

TAIPEI

台北

2021



STORIES FROM THE CAPITAL

DISCOVER THE UNDISCOVERED

COVER STORY Hidden in Plain Sight: Secret Spots in Taipei's Most Popular Places / **EXPERIENCE** The Taipei Grand Trail: Discovering the Secret Wilderness of the Capital / **ART AND CULTURE** Behind the Scenes at the Baosheng Cultural Festival: A National Treasure Talks Traditional Chinese Papier-Mâché / **PEOPLE** Where Are All the Flowers from? Unearth Taipei Flowers Auction with Ching Flowers / **FOOD AND DRINKS** Innovative Tea for a New Generation with Wangtea Lab

TAIPEI 台北

STORIES FROM THE CAPITAL

TAIPEI IS AVAILABLE AT

台北市政府觀光傳播局

Department of Information and Tourism,
Taipei City Government

📍 4F, 1, City Hall Rd., Taipei City
☎ 1999 ext.7564

台灣桃園國際航空站一

Tourist Service Center at Arrival Lobby,
Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport
Terminal 1

📍 9, Hangzhan S. Rd., Dayuan Dist.,
Taoyuan City
☎ (03) 398-2194

台灣桃園國際航空站二

Tourist Service Center at Arrival Lobby,
Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport
Terminal 2

📍 9, Hangzhan S. Rd., Dayuan Dist.,
Taoyuan City
☎ (03) 398-3341

美國在台協會

American Institute in Taiwan

📍 100, Jinhu Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2162-2000

遠企購物中心

Taipei Metro the Mall

📍 203, Sec. 2, Dunhua S. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2378-6666 ext.6580

國語日報語文中心

Mandarin Daily News (Language Center)

📍 2, Fuzhou St., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2341-8821

台北松山機場

Taipei Songshan Airport

📍 340-9, Dunhua N. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 8770-3430

瓶蓋工廠台北製造所

POPOP TAIPEI

📍 13, Sec. 2, Nangang Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2785-9900

台北美國學校

Taipei American School

📍 800, Sec. 6, Zhongshan N. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2873-9900

國立國父紀念館

National Dr. Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall

📍 505, Sec. 4, Renai Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2758-8008

國立中正紀念堂

National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall

📍 21, Zhongshan S. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2343-1100

台北當代藝術館

Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), Taipei

📍 39, Changan W. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2552-3720

市長官邸藝文沙龍

Mayor's Residence Arts Salon

📍 46, Xuzhou Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2396-9398

台北國際藝術村

Taipei Artist Village

📍 7, Beiping E. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 3393-7377

台北二二八紀念館

Taipei 228 Memorial Museum

📍 3, Ketagalan Blvd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2389-7228

交通部觀光局旅遊服務中心

Travel Service Center, Tourism Bureau,
M.O.T.C

📍 240, Dunhua N. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2717-3737

光點台北

SPOT-Taipei Film House

📍 18, Sec. 2, Zhongshan N. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2778-2991

台北市政府市民服務組

The public service group of
Taipei City Government

📍 1, City Hall Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2720-8889 / 1999 ext.1000

士林官邸

Chiang Kai-shek Shilin Residence

📍 60, Fulin Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2883-6340

台北市孔廟

Taipei Confucius Temple

📍 275, Dalong St., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2592-3924

台北記憶倉庫

Taipei Info Hub

📍 265, Sec. 1, Zhongxiao W. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2371-4597

松山文創園區

Shongshan Cultural and Creative Park

📍 133, Guanfu S. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2765-1388

華山 1914 文化創意產業園區

Huashan 1914 Creative Park

📍 1, Sec.1, Bade Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2358-1914

國立台灣博物館

National Taiwan Museum

📍 2, Xiangyang Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2382-2566

亞典圖書公司

Art Land Book Co. Ltd.

📍 122, Sec. 3, Renai Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2784-5166

台北市立圖書館

Taipei Public Library (Main & branches)

台北市旅遊服務中心

Visitor Information Centers in Taipei

捷運沿線各站

All Stations of MRT Lines

伊是咖啡

Is Coffee

誠品書店各分店

eslite Bookstore

金石堂書店

Kingstone Bookstore

REVEALING THE UNDISCOVERED TAIPEI

Spring is a time of hope, renewal, and exploration. It's an occasion for journeys that fulfill mind, body, and soul; in that spirit, we're pleased to bring you our spring issue, in which we set out to discover "the secrets of Taipei." In the pages ahead, the unknown, unheralded, and largely untrod places of Taipei, and the people who call those spots home, are finally given their due.

Walking through the streets, many of the places brought to light in our cover story are indeed, as the title suggests, "Hidden in Plain Sight." When meandering through the historic inner-city Bangka/Ximending area, it would be easy to pass by Qingshui Temple without knowing of its storied origins, dating back to the late 18th century. This and many others are spots easily overlooked by the casual eye, missed by most who visit the city as they make their way to more obvious landmarks. But it is precisely sites like these that color the city's vibrant culture, and deepen one's understanding of the city.

From the unseen pieces of Taipei's cultural fabric, we take you on a tour through the bastions of solitude and quiet found throughout the capital. From a former Japanese bathhouse to urban gardens that will make you forget you're in a city at all, don't miss our exposé on these "urban oases." Meanwhile, if you're looking for an outdoor adventure, go on a hike along Taipei Grand Trail. The 92-kilometer journey will lead you to the secret wildness of the capital.

For fans of art and traditional culture, go behind the scenes of the famous festival to learn about papier-mâché with a master with 40-plus years of experience, and follow the footprints of *TAIPEI* to discover where some popular films are filmed in this city.

What would spring be without flowers? Step inside the Taipei Flowers Auction with Ching Flowers to find out where all the flowers are from. And if you are a foodie like Moira Turley, join our conversation with her to learn the secret life of a diplomat in Taipei.

We did not forget about the food scenes either. From inconspicuous restaurants without names, to speakeasy bars hidden down lanes, check out more excellent features in this issue that explore the unknown mouth-watering tastes of Taipei.

All this and more, as we put our best foot forward into the beautiful spring season in Taipei.



CONTENTS

2021 SPRING VOL.23

COVER STORY

- 04 Hidden in Plain Sight:
Secret Spots in Taipei's Most Popular Places

EXPERIENCE

- 14 Of Paper and Leaves: Extraordinary Urban Oases in Taipei
- 20 The Taipei Grand Trail:
Discovering the Secret Wilderness of the Capital

ART & CULTURE

- 28 Behind the Scenes at the Baosheng Cultural Festival:
A National Treasure Talks Traditional Chinese
Papier-Mâché
- 34 On Location: The Big Screen Guide to Exploring the City

PEOPLE

- 38 Where Are All the Flowers from? Unearth Taipei Flowers
Auction with Ching Flowers
- 44 A Journey of Food and Discovery:
A Kiwi in Taipei

FOOD & DRINKS

- 48 Innovative Tea for a New Generation with Wangtea Lab
- 53 Four Inconspicuous Restaurants that Need No Name
to Shine
- 58 Bars in Taipei: Secret Promised Land of the City





TAIPEI 台北

STORIES FROM THE CAPITAL

Publisher Yi-ting Liu
Editor in Chief Pei-chun Hsieh
Deputy Editor in Chief Chia-ying Tzou
Editor Yennan Lin
Integrated Marketing Cathy Chen, Mika Lee, Ingrid Chen
Translators Joe Henley, Adam Hopkins, Jie Ru Wu, Yining Chen
Cover Design Broo Branding Consultant

**Department of Information and Tourism,
Taipei City Government**

Add: 4F, 1, City Hall Rd., Taipei, Taiwan, R.O.C.

Tel: 1999 (02-2720-8889 outside Taipei City);
ext. 2029, 7564

Fax: (02) 2720-5909

Email: taipei_quarterly@mail.taipei.gov.tw

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) 2562-5005

Fax: (02) 2562-5505



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

Department of Information and Tourism,
Taipei City Government

All rights reserved. Reproduction in any form without
written permission is prohibited.



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

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT: SECRET SPOTS IN TAIPEI'S MOST POPULAR PLACES

Taipei is fast becoming one of the most popular tourist destinations in Asia. From hot spots, such as Taipei 101 and Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall (中正紀念堂), to local foodie favorites like *guabao* (刈包) and bubble tea, the city has many much-loved attractions that keep people coming in droves.

However, as much as we champion these backbones of Taipei's touristic pull, we aren't thinking about them right now. We want to drag you away from the mainstream. Not too far, mind you, but just far enough to show you a different side of Taipei. A secret side, if you will.

Here's a guide to some of the most popular places in Taipei, Yongkang Street (永康街), Yangmingshan (陽明山), Bangka (艋舺) and Ximending (西門町), as you've never seen them before.

-
- 01 Many secret spots are hidden near famous attractions in Taipei, waiting to be discovered by visitors.
 - 02 Jinan Market is an antique market collecting and selling all kinds of treasures such as movie posters and vintage furniture.





YONGKANG STREET

This is Taipei's most popular tourist street, especially for those looking to fill their bellies. During pre-pandemic times, Yongkang Street was packed with visitors all keen to stuff their faces with local favorites such as *xiaolongbao* (小籠包), beef noodles and mango shaved ice. Nowadays, while the crowds may be thinner, the street is still a hive of activity, particularly on weekends, with young families enjoying some quality time together in Yongkang Park (永康公園).

One thing you may not know about Yongkang Street is its Japanese colonial legacy, stemming from Taiwan's era of Japanese rule (1895-1945). Ramen shops aside, if you take some time to peer down one of the street's several lanes and also admire some of the architecture, you'll realize there is definitely a bit of a Japanese feel to the area. Also, a visit to Yongkang Street isn't all just about food. There is a much trendier side to the street best known for scallion pancakes (*congyou bing*, 蔥油餅) and bowls of noodle soup. Stylish boutiques, achingly cool cafés, and hip bars; there are plenty of reasons to head to the most famous spot in Dongmen (東門) other than just for the food.

SECRET SPOTS AROUND YONGKANG STREET



📍 Jinan Market

錦安市場昭和町文物市集

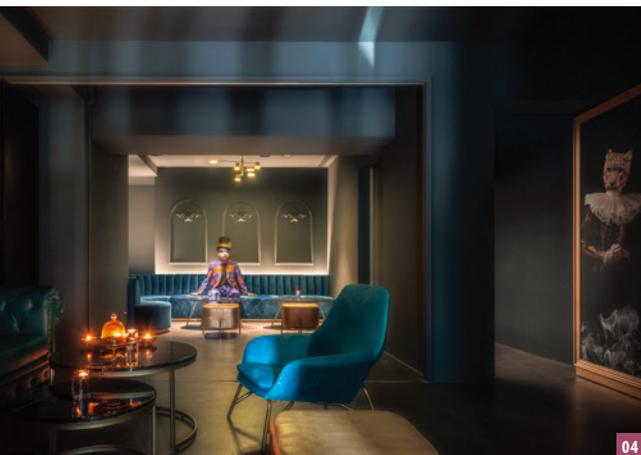
A place that has gone by many names over the years, Jinan Market is an antique market just off Yongkang Street. Composed of around 20 stores selling vintage, antique and second-hand products, you'll

also find a lot of Japanese items here, another nod to Yongkang Street's Japanese influence. You'll see all kinds of items ranging from artworks to things of cultural interest. The perfect place for a leisurely browse, it doesn't open until 1:00 p.m. and closes at 10:00 p.m., so there's no need to rush over early in the morning.

📍 Remains of Taipei Prison Wall 台北監獄圍牆遺跡

Located on Jinshan South Road (金山南路), just a stone's throw away from Yongkang Street's famous Yongkang Beef Noodles (永康牛肉麵), the remains of Taipei's old prison walls are a glimpse into the city's past. The prison's outer walls were built during Japanese rule and nowadays survive as two 100-meter-long expanses.

Opened in 1895 as a Japanese penitentiary, before becoming a post-war prison, in 1963 it was relocated to Taoyuan (桃園市). Other remaining parts of the prison are the buildings which were formerly Japanese government housing, built on the southern side of what was once known as Taihoku Penitentiary (台北刑務所). Nowadays, the site where the prison once stood is taken up by office buildings.



📍 LORE Taipei 劇場酒吧

A cocktail bar combining experimental drinks with immersive theater. LORE's shows are based on folklore and popular childhood stories and change every six months. Focusing heavily on nostalgia, LORE takes their guests "on a journey through cocktails and emotions, enhancing their understanding of nostalgia. Every audience member will have a different interpretation of the one-hour performance based on their own personal life experiences."

Found at Section 2 of Xinyi Road (信義路), right by Yongkang Street, LORE's drinks are equally as impressive as their shows, served with phenomenal detail and presentation, with fun, memorable names such as "Cheshire Cat: Curiosity Never Killed The Cat" and "Flower: My Scent is like a Drug, My Personal Brand of Heroin."



DRINK RESPONSIBLY



- 03 Sitting on Jinshan South Road are the Remains of Taipei Prison Wall.
- 04-05 A great place for fans of Taipei's nightlife, immersive theater/bar LORE Taipei provides different kinds of interactive shows. (Photo/LORE Taipei)



YANGMINGSHAN

Yangmingshan National Park, located between Taipei and New Taipei City (新北市), is best known for its hiking trails. From Mt. Qixing (七星山) to Mt. Datun (大屯山), the area has ten peaks to hike, a 23.8-kilometer east to west route that can be completed in one day if you're up to the challenge. Mt. Qixing is Taipei's largest dormant volcano, so the strong smell of sulfur often fills the air, reminding you of the area's volcanicity.

As well as hiking, Yangmingshan is a great spot to cleanse your body and mind. Not only the top spot for hiking, it is also home to all kinds of flora and fauna. You may even spot the odd snake if you're lucky (or unlucky, depending on your views on snakes). The fresh air and nature-rich surroundings are great for the soul. Also, you can't forget the hot springs. The district of Beitou (北投), at the foot of Yangmingshan, boasts one of the highest concentrations of hot springs, hot spring spas and public hot spring baths in the world, and is the ideal place to visit after a hike to soak your weary legs.

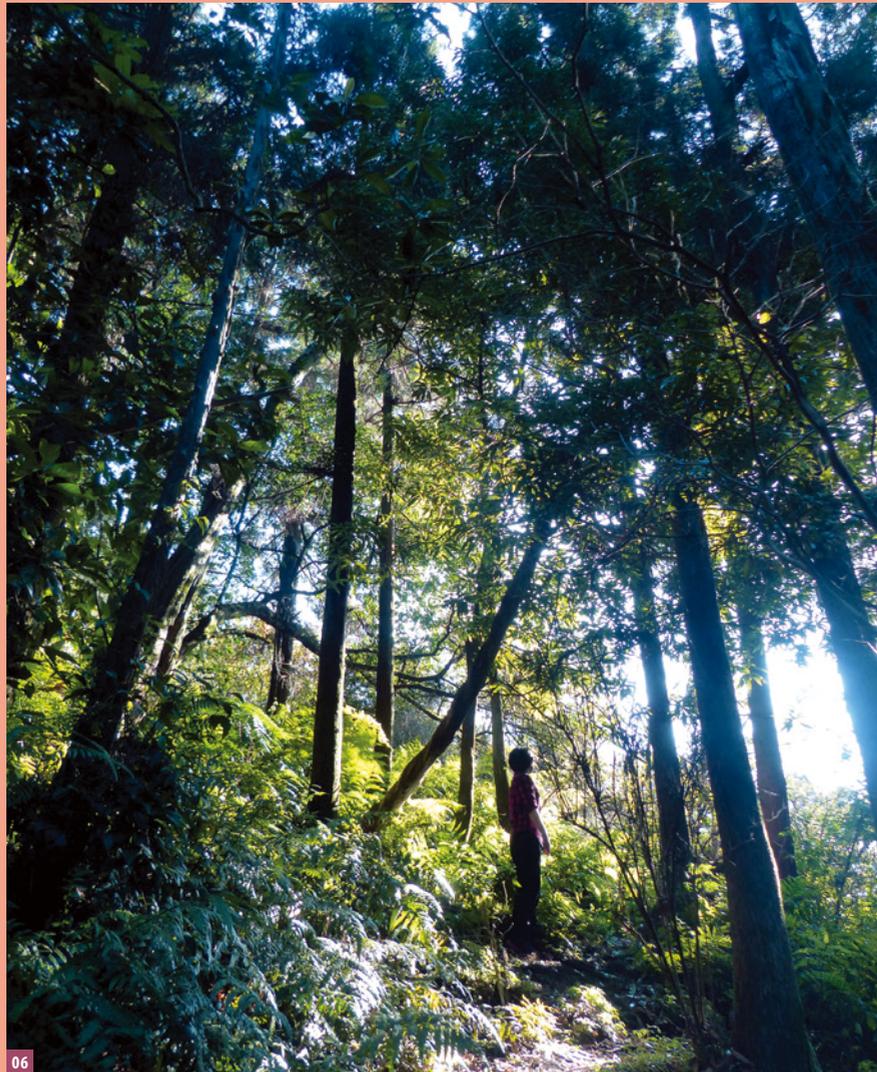
SECRET SPOTS AROUND YANGMINGSHAN

Zhuzihu Black Forest 竹子湖黑森林

A popular spot for couples taking wedding photos, the Black Forest in Zhuzihu (竹子湖) on Yangmingshan is a dense forest of tall Chinese fir trees and leafy ferns. The sun shining through gaps in the trees creates long shadows, giving the forest a mystic wonderland in the mountain.

The mysterious forest is near the Shuicheliao Trail (水車寮步道) and Shuijun Trail (水圳步徑). It can be reached by taking Bus S8 and S9, with the nearest stop being Fengjiakou (風架口) Stop.

06 With sunlight shining through the Black Forest in Zhuzihu, it's a great place for shooting a shot of Yangmingshan.



06



07

📍 Free Public Hot Springs in Qianshan Park

前山公園公共浴池

Don't want to pay for a Beitou hot spring hotel? The picturesque Yangmingshan Qianshan Park is home to some public hot springs where you can stop to soak your feet for free. The park was renovated in 2014 and boasts several ecological resources, with many recreational trails by the park for visitors to walk along and enjoy the mountain views. Accessible by bus, the park is near Yangmingshan Bus Station.

07 Qianshan Park provides a tranquil space for visitors to enjoy a free hot spring bath in Yangmingshan.



📍 Ceramics DIY at Cloud Forest 雲森陶陶

A ceramics studio run by an American expat who's been in Taipei for more than three decades, Cloud Forest is one of Yangmingshan's hidden gems. A studio and exhibition space, at Cloud Forest you can take part in expert-led ceramics workshops or just pop in unannounced (if there's space, of course) and practice yourself. Maybe you'll make a teapot, maybe you'll make a vase, or perhaps you'll just make a mess, but you'll surely get your hands dirty and have a great time doing it. The studio sometimes hosts residencies for visiting artists, during which they will lead workshops and also display their works in Cloud Forest's gallery/museum area.



08



09



10

-
- 08-09 Cloud Forest is an amazing place for people looking to try their hand at ceramics. (Photo/Taiwan Scene)
 - 10 The owner of Cloud Forest, David, has dedicated himself to the art of ceramics for years, and his studio is a hidden gem at the foot of Yangmingshan. (Photo/Taiwan Scene)





BANGKA & XIMENDING

Two of the most popular tourist spots visitors to the Bangka (艋舺) area usually frequent Longshan Temple (艋舺龍山寺) and Huaxi Street Night Market (華西街觀光夜市), while people heading to Ximending are usually there for the shopping or taking in some of the city's pop culture at venues such as Red House (西門紅樓).

Bangka is actually one of Taipei's more historic areas, and visitors can enjoy a walk around its historic

block, Bopiliao Historic Block (剝皮寮歷史街區), an area that was built during the Qing Dynasty (清代, 1636 A.D. – 1912 A.D.) and passed through Japanese rule and post-WWII recovery. You can also find time to browse U-mkt, or Xinfu Market (新富町市場), and eat traditional street foods and try vintage pastries in the oldest neighborhood in Taipei.

When it comes to discovering traditional culture and historic heritage, Bangka and Ximending are the go-to spots in Taipei.



SECRET SPOTS WITHIN BANGKA/XIMENDING



11

📍 Huajiang Apartment Buildings and Sky Bridge

華江整建住宅

Originally a shopping mall built during an urban renewal project after WWII, the local government decided to turn the four buildings that are located at the four corners of an intersection into a residential area. They are connected by a circular sky bridge that was originally designed as the mall's corridor, and it is the last building in Taipei that was built in such a way. Countless stairs and hallways turn it into a gigantic maze, making it a popular location for music video shoots and a great place for taking pictures for Instagram.

10

- 11 Huajiang Apartment Buildings is known for its circular buildings that are connected by a sky bridge, making it a hot spot for movie and music video shooting.
- 12 Qingshui Temple, primarily dedicated to Master Qingshui, is the religious center for people in Wanhua.
- 13-14 Tangbu Cultural Park showcases life on an old cane sugar farm and gives a history of Taiwan's sugar industry.



12

📍 Qingshui Temple

艋舺清水巖祖師廟

One of Taipei's great temples, Qingshui Temple was built in 1787 and is one of three temples in northern Taiwan dedicated to Master Qingshui (清水祖師), a dark-faced monk who protects people from drought and plague. As well as shrines dedicated to Master Qingshui, there are also areas for worshipping the likes of Mazu (媽祖), the Goddess of the Sea, and Wenchang Dijun (文昌帝君), the God of Literature. Once a school during Japanese rule, nowadays the temple is a leader in the promotion of education in Taiwan.

📍 Tangbu Cultural Park

糖廠文化園區

A designated historic site and formerly home to warehouses of the Taiwan Sugar Corporation (台灣糖業公司), here you can learn about the history of Taiwan's sugar industry. In the build-up to and in the years that followed WWII, sugar was a mainstay of Taiwan's economy, with sugarcane having been grown on the island since the arrival of the Han Chinese, at the latest. There are also many art installations that teach about the process of making sugar from cane farming to transportation. Also, be sure to take a look at the park's sugar train, an actual train once used for transporting sugar.



13

! The indoor exhibition center at Tangbu Cultural Park is currently under renovation and will re-open in August 2021. The park area remains open to visitors as usual.



14



15

📍 Wanhua Lin Mansion 萬華林宅

A historic mansion which these days, like seemingly most buildings on the planet, is now a Starbucks. Completed in 1935 and also known as Wanhua Lin House, the building is a four-story quadrangular build with an exterior wall composed of Japanese red bricks and biscuit porcelain, with the traditional wooden doors and windows still intact. Not just a Starbucks, the third and fourth floors of the mansion are galleries displaying artifacts, photos and documents related to architect Lin Hongma (林紅麻), who designed the building, while the top floor is a prayer hall.

15 With a history of 60-plus years, Wanhua Lin Mansion is one of a few places to see a classic red-brick building in Taipei.

16-17 Disguised as a vintage movie theater, HANKO 60 is a very cool speakeasy. (Photo/ Taiwan Scene)

📍 HANKO 60 新聲大戲院

A speakeasy regarded by many as one of Taipei's coolest bars, HANKO 60 in Ximending is disguised as an old movie theater, with the entrance decorated with vintage movie posters and a movie timetable. The inspiration for the design comes from Ximending historically being an iconic place to watch movies in Taipei and a leading light in the evolution of the city's pop culture scene. One of their drinks, the Movie Street, even comes hidden inside a bag of movie theater popcorn. A great place to take friends, dates, or even just to check out for yourself.



16



18

18 Snowking developed various flavors of ice cream ranging from strawberry to pork knuckle, giving customers the chance to try something familiar or something more unusual. (Photo/Samil Kuo)



📍 Snowking 雪王冰淇淋

An ice cream store hidden on the second floor of an old building in Ximending where you'll either leave satisfied or horrified, depending on how adventurously you ordered, at Snowking, they are not afraid to experiment. Flavors on offer start pretty standard; we're talking chocolate, strawberry, mango etc. Then they get a little more adventurous; think *Oolong* tea and basil. Then, things just get weird and arguably unnecessary: pork floss, pork knuckle, chili pepper, sesame chicken, and even kaoliang. Order at your peril, but it's a lot of fun, especially if you're trying different flavors together as a group. 🍷



17

DRINK RESPONSIBLY

OF PAPER AND LEAVES: EXTRAORDINARY URBAN OASES IN TAIPEI

Sometimes, amid the noise of the city, people have an urge to find a touch of respite, some greenery or calm. What's more, creative experiences that go beyond the latest busy shopping mall and cacophony of people, traffic and light and allow one to recharge on a deeper level are all the more valuable to survive city life. Reading a book in a quiet garden, arranging plants in a beautiful container or contemplating a paper-based art project are all restorative experiences that can take one out of the daily grind and bring a little peace to one's life.

While the lanes and back alleys of Taipei can be quiet, contemplative places, you're still never too far away from a busy street in this compact city. Places where one can truly escape, be creative, read a book or just enjoy the quiet — urban oases — are rarer. However, after searching Taipei for such spots of calm which also offer extraordinary experiences for creativity and reflection, *TAIPEI* found three that stand out: Succulent & Gift (有肉), Fenko Catalysis Chamber (鳳嬌催化室) and Not Just Library (不只是圖書館). Let's explore them together.

- 01 Spring is coming, if you don't have time for outdoor activities, in Taipei you can also find some indoor corners of greenery. (Photo/Samil Kuo)
- 02 At Succulent & Gift, you can not only find a variety of succulent plants, but also learn about growing and caring for them. (Photo/Samil Kuo)
- 03 Succulent-themed workshops and courses take place in this leafy space. (Photo/Samil Kuo)





SUCCULENT & GIFT

Tucked away in a quiet lane off Daan Road (大安路), Succulent & Gift is more than a shop selling succulents and pots. The greenery outside spills into an airy botanical-industrial space filled with succulents arranged in an array of Taiwan-made designer containers, including ceramics, cement, glass and wood. From cacti taller than most people and spiky succulents in fat ceramic pineapple containers to air plants in wood-cut holders, anything is possible.

Relaxing yet hip music plays in this urban garden as you browse or participate in one of Succulent & Gift's many individual, group, family and team-building courses, from arranging or caring for succulents to making your own cement or glass pot, as well as family activities that include succulent-themed watercolor, clay art and cookie decorating. Some courses are available in English on request, or in Mandarin with English support.

When we visited, a group of friends chatted merrily while smoothing down the surfaces of their handmade cement planters, each having chosen a unique color palette. Their stress, like the rough nubs on their creations, seemed to be melting away.

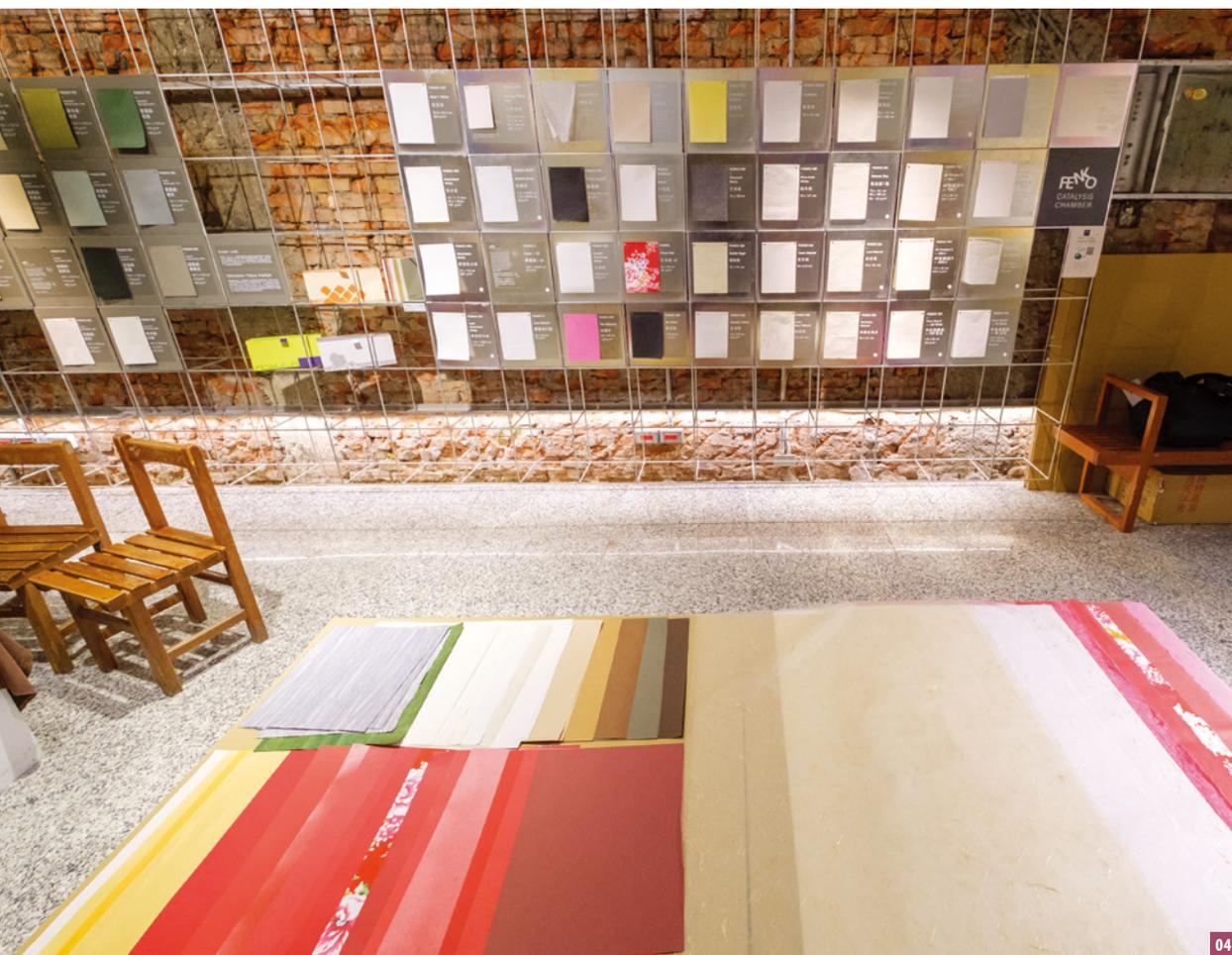
Customers can choose their preferred succulents and pots themselves as well as create their own arrangements down to the gravel type and color, or leave the plant choice and arrangement to the knowledgeable staff. In addition to landscaping services, houseplant consultations and nationwide delivery, Succulent & Gift also provides plant care services; if one of your purchased plants looks sickly, they'll help you nurse it back to health. Fortunately, succulents are easy to care for, requiring sun but little water, and most are non-toxic to pets.

Succulent & Gift strives to be not only Taiwan-focused, but neighborhood-focused as well, with several local cooperative efforts. This allows each business to offer promotions and discounts at neighboring retailers.



📍 19, Ln. 76, Siwei Rd., Daan Dist.

🕒 11:00am - 6:30pm



04

FENKO CATALYSIS CHAMBER

From the outside, Fenko Catalysis Chamber looks like a high-end paper store. Inside, however, it's much more than that. Located a few doors down from Suho Memorial Paper Museum (樹火紙博物館), created in memory of Chang Chun Cotton Paper Mill (長春棉紙廠) owner Chen Suho (陳樹火), it's not surprising that Fenko Catalysis Chamber is set up in memory of Chen's wife, Lai Fenko (賴鳳嬌). Complementing the Suho museum experience, Fenko offers a range of paper products suitable for any number of creative pursuits. Most commonly, those looking for materials for a creative endeavor make an appointment, and plan their paper art project with the staff, who can provide advice on design, materials and volume. Talks and workshops are also held.

In chemistry, catalysis is the acceleration of a reaction due to a catalyst. This "catalysis chamber," then, is a place where one's ideas and creative sparks may catalyze into plans and projects. Or, as Fenko puts it, it is a "catalytic room for behavior, material and people. Time, space, fiber, everything in nature, your talents, experience, expertise, concepts and actions can all be transformed into inspiration, creation, trends and insights." The vagueness here is intentional, as Fenko is "not in a hurry to define itself."

For casual browsers, a large sheet of cloud-like tissue hangs artfully above spools of paper that seem to float in mid-air. Gentle lighting and a moss wall (designed as Fenko Moss) with the relaxing pattern of falling water soften the industrial design, and the burgeoning mosses on the wall also bring an

- 04 Fenko Catalysis Chamber introduces, exhibits and discovers the possibilities of paper covering. (Photo/Yenyi Lin)
- 05 Walking into Fenko Catalysis Chamber, you will be brought into a world of paper. (Photo/Yenyi Lin)
- 06 With a wide range of paper collection and a hidden moss wall, Fenko Catalysis Chamber reconnects city life with nature. (Photo/Yenyi Lin)



atmosphere of calm. A wall of papers can be perused at your leisure: each offers bilingual descriptions of paper type, features, uses, manufacturing process and the thought process behind its design under each magnetically-attached sample.

Walking deeper into the Fenko, you will reach a greenhouse-like room with sunshine coming in through the glass ceiling. The space is called the “Moss Chamber,” and this is where all the paper experiments involving water take place. Exploratory workshops and collaborative creations for paper, fiber and dyeing are often hosted in this room.

A variety of Taiwan-made papers created in Fenko are based on the experiments in the Moss Chamber, including The National (台灣紅), a bright pink with gold fibers, inspired by the cheerful hues of Hakka-style flower fabric and dubbed the “color of Taiwan.” Floral Red (花布紙—紅) imitates that same fabric, made by layering ten different colored sheets. Rice Husk paper (稻禾紙), where the husks form small nubbins between the white paper fibers, reminds one of Taiwan’s agricultural roots.

In Fenko, you will also learn that in addition to trees, papers can be made with different materials such as pineapple, banana and bamboo fiber. These plants have stronger fibers for paper-making, enabling more creative applications and even making paper water resistant. Fenko also produces paper yarn and has designed a water-resistant overcoat made with it. Here papers can be turned into outdoor installations, cosmetic products and 3D and fiber art projects.

This may seem like a lot, but what you get out of Fenko is what you bring to it. Surrounded by every paper possibility, at a “lab table” with staff who can provide advice, the catalysis you experience is the one you create.



📍 74, Sec. 2, Changan E. Rd., Zhongshan Dist.
 🕒 1:00pm - 6:00pm (Closed on Saturdays & Sundays)

NOT JUST LIBRARY

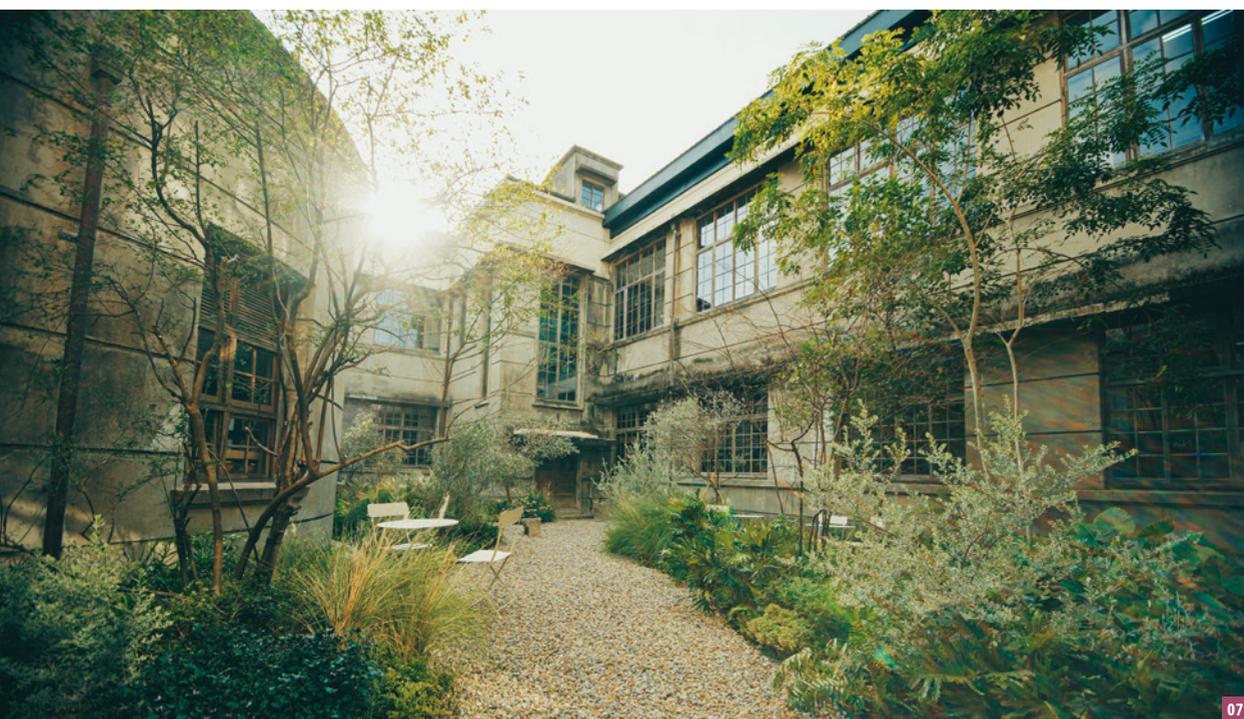
Picture an oasis within an oasis. Imagine yourself emerging from the streets connecting the modern Xinyi financial district with the nearby Songshan Cultural and Creative Park (松山文創園區), which once housed the Songshan Tobacco Factory (松山菸廠). As you walk through the renovated factory buildings of the park, getting a bit lost among the outdoor spaces converted to tropical gardens, design museum, shops and cafes, you're already in one of the more peaceful parts of Taipei — on weekdays, at least. At the eastern end of the park, when passing palms and fountains, stone paths and wood-framed industrial warehouse windows, you'll come to the old bathhouse, where female workers at the tobacco factory once removed the smell of their day's labor.

However, like the factory this site once housed, the bathhouse has been converted to a space where one can "bathe in books" (metaphorically, of course). As with entering a bathhouse, leave your shoes at the door at Not Just Library and don a pair of woven slippers. For an NT\$80 entrance fee, you can peruse books on art, design, industry and architecture from their collection, with plenty of English options

available. Not Just Library is Taiwan's first — if not only — design-themed library, with this theme tying into other popular parts of Songshan Cultural and Creative Park: the Taiwan Design Museum (台灣設計館) and Golden Pin Design Awards (金點設計獎) shop, where design goods honored with the prestigious award are sold.

The space is divided into a series of rooms, including a sunken, bath-like reading room inspired by the site's original function and a tiled room, with original 1930s bathhouse tiles. The old semicircle bath pool stands in the middle of the reading room, serving as seats for readers.

On one wall, old library cards contain recommendations from prominent visitors. Although you can't take out the books, Not Just Library hosts lectures and exhibitions in addition to being a reading and meeting space. Some areas are clearly intended for quiet reading and contemplation, whereas others are designed to allow conversation to flow more easily. The large factory windows provide ample natural light and maintain the history of the site. One, however, has been converted into a door.





This is an oasis within an oasis within an oasis — open that door, switch your woven slippers for plastic ones, and descend into a small garden that was once “an abandoned place, full of trash.” Now, artfully placed tables and chairs line a gravel path across an interior garden bursting with tropical greenery. On pleasant days, visitors can bring books from the collection outside to read, or simply come out to enjoy fresh air in a quiet garden. Parents sometimes bring children here as an enclosed outdoor space to play while they read, work or chat quietly.

Imagine leaving an apartment filled with traffic noise, walking down congested streets and passing coffee shops full of customers, not a single table available. Perhaps you want to bring a little peace to your living space by adding an arrangement of succulents or paper art to your wall, designed and created by you. You can also walk through the long, cool halls of the old tobacco factory, slip off your shoes and sink into a world of beautifully-illustrated books. Here in Taipei, you can find places to fulfill your desire for calm right in the city center. 



📍 133, Guangfu S. Rd., Xinyi Dist.
 🕒 10:00am - 6:00pm (Closed on Mondays)

- 07** With a small garden inside, Not Just Library is truly an oasis within the city. (Photo/Not Just Library)
- 08-09** Transformed from an old bathhouse, Not Just Library keeps the original semi-circle bath as seats for visitors. (Photo/Not Just Library)



01

THE TAIPEI GRAND TRAIL: DISCOVERING THE SECRET WILDERNESS OF THE CAPITAL

Taipei is a striking juxtaposition of human achievement and natural wonder. On one hand, you have the glistening, high-tech edifice of Taipei 101, and on the other, wild, untamed jungles. No matter where you are within the city, nature always lies within reach.

Hidden within this seemingly impenetrable wilderness that encircles Taipei are sights and secrets that are ripe to quell the wanderlust of city-bound souls.

In 2018, the Taipei City Government announced the opening of the Taipei Grand Trail (台北大縱走), an amalgamation of a massive, pre-existing network of mountain trails. Spanning a total of 92km, it reaches from the heights of Yangmingshan, or Mt. Yangming, in the north, wraps around the ridges of Neihu (內湖) in the east, then snakes all the way down to Maokong (貓空) in the south.

Composed of seven individual sections that each takes an average of seven hours to complete. Every section is easily accessible via public transport so it is entirely possible to complete one section at a time. Other than the distance, the trail climbs to an altitude of 1,120 meters at Mt. Qixing (七星山) Main Peak.

As a special bonus for dedicated hikers, the Geotechnical Engineering Office, Public Works Department, Taipei City Government (台北市政府工務局大地工程處) is offering a commemorative towel for those who complete the trail before December 31, 2021. Hikers must take photos of themselves with all of the 12 commemorative posts that are strategically placed along the way. The posts are a small plaque with a Chinese character written on the top. Signposts have also been erected along the entirety of the Grand Trail to guide hikers along their way. A hard copy of the map can be collected from the office during business hours.

SECTION 1: GUANDU → ERZIPING

Section 1 of the Taipei Grand Trail begins in the northern district of Beitou. It is a hill climb from down in the city up to the Datun Saddle (大屯山鞍部) on Yangmingshan. It is approximately 10 kilometers in length and takes about seven to eight hours to complete. The beginning of the Grand Trail is marked at the intersection of Xueyuan Road (學園路) and Zhongyang North Road Section 4 (中央北路四段), a few minutes on foot from MRT Guandu Station (捷運關渡站). From there, it's a couple kilometers through the campus of Taipei National University of the Arts (台北藝術大學) to reach the Mt. Zhongyi Trailhead (忠義山步道口). The ascent begins and the scenery transforms from the concrete jungle into a scene from Jurassic Park.

The main highlight about halfway up is Qingtian Temple (清天宮) in the Zhongjingque (中菁巖), a quaint mountainside village. This is but one of many temples that you will find along the Grand Trail. Then it's a short trek up through the forest until you reach the highest point of Section 1, Miantian Ping (面天坪), at 815 meters above sea level.

This is the end of Section 1; you can either choose to continue on to Section 2 or leave via the Erziping Trail (二子坪步道) and catch Bus 108 back down the mountain.

On the greenery way from Qingtian Temple to Erziping, you can also walk up to the hills such as Mt. Miantain (面天山) to get a magnificent view of the Taipei.

Section 1 serves as a good primer for what to expect when embarking upon the Grand Trail.



02

- 01 The challenging Taipei Grand Trail leads hikers on a journey exploring the secret wilderness of Taipei. (Photo/Tz Ting)
- 02 Section 1 ends at Erziping, an amazing place to enjoy the mountain views and rest your feet.



Please note identification is required to enter university grounds due to COVID-19 preventative measures. (updated by March 2021)

SECTION 2: ERZIPING → MT. DATUN → XIAOYOUKENG

The altitude starts to climb with the second section of the Grand Trail where several peaks await, making it and the next section the most challenging stretch of the whole Grand Trail.

Section 2 is approximately 9 kilometers in length and takes an average of six to seven hours to complete. It can be started by continuing from Section 1, or by catching Bus 108 to Erziping Tourist Service Station and walking south via the Erziping Trail to Miantian Ping. If you choose the latter, you will pass through the Erziping Recreation Area, a serene, grassy rest stop.

Venturing forth from Miantian Ping, you will begin to ascend Mt. Datun Western Peak. Immediately this climb becomes more strenuous as the sealed path gives way to craggy embankments of tree roots and rocks. If it has rained in previous days, expect it to be

muddy, slippery and difficult to pass. Hiking poles or walking sticks gathered from nearby can be extremely useful. There are permanently fixed ropes that can be used to help you up. Both the Western and Southern Peaks of Mt. Datun are similar in difficulty and only 600 meters apart. They are rocky, windswept outcrops that arise from the damp forest below. The view is definitely worth the effort if the weather is favorable.

Once you pass Mt. Datun Main Peak, the next popular stop is Zhuzihu, famed for its fields of calla lilies, hydrangeas and the abundance of restaurants sitting in their midst. If the lilies are in bloom, you can expect scores of people swarming about, photographing the ephemeral sea of white. Gazing up on a clear day, you can spot the smoking Xiaoyoukeng (小油坑) fumarole where Section 2 terminates. From the Xiaoyoukeng Tourist Service Station you can catch Bus 108 to Yangmingshan Bus Terminal or continue on to Section 3.



For Sections 2 and 3, please note that weather conditions can be much more volatile and potentially dangerous at higher altitudes, so plan your hike accordingly.



04

SECTION 3: XIAOYOKENG → MT. QIXING → QINGTIANGANG GRASSLAND → FENGGUIKOU

With a length of about 14 kilometers and an estimated walking time of seven to eight hours, Section 3 begins from Xiaoyoukeng, reaches the highest peaks of Taipei, then dips down to Fengguikou (風櫃口), east of Yangmingshan.

It starts strong at Xiaoyoukeng, the site of smoking fumaroles emitting volcanic gases into the air. The strong smell of sulfur is a sobering reminder that you are in fact standing on an active volcano. Obey the warning signs and keep your distance.

Pressing on, you will reach Mt. Qixing Main and Eastern Peaks. Blessed with a stunning 360-degree view of Taipei and the north coast, these are the crown jewels of the Taipei Grand Trail. With an elevation of 1,120m above sea level, it is the highest point in Taipei. If it is a misty day, the ambience evokes images of Tolkien's fantasies.

Descending from the heavens, the next attractions are the Qingtiangang Grassland (擎天崗) and Mt. Shiti (石梯嶺), which are home to a herd of water buffalo. They are often seen grazing peacefully in the grasslands, a surreal meadow that unfurls from within the densely forested slopes of Mt. Shiti. Even though the buffalo are typically passive creatures, they are still wild animals, so exercise caution.

Another popular stop along this wildly diverse trail is the Japanese Cedar forest just before Mt. Ding (頂山). It was part of a reforestation initiative led by the then Japanese government in the 1920s, an intriguing remnant of Taiwan's turbulent history. Beyond the cedars is Mt. Ding and the way to Fengguikou. The stop for the Bus S1 (小1) is about 1 kilometer away, or you can continue along the Fengguikou Trail to Section 4.



05

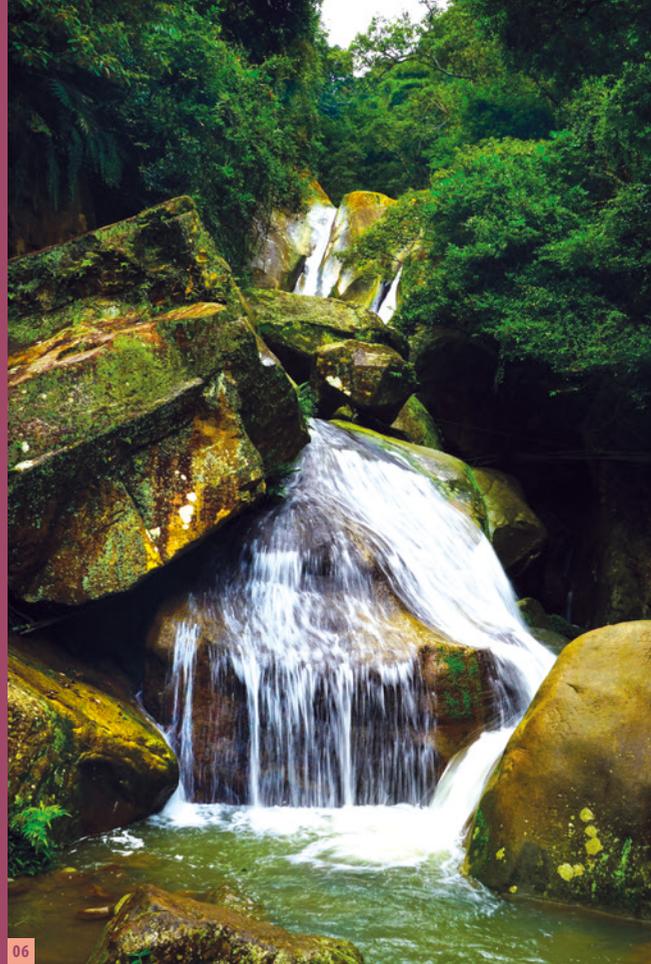
- 03 Covered with mud roads and steep hills, Mt. Datun's trail is considered as the most challenging part of the Taipei Grand Trail.
- 04 The starting point of your hike to Mt. Qixing, Xiaoyoukeng is also a popular spot for photography. (Photo/Andrew Haimerl)
- 05 Mt. Qixing is not only famous for its height but also for its winding trail surrounded by grassland. (Photo/Young Chen)

SECTION 4: FENGGUIKOU → BAISHIHU → DAHU PARK

Beginning in Fengguikou, Section 4 is a 16-kilometer stretch rambling down the hills to Dahu Park (大湖公園) in Neihu. The estimated completion time is from six to seven hours. The first several kilometers that pass Mt. Meihua (梅花山) and Mt. Bishan (碧山) are worn dirt paths that penetrate the thick Taiwanese jungle. Many seek respite at One Heart Pool (同心池), a peaceful lakeside stopover.

Not far away is the hilltop community of Baishihu (白石湖), its collection of organic strawberry farms and the 116-meter suspension bridge symbolizing a great dragon soaring across the valley. On the other side is Bishanyan (碧山巖) and the giant Bishan Temple (碧山巖開漳聖王廟), which possesses a magnificent panoramic view of Taipei from the north. Right behind the temple is Mt. Zhongyong (忠勇山), which connects with Section 5.

Journeying back down through the forest feels almost like a page from *The Lost World*. Another popular rest stop is Yuanjue Temple Waterfall (圓覺寺瀑布), a spacious oasis hidden below Yuanjue Temple (圓覺寺). The trail and the mountain stream both wind down to the Dagou Creek Water Park (大溝溪親水公園) close to MRT Dahu Park Station (捷運大湖公園站). The grassy lowlands are perfect for family picnics.



06

06 Yuanjue Temple Waterfall is a nice spot in Section 4 to enjoy a relaxing moment by the water. (Photo/Gao Zanzian)

07 Before ending the hike at Section 4, swing by Baishihu Suspension Bridge to reward yourself with a spectacular view.



07

SECTION 5: DAHU PARK → JIANTAN

The Jiantan Branch Line (劍潭支線), or Section 5, is a 13-kilometer trail that runs along the lower ridgeline between MRT Jiantan Station (捷運劍潭站) in Shilin (士林) and Bishan Temple in Neihu, where the path connects with Section 4. This route takes about six to seven hours to complete. It is an approachable, low-altitude hike that offers close-up views of the city.

If you choose to begin from Dahu Park, you can either hike up to the Bishan Temple or take Bus S2 (小2) from MRT Neihu Station (捷運內湖站). Venturing from Mt. Zhongyong, you will make your way through a mix of bush trails and mountain backroads. Much of the stone trail allows for an easy stroll through the bamboo forests that are iconic in East Asia.

Beyond Mt. Wenjian (文間山), by far the most popular stop on this trail is the Old Place Viewing Platform (老地方觀景平台) that faces Taipei Songshan Airport (台北松山機場), from there you also see Dajia Riverside Park (大佳河濱公園) and Taipei 101. Many photographers gather here to photograph the spectacle of planes taking flight.

There are other perfect vantage points that are less crowded along the Mt. Jiantan Trail (劍潭山步道). On the way you will find some military ruins such as sentry posts and old dorm houses. If you come in the afternoon, it is also a great sunset spot.

Then you can take the way down to Zhongshan North Road (中山北路) and MRT Jiantan Station.



08 Old Place Viewing Platform is one of the best locations in Taipei to for a great view of the river and airplanes taking off and landing.



SECTION 6: CHINA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY → MT. JIUWU → MT. MUZHI → FUYANG ECO PARK

The entrance to Section 6 is tucked away behind the China University of Science and Technology (中華科技大學). You can reach the university by taking Bus 620, amongst others, that run from MRT Nangang Exhibition Center Station (捷運南港展覽館站).

This is the most difficult section in the southern half of the Grand Trail. It's 12 kilometers in length and takes about five to six hours to complete. What makes this particular section more difficult is the peak elevation of 375 meters at Mt. Jiuwu (九五峯).

Due to the steep climb and the trail's proximity to the city, the views are the greatest seen from the southern ranges. Mt. Muzhi (拇指山) is the definite pinnacle of this trail. It's a narrow, rocky outcrop that protrudes from the dense forest below. Once you scale the ropes to get to the top, you are rewarded with an unobstructed 360-degree view of Taipei. With Taipei 101 ahead, and Muzha (木柵) behind, there is nowhere else quite like it. Just below the peak is the Horseshoe Platform (馬蹄形平台), which is the perfect place for lunch with a superb view.

The descent is steep, so tread carefully. Once Anlu Temple (安祿宮) is reached, the trail splits with one direction continuing to Section 7 and the other connecting to the small Fuyang Branch Line (富陽支線). The small stretch that links Mt. Jungong (軍功山), Mt. Zhongpu (中埔山) and Mt. Fuzhou (福州山) is mostly a dirt trail trekking through the bush. Section 6 terminates in the Fuyang Eco Park (富陽生態公園), close to MRT Linguang Station (捷運麟光站).

SECTION 7: NATIONAL CHENGCHI UNIVERSITY → ZHINAN TEMPLE TRIAL → MAOKONG

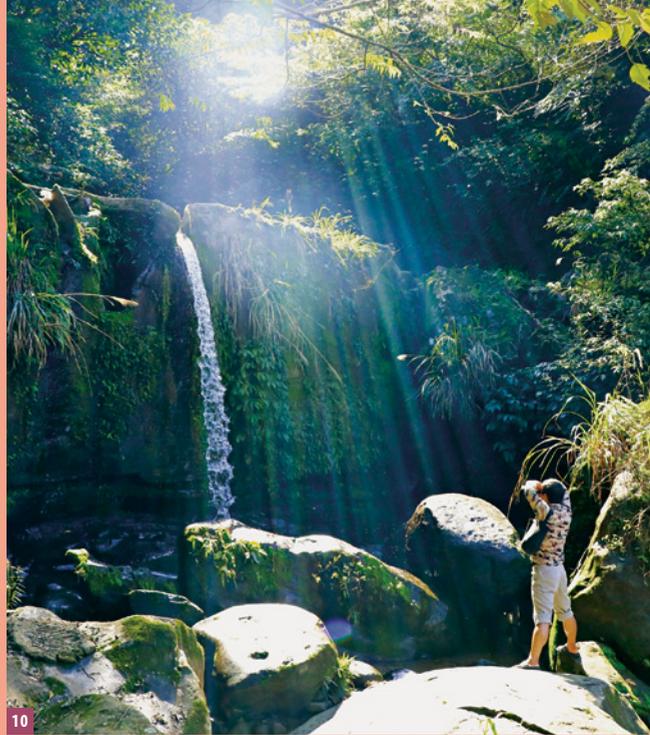
Section 7 is approximately 18 kilometers in length and takes an average of six to seven hours to complete. The trail can be continued directly from the Fuyang Branch Line in Section 6 by catching Bus 282 from Heping East Road Section 4 (和平東路四段) to National Chengchi University (國立政治大學). From there the entrance to the Zhinan Temple Trail (指南宮步道) can be found tucked away in a quiet neighborhood beside the university.

The final section of the Taipei Grand Trail is easy to manage due to the lower elevation and much of the trail follows the roads through Maokong. The first stretch leading up to Zhinan Temple is ornamented with stone Japanese lanterns and rest stops. The Zhinan Temple itself provides an excellent view of the southern hills of Taipei.

Not far behind it is the Maokong Gondola Station and the Green Light Platform (綠光平台) where you can watch as the cable cars quickly dip down into the valley below before zipping up to the final stop in Maokong. As you venture further into the forest, you can find the waterfall and the eponymous Maokong Potholes (貓空壺穴) further upstream.

Besides its namesake, Maokong is known for its many tea plantations dotting the hills which can be seen on the Taipei Tea Promotion Center for Tie Guanyin Tea and Baozhong Tea (台北市鐵觀音包種茶研發推廣中心) and Camphor Tree Trails (樟樹步道). Camphor harvesting in Taiwan dates back to the Japanese colonial era, yet another reminder of Taiwan's tempestuous history. The walk through the bustling tourist area of Maokong is easygoing, and there are numerous eateries with panoramic views of the slopes. There are also many outlets offering local snacks like tea-flavored ice cream.

The Color Cloud Pavilion (彩雲亭) is the last attraction as the trail winds back down the mountain, via the Feilong Trail (飛龍步道), to finally terminate within the grounds of National Chengchi University.



10

The Taipei Grand Trail is an incredible showcase of the natural splendor of Taiwan and the dynamic and thriving metropolis of Taipei. It is a gorgeous feast for the eyes and an invigorating challenge for the legs. It is such an ineffable and engaging way to travel around a modern city and it proves how unique, and how grand, Taipei genuinely is. **T**

09 Mt. Muzhi is the pinnacle of Section 6, offering a bird's eye view of Taipei City. (Photo/Fion)

10 Enjoy the sunlight at the waterfall before heading to the Maokong Potholes by following the trail by the creek.

For more information on Taipei Grand Trail

 gisweb.taipei.gov.tw/release/



(Logo/Geotechnical Engineering Office,
Public Works Department, Taipei City Government)



BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE BAOSHENG CULTURAL FESTIVAL

A NATIONAL TREASURE TALKS TRADITIONAL CHINESE PAPIER-MÂCHÉ

The annual Baosheng Cultural Festival (保生文化祭) is one of Taipei's major traditional festivals. It is centered on the large and magisterially ornate Baoan Temple (大龍峒保安宮), one of Taiwan's great places of religious worship, the only temple in Taiwan to have received a UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Award for Cultural Heritage Conservation.



01

With this year's event scheduled from April 15, various traditional ceremonies are highly anticipated. One of the visually spectacular events during the two-month celebration is the hour-long *fang huoshi* (放火獅), or in English the Fire Lion Fireworks Display, held at night in the temple-front plaza before wide-eyed crowds.

This is an impressive display of beehive fireworks power and the beauty of traditional papier-mâché. Tens of thousands of beehive mini-rockets are set off, blasting forward and setting the night sky alight in an explosion of colors. The big, ebulliently colorful, intricately sculpted and decorated papier-mâché fire lion, huge as a hippo, is set alight. The fire and explosions are believed to frighten away nasty beings from the netherworld, thus warding off disease and other evildoings, protecting the community.

Our focus is not the fireworks spectacle, however, but the aesthetics and craftsmanship of the fire lion artwork and traditional Chinese papier-mâché art in general. The brilliant master papier-mâché craftsman behind the Baoan Temple event is Lee Ching-rong (李清榮). Among his many laurels is the bestowal of a Taipei Master of Traditional Arts Award (台北市傳統藝術藝師獎) from the city government last year. *TAIPEI* recently visited Master Lee at his studio off Wenchang Street (文昌街) to learn more about Chinese papier-mâché in general, his own background, his paper lion work, and the practicalities of creating papier-mâché art works.



02

01 Lee Ching-rong, a master of Chinese papier-mâché, is known for his 100% handmade *zhiza* artworks that frequently appear in cultural and religious events in Taiwan.

02 One of Lee's specialties is to design and make spiritual animals and legendary creatures such as fire lions.



► Video Interview



THE STORY OF CHINESE PAPIER-MÂCHÉ – HUZHI AND ZHIZA

Both *huzhi* (糊紙) and *zhiza* (紙紮) are Chinese terms to describe papier-mâché. The first is literally “paste paper,” and refers to papier-mâché arts in general. “*Zhiza* is more specific,” says Lee, “meaning ‘paper offerings.’ In truth, however, most Chinese people associate *huzhi* with *zhiza*.” — meaning the paper artworks burnt as offerings to the gods or ancestors.

“My understanding is that *zhiza* dates back to the Ming Dynasty (明朝, 1368 A.D. – 1644 A.D.),” he states. “History books I have read show the art form is depicted for the first time in woodblock prints from that period.” It seems that papier-mâché in the general sense goes back much further, however, to the Han Dynasty (漢朝), around 200 A.D., about a

century after the Chinese invented paper, making such papier-mâché items as mirror cases, snuff boxes, ceremonial masks, and even warrior helmets.

OLD AND MODERN PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE ART

“Through the centuries, *zhiza* have most commonly been used as offerings to ancestors or to the gods, usually at temples. In the former case, whatever is burnt, such as, today, a miniature mansion or expensive car, is ‘sent’ to the next world for their comfort or enjoyment. Artworks sent to the gods are generally to honor them,” Lee explains.

Their use in funerary rites and ancestor worship long meant the association of traditional papier-mâché

arts with taboos and fear. “I was born in rural Baihe Township (白河鎮) in today’s Tainan City (台南市), from the third generation of a family of *zhiza* masters. In school, I didn’t dare tell my classmates what we did at home, just saying we had a ‘small business.’ Thankfully, attitudes have started to change since the 1990s, with the rise of the ‘native soil’ (鄉土) movement, when Taiwan’s people began to embrace and celebrate our own unique cultural heritage. Today most people appreciate *zhiza* for the artistry, craftsmanship, and role it has played in Taiwan’s history.”

TODAY’S CHANGING ZHIZA — LEE’S ROLE IN CREATING “NEW TRADITIONS”

“You could say that, when studying as a disciple under my father and many masters, I was not the best student,” Lee says. “Emphasis had always been on duplicating exactly what masters of the past had done, but I’ve always thought that since society constantly changes, why can’t an art form see innovation and ‘modernize’ as well, while still respecting tradition? I hope that through my many years of innovative works, people can better understand and appreciate the depth and beauty behind both traditional folk culture and this proud craft.”

Lee also hopes that the ever-increasing sophistication of his works will attract people of different religious beliefs to appreciate the aesthetics of traditional papier-mâché craftsmanship. He is known for the dynamic three-dimensionality of his works. “Traditionally, works were highly two-dimensional. I studied fine arts in my formal post-secondary schooling, and have sought to develop a style emphasizing three-dimensionality, dynamic movement, and modern aesthetics. I’ve spent a great deal of time studying the work of the best local masters around Taiwan, studied Western sculpting techniques, and closely studied video game art.” His studies have also brought him to expand the range of his subjects outside the strictly religious realm — he’s even done cartoon characters.

“By innovating and modernizing, my hope is that new blood is attracted. Today, young people are stepping

forward, but they will not commit to the full traditional apprenticeship, which takes about three years and four months. This is the time needed to acquire the technique skills, but just as important, to acquire deep understanding of related cultural and religious connotations,” Lee says.

Nowadays, new talent generally comes from formal art studies programs, and individuals study (Chinese papier-mâché) on their own, but won’t become formal apprentices. “I will help them with any questions they have. Nonetheless, what happens is that even if they acquire the mechanical skills, they suffer in terms of cultural/religious understanding, which shows in their artworks,” he adds.

- 03 The figures in Taiwanese religion or traditional folk beliefs are often the inspiration behind *zhiza* art.
- 04 For master Lee, the art of *zhiza* not only includes the elements of paper, but can also combine materials such as fabrics, or even hair, to vividly display the expression of each figure.





WHERE TO SEE ZHIZA AND MASTER LEE'S WORKS

Taiwan is a place that loves the modern cutting-edge, says Lee, but his business and those of many fellow masters continue to thrive. *Zhiza* works are still in great demand in local society. The three key markets are temple events, funerary and ancestor-worship rites, and offerings by businesses beseeching blessings from the gods for commercial prosperity, such as for new business launches or on key religious dates, are commonly held in public outside a firm's premises. "In recent decades, orders from businesses have faded, however, because of tightening eco-protection restrictions on publicly burning materials," says Lee.

Moreover, Lee has been providing fire lions to Baoan Temple for over ten years now, starting after its original fire lion master passed away. "In the beginning they provided much input, but they trust me completely now, so each design is fully my own. Their only stipulation is that its primary color is gold, which represents wealth and prosperity."

Lee also works annually with Bangka Qingshan Temple (艋舺青山宮) for the Qingshan King Rituals

(青山王祭典), which together with the Baoan Temple celebrations are two of Taipei's "Big Three" annual folk festivals. In addition, he says, the Taipei City Government will soon be putting his work on long-term public display at the Bopiliao Historic Block, a popular heritage-site attraction in Wanhua District.

A LOOK AT MASTER LEE'S PAPIER-MÂCHÉ CREATIVE PROCESS

During *TAIPEI's* visit, Master Lee uses a fire lion work-in-progress and an almost human-sized effigy of the earth god Tudi Gong (土地公) to demonstrate papier-mâché technique. Fire lions generally involve the most work, and take about 15 days to complete. First, a bamboo framework is created, and in northern Taiwan Makino Bamboo is often used. Rigid bamboo sections are used for such things as straight-line support pillars; more elastic sections are for curving items such as roof ridges and arms. Lee uses steel wire for arms, etc. instead, considering its greater pliability. "It helps me better capture fluidity and posture dynamism," he explains.

The next stage of shaping involves the forming of newspaper over the framework, glued in place. After

this, papier-mâché paste is applied in final forming in places to be left exposed, such as the head, paws, and other body parts for the fire lion. In some instances, intricate works like heads are sculpted separately and then fitted to the framework, which Lee demonstrates for Tudi Gong effigy.

Finally, the many different final touches. Traditional paper-cut art is used for such things as Tudi Gong's intricate headdress, built in layers. In the past, papier-mâché paste was even used for such elements as deities' robes, then painted, but the innovative Lee uses materials such as canvas, again to better capture fluidity and a sense of movement. He also freely uses different materials, for example wood, metal, and plastic, both in the shaping and in final exterior adornment, if he finds they produce a better aesthetic effect.

A MASTER'S GREATEST DIFFICULTY

Lee says that "deities and animals — dragons, lions, horses, etc., which all have auspicious symbolism — are the most difficult to do, because you must exactly

capture and convey their inner character (the aforementioned cultural/religious connotations) through the visage, posture, and movement. For the gods, the flowing nobility of the pleated robes and delicacy of such things as hems and cuffs is something only the finest masters can master." By no coincidence, deities and animals are the two types of artwork he is best known for.

"My goal is to create works of such exquisite detail and beauty that the buyers cannot bear to burn them," says Lee. This has in fact happened more than once, with temples deciding to enshrine his papier-mâché deities on their altar tables. "However, I shouldn't hope for too much success this way," he laughs, "because if people don't come back every year with new business — I'm out of business!" T

-
- 05 With 40 years of experience, master Lee specializes in designing, paper cutting, and every single step in the production of *zhiza*.
 - 06-07 The first step of making *zhiza* is to cut bamboo into long sticks and assemble them to frame the creation.
 - 08-09 After framing, the next step is to paste the newspaper on the frame as a base before carefully placing decorative materials on the outside.





ON LOCATION: THE BIG SCREEN GUIDE TO EXPLORING THE CITY

Watching movies filmed in different cities and countries has been an efficient way for people to explore the world, especially at the time when travel activities are limited due to the ongoing pandemic. Through the lenses of filmmakers, we may discover the city from angles we have never thought of, and get to know people's varied ways of life, even when they are thousands of miles away.

Taipei, the frenetic capital of Taiwan, is home to both the modern and the ancient. In Taipei, you'll find state-of-the-art skyscrapers reaching into the clouds as well as ancient old streets and wharves revealing the capital's long history as a trade hub. Looming behind almost every Taipei City scene are towering mountains. As a basin city, peaks circle Taipei, giving a fresh and green backdrop to the urban setting.

No wonder, then, that Taipei has played host to some of the country's — and the world's — most popular audiovisual works like TV dramas and films. Luc

Besson's 2014 thriller *Lucy*, for example, represents Taipei to the world from its Sci-Fi point of view.

Shooting on location brings all the vibrancy and energy of Taipei City life to the screen. Those of us wishing to explore the city can take some of those famous scenes as inspiration to get to know Taipei even better.

In addition to Hollywood productions, more and more locally-produced films from Taipei can be watched everywhere as long as one is connected. Thanks to streaming services, an increasing number of Taiwan-based movies are now accessible to audiences across the world. Just turn on your devices and you will find authentic stories and scenes set in Taipei.

Here are some of the amazing filming locations in Taipei selected from audiovisual works released in recent years which you can enjoy at home to learn more about this lovely city.

A SUN: HUANAN VILLAGE

Gritty family drama *A Sun* (陽光普照, 2019) depicts some of the darker aspects of Taipei life. The 2019 film by established Taiwanese auteur Chung Mong-hong (鍾孟宏) follows a Taipei family ripped apart by sex, crime, and death. Not for the faint-hearted, the winner of multiple Golden Horse Awards, the most prestigious film award in Taiwan, takes a deep dive into the loves and losses of some of Taipei's residents. Many of the film's most moving scenes were filmed in the iconic streets of Huanan Village (化南新村) in Muzha, one of Taipei's oldest neighborhoods.

National Chengchi University built Huanan Village as a dormitory for staff in the 1950s, but, for the last five years, residents and supporters have been campaigning to halt its demolition. The area is iconic for its stout red-brick buildings covered with luscious greenery. Chung said he filmed scenes in the area in the hope that the old houses would be preserved. Walking in the community, you will feel the atmosphere of old Taipei and the simple days in the past.



The historic architecture — brought to cinemas around the country by the masterful epic — has made the neighborhood popular with young Taiwanese, who enjoy walking through the romantic brick streets and posing for fashionable photos. The neighborhood's Insta-worthiness has been capitalized upon by a local group, Huanan Wanxing Vision Team (化南萬興願景團隊), who have created a cutesy map to guide you through the lanes and introduce some of the friendly residents. At the foot of the luscious Maokong, the village is also home to plenty of wildlife, including the iconic Taiwan Blue Magpie. Those wanting to make a day trip of Huanan Village can easily visit Taipei Zoo (台北市立動物園) just around the corner or hop on a cable car on the Maokong Gondola (貓空纜車) up to Maokong, known for its fresh air and tea farms.

- 01 Through movies, we can see the diverse sides and undiscovered corners of Taipei. (Photo/Taiwan Scene)
- 02 Huanan Village, where *A Sun* was filmed, keeps the poetry of red brick architecture alive. (Photo/ Taiwan Scene)
- 03 *A Sun*, released in 2019, was selected as a contender for the Academy Awards this year. (Photo/3 Ng Film)



YOUR NAME ENGRAVED HEREIN: NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY MARTYRS' SHRINE

Your Name Engraved Herein (刻在你心底的名字, 2020), a romantic drama by Patrick Kuang-Hui Liu (柳廣輝), has charmed audiences since its release in September last year. The movie, narrating a love affair between two boys at a Catholic high school, was the first LGBTQ-themed movie to make more than NT\$100 million at the box office in Taiwan. The movie follows students A-han and Birdy as they explore their feelings and sexuality amid a backdrop of the death of President Chiang Ching-kuo (蔣經國) and the end of martial law in Taipei.

A pivotal scene sees the two young lovers take a trip to Taipei to mourn the death of President Chiang at the National Revolutionary Martyrs' Shrine (國民革命忠烈祠). The movie shows hordes of mourners weeping at the shrine on the banks of the Keelung River (基隆河) and at Yuanshan (圓山). A brilliant example of classical Chinese architecture, the Martyrs' Shrine was built to worship martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the country. A-han and Birdy

take advantage of the trip into the city, away from the campus, to get to know one another better and explore the neighborhood around Yuanshan.

More than 30 years after the events of the film, the Martyrs' Shrine and the surrounding neighborhood are still well worth a visit. The Keelung River in the north of the city is lined with luscious parks and cycle ways, perfect for getting some fresh air without leaving the city. Just across the river from the Martyrs' Shrine is the Taipei Fine Arts Museum (台北市立美術館). This striking building (in the Japanese Metabolist style) features some of Asia's best contemporary art and hosts the Taipei Biennial.

-
- 04 *Your Name Engraved Herein* depicts the love story of two boys under a fast changing society at the end of the 1980s. (Photo/Oxygen Film)
 - 05 At the National Revolutionary Martyrs' Shrine, you can witness the changing of the guard on the hour.
 - 06 In *Your Name Engraved Herein*, the protagonists came to Taipei to join the memorial service for the late president, leading to the beginning of an innocent love. (Photo/Oxygen Film)





07

FRESH OFF THE BOAT: THE GRAND HOTEL

Undisputedly the most renowned hotel in Taiwan, The Grand Hotel (圓山大飯店) has played host to important events on screen and off since it opened nearly 70 years ago. The gargantuan and opulent building, constructed in the classical Chinese style, is viewable from all over the city and only Taipei 101 rivals it as a city landmark. The hotel's grand rooms and vast dining halls have played host to foreign dignitaries, celebrities, and a number of film crews for decades.

Edward Yang's (楊德昌) 2000 classic *Yi Yi: A One and a Two* (一一) opens with a huge wedding reception at the Grand Hotel and sees eight-year-old Yang Yang climbing the lobby's iconic oversized flight of red-carpeted steps. In 2016, US-series *Fresh Off the Boat* opened its third season with the Huang family (the mother played by Constance Wu of *Crazy Rich Asians*) returning to Taiwan and staying at the iconic residence.

Recently, the hotel has attracted local tourists who have long desired to try out the hotel's coveted rooms themselves. Some great staycation deals have helped ensure the Grand Hotel is just as bustling as ever. Another draw is the hotel's unique feature, a (once) secret escape tunnel built by the late President Chiang Kai-shek (蔣中正).



08

Chiang built the hotel as a place to host visiting dignitaries after the Nationalist government retreated to Taiwan, and the escape tunnel features concrete slides to ensure quick evacuation. The hotel's guided tour takes you down this quirky artifact of Taiwan's past and enlightens guests to other unique features of the astonishing hotel.

Nearby is the world-famous Shilin Night Market (士林觀光夜市), the place to pick up Taiwan street food classics such as giant fried chicken chop (大雞排), *shuijianbao* (pan-fried stuffed bun, 水煎包), and stinky tofu. To burn off all those calories, there are trails up the mountain behind the hotel, perfect for taking in Taipei's nighttime cityscape after an indulgent dinner. **T**

-
- 07 The Grand Hotel is one of the most iconic buildings in Taipei, with its awe-inspiring palatial architecture.
 - 08 The secret escape tunnel built by late President Chiang Kai-shek is now open to the public.



WHERE ARE ALL THE FLOWERS FROM? UNEARTH TAIPEI FLOWERS AUCTION WITH CHING FLOWERS

It is 2:30 a.m., but the day is just getting started for flower shop owner Jimmy Ching (景志銘) and his wife Yvonne Tseng (曾郁涵). Tucked away in the hustle and bustle of the Taipei Flowers Auction (台北花卉批發市場) is their family-owned shop, Ching Flowers (永進花卉), which has been in operation in Taipei for over 30 years. As a flower wholesaler, they cater to a wide variety of customers, ranging anywhere from retailers to floral arrangement workshop teachers to studio owners. But who are the people behind Ching Flowers?

BACK TO THE ROOT

It all started in 1983 with a small roadside stall on Taipei's Jiuquan Street (酒泉街) and Jimmy's parents. Both are from Houli (后里), a rural township in the central Taiwan, and began their original quest in the flower wholesale business with the hope of representing and improving the lives of local growers from their hometown. Working day in and day out, more and more growers became willing to hand over the flowers they had worked so tirelessly to grow, and eventually the family business expanded.

In the '90s, the industry began to expand, allowing Ching Flowers to move from their humble roadside stall to the second floor of Binjiang Market (濱江市場), and then eventually to its current Neihu location. The improvement of hardware and equipment made flower production and marketing more and more complete, thus cementing their place in the wholesale flower market. With Jimmy's parents' retirement in 2014, the family business was handed over to Jimmy and Yvonne, with the integrity and values of the shop still unchanged to this day.

-
- 01 At Ching Flowers, flower-lovers can buy flowers from across Taiwan and the world.
 - 02 Flower wholesalers join the flower auction everyday at 3:30 a.m. bidding for flowers from all over the world. (Photo/Taipei Flowers Auction)

THE EARLY BIRD GETS THE WORM

Having had such a jumpstart to the morning, the couple has more than enough time to arrange their stands, roll out their flowers, and prepare for the imported flower auction that begins every day at 3:30 a.m. With the introduction of the Internet and modern technology, all of the bidding is now done online.

"The bidding is basically four conveyor belts grouped by various imported flowers," Jimmy tells us. "There is a large screen indicating the condition of each flower, and then the bidding begins." How does the auction process differ from that of other industries?

"Normally, a regular auction begins with the lowest price, and then goes up. But with the floral industry, to save time, bidding starts high and then goes down, so the process is actually quite different," Jimmy exclaims. "But there are still many things to consider when buying, for example the condition of the flowers, the quality, as well as which grower it came from. Some growers are better or more reputable than others," he explains.

"Including our imported flowers, we usually have roughly 60 to 70 different species of flowers at our shop on any given day or time," Jimmy says proudly. "For example, one of our most popular flowers, the Chinese bellflower, has ten species alone. But that doesn't mean we sell out of all of them every day!" he chuckles. "That's why we have to rearrange our stands every morning," he adds.



GETTING READY FOR SPRING

With winter passed, Jimmy is currently preparing their stock for the onset of spring, a time when his customers are looking to fill their homes and businesses with floral accents once more. He shares with us, “Actually, most customers have a bunch of flower vases lying around at home and are just looking to fill them with nice flowers. It’s rarer that they’re using other items like floral foam unless they’ve actually taken a specific course on flower arrangement,” he remarks, “So, that means most of our business is centered around flowers that are easy to manage and vase-friendly, too.”

He notes that there are some common players popular all year round, including chrysanthemums, lilies, roses, and orchids. Jimmy exclaims, “They’re considered ‘common,’ since they’re much easier to manage, minus the thorns on roses, of course!”

“In springtime, that is when the Lunar New Year holiday passes, we can expect to roll out local spring flowers such as cornflowers, blue lace flowers, little silverbells, blue dazes, thistles, calla lilies, and dancing-doll orchids — just to name a few. Some of them are already available now.” He points to an area where we see several bunches of blue and purple blossoms. Jimmy walks a bit further down and points to another interesting flower. “When the weather gets warmer in spring, we will also get special imported ones. For example, this one here,” he takes a bundle of white flowers. “This is called sweet pea, imported from Japan,” he says, while bending down to take in the fresh aroma. We take a whiff ourselves. It has just the right touch of a light scent dotted with spring.

When asked if there is any particular flower that can only be found in Taiwan, Jimmy grasps a bunch of flowers which have brown dots on their yellow-greenish petals. “This is a kind of spider lily, which is cultivated in Taiwan in recent years. It is usually exported to other places such as Europe or the U.S. But with the COVID-19 pandemic going on right now, they have turned to the local market instead,” Jimmy shares. The variety is very special and is responsible for one of the trophies Jimmy won at the auction in the morning. At the time we finish the interview, all of them are sold out.



Once known as “Orchid Capital of the World,” Taiwan has developed and cultivated many special orchids, including the spider lily. Taipei Flowers Auction is where you might have the opportunity to get a glimpse of them.

Ching Flowers

- 📍 Shop #1507, 28, Xinhua 3rd Rd., Neihu Dist.
- 🕒 3:00am - 12:00 noon (Closed on Sundays)

LOYAL CUSTOMER BASE

“Many of our customers are long-time, loyal clients who keep coming back because they know we never compromise on quality,” Jimmy says proudly. “This is also why customer service is such an important component of the business, and also the most difficult,” he chuckles.

What are some other difficult parts on the job? “I’d say waking up early — definitely!” he smiles. “Also, the floral industry is different from others because there is the factor of freshness involved. So, it’s an issue of maintaining the flowers’ freshness while also accommodating fluctuations in the market and price. Also, there is often a shortage in supply, so sometimes we really have to fight for certain types, especially imported or rare flowers. Lastly, there is some physical labor involved as well since we’re constantly moving heavy boxes and pots filled with water.” Jimmy then goes on and chuckles, “But then again, when is any work considered easy?”

When asked about his biggest achievement in the business, Jimmy proudly introduces the website of the shop. “It is the first wholesale fresh flower website in all of Taiwan, and it only began when I took over,” he remarks. “It’s a feat in and of itself because it had never been done before by anyone else, since selling flowers on the internet is very challenging,” he explains. “The prices of the flowers vary every day based on the auction and the market, therefore, running an online flower shop means that we have to keep the price updated all the time to make sure clients buy the flowers with the correct price. The online business also offers new access for people who cannot visit the flower market in person.”

- 03 Jimmy Ching, the second generation of Ching Flowers, wakes up incredibly early every day.
- 04 Ching Flowers sells around 60 to 70 varieties of flowers every day including colorful imported roses.
- 05 Taipei Flowers Auction in Neihu is a wonderland for flower lovers with more than a thousand vendors selling a variety of flowers and potted plants.



05



06-07 Flowers arrangement and plant freshness checking are indispensable daily tasks of Ching Flowers.

08 Holding a bunch of colorful flowers, Jimmy invites readers of *TAIPEI* to take the springtime vibe back home with them.

09-10 Ching Flowers offers seasonal flowers as well as several local varieties such as spider lilies (left) with vivid colors and spring time flowers such as blue dazes and thistles (right).



TAKING A STROLL AROUND TAIPEI FLOWERS AUCTION

As the biggest and most diverse flower market in all of Taiwan, the Taipei Flowers Auction has plenty to offer for everyone. "It's quite easy to get around," Jimmy tells us. "There are clear, distinct signs everywhere that will point you in the right direction. For example, the building next door sells potted plants," he says while pointing in a different direction. "So, if customers ask us why we don't sell potted plants, we just point to the signs," he laughs slightly. "All of our stands are actually quite different, yet similar. For example, some shops sell only leaves, while others sell mostly imported varieties. The biggest difference lies in the customer service and quality of the flowers."

Jimmy goes on to add, "Additionally, every shop has a different target audience. The kind of flowers you would expect to find at a stall in a department store would be different from the flowers you would find at a wholesale market, and vice versa." What about the target audience for Ching Flowers? "Our customers are usually a bit younger, and mostly consist of flower shops or studio owners," he shares. "A lot of the young generation nowadays are quite adventurous, opening up their own flower arrangement workshops and taking their own orders."

POWER OF THE FLOWERS

As one of the longstanding sellers in, Jimmy explains the way trades are made at Taipei Flowers Auction. “Usually, most flowers at the market are sold by the bundle or bunch unless it’s a particularly expensive or exotic flower. For example, the hydrangea or orchid is usually sold individually, and both aren’t cheap.” He also notes that some flowers, such as baby’s breath and Gypsophila, are sold by weight since they’re too difficult to count by the stem.

Speaking of the most interesting flower that Jimmy has ever bought in his flower trading business, “It’d

have to be a Christmas tree!” he recalls, laughing. “It was a special order for a client and had to be imported. It even measured around 200 centimeters!” As we look around and take in all the variety and uniqueness of Ching Flowers, it seems no task is too difficult for these determined owners.

Actually, it might take superpowers to be flower wholesalers. Starting a day by waking up at midnight, and carrying the heavy loads of flowers in and out of the market after the early morning bidding, Jimmy and Yvonne enable us to enjoy a floral spring in Taipei. T



A JOURNEY OF FOOD AND DISCOVERY: A KIWI IN TAIPEI

Both island nations with proud indigenous cultures, not to mention having displayed two of the world's best responses to the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, Taiwan and New Zealand definitely have their similarities. For one woman, the two countries have a special place in her heart in particular, as she has been lucky enough to call both home. Having lived in Taipei for four years, Moira Turley left her post as Director of the New Zealand Commerce and Industry Office in Taipei and returned to her native Wellington just before last Christmas. *TAIPEI* sat down for a chat with Moira just before she left to talk about all things Taipei and Taiwanese food, as well as learn about her and how her previous postings compare to life in the Taiwanese capital.

COMING BACK TO ASIA

Despite having never been to Taipei or Taiwan before, taking up a position in Taipei just made sense for Moira, as she longed to return to Asia. "When I was looking for somewhere to go offshore again, I was keen to stay in this region," she says, giving a nod towards her time spent based in Manila. "I was looking for somewhere, now that I have a young family, that was good to take children and my partner, too. Taiwan, for New Zealand, is a really strong economic relation, and there's a strong indigenous connection, which makes things even more fascinating."



01

01 With years of experience of being a diplomat, food lover Moira Turley takes the opportunity to try all kinds of food from different countries.

(Photo/Samil Kuo)

02 Known for Sichuanese dishes such as spicy pork dumplings, Chili House is one of Moira's favorite restaurants in Taipei. (Photo/Samil Kuo)

While Taipei is such a densely populated city, Moira was pleasantly surprised at how Taipei isn't that crowded, and how easy it is to get around the city, praising the MRT system in particular. "It was also much greener than I thought it would be," she adds, commending several of Taipei's parks. "It's a really easy place to have you kids go to school and learn a little bit about the cultural differences."

A GOURMET'S TAIPEI FOODIE EXPERIENCE

Having previously served in various countries, Moira is a major foodie who enjoys experiencing authentic cuisine from different lands. Looking back on her four years in the city, she admits she was not really familiar with this part of Asia. "I've not lived in North Asia before, so I didn't know much about the regional variations. I didn't realize Taiwanese cuisine has influences from China and Japan, which make it a lot more diverse than I had expected, and that has been great."

Keen on spicy food, giving a special mention to Sichuan cuisine (四川菜, a style of spice-heavy cooking originating in China's Sichuan Province), Moira outlines some of her and her family's favorite spots to eat in the city. "We really like Chili House (四川吳抄手)," she says fondly. Chili House is a Sichuanese eatery that originally started out as a noodle shop more than 60 years ago, and from then has transformed into a Bib Gourmand restaurant known for its signature pork dumplings.

In addition to flavor-rich Sichuan cuisine, many of Taipei's most-praised restaurants are also Moira's favorites. As a foodie paradise, Taipei has been on the Michelin map since 2018. A fan of Taipei's Michelin-vaunted restaurants (and why wouldn't she be?), Moira had already visited two the week we met, Cantonese eateries Le Palais (頤宮) and Three Coins (大三元酒樓); three- and one-star respectively. The former is known for its crispy roast duck and tofu dishes, while at the latter you must try the steamed abalone and the seafood baked in papaya.

Despite obviously enjoying the top-end luxury of Taipei's fine dining scene, Moira actually prefers the more affordable Michelin Bib Gourmand restaurants, for these budget-friendly eateries usually provide a wide variety of local options. "They're much more diverse," she explains.

However, it's not all Michelin dining for Moira and her family. And it shouldn't be for you, either, if you want to experience Taipei properly. "The night markets are great! The baked pepper buns (*hujiao bing*, 胡椒餅) at Raohe Street Night Market (饒河街觀光夜市) are fantastic, but these days there's always a really long



queue! My kids really like the scallion pancakes (*congyou bing*, 蔥油餅), and you can get those everywhere. They're really good," she adds. "Going to night markets with kids is one of the best ways to experience local culture, interact with locals and most importantly, trying the most authentic food," says Moira.

In addition to night markets, Moira is also amazed by how diverse the food choices are in Taipei. "One of the things I will really miss is that you can go to not just night markets, but food courts here and get really great food. In New Zealand for some reason, food courts are just awful. It's McDonald's, KFC and not much else. Here you can go anywhere and you'll get really good food."

One perhaps slightly controversial view she has on Taipei's food is that she isn't a fan of hotpot, which is

highly popular with the locals. "I just figure I can cook at home," she laughs. However, she does like beef noodle soup and also the spicy wontons (*hongyou chaoshou*, 紅油抄手) from Din Tai Fung, so we'll let her off the hook this time. With Din Tai Fung in mind, Moira is very aware there is no branch of Din Tai Fung in her home country. "I've made this point to very many people!" she chuckles. "There's one in Australia, but there is not one in New Zealand... yet!"

03-05 Le Palais, the only 3-star Michelin restaurant in Taipei, is known for its high-class dining environment and Cantonese cuisine.

06 Night markets are another key feature of Taiwan's food culture for Moira, with Raohe Street Night Market one of her favorites. (Photo/fazon1)

07 Baked pepper buns are a common street food in Taipei and are a snack favored by Moira's children. (Photo/Taiwan Scene)



03



04



05



06

FINDING KIWI HOME COMFORTS IN TAIPEI

As with every expat in a country dissimilar to their own, Moira likes to seek out home comforts that remind her of her roots. When talking about New Zealand food in Taipei, she gives a shout-out to Kiwi Gourmet Burger, in the National Taiwan Normal University (國立師範大學) neighborhood, and their authentic New Zealand beef. “I really like KGB burgers. It’s New Zealand-owned and New Zealand themed and is generally what you’d get at home,” she says. “And the milkshakes are fantastic!”

Keen to cook at home as well as eat out, Moira also commends Taipei on how easy it is to find New Zealand products here, from beef to cookies. Also, due to the large number of Asian restaurants in New Zealand, when seeking out Asian food comforts, a visit to a Vietnamese spot, for example, surprisingly often does the trick.

FAMILY LIFE IN TAIPEI

Since her work had taken her to Turkey, Australia and the Philippines, moving to Taipei wasn’t overly daunting for Moira, but a challenge nonetheless, especially with family in tow. “I have a daughter who is 11 and twin boys who are ten, and they’ve really loved it [here in Taipei].” Her family thoroughly enjoyed their time in Taipei and Taiwan as a whole,



07

with Moira citing a recent visit to Kenting (墾丁) and Taroko Gorge (太魯閣), situated in the southernmost point and the eastern portion of the island respectively, as two family favorites.

One thing that is tough for every foreigner who relocates to Taiwan is learning the language, with Chinese being considered as one of the most difficult languages in the world to learn. While Moira does have some language-learning experience thanks to her time spent working in the Philippines and Turkey, she is no exception. “I learned a little bit of Tagalog,” she says. “Although most Filipinos speak English. I learned a bit more Turkish, so I could get round in Turkish a bit, but I am terrible in Chinese! It’s a hard language!”

One of the benefits and highlights of Moira’s time in Taipei is having had her children live here. “I think being exposed to another language at that age is very beneficial, as is being exposed to a different culture. It makes a big difference and has really broadened their horizons.” Learning Chinese and living in a comfortable and friendly environment like Taipei are incredibly beneficial as hospitable locals aren’t afraid to let foreigners try and chat with them, regardless of language ability, which minimized possible cultural shock for her family.

All in all, Moira’s time with her family in Taipei has been beneficial and enjoyable, and she left the city with many fond memories and, by the sound of things, a full stomach. **T**

INNOVATIVE TEA FOR A NEW GENERATION WITH WANGTEA LAB

Tea is the world's most widely-consumed drink, and in Taipei, you're (probably) never more than a few feet away from someone enjoying a cup of chá. A drink rich in tradition, culture, and history, Taiwanese tea is seen as a beverage for the older generations, with Taipei's young people preferring more stylish drinks such as coffee, bubble tea, and craft beer. As with a lot of industries in the capital these days, teahouses have to keep up with the times and adapt to the changing needs of their clientele.

With the rise of influencer culture in recent years, not only do drinks in Taipei today need to taste good, they also need to look good. To many people, taking a picture of their drink is equally, if not more, important than drinking it. At one teahouse in Dadaocheng (大稻埕), they are not only finding ways to appeal to Taipei's youth, but also maintaining the tradition that has seen their family business thrive for more than 130 years.

Wang Tea (有記名茶) has been in operation since 1890, and last year took a big leap into the modern market by opening the very stylish Wangtea Lab on Chongqing North Road (重慶北路), right between Dadaocheng's famous Dihua Street (迪化街) and Ningxia Night Market (寧夏夜市).

DRINKING TEA IN WAYS YOU NEVER THOUGHT

Looking more like a trendy bar than a teahouse, Wangtea Lab, conveniently located next door to Wang Tea's tea factory and tea museum, boasts a menu as forward-thinking as its design, offering drinks such as sparkling tea and even tea beer as part of their draught series.

Far from the average teahouse, Wangtea Lab's modern approach and aesthetic is owed to a quickly changing tea market in Taipei, with younger generations just not as into traditional tea culture as their predecessors. "Young people drink tea, but they don't drink it the old-fashioned way," Jason Wang (王聖鈞), a fifth generation Wang Tea tea maker/trader and manager of Wangtea Lab, tells *TAIPEI*.

"A lot of young people drink bubble tea, but seldom do the younger generations go to teahouses to brew tea themselves. We see it as a niche market." Jason thus planned to do something between bubble tea and the tradition of old-school teahouses.

At Wangtea Lab, he is trying to make something different. "We have sparkling tea, for example. We're trying to use ways that haven't been used in the tea business here [in Taiwan]," Jason explains.

This is part of where the idea for Wangtea Lab came from. Jason wanted to cash in on the gap in the market, while also fulfilling his father's dream of opening a family teahouse.

01-02 At Wangtea Lab, you can enjoy traditional tea blend with innovative style and enjoy the tea in the modern space.





 **WANGTEA**
LAB 有 記
Blending Roasting Brewing

SS A YI





03

INNOVATIVE FAMILY LEGACY

“At the very beginning, like five to ten years ago, my dad wanted to open a teahouse. An old-fashioned one. But it never materialized until now, so he said, ‘Okay, you can do what you want to do right here.’” Jason was given complete creative freedom for the project. “My family actually had no idea what I was going to do. I think they are very supportive. My father is a very open-minded person. So, if I make a new kind of tea, I ask him to try it to see if it’s ok, or if it needs some adjustment.”

From an innovative menu introducing the roasting and blending of tea in different levels and varieties, you’ll find many interesting and delicious drinks at Wangtea Lab that Jason wants people to try.

“I would say you definitely need to try our draught series. It’s something you can’t try in other places,” he smiles. “We also blend different kinds of tea. People can get the single types of tea at other tea shops, but you cannot get blended tea. We blend two, sometimes three types of tea together to come up with some new flavors.”

He is also adamant on his store not just becoming another bubble tea chain. “What we sell here, the tea

has no sugar and no bubbles. But with milk, I needed to make a compromise,” he laughs. With milk tea being consumed so widely in Taipei, he knew it would be a bad idea to keep it off the menu. “At the beginning, I didn’t want to sell milk tea. But there’s a really big market for it.” Sometimes you have to make sacrifices to make businesses thrive.

DISCOVER NEW TEA DRINKING CONCEPTS WITH WANGTEA LAB

Jason explains how he came up with his shop’s innovative ideas and creative flavors. “I came back to the family after my graduate studies in Boston in 2012, but had been involved in the family business since college. So, I already knew the background and the basics of how we could do it [blending tea]. It’s trial and error until you get the best product, which we’ve got right here.”

For example, the sparkling tea is one of the products that Jason had to keep experimenting with to see how it would go in the beginning. As he recalls, “We would experiment. The carbon dioxide would cover the smell, so you’d need to use a very floral or fruity-smelling tea to make it. We also found out that using nitrogen gas would make it taste much smoother than one with carbon dioxide.”

Wangtea Lab’s draught series is unique, with nowhere else in Taipei offering tea in this style, as is their pour-over series, whereas other tea shops and teahouses still use the old-fashioned way, using the teapot, or the *gaibe* (蓋杯, covered cup), or *gaiwan* (蓋碗, covered bowl), to pour their tea. “Also, we’ve got the whole series where we use the whole leaf to brew the tea,” said Jason. “We don’t crush them. Using the whole leaves has a better aroma. I would also say it tastes better.”

“We want to let more people know about Taiwanese tea culture, but we are using a different way to present it. So, here you’re not just drinking tea, you are also acquiring some knowledge about tea. Looking at our menu, you can learn about the fermentation and the roasting. You can also go to our tea factory.”

To figure out how to make his store appealing to customers, Jason used other business models for inspiration. "I observed different businesses. For example, I would try to figure out why people would rather go to a coffee shop than a tea house to do their homework or to chit chat with friends. What are the elements that I can borrow from a coffee shop?" Jason adds: "Also, there is a cocktail brand called Draft Land, which is very popular in Taipei, and they've got so many different flavors and they use a very easy way to present the cocktails to their customers. Easy and fast, less is more."

Meanwhile, Wangtea Lab collaborates with other beverage makers to put more twists on their tea. Last summer, Sunmai (金色三麥), a Taiwanese brewery, debuted a *baozhong* tea (包種茶) beer at convenience stores, which uses tea from Wangtea. Jason then asked the beer brewer to customize a flavor for Wangtea Lab, which has a stronger tea flavor compared to the one sold in convenience stores.

- 03 Wangtea Lab provides a wide range of tea options for guests to try, with different blending and roasting levels.
- 04 Jason Wang, the fifth generation manager of Wang Tea shares his goals and expectations regarding creating a new tea-drinking space.
- 05 One of the most unique products at Wangtea Lab is its draught series.





EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITIES OF TEA

Wangtea Lab has been well received so far by tea insiders and regular customers alike. “We’ve gotten attention from people within the tea business, since it’s a totally different thing for them. Also, customers who are accustomed to going to coffee shops are intrigued by us,” Jason shares. He further indicates that the strategy for promoting this new place is to attract customers with cutting edge interior design.

Walking into Wangtea Lab, you’ll first see a modern look bar lying in the center of the space with a lantern made of bamboo structure hanging above. “Once they come in, they would realize we are not just selling normal tea,” he laughs.

Meanwhile, because Wang Tea is a famous brand with a long history, Jason noticed that people who already knew the brand would be curious about what Wangtea Lab can do that’s new within the tea business.

Jason’s goals for the future remain balanced and realistic. “Right now, because this is still a new thing to the market, we need to stabilize the whole business. Then, we want to come up with some new flavors for the draught and the pour-over, and see how to represent the brand in different locations. Maybe open a shop that just sells the draught series, or a shop that just sells the pour-over series.”

If you want to drink Taiwanese tea like you never have before, head to Wangtea Lab for a taste that is familiar but different, and an experience that is traditional but unlike any other. **1**

Wangtea Lab

📍 24, Ln. 64, Sec. 2, Chongqing N. Rd., Datong Dist.

🕒 12:00pm - 9:00pm (Mondays, Wednesdays to Saturdays)
10:00am - 7:00pm (Sundays)
(Closed on Tuesdays)

06 The space at Wangtea Lab includes elements of the family’s tea roasting history, along with its bright and open space.

FOUR INCONSPICUOUS RESTAURANTS THAT NEED NO NAME TO SHINE

Taipei has long been known as a street food paradise. No trip to Taipei is considered complete without visiting a night market and trying some Taiwanese snacks. Searching online, popular restaurants recommended by travel bloggers or international media can be easily found on Google Maps and the like. With tens of thousands of places to discover, it is always the most unpretentious taste that keeps surprising food lovers from all over the world. These small restaurants or stands in Taipei may not have a gorgeous name or brand, but instead have been selling only the same simple bowl of noodles or a humble pack of handmade buns for decades. However, it is precisely their simplicity makes the ordinary dishes extraordinary.

To find the authentic Taiwanese flavors, *TAIPEI* has undertaken a journey through the capital's dense, labyrinthine alleys and lanes. Here are four unassuming restaurants tucked in regular neighborhoods or hidden on inconspicuous street corners, yet their fabulous flavors have been supporting local residents' lives for years. It's time to let them be seen by the world.

01 There are many delicacies hidden in the alleys in Taipei. (Photo/Daivd Emrich)





石牌無名蛋餅

MARVELOUS EGG CREPE IN SHIPAI

BEITOU DIST.

As we always say: "Breakfast is the most important meal of the day." Our first restaurant without a name is a traditional Taiwanese breakfast stand in Shipai (石牌). Among its various choices on the menu, such as fried bread sticks (*youtiao*, 油條) and sticky-rice rolls (*fantuan*, 飯糰), their egg crepe (*danbing*, 蛋餅) is this unassuming establishment's signature dish. The egg crepe is 100% handmade and hand rolled by the owner, which makes it thicker than those made by machines. The texture is crispy on the outside and chewy at the inside, and goes extra amazing with the hot and sour sauce on the top. The famous Michelin-starred restaurant chef André Chiang (江振誠) once named the restaurant one of the most unforgettable of his youth, as he grew up in the Shipai neighborhood, making the little shop even more popular nowadays.

According to Chiang and every local in the neighborhood, the truly local way to enjoy the stand's egg crepe is to dip it into a bowl of hot rice milk (*mijiang*, 米漿), a plant-based milk made from brown rice and peanuts. Aside from the crepe, fried radish cakes (*luobo gao*, 蘿蔔糕) and sweet peanut soup are another two bestsellers at the shop. The skin of the radish cake is crispy, and tastes as perfect as it looks. As a traditional Taiwanese dessert, the sweet peanut soup provides a bowl of soft, smooth and luscious cooked peanuts, making it a glorious ending to your breakfast pilgrimage to Shipai.

📍 7, Ln. 48, Shijian St., Beitou Dist.

🕒 6:00am - 11:00am (Closed on Tuesdays)

- 02 The egg crepe store in Shipai is incredibly popular with locals.
- 03 Egg crepe, fried radish cakes, hot rice milk and peanut soup make the perfect combination for breakfast in Taipei.
- 04 Dipping egg crepe in hot rice milk is the most authentic way to enjoy this amazing food.



02



03



04



赤峰街無名排骨飯

RICE WITH PORK CHOP ON CHIFENG STREET

DATONG DIST.

Rice with pork chop, a common *bento* (便當, lunch box) option in Taiwan, plays an important role in Taiwanese food culture, as it's the juicy protein that powers much of the Taiwanese working class. This tiny restaurant, hidden in an old residential apartment on Chifeng Street (赤峰街), has been serving the palatable rice with pork chop for almost four decades, changing hands from the last generation to their daughter, who runs the place with her husband these days.

We are not kidding when we say the restaurant is small. The kitchen is tucked in a less-than four-square-meter corner, with other space stuffed with four tables that provide only ten seats. Regardless of the cramped space, it is their mouthwatering pork chop that wins the customers' hearts (and stomachs). The pork chops are marinated, fried and braised with soybean sauce, star anise, and sugar, making it a perfect balance of sweet and salty flavors. Priced at only NT\$100 for a set, it's the greatest value for your money, considering how thick the pork chop is. The finishing touch is the

runny egg on top. Make sure to mix the yolk with the rice and the vegetables! You can try the hot chops if you're into spicy food, which add yet more tantalizing flavors to this already appetizing meal.

Arriving at early lunch/dinner time is highly recommended, just in case the line is long or, heaven forbid, they are sold-out. We arrive on a Tuesday evening at around 7:00 p.m. By the time we sit down and finally enjoy the meal after waiting 30 minutes in line; the owner shouts out "Last two pork chops!" much to the disappointment of the customers behind us. That's how popular they are!

📍 4, Chifeng St., Datong Dist.

🕒 12:00pm - 2:00pm, 5:30pm - 8:00pm
(Closed on weekends)

05 The pork chop on Chifeng Street is fried before being braised, making it more juicy and tasty.



05



延壽街無名麵店

NAMELESS NOODLE SHOP ON YANSHOU STREET _____ SONGSHAN DIST.

Plain noodle soup (*yangchun mian*, 陽春麵), just a bowl of noodle soup with chopped green onions on top, is the best street eat to endorse the proverb “simplicity makes perfection.” If you’re looking for a perfect bowl of plain noodle soup, this nameless noodle shop on Yanshou Street (延壽街) will not let you down.

Located on the side of the busy road in Minsheng Community (民生社區), this noodle vender has no sign at all, making it even harder to spot the inconspicuous stall. Open from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., longer than the normal lunchtime eatery hours in Taipei, the shop is favored by local laborers who don’t have a fixed schedule. Even at 3:00 p.m., the stand is still lined with many off-duty taxi drivers or shop clerks, eager to grab a late lunch or an early dinner after a long shift. The star on the menu — plain noodle soup — is the most common dish on any Taiwanese dinner table, reminding of grandma’s cooking with its mild soup and soft noodles.

Their fresh-cooked *luwei* (滷味) is also a must-try when visiting the vendor, with braised kelp, pig scalp, pork jowl and dried tofu being the top choices for many customers.

📍 1, Aly. 20, Ln. 330, Yanshou St., Songshan Dist.

🕒 11:30am - 4:00pm (Closed on Sundays)



06



07

06-07 Plain noodle soup and *luwei* are common street foods in Taiwan.

08 It’s hard to believe that an inconspicuous stall at the corner of Yanshou Street is the top choice for many local workers and residents.



08



士林深夜生炒羊肉

LATE NIGHT STIR-FRIED LAMB AT SHILIN NIGHT MARKET SHILIN DIST.

Taiwanese see *rechao* (Taiwanese stir-fries, 熱炒) as the most essential comfort food, and stir-fried lamb is the most indispensable dish, found in any *rechao* restaurant. Sitting in the bustling Shilin Night Market, our discovery is a stir-fried lamb specialist that only opens three hours a day, from midnight to 3:30 a.m. The stall is run by two sisters, the second generation in their family who have dedicated themselves to the common yet amazing street eat.

With a history of two decades, the things that have never changed at the stall are the four items on the menu: stir-fried lamb, rice, seasonal soup, and beer. Knowing lots of people aren't that into the gamey taste of lamb, the two sisters insist on using the freshest lamb available so that anyone can enjoy it carefree. Another secret ingredient is their shacha sauce. Unlike most restaurants which use factory-made sauce, they make theirs themselves, following the recipe handed down through the generations in their family. The rich and aromatic sesame in the sauce elevates the whole dish and sets their stir-fried lamb apart from other restaurants. Besides the tender meat and the sauce, three-times the usual amount of water spinach is added, giving the dish a crunchy texture as well. For fans of hot food, be sure to order the spicy version. 

 21-3, Dadong Rd., Shilin Dist.

 0:30am - 3:30am (Closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays)

09 Stir-fried lamb with shacha sauce is the most appetizing late night supper.

10 The stir-fried lamb stand at Shilin Night Market only operates at night, giving night owls in Taipei a great place to get a good meal.



09



10



01

BARS IN TAIPEI: SECRET PROMISED LAND OF THE CITY

“Wine makes daily living easier, less hurried, with fewer tensions and more tolerance.”

This is a famous quote by Benjamin Franklin, and probably also the reason why the streets of Taipei, one of the most vigorous, glamorous cities in East Asia, are intensely lit up by so many bars after seductive dusk falls. Every night, drinkers are drawn to the enchanting history of these establishments, their secret menus and mystifying charm, longing to be tended to; to be awed.

From the Japanese era, to the days of the Taiwan-based US Armed Forces and on to the awakening and recognition of native consciousness in recent years, the bars in Taipei have undergone a complex process of evolution, consisting of cultural collision and

generational transformation, which makes both their drink lists and their stories undeniably intriguing. Café bars, speakeasies, Japanese-style shisha bars, hip-hop bars, gay bars with drag queen shows, bars that serve traditional Taiwanese delicacies...if you can imagine it, there's a good chance we can have it served to you on a silver platter.

It's no wonder that when travelers want to fully savor the brilliant city, hidden bars are the places they choose to visit, for too often the most fascinating secrets of a place are found lying at the bottom of wine glasses.

Ask the bartenders in these covert bars, they'll give you a smile — warm, tinged with just a bit of mischievousness — and assure you that you have reached the X of the treasure map, the land flowing with milk and honey.

01 Wherever you come from, you will find a place that suits you amongst the diverse nightlife in Taipei. (Photo/Pawn Bar)



BAR WEEKEND

Walking down the winding staircase leading to Bar Weekend, you find yourself captivated by the calming, dim lighting, as if stumbling upon a sleeping kingdom at night. Yet with the pink cherry blossoms hanging from the ceiling and the blood orange-colored sunset shining in the west, you soon realize it's actually the magical moment when day and night intersect — where anything can happen.

Located in the basement of Chez Nous Hotel (司旅), the opening of Bar Weekend in March, 2020 has passed on the legacy of its predecessor, Swagger x Old'98, both famous among drinkers all over Taipei for two reasons, the first one being the manager/bartender, Wade, whom many regulars have followed loyally, the second one being his renowned tea cocktails.

After being greeted with a glass of "today's tea" and a plate of caramel-flavored sunflower seeds, it's time to order your first drink. While there are two counters, one for straight-up drinking and one for cocktails, the rules are very flexible and you can order whatever you want at both.

At Bar Weekend, menus are not provided, nor needed. Tell the bartenders what you're craving, and let them work their magic. The must-tries are definitely their tea cocktails. *Tieguanyin* (鐵觀音), Oriental Beauty Tea (東方美人茶) and Matcha blended with alcohol, fresh

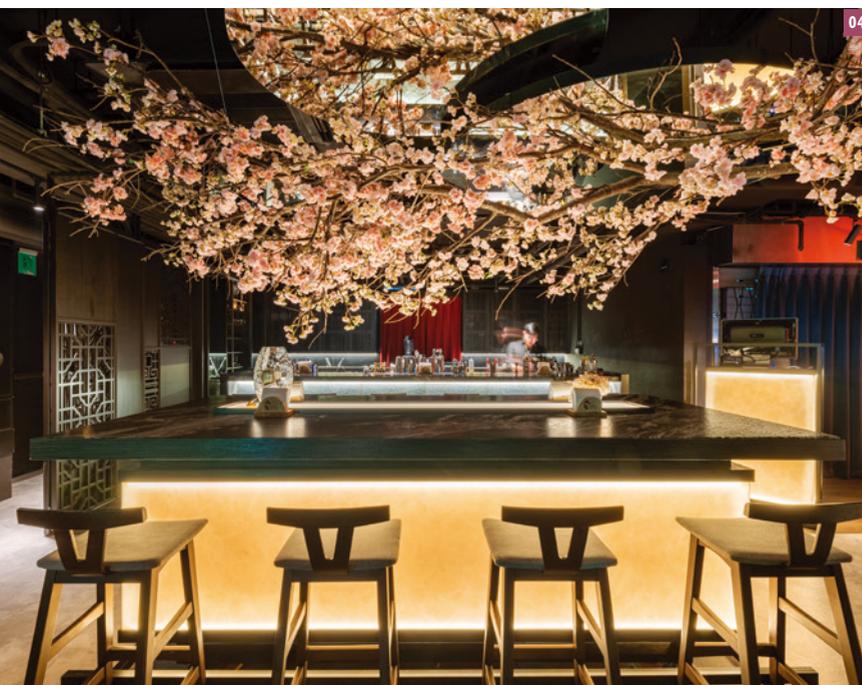


juice and special ingredients such as soybean milk. It's something you've likely never tasted, probably will struggle to find elsewhere, and with such a realization, a surprising new world unfolds in front of you.



📍 18, Ln. 147, Sec. 3, Xinyi Rd., Daan Dist.

🕒 7:30pm - 1:00am (Closed on Sundays & Mondays)



02 Wade, manager/bartender of Bar Weekend, presents his renowned tea cocktail.

03 Sipping on a cocktail made with *Tieguanyin* and honey, you will notice a distinct aftertaste of tea.

04 At Bar Weekend, you'll forget your travels while sitting under the blooming cherry blossoms.

 **BAR PUN**

One of the best speakeasy bars in Taipei, BAR PUN is unsurprisingly named after a pun, as “pun” resembles the pronunciation of “fragrance” and “bee” in Taiwanese dialect.

The concept of the “speakeasy” can be traced back to the Prohibition Era in 1920s and 1930s America, when all alcohol was banned in the US and underground bars started to thrive, where people had to speak softly to avoid exposing their small havens to the prying ears of the law.

Needless to say, BAR PUN is also all about secrets and privacy. Even finding the entrance of the place is no

easy task. Visitors have to search patiently in a dark, extremely narrow alley for a fire alarm on the wall, and push the button on the device to open the hidden door.

The space of BAR PUN consists of three different areas — counter, couches and stand-up tables, all in an elegant combination of black, gray and white. Aside from the classic and signature cocktails, the bar’s must-tries are their “PUN Experience” — sets including an exclusive cocktail served with exotic delicacies such as ostrich meat, duck breast and bamboo shoots.

After enjoying an enigmatic night at BAR PUN, you are escorted out the exit by the waiters. Looking at the black door going back to being disguised as part of the brick wall, you realize it’s right next to the alley you almost got lost in. You smile, as everything that happened that night somehow starts to feel like an illusion, an adventure in a wondrous land.



05



06



07

-  5, Ln. 378, Sec. 4, Xinyi Rd., Daan Dist.
-  6:30pm - 2:00am (Mondays to Thursdays)
6:30pm - 3:00am (Fridays & Saturdays)
8:00pm - 2:00am (Sundays)

- 05** With the entrance well hidden, you will have to head down a narrow alleyway and find the entrance button to get into BAR PUN.
- 06** The sharply-dressed bartender shows-off his ice cutting skills, with the bar having a high standard for presentation, even when it comes to ice cubes.
- 07** BAR PUN’s interior is decorated with blacks, grays and whites, giving it an understated yet luxurious vibe.



08

- 08 Gene Chein, the owner of Shochu Sake Bar, often serves the drinks himself and explains how to enjoy a glass of sake in different ways.
- 09 You will find all kinds of sake, including special and seasonal editions, at Shochu Sake Bar.



SHOCHU SAKE BAR

Originally an izakaya (居酒屋) in Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山1914文化創意產業園區), Shochu Sake Bar (小酒) was first a unique place where people would go for a wide range of sake options. The izakaya then became a hidden bar inside Al Cicchetto Huashan Bistro (義麵坊華山小酒吧). In 2020, it moved to the Zhongshan District and was turned into a cozy, private space for sake lovers to taste authentic Japanese drinks.

Having a drink in Shochu is never about exciting tricks or stunts, but rather is an exploration of the marvelous sake universe constituted by rice, koji, water and land. Shochu opens the secret entrance to visitors with its sake collections from local breweries across Japan, which are displayed on the wall behind the bar.

A reservation is a must for entering the mystery temple of sake. At the latest carnation of Shochu, the owner, Gene Chein (簡國正), wants to share the warmth of sake with people who are as passionate about it as he is. "Sake is the kind of drink which you enjoy with different temperatures," says Gene, "and you need to serve it to the right person," he adds.

However, Shochu is not that kind of posh bar which only hosts regular customers. Instead, through the reservation system, Gene is able to build connections with his customers and unveils the natural and culture context of liqueurs in a more private way.

When stepping through the door, guests are considered new friends coming to enjoy a drink together with Gene.

Thus, do not hesitate to book a seat in Shochu even if you have zero knowledge of sake. Through the crystal of a sake glass, stories are shared.

- 📍 7-1, Ln. 11, Sec. 2, Zhongshan N. Rd., Zhongshan Dist.
- 🕒 5:30pm - 1:00am (Mondays to Thursdays)
5:30pm - 2:00am (Fridays & Saturdays)
(Closed on Sundays)



09



PAWN BAR

“How to get over a heartbreak? Exactly 10,000 drinks, however long that takes.”

It’s undeniable that sometimes, a drink can set us free from the cages built with our past. Now, what if we tell you there’s a bar in Taipei that allows visitors to sell their mementos in exchange for alcohol?

Pawn Bar (當舖) sits right above a pawn shop, which opened in 1975 and was later bought and remodeled into the bar entrance. Pushing the door open, you find yourself in an empty pawn shop with a style of Taiwan in the 1970s. You’re stunned, and realize after a couple seconds that you have to ring the bell on the counter to get in.

The menu, once again, is not what you might have imagined. The colorful, flyer-like menus catch your

eyes with their exclusive cocktails made with local Taiwanese soft drinks and ingredients, such as guava juice, sweet asparagus juice, and even taro ice cream. The food served is also traditional snacks that could be found in any local grocery store, which can bring a Taiwanese back to 40 years ago with just a nibble.

At Pawn Bar, the “pawn hours” are from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. Bring something you want to pawn and share the stories with the bartenders, who will discuss a price and give you a pawn ticket, which can be used to pay your bill. In the blink of an eye, your memories have become the bitter-sweet liquid in the glass, and your steps feel a little lighter.

- 📍 45-2, Sec. 1, Changan E. Rd., Zhongshan Dist.
- 🕒 8:00pm - 2:30am

- 10 Converted from a pawn shop, Pawn Bar maintains an old fashioned feel. (Photo/Pawn Bar)
- 11 Pawn Bar adds several iconic local beverages to its cocktails, including local brand HeySong Sarsaparilla soda (黑松沙士). (Photo/Pawn Bar)
- 12 The retro interior of Pawn Bar reminds people of Taiwan in the 1970s. (Photo/Pawn Bar)





DAILY BY DRAFT LAND

We've all heard of afternoon tea, but afternoon cocktails? Not so much. If you thought the indulgence in the power of alcohol is only limited to night, Daily by Draft Land is here to prove you wrong.

Draft Land has been selected as one of the Top 50 Bars in Asia in 2019 and 2020. Known for its "tap cocktail" — literally tap beer replaced by cocktails — it's a must-visit bar in Taipei. In 2020, it established a new brand, Daily by Draft Land, which has redefined the open hours of bars, and also explored the possibilities of drinking in broad daylight.

Spacious, bright, lively, with comfortable seats and sunlight flowing in effortlessly through the glass windows, Daily by Draft Land is just like a regular café. The only exception is the eye-catching slogan on the wall, "It's not a coffee shop," and the warm, sweet smell of cocktails.

Inheriting the brand spirit of Draft Land, the tap cocktail menu at Daily by Draft Land changes

constantly, with special designer drinks made with local craft beer, fresh fruits and tea. Instead of strong, stimulating drinks, most beverages served here are lighter or non-alcoholic, which relaxes and refreshes the busy life you lead day by day.

So, if you're wandering in Taipei city, looking to lighten up another ordinary afternoon, come to Daily by Draft Land and sit in this not-a-coffee-shop café, while surrendering to a dream filled with delightful music, subtle laughter and the faint scent of alcohol. **T**

📍 7, Ln. 76, Siwei Rd., Daan Dist.

🕒 1:00pm - 7:00pm (Closed on Mondays)

- 13** Daily by Draft Land offers on-tap cocktails at the bar, with various flavors available.
- 14** Daily by Draft Land has open, casual spaces for enjoying drinks.
- 15** Mixed with fruit and Kombucha, the unique designer drinks are offered both with or without alcohol.



 DRINK RESPONSIBLY

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 Foreigners 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

The 2021 Calla Lily & Hydrangea Festival



Calla Lily Festival
03/26 - 04/25

Hydrangea Festival
05/22 - 06/20

GENDER EQUALITY ENGENDERS QUALITY



undiscovered
TAIPEI

你所未見的台北



2021 TAIPEI AZALEA

台北杜鹃花季

FESTIVAL

Our Promise in Spring

3.14 - 3.31

3.21 SUN Azalea Concert
14:00-17:00 Daan Park

Organizer



觀光傳播局
Department of Information and Tourism

Official Website



Advertisement