

TAIPEI

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STORIES FROM THE CAPITAL

THE FUN SIDE OF FAMILY TRAVEL

COVER STORY Taipei: The Most Kid-Friendly City in Asia / **EXPERIENCE** Six Things to Do with Your Parents in Taipei / **ART AND CULTURE** Your Guide to Taipei's Dragon Boat Festival / **PEOPLE** Step Inside the Enchanting World of Picture Books / **FOOD AND DRINKS** Four Fantastic Family Restaurants in Taipei

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TAIPEI — A CITY FULL OF FAMILY FUN

We're a fortunate bunch, those of us who call Taipei home. Though the capital is every bit a sprawling, urban metropolis, it somehow retains the spirit of a family-friendly little burgh. From the public transportation network allowing quick and easy travel to every corner of the city, to kid-friendly restaurants, to everyday life itself, there's hardly anywhere you can't take the whole gang. And for this family-themed issue, we could think of no one better than popular blogger Kathy Cheng (Tricky Taipei) to share her top picks for family-oriented activities in our beloved hometown (or home away from home, as the case may be).

Also, in case it wasn't obvious enough from the heat, summer is here! Some may be scrambling for anywhere with air conditioning, but why limit yourself to the indoors when there is so much to do outside? From temple visits to tea tastings, and parks to museums, we've got family-fun day trips for days in the pages ahead, leaving the adults spiritually satisfied, and the kids wonderfully spent.

Summer doesn't just mean skyrocketing temperatures. It also means it's time for one of the most visually spectacular and gastronomically fulfilling holidays of the year — Dragon Boat Festival. Not only is this the time to watch the dramatic and colorful dragon boat races, but it's also the holiday when one of Taiwan's most beloved treats, *zongzi*, or sticky rice dumplings, are enjoyed by the ton. Also, speaking of things enjoyed by many, why not check out our feature on Taiwan's traditional toys? Whether you're looking to try out the diabolo, or wanting to try your hand at making your own D.I.Y. bamboo gun, this informative and fun-filled piece is for you.

During this season of family togetherness (the kids are out of school, after all), it's a great time to be reminded that there are many in Taipei for whom family is their highest priority. We've spent the lead-up to the hottest months of the year getting to know some of the hottest trendsetters when it comes to fashion, literature, and traditional folk arts. We'll bring their stories of how family has influenced them in their varied pursuits to you in our features on Maison Temps-Rêves, a store specializing in picture books, the Shadow Legends Drama Group, who keep the tradition of shadow puppetry alive, and Ángeles Studio and Shop, a boutique with one-of-a-kind designs for children (and parents) of all tastes and types.

All this running around the city will no doubt work up an appetite. Whether you're a true gourmand or just looking for something the kids won't turn up their noses at, flip through to our story on Taipei's best family-friendly restaurants, places where the food is fresh, activities for the kids are aplenty, and the prices are more than fair. Be sure to leave room for dessert, too, as our guide to the top desserts of the summer season will leave you salivating.

So, as you can see, Taipei is a city that welcomes visitors of all ages. And whether you're a kid, or just a kid at heart, this is a place that will always take you in with open arms.



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TAIPEI 台北

STORIES FROM THE CAPITAL

Publisher Yi-ting Liu
Editor in Chief Pei-chun Hsieh
Deputy Editor in Chief Chia-ying Tzou
Editors Yennan Lin
Integrated Marketing Cathy Chen, Yenhsin Lee
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Cover Photo Samil Kuo
Cover Design Broo Branding Consultant

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ISSN: 24137766

GPN: 2010402342

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of *TAIPEI*. If you have any suggestions, please do not hesitate to email or fax us.

**Artwork Designer & Production
 MyTaiwanTour Service Co., Ltd.**

Tel: (02) 2365-3881

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Online reading:
www.travel.taipei/en > Media > TAIPEI

Department of Information and Tourism,
 Taipei City Government

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This magazine was printed
 with environmentally
 friendly soy ink.

Domestic	NT\$180	Regular Mail
Hong Kong/Macau	NT\$540	Regular Air Mail
Asia/Pacific Region	NT\$660	Regular Air Mail
Europe/US/Africa	NT\$900	Regular Air Mail

TAIPEI Subscription Services, Postal Wire Transfer: 6 Issues
 Beneficiary Account No.: 16630048
 Beneficiary Name: Department of Information and Tourism,
 Taipei City Government

中華郵政台北雜字
 第 1377 號執照登記為雜誌交寄
 Price: NT\$30





TAIPEI

THE MOST KID-FRIENDLY CITY IN ASIA

Taipei is an absolutely fantastic city for kids of all ages. There's plenty to keep them entertained, active and well-fed whether you're here for three days, a week or the whole summer.

Taiwan's capital city, Taipei, is an easy and approachable introduction to a mix of Asian cultures and food for your children. It's the perfect place to inspire adventurous young eaters and spoil them with tasty snacks and gourmet meals. Surprise them with seasonal Taiwanese-grown fruits like guavas, mangoes, pineapples and wax apples. Or sit down and enjoy a spread of *xiaolongbao* at a dumpling restaurant.

If you're looking to enjoy sightseeing and outdoor activities under the sun, Taipei has plenty to offer in that regard, too. Children can stretch their legs on scenic hikes just outside the city center, or ride along the trails running through many kilometers of riverside parks. There are small playgrounds in every neighborhood where kids can socialize after school. You'll also find restaurants and department stores have strollers and high chairs on hand to make life easier for parents. Is Taipei the most kid-friendly city in Asia? I absolutely think so.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathy Cheng is a writer and creative consultant based in Taipei. Her blog, Tricky Taipei (trickytaipei.com), is an English-language platform covering design, culture, food and travel. After having her daughter in 2017, she started writing about parenthood and traveling with children. Her love of the city inspired her to write a children's picture book introducing Taipei to the world. *Hey Taipei* was published in 2019.

COVID-19 alert

A friendly reminder: Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, there might be safety/hygiene measures enforced at each destination, such as the mandatory wearing of masks or temperature check.

WHY I CHOSE TAIPEI FOR MY FAMILY

I'll admit that I had no idea about Taipei's appeal for children until having a baby girl of my own. I was working in New York City before moving back in 2014. Now after two-plus years living in Taipei with my daughter, I'm constantly trying to convince my overseas friends to come for a family vacation with their kids.

I tell them it's sort of like an undiscovered gem in Asia. While Tokyo can feel daunting and infinite, Taipei is welcoming and manageable. And where Hong Kong can seem like the densest place on Earth, Taipei offers open, green spaces and wide boulevards, each a welcome breather from city life.

① PREGNANCY & CONFINEMENT IN TAIPEI

I first noticed the benefits of being a parent in Taipei during my pregnancy. The majority of my tests and ultrasound scans were covered by Taiwan's National Health Insurance. Maternal support is also very strong. The culture of *zuo yuezi* (坐月子, postpartum confinement) is practiced widely in Taiwan by mothers of all ages. Specialized confinement centers take care of the newborn's feeding, bathing and sleep needs, allowing new mothers to focus on recuperating and healing after childbirth. Some mothers choose to stay for 10 days or two weeks, while others complete the full month of confinement. Nourishing meals are always included and spa treatments are not uncommon. Sounds amazing, doesn't it?

② CONVENIENT TRANSPORTATION

After settling into life at home with a newborn, I started to discover all the ways Taipei is designed to help young families. For instance, the city's public transport system has been crucial to helping us get around. It's clean and affordable, with lots of family-friendly amenities such as ramps and elevators for

stroller access, breastfeeding rooms for nursing mothers, plus family toilets with changing tables. We've never had a car in Taipei and I can honestly say that I haven't missed having one yet. Passengers on the MRT and bus are friendly to pregnant women and parents with kids as well.

③ KID-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

My next favorite thing about life in Taipei is how kid-friendly restaurants and cafes can be. Even though most restaurants don't have a dedicated kid's menu, they have high chairs, kids' utensils and dining sets to make eating out with kids easier on the whole family. And as the cuisine in Taipei is so diverse, exploring new restaurants can be incredibly fun with kids.

Another bonus to life with kids in Taipei are the small parks you can find down almost every alley in Taipei. There are slides, swings, seesaws and sometimes even inline skating grounds. Just watch out for the mosquitos in the summer months and pick up some sticky insect repellent patches for everyone.



02

02 Taipei boasts an abundance of parks with distinguishing features. You can find playground in almost every corner of the metropolis for kids! (Photo/Jessie Rock)

HELPFUL TIPS FOR PARENTS IN TAIPEI

Navigating a new city is never easy. These are a few of the tips and tricks I've learned these past few years which may help you, together with your kids, enjoy a wonderful stay in Taipei.

BEFORE YOU GO



PREPARE MOSQUITO REPELLENT PATCHES

Due to the hot and humid weather in Taiwan, mosquitoes can be everywhere in the summer months. To keep kids safe in parks and playgrounds, stick mosquito repellent patches on their clothes. I go for the back so it's out of sight and out of reach.



FOLLOW TAIPEI-BASED INSTAGRAMMERS

Deciding where to eat can be even harder when you have kids in tow. To help save time, I frequently rely on Instagram as a great resource for restaurant recommendations straight from Taipei residents. A few of my favorite foodie accounts to follow include @taipeieats, @hungryintaipei and @taipeieater. I also share my own Taipei recommendations on Instagram at @trickytaipei.

DURING YOUR VISIT



DROP IN TO CONVENIENCE STORES

There are 24-hour convenience stores on just about every corner in Taipei. You can pick up necessities like toothbrushes and shampoo, as well as daily essentials such as milk and fruit for kids to have a quick teatime at any time of day or night. Parents can grab coffees on the go in the mornings or local beers for an after-dinner drink.



KIDS UNDER 6 TRAVEL FREE

Children under six years of age or less than 115cm tall can ride for free on Taipei's MRT and bus system alongside a ticketed passenger, which makes it easier for parents to take young kids out. This means only parents need to tap on and tap off at the turnstiles. Preload an EasyCard at a convenience store or MRT station and won't worry about loose change.



RIDE THE TAIPEI SIGHTSEEING BUS

On those days when kids aren't up for walking and parents don't have the energy to carry them, the hop-on, hop-off Taipei Sightseeing Bus is a lifesaver. The double-decker bus stops at all the major attractions so you don't need to worry about navigating the metro map. It's a lifesaver on rainy days too.



ESCAPE TO AIR-CONDITIONED MALLS

When your family needs a bit of respite from the summer heat, simply do what locals do and hang out in a cool mall for an afternoon. For example, Syntrend (三創生活園區) on Civic Boulevard (市民大道) has eight floors of gadgets, toys and digital products for everyone in the family, as well as two floors of restaurants. You'll find all the latest technologies from Asia's top brands and hard-to-find collectibles.

KATHY'S RECOMMENDATIONS: THE BEST THINGS TO DO WITH KIDS IN TAIPEI



① EXPLORING NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM

The National Palace Museum sounds daunting, but it's one of the most scenic places to soak in Chinese culture and it's surprisingly kid-friendly. You can easily spend an hour or two browsing the incredible museum exhibits, making it the perfect place to go on a rainy day. The indoor Children's Gallery has plenty of hands-on activities, plus film screenings. The kids-only space means they are free to run and scream at the same time. We love coming for half-day trips.

② EAT AND PLAY THROUGH THE NIGHT MARKETS

No visit to Taipei is complete without a trip to one of the famous night markets to try classic Taiwanese snacks like stinky tofu, pepper buns, sweet potato balls and fried chicken. Raohe Street Night Market (饒河街夜市) and Shilin Night Market (士林夜市) are always popular with visitors, but there are smaller ones like Ningxia Night Market (寧夏夜市) and Linjiang Street Night Market (臨江街夜市) that are equally popular with locals. After trying all the snacks, make sure to check out the claw machines and other games at the market.



(Photo/Top: Jessie Rock, Left & Right: April Chen)

③ SPEND A DAY IN HUASHAN 1914 CREATIVE PARK

Grouping activities together is priceless when you're with the kids. A foolproof itinerary for us starts with traditional Taiwanese breakfast of soy milk and rice balls at the famous Fuhang Soy Milk (阜杭豆漿) breakfast stand, then a stroll over to Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山1914文化創意產業園區) across the street.

There's lots to explore for kids in this renovated industrial complex, including Wooderful Life & Land, a play center where everything is wood and therefore analog, meaning the entire environment encourages kids to watch, listen and feel.



(Photo/glowonconcept on iStock)



(Photo/Pitua Sutanto)

④ HIKING IN XIANGSHAN

The hike up *Xiangshan*, or Elephant Mountain (象山), will reward you with arguably the best view of Taipei's skyline. Start early in the morning to avoid the midday heat and make sure to pack hats and plenty of water. Or for a different vibe, go in the early evening to watch the sunset over the city. It only takes 30 minutes to reach the top, which is manageable for kids of all ages.



(Photo/Taiwan Scene)

⑤ BEATING JETLAG WITH STORYTIME

If you just had a long flight and the kids can't sleep due to the time difference, the 24-hour Eslite Bookstore (誠品書店) in Xinyi District will save your family from jetlag, no matter how hard it hits. If the kids wake up too early and nothing else is open, pack them up and head over to Eslite. You'll find a great children's book zone with plenty of books, board games and toys.

MUST-TRY TAIWANESE ICE AND DRINKS FOR SUMMER

When the temperatures get high, it means it's time for your family to take a break and enjoy a refreshing ice dishes and drinks. These are our favorites in the summertime, for kids and adults.



(Photo/MyTaiwanTour)

① MANGO SHAVED ICE

There's nothing better during the Taipei summer than having a big heaping bowl of mango cubes with shaved ice and condensed milk or mango ice cream. Try the busy shops on Yongkang Street (永康街), in Ximending (西門町) or an Ice Monster location for this beloved dessert. As it's usually a big bowl, the whole family can enjoy one together.

② BUBBLE TEA

In case you didn't know, Taiwan is where bubble tea (or boba milk tea) was invented. There are thousands of bubble tea shops throughout the city. You can compare the classic franchise chains with the newer brands that offer fruity bubble tea flavors served with toppings like jelly, pudding or even cheese. Try to limit your kid to one a day; the sugar high is no joke!



(Photo/Phan Anh Tran)

③ SOYMILK SOFT SERVE

Soy milk soft serve is a vegan alternative to dairy ice cream. At one of the top-rated soy milk stores, Soypresso (二吉軒豆乳), it comes in original soy milk flavor or black sesame flavor. Both are equally delicious.



④ PAPAYA MILK

Every kid in Taiwan grows up drinking sweet, ripe papaya and fresh milk blended into a smooth and refreshing smoothie. Taipei Milk King (台北牛乳大王) is the chain most locals remember fondly, but you can also find papaya milk sold at the night markets. The sweet frothy milk is an instant flashback to childhood.

There are so many things you can enjoy in Taipei with your family. From the exciting food culture to the amazing transportation system, this hidden gem in Asia will never stop surprising you and your kids with its lovely people and kid-friendly environment, whether you're a first-time visitor or building a long-term life in the city. 🇹🇼



(Photo/Anastasiia)



01

SIX THINGS TO DO WITH YOUR PARENTS IN TAIPEI

Whether Taipei is your home, or just somewhere you're visiting, there is no doubt that it is a great destination to be enjoyed with family. As we get older, time spent with parents becomes more and more cherished, and Taipei is a wonderful place to explore with them, whether it be enjoying the outdoors, visiting the city's most notable landmarks, or stuffing your faces with exceptional local food. Here are six ways to make the most of a trip to Taipei with your parents.

⚠️ COVID-19 alert

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1 GO TO THE TOP OF TAIPEI 101

This one is a no-brainer. There's so much to do at Taipei 101, and you'd be foolish not to include a visit to Taiwan's tallest building in your itinerary. Browse the luxury brands in the shopping mall before taking a trip up the tower to marvel at the panoramic view of the Taipei skyline from the observation deck. If mom and/or dad have a head for heights, book 101's Skyline 460 experience, which includes a visit to the 101st floor at the very top of the skyscraper, as well as a stop for drinks at the luxe Bar 88. If you're hungry, you should check out the vast variety of options available at the food court, or even treat yourself to *xiaolongbao* (小籠包, soup dumplings) and more at the Taipei 101 branch of world-famous Din Tai Fung (鼎泰豐).

01-02 At one time the tallest building in the world, Taipei 101 is a must-see landmark in Taipei to enjoy with parents.

03-04 Enjoying a leisurely ride through the hills and sampling some of the best tea grown in Taiwan are must-dos in Maokong.



02

(Photo/Lisanto)

2 RIDE THE GONDOLA UP TO MAOKONG

Sample the most authentic Taiwanese tea on a trip to Maokong (貓空). Ride the scenic gondola (think a fancy cable car) up into the hills before learning how Taiwan's tea is grown, harvested and produced, and why Maokong (and Taiwan as a whole) is such a great place to grow tea leaves. Sample some of the best tea Taiwan has to offer for yourself and, if the weather is agreeable, enjoy a leisurely hike on the hillsides that are accessible to hikers of all ages.



03

(Photo/Yenping Yang)



04



05

3 SEE THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT CKS MEMORIAL HALL

Visit one of the most historic sites in the country, built in honor of Chiang Kai-shek (蔣中正), the first president of the Republic of China, and take in the fantastic changing of the guard ceremony. If you or your parents can't climb the steep steps, the hall is wheelchair accessible and wheelchairs are also available to be hired onsite. Since you're in the area, be sure to also pop in to the nearby branch of Chun Shui Tang (春水堂), the Taiwanese tea store that claims to have invented bubble milk tea.

4 VISIT A TAIWANESE TEMPLE

No trip to Taipei is complete without absorbing some local tradition and culture, so a trip to a temple is an absolute must. Head to one of the city's most iconic sites of worship, such as Longshan Temple (艋舺龍山寺) or the City God Temple (台北霞海城隍廟), and immerse yourself in the rituals that local people have practiced for centuries. Pray to Zhusheng Niangniang (註生娘娘), the fertility god, if you're hoping to make your parents into grandparents. You can also pray for your parents' health at Baoan Temple (大龍峒保安宮), another spiritual spot in Taipei where the faithful worship Baosheng Emperor (保生大帝), the god of medicine and health. Parents can experience local cultures and religion and enjoy the amazing artworks there as well. From the temple's carvings to its decorative paintings, moms and pops will be enchanted by the traditional tales without a doubt.



06

- 05 Visit one of Taiwan's most famous historic sites and admire the architecture of the three halls at CKS Memorial Hall.
- 06 Immerse yourself in the local culture by following customs practiced in temples.
- 07 Enjoy a variety of local street foods at night markets where you can literally taste everything.
- 08-09 Taipei boasts a great diversity of exotic plant life. Its flower markets are definitely worth visiting if your parents are into horticulture. (Photo/Left: Gao Zaxian, Right: Taiwan Scene)



07

5 EAT LOCAL FOOD

If you don't try the local food when coming to Taipei, you've wasted your visit. From tasty breakfast foods like *danbing* (蛋餅, egg crepe) served with hot glasses of *doujiang* (豆漿, soy milk), to delicious bowls of beef noodles, Taipei is a treat for the taste buds. Take your parents for a walk around one of the city's many fantastic night markets, such as Raohe or Ningxia, where they can sample the best of what Taipei has to offer in one location. Bubble tea, fresh fruit, steamed buns, oyster omelets — Taipei has it all. And, if they're brave enough, your parents absolutely have to try stinky tofu, an aromatic local delicacy.

6 EXPLORE A LOCAL FLOWER MARKET

The capital city of a subtropical island, Taipei is home to a great deal of exotic plant life, in particular many varieties of flowers. Take your parents to peruse one of the city's several flower markets, such as Jianguo Holiday Flower Market (建國假日花市), Taipei Garden Mall (台北花卉村) and Neihu's Taipei Flower Market (台北花市). Regardless of the season, there will be flowers on display and available to buy all year round, although it may be difficult to get them in your suitcase back home if you're visiting from overseas. 1



08



09

TAIPEI SUMMER HOTSPOTS: BEAT THE HEAT THIS SUMMER WITH THESE FIVE FAMILY-FRIENDLY OUTDOOR DESTINATIONS

Taipei is a highly liveable city. It boasts a very well-connected public transportation system. It is super safe, very easy to navigate, and there are loads of outdoor places to explore. You can't walk for more than 10 minutes without discovering a park. There are excellent mountain hikes within the city limits. Riverside bike paths stretch for kilometers. The public spaces are also well-maintained and family-friendly.

Taipei has so much to offer; visitors and locals alike are spoiled for choice. And if you are struggling to decide where to take the kids this summer, no sweat. Here are five family-friendly destinations within Taipei where you can chill out this summer.

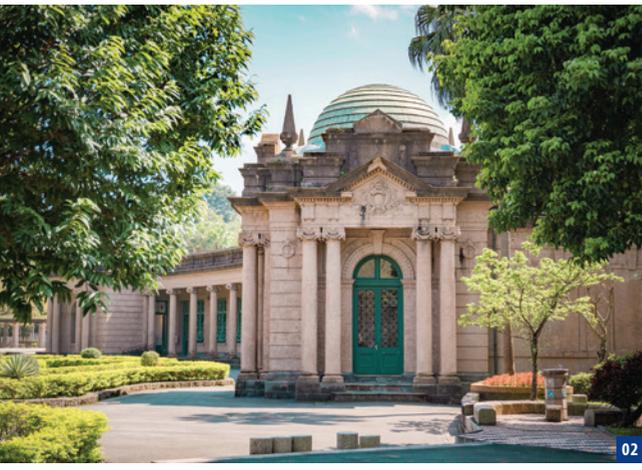
01 Taipei has an abundance of parks where kids can have some fun. (Photo/Myles Tan)

COVID-19 alert

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01



TAIPEI WATER PARK

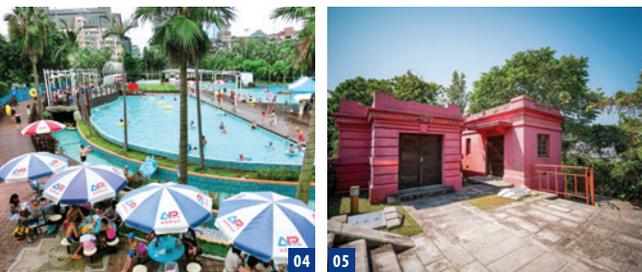
- 📍 1, Siyuan St., Zhongzheng Dist.
- 🌐 waterparken.water.gov.taipei

To say that summer in Taipei is hot is an understatement. The summer humidity can be so overwhelming that most people tend to hide away in their air-conditioned apartments. But on a sweltering summer day, there is nothing more refreshing than taking a dip in the pool. It is even more amazing if that pool comes equipped with giant water slides!

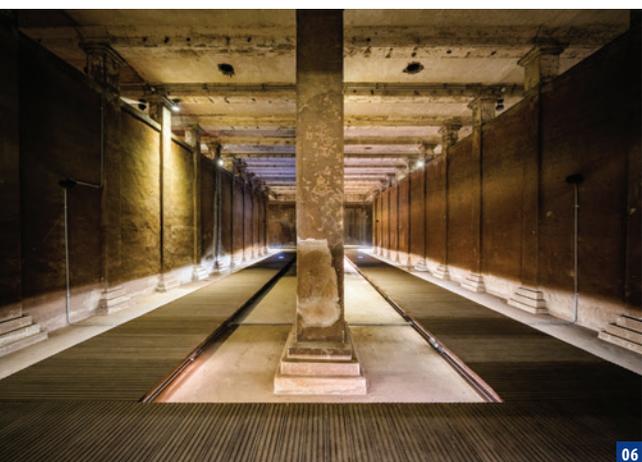


The Taipei Water Park (臺北自來水園區) is located in Gongguan (公館) and lies only a short walk from MRT Gongguan Station (捷運公館站) and the Gongguan commercial district. The nearby Gongguan Riverside Plaza (公館水岸廣場) is another perfect space for the whole family to enjoy a bit of cycling. Besides the water slides, there is a large wading pool complete with playground equipment that will keep the kids busy.

It's not just your typical water park, though. The site is also home to the Museum of Drinking Water (自來水博物館). The museum, housed within a Baroque-style building built in 1908, was a water intake unit that collected water from the Xindian River (新店溪) and also a water pump house/purification plant that provided water to 120,000 users in Taipei. It was a remarkable construction a hundred-plus years ago as it represented the modernization of Taipei's water supply system. Nowadays, it serves as a museum that provides interesting and educational information on water conservation, and much of the original equipment remains on display inside. This park will cool the kids down when the weather heats up.



(The opening hours of the pool are subject to change due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Please check before visiting.)



- 02** Not only does the Baroque-style Museum of Drinking Water provide educational information on water conservation, but it is also a hotspot for bridal photographs! (Photo/Taipei Water Park)
- 03-04** When the scorching summer sun comes out, there is nothing more refreshing than spending an afternoon at the Taipei Water Park. (Photo/Taipei Water Park)
- 05-06** The Guanyinshan Reservoir, also located inside the Taipei Water Park, was built 111 years ago during the Japanese era. (Photo/Taipei Water Park)



07



08



09



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07-10 The Taipei Zoo boasts creatures from all over the world. It's a must-visit for curious animal lovers! (Photo/Taipei Zoo)

11 As one of the largest zoos in Asia, Taipei Zoo also offers an internal shuttle train/bus service which only costs NT\$5 per ride!

TAIPEI ZOO

📍 30, Sec. 2, Xinguang Rd., Wenshan Dist.
 🌐 english.zoo.gov.taipei

With an esteemed history that stretches all the way back to 1914, the Taipei Zoo has been a mainstay in Taipei for over a century. Originally based in Yuanshan (圓山) in the northern suburbs, the zoo was relocated to a purpose-built site in Muzha (木柵) in 1987. It is easily accessible and sits at the very southern end of the MRT's Wenhü (文湖) Line. With admission costing only NT\$60 for adults and NT\$30 for kids, it is a cheap day out for the whole family.

The Taipei Zoo is home to creatures from all over the world and is the perfect place for young children to get up close and personal with them. The headliners of the show are in the Formosan Animal Area. This

area houses animals indigenous to Taiwan, and many are very rare or endangered species in dire need of conservation. There are various species of deer, the clouded leopard, Formosan rock macaques, pangolins, the leopard cat and the elusive Formosan black bear. The black bear has even become an unofficial mascot of Taiwan in recent years.

In addition to the Formosan residents, there are many other international and domestic species for children to learn about. Highlights include the Children's Zoo, where kids can interact with domesticated species such as alpacas, llamas, miniature horses and more. The Australian Animal Area is home to the famous Australian icon, the kangaroo, and the African Animal Area is where the legendary beasts of the great continent reside. There are zebras, giraffes, rhinoceroses, elephants, gorillas and of course the king of them all, the mighty lion.

TAIPEI CHILDREN'S AMUSEMENT PARK

📍 55, Sec. 5, Chengde Rd., Shilin Dist.
🌐 english.tcap.taipei

The name just about says it all! This is where to go if the kids just want to go wild and have fun. Taipei Children's Amusement Park (臺北市立兒童新樂園) is located in Shilin District and is guaranteed to be an action-packed day out, even for parents. While the park is meant for kids, parents can jump on a few of the rides, too. There are all the typical rides you'd expect at an amusement park. There is a Ferris wheel, a roller coaster, a pirate ship, and a giant slide, just to name a few. There are lots of options for restaurants in the park as well, mostly fast food chains. Street

performers also appear on occasion, and there is a theatre featuring shows by the IFKIDS Theatre Company (如果兒童劇團).

The best part is that the park is very affordable, unlike typical amusement parks. You can let the kids rampage all day without going broke. For the basic entrance fee, it will cost NT\$30 for adults and NT\$15 for children aged 7 to 12. For each ride you choose, there will be another charge from NT\$20 to NT\$80. You can also get a one-day pass for NT\$200 per person, which allows you to take any ride in the park as many times as you can handle. And to make it easier, you can use your EasyCard to pay. So, you can top up your kid's card and let them decide how they want to spend their budget.



12-13 The Taipei Children's Amusement Park is a popular hotspot for families wanting to take a break on weekends. (Photo/Taipei Children's Amusement Park)

14-16 Taipei Children's Amusement Park boasts a variety of large amusement facilities that can be enjoyed by children, and even parents, too.





SHANSHUILU ECOLOGICAL PARK

📍 37, Nanshen Rd., Nangang Dist.

To imagine what was once a dreadful landfill being resurrected as a welcoming oasis, a place of regrowth, seems too farfetched. However, Shanshuilu Ecological Park (山水綠生態公園) was once the Shanzhuku Sanitary Landfill Site (山豬窟垃圾衛生掩埋場), located in the southeast corner of Nangang District in eastern Taipei. In 2003, plans to convert this large landfill began. Once the landfill was officially closed in 2011, more than 1,700 trees were planted. Shortly after, wildlife began to return to the massive 21-hectare area, which is said to be the largest tree-covered area in all of Nangang.

Much of the waste management infrastructure, or the very waste itself, has been converted and repurposed. The former recycling plant has now become the visitor center, and the garbage truck wash bay enjoys a second life as a cafe. Hundreds of thousands of aluminum cans are now an art installation, and old

17-18 The Shanshuilu Ecological Park was once a landfill site but now turns into a play ground with zip lines, slides and more.

19 Most of the waste, such as recycled cans, and the management infrastructures in Shanshuilu Ecological Park have been repurposed into massive installation arts.

power poles are the support beams for an observation deck.

This park is the place to go if you want to relax in the sunshine or ride a bike, which is free for visitors. Don't forget to bring your picnic blanket and lunch with you, as you might stay there longer than you think. Kids can never get enough of the zip lines and sand pit in the park.

Shanshuilu, meaning green mountains and water, is inspired by the poem "Fishermen (漁翁)" by the Tang Dynasty (唐朝) poet Liu Zongyuan (柳宗元), a statue of whom stands as a monument in the park. It is a step in the right direction that the young generation can seek inspiration from.



HSIN HSIN PARK

📍 Ln. 109, Sec. 3, Nangang Rd., Nangang Dist.

Located in the eastern part of the city, Hsin Hsin Park (新新公園) in Nangang was opened to the public in early 2020. Considering the Nangang area serves as a key transportation hub between Taipei and its neighboring cities in the east, Keelung (基隆) and Yilan (宜蘭), in the near future, the park is expected to decrease the “heat island effect” and dissipate the heat in the area to make the entire region much more livable and sustainable.

The park is a picturesque wetland with wooden walkways crossing over the water. The gargantuan Taipei 101 can be seen in the city skyline in the distance. Sunset is the perfect time to snap a couple of photos. Besides the scenery, the centerpiece of the park is the double slide with a miniature rock-climbing wall on top of the hill, which is perfect for thrill-seeking kids (and parents). There is also a zipline and other interesting playground equipment to keep everyone entertained. All the park amenities are brand new and the toilet blocks are close to the playground.

Hsin Hsin Park is only a short walk from MRT Kunyang Station (捷運昆陽站), making it very easy to get to. This spot is perfect for a little family picnic, and it’s totally free; a nice addition to the already extensive selection of parks in Taipei. 📍

20-21 Hsin Hsin Park’s centerpiece is its double slide with a rock-climbing wall, suitable for thrill-seeking kids. (Photo/Daria Lin)

22 The picturesque wetland with wooden walkways are also Hsin Hsin Park’s distinguishing features. (Photo/Liu Jiawen)



01

EXPLORING MUSEUMS WITH KIDS IN TAIPEI

Summer vacation is right around the corner, and *TAIPEI* is here to help any parent who might be feeling a bit nervous about having the kids around for weeks on end. It's no secret that Taiwan's capital offers plenty of fun choices for kids of all ages. But once you've taken a hike up *Xiangshan* and had that picnic in Daan Park (大安森林公園), what else is there? Why not take the chance to explore Taipei's kid-friendly museums and add some knowledge to their summer journey? It may surprise you to learn that these museums are not just designed for kids, and even adults can enjoy a stroll through the many interactive exhibits. Here are some of the top choices as selected by all of us on the *TAIPEI* team.

01-04 Kids are provided with various themed areas in which to learn by doing at KidsAwesome Children's Museum of Taipei. (Photo/KidsAwesome Children's Museum of Taipei)

COVID-19 alert

A friendly reminder: Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, there might be safety/hygiene measures enforced at each destination, such as the mandatory wearing of masks or temperature check.



02

KIDSAWESOME CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF TAIPEI

Located right next to MRT Daan Station (捷運大安站), KidsAwesome Children's Museum of Taipei (奧森兒童博物館) is a private museum dedicated to children aged 0 to 10. There are 13 exhibition areas in the museum featuring different themes kids will enjoy. The Art Studio is a perfect area for kids to paint to their hearts' content without making a mess at home for parents to clean up. Children who love science will have lots of fun at the Kinetic Area, with its massive machine that triggers tons of balls to drop from the sky. Don't miss out on the speedy slide at their Zip Lines Zone, where helmets are on hand to keep kids safe from any rough-and-tumble mishaps. But the biggest highlight of all has to be the Bubbles Room. Imagine not just blowing bubbles with a straw, but actually standing inside a bubble! Even adults would have trouble resisting such a magical moment that can transport anyone back to the carefree days of childhood.



03

Though it is definitely a museum for children, KidsAwesome does not forget the needs of parents. Nursing rooms and changing tables can be easily found in case moms and dads need them. In some exhibition rooms that are "children-only," they also set up monitors outside for parents to keep an eye on their babies. The cafe on the first floor is an oasis for parents who need to take a break. As we all know, no one needs coffee more than moms.



04

📍 153, Xinyi Rd., Sec. 3, Daan Dist.

🕒 10:00am - 5:00pm
(Closed on Tuesdays & Wednesdays)

🌐 kidsawesome.com.tw/en/

NATIONAL TAIWAN SCIENCE EDUCATION CENTER

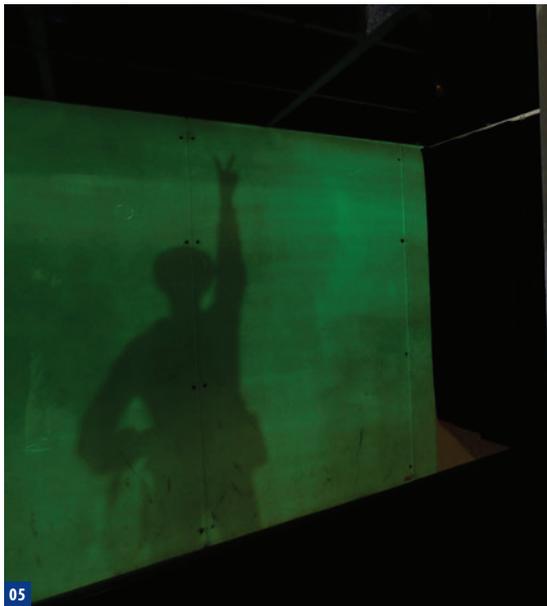
Established in 1956, the National Taiwan Science Education Center (NTSEC, 國立臺灣科學教育館) is a well-known place for kids and parents to learn about science together. The museum itself has nine floors in total. While the permanent exhibition areas display interesting content related to life sciences, physics, chemistry, mathematics and earth sciences, there are also special exhibitions occasionally held in the lobby or on the 7th and 8th floors, featuring educational subjects such as dinosaurs, rockets and robots.

One of the childhood memories of every Taipei residents is to go on a school field trip to the NTSEC and watch a 3D movie that takes you on a trip to the

fascinating world of outer space. It's also a common scene to see young students swarming in "The Amazing World of Chemistry" exhibition on the 5th floor, holding a pencil and paper in their hands and trying to find the correct answer for the pop quiz their teachers just gave them. The crystal ball that generates electricity by using the basic principle of vacuum discharge is always crowded with excited children who are ready power up their day. If you are looking for a place for your kids to learn and play, the NTSEC will never let you down.



- 📍 189, Shishang Rd., Shilin Dist.
- 🕒 9:00am - 5:00pm (Tuesday to Friday)
9:00am - 6:00pm (Saturday & Sunday)
- 🌐 en.ntsec.gov.tw



NATIONAL TAIWAN MUSEUM — NANMEN PARK BRANCH

Nanmen Park Branch of National Taiwan Museum (台灣博物館南門園區) sits in a tranquil neighborhood close to Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall. It's a historic building established during the Japanese era, and had served as a camphor factory, operated by the Monopoly Bureau of the Taiwan Governor's Office and later by the Taiwan Tobacco and Wine Monopoly Bureau, from 1899 to 1967.

To start this educational trip with your kids, you can walk into the park to admire the historic site known as the "Little White House," a stone building that is now being used as an event space for special exhibitions. The mottled brick building next to the Little White House, known as the "Red House," is the main exhibition area in the park. At the Red House, you can learn about the background of Taiwan's camphor industry, which was one of the top three export industries of Taiwan in the 1910s. Don't worry, kids will not be bored by the exhibition, as interactive displays such as Legos and projector screen games are set up for children to learn more about Taiwan's history in an entertaining and educational way.

The children's room on the first floor, on the other hand, is a space decorated with creative paintings on the walls for children to learn about the planets, birds and insects that grow and lives here. Admission only costs NT\$20 for adults, NT\$10 for kids aged six to twelve. Children under six get in free of charge. Nanmen Park Branch of National Taiwan Museum is certainly a parent's best choice to spend a budget-friendly day in Taipei.

05-07 NTSEC cultivates children's interest in science through interactive exhibitions such as "Staying Your Shadow on the Wall" and "The Lightning Ball," both heavily favored by kids. (Photo/NTSEC)

08-09 The Nanmen Park Branch of National Taiwan Museum was built during the Japanese Era, and now serves as an exhibition hall that showcases the history of Taiwan's camphor industry. (Photo/Nanmen Park Branch of National Taiwan Museum)

10 Children can also learn about the creatures that live there by joining the branch's environmental education activities. (Photo/Nanmen Park Branch of National Taiwan Museum)



📍 1, Sec. 1, Nanchang Rd., Zhongzheng Dist.

🕒 **Park:** 6:00am - 10:00pm (Monday to Sunday)

Exhibition Hall: 9:30am - 5:00pm (Tuesday to Sunday)

🌐 ntm.gov.tw/en/content_174.html



11



12

TAIWAN INSECT HALL

Founded by a group of insect fanatics, Taiwan Insect Hall (台灣昆蟲館) is a museum/NGO that encourages kids to get into nature and fall in love with their multi-legged and slimy friends. The exhibition displays the background information of different bugs, featuring thousands of insect specimens while also recreating their habitats for children to explore. Visitors can interact with those charming creatures since the museum is also a large zoo for insects and reptiles. Here at Taiwan Insect Hall, dorbeetles, snakes and lizards are loved and pampered like kittens and rabbits. Kids can pet and feed them under the watch of the professional instructors who also teach them the proper ways to get along with these unusual friends.

As Taiwan Insect Hall cares about children's education very much, the open hours are in concert with Taiwan's school time. You might not be able to visit in the morning, but that also means Taiwan Insect Hall cannot be more suitable for you if your child's energy never drops at night, like a nocturnal animal. Opening until 9:00 in the evening, it also occasionally holds outdoor exploration trips for parents and kids in nearby Fuyang Eco Park (富陽自然生態公園), a well-known habitat for fireflies in Taipei. The Taipei night might be colorful in the glitzy Xinyi District, but it can certainly be more lively when it's lit up by fireflies and children's laughter. 



13

11-12 Don't miss the chance to see these unusual animals up close and learn how different they are from professional instructors at Taiwan Insect Hall. (Photo/Taiwan Insect Hall)

13 The exhibition in the Taiwan Insect Hall displays and recreates the habitats of various creepy-crawly creatures. (Photo/Taiwan Insect Hall)

 B1F, 8, Ln. 406, Sec. 3, Heping E. Rd., Daan Dist.

 6:00pm - 9:00pm (Monday & Tuesday)
12:00pm - 9:00pm (Wednesday)
4:00pm - 9:00pm (Thursday & Friday)
10:00am - 9:00pm (Saturday & Sunday)

 taiwan.insectweb.org



**THE TRADITIONAL,
THE IMPORTED AND
THE HOMEMADE:
TAIWAN'S
TRADITIONAL TOYS
TEACH US ABOUT
THE PAST**



02

Across Taiwan, residents and tourists might choose to spend a pleasant weekend day wandering down one of the country's "Old Streets" (老街), which typically feature preserved traditional architecture. The most popular of these in Taipei — such as Dihua Street (迪化街) and Huaxi Street (華西街) — feature shops and stalls selling all manner of traditional products, or at least products inspired by Taiwan's traditional past.

One shop may sell kitchen implements that a Taiwanese grandma might have used, another wooden massage tools, still another an array of traditional balms and oils, or old-style candies. All of them cater to locals' sense of nostalgia, as well as tourists' desire to explore Taiwan's cultural history. Nestled among these storefronts, perhaps set up inside a Japanese-era shophouse, you are likely to come across a store selling traditional Taiwanese toys.

In an age where toys are either prefabricated from colorful modern materials and tend to be imported, or have been replaced completely with video games,

02 The majority of traditional toys can actually be made with everyday objects or found materials.

these traditional toys are usually no longer Taiwanese children's first choice, but the stories they tell about Taiwan's history hold great cultural relevance. While some, such as the kendama (a type of cup-and-ball toy), came to Taiwan via Japan during the colonial period, others came from China, such as the diabolo. "Battle cards," called pogs in the US, probably arrived in Taiwan via connections between Taiwanese and the Asian diaspora in Hawaii, where they originated in the 1920s. Still others are simple to construct and made from readily available materials, natural in a time when Taiwan was still an agricultural nation.

These stories weave together to tell the story of a unique Taiwanese culture influenced by its neighbors as well as cultural connections to Asian communities around the world.

BAMBOO GUNS

These are not so much a toy you can buy in shops as something children might create themselves. They're still popular as DIY projects for youngsters, often using rubber bands and disposable chopsticks, creating a rubber band gun that allows you to have harmless fun snapping rubber band projectiles at friends or siblings, without risking a snap to your own finger. The "guns" children might make for this purpose range from simple projectile launchers to complex, crossbow-like weapons, for more mechanically-inclined children. The basic form is simple: you need a barrel (usually two to four chopsticks, with some space between them), a handle

(more chopsticks), a moveable launcher (a smaller piece of wood or bamboo, which fits in the space created by the barrel) and something to string the rubber band on at the end.



STILTS

This is one traditional toy you're not as likely to find at a shop, but stilts have been around for a long time in Taiwan. Stilts are usually made of wood or bamboo and can run from very short — these are toys you might buy for a child to play with — to several meters high, for professionals only. Very short, fat ones (for younger children) are now often made of plastic.

If one gets to be very good at stilt-walking, it's possible to do this professionally. Many temple festivals in Taiwan feature stilt-walking acrobatic troupes who perform in a variety of styles, or other types of performers, such as groups of Eight Generals (*bajiajiang*, 八家將) or lion dancers who might do performances on stilts.



BAMBOO COPTERS (BAMBOO DRAGONFLIES)

Some of the most traditional toys not only have agrarian connotations — a bamboo copter can be made entirely from natural materials — but are even named after animals. The bamboo dragonfly is a simple toy made of a twisted bamboo propeller (which may be burnt a bit at the center to make it more pliant) attached to a stick of bamboo or wood. The finished product resembles a dragonfly. Rotated by sliding one's palms against each other, the dragonfly shoots into the air. Another version of the toy involves wrapping a string around the shaft, drawing it through a hole drilled in a small container, and pulling quickly.

Bamboo copters were originally from China before making their way to Taiwan. In fact, Jin Dynasty (晉朝) Chinese philosopher Ge Hong (葛洪) mentioned the string-pulled type of this toy in his 4th century writings.



SHUTTLECOCK KICKING (JIANZI)

Unlike the shuttlecocks used in badminton, these are feathers attached to a flatbottom, which is usually made of rubber in modern times. The game is similar to hacky-sack in the West: the goal is to keep the shuttlecock in the air using any part of the body except the hands. Popular in China for centuries — it may be related to *cuju* (蹴鞠), game played during the Han dynasty (漢朝) — modern shuttlecock kicking can be done alone or with friends. It can also be played competitively, often with a net (although shuttlecock games without nets exist). Similar games, often using a ball, are popular across Asia, including

sepak takraw in Thailand, jegichagi in Korea, larong sipa in the Philippines and kebane in Japan.



BAMBOO CICADAS

While many of the toys above came to Taiwan via China, the bamboo cicada seems to be uniquely Taiwanese. The materials — bamboo, wood, paper, string and rosin (a natural sap resin) — are also naturally abundant here, and fairly easy to obtain in rural communities. This may be why the toy was once so popular among Taiwanese children. To make one, a slice of bamboo, often decorated to look like a cicada, is covered with paper at one end, through which a knotted string is pulled. The string is wound around a stick, often between two bulbs carved at the end for this purpose, with rosin applied to the groove between them. When the bamboo slice is whipped

around on the string, the friction between the string and the rosin creates a sound quite similar to Taiwan's summer cicadas.



DIABOLO

This is another toy that made its way to Taiwan from China, where it has been popular since at least the Tang Dynasty (唐朝). Like the bamboo copter, modern colorful plastic versions exist. In this case, however, the traditional and the modern diverge noticeably. An old-style Chinese yo-yo has a long axle with two wooden, barbell ends, which cause a droning cicada-like sound. Hence the toy's various names: *kongzhu* (空竹, air bamboo), *kongzhong* (空鐘, air bell), or most commonly in Taiwan, *cheling* (扯鈴, pull-bell). By contrast, a newer style of yo-yo, called the diabolo, has a shorter axle and the ends are hourglass-shaped cups, and is popular with circus and party trick

professionals. Though the diabolo offers better manipulation for easier tricks, the quintessential "whistling bell" sound is lost. **T**





MAKE YOUR OWN BAMBOO GUN!

YOU WILL NEED

- A sharp, boxcutter-style razor
- Four to five sets of disposable wooden chopsticks (you may want extra on hand)
- A large supply of rubber bands

EASY STEPS

- 1 Place three chopsticks in a row. Pull the middle one halfway back, so it creates a chopstick-size space between the other two. Fasten all three together with rubber bands in at least two places. The middle chopstick should have the fat end facing out (in the direction you will shoot).
- 2 Cut a new chopstick in half, and place the pieces together at an angle (with a bit of overlap at the bottom). They'll look like a triangle with one side missing. Cinch them together with a rubber band. Place these in the space between the two chopsticks in your barrel (towards the back, where the handle of a gun would be — leave space for the launcher near the front). Secure these on each side with more rubber bands to the barrel.
- 3 Cut one third of a chopstick for your launcher. Place this in the space in the barrel, in front of your handle. Secure with a rubber band, but not as tightly. Make sure it can be moved when you pull the bottom (your "trigger").
- 4 Cut a small piece of a chopstick, and secure very tightly with a rubber band to the end of the barrel (the middle chopstick you pulled out). This should go below the long "barrel" chopstick.
- 5 Arm your gun by stringing a rubber band between the barrel and the small end-piece, to hold it in place. Put the other end over the top part of your launcher, which should be pulled back.
- 6 Hold the handle and pull the "trigger" part of the launcher. Your rubber band is on its way to your target!



(Photos/Taiwan Scene)

YOUR GUIDE TO TAIPEI'S DRAGON BOAT FESTIVAL

One of four major holidays in the traditional Taiwanese calendar, the Dragon Boat Festival (端午節) offers much more than just a long weekend. With over 2,000 years of history at its bow, this lively annual observance features special food, eyebrow-raising customs, and a unique sports culture found few other places on earth (think rowing with really fancy boats).

Taipei, the capital of Taiwan, celebrates the Dragon Boat Festival on a grand scale. Though it remains to be seen how the COVID-19 pandemic will impact this year's larger celebrations, there will likely be plenty for socially-distant revelers to try, taste, and experience — that and a chance to come to grips with a fascinating facet of Taiwanese culture.



WHEN IS IT HELD?

Also known in Chinese as the Double-Fifth Holiday (雙五節), the Dragon Boat Festival takes place on the fifth day of the fifth month in the traditional lunar calendar. Its Western date varies from year to year, usually being between late May and late June. This year's celebrations occur on June 25, with large Dragon Boat events going ahead in Taipei.



01

WHAT'S THE BACKSTORY?

There are various legends surrounding the Dragon Boat Festival's origins, but the most widely remembered one features Qu Yuan (屈原), a devoted government minister of the Warring States Period (戰國時期 c. 475–221 BC). Qu lived at a time of political instability and was banished from the State of Chu (楚國) on false counts of treason. He then spent 20 years wandering the wilderness, writing poetry and lamenting the corruption of his homeland. Legend says it on the date of May 5, news reached him that the capital of Chu had been captured by a rival kingdom. Heartbroken, Qu drowned himself in a nearby river. Seeing this, some local villagers frantically rowed after the tormented exile to prevent the suicide or at least salvage his body. When they failed to do both, the villagers threw balls of sticky rice into the water, hoping that the glutinous snacks would feed the fish and stop them from eating Qu's body. The commemoration of this futile recovery mission inspired many of the practices observed during the festival. Nowadays, Taiwanese still hold dragon boat races at the riverside and eat sticky rice balls during the Dragon Boat Festival. You'll see boats carved into traditional dragon shapes, or with dragons painted on the sides. This is also in memory of Qu, as Taiwanese believe dragons can drive the fish away.

01 The sport of dragon boat racing has been practiced for more than 2,500 years. (Photo/Department of Sports, Taipei City Government)



02

WHAT'S TO SEE?

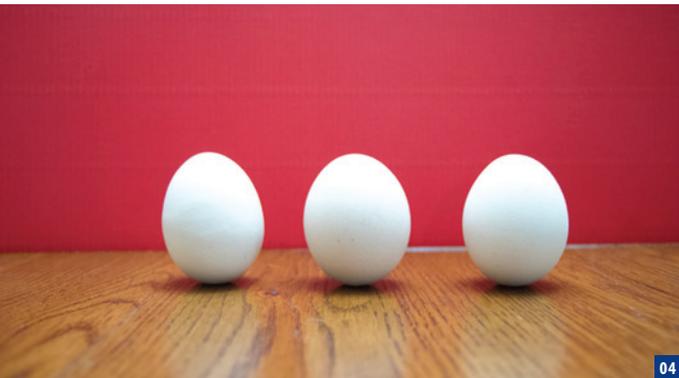
Doubtless, the most eagerly anticipated activities to take place during and around the big day, dragon boat races are a high-octane spectacle in which teams of sometimes over 50 people race to capture floating flags. This ferociously fast-paced water sport has been around for at least 2,500 years, supposedly emerging from water dragon worship in Southern China.

True to these badass beginnings, teams go head-to-head in formidable dragon-headed canoes, each of these 15 to 30-meters long and intricately hand-painted by master craftsmen. As if torn from the pages of a George R. R. Martin title, the rowers move in sync to the ominous beat of a drummer positioned at the head or tail of the “dragon boat.”

Taipei has a rich history of dragon boat racing, the first event having been held in 1895. The city's first official race began in 1974 and continues in its current form as the Taipei Dragon Boat Festival Carnival (端午嘉年華). Held at Dajia Riverside Park (大佳河濱公園), this two-day event is currently scheduled from June 25-26 this year. It's a great opportunity to see the crews tear up on the Keelung River (基隆河) while a team member balanced on the dragon boat's head reaches out precariously to grab the flag at the finish line. However, due to COVID-19, no spectators are allowed this year. The race can only be watched through online live streaming or television broadcasts. The Dragon Boat Eye Dotting Ceremony and the River Worshipping Ceremonies are also restricted to limited participants only this year.



03



04

WHAT TO EAT?

Any Taiwanese celebrants who aren't straining their vocal cords at the races will almost certainly be wolfing down *zongzi* (粽子) — sticky rice tamales typically stuffed with pork, salted duck egg yolk and earthy shiitake mushrooms, wrapped up in bamboo leaves. Tradition holds that the original recipe for these moreish street snacks was inspired by the rice balls villagers threw into the river after Qu Yuan.

Ask any local who makes the best *zongzi* and they'll probably say "my mom." Luckily, though, there are still plenty of great spots scattered around the city for those of us who aren't blessed with a knowledgeable Taiwanese parent. The street-snack savvy hands at Cai Wanxing (蔡萬興老店), Four Happy Rice Dumplings (四喜食品行) and Wang Ji Rice Dumplings (王記府城肉粽) have been making *zongzi* magic for decades and are favored by local families.

- 02 On the Dragon Boat Festival, eat *zongzi* like the locals! (Photo/Taiwan Scene)
- 03 Good teamwork is required to be able to be the "last team standing." (Photo/Department of Sports, Taipei City Government)
- 04 Try your luck by balancing eggs at noon! (Photo/Taiwan Scene)

Cai Wanxing 蔡萬興老店

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- 📍 118, Sec. 1, Heping W. Rd., Zhongzheng Dist.
- 🕒 11:30am - 2:00pm
5:00pm - 9:00pm (Closed on Mondays)

Four Happy Rice Dumplings 四喜食品行

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- 📍 2F, 60-46, Sec. 4, Xinyi Rd., Daan Dist. (in Xinwei Market)
- 🕒 9:00am - 9:00pm

Wang Ji Rice Dumplings 王記府城肉粽

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- 📍 374, Sec. 2, Bade Rd., Songshan Dist.
- 🕒 10:00am - 1:00am

MORE CUSTOMS TO FOLLOW

Much like *zongzi*, the Dragon Boat Festival comes with a few strings attached. Like many Taiwanese holidays, the Dragon Boat Festival is an opportunity for evil spirits to cause havoc among the living. Thankfully, there's plenty you can do to keep the bad energy at bay. To fight off the phantoms like a local, hang a bushel of sage-like mugwort or sweet-smelling calamus above your door or window — though preferably not if you're staying in a hotel. You can also try to wear a fragrant sachet, a small bag full of various spices and herbs that wards off evil spirits. If you don't have any fresh herbs handy in your suitcase, a dozen eggs may work instead. It's also widely held that whoever can balance a chicken egg on its end at noon will receive a year's worth of good luck. So go on, get cracking! 🍳

STEP INSIDE THE ENCHANTING WORLD OF PICTURE BOOKS

Just steps away from Taipei's MRT Guting station (捷運古亭站) lies a modest, quaint wooden shop that houses the most wondrous of surprises: rows and rows of colorful picture books from every corner of Europe, and Canada imaginable. As you step inside, the rich, vibrant book covers lining the aisles capture your eyes almost immediately. Maison Temps-Rêves (童里繪本洋行) is a rare jewel in Taipei — a bookstore that sells picture books from European countries like France, Spain, Poland, and more. Just like its name, meaning “time for dreams,” it's a space suitable for both children and adults to dream big and let their creative juices flow.



ORIGINS OF MAISON OF TEMPS-RÊVES

As a French major at Tamkang University (淡江大學), owner Angélique Lin (林幸萩) is no stranger to French bookstores. “I worked for the French bookstore, Librairie Le Pigeonnier (信鴿法國書店), straight out of college for 14 years. At one point, I wanted to change industries but just couldn't seem to leave the bookstore industry behind,” her eyes sparkle and dance as she speaks.

01 The rich and vibrant covers immediately catch the eyes of whomever steps inside this special shop.



But why picture books? “Well, actually, I started collecting picture books about 20 years ago. They’ve always just been a personal interest of mine. To me, reading picture books is just like admiring a piece of art. I can never get enough of it.” Although most Taiwanese students grew up reading American, British, or Japanese picture books, Angélique has always stood out from the crowd. “European picture books just had a way of touching my heart,” she says. “I just couldn’t seem to get into the others [American, British, or Japanese picture books] or understand them,” she chuckles.

As she developed her career at Librairie Le Pigeonnier, she would often help purchase books and attended book exhibitions in Paris yearly. “It was easy back then because I could buy whatever I wanted!” she laughs. “Now it’s more difficult because I have to plan in advance, and pick and choose carefully what I would like to showcase each month or sometimes coordinate with the seasons. And for many overseas French book publishers, there is no such thing as a ‘trial’ or ‘refund policy.’”

CHAOZHOU STREET BEGINNINGS

At one point, upon leaving Librairie Le Pigeonnier, Angélique had wanted to change career paths. “The thing is, I’ve known only bookstores my whole life. But at 40, I knew I wanted something different for myself.” So instead, in 2015, she decided to take the leap and set up her own online bookstore. During that period, she also held periodical flash stores at dessert shops, design studios, or other local businesses, with her longest-running shop spanning a total of five weeks at JXJ Books (舊香居) near National Taiwan Normal University (國立台灣師範大學). Eventually, in 2018, when opportunity came knocking in the form of a friend who had a shop available for rent on Chaozhou Street (潮州街), she jumped at the chance immediately.

“Actually, I grew up around this area, Zhongzheng District. I went to school near Taipei Botanical Garden (台北植物園), and many of my junior high school classmates still live around here and come visit often,” she chuckles. “It was originally a friend’s leather handicraft shop, but they realized it was too much space for just three workers,” she smiles, “and thus Maison Temps-Rêves was born.”

THE DAILY HUSTLE & BUSTLE OF A PICTURE BOOKSTORE

“It was difficult at first to get used to working in an actual bookstore again. There are a lot of pre- and post-operations that most customers aren’t aware of. When our books arrive, we can’t just stock them on the display shelves immediately. All of them must go through a very meticulous cycle of cleaning, organizing, wrapping, taking photos, rewriting book flaps or introductions, and even translating each book into Chinese,” Angélique explains. “It’s a high-cost, low-profit industry that most business owners would shy away from,” she chuckles. Although picture books are often considered more suitable for children, Angélique emphasizes that there really is no age restriction for European picture books and, in fact, they can be enjoyed by all. “The great thing



about European art and picture books is that they can really go beyond being just for children. Actually, they can even help reduce the age gap between children and adults, too!” Since picture books are multifaceted artworks, they may be enjoyed as an exquisite piece of art or an attractive storybook depending on the reader’s point of view.

Moreover, France is a unique cultural hub, as most French picture books are born out of collaboration between illustrators and writers of different nationalities. “You could have an illustrator from Spain but a writer from Italy to create this book, for example,” she says. “There really are no borders for creativity, unlike in Taiwan, where most illustrators and writers come from similar backgrounds or are both Taiwanese.” And what about her own favorite picture book? “Well, I personally love the book *FRIDA*, illustrated by Benjamin Lacombe and written by Sebastien Pérez. Much of Lacombe’s artwork is based off of Frida Kahlo’s original pieces, but he adds in his own style and the usage of butterflies, which is what he is known for. And it really touches on so many important chapters of her life, including difficult topics like death, love, sex, animals, and more.”



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- 02 Angélique displays the magic and exquisite nature of picture books.
- 03-05 The clean interior design, low shelves and simple exterior design give us the impression that this is no ordinary bookstore.

Temps-Rêves 童里繪本洋行

- 📍 15, Chaozhou St., Daan Dist.
- ☎ (02) 2391-8676
- 🕒 12:00pm - 7:00pm (Tuesday to Friday)
11:00am - 9:00pm (Saturday & Sunday)
(Closed on Mondays)
- 🌐 maisontempsreves.com

A LONE STAR IN THE INDUSTRY

As a bookstore specializing in European picture books in Taiwan, Maison Temps-Rêves is literally one of a kind. When asked how Angélique keeps up with her competitors, she exclaimed, “What competitors?! There are none!” she smiles. “But in all seriousness, it’s actually quite difficult when you work in such a niche industry.” She goes on to elaborate, “You have to spend more time than the average business in building, stimulating, and nourishing consumers’ awareness of your products. Essentially, you really are creating your own market.”

This is especially true in traditional Taiwanese society, where emphasis is often placed less on art and more on academic performance and exam scores. “Most of our customers are actually single or young adults — not children or families,” she says. “It’s difficult for us to reach the typical Taiwanese family since the average price of our books is quite

high, and many parents just assume that visual art is not as important as acceleration at school.” Despite facing these challenges, Angélique still does everything she can to promote picture books to everyone. By holding art exhibitions with local artists or having book reading in her store, she hopes that art can one day be a part of Taiwanese people’s lives. “Sometimes I’d put a new picture book in my house intentionally, and see if my sons will pick up to read it by themselves. It feels really nice when they come to share their thoughts after reading the books, because that proves aesthetics can be cultivated from a young age in every family”.

In addition, she often holds regular lectures on European picture books at her store as a way to promote this issue. “Sometimes I’ll invite distinguished lecturers to come in and discuss picture books with our readers. They are able to break down the stories and artwork for readers to better understand, and it’s also a great way to promote cultural and visual art exchange.”





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06 It is a profound love for picture books that gives Angélique the willpower to pursue a career in this challenging field.

07-08 As a special paper museum in Taiwan, Suho offers the chance to discover the beauty of the ordinary, as well as close-up experiences with handmade paper goods. (Photo/Suho Memorial Paper Museum)

09 The historic and atmospheric buildings in Taipei's old town like Wanhua attract visitors from all around the world. (Photo/MyTaiwanTour)

TIPS FOR VISITORS

Angélique has many foreign friends and guests of her store come from countries such as France, Singapore, Korea, Hong Kong and Japan. "It's funny, a lot of them avoid places like Xinyi District because it reminds them of any other big, modern city back home. They actually prefer areas like Wanhua or Zhongzheng District for its old, classic architecture and local handicrafts, so stores like mine really draw them in as well." Sometimes they'll come into my shop and I'll recommend them local eateries to try or even recommend visiting other local art venues like the Suho Memorial Paper Museum (樹火紀念紙博物館). "There is so much to see and do here. Taipei really is a cultural and artistic hub for many!" Angélique exclaims.

FUTURE VISION

When asked if she foresees herself promoting Taiwanese picture books overseas in the years ahead, she says, "That might be a future plan, but not as of right now. In order to create a good picture book, the storyline is just as important as the illustrations. It's difficult to have both. Many Taiwanese students grow up not having enough access to visual art, so that when they become of age or reach college, it's difficult to catch up — which is just one more reason why our role here in Taiwan is so important."

Although picture books tend to be classified as something reserved only for children, Angélique emphasizes that they can be enjoyed by both adults and children alike. "I'd like our readers to consider these books as more of a piece of art — not just a picture book. This is why when I set up shop, I made sure I didn't want high ceilings filled to the top with books. I didn't want it to feel like a bookstore! I wanted it to be more of an art gallery, because for me, that's essentially what this is." And that's exactly the enchanted feeling we get when we enter and leave this wondrous place as well. **1**

Suho Memorial Paper Museum 樹火紀念紙博物館

📍 68, Sec. 2, Changan E. Rd., Zhongshan Dist.
 🕒 9:30am - 4:30pm (Closed on Sundays)
 🌐 suhopaper.org.tw



01

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER SHADOW LEGENDS DRAMA GROUP CARRYING ON TAIWAN'S SHADOW PUPPETRY THEATER TRADITIONS IN TAIPEI

If you've an interest in Chinese and specifically Taiwanese traditional folk arts for the stage, there's a more than even chance you've heard of Pili Glove Puppetry (霹靂布袋戲), which has brought Taiwanese glove puppetry to the world's attention with its mesmerizing "Golden Ray Puppetry (金光布袋戲)," characterized by fantastic battle scenes, brilliantly costumed characters, and bombastic light-and-sound effects. Its movies have entertained around the globe.

You may not be so aware of two other forms, however. Glove puppetry shares stage with marionette and shadow puppetry, called the "three major puppetry traditions of Taiwan." As elsewhere around the globe, Taiwan's traditional folk arts are threatened in the face of the myriad entertainment distractions modern life provides. It is the mission of Taipei's Shadow Legends Drama Group (影子傳奇劇團), northern Taiwan's sole shadow puppetry troupe, to help preserve the island's shadow play theater traditions. Troupe leader Hsiao Meng-tung (蕭孟通) explains.

ORIGINS AND MISSION OF THE SHADOW LEGENDS

Hsiao Meng-tung leads the group with his brother, Hsiao Nai-cheng (蕭乃誠). “We’re carrying on this mission in the name of our father, who founded our group,” he states. “After seeing shadow puppetry performed when he was a boy in Changhua (彰化), central Taiwan, he developed a lifelong interest. Later, after moving to Taipei for work, he was surprised to find no shadow puppetry troupes here, and that people had little exposure to the form. In middle age he decided to learn more, and for years would drive to Kaohsiung (高雄) and back on weekends to study under masters, overnighing on Fridays at his Changhua family home.”

Eventually, after attaining a level of mastery on his own, he decided to form his own troupe, and the Shadow Legends Drama Group was born. “That was in the 1990s,” says Hsiao Meng-tung. “He had two missions. First, seeing the dwindling number of troupes around Taiwan, he wanted to preserve this folk art, so important to Taiwan’s cultural history. Second, he wanted to teach northern Taiwan’s people about it, with the goal of building up a new audience, one person at a time. My father retired about 10 years ago, and my brother and I took over.” The duo has since taken the troupe to new heights, including repeat overseas travels to perform in Hong Kong, Macau, and Scotland, at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

SHADOW PLAY IN TAIWAN — YESTERYEAR TO TODAY

“First — what exactly is shadow puppet theater?” Hsiao Meng-tung says. “It originated in China at least a millennium ago, possibly two. Taiwan follows what is called the ‘Chaozhou (潮州)’ tradition.” In the Chaozhou tradition, the flat, articulated puppets are operated with short rods fixed at right angles to the figure, which are not detachable. The music is similar to the music heard during rituals conducted by *daoshi* (Taoist priests, 道士).

“The standard number of artists for a performance is five: one puppet-master, who manipulates most puppets and does most voices; a secondary puppeteer; and three



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01 Shadow Legends Drama Group’s leader Hsiao Meng-tung (left) and his brother Hsiao Nai-cheng (right) took over the troupe their father established, and are committed to spreading shadow puppetry to the world.

02-03 Simple as it may seem in the front of the screen, a shadow puppeteer actually needs years to master manipulation skills behind the scene.

musicians, who also handle sound effects. The figures are transparent, and a strong light in the rear projects their colorful images (i.e., 'shadows') onto a translucent screen, which is what the audience sees. The artists, however, are never seen. In the past all figures were made of leather, but today many troupes use plastic, because it takes four to five days to beat the leather for a single puppet to a transparent fineness." The magic of shadow puppetry lies in its ability to present a 2D animated story with the help of colorful puppets, a translucent screen and a stable source of light. It is the intermingling of those indispensable components that makes shadow puppetry so intriguing.

Traditionally, storylines were taken from Chinese historical epics, mythology, popular romances, and other folktales. Some scholars argue that the highly stylized gestures, body expression, and choreography of actors in Chinese opera are in fact imitations of elements seen in Chinese puppetry — not the reverse as many assume. "Remember," says Hsiao, "that puppetry is the older form."

It is Hsiao's understanding that shadow puppetry theater was brought from China to Taiwan in the earliest years of Taiwan's Han Chinese development. "When Koxinga (鄭成功) attacked and expelled the Dutch from Taiwan in the early 1660s, shadow puppetry troupes were brought to entertain the encamped, and later garrisoned, troops."

Originally performed in informal settings, "in the 1800s, there was a move to perform in large formal theaters, because demand was great. You could say these were the first 'movies' in Taiwan. However, during the Japanese era, great difficulties were faced." At the beginning of this period there were about 100 troupes, concentrated in the south, especially in today's Kaohsiung/Pingtung (屏東) region. However, during this period, "Performances had to be in Japanese, not local dialect, which most middle-aged and older people could not follow, and audiences dwindled. Then black-and-white films came to the theaters, followed by color films and TV, and in more recent decades a media explosion." According to Hsiao, today there are just two troupes in Kaohsiung, and his in the north.



04-05 Traditional figures are made of leather, and very time consuming to create due to their meticulous craftsmanship as each of them can have over 10 components.

06 The Shadow Legends Drama Group also uses plastic boards to make puppets, which is faster but still achieves the same effect.



BATTLES FACED, BATTLES WON

“The biggest battle we have faced is that the people of the north have little if any memory of shadow puppet theater, and the younger generation none at all. So, we’ve had to win our audience individual by individual. Our father decided the best path was to build loyal followers among fresh-eyed youth, by adding new modern elements.” says Hsiao.

For example, performances are interactive, with the characters engaging directly with the audience. “We’ll do things like ask the kids if they want a certain character saved, allowing them to influence an unfolding storyline,” he says. As well, in some shows live actors perform in front of the stage, interacting with both puppets and audience members.

“Our father also added to the traditional repertoire of classical Chinese tales, with a penchant for bringing



in Western children’s stories that modern youngsters are familiar with, such as ‘Little Red Riding Hood’, ‘The Three Little Pigs’, and ‘The Wolf and the Seven Little Goats.’ The appeal of these is their storylines are relatively plain in comparison to those of many classic Chinese tales, and they contain clearer division of ‘evil’ and ‘pure/innocent/good’ characters.” Such tales, he adds, also make it easier when encouraging youngsters to create their own stories.

The decision was also made to perform in Mandarin Chinese rather than the customary Taiwanese Hokkien (a local dialect), to maximize the potential audience. “Today all youngsters are taught in Mandarin Chinese and have good Mandarin skills, so this approach is all-inclusive.”

Another initial difficulty was finding people with the interest and dedication to join the troupe and learn the necessary skills, from the making of puppets to live-performance readiness. “In the beginning we had adults, middle aged and older, who had an interest, usually because of childhood familiarity. But they generally had too many other responsibilities or distractions to put in the time required.” His father’s idea was to first capture youngsters’ interest through DIY education; those who developed a keen interest might thereafter stick with the training program for the troupe.



07 Despite facing innumerable difficulties, Troupe leader Hsiao still endeavours to preserve shadow puppetry for future generations.

08-09 Shadow Legends Drama Group merges the culture of shadow puppetry with education. Now, students are able to see exhibitions at school, and can even learn and perform themselves.



Video Interview

The troupe moved into its current base in the Dali Elementary School (大理國民小學) in Wanhua District in 2006. This was on the invitation of the principal, who supported their mission in preserving traditional folk arts. Two former classrooms serve as the workshop and theater/exhibition hall, respectively. Plays are put on for the students, the facilities have become an intimate part of the students' lives, and the happy result is that a number of former students have maintained a solid interest in the art form and have joined the troupe.

FAMILY FUN LEARNING RECOMMENDATIONS

If in Taipei and looking to learn more about shadow puppetry, Hsiao Meng-tung advises that his troupe's Dali Elementary School base is the place to go. "Our Saturday DIY experience sessions for groups are popular," he says. "Each lasts 2.5 hours, for groups up to 20. We teach you the background and basic performance skills, you get to craft your own plastic puppet character, and then you can create and perform your own little play. You also get to take your

DIY puppets home." Local tour operators will often make these sessions part of their itinerary, he says, and have brought foreign tourists. Advance bookings are required, and Hsiao advises that it is crucial to have a person who can provide translation from Mandarin.

He also encourages people to come see their performances in other venues, especially during the annual Wenshan Art Festival (文山藝術季) in Wenshan District, which runs from October through December. The Shadow Legends shows staged during this festival feature live actors. "Those interested in traditional glove puppetry should visit the Taiyuan Asian Puppet Theatre Museum (台原亞洲偶戲博物館), in the old Dadaocheng (大稻埕) neighborhood," Hsiao goes on. "The director is a Dutchman, Robin Ruizendaal. This is a good place for family outings, and there are two resident puppet-theater companies." The museum's superb collection of puppetry artifacts surpasses 8,000 pieces. In addition to occasional puppetry-themed exhibitions, there are glove puppet-making sessions, puppet-master shows, family glove puppet theater presentations, and classes in traditional puppetry skills. These activities primarily take place on weekends.

TaipeiEYE (臺北戲棚) is a facility dedicated to presenting traditional Chinese/Taiwanese stage arts to tourists, with shows presented four nights a week. Each includes sample performances of Chinese opera, folk arts/acrobatics, folk music, indigenous dance, and folk musical theater, and the program is changed every six to eight weeks. Subtitles are provided in Chinese, English, Japanese, and Korean. Off-stage experiences are also available to visitors, such as watching and learning about opera-actor costume and make-up preparation, trying on costumes, photo ops with performers, and a Taiwan glove-puppet theater display. "Shadow puppet theater has been included in the program there, too," says Hsiao.

Besides TaipeiEYE, you may find the large Puppetry Art Center of Taipei (台北偶戲館) on the city's east side. It is divided into three main display areas, focused on glove-puppet, marionette, and shadow-puppet theater. Visitors are given the chance to handle and operate puppets in all three. Also on offer are special-theme exhibits, live theatrical performances, interactive games, and DIY puppet-making classes for groups, with advance booking required.

Although the Hsiao brothers were not born puppeteers, it never stopped them from moving forward with their passion for shadow puppetry to fulfill their father's dream. They will continue their progress, step by step, and hopefully gain the opportunity to hold performances in more countries in the future in order to spread this endangered cultural tradition far and wide. **T**



08

Shadow Legends Drama Group 影子傳奇劇團

- 📍 389, Bangka Blvd., Wanhua Dist.
- ☎ 0911-228-150
- 🌐 facebook.com/pecstory1989/

Puppetry Art Center of Taipei 台北偶戲館

- 📍 2F, 99, Sec. 5, Civic Blvd., Songshan Dist.
- 🌐 pact.taipei/index.aspx
- 🕒 10:00am - 5:00pm Saturday & Sunday
(Closed on Weekdays)
- Working hours during COVID-19 pandemic
Permanent exhibition area temporarily closed from
6/15 to mid-October.*

TaipeiEYE 臺北戲棚

- 📍 113, Sec. 2, Zhongshan N. Rd., Zhongshan Dist.
- 🌐 taipeiye.com
- Currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Estimated to reopen in July 2020.*

Taiyuan Asian Puppet Theatre Museum 台原亞洲偶戲博物館

- Currently closed due to relocation.
Estimated to reopen in 2021 on Dihua street in Dadaocheng.*



09

CHIC INDIE-DESIGN CHILDREN'S APPAREL AND FAMILY-FUN IN TAIPEI: ÁNGELES STUDIO & SHOP

Joyce Liu (劉雨欣) is one of the lucky ones. She spends her workdays doing what once filled the dreams of her teenage days. Here's her story; her journey of taking the passion of her dreamy teenage days to her responsible-adult days.



01

DAWN OF THE ÁNGELES BRAND

Joyce is an independent designer of fashionable children's wear who enjoys a solid reputation at home and a growing reputation abroad, notably in Japan and Europe. She specializes in children's wear for girls 2 to 12 years old, and a few years ago began adding attire for moms, since it is moms that do almost all of the shopping at her two retail outlets. Her original-cum-flagship store and workshop, called the Ángeles Studio & Shop (安荷童裝), is on a quiet lane in Taipei's renowned Yongkang Commercial District (永康商圈), a popular tourist draw filled with eateries, cafes, teahouses, and boutiques.

She dabbled in making clothing in her teen years, but her first serious stab at the art form was during a stay in Barcelona, Spain, where her brother lives. This turned out to be a false start. "My designer garments were too expensive," she says. "I was not operating at the high end, inhabited by Europe's world-famous designers. However, I found there was a gap between this and mass-market chic labels like fast-fashion Zara, and potential customers consistently went for such brands because of cheaper price."

Afterwards, she pursued architectural studies back in Taiwan. But this proved a false start as well. Joyce saw that a young architect's life was spent working nights and weekends, and when she became a mother (she now has three girls), she decided this was not her dream come true. She began designing and making children's clothes in her home, inspired by her growing family. And after finding sales success, she decided to open a formal workshop/store. "My auntie, a former interior designer, had opened a successful European-style bakery, Boîte de Bijou (珠寶盒法式點心坊), on a quiet lane in the Yongkang Commercial District, and suggested I open there, saying many new cultural-creative boutiques were moving in."

She opened Ángeles Studio & Shop in 2010 — right next door to Boîte de Bijou. Today she has 15 employees, including a second designer. "Many



people assume that the 'Ángeles' in our name is referring to the children we make clothing for as 'angels.' This is indeed our feeling — simplicity and purity are the most precious traits of children, and also describes our design philosophy. In truth, however, 'Ángeles' is the name I chose for myself when in Spain, since locals had difficulty pronouncing 'Joyce.'"

Ángeles Studio & Shop 安荷童裝

- 📍 21, Ln. 33, Lishui St., Daan Dist.
- 🕒 11:30am - 6:00pm (Monday)
11:30am - 9:00pm (Tuesday to Sunday)

- 01 Joyce Liu is blessed to be able to pursue a career that she truly loves.
- 02 Not only is Joyce expert in children's clothing design, but she also designs dresses for mothers, which are as popular as children's wear in her store.



TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

When she returned from Spain, she says, she brought back something very important. “My garments have a strong European flavor. You might call my style ‘European-style minimalist elegance.’” She uses limited adornments/accessories, preferring clean cuts and lines. “I also prefer to let the beauty of fine fabrics speak for itself, without distraction by flair. And for most designs, I’ll use just one or two colors.” The results, though visually quiet in relation to clothing with an ebullient mix of colors or bling, are nevertheless bold and striking in effect.

This initially resulted in some problems in the Taiwan market, though her designs have always caught the fancy of overseas professional buyers, especially from Europe and Japan. “Taiwanese customers are comparatively reserved and conservative in their clothing choices,” she states. “They tend not to want to stand out from the crowd, and tend to watch and identify [when] fashion styles first emerge, then join in when the fashions are proven.” This meant resistance to her simple, elegant, yet “too bold, too different, too attention-getting” designs. “Taiwanese have a liking for more cutesy children’s clothing, often with bright, loud colors, cartoon characters, and so on.”

With time, however, she has built up a loyal clientele of parents with more appreciation for the art in her works. She also has many “serendipity” customers —



people browsing the shops and boutiques in the Yongkang area who happen upon her lane and are drawn by the attractive Angeles façade and designs on display through the large windows. This effect, she has noticed, is notably strong among Westerners and Japanese. “I also have foreign customers, from Spain, Germany and Japan, that make special visits each time they are in Taiwan.”

In the beginning, Joyce leaned more toward darker, more natural earth-tone colors, in part influenced by Europe’s strong eco-movement. However, in recognition of her Taiwanese customers’ leaning toward brighter colors, she now rolls out brighter designs — and also incorporates “small yet chic dashes of ‘flair.’”

For her design inspiration, she says, “I rely on serendipity. Moments from everyday life will pop ideas into my head. It may be a picture I see in a magazine, a little life vignette that unfolds in front of



me, a pretty scene I encounter when traveling or moving around the city.” By way of example, she pulls out a number of blouse/skirt sets based on the dynamic colors of paintings by Van Gogh, one of her favorite artists. One, based on *The Starry Night*, has a line of medallion-like fabric circles on the collar with stitched-art renditions of a Van Gogh-style crescent moon. The silver skirt, which sparkles like tinsel, gives off the effect of a sky filled with sparkling stars. She has lightened the base colors for the Taiwan market.

SOMETHING NEW EVERY VISIT

Joyce unveils “From 20 to 30 new designs each season, with a number of other designs contributed by other *Ángeles* designer. Each is made with two variations; i.e., two different color combinations. A total of 12 to 15 copies are made of each variation in

- 03 The attractive façade and large window display design helped Joyce Liu catch the eyes of potential customers.
- 04 With carefully selected materials and colors, Joyce creates garments with a “European-style minimalist elegance”.
- 05 Inspired by her growing family, Joyce’s dream of being a fashion designer finally came true when she began designing and making children’s clothes for her children.



each garment size offered.” This ever-changing catwalk of new works has resulted in a solid portion of her customers revisiting seasonally.

She also uses different materials in the different seasons. In summer, for example, “I make heavy use of light, thin cottons and linens, which breathe well and maximize wearer comfort in the face of Taiwan’s high humidity.”

The distinctively classy designs rolled out at *Ángeles* have also caught the eye of local celebrities, and Joyce says that “I’m often approached by well-known

personalities to specially create one-off designs for their children, for public performances by the youngsters and other special occasions. I do these on my own, without input from the customer, after assessing the youngster's personality and preferences." Asked by *TAIPEI* to divulge some of the biggest names, she politely demurs, citing confidentiality.



FAMILY FUN DAY: DESTINATIONS FOR ART ADDICTS

Joyce says she has noted that "many of our customers will build a day-outing around a visit to our shops, bringing their children." There's almost no end to the tourist-oriented Yongkang Street area's supply of eateries and shops selling food and drink that will meet youngsters' high standards, of course, from fruit juices to sweet baked goods, Western- and Chinese-style to shaved-ice wonders.

As do some of her customers, Joyce will take her own children to the Pinmo Pure Store (品墨良行), on Yongkang Street. This is an artsy-craftsy paper/zakka store, and part of its façade has been made to look like a vendor stand, with a friendly bunny greeting customers who walk up to buy fresh-made cake and cookies over the counter. Inside are art papers and a variety of designer paper products, such as notebooks,

calendars, postcards, and bookmarks. DIY workshops are regularly held, making all the same items as just mentioned, and youngsters love rummaging through the cornucopia of creative materials — different papers, wood materials, dried flowers, petals and leaves, rope sections, and oodles beyond.

As for visitors to Taipei specifically interested in fashion and lifestyle products by independent local designers, Joyce has two special recommendations: Huashan 1914 Creative Park and the Eslite Spectrum Songyan Store (誠品生活松菸店).

The first is a heritage winery complex transformed into a cultural-creative hub. It is home to dozens of chic designer boutique shops, eateries, and cafes, and serves as a venue for large-scale exhibits, cultural/arts performances (especially on weekends), and workshops for the cultural/creative arts. As well, an indie-designer bazaar is hosted each weekend, brimming with precious-gem handicrafts and knick-knacks.

The second is in Songshan Cultural and Creative Park (松山文創園區), a converted tobacco-factory complex. A few years back Eslite Spectrum was named one of the "world's coolest department stores" by CNN Travel. This Eslite facility is a multifunction mall-type space combining a bookstore, dining options, and cultural creativity. Many well-known Taiwan designer brands have an on-site presence, and various designers of crafts and handicrafts have set up workshops or DIY studios.

At last, when talking about her hope for the future, Joyce envisages that Ángeles Studio & Shop will inspire other local designers to dive into children's modern fashion wear, expanding their recognition and collective marketing power among local consumers. Building on this, Taiwan will thus also be able to build a presence on the international stage, as she is now doing individually.

What passions fill your workaday world? Craving elevation? Drop by Ángeles Studio & Shop for a little creative inspiration! [T](#)



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- 06 Joyce uses different materials for different seasons for her garments to maximize the comfort of her valued customers.
- 07 In Pinmo Pure Store, you may find art papers and a variety of related products. (Photo/Pinmo Pure Store)
- 08 Huashan 1914 Creative Park is a cultural-creative hub, home to dozens of chic designer boutique shops, eateries and cafes and serves as a venue for exhibits and performances. (Photo/Yenping Yang)
- 09 Eslite Spectrum Songyan Store was named one of the "world's coolest department stores" by CNN travel. You may find gourmet restaurants, designer crafts and creative boutiques in this multifunctional mall. (Photo/Taiwan Scene)
- 10 Once home to the first modernized tobacco factory in Taiwan, the Songshan Cultural and Creative Park has now been repurposed and transformed into a creative hub that hosts cultural and creative exhibitions and performances. (Photo/MyTaiwanTour)

Pinmo Pure Store 品墨良行

- 📍 63, Yongkang St., Daan Dist.
- 🕒 12:00pm - 5:00pm (Monday to Thursday)
12:00pm - 7:00pm (Friday & Saturday)

Huashan 1914 Creative Park 華山文化創意產業園區

- 📍 1, Sec. 1, Bade Rd., Zhongzheng Dist.
- 🌐 huashan1914.com/w/huashan1914_en/index

Eslite Spectrum Songyan Store 誠品生活松菸店

- 📍 88, Yanchang Rd., Xinyi Dist.
(inside Songshan Cultural and Creative Park)
- 🕒 11:00am - 10:00pm

Songshan Cultural and Creative Park 松山文創園區

- 📍 133, Guangfu S. Rd., Xinyi Dist.
- 🌐 songshanculturalpark.org/cms/en/index.aspx

FOUR FANTASTIC FAMILY RESTAURANTS IN TAIPEI

Taipei is one of the world's greatest foodie destinations. From street snacks to fine dining, and from local delicacies to more international fare, the Taiwanese capital has something for all tastes and budgets. For many families, a good old-fashioned family dinner is one of the few occasions they get to spend time together. Fortunately for them, and you, Taipei has a great selection of restaurants for families of all ages. Whether you live here or are just visiting, you'll always be able to find somewhere suitable for a family outing. For this roundup, we're going to concentrate in particular on kid-friendly restaurants; places where families can take their young children to not only eat good food, but also play and enjoy themselves. So, without further ado, here are four great family-friendly restaurants in Taipei.

01 Enjoying quality time with kids is one of the best ways to strengthen family ties. (Photo/Crazy Cart Café)



CRAZY CART CAFÉ

We'll admit, at first, we misread this as Crazy Cat Café. However, on closer inspection, you'll find it's nothing of the sort. Based at Global Mall Nangang Station (環球購物中心南港車站), Crazy Cart Café (甩尾主題餐廳) is all about go-karts. Perhaps best before they eat, kids can get behind the wheel of a kart and zoom around to their hearts' content (or until their allotted time runs out, at least). Karts come in different sizes that allows both adults and children to experience the excitement of go-kart racing, and the venue is available to be hired for private functions like birthday parties. Tier barriers are added around the track for safety, while there are also trackside podiums where winners can pose for photos to remember their day. In terms of food, think American-style burgers, steaks, onion rings and fries — typical Western favorites that kids love. There is a fully stocked bar complete with alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, while the bar area also has a big screen to show live sporting events and the like. Come for the fast cars, stay for the definitely not fast food.

02-03 Crazy Cart Café is not only known for its Go-Kart tracks, but also its mouth-watering dishes. (Photo/Crazy Cart Café)

📍 1F, 360, Sec. 8, Civic Blvd., Nangang Dist.

☎ (02) 2782-2300

🕒 11:00am - 10:00pm





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04-06 With a glittering interior, multiple amusement facilities and delicious foods, Money Jump will definitely leave its customers mesmerized. (Photo/Money Jump Fun & Restaurant)

MONEY JUMP FUN & RESTAURANT

In Neihu (內湖), Money Jump (媽咪講親子餐廳會所) has all sorts of different activities onsite to keep kids entertained before they even realize they're hungry. We're talking a fully functional carousel, an interactive ball pool, a parent-and-child reading room, a peekaboo tunnel and more. Money Jump is open in three sessions per day, and the restaurant has both a dedicated kids' menu of set meals and one for

babies featuring different kinds of purees. For parents, there are choices of salmon fillets, pork chops, sirloin steaks, afternoon tea sets, pizzas, salads and more, as well as a full wine list.

- ////////////////////////////////////
- 📍 2F, 127, Minshan St., Neihu Dist.
 - ☎ (02) 2792-1156
 - 🕒 11:00am - 1:30pm / 2:00pm - 5:00pm / 5:30pm - 8:00pm



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07-09 Mr. Tree is a good choice for your kids to burn some energy with its playground while you relax. (Photo/Mr. Tree)

MR. TREE (GUTING BRANCH)

A stone's throw away from MRT Guting Station, Mr. Tree (大樹先生的家) is a great place for kids to burn some energy while the grown-ups put up their feet and relax. There is a specialized kids' menu with many popular favorites presented as funny faces and the like, as well as many options for adults, including pastas, salads and a range of teas and coffees. The children's play area is both in and outdoors and

features a huge ball pit, slide, a child-size mock kitchen, a sandpit, soft play, costumes for dressing up and more.

📍 38, Chaozhou St., Daan Dist.

☎ (02) 3393-3313

🕒 11:30am - 2:30pm / 3:00pm - 5:30pm / 6:00pm - 9:00pm
(Closed on Mondays)

FARM TABLE

Kids can eat healthy and learn about where their food comes from at the farm-to-table restaurant Farm Table (農人餐桌). There is a mock kitchen for kids to play in, while onsite DIY classes are provided occasionally for you to join. Appetizers include steamed eggs and baked pumpkins, while main courses range from steak to seafood to risotto. There are sharing meals such as fried chicken baskets with fries, and the impressive kids' menu boasts Japanese chicken curry, tuna rice balls, alphabet spaghetti and more. Also, be sure not to skip dessert. The selection

includes organic strawberry ice cream and cheese cake. Afternoon tea is also available. All the ingredients used are organic, with its menu are special designed to teach kids the importance of eating healthy. It's a great place to bring kids to prove that healthy can also mean tasty! **T**

📍 B1F, 51, Sec. 2, Chongqing S. Rd., Zhongzheng Dist.

☎ (02) 2322-3716

🕒 11:00am - 8:30pm



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10-12 Farm Table offers parents the chance to stimulate children's interest in cooking by using healthy and organic ingredients. (Photo/Taiwan Scene)

TAIWANESE "TEATIME" TAKE A BREAK WITH THE ISLAND'S SWEETS AND TREATS



The bustling city of Taipei is a food mecca known for everything from Michelin-starred restaurants to old Mom-and-Pop hole-in-the-wall eateries serving dishes made with century-old recipes. The lively night markets light up the streets at sundown with blowtorches and scents that permeate the night air. And no matter what day of the week it is, Taiwanese families love their afternoon snacks. With an unlimited number of food options available on the island, the afternoon “teatime” is just as much about taking a break as it is about savoring a Taiwanese snack — desserts included. Whether it’s sweet or savory, Taipei offers an array of unique bites that are delicious, cheap, and easily accessible.

So when you’re visiting the capital, be sure to take a break, take a seat, and enjoy the snacks below with your loved ones. From grandparents to toddlers, there’s something to satisfy people of all ages.



SWEET TAIWANESE DESSERTS

In the mood for a pick-me-up? Or maybe you just need to satisfy that sweet tooth? Taiwan’s dessert culture has something for the whole family with unique ingredients, textures, and animal-shaped treats for kids (and adults, too!)



FRIED SWEET POTATO BALLS

The sweet potato is a symbolic and pervasive vegetable on the island. Sweet potato balls (地瓜球) are a dessert that resembles small doughnut holes. Sweet potato balls are made by frying a mixture of mashed sweet potatoes and sweet potato flour in a deep pan. Special tools are used to squeeze out all of the air inside the balls, which make them hollow. It is a fun experience to watch this process; the sweet potato balls expand right before your eyes in the pan as all the air is squeezed out! The result is crunchy, doughnut-like balls that are sweet and soft on the inside. The naturally-sweet vegetable means that no extra sugar is added, so you don’t have to worry about the kids jumping off the walls later!

SHUANGBAOTAI

Shuangbaotai (雙胞胎) is another doughnut-like dessert. It is made by twisting two small pieces of dough together and frying them. When fried, the pieces of dough separate slightly while remaining connected. This process and the resulting shape is what gives this dessert its name; *shuangbaotai* means “twins” in Mandarin. This sweet, fried dough dessert is crisp on the outside and chewy on the inside.





SHAVED ICE

A favorite among children in Taiwan, especially during the summertime, is shaved ice (剉冰). A towering pile of ice shavings, shaved from a whole block of ice, is usually topped with tropical fruits like mangoes, or traditional Taiwanese ingredients like sweet red beans, mung beans, grass jelly, taro, and sweet potato-flavored rice balls. Condensed milk, syrup, and even ice cream can be added to the top for a refreshing pick-me-up in the midst of the island's summer heatwave. Shaved ice shops are especially accommodating during the summertime. Most outdoor shops are equipped with mist sprayers to keep customers even cooler while they enjoy their ice.

TOFU PUDDING

Tofu pudding (豆花) is a sweet dessert that can be served either hot or cold. Real pieces of soft, silky, tofu are made from rich soy milk which is boiled, cooled, and set with the proper ingredients overnight. The creamy pieces of tofu are then placed in a bowl and served with sweet toppings like tapioca pearls, red beans, cooked peanuts, Job's tears, mung beans, and syrup flavored with ginger or almond. The more traditional tofu pudding is served in fresh soymilk and can be found throughout the island as well. Served on ice, it's a great way to cool off while enjoying authentic Taiwanese ingredients made with time, care and love.





WHEEL PIES

Wheel pies (車輪餅) are a classic, Taiwanese dessert that can always be found on the streets of Taipei. Street-side vendors pour freshly made batter into round cake molds on a machine similar to a waffle iron. The batter is then cooked on these custom-shaped griddles, forming thick, hollow shells — made on request. Sweet fillings like red bean paste and vanilla custard are added to individual shells, which is then sandwiched by an empty shell to form a wheel-shaped, stuffed pastry. These rich and filling desserts are a must-try for the whole family.

EGG CAKES

Egg cakes (雞蛋糕) are light and fluffy treats that are also made-to-order on custom-shaped griddles. A perfectly-measured egg and flour batter is poured into fun, animal-shaped molds that resemble chickens, bears, monkeys and whatever you can think of. Children especially love the Hello Kitty-shaped cakes that can be found in Taipei! These light and fluffy cakes are usually hollow, but as with all Taiwanese snacks, a number of variations can be found, including egg cakes filled with chocolate and vanilla custard.





TRADITIONAL SALTY SNACKS

If you want a taste of authentic Taiwanese cuisine, opt for a savory and filling snack that can be shared with the whole family.



STEAMED SPRING ROLL

Steamed spring rolls (潤餅), also known as Popiah (薄餅), are fresh spring rolls wrapped in a soft “popiah,” meaning “wafer-thin skin.” They are filled with fresh vegetables like bean sprouts, shredded carrots, radish, and cucumbers. Slices of fried braised pork are added, and crushed peanuts and sugar are the final touches. Special care is taken to prevent this light, crunchy burrito from getting soggy; the magic is in draining the vegetables to prevent any liquid from getting the delicate skin wet. The large roll can be cut in halves and quarters to share with the whole family.

FRIED RADISH CAKE

If you’ve even been to a dim sum restaurant, you’re probably familiar with fried radish cake (蘿蔔糕). This dish is a glutinous rice cake made from shredded radish and plain rice flour. After the cake is steamed, it is then cut into squares and fried until golden brown. Radish cake typically contains dried shrimps, dried scallops, and Chinese sausages or preserved meat. The sticky consistency and salty flavor pairs perfectly with jasmine or *puer* tea (普洱茶).



In a culture where food is accessible anywhere and everywhere, the afternoon snack time is a special time of the day that is taken seriously by Taiwanese. Whether it's sweet, salty, warm or cold, Taipei has something to offer for the whole family. While you're out discovering the bustling city of Taipei, be sure to take a break and savor the endless number of snacks during the Taiwanese version of “teatime.” 

TRAVEL INFORMATION

For traveling between Taipei and Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport, whether by inexpensive, high-quality shuttle, safe and fast taxi, high-grade professional airport limo service, or the brand new Taoyuan Airport MRT, you're spoiled for choice in satisfying your particular time and budget.



TAXI

Service locations:

West side of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal 1
West side of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal 2

One-way fare:

Meter count plus 15%, with freeway tolls extra; average fare to Taipei around NT\$1,100

Terminal 1 Arrivals Hall

taxi-service counter: Tel: (03) 398-2832

Terminal 2 Arrivals Hall

taxi-service counter: Tel: (03) 398-3599



PASSENGER SHUTTLE BUS

Service locations:

Terminal 1 bus pickup point:

Bus pickup zone at B1 Arrivals Hall.

Terminal 2 bus pickup point:

Bus pickup zone at the east arcade of the 1st floor Arrivals Hall.

Shuttle-service companies:

Kuo-Kuang Motor Transportation, Evergreen Bus, Citi Air Bus

One-way fare: NT\$65~145

Travel time:

40~60 minutes depending on routes (60~90 minutes for Citi Air Bus, which has more stops)

Schedule: Every 15~30 minutes



TAOYUAN AIRPORT MRT

Service Locations:

A12 Airport Terminal 1 Station
A13 Airport Terminal 2 Station

One-way fare: NT\$150

Service Time:

First train - to Taipei 05:57 / to Airport 06:00
Last train - to Taipei 23:35 / to Airport 23:37



METRO TAIPEI

Service Hours: 6:00am - 12:00 midnight **Customer Service Hotline:** (02) 218-12345

METRO TICKETS



ONE-WAY TRIP TICKET
NT\$20 - NT\$65



DAY PASS
NT\$150



24HR PASS
NT\$180



48HR PASS
NT\$280



72HR PASS
NT\$380

IC CARDS

EasyCard (left) and iPASS (right) are available at MRT stations and convenience stores. Just add value before entering the system; the fare for each journey will be deducted appropriately. These cards also have an e-purse function for use at convenience stores and other authorized businesses, and for YouBike rentals.



TAIPEI FUN PASS

There are three types of Taipei Fun Pass available: the Unlimited version (attraction+transportation), Exploring version (attractions+EasyCard) and Transportation version (transportation only). You can visit Taipei City, New Taipei City and Keelung City within the validity of the pass.



Unlimited
1 Day Pass/2 Day Pass/
3 Day Pass
NT\$1,200/1,600/1,900



Exploring
2 Day Pass/3 Day Pass/
4 Day Pass
NT\$650/850/1,050



Transportation
1 Day Pass/2 Day Pass/
3 Day Pass/5 Day Pass/
Maokong Gondola
1 Day Pass
NT\$180/310/440/700/350



TRAVEL INFORMATION SERVICES

Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communication: 0800-011-765

Information for Foreigner in Taiwan: 0800-024-111

Taipei Citizen Hotline: 1999 (Outside Taipei City, please dial 02-2720-8889)



Taipei Sightseeing Bus
(02) 8791-6557 ext.30



Tickets available from **12:00 pm on 6/19 (Fri.)** on **ArtsTicket!**

* For more information, please follow Taipei Arts Festival on Facebook.



Presenter
 臺北市政府
 Organizer
 臺北市文化局
 Department of Cultural Affairs
 Taipei City Government
 台北市文化基金會
 TAIPEI PERFORMING ARTS CENTER 廣告

Taipei Dragon Boat Festival Championships

6.25-6.26

Dajia Riverside Park



WE FIGHT
TOGETHER

