/grays in the sea beyond, in turn brings in steady waves of photographers. (Note: Walking on the reef is not permitted, for eco-protection reasons.)

NORTHERNMOST TIP

Scenic Fugui Cape is as far north as you can go on mainland Taiwan

The **Shimen Arch** stands right beside the coastal highway. This is a massive block of conglomerate rock through which wind and primarily tidal-wave erosion long ago carved a cave-like doorway 10m tall. Tectonic activity has brought the block inland and about 2m up from the water’s level. The “Stone Gate” name was bestowed by the area’s Han Chinese settlers in the Qing Dynasty. Steps lead up to the top of the arch, where you’ll find sea-view seating and the remains of a military gun emplacement.



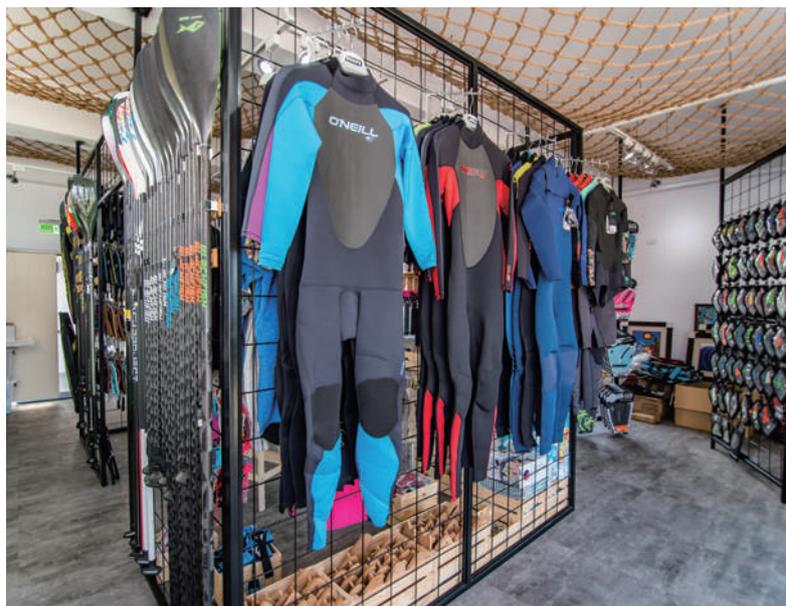
Laomei Green Reef

Through Jinshan and Wanli

Jinshan, the nucleus of Jinshan District, is the largest town between Tamsui and Keelung. Wanli District is right next door to the east. The winding and very scenic Provincial Highway No. 2A, which leaps the Yangmingshan massif through Yangmingshan National Park, has its North Coast terminus here.

The gradient-friendly **Wanjin Bikeway** runs about 8km parallel to the coastline in Jinshan and Wanli districts. The route is a mix, featuring paved path, wooden boardwalk, separate paved bike lanes on roads (about 1km in total), and one quick 200m section on the coastal highway. You'll breeze by beaches, wetlands, coastal hiking trails, and myriad establishments offering good food and drink. The cycleway gives you access to all the other attractions introduced in this section.

Jhongjiao Bay Surf/SUP Center has all gear needed for surfing and SUPing



Umi Coffee Bus

Zhongjiao Bay, wide and comparatively shallow, has long been the North Coast's hottest spot for surfing, and now also for SUP (standup paddleboarding), which has become very popular in Taiwan in the last decade. The young, voluminous **Zhongjiao Bay Surf/SUP Center**, beside the coastal highway at the bay's west end, has been set up to promote it as an international surf/SUP destination. Gear rental/sales and both surfing and SUP training are provided (fee; available in English), along with tourism services, a snack bar, shower facilities, etc.

The irresistible **Umi Coffee Bus** (www.facebook.com/umicoffeebus), which has become a North Coast-traverse milestone, is in a nearby parking lot overlooking the fine-sand beach's west-end tip. The van, painted bright red and white, is nigh impossible to miss. A long row of umbrella-shade tables runs along the top of the waterside bluff. Beyond invigorating and/or refreshing lattes, cappuccinos, and milk teas, from the "kitchen" also come hot hit-the-spot waffles and pizzas.

JHONGJIAO BAY SURF/SUP CENTER (中角灣國際衝浪基地)

☎ (02) 2498-8226

📍 No. 162-1, Haixing Rd., Wanshou Borough, Jinshan District, New Taipei City
(新北市金山區萬壽里海興路 162-1 號)

📘 www.facebook.com/jinshansurfing



Yehliu Geopark seen from Shitoushan Park



Huanggang Fishing Harbor



Between central Jinshan and the sea is forested **Shitoushan Park**, which takes up the better part of Jinshan Cape. Pleasant well-paved pathways wend over the promontory. For much of the last century this was an off-limits military zone. One beneficial result for today's visitor is the well-protected natural ecology, with a splendidly diverse forest physiognomy, artistry-augmented with the cultivation of trail-side Formosan lilies and red spider lilies. Another intriguing leftover is the presence of fortification remains such as barracks and artillery emplacements.

Look out to sea from lookouts along the outer edge of Shitoushan Park and you'll see one of the North Coast's geo-icons, the **Twin Candlestick Islets**. These two rocky outcrops, 60m high, leap straight up out of the waves 450m offshore. Not in fact individual islets, they are mounted atop a partially exposed one-piece understructure. This unique formation was long-ago "hidden" within a much larger Jinshan Cape, and for a long period after the geo-sculpture was freed by erosion and tectonic forces the candlesticks were connected at the top, forming a great stone arch. The surrounding 19m-deep waters, rich with flamboyant marine creatures, are regularly visited by pods of scuba divers.

SUPer Scenery
Standup paddleboarders can be seen around the Twin Candlestick Islets when sea conditions are right

Yeliu and Eastward

A short side-road drive takes you from the coastal highway along the base of coast-side cliffs on the next cape to the east to close-packed **Yeliu Fishing Harbor** – i.e., both the boats in the tiny harbor and the surrounding settlement's buildings are crammed into tight spaces. At the village's heart is a cluster of unpretentious, inexpensive eateries extremely busy on weekends/holidays. Within view of these, on the settlement's ocean edge, is **Yehliu Ocean World**, an oceanarium offering dolphin and sea lion shows plus a 100m under-the-sea aquarium tunnel.

Yehliu Geopark takes up a long, thin spit of land that extends about 1.7km out into the sea from the edge of the cape. From ground level this headland sliver resembles an upside-down crooked finger; if you happen to see it from on high, possible if you walk the trail up to the cape's high point overlooking the village/park, it resembles a giant turtle submerging into the sea. Bizarre sandstone formations on the rocky promontory have been carved by Mother Nature the artist, using wave and wind as her tools, the gallery of works including a formation that some people say resembles a bust of the Egyptian Queen

Nefertiti, Cinderella's lost slipper, burning candles (to my mind, by far the most beautiful), and petrified eggs left to hatch by ancient sea monsters.

The sculptures are found toward the village end of the promontory. Recommended is the easy 2.2km loop trail that takes you out along higher ground to the promontory's tip and back, highest elevation a bit over 100m, which presents superlative views back along the coast and good birding. Comparatively few park visitors venture far along the trail. One of the highlights along the way is the striking Yeliu Light Beacon, which possesses a shape clearly resembling the geopark's famed Candle Rocks, a tall pure-white tower topped with a beacon casing shaped like a candle flame appropriately painted rich flame-red.

Guoshengpu Beach is tucked into the space where mainland meets cape on the latter's west side. Above the beach, right beside the coastal highway, is a small park with a lookout providing clear views down to the beach and of the Jinshan Cape to Yeliu Cape sweep, including the Twin Candlestick Islets. The waters of the bay here, generally calm, have made this beach a popular SUP launch-point.



Yehliu's famed Queen's Head Rock



Yehliu rock formations

YEHLIU OCEAN WORLD (野柳海洋世界)

☎ (02) 2492-1111
 📍 No. 167-3, Gangdong Rd., Yeliu Borough, Wanli District,
 New Taipei City (新北市萬里區野柳里港東路 167-3 號)
 🌐 www.oceanworld.com.tw

YEHLIU GEOPARK (野柳地質公園)

☎ (02) 2492-2016
 📍 No. 167-1, Gangdong Rd., Yeliu Borough, Wanli District,
 New Taipei City (新北市萬里區野柳里港東路 167-1 號)
 🌐 ylgeopark.org.tw



Wanli Camel Rock

SURPRISING SCULPTURES
On the North Coast you will find astonishing works of art created by the forces of nature



Small man-made cave at the top of Camel Rock



Wanli Fist Rock



Colorful sandstone striations

Another key Yeliu Cape photo-backdrop is **Wanli Camel Rock**, just east of the miniscule Dong'ao Fishing Harbor. This is right on the shore, not bobbing up and down out in the water, and accessible on foot. The large sedimentary-rock formation is said to look like a giant camel resting, its face oriented toward the village; the best viewing spots to prove this is so are along the Yehliu Geopark trail.

Wanli Fist Rock is further southeast along the coast, in a location where the height of the shoreline cliffs starts to rise dramatically and the narrow hill-bracketed entrance of the deep, natural Keelung Harbor can be seen in the distance. The rock sculpture has the look of an immortal's clenched fist risen from the Neptunian depths. Good downward views of the artwork are enjoyed from atop a cliff at a small highway-side park. A moderately sloping paved pathway also leads down to the rugged rocky shore from here.



Biking along the Tamsui River

Tamsui and Bali

In this last section we swing back to the North Coast's far west, the land areas on either side of the mouth of the Tamsui River, which drains the just-above-sea-level Taipei Basin, the city of Taipei's mountain-walled nest. The port town of Tamsui is on the river's right bank just inside its mouth, the town of Bali on its left. Each sports a history-rich Old Street by their respective waterfront. The Old Street areas are connected by regular ferry service, and Tamsui's is just steps from the Taipei Metro's Tamsui Station. Bikeways line both riverbanks, and cycle rentals are available in both Old Street areas.

The "**Golden Riverside Bikeway**" is a 15km route that runs north along the right-bank side of the Tamsui River from Guandu Park, near the famed Guandu Temple, up past the river's mouth and along the North Coast, ending at Danhai New Town. Guandu Temple is north Taiwan's oldest Mazu (Goddess of the Sea) temple. The paved, flat cycleway brings you past/along such attractions as the Tamsui River Mangrove Conservation Area, Tamsui Old Street, Tamsui Riverside Landscape Trail, and Tamsui Fisherman's Wharf. All along the river section the backdrop over on the Bali side is Guanyinshan (Mt. Guanyin), said to resemble – and indeed very much doing so – Guanyin, or the Goddess of Mercy, reclining and gazing at the heavens. This is our destination in our final two entries.



Tamsui's waterfront



Mt. Guanyin's Linshao Trail

The **Linshao Trail** (you'll see "Treetop Trail" on the trailside direction signs) starts beside the Guanyinshan Visitor Center complex. Stretching 800m around an elevation of 380m, it is mostly raised boardwalk whisking you along a mountain slope at forest-canopy level. The only steep section is a single staircase structure. Along the way you'll have a good chance to espy such hovering and darting raptors as the Chinese sparrowhawk, gray-faced buzzard, collared scops owl, and eagles. The trail ends at the soothingly landscaped grounds of cliff-backed Lingyun Temple, Guanyinshan's oldest; the temple features stone quarried right on the mountain, traditional red-tile roofing, and a distinctive asymmetrical "horseback" architectural design.

If interested in learning more about the local raptors, and about the local geology story as well, spend a spell at the **Guanyinshan Raptor Exhibition Hall** right beside the just-mentioned visitor center (free entry; limit of 50 visitors at a time). The first of its kind in north Taiwan, it was inaugurated in 2020. A lively approach is used for the presentation of information here, with especially stimulating interactive multimedia and VR facilities augmenting the pictures, texts, and models.

Note that the majority of the places visited here are within the North Coast & Guanyinshan National Scenic Area (northguan-nsa.gov.tw), which is overseen by the Taiwan Tourism Bureau (taiwan.net.tw). Its main visitor center is in Jinshan town, beside Shitoushan Park. Other centers are found around the NSA, a few mentioned in this article. 📍



Guanyinshan Raptor Exhibition Hall

HOW TO GET THERE

There are three main routes to get to the North Coast by public transport, via the port town of Tamsui, northwest of central Taipei (MRT Tamsui Line + Taiwan Tourist Shuttle bus no. 716); via the port city of Keelung, northeast of the city (local train/intercity bus + bus no. 862); or via Yangmingshan National Park, to the north (intercity bus no. 1717 + Taiwan Tourist Shuttle bus no. 716).



ENGLISH AND CHINESE

- Bali 八里
- Baishawan 白沙灣
- Fugui Cape (Lighthouse) 富貴角公園 (富貴角燈塔)
- Fuji Fishing Harbor 富基漁港
- Golden Riverside Bikeway 金色水岸自行車道
- Guandu Temple 關渡宮
- Guanyinshan 觀音山
- Guanyinshan Raptor Exhibition Hall 觀音山猛禽展示館
- Guoshengpu Beach 國聖埔海灘
- Jinshan District 金山區
- Laomei Bay 老梅灣
- Laomei Green Reef 老梅綠石槽
- Lingyun Temple 凌雲禪寺
- Linshanbi Recreation Area 麟山鼻遊憩區
- Linshao Trail 林梢步道
- Qianshui Bay 淺水灣
- Sanzhi District 三芝區
- Shimen Arch 石門洞
- Shimen District 石門區
- Shitoushan Park 獅頭山公園
- Shuangwan Bikeway 雙灣自行車道
- Tamsui Fisherman's Wharf 淡水漁人碼頭
- Tamsui Old Street 淡水老街
- Tamsui River 淡水河
- Tamsui River Mangrove Conservation Area 淡水紅樹林保護區
- Tamsui Riverside Landscape Trail 淡水河岸景觀步道
- Twin Candlestick Islets 燭臺雙嶼
- Umi Coffee Bus 烏咪咖啡小巴
- Wanjin Bikeway 萬金自行車道
- Wanli Camel Rock 萬里駱駝峰
- Wanli District 萬里區
- Wanli Fist Rock 萬里拳頭石
- Yangmingshan 陽明山
- Yeliu Fishing Harbor 野柳漁港
- Yeliu Light Beacon 野柳燈塔
- Zhilian Park (Ocean Viewing Platform) 芝蘭公園(海上景觀平台)
- Zhongjiao Bay 中角灣



MAP

Slopes shimmering with swaying miscanthus grass, the susurrous of mountain streams, a rich mining history to dig into, the welcome breezes of a tall waterfall on a hot day, and quaint towns where you can fill your belly — all of this just an hour away from central Taipei City by public transport. Ruifang District holds more than enough to merit repeat visits.



Going for Gold

Mining Ruifang District for Nuggets of Travel Joy

TEXT | AMI BARNES

PHOTOS | VISION

Whether you are a veteran of the Taiwan travel scene or are planning your very first visit, there's a high chance you've got a couple of Ruifang's scenic spots in your sights. Located in the northeastern reaches of New Taipei City, mountainous and semi-rural Ruifang District was once the stage for Taiwan's very own

gold rush. Like many mining communities around the world, its fortunes flourished and faltered in tandem with the industry. With the mines now long closed, the region has restyled itself as a tourist destination brimming with places easy to get to on day trips and relaxing staycations. Read on for a brief introduction to some of its highlights.

◆ Sandiaoling

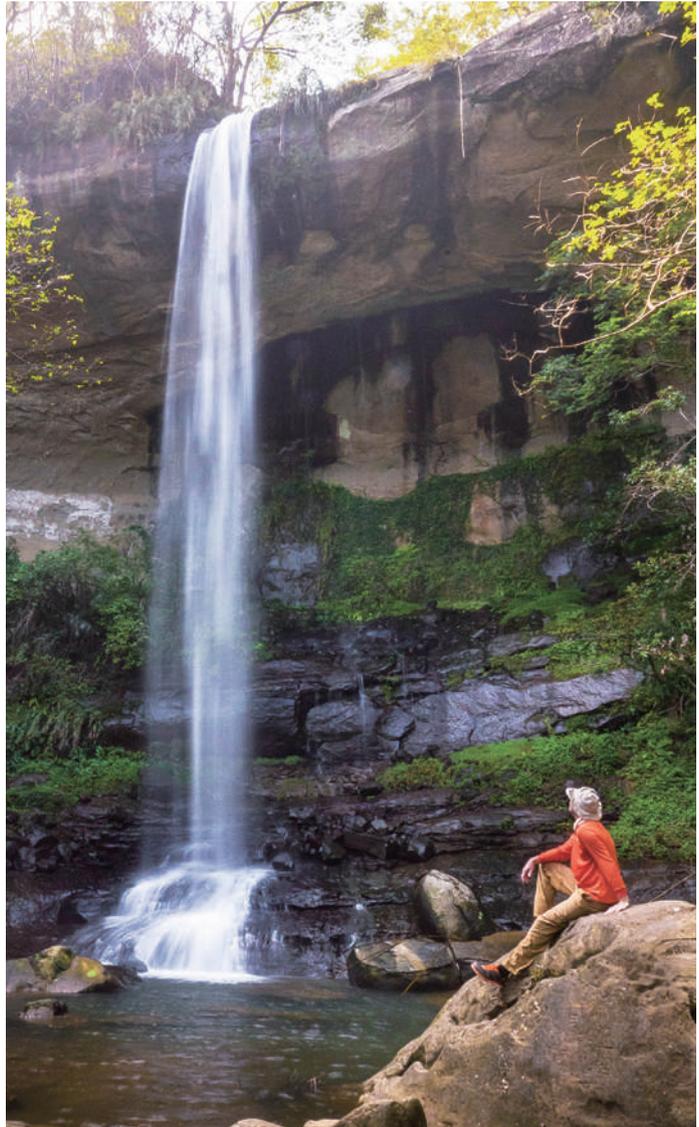
Sandiaoling Waterfall Trail

Just an hour's train ride away from Taipei Main Station, Sandiaoling is a tiny station that is not served by any public road. It's the jumping-off point for a number of enjoyable excursions, chief among them hiking the ever-popular Sandiaoling Waterfall Trail.

A trio of waterfalls divides the walk into three distinct sections with increasing levels of difficulty. The walk to the first, **Hegu Waterfall**, takes around 25 minutes from the station. There are some steps at the start, but the majority of this section is flat. Between Hegu and **Motian Waterfall**, you'll find a rougher trail comprised of compacted earth and boot-smoothed sandstone. Highlights of this stretch are a pair of springy rope bridges and the accompanying soundtrack of a mountain stream. Fish and freshwater crabs populate the clear waters, and if you peer into the surrounding forest, you can see the telltale mounds of orange-red earth kicked up by pangolins on the hunt for some tasty ants. The hardest part of this trail comes between Motian and **Pipadong Waterfall** – here you'll find your climb assisted by railings and steps that have been hammered into the steep rockface.

At 31m, Pipadong is a full 10m shorter than Motian, but that doesn't make it any less impressive. Steep treed walls surround the plunge pool at its base, giving the impression of a natural amphitheater. Time and weather have left a number of rocks perfectly placed to allow you front-row seats for the perpetual dance of the falling water – it's a wonderful place to pause and breathe in the fern-scented air.

Many walkers turn around at this point and head back to Sandiaoling Station, but if daylight, weather, and your energy level permit, you can continue to the top of Pipadong Waterfall. When the trail splits, turning left will take you to **Dahua Station** on the Pingxi Branch Line, while the right branch goes towards **Houtong** ("Cat Village"). Those who return the same way can reward themselves for their efforts in one of the several small cafés and eateries close to the trailhead.



Pipadong Waterfall



One of two rope bridges on the trail

◀ SANDIAOLING

A perfect trail for casual hikers, modest in difficulty, superb in pristine nature and enchanting scenery

Sandiaoling Eco-Friendly Tunnel

The Sandiaoling Eco-Friendly Tunnel is a recent addition to Ruifang's roster of scenic attractions. Opened to hikers and bikers mid-2022 – precisely a century since it was built – this old railway tunnel had been abandoned following the construction of a newer double-track tunnel close by.

Sealed off from the world for 37 years, the tunnel became a haven for wildlife, the flooded floor providing a habitat for fish and freshwater shrimp and bat colonies thriving in the undisturbed dark. Thankfully, engineers have found creative ways of allowing humans and animals to coexist. The iron-bar bikeway seemingly floats through the center of the tunnel, suspended above the streambed, and lighting is kept minimal – it feels almost as if you've slipped into another dimension.

Initially, online application was required. However, as of March 2023, there's no longer any need to apply for midweek visits. Public-rental bikes (YouBike 2.0) can be picked up and returned at either Houtong Station or Mudan Station, although the ride starting from Houtong is easier on account of being mostly downhill (assuming, of course, that you do not return the same way).

Photos on this page courtesy of New Taipei City Tourism and Travel Dept.



Sandiaoling Eco-Friendly Tunnel is part of a bike route that connects the villages of Houtong and Mudan

◆ Jinguashi

Baoshishan Trail

Some claim that a hard climb makes the view all the sweeter, but if you don't subscribe to this opinion, Baoshishan Trail near the village of Jinguashi was made for you. Bus No. 1062 can whisk you straight from downtown Taipei (launch point MRT Zhongxiao Fuxing Station) to **Quanji Temple** – just 250m from the start of the short trail's steps. Almost as soon as you get walking, the view opens up and suddenly you're on top of the world.

From here you can see many of Ruifang's landmarks. To the north, **Mt. Keelung** looms, and gazing south you'll spot the unmistakable oddly knobably **Teapot Mountain**. Inland, higgledy-piggledy buildings dot the layered and often mist-shrouded hills, looking for all the world like something cooked up in a child's imagination.

Wherever you turn, you can see traces of the mining industry – the flues of **Shuinandong Smelter** hug the slopes, a disused funicular railway cuts a bold line, and there are remnants of the open-cut mining techniques that turned the “golden gourd (*jingua*)” rock Jinguashi draws its name from into a stone hippo.



BAOSHISHAN TRAIL

Not much effort is required to walk to the vantage point of this trail for some stunning views of the Northeast Coast

Qitang Old Street

For a more thorough understanding of the area's mining history, take a stroll over from Baoshishan Trail back to Jinguashi village. Here you can check out the **Gold Museum's** (www.ggp.ntpc.gov.tw) exhibits and refuel with a “miner's lunchbox” before taking a wander down Qitang Old Street.

Unlike its packed and perpetually popular Old Street neighbor in the next-door town, Jiufen, Qitang has remained largely undeveloped. Previously, this was the main thoroughfare through the mountainous mining village; these days visitors to Qitang Old Street will find a smattering of cozy cafés hidden in side streets and plenty of photogenic spots. Brightly painted steps sit alongside walls of gray concrete, and as you roam the maze-like staircases, you're more likely to hear the roar of the stream weaving between the houses than the shouts of fellow travelers. The steps emerge at the bottom end of the village close to the **Taiwan POW Memorial and Peace Park**, a quiet park dedicated to the memory of foreign prisoners of war on the site of the Japanese-run World War Two Kinkaseki POW Camp.



Qitang Old Street



Building of the Gold Museum complex

◆ Jiufen

Jiufen Old Street

Easily accessed by bus from Ruifang Railway Station, MRT Zhongxiao Fuxing Station in Taipei City, and Banqiao Station in New Taipei City, Jiufen is up there with Taipei 101 and Yehliu Geopark on the list of most recognizable sites in northern Taiwan. Famed for its teahouses, cloistered lantern-festooned lanes, and an enticing array of street-food choices, it's long been a favorite of local day-trippers and international visitors alike.

Once a diminutive camphor- and tea-producing hamlet, the 1890s gold rush saw its population surge to over 30,000 before the decline of the mines sent that growth into reverse. The town's subsequent revival is largely attributed to its enduring nostalgic appeal and the popularity of two films – Hou Hsiao-hsien's 1989 *A City of Sadness*, which took Jiufen's twisting alleyways as its backdrop, and 2001's *Spirited Away*. The director of this animated film, Hayao Miyazaki, has refuted claims that Jiufen inspired the town and bathhouse central in the movie (although there are undeniable visual similarities). However, that hasn't stopped enterprising shopkeepers from making the most out of a good marketing opportunity.

Spilling out onto the cramped walkways are vendors selling all the usual traditional-market favorites (stinky tofu, fishball soup, egg waffles), alongside others that are more unique (mugwort rice cakes and vegetarian braised “meatballs”), but Jiufen's unmissable specialty is the chewy taro balls. Available in a hot syrupy soup or on a bed of shaved ice, the balls – formed of mashed root vegetable and tapioca starch – are paired with melt-in-the-mouth sweetened adzuki/mung beans. You'll find multiple shops offering the toothsome morsels, but those in the know seek out **A Gan Yi Taro Ball**, which offers guests a side-serving of fine views.

Once you've feasted on the many culinary delights and picked out a souvenir or two, why not check out the restored **Shengping Theater** or go for a wander? Climbing Mt. Keelung makes for a satisfying challenge, but my personal favorite walk in the area is a leisurely stroll to visit the remains of the **Jinguashi Aqueduct**.



Jiufen's famous Amei Tea House

◆ Shuinandong

The picturesquely decaying ruins of **Shuinandong Smelter** (today commonly referred to as the Remains of the 13 Levels) can be found facing the Pacific Ocean beside coastal Provincial Highway No. 2, and is served by bus No. 856 (Taiwan Tourist Shuttle service's Gold Fulong Shuttle Bus route; www.taiwantrip.com.tw) from close to Ruifang Railway Station.

Built by a Japanese mining company in the 1930s, the complex originally sprawled over a total of eighteen levels, with raw materials entering the top floor via a cableway and gradually moving downhill as they were tested, crushed, and mixed into a slurry from which the precious metals (mostly gold and copper) could be extracted.

Much of the site was damaged by World War Two bombing, leading to an extensive round of repairs and upgrades, including the installation of the three gargantuan fume-extracting flues still visible on the hillsides above the plant. After its eventual closure in 1987, the facility became a favorite haunt of urban explorers and bands looking for a dramatic spot to record a music video, but these days it's best viewed from the observation platform in the highway-side car park (formerly the location of the facility's copper precipitation pools).

You'll find another of Ruifang's top attractions a short two-minute drive (or fifteen-minute walk) from the smelter – the **Golden Waterfall**. Considering the region's gold-mining history, you would be forgiven for thinking that the moniker hints at gold deposits being found in the stream, but that's not exactly the case. Instead, it refers to the brilliant yellow-orange cast left on the streambed by minerals leaching from the local bedrock – but since one of those is arsenic, you'd best refrain from taking a dip. 🚫



Shuinandong Smelter in the evening



Golden Waterfall

🗨️ ENGLISH AND CHINESE

A Gan Yi Taro Ball 阿柑姨芋圓
Baoshishan Trail 報時山登山步道
Dahua Station 大華車站
Gold Museum 黃金博物館
Golden Waterfall 黃金瀑布
Hegu Waterfall 合谷瀑布
Houtong 侯硐
Jinguashi (Aqueduct) 金瓜石 (黃金水圳橋)
Jiufen (Old Street) 九份 (老街)
Taiwan POW Memorial and Peace Park 國際終戰和平紀念園區
Motian Waterfall 摩天瀑布
Mt. Keelung 基隆山

Pingxi Branch Line 平溪支線
Pipadong Waterfall 枇杷洞瀑布
Qitang Old Street 祈堂老街
Quanji Temple 勸濟堂
Remains of the 13 Levels 水湳洞十三層遺址
Ruifang District 瑞芳區
Sandiaoling Station 三貂嶺車站
Sandiaoling Eco-Friendly Tunnel 三貂嶺生態友善隧道
Sandiaoling Waterfall Trail 三貂嶺瀑布步道
Shengping Theater 昇平戲院
Shuinandong (Smelter) 水湳洞 (選煉廠遺址)
Teapot Mountain 無耳茶壺山



MAP

RAMBLES IN YANGMINGSHAN

EXPLORING TAIPEI'S NOT-SO-SECRET GARDEN

TEXT | AMI BARNES PHOTOS | AMI BARNES, VISION

Is there a more potent tonic for the strains of everyday life than nature's unruly beauty? For those in Taipei and in need of a break from the urban jungle, there's no need to spend hours and hours traveling — Yangmingshan National Park offers a generous dose of nature therapy right on the city's doorstep.



Situated atop the massif that stands along the northern edge of the Taipei Basin, Yangmingshan National Park is a 113-square-kilometer expanse of grass-capped peaks and interconnected forest trails. Diverse habitats shelter an impressive 12,000 species of animal and plant, and history buffs can explore traces of human activity stretching back centuries.

Each season in the park brings its own delights. When hot summer air thrums to the song of cicadas, shady streams offer refuge from downtown's muggy fug. When winter's mists descend, steaming thermal pools lure in walkers and the highest peaks might muster a dusting of snow. Whenever you may find yourself in Taipei, it's always the right time to head for these hills.

Lujiaokeng Ecological Protected Area

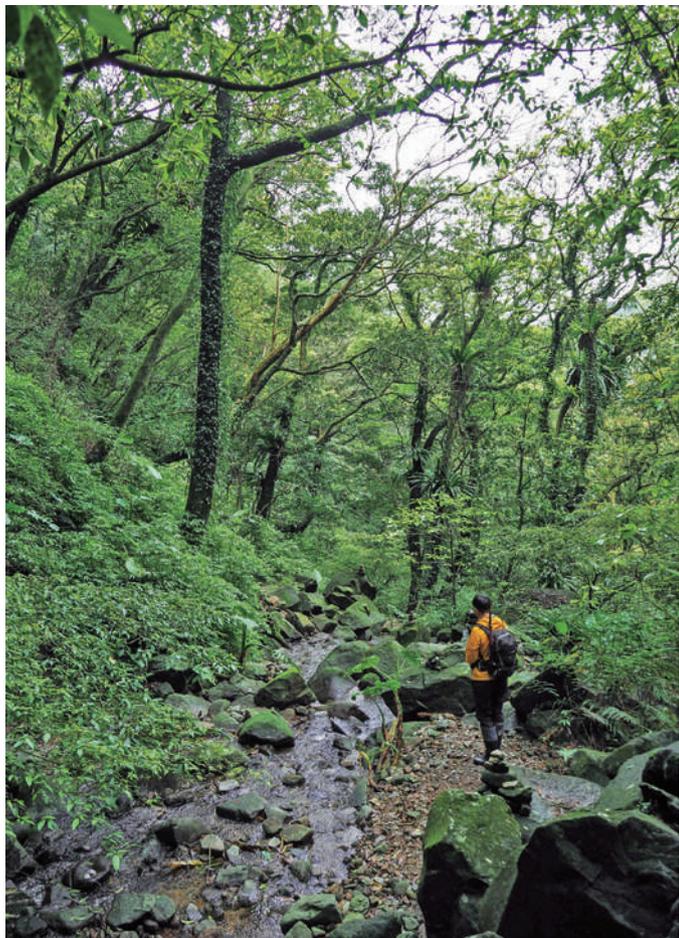
Lujiaokeng Ecological Protected Area rests in a valley on Yangmingshan's north-facing slopes. Home to a wide variety of endemic flora and fauna, entry is restricted in order to conserve the natural habitat and monitor access to a nearby military installation.

The preserve's densely forested 1,474 hectares are undoubtedly one of Yangmingshan's remotest regions. To put it into context, whether you're driving or using public transport, it's probably quicker to get from central Taipei to Yilan County on the Northeast Coast than getting to the start of the Lujiaokeng Trail.



Fenglin Waterfall inside the Lujiaokeng Ecological Protected Area

Pristine natural environment



The path crosses a small stream several times



Added into the mix is the complicating factor of having to apply for permits. Thankfully, however, using the park's new application portal is simple. Just fill out the form and select "Lujiaokeng checkpoint to Fenglin Waterfall" from the dropdown menu. (Permits can be applied for 3~30 days in advance at applyweb.ymsnp.gov.tw)

On the morning of a recent *Travel in Taiwan* visit, clouds hung low over the surrounding peaks and the air was sweet with the smell of damp earth. At the ranger station – at the entrance to the protected area – our permits were inspected and we scraped the mud from our boots (to reduce the risk of tracking any outside species and/or diseases into the area) before being let through the gate.

The first half of the trail is a wide and shady track that leads uphill towards Lujiaokeng Pumping Station – the tap water source for residents in the area. Fish shimmer in the depths of a pool behind the station's weir, and if you're quiet, you might catch the electric-blue jolt of a kingfisher in flight.

Upstream of the weir is where the real fun begins. Unlike most trails in Taiwan, here you'll find no hiking tags or signposts. Instead, walkers are guided by cairns, each small rocky pile beckoning you onwards. We picked our way carefully over across stream-slicked rocks (rainboots are a must), following the course of the water through a beguilingly lush fern-draped landscape.

An hour after setting off, we found ourselves standing in front of Fenglin Waterfall. "Fenglin" means "maple forest," and in winter, hikers can admire a fiery display of maple leaves framing the 20m-high column of water. It is a peaceful spot to stop and breathe awhile before retracing your steps.



Bird sighting



One of many fern types in the area



Mud scraping at the entrance

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Take bus no. 1717 (Taipei-Jinshan Route) from downtown Taipei to Yangmingshan and get off at the Xiaogigu (Huayicun Hot Spring) bus stop. Follow Lane 251 of Zhuzihu Road for about 2km to reach the ranger station.

Menghuan Pond Ecological Protected Area

The smallest of Yangmingshan’s eco-protected areas is Menghuan Pond. Although the pond itself is off-limits to everyone except academics with a permit and good reason to be there, all visitors to Yangmingshan National Park can enjoy observing this protected wetland habitat from a lookout on the pool’s eastern shore. Often cloaked in mist, the pond is the only known location where Taiwanese isoetes can be found (a type of aquatic plant in the quillwort family).

In 2020, the trail to the pond was recognized by the Quiet Parks International organization (quietparks.org) as the world’s first Urban Quiet Trail – “urban” indicating that the trail is in or near a city, and “quiet” in an urban context meaning that the background of human-generated noise stays below 45 decibels (think light rainfall or the hush of an office). Walkers are encouraged to keep their ears open and their mouths shut to better appreciate the sounds of nature – just don’t expect nature to abide by the same vow of silence.

The soundscape varies drastically from hour to hour and season to season. Birdsong dominates the spring until it is eclipsed by the summer’s cicada chorus, which in turn gives way to the drumming of raindrops hitting leaves. On our recent April morning visit, we listened to hidden frogs singing their hearts out against the gentle watery sounds of ducks dabbling for a pondweed snack.

Since the path to Menghuan Pond is short (a loop takes 60~80 minutes at most), you’ll have plenty of time to explore a few more of Yangmingshan’s sights. If you’ve got a couple of hours, why not challenge yourself to climb Taipei’s tallest mountain, Mt. Qixing? Or if that sounds a little too adventurous, you can always wander down from the trailhead to the hot-spring footbaths at Lengshuikeng and go on a leisurely walk of the Qingtiangang grassland.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Both bus S15 from MRT Jiantan Station and bus 108 from Yangmingshan Bus Terminal can get you to the Lengshuikeng trailhead. From there, a 25min climb up stone steps will bring you to the start of the trail to Menghuan Pond.



Path to Menghuan Pond



Menghuan Pond



Calla lilies



Azaleas

Yangmingshan's Flower Seasons

The passage of time in natural spaces is best measured in the annual rhythms of life, and that is certainly true of Yangmingshan National Park. In addition to quiet trails and protected habitats, the park is also well-known for its flower seasons. The largest annual event is the Yangmingshan Flower Festival – an almost month-long spring celebration that falls in the weeks either side of the Lunar New Year. Activities center around the Flower Clock in the national park's Yangming Park – an actual working clock adorned with beds of vibrant blooms that are changed each year.

But Taiwan's flower fans are not limited to a single season. Almost every month brings a new floral tribute, with dainty plum blossoms arriving first to herald the start of the new year. Designated Taiwan's national flower for its ability to endure the harsh conditions of winter, the plum blossom makes an appearance in January and is swiftly joined by blooming cherry trees decked in many shades of pink. While sakura seekers can spot bright bursts of pink throughout the national park, some of Yangmingshan's most impressive displays of the cherry blossom can be enjoyed in Yangming Park and along Lane 42 of Pingjing Street every February through March.

As the cherry trees drop their petals, the calla lily season gets underway in the Zhuzihu area. From February through to May, the sturdy stems topped with elegant white flowers can be seen flooding this farmland basin, once home to a volcanic lake. Visitors can pay a small fee at several of the farms to wander through the fields and pick their own lilies, and many roadside vendors sell pre-picked bouquets. In May and June, when summer begins to make its presence felt at Zhuzihu, the lilies are replaced by the voluminous blue-purple explosion of hydrangea season. Then, as October brings the promise of cooler weather once more, the park's hills are gilded with the sun-catching fuzz of miscanthus grass in the year's final glorious display before the plum blossom returns. 📍

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

For Yangming Park, take bus S15 from MRT Jiantan Station to Yangmingshan Bus Terminal and walk to the park (10-15min). For Zhuzihu, take bus S8 from MRT Shipai Station or S9 from MRT Beitou Station to Zhuzihu.

📍 ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Fenglin Waterfall 楓林瀑布
 Flower Clock 花鐘
 Lengshuikeng 冷水坑
 Lujiakeng Ecological Protected Area 鹿角坑生態保護區
 Lujiakeng Pumping Station 鹿角坑淨水廠
 Menghuan Pond Ecological Protected Area 夢幻湖生態保護區
 Mt. Qixing 七星山
 Pingjing Street 平菁街
 Qingtiangang 擎天崗
 Xiaqigu (Huayicun Hot Spring) 下七股 (花藝村溫泉會館)
 Yangming Park 陽明公園
 Yangmingshan Flower Festival 陽明山花季
 Yangmingshan National Park 陽明山國家公園
 Zhuzihu 竹子湖



MAP

KEELUNG

More than Just a Day Trip

Staying Overnight in One of the
Port City's Charming Places of Stay

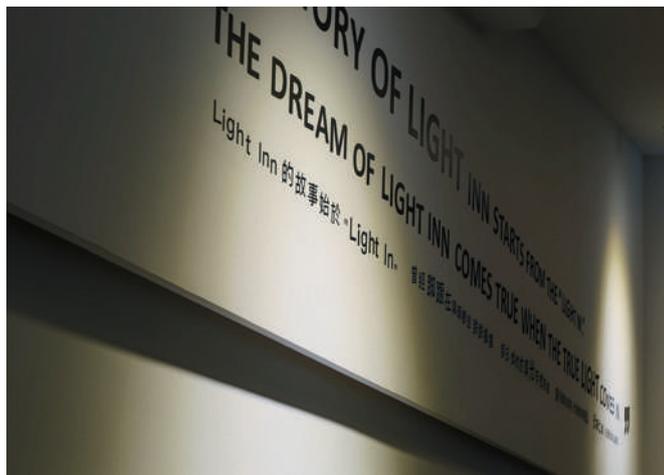
TEXT | HAN CHEUNG PHOTOS | VISION



Just a half-hour drive from downtown Taipei City, the port city of Keelung is often visited by tourists on day trips. But there's actually much more than day-trip quantity to see and eat in this gritty yet charming historic city, and it's also a great base to further explore the North Coast and Northeast Coast. A wide range of accommodations can be found across town, from barebones backpacker inns to chic designer lodgings.



Cozy bunk bed



Christian-inspired messages on the wall

Light Inn

Don't be fooled by the grimy-looking exterior; this no-frills hostel located on the sixth floor of an old commercial building is well-lit, clean, and wholesome with all the required amenities for a budget stay. There's a spacious, comfy lounge to hang out in, and the hostel has free Wi-Fi, laundry and drying machines, a public kitchenette with fridge and coffee machine, a public computer, as well as lockers inside the guestrooms. Sticky notes gushing with kind messages cover the wall of the lounge and spill over to the ceiling, along with maps and detailed travel information.

Located close to Keelung's railway and bus stations and just a one-minute walk to the popular Miaokou Night Market, it's an ideal place to drop off your bags after arrival and head off exploring. Staff have listed their personal recommendations for

the night market's dizzying array of offerings, and there is also a large number of restaurants and shops close by. Buses to other parts of the city and beyond can be hailed right across the street. The well-known Kanziding Fish Market, where auctions begin at midnight, is just a five-minute walk away.

The decor of the hostel is simple and crisp, primarily featuring whites and gray washes for the walls with splashes of bright color. The public space has nice views of the bustling waterfront and the city center.

Light Inn offers eight-, six-, and four-person bunk-bed rooms as well as more costly private single and double rooms and a four-person family suite. Christian scripture passages are written on the walls, as the owner says he opened this spot five years ago to provide employment opportunities for the disadvantaged youngsters at his church. He says his hope is that after a few years they can take over the place so he can retire.



Spacious lounge with city and waterfront views

LIGHT INN (輕旅背包客棧)

☎ 0908-953-358

📍 6F-1, No. 87, Sec. 3, Ai 3rd Rd., Ren'ai District, Keelung City
(基隆市仁愛區愛三路 87 號 6 樓之 1)

🌐 lightinn.com.tw

📘 www.facebook.com/lightinnkeelung



Double room (©Hotel Drizzle)

Hotel Drizzle

This atmospheric boutique hotel doubles as an art gallery – colorful, quirky prints of scenes in Keelung punctuate the monochrome, industrial-style decor throughout the four-story building. A solo exhibition by Taiwan artist Aeemi runs until October, the works on show the result of a three-week residency at the local Zhengbin Harbour Museum of Art that allowed her to roam the city and soak in the ocean port vibes.

Located on a curving street of fading historic buildings, the pet-friendly hotel is right by the Miaokou Night Market and just about a 10-minute walk from the railway station. Across the street is the famous Yuandong Bubble Ice shop, which is considered the originator of the icy treat, inventing it in 1955 when the operation was still a roadside stall.

Hotel visitors first pass through a mini-store selling all sorts of design crafts, books, and drinks (including Ramune marble soda and craft beer). Guests get 10 percent off on all items. The ground-floor lobby is a compact yet comfortable space to lounge in, and the darker tones give way to brighter walls until you reach an atrium with sunlight shining straight down the shaft.

Accommodations range from dormitory-style bunks (with lockers) to cozy, well-lit two-person rooms and a split-level suite for eight people with a balcony, dining area, and spacious bath. There's a lounge on the roof, with characteristic views of the city and the hills beyond.

The amenities, from the linen to towels to mirrors, are all locally sourced, and the shampoo and body wash are environmentally and animal-friendly. Bring your own toiletries or purchase them from the counter.

Breakfast is not served due to the abundance of food options nearby, but there's a shared kitchen on the ground floor for those who wish to cook. There's also coffee and a coffee machine, as well as cereal, fresh milk, toasting bread, and eggs for a hearty breakfast.



Reception area



Rooftop lounge (©Hotel Drizzle)



Kitchen area

HOTEL DRIZZLE (雨島旅店)
 ☎ (02) 2425-2929
 📍 No. 8, Ren 3rd Rd., Ren'ai District, Keelung City
 (基隆市仁愛區仁三路8號)
 🌐 www.hoteldrizzle.com



Spangle Inn

Superbly located, this designer inn boasts splendid views of the colorful houses of Zhengbin Fishing Port, a popular spot filled with coffee shops, galleries, and eateries. The inn's name is drawn from the shimmering light of the ocean.

Like Hotel Drizzle, run by the same proprietor, this place also opens to a shop, albeit slightly larger, selling arts, crafts, books, and drinks. The interior is much brighter, the designer opting for lighter woods and wall colors. The first floor is a gallery also run in collaboration with the Zhengbin Harbour Museum of Art.

With the building situated against a hill, a surprise feature is an air-raid tunnel in the back of the first floor that retains its original rough form. This space is sometimes used for events and exhibitions.

The inn has no elevator, as this is an older edifice. Each floor has two rooms; the street-facing side has large windows with harbor views, the best option being the Spangle double room with private terrace. Accommodations on the other side (facing the hill) are smaller, and the windows open up to rocks and vegetation, creating a more intimate feel. As at Drizzle, for amenities local brands are used wherever possible, including camellia oil-based shampoo and body wash. A shared kitchen with basic breakfast foods is also available.

The rooftop lounge provides the best of both Spangle worlds, with harbor views in the front and the lush greenery of the hillside rising up at the back.

SPANGLE INN (鰲島旅宿)

☎ (02) 2463-2696

📍 No. 34, Zhengbin Rd., Zhongzheng District, Keelung City
(基隆市中正區正濱路 34 號)

🌐 spangleinn.com

📘 www.facebook.com/spangleinn



Painted houses at Zhengbin Fishing Port

Places of Interest Nearby

Built in 1934, **Zhengbin Fishing Port** was once the largest fishing port in Taiwan, and was vital to Keelung's development as a bustling fishery hub. The harbor was not able to handle the increased sizes in fishing ships over the years, and eventually declined. It was revitalized as a selfie hotspot after the buildings were given a colorful makeover in 2017, and although today all sorts of trendy cafés and shops have opened up, it still retains a lot of its original character.

Heping Island is famed for its colonial history and otherworldly rock formations. Many visitors go straight to the geopark, which offers swimming in ocean pools and a pleasant 400m-long hill trail that passes through/by the main sights. You can see mushroom rocks, tofu rocks, the Fanzi Cave with wall inscriptions carved by Dutch sailors in the 17th century, and a monument to Ryukyu fishermen who once lived here, brought to teach locals

fishery techniques. Outside the park, the ruins of the Todos Los Santos church, built by the Spanish in the 1620s, are definitely worth visiting.

About 4km southeast of Heping Island, you come to Badouzi Fishing Port and a peninsula popular with tourists. On the peninsula, follow the stark-white staircase down a verdant, narrow valley to the open blue sea on the **Wangyou Valley Seaside Trail**, a breezy 1.3k-long walk with spectacular vistas. Visitors will forget all their troubles here – the characters for *wangyou* form a homophone for another Chinese term meaning “forget your worries.” Visible out on the ocean is the volcanic Keelung Islet, which was opened to tourism a few years ago. At the highest point on the Wangyou Valley trail is a pagoda that offers panoramic views of Badouzi Fishing Port and beyond, as well as interesting geological structures created by erosion.



Pavilion on Heping Island



Wangyou Valley Seaside Trail

On the eastern side of the same peninsula is **Chaojing Park**, an expansive seaside grassland that was once a landfill, converted with the help of the nearby National Museum of Marine Science and Technology. It's accessed from Changtanli Fishing Harbor, a small settlement that's also worth exploring. The eroded rock platform in the park is accessible during low tide, and visitors can see all sorts of intertidal creatures. Many artworks and installations can be seen along the park's paths, with the field of upright brooms, especially, a smash hit for people to take Harry Potter-esque portraits.

Back in central Keelung, it's hard to decide where to start when visiting the compact **Miaokou Night Market**, as the lantern-lined streets with numbered stalls are said "the largest variety of dishes in Taiwan." Staff at your chosen place of stay will offer suggestions – Light Inn's owner, for example, lists crab thick soup, rice wine sweet dumplings with egg, *shacha* beef, the famous "healthy sandwich," and mini sausages among his personal favorites. 📍

📍 ENGLISH AND CHINESE

- Badouzi Fishing Port 八斗子漁港
- Changtanli Fishing Harbor 長潭里漁港
- Chaojing Park 潮境公園
- Fanzi Cave 蕃字洞
- Heping Island 和平島
- Miaokou Night Market 廟口夜市
- Kanziding Fish Market 坎仔頂漁市場
- Keelung Islet 基隆嶼
- Wangyou Valley Seaside Trail 望幽谷濱海步道
- Yuandong Bubble Ice 遠東泡泡冰
- Zhengbin Fishing Port (Color Houses) 正濱漁港 (彩色屋)
- Zhengbin Harbour Museum of Art 永晝海濱美術館



MAP



"Healthy sandwich"



Chaojing Park



At Chaojing Park you can also visit the educational iOcean center (iocean.nmmst.gov.tw)



Miaokou Night Market

Reinterpreting Taiwanese Flavors

Fine-Dining Restaurants Serving
Delicacies with Local Characteristics

TEXT | HAN CHEUNG **PHOTOS** | POWEI CHEN

With growing interest in eating refined local cuisine, Taiwanese chefs are fusing traditional ingredients and foodways with fine dining, transporting distinct flavors from such places as night markets and mountain villages into elegantly designed spaces.

“**T**aiwanese cuisine generally conjures images of snack foods at roadside eateries and night markets”, says Banbo fusion restaurant owner Cheng Lee. “Must the food be fast, fried, and cheap for it to be called Taiwanese? Can these familiar flavors not be reinterpreted and be enjoyed in a more elegant space?”

In recent years, more entrepreneurs and creative minds like Lee have been looking at ways to infuse traditional Taiwanese elements into their modern, trendy offerings. Says Wes Guo, owner of Embers restaurant: “Before, many Taiwanese had little idea of what this bountiful island has to offer, making the task of promoting the sustainable foodways and unique ingredients found across the diverse cultures of the island even more important.”

BANBO

Visitors to Banbo are invited to sit in a waiting area by the entrance and enjoy a cup of tea first. The industrial-chic decor in this space is meant to evoke images of everyday Taiwan, such as cramped alleys, bus stops, and corrugated metal structures. They are then given a stone and brought into a small, dark room with a birdcage, and once the stone is placed in a slot by the wall, the metal bird rises out of the cage and leads customers to the second floor dining hall, a very cool way to enter.

The stairwell also features many everyday elements, and the wooden furniture on the second floor is made by Tainan artisan Yang Po-chin, who draws inspiration from old-school household designs. The cutlery includes a traditional artisanal knife and a modern interpretation of it, which sit on an ornate bronze rack resembling flower stems.

Banbo is a transliteration of the Mandarin Chinese term for “mottled,” which owner Cheng Lee says gives off the initial impression of peeling paint and weathered surfaces. Head chef Steven Su once saw such a scene at a construction site, but with the sun shining on the site’s dilapidated walls, he found it beautiful in its own way. This became the inspiration for the restaurant’s name. Lee feels that “mottled” is a metaphor for everyday Taiwanese culture, which many feel does not belong in places such as a fine-dining restaurant.

“Can’t *banbo* be used as a positive term?” Lee says. “We hope that people can look at it differently, and that’s why we have the bird breaking out of the cage. We want locals to reacquaint themselves with our homeland from another angle, and to proudly tell foreigners that, from our space to the food to the environment, this is Taiwan.”

Both Lee and Yang have extensive experience working in prestigious Western-style kitchens abroad, where they realized how undervalued Taiwanese flavors are. Yang was further moved when his cousin asked if he really couldn’t cook anything that their dying grandfather was used to eating. So he decided to incorporate these everyday tastes into his creations. “We want diners to feel that they may have experienced similar flavors in night markets or local eateries, but now they are in a completely different form,” he says.

For example, the dish “Far Mountain” features a dry-aged steak with onion sauce with dried sweet potato leaves and cabbage piled up in an arrangement on the side evoking the mountains surrounding the Taipei Basin. When eaten together, it’s meant to remind diners of stir-fry shop favorite scallion beef.

“Harbor” features scallop puree wrapped in bok choy symbolizing a boat, with a short-necked-clam-based dark sauce representing the oil one might see on the surface of pier-side waters, coupled with a piece of fried and roasted tiger grouper. Eaten together, they remind diners of the freshly caught fare found at Taiwan fishing-harbor eateries.

“Each dish is like a montage where we present the imagery for the beginning and the end, and customers can interpret the middle parts however they wish,” Yang says.



Banbo owner Cheng Lee (left) and head chef Steven Su (right)



Ruby Black Tea Pudding



Restaurant entrance



Tree Grapes by Banbo

BANBO (斑泊)

☎ (02) 2700-8088

📍 No. 38, Lane 265, Lequn 2nd Rd., Zhongshan District, Taipei City (台北市中山區樂群二路 265 巷 38 號)

Reservations: <https://bit.ly/42oZIGQ>

Embers owner Wes Kuo



Taiwan's culinary heritage is manifold – with influences coming from Japan, China, Taiwan's various indigenous groups, as well as new immigrants from Southeast Asia – and Embers defines its “fusion” not as a melding of Taiwanese and haute cuisine, but a fusion of all the flavors found across the island. “We’re not trying to especially highlight a certain culture,” he says. “It’s more like we’re reviewing, understanding, and accepting the past, and moving forward to create what the future of Taiwan could look like.”

Kuo intentionally accentuates flavors that may be familiar to Taiwanese, such as rice wine and *shacha* sauce, in dishes that customers may have never seen before, and he can also recite the history behind them. He introduces less common ingredients as well, such as shell ginger, and hopes that people remember the taste and appearance and are able to recognize the source plant if they see it in the wild.



Artistic Japanese-cedar installation

EMBERS ◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇◇

Wes Kuo has gone from selling Japanese skewers at a night market to running a fine-dining restaurant that delves into Taiwanese ingredients and the rich culture and history behind them. Embers opted for an all-vegan menu this spring season, as Kuo wanted to highlight the abundant non-meat produce that Taiwan boasts during this time of the year due to its diverse climate, terrain, and cultures. “It’s not just about eating local, it’s about highlighting cultural diversity and the fact that Taiwan is in a very, very special geographic position,” Kuo says.

But there’s still a lack of understanding among Taiwanese as to what Taiwan has to offer, even down to staples like chicken and rice. Kuo says he himself was also clueless when he was younger because schools didn’t teach much local culture. “I only started being ‘Taiwanese’ when I turned 30,” he says. “So everything I explore is new and exciting to me, and even today, I feel like I’m looking at Taiwan from the perspective of a foreigner.”



Dining area with natural light



Stylish tableware



Carrot creation



Bread offering

The welcoming dish at the restaurant is a “betel nut” – traditionally consumed and used ceremonially across cultures in Taiwan in the past. The indigenous Amis use it as a token of love, and people in pre-Internet days often relied on betel nut stands for directions. But since many people are averse to the addictive nut these days, Kuo has created an alternative version using pureed Ceylon olive wrapped in a wild pepper leaf.

He has also found a way to age the usually tasteless white wood ear fungus with a companion fungus until it starts emitting a jasmine-flower aroma, allowing it to be used as a main player in a dish. For another course, he takes different-colored beets and cooks them in varying ways using the entire plant, creating a visual and gustatory mosaic.

The restaurant space isn't filled with plants, but the use of Japanese-cedar installations and furniture along with natural wall coloring creates an organic atmosphere. The tableware is made by local artisans.

Kuo says that when traveling, food is an important way of getting to know a country, and he hopes that Embers can offer a deeper understanding of Taiwan to both foreign and local customers.



Wild vegetables

EMBERS

- ☎ (02) 7751-5598
- 📍 No. 24, Lane 122, Sec. 4, Ren'ai Rd., Da'an District, Taipei City
(台北市大安區仁愛路四段 122 巷 24 號)
- 🌐 www.embersdining.com
- 📘 www.facebook.com/embersdining
- 🌟 guide.michelin.com/tw/en/taipei-region/taipei/restaurant/embers

FAMILIAR FLAVORS

Kuo intentionally accentuates flavors that may be familiar to Taiwanese diners, such as rice wine and *shacha* sauce



More carrot artistry

HOSU

Located in Taipei's trendy East District, this restaurant's name, HoSu, means "good island" in Taiwanese (it also sounds like "good things"). Owner Ian Lee says the mission of his business is "to use eco-friendly, sustainable local ingredients sourced from good people across Taiwan."

Lee points out that his team members personally visit at least 70 percent of the producers they purchase from. They are also working on turning their food waste into fertilizer and sending it to partnering farmers.

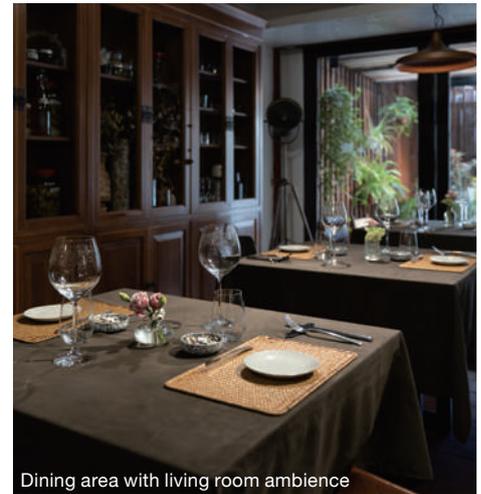
The owner is one of about 200 certified "eco-chefs" in Taiwan, and he travels across the island to teach at rural elementary schools, where he gets a close-up look at local methods of sourcing ingredients and preparing food. In addition to Han Chinese and indigenous foodways, the restaurant is now also integrating culinary elements from the island's growing Southeast Asian population. "We consider the cultural context for every ingredient – which ethnic group uses it, how they consume it, and we'll try to incorporate it into our cooking," he says.

Although the dishes have a Western fine-dining style appearance, Lee says there may be elements, or flavors, that are familiar to Taiwanese – for example, the aroma of stir-frying with shallots or garlic, or the taste of rice wine. "You might not see it, but when you eat it there's a familiar taste," he says.

The restaurant also pairs self-made seasonal wines and condiments with its food offerings; currently they're fermenting plum liquor. The menu changes with the seasons, but minor adjustments will be made several times during each season so that returning customers can always try something new. Notable items this spring season included a dish made from chicken raised on ruby black tea leaves. The breast meat was paired with chicken mousse with tea-soaked plums in a tea-infused chicken broth.



HoSu owner Ian Lee



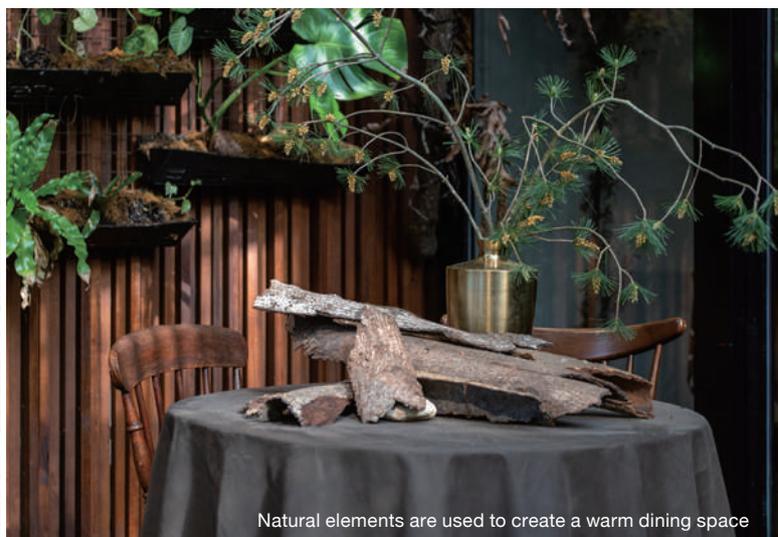
Dining area with living room ambience



The menu changes each season and within seasons



HoSu serves dishes with Western-style appearance and local flavor



Natural elements are used to create a warm dining space



Restaurant entrance



Dishes are paired with self-developed wines and condiments

HoSu's creative process is a slow one, Lee says – for example, by the time they're done experimenting with a certain ingredient, its season might be over, and they'll have to wait another year to turn it into a dish. Although the idea is to convey the stories behind the ingredients to the customers, HoSu allows guests to explore at their own pace, letting them initiate conversations with the staff while providing some information in the menu through QR code links.

While Taiwanese consumers have a general idea of what sort of food is suitable for which season, Lee says, awareness of the seasonal changes for specific produce has dropped as ever fewer people cook at home. "We're trying to deepen this understanding," he says. "We might purposely use a lot of mushrooms during autumn, for example, and root vegetables in the winter."

When people were unable to travel abroad during the pandemic, Lee says the interest in local eating increased, but there's still a lack of understanding of what the island has to offer. "We're an island country, but we actually don't have deep connections with maritime culture. We have high mountains, but many people never enter them. So we want to bring the things we've found and researched from these mountains and seas and showcase them." 📍

HOSU (好嶼)

☎ (02) 2711-4723

📍 No. 14, Alley 40, Lane 181, Sec. 4, Zhongxiao E. Rd., Da'an District, Taipei City (台北市大安區忠孝東路四段181巷40弄14號)

📘 www.facebook.com/hosutaiwan

🗺 guide.michelin.com/tw/en/taipei-region/taipei/restaurant/hosu

Note: Reservation in advance is required for each of the above three restaurants.

🗺 ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Amis 阿美族

Cheng Lee 李澄

East District 東區

Ian Lee 李易晏

shacha sauce 沙茶醬

Steven Su 蘇品瑞

Wes Guo 郭庭璋

Yang Po-chin 楊博欽



MAP

It's Getting Late. Where to Go?

TEXT | VISION

Ideas for Having Fun in the Evening

So much to see, so many places to go. If only there were more time to each day... Unfortunately, one cannot just add to the day's 24 hours, but fortunately there are a lot of things to do in Taiwan, apart from typical city nightlife activities, for those who don't feel like returning to the hotel just yet.

Fireflies in Alishan
(©Alishan NSA Admin.)

▲ Firefly Watching

Being interested in the natural wonders of Taiwan does not mean that a day of exploration has to end when the sun sets. The island is a fascinating playground for eco night tours. Among the beloved creatures of the night are fireflies (Taiwan is home to 65 species of these light-emitting bugs), which can be seen flying around with their “tail lights” on during mating season in April and May. The Taiwan Tourism Bureau has published an informative brochure with info on where to go and how to spot these incredible insects. Download the English brochure in PDF format here: bit.ly/43flafc





©Taipei Zoo



Yehliu Geopark (©North Coast and Guanyinshan NSA Admin.)



Ho-Hai-Yan Gongliao Rock Festival (©New Taipei City Govt.)



▲ Taipei Zoo

During the summer (until August 29), visiting hours for the Taipei Zoo are extended to 9pm on Saturdays (evening tickets, sold from 4pm to 8pm, are half price). 🌐 zoo.gov.taipei

▲ National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium

The National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium in Pingtung County offers sleepovers, allowing you to spend a night close to fish and cetaceans. The sleepover is combined with a range of other marine creature-related fun and educational activities, such as exploring the tidal zone outside the museum. 🌐 www.aquarium.com.tw/sleepover.asp (Chinese)

▲ Yehliu Sunsets

One of the premier tourist spots in Taiwan, known for its otherworldly sandstone sculptures, Yehliu Geopark is a must-visit attraction on the North Coast. On fine-weather days during the hot months, you want to visit late in the afternoon to avoid the heat (it can get very hot on the exposed rocks during the day) and to enjoy the magnificent sunsets Yehliu is known for. Hours during July and August are until 6pm. Once a year, the rocks of Yehliu are also colorfully illuminated for an evening event named Yehliu Night Tours, which lasts for two weeks (being held in July this year), with park hours extended until 9pm. 🌐 www.ylgeopark.org.tw

▲ Ho-Hai-Yan Gongliao Rock Festival

Another cool way to spend time by the sea in the evening is the Ho-Hai-Yan Gongliao Rock Festival staged in August on the Northeast Coast's Fulong Beach. After plans for splitting this festival into smaller events in different locations met strong opposition from music lovers earlier this year, the event is back on track with its long-time format, to the delight of fans who look forward to listening to live music sitting on the soft golden sand Fulong's beach is famous for.

▲ Other Options

Taipei 101 Observatory (open daily until 9pm); Taipei Fine Arts Museum (until 8:30pm on Sat); Observation Deck of 85 Sky Tower in Kaohsiung (daily until 10pm); Kaohsiung Lighthouse on Qijin Island (until 9pm Tue~Sun), Chikan Tower in Tainan (daily until 9:30pm). 📍

🌐 ENGLISH AND CHINESE

85 Sky Tower 八五大樓

Chikan Tower 赤坎樓

Ho-Hai-Yan Gongliao Rock Festival 貢寮國際海洋音樂祭

Kaohsiung Lighthouse 高雄燈塔

National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium 國立海洋生物博物館

Qijin Island 旗津島

Taipei 101 Observatory 台北 101 觀景台

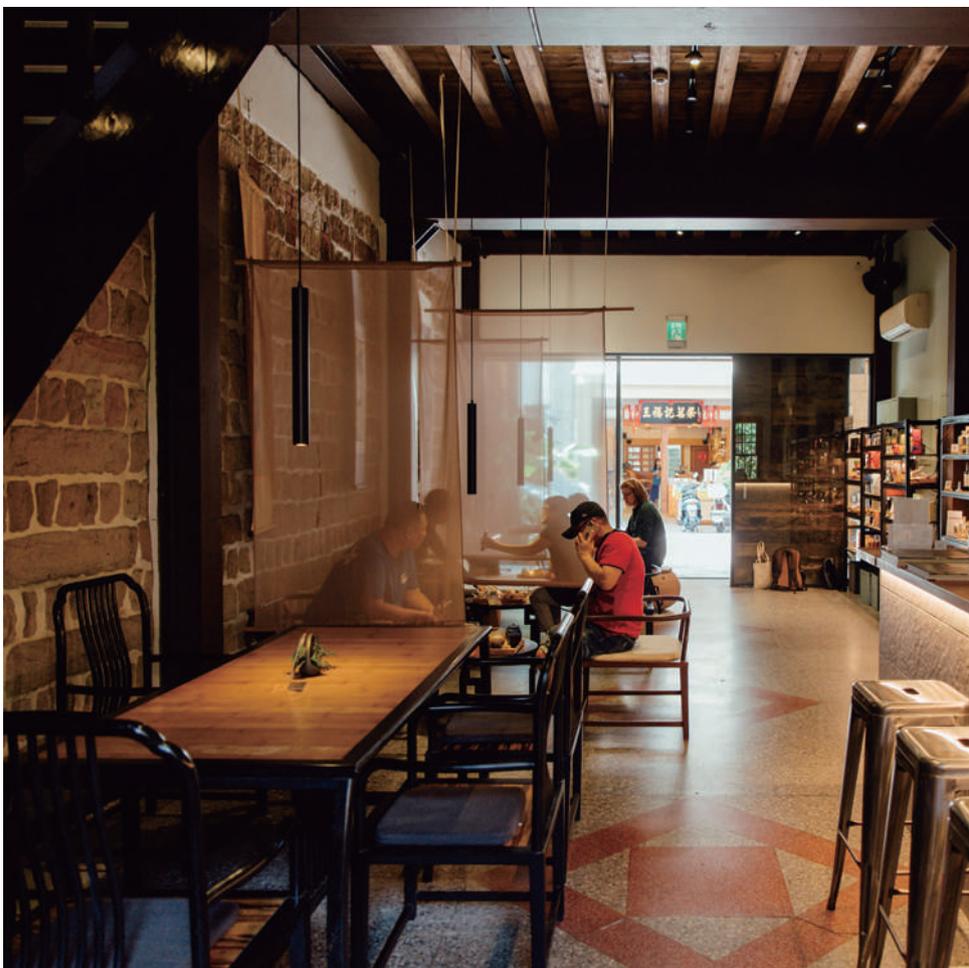
Taipei Fine Arts Museum 臺北市立美術館

Taipei Zoo 臺北市立動物園

Yehliu Geopark 野柳地質公園



Business owner Chen Jie-fu



First floor of the Tongan Family Selection teahouse

Tongan Happiness

Preserving Traditional Culture in One of
Taipei's Oldest Neighborhoods

TEXT | OWAIN MCKIMM PHOTOS | SHUN WEN YANG

In an ever-changing city like Taipei, where the urban landscape seems constantly in flux, holding onto the past is no easy task. For Chen Jie-fu, a former news broadcaster with deep ancestral roots in Taipei's Datong District, however, history – whether in the form of old buildings, arts and crafts, ritual, or cuisine – is something that is certainly worth fighting for. And where better to make this stand than in Dadaocheng, one of Taipei's best-preserved historic neighborhoods.



We meet Chen on the second floor of No. 121, Dihua Street, a heritage residence that Chen now runs as a teahouse. “The layout is all original,” he says, gesturing to the walls of red-stained cypress that divide the space into semi-private seating areas. “These used to be the family’s living quarters. Downstairs used to be their storefront, where they sold rice and oil.”

Sunlight streams through the wood-framed windows that look out onto bustling Dihua Street, the commercial spine of the Dadaocheng neighborhood, which experienced a huge economic boom in the late 19th century as hub for exporting Taiwan’s famous oolong teas to the world. Today, it is the core of one of the city’s best-preserved areas, with many buildings – their architecture a curious mix of European and East Asian styles – well over a hundred years old.

“This year marks 170 years since Dadaocheng’s founding,” Chen says.

During the Qing dynasty, he explains, many settlers from China’s Fujian Province set up homes on the eastern bank of the Xindian River, in the area that is today known as Wanhua District. However, in 1853, a conflict broke out between tradespeople from the Fujian districts of Tongan and Sanyi. Losing the conflict, those from Tongan fled to the village of Dalongdong further north on the eastern



Tea and snacks



Second floor of teahouse

bank of the Tamsui River, where many fellow immigrants from Tongan lived, and subsequently settled just south of Dalongdong in what is now Dadaocheng. (Today, Dalongdong and Dadaocheng together make up Datong District.)

Chen’s ancestors moved from Tongan to Taiwan nine generations ago, settling eventually in Dalongdong. His family history is deeply intertwined with the area. His great-grandfather, for example, donated the land on which the area’s Confucius Temple is built, and his ancestral home – known as the Teacher’s Mansion – is a listed historic site currently undergoing renovation in collaboration with the central government. It is in deference to these ancestors from Tongan, and their culture, that he named his enterprise *Tongan Le* – “Tongan Happiness.”

Moving towards the back of the teahouse, Chen shows us the atrium, an architectural element common among the shops of Dihua Street and one that speaks to the cultural values of those who built them. “In traditional Chinese architecture, the atrium is very important because it allows in air, water, and light. Water in particular is symbolic of wealth, so having an area inside the house that collects water is very desirable.” Beyond the atrium is a rear section that once served as a warehouse, but which now houses the building’s owners.

Chen draws my attention to the architectural style of the old warehouse – red brick with a tiled swallowtail roof. “You see how different it is to the shop’s front? During the Japanese colonial era, the Japanese were obsessed with modernization and Westernization. So they encouraged the building of these Baroque-style façades you can still see on Dihua Street. But behind those façades, as you move backwards along the length of the structure, the old southern Fujian style of architecture is preserved. It’s what makes these shophouses so interesting.”



THE GOOD OLD TIMES

The Dadaocheng and Dalongdong neighborhoods are arguably Taipei’s best stomping grounds for experiencing nostalgia



STAY Taipei City

Le Palais, Palais de Chine Hotel

君品酒店頤宮中餐廳

Le Palais, the only restaurant in Taiwan that has received three Michelin stars for five consecutive years, now provides fine cuisine to passengers on international China Airlines flights. Ken Chan, head chef of Le Palais, personally designed the in-flight menu named "Skyward 3-Stars Private Cuisine", which has ten classic delicacies including exquisite appetizers, main dishes, desserts, and sweet treats. The menu is available to passengers on China Airlines' Europe and US/Canada routes in Premium Business, Premium Economy, and Economy Class, allowing them to enjoy a feast created by a famous 3-Michelin-star chef high up in the sky!



No. 3, Sec. 1, Chengde Rd., Datong District, Taipei City
(台北市大同區承德路一段3號)
Tel: (02) 2181-9999
www.palaisdechinehotel.com



STAY Taipei City

Grand Hotel Taipei

圓山大飯店

Situated on Mt. Jiantan in Taipei, the Grand Hotel is a 14-story palace-style building constructed in 1970. There are two underground tunnels, under its east wing and west wing, respectively, which were designed as emergency escape routes for President Chiang Kai-shek. After opening the West Secret Tunnel earlier, receiving enthusiastic response by visitors, now, the 50-year-old East Secret Tunnel has been opened to the public as well. It has a length of 67 meters with a curvy design meant to prevent chasing soldiers from shooting at the fleeing parties, and walls with an uneven surface to enhance sound absorption. Since only a limited number of visitors can be accommodated, the East Secret Tunnel is only open to guests who come on corporate trips, attend state banquets, or opt for a special East Secret Tunnel Room Package.



No. 1, Sec. 4, Zhongshan N. Rd., Zhongshan District, Taipei City
(台北市中山區中山北路四段一號)
Tel: (02) 2886-1818 ext. 1818 [guided-tour department]
www.grand-hotel.org



STAY Taitung City

Rice Resort Hotel

禾風新棧度假飯店

Taitung is well known for its beautiful mountains and rivers. Rice Resort Hotel is like an idyllic rural castle designed with the county's specialty rice as its theme. The hotel has ten floors with a total of 100 guestrooms. Among its facilities are an outdoor swimming pool, a Chubby Choice Star Bar, a children's playground, a gym, and a massage area. It's like a fun paradise for the whole family. In the high-ceiling first-floor lobby of the hotel you will see design elements representative of Taitung, including lights in the shape of rice ears and grains of rice. The marble-textured floor and the beige walls give the space a soft and elegant feel.



No. 29, Xinxing Rd., Taitung City
(台東市新興路29號)
Room Reservation Hotline: 089-229-968
Banquet Reservation Hotline: 089-219-178



STAY Hualien City

Fullon Hotel Hualien

福容大飯店 花蓮

No. of rooms: 257
Room rates: City View Rooms from NT\$7,800; Japanese/Western Rooms from NT\$16,800
(room rates are subject to 10% service charge)
Desk personnel speak: Chinese, English
Restaurants: Happy Garden (Chinese, Cantonese), Arcadia Café (Western style)

The hotel is located close to Hualien Harbor, allowing you to enjoy the most beautiful sunrise over the Pacific Ocean, the water's color ranging from deep azure to light blue, the sun's palette ranging from pale yellow to golden. Take in the marvelous views of the sun beautifully reflected by the sparkling sea from the infinity pool or one of the sea-view guestrooms. Staying at the hotel gives you easy access to the world-class scenic wonder that is Taroko Gorge as well as the bucolic East Rift Valley. Travel with friends and family and explore the mountains and the coast. Hualien will surely give you unforgettable memories!



No. 51, Minsheng Rd., Hualien City, Hualien County
(花蓮縣花蓮市民生路51號)
Tel: (03) 823-9988 Fax: (03) 823-0077
www.fullon-hotels.com.tw/hl/en/



BUY Taipei City

June 1st

六月初一

Breaking with the tradition of how egg rolls are usually shaped, this treat by June 1st is a new representative of innovative Taiwanese souvenirs. The 8-shaped egg rolls have a distinct shape, resembling the number 8, the only patented shape of its kind in the world. In addition to its special appearance the egg rolls' Chinese name also sounds like "praising someone" when pronounced in Taiwanese, creating the idea that this unique product is a symbol of gratitude to be shared with someone important. This must-buy souvenir is especially suitable as gift during the festive season.



Taipei Dihua Branch
(No. 1, Sec. 1, Dihua St., Taipei City)
Tel: 02-2550-8500

Taipei Yongkang Branch
(No. 206, Sec. 2, Xinyi Rd., Taipei City)
Tel: 02-2322-2700

Taichung Meicun Branch
(No. 19, Sec. 2, Meicun Rd., Taichung City)
Tel: 04-2375-6001



TRAVEL Kinmen County

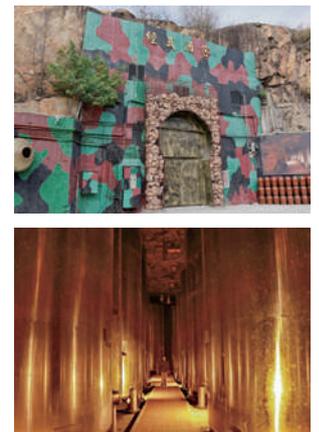
Kinmen Kaoliang Liquor –

The Travel of Jing Wu

Liquor Cellar

金酒公司「經武酒窖 窖藏光旅」

Dug out by hand by soldiers of the Nationalist Army, Jing Wu Tunnel was completed in 1983. Thanks to Kinmen's granite layer geology and its island climate Kinmen Kaoliang Liquor stored in this natural granite cellar develops a unique mellow flavor. In 2016, Kinmen Kaoliang Liquor Inc. started to build large stainless steel wine barrels to improve storage capacity and liquor quality. In 2022, the storage facilities were first opened to the public to offer "The Travel of Jing Wu Liquor Cellar" experience, a guided tour during which visitors can use their five senses to travel back in time, learn about the history of the liquor company, and taste the flavor of kaoliang liquor.



No. 1, Taoyuan Rd., Jinning Township, Kinmen County
(金門縣金寧鄉桃園路1號)
Tel: (082) 32-5628
www.kkl.com.tw





June 1st

8-Shaped Egg Rolls

Famous Gift from Taiwan
The Only 8-Shaped Egg Roll in the World
An innovative egg roll that breaks with the 500-year tradition
of a long straight egg roll shape.
It's the perfect idea for a unique gift!



Taipei Dihua Branch

☎ 02-2550-8500
📍 No. 1, Sec. 1, Dihua St., Taipei City

Taipei Yongkang Branch

☎ 02-2322-2700
📍 No. 206, Sec. 2, Xinyi Rd., Taipei City

Taichung Meicun Branch

☎ 04-2375-6001
📍 No. 19, Sec. 2, Meicun Rd., Taichung City



June 1st Official Website
www.june1.com.tw

