

TAI 台 PEI 北

No. 40

Summer | 2025

A Day in Taipei

Getting to Know Shilin
Around Zhongxiao Xinseng Station

Out in Nature

Hiking up Mt. Jinmian

Fine Food

Silky Gelato and Shaved Ice
Cool Cocktail Spots

A City of Bright Minds

Strolling Through
University Campuses

Shopping for Books and Arts
Learning Mandarin

TAIPEI 台北

PICK UP POINTS

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
☎ (02) 2720-8889/1999 ext.7564

桃園國際機場第一航廈

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

📍 15, Hangzhan S. Rd., Taoyuan City
☎ (03) 398-2194

桃園國際機場第二航廈

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

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

台北松山機場

Taipei Songshan Airport

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

松山車站

Songshan Station

📍 11, Songshan Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2767-3819

南港車站

Nangang Station

📍 313, Sec. 1, Nangang Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2783-8645

美國在台協會

American Institute in Taiwan

📍 100, Jinhua St., 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. 6666

國語日報語文中心

Mandarin Daily News (Language Center)

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

榕錦時光生活園區

Rongjin Gorgeous Time

📍 167, Jinhua St., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2321-8896

台北美國學校

Taipei American School

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

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) 2552-3721

市長官邸藝文沙龍

Mayor's Residence Arts Salon

📍 46, Xuzhou Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2396-8198

寶藏巖國際藝術村

Treasure Hill Artist Village

📍 2, Aly. 14, Ln. 230, Sec. 3,
Tingzhou Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2364-5313

新富町文化市場

U-mkt (Xinfu Market)

📍 70, Sansui St., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2308-1092

交通部觀光署旅遊服務中心

Travel Service Center, Tourism
Administration, MOTC

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

台北之家

Taipei Film House

📍 18, Sec. 2, Zhongshan N. Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2511-7786

台北市政府秘書處市民服務組

Information and Assistance Division,
Secretariat, Taipei City Government

📍 1, City Hall Rd., Taipei City
☎ (02) 2720-8889/1999 ext.1011

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) 2592-3934

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

Songshan Cultural and Creative Park

📍 133, Guangfu 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

誠品書店台大店、西門店

eslite Bookstore NTU, Ximen

金石堂書店

Kingstone Bookstore

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

新北捷運環狀線

All Stations on Circular Line
of New Taipei Metro

台北捷運市政府站、忠孝復興站、
台北車站、西門站、民權西路站、
中正紀念堂站

Taipei City Hall, Zhongxiao Fuxing,
Taipei Main Station, Ximen,
Minquan W. Rd. and C.K.S. Memorial
Hall of Taipei Metro



Taipei National University of the Arts

Editor's Note

We welcome you for summer fun under our warming Taipei sun! In our three feature articles in this issue, you're headed to "summer school" – i.e., learning about the scenic, shopping/eating, and educational attractions in and around Taipei's universities and other tertiary institutions.

Our main article focuses on the tourist attractions you will find on the lovely, expansive campuses of three of the city's universities: National Taiwan University, Taipei National University of the Arts, and National Chengchi University. Next is sample outings through the dynamic college towns beside the National Taiwan University and National Taiwan Normal University, percolating with affordable food, funky cafés, independent bookstores, stylish boutiques, and intriguing cultural-arts spaces. And finally, learn about the high-quality institutions where you can study Mandarin, even if visiting Taipei for just a short time.

In our two regular *A Day in Taipei* articles, enjoy walkabouts in two dynamic neighborhoods that tourists find especially attractive. First up is Shilin District, in the north, home to such major draws as the Shilin Night Market, Taipei Astronomical Museum, Taipei Children's Amusement Park, and Shuangxi Wetland Park. Next is the quarter around downtown's MRT Zhongxiao Xinsheng Station, with such walkabout headliners as the Syntrend 3C product mall, Huashan 1914 Creative Park, and the Qidong Street Japanese Houses & Taiwan Literature Base.

Time now for encounters with the city's natural world. As always, we present two *Out in Nature* explorations. It's "Mt. Jinmian and Beyond" as you tackle the probing finger of mountainous green on Taipei's north between the urban areas of Shilin and Neihu districts. And in our popular "Untamed Taipei" photo feature we introduce the Formosan Giant Flying Squirrel and Formosan Masked Palm Civet.

Other experience possibilities awaiting you in this issue: a DIY class in traditional bamboo handicraft weaving, contenders for Taipei's best silky gelato and innovative shaved ice, two bars taking you back in time, and a centenary visit to the world-renowned National Palace Museum.

Enjoy your days of summer here with us in warm and very welcoming Taipei!



Please complete this online questionnaire to help us improve our magazine. Thank you!

TAIPEI 台北

NO. 40 SUMMER 2025

PUBLISHER

Hsiang Yu

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Chiaying Tzou

DEPUTY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Cathy Chen

MANAGING EDITOR

Erhuan Lien

DISTRIBUTION

Kuanting Yeh, Hsinju Lin

COVER PHOTO

Ray Chang @ NCCU

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.7566

Email: taipei_quarterly@gov.taipei

ISSN: 24137766

GPN: 2010402342

Vision Creative Marketing & Media Co.

Editors: Rick Charette, Johannes Twellmann, Anna Li

Contributors: Han Cheung, Rick Charette, Ami Barnes, Hollie Younger, Ash Boden

Design: Ian Tsai, Eve Chang

TAIPEI Subscription Services, Postal Wire Transfer: 4 Issues

Beneficiary Account No.: 16630048

Beneficiary Name: Department of Information and Tourism, Taipei City Government

Domestic	NT\$120	Regular Mail
Hong Kong/Macau	NT\$360	Regular Air Mail
Asia/Pacific Region	NT\$440	Regular Air Mail
Europe/US/Africa	NT\$600	Regular Air Mail

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.

中華郵政台北雜字

第 2372 號執照登記為雜誌交寄

Price: NT\$30



This magazine was printed with environmentally friendly soy ink. We hope you enjoy reading this issue of *TAIPEI*. If you have any suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.



CONTENTS

COVER STORY

A CITY OF BRIGHT MINDS

Touring Taipei's Universities ----- 06

The City's Verdant Campuses Have Much in Store for Casual Visitors

A Haven for Books and the Arts ----- 16

Browsing Through the Areas Around National Taiwan Normal University and National Taiwan University

Learning Mandarin in Taipei ----- 20

Why the City Is the Preferred Choice for Many International Students

A DAY IN TAIPEI

Getting to Know the Shilin District ----- 22

Edu-tainment, Rides and Games, Food, and Mother Nature Outing

Discoveries Around Zhongxiao Xincheng Station -- 28

A Heady Mix of Early 20th Century Old and 21st Century New

OUT IN NATURE

Mt. Jinmian and Beyond ----- 34

A Pick-Your-Own-Ending Adventure in the Hills North of Central Taipei

Untamed Taipei ----- 40

Encounters with Extraordinary Wildlife in the City

DIY FUN

Bamboo Basket Weaving ----- 42

Learning About a Traditional Taiwanese Craft in a Relaxing Class

FINE FOOD

Cool Creations ----- 46

Silky Gelato and Innovative Shaved Ice

Time-traveling Tipples ----- 50

Local Culture and a Dash of History at Taipei's Coolest Cocktail Spots

WHERE TO...

Where to Find Masterpieces ----- 54

The National Palace Museum Is Celebrating Its Centennial This Year!



Seasonal Festivals and Events

#01



Trendy Taipei

潮臺北

More than just a music festival, Trendy Taipei serves as a dynamic platform bringing together contemporary music, creative technology, and global trends. Envisioned as a catalyst for Taipei's cultural innovation and a driver of its city brand, the goal for this happening is to establish the city as a source of trends. Following a successful pilot in 2024, the inaugural full-scale edition, with the theme *Trendy Taipei: It's now*, is poised to make a significant impact in 2025. This year's two-week edition promises an even more expansive and immersive experience, highlighted by two two-day music jamborees: *Jam Jam Asia* at Taipei Music Center (Aug 30-31) and *Trendy Taipei – Music × Innovation* at Taipei Arena (Sep 6-7), along with live house performances across the city.

📍 Taipei Music Center, Taipei Arena, and other venues

台北流行音樂中心、台北小巨蛋等

📅 August 25-September 7



#02 Tianmu Beer Festival

天母啤酒節



This annual summer event held in the Tianmu neighborhood has a significant expat population. It is to promote the Tianmu shopping area by showcasing local international restaurants, department stores, and beer vendors. This year, the event, which takes place over a weekend at the Tianmu Sports Park, has the theme *Tianmu Flavor Is International Flavor* and visitors can enjoy more food and beer options from the US and Japan, along with live music performances.

📍 Tianmu Sports Park
天母運動公園

📅 July 19-20

#03 Taipei Film Festival

台北電影節



A prestigious annual fête, the Taipei Film Festival showcases the best of Taiwanese and international cinema, with a focus on emerging talents and independent productions. It features screenings, Q&A sessions, and industry events, drawing filmmakers, critics, and film enthusiasts. The 2025 edition's theme, *Challenge! Dare to Try*, embodies the spirit of bravely pursuing innovation and breaking from conventions when facing unknown challenges.

📍 Taipei Zhongshan Hall and other venues
台北中山堂等地點

📅 June 20-July 5

🌐 www.taifeiff.tapei

#04 Xinzhongshan Southern Section Opening Market

心中山南段開幕市集



This themed market celebrates the completion and opening of the south section of Xinzhongshan Linear Park. The park's northern part, completed in 2019 between MRT Shuanglian and Zhongshan stations, was instrumental in transforming this area into one of the city's trendiest spots. The newly opened southern section, stretching between MRT Zhongshan Station and Taipei Main Station, features a modern design with engaging public artworks, and will surely become a new tourist favorite.

📍 Xinzhongshan Linear Park
心中山線形公園

📅 July 25-August 17



#05 Taipei Summer Festival

大稻埕夏日節

This romantic summertime celebration takes place around the traditional Qixi Festival (Chinese Lover's Day, August 29 this year) at Yanping Riverside Park (Dadaocheng Wharf). The key attraction is a series of four fireworks displays: three five-minute mid-altitude shows on successive Wednesdays, and an eight-minute high-altitude finale on a Saturday. Given the event's popularity, arriving early is advised to secure a good viewing location. Beyond the captivating fireworks over the Tamsui River, you can also enjoy live music performances by local pop stars, walk along a Riverside Light Corridor, and sample a variety of the tasty local and international foods available at the Dadaocheng Wharf Container Market.

📍 Flood Gate 3-5, Yanping Riverside Park
延平河濱公園 3 號至 5 號水門

📅 August 6-30

🌐 taipeisummer.travel.taipei



Touring Taipei's Universities

The City's Verdant Campuses Have Much in Store for Casual Visitors

TEXT | HAN CHEUNG PHOTOS | VISION

Beyond their vital role in education and research, the universities in Taipei City offer a unique and often overlooked appeal to tourists. Step onto their green campuses and discover unexpected havens of tranquility, with park-like settings, interesting museums, and architecturally intriguing buildings.

These universities are more than places of learning, as several scenic campuses have become popular attractions with locals, especially during weekends, who come to exercise or just stroll around and soak in the vibrant atmosphere. There's often some event going on, whether it be a concert, fair, cultural event, or rally for a social cause. Some universities even have quality museums, with exhibitions that showcase the institutions' rich collections and cutting-edge research.

Tourists often bypass these intriguing school grounds for the more celebrated sights around town, but for those who have time, they're well worth an afternoon expedition or two. Not only do they offer a pleasant refuge from the bustle of the metropolis, but they also provide valuable insights into Taiwan's academic past and present.

The first college-oriented area in Taipei that usually comes to mind for a visit is the Gongguan neighborhood, home to the historic National Taiwan University campus, which possesses many century-old buildings. Nature lovers can head to the city's outskirts to visit Taipei National University of the Arts in Beitou District, built along a steep grassy slope dotted with art installations, or unwind at National Chengchi University, nestled at the foot of Maokong's lush hills in Wenshan District.

National Taiwan University

National Taiwan University (NTU) has been Taiwan's undisputed top center of higher learning since its inception in 1928, when the Japanese, who governed the island at the time, established it as Taiwan's first modern university. Expansion and renovation continued throughout the century, making the campus a microcosm of Taiwan's architectural history. Several of its old buildings still bear the scars of the Allied bombings during World War II.

NTU remained the only institution of its kind until the 1950s, and students from across Taiwan vied for admission to this prestigious tertiary institution. This remained true in the 1990s, when there was even a well-known satirical comic about a group of cram school students whose sole aim was to gain entrance to this "promised land," and it remains the case today. The school has produced countless notable alumni, including all five of Taiwan's democratically elected presidents and a Nobel Prize winner.

The campus is steeped in history from its very entrance – the brick-and-stone main gate constructed in 1931, which features a guardhouse in the center, matches the color scheme of other campus buildings from the same period.

From here, the wide Royal Palm Boulevard stretches directly eastward as NTU's main artery, lined with about 100 towering palm trees and rows of azalea bushes, teeming with sparrows. This path concludes at the Main Library, built in 1998 – an impressive five-story structure with arched windows and a bell tower echoing the style of the main gate. Enchanting, unobstructed sunrises and sunsets can be seen from the respective ends of the boulevard.



College of Liberal Arts



The Japanese-era chimney





Fu Bell

The College of Liberal Arts is a gem among the original structures, featuring an intricate Romanesque façade with a Japanese-style tiled roof and spacious portico. Make sure to check out the gorgeous central stairwell inside. Across the boulevard is the iconic Fu Bell, built in 1951 after the passing of former president Fu Ssu-nien. It rings 21 times at the end of each period, referencing Fu’s saying, “There are only 21 hours in a day because three should be reserved for self-reflection.”

Another Japanese-era landmark that stands out is the 20m-high chimney built in 1931 to serve the Department of Agricultural Chemistry’s fermentation lab. It’s one of the few industrial chimneys from that time that survives in Taiwan today.

For birdwatching, head toward Drunken Moon Lake. This lake was constructed when the area was farmland to regulate the flow of the Liugong Canal, used for irrigation, and in 2017, the school completed a project just south of the lake to restore a section of the canal’s hydrological landscape and vegetation.

Many of the post-World War II buildings feature a distinctive blend of Chinese and Western characteristics, over 20 of them designed by famed architect Wang Da-hong. A prime example is the First Student Activity Center, a concrete structure with a folded-plate roof infused with various traditional Chinese elements, such as the bright-red doors adorned with black and gold.

Those who seek peace and quiet can head to the experimental farm, stroll through the fields, and kick back at the visitor center’s café. Turning 101 this year, the fields are a drastic contrast to the busy thoroughways and tall buildings just outside the campus.

Scan to open a map of the NTU campus. Switch between Chinese/English in the top right corner; use left menu to find specific places.



NTU CAMPUS MAP



Old Main Library building

While exploring the various sights on campus, take the time to step into one of National Taiwan University's 11 museums to learn more about its academic endeavors. From anthropology and botany to medicine, physics, or art, visitors will no doubt find much of interest.

A recommended place to start is the Gallery of University History, located in the Old Main Library building close to the main gate. The spacious gallery was once the study area for the library, and a section by the large arched windows has been restored with desks and lamps that survived the May 1945 bombing of Taipei, which destroyed the roof. The displays tell a detailed story of the university's development and achievements over the past century, with many fascinating artifacts and photographs. Student life is also highlighted, as well as the school's role in significant historical events.

Adjacent to the gallery is the Museum of Anthropology, showcasing ethnographic and archaeological artifacts about Taiwan's indigenous communities, mostly collected during the 1895-1945 Japanese era. One of the museum's most prized objects is a four-sided ancestral pillar obtained in



Gallery of University History



Herbarium

1932 from the Paiwan chief Zingur's old house in Kaviyangan Village, Pingtung County. With six fingers on each hand, the figure on the pillar represents the family's female ancestor, Muakai. The village originally wanted the object back, but instead, an agreement was reached in 2014 to marry the pillar to NTU through a full traditional wedding, and in 2015, it was designated as a national treasure.

The Herbarium's exhibition room presents a selection of the university's collection of over 300,000 specimens from Taiwan, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. The small space is packed with various displays on the essentials of botany, and most of its furniture and cabinets are antiques procured from around campus. There's a section on extinct plants, a spirit room with specimens preserved in liquids, and a hands-on ethnobotany room where visitors can learn about the uses of spices, herbs, and edible plants.

Visitors might find long lines at the Agricultural Product Sales Center, as its limited supply of baked goods, sliced bread, ice cream, and high-quality fresh milk, produced right here on campus, is quite popular with locals. Shoppers can enjoy their purchases at the pleasant outdoor patio.

Souvenirs can be found across the campus, including the NTU Press Bookstore on the second floor of the Gallery of University History, as well as a Japanese-style green cottage, which was built in 1938 by the Old Botany Lab and remains a prime spot for photo ops. But the hottest new place to grab school-themed products is the NTU Hub and Store, which just opened its doors in December 2024. Occupying

the first floor of the New Moon Pavilion building, this shop offers a staggering array of well-designed creative products such as hand-made soaps, placemats, and utensil sets, cellphone music amplifiers, campus-landmark LEGO sets, and more.



Fresh milk and ice cream sourced from NTU farm



New Moon Pavilion souvenir shop

NATIONAL TAIWAN UNIVERSITY 國立台灣大學

1, Sec. 4, Roosevelt Rd., Daan Dist.

(02) 3366-3366

www.ntu.edu.tw



Administration Building

Taipei National University of the Arts

Built atop a southwest spur of the Yangmingshan massif in Beitou District, the picturesque Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA) offers stunning, panoramic views of the lush Guandu Plain. The school opened in 1982 as the National Institute of the Arts without a campus, making do in several National Taiwan University facilities before settling in New Taipei City's Luzhou District.

In 1991, TNUA returned to Taipei City with a newly built campus situated uniquely upon a steep slope. Chu-yuan Lee, the architect of Taipei 101, also applied his East-meets-West sensibilities to the main buildings here, creating a complex of structures with red bricks, gray walls, and black roof tiles that express traditional motifs with modern materials and design details. Each building features a courtyard, and the overall spatial layout traces the rolling terrain and integrates into the natural landscape. There are plenty of footpaths and green spaces to roam about, and art



Water buffaloes beside a campus art installation

installations to see along the way. Visitors should keep their eyes peeled as even a bench, pavement marking, or bus stop decoration can be a work of art.

It's quite a trek up the hill following Xueyuan Road from Zhongyang North Road, but once you have reached the campus, the sights are rewarding. Visitors will first come to the Egret Grassland, a favorite spot for its namesake bird, as well as the 22 royal poinciana trees and 22 lamps honoring the institute's 22nd anniversary. But the main attraction is the three water buffaloes that hang out leisurely here – students affectionately refer to them as the “divine guardian beasts” of the school. The first water buffaloes were first brought to TNUA in 2005 for an art performance by Singaporean artist Srinivasan Chandrasekaran; after the show, they were settled on the grassland and became an accidental tradition.

The school's Performing Arts Center manages three professional-grade venues: the concert hall, dance theater, and experimental theater, offering programs by students and outside artists to the public. The center has also hosted the annual Kuandu Arts Festival since 1993, a multi-day extravaganza that mostly features graduation works by performing-arts students. The Kuandu

Museum of Fine Arts is Taiwan's first fine arts museum located on a university campus, putting on exciting international and local art exhibitions in its nine galleries across six stories.

The spacious TNUA Bookshop is an independent shop currently run by an alumnus. Visitors can peruse a wide range of tomes on the arts, humanities, social issues, and life aesthetics in a relaxing environment.

There are plenty of vantage points across campus with the plains below; those looking to rest their weary legs and grab a bite can visit DaVinci's Kitchen or Hui Sun Coffee and take in the scenery from the large windows or patio seating. For the ultimate vista, however, keep heading up the slope past the sculpture park and acacia trees to reach the outdoor Forest Theatre, the highest point on campus. From here, one can see as far as the mouth of the Tamsui River emptying into the Taiwan Strait. Those who still have energy can tackle the hiking trail up Mt. Zhongyi, a secluded path of mostly stone steps teeming with wildlife.

TAIPEI NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS

國立台北藝術大學

📍 1, Xueyuan Rd., Beitou Dist.

☎ (02) 2896-1000

🌐 w3.tnua.edu.tw

Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts





Dah Hsian Seetoo Library



Si Wei Hall



Xing Jian Trail



Inside Dah Hsian Seetoo Library

National Chengchi University

First established in 1927 by the Chinese Nationalist Party in Nanjing to train party cadres and civil servants, National Chengchi University (NCCU) was the first institute of higher learning to be revived in Taiwan after the authorities retreated to the island upon losing the Chinese Civil War in 1949.

Facing a pressing need with National Taiwan University as the island's only university, NCCU reopened its doors in 1954 at the foot of Taipei City's southern hills in Wenshan District. Over the years since, it has developed into a research-based institute focusing on the humanities and social sciences.

Located at the confluence of the Jingmei and Zhinan rivers, the area around the university is quite scenic and brimful with wildlife. The riverside bike paths, recreational parks, and tranquil on-campus trails are often visited by locals and tourists alike.

Upon entering the main gate, the school's three officially listed historical structures are immediately visible: the Guo Fu Building, Zhi Xi Building, and Si Wei Hall, which respectively served as the original administrative office, main library, and activity center. They're built in the same austere style: simple two-story concrete structures with gray-terrazzo façades and large front windows.

Built in 1959, the unassuming Si Wei Hall is a beloved campus icon. Over the decades, countless events such as general assemblies, final exams, school anniversary celebrations, graduation dances, and singing contest took place here. The school once considered replacing it with a larger, modern building, but ended up deciding to renovate it due to strong objections from alumni.

Next to Si Wei Hall is the Main Library, whose Mandarin name Zhongzheng Library pays respect to the former president and school principal Chiang Kai-shek. The building's exterior resembles a bastion, with its four corners protruding, giving it the appearance of a giant diamond. At the center is an atrium that facilitates natural lighting and air circulation.

Near NCCU's rear gate stands a prominent bronze statue of Chiang Kai-shek on horseback. This monument is a well-known student meeting spot and a frequent canvas for creatively expressing demands to the university, sometimes through acts like splashing paint. The statue has also inspired a few campus legends, including one whimsical tale claiming the horse switches its standing front leg when weary at night.

The real star, however, is the Dah Hsian Seetoo Library, widely considered one of the most beautiful in Taiwan. Completed in 2019, this monumental eight-story structure, donated by the Ruentex Group

to express gratitude to Professor Dah Hsian Seetoo, is built into a grassy hill, with a large surrounding terrace overlooking a picturesque lake and school buildings dotting the hills beyond. The interior is quite spectacular, as the seven floors of bookshelves and reading desks are intricately arranged around a central, top-lit atrium, making for captivating views from different levels and angles.

Cross the Zhinan River to NCCU's rear campus, where a series of nature trails crisscross the hilly terrain. Hikers can opt for a relaxed stroll or challenge themselves on the Xing Jian Trail, a long, steep stairway that directly cuts up-mountain to the Dawn Pavilion. Nearby is the entrance to the Dragon Trail, which leads to Zhangshan Temple and the tea-sipping mecca of Maokong in the mountains beyond. Apart from hiking, the trail are also great for observing wildlife, including protected animal species such as pangolins and Swinhoe's pheasants.

Don't forget to grab a souvenir or two while on the campus – the shop is right by the main gate. Gear related to the NCCU Griffins, a powerhouse in the University Basketball Association, are popular items here. **T**



Main entrance of NCCU

NATIONAL CHENGCHI UNIVERSITY 國立政治大學

📍 64, Sec. 2, Zhinan Rd., Wenshan Dist.

☎ (02) 2939-3091

🌐 www.nccu.edu.tw



Dah Hsian Seetoo Library | 達賢圖書館

Dawn Pavilion | 待曦亭

DaVinci's Kitchen | 達文西廚房

Drunken Moon Lake | 醉月湖

Egret Grassland | 鶯鶯草原

Forest Theatre | 荒山劇場

Fu Bell | 傅鐘

Hui Sun Coffee | 惠蓀咖啡

Kuandu Arts Festival | 關渡藝術節

Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts | 關渡美術館

Liugong Canal | 瑠公圳

New Moon Pavilion | 新月台

Royal Palm Boulevard | 椰林大道

Zhangshan Temple | 樟山寺



MAP

A Haven for Books and the Arts

Browsing Through the Areas Around National Taiwan Normal University and National Taiwan University



TEXT | HAN CHEUNG PHOTOS | RAY CHANG, VISION

Neighborhoods around Taipei's universities are often energetic and lively, offering a vibrant selection of affordable food, funky cafés, independent bookstores, stylish boutiques, and intriguing cultural-arts spaces. The areas introduced here have long been a hotbed for new ideas and creative thinking, but many beloved establishments have remained popular for decades, staying relevant as trends come and go.

Leica Store Taipei Qingtian



The Art Scene Around NTNU

Dotted with old-school art supply stores, framing shops, and galleries, the area around National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU) is a favorite haunt for creative types. Among the best-known and long-established art supply shops on Heping East Road are Toplevel Study Treasures (calligraphy supply expert), Kuo Tai Fine Art Service (wide range of art supplies), and Charleston Art (self-produced paints). Another stalwart of the scene is University Art Shop on Jinshan South Road, its cluttered, narrow aisles offering both Eastern and Western supplies and framing services since 1958.

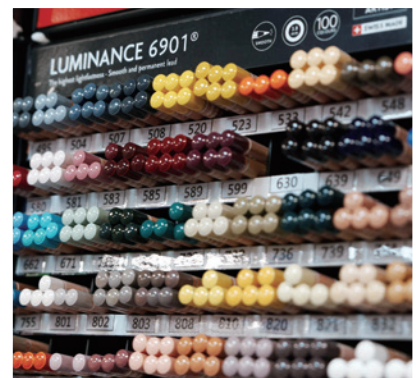
Head a few blocks east from the University Art Shop, and you can find several art galleries: Piaopiao Gallery on Yongkang Street puts on about 30 shows per year, and many art students make their exhibition debut here. It also has a special interest in contemporary ink brush painting, and hosts exhibitions by painters of different generations.

Sporting a minimalist façade of plain white and glass, the three-story San Galerie sits quietly on narrow Chaozhou Street almost unnoticed. Inside, all walls and ceilings are also painted white. The founder aims to explore the intersection between daily objects and fine art, hoping to make art more relevant to the younger crowd.

Also featuring bright, white tones, Yiyun Art on Qingtian Street explores new ways to redefine contemporary Eastern aesthetics through contrast with the classics and also Western art. From ancient brush painting to modern styles and also daily objects, the gallery has put on diverse shows for years.

Just two lanes to the north, housed in a beautifully restored Japanese-era building, is the Leica Store Taipei Qingtian. It offers a selection of high-end Leica cameras and accessories. Beyond camera gear, the store also has a collection of photography books, and it regularly hosts photography exhibitions.

Finally, don't forget to check out Teh-Chun Art Gallery on the university campus, on the first floor of the Department of Fine Arts building, if interested in admiring student creations.



Toplevel Study Treasures

SMC Books



Feeling the Intellectual Beat Around NTU



Eslite NTU Store

It's probably no surprise that the streets around Taiwan's top center of higher learning are home to many bookstores – both commercial chains and indie gems. While the current roster pales in comparison to when there were more than 40 shops during the area's heyday, the density and variety are still impressive considering the increasingly digital age we live in.

Just across the street from the school's main gate on Xinsheng South Road is the oldest surviving Eslite bookstore in Taipei. Established in 1996, it still retains the original decor and atmosphere of the chain, when it still predominantly sold books and stationery. There's a decent English-title selection and a café on the third floor.

Just a block away, on Lane 333 of Roosevelt Road, head down a narrow staircase and passageway plastered with art, culture, and political posters to find Tonsan Bookstore, a small, unassuming space



Fembooks



Witch House ©Cros Music

offering non-mainstream and academic titles focused on the humanities and social sciences. During the 1980s, when Taiwan was still under martial law, the store printed banned books for students, contributing to the push for reform and eventual democratization. It continues to focus on similar pertinent topics with special sections on Southeast Asian immigrants and the Hong Kong protests.

With large maps and historical photos on its walls, SMC Books, on Lane 283 of Roosevelt Road, is all about Taiwan. Established in 1976, the publishing company covers the gamut of topics related to Taiwan, from geography and history to Chinese medicine and botany, with the titles available in a variety of languages. It started by republishing historic tomes in Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish, and later reissued important early Japanese research on indigenous cultures. The founder is an avid collector of old maps, and visitors can leaf through a selection of his bounty, including a comprehensive compendium of charts showing the development of cities during the 1895-1945 Japanese era.

If you're searching for a bargain, look no further than Yabook, on Lane 76 of Xinsheng South Road, which boasts a dizzying array of used books and magazines in various languages. Treasure hunters can take their time in this brightly lit, pleasant space, looking for unexpected gems.

Fembooks, on Lane 56 of Xinsheng South Road, was one of the first bookstores in the Chinese-speaking world to focus on feminism and gender

studies. Launched in 1994 by women's rights activists to make feminism more accessible to the public, its original mission was to carry or print books that were "written by women, written about women, and written for women." Today, it also has a men's studies section and a significant LGBTQ+ component. The store regularly hosts gender-related lectures, workshops, and other activities, and offers many quirky, home-made souvenirs.

Apart from browsing bookstores, you can also enjoy live entertainment around the NTU campus. On the first floor of the Fembooks building is the fabled Witch House, a café and bar where countless well-known singers and bands got their start. Legend has it that, one day in 1996, a rocker showed up unannounced with a car full of stereo equipment, offering it to the establishment and asking to perform, and everything snowballed from there. In a time when the rock scene was male-dominated, Witch House offered a mellower, more feminine space for women to perform. The chairs with bras hanging on them are a distinguishing feature.

Another live house in the area is Backstage Café, which is located inside the university's sports complex, located at the intersection of Xinsheng South and Xinhai roads. This dimly lit, spacious eatery with a wall lined with guitars is tranquil during regular hours, but up to 300 people fill the place during performances. Other live performance venues close to the university include The Wall Live House and Pipe Live Music. **T**



Charleston Art | 彩逸美術社
Backstage Café | 後台
EsLite NTU Store | 誠品書店 台大店
Fembooks | 女書店
Kuo Tai Fine Art Service | 國泰美術社

Piaopiao Gallery | 一票人票畫空間
San Galerie | 生活器物藝廊
SMC Books | 南天書局
Teh-Chun Art Gallery | 德群畫廊
Tonsan Bookstore | 唐山書店

Topline Study Treasures | 蕙風堂
University Art Shop | 大學美術社
Witch House | 女巫店
Yabook | 雅博客
Yiyun Art | 異雲書屋



MAP

Learning Mandarin in Taipei

*Why the City Is the Preferred Choice
for Many International Students*

TEXT AND PHOTOS | VISION

Mandarin Chinese, as the second-most spoken language by number of speakers in the world after English, naturally creates a high demand for classes. Many international students choose Taiwan, in particular Taipei, for its excellent immersive environment and high-standard facilities for learning the language.



謝謝

Embarking on the journey of learning Mandarin Chinese is an enriching experience, unlocking doors to a vibrant culture, a vast history, and a significant global language. Choosing Taipei City as your learning hub further elevates this experience, placing you in the economic and cultural center of Taiwan, a land celebrated for its warm hospitality, delicious cuisine, and immersive Mandarin-speaking environment. Within this dynamic metropolis, a wealth of opportunities awaits those eager to dive deep into the nuances of the Chinese language.

Taipei has a remarkable concentration of esteemed educational institutions offering Mandarin Chinese language programs. Out of the 66 institutes approved by the Ministry of Education to enroll international students, 14 are located in Taipei.

Among the most prominent are the language centers affiliated with National Taiwan University (NTU), National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU), and National Chengchi University (NCCU), holding long-standing reputations for their rigorous curricula and experienced instructors. Beyond these flagship universities, institutions such as Tamkang University (TKU) and Chinese Culture



University (CCU), along with numerous other language centers scattered across the city, provide a diverse range of learning environments to suit varying preferences and learning styles.

For the latest list of certified Chinese language centers in Taipei and around Taiwan, visit the Taiwan Mandarin Educational Resources Center website: lmit.edu.tw/en/school_list, which also provides general guidelines for studying Mandarin in Taiwan, along with self-study materials and mock tests for new learners.

Recognizing the evolving needs of learners, these language centers come with a variety of course schedules to accommodate individuals with different time commitments. Whether you're seeking a brief yet intensive immersion experience spanning a few weeks, a more comprehensive multi-month (typically a semester or quarter) program, or a focused summer intensive course, summer camp, or study tour, there's always an option to fit your needs. Many centers also offer online courses and even customized programs, providing additional flexibility for those with specific learning objectives or scheduling constraints.

Curricula are usually designed to provide a well-rounded linguistic foundation. You can expect detailed information regarding class schedules and subject

matter taught, clearly defined proficiency levels aligned with international standards, and varying class sizes, including the possibility of one-on-one instruction. Program fees will vary depending on the institution and the duration of the course, so thorough research is essential.

Pay close attention to the visa application process, particularly the requirements for a study visa. You can find relevant information on the website of the Bureau of Consular Affairs, MoFA: bit.ly/tw-visa-mandarin. Familiarity with the Test of Chinese as a Foreign Language (TOCFL), Taiwan's standardized language proficiency test, may also be beneficial, especially for those planning to pursue further academic or professional endeavors in Taiwan. See more information at tocfl.edu.tw.

In conclusion, choosing Taipei City as your destination for studying Mandarin Chinese offers an unparalleled opportunity to immerse yourself in a vibrant linguistic and cultural environment. With a diverse array of reputable language centers, flexible course durations, comprehensive curricula, and readily available resources, Taipei provides a supportive and stimulating setting for learners of all levels to embark on and excel in their Mandarin journey. ■

Get to Know Shilin

Edu-tainment, Rides and Games, Food, and Mother Nature Outings

TEXT | RICK CHARETTE PHOTOS | VISION

Shilin District, in Taipei's north, runs from the high mountain slopes of the Yangmingshan massif down to and across a densely developed flatlands area where the Shuang River (Shuangxi) runs into the Keelung River and then the Keelung enters the Tamsui River. Here we're visiting key tourist attractions within easy walking distance of Taipei Metro's Red Line.



Water Walkway of
Shuangxi Wetland Park

We start with two nationally important educational tourist facilities, which is fitting because the name “Shilin” literally means “forest of scholars.” It arose in the late Qing Dynasty because a high number of locals were passing the imperial examination.

About 20min on foot northwest of MRT Shilin Station, the mission of the National Taiwan Science Education Center is to spark an interest in applied science among visitors. It targets both adults and youngsters, emphasizing hands-on interactive high-tech displays. The thematic foci include the life, natural, materials, and earth sciences.

Perhaps the attraction with the greatest “must-not-miss” cachet is the thrilling Air Bicycle ride from one end of the facility to the other, 20m up balanced on a steel cable, a live demonstration of the principles of leverage and tension. Another popular draw is the Large Centrifuge, a rotating disc fitting 10 people providing an exciting observable demonstration of the Coriolis force. Also worth visiting is the robot education center.

The science center’s next-door neighbor, the Taipei Astronomical Museum is a hands-on four-story facility primarily oriented toward young students. Exhibit subjects covered range from the Earth, moon, and ancient astronomy to the solar system and constellations, and on to our galaxy and star formation.

Assuming you don’t have days to spend here, you also have to choose from among several highlight adventures. Travel past our solar system’s planets in the Cosmic Adventure space pod simulator. During designated Observatory hours, enjoy intimate telescope views of planets and stars. Different celestial bodies are visible during the day and at night. And the Dome Theater and 3D Theater provide spectacular journeys through the skies and heavens.



NATIONAL TAIWAN SCIENCE EDUCATION CENTER

國立台灣科學教育館

📍 189, Shishang Rd., Shilin Dist.

☎ (02) 6610-1234

🌐 www.ntsec.gov.tw

🕒 Tue-Fri 9:00am-5:00pm

Sat-Sun 9:00am-6:00pm

TAIPEI ASTRONOMICAL MUSEUM

台北市立天文科學教育館

📍 363, Jihe Rd., Shilin Dist.

☎ (02) 2831-4551

🌐 tam.gov.taipei

🕒 Tue-Fri, Sun 9:00am-5:00pm

Sat 9:00am-8:00pm



Neighbor to the science center and astro museum, the Taipei Children's Amusement Park has less of an educational mission. Its *raison d'être*, simply put: fun, fun, fun for the sheer joy of fun. Taiwan's largest publicly operated amusement park, spanning 5 hectares, opened in 2014. The scores upon scores of rides and other amusement options include Large Rides (the main attractions), Small Rides, multiple indoor and outdoor playgrounds, as well as a SNOOPY Play Center!

Among the most in-demand of the 13 different Large Rides are the 40m-high Ferris Wheel, which provides a sweeping vista of the wide Taipei Basin; the Wave Swinger (Radial Flying Chairs, shaped like planets flying around the sun); the Drop Tower, a free-fall ride modeled like a jungle treehouse; and the scream-inducing Magic Star Trek (Roller Coaster).

Most coveted of the Small Rides enticements is the summer-only Aqua Planet, exclusively open during summertime. The waterpark offers an assortment of water-play temptations such as the Ring Tunnel, Tipping Bucket Monsters, and Floating Yo-yos. Also high on the list of must-dos for kids is steering monstrous battle robots and racing mini go-karts around a short track.

Standing out among the indoor fun attractions is the Snoopy Play Center, which has a large ball pit with slides and themed areas featuring diverse and engaging role-playing experiences like a salon, fire truck, police station, dressing room, and market.



©Department of Information and Tourism

**TAIPEI CHILDREN'S AMUSEMENT PARK**

台北市立兒童新樂園

📍 55, Sec. 5, Chengde Rd., Shilin Dist.

☎ (02) 2833-3823

🌐 www.tcap.taipei

🕒 Tue-Fri 9:00am-5:00pm

Sat-Sun 9:00am-6:00pm

A little sidebar journey for history buffs ...

The current Taipei Children's Amusement Park is the successor to the beloved Taipei Children's Recreation Center, situated next to the former Yuanshan Zoo. After the zoo was relocated to Muzha in 1986, the recreation center saw significant expansion before important archaeological discoveries led to its closure, and the site was designated as protected. Nostalgically, the old center's Ferris wheel and merry-go-round have been preserved and become popular Instagram-worthy spots.

The three just-introduced destinations are located just before the Shuang River/Keelung River confluence, and Shuangxi Wetland Park awaits you right where these two waterways meet.

Opened just a few years ago, at this eco-friendly hideaway of superb sunsets and photo-magnetic wildlife such as kingfishers and terrapins, you can observe how sedimentation and dense vegetation are used to naturally treat water from the site's Shilin Pumping Station, ultimately flowing into a large eco pool and then out into the river. A "Water Walkway" leads to an observation circle at the pond's center, where the glassy water's surface is – mesmerizingly – at chest height. There's also an elevated boardwalk from which you can see the park from higher up.



A DAY IN TAIPEI

Mere steps north of MRT Jiantan Station, the Shilin Night Market has a claim to being both Taiwan's biggest and best. It is one of the most-visited by international tourists. Two of Taipei's other top-tier tourist draws are also just steps away: the imposing futuristic-look Taipei Performing Arts Center, opened in 2022, and the magnificent Chinese palace-style Grand Hotel, a cherished national heritage asset, its original building (in rear) opened in 1952, its main building (in front) opened in 1973.

The sprawling market has two areas. One is the modern-façade Shilin Market building on Jihe Road. The other, with the old Yangming Theater and Cixian Temple as its twin hearts, is a boisterous street-grid market framed by Jihe, Wenlin, Dadong, and Danan roads, narrow old lanes running in between.

This is a grand emporium of carnival-style games, sellers of clothing, souvenirs, and other merchandise, and most importantly, food, food, glorious snack foods in mind-boggling variety. Shilin Market consists of a covered arcade with children's games at ground level and a well-lit basement-level food court, which was recently revamped to optimize the dining space and how visitors move through the market. Elsewhere is a head-spinning serendipitous mix of bricks-and-mortar and vendor-stand entrepreneurs, each boasting a specialty.

Every night market in Taiwan has a list of culinary icons, and among those at Shilin are large, succulent deep-fried chicken cutlets, Shilin big sausage, oyster vermicelli, and, for the palate-daredevilish, pig brain soup (yummy pudding-like texture!). A number of vendors have earned Michelin stardom.

©Department of Information and Tourism





North Eye Platform

Another little sidebar journey for history buffs ...

The Shilin Market is among the city's oldest, dating back to 1909, taking root in the square before Cixian Temple and quickly expanding. The temple was on the old trading route between the Taipei Basin and the north coast. In 1913, two spacious brick-and-timber market buildings were constructed facing the temple. Growing dilapidated, these were closed in 2002 and today's Shilin Market building was opened in 2011.

Finish a Shilin day with an invigorating short hike (15-20min) up the high hill on the north side behind The Grand Hotel along the Jiantanshan (Mt. Jiantan) Hiking Trail, which begins across Zhongshan North Road from MRT Jiantan Station. As you walk up the mildly steep stone steps, you enter a realm of incense nanmu and red nanmu trees as the trail evens out, with shade-tolerant plants such as lady palm and wild coffee below. Your destination and hike reward is the Breeze Platform and the nearby lovely, lily-white young North Eye Platform, which hangs out over a steep hillside facing Shilin. The enthralling view sweeps out over the district to the Tamsui River and Mt. Guanyin beyond, and the sunsets are spirit-tickling. 📍



Night scene from Mt. Jiantan



Breeze Platform | 微風平台
Cixian Temple | 慈誠宮
Jiantanshan Hiking Trail | 劍潭山步道
North Eye Platform | 北眼平台
Shilin Night Market | 士林夜市
Shuang River | 雙溪
Shuangxi Wetland Park | 雙溪濕地公園
Taipei Performing Arts Center | 台北表演藝術中心
The Grand Hotel | 圓山大飯店
Yangming Theater | 陽明戲院



MAP

Discoveries Around Zhongxiao Xincheng Station



A Heady Mix of Early 20th Century Old and 21st Century New

TEXT | RICK CHARETTE PHOTOS | VISION

The busy crossroads under which the MRT Zhongxiao Xincheng Station sits is the precise point where Taipei's modern East District began to take shape in the 1960s. Here's an on-foot dive into the area's marvelous blend of cutting-edge new and imperial-age old.

Huashan 1914 Creative Park



Syntrend

A block-and-a-bit north/northwest of the metro station, Syntrend is a high-rise building of avant-garde design housing an uber-trendy shopping complex dedicated to 3C product shopping. It specializes in technology, gaming, anime culture, photography, and electronics. Sellers entice buyers with hands-on experiences, and visitors enjoy ample opportunities at VR and e-sports experimentation.

The sixth and seventh floors compose the city's leading anime/manga center. There's an outlet of Lashinbang, Japan's top second-hand collectible store, and at Kiledo Heaven Arcade play games to your heart's content, including Japan's hit Taiko no Tatsujin, with you a taiko drummer keeping time with music.

At the ground-floor Republic of Gamers outlet, test-drive the multitude of gaming stations. At the third level, Viveland offers immersive Virtual Reality/Mixed Reality games, such as Versus (VR laser tag).

Note that another high-rise complex is right next door, the beloved Guang Hua Digital Plaza, filled with retailers specializing in computers and computer accessories.

SYNTREND 三創生活

📍 2, Sec. 3, Civic Blvd., Zhongzheng Dist.

☎ (02) 7701-0268

🌐 www.syntrend.com.tw

🕒 Sun-Thu 11:00am-9:30pm

Fri-Sat 11:00am-10:00pm



Don Don Donki Zhongxiao Xincheng

Japan's Don Don Donki is a discount-store chain known for its mind-boggling array of products, from Japanese snacks to cosmetics to household goods. Like its brethren, this Taipei outlet is a color riot – both in terms of products and displays.

Uniquely, it has a maze layout, with the endless route choices leading to serendipitous finds of quirky products. Each section is a world unto itself, featuring an idiosyncratic color scheme and/or graphic style. And the clever display designs add to your shopping entertainment – for example, you'll find the penguin mascot Donpen jumping out of an oversized noodle cup and riding a roller-coaster, the penguin Donko as the Statue of Liberty holding ice-cream products and with popsicles forming her crown, etc.

DON DON DONKI ZHONGXIAO XINSHENG

📍 B1, 55, Sec. 1, Bade Rd., Zhongzheng Dist.

☎ (02) 2321-8911

🌐 www.dondondonki.com/tw

🕒 Mon-Fri 9:00am-11:00pm

Sat-Sun 8:00am-11:00pm



Huashan 1914 Creative Park



The heritage facilities at Huashan 1914 Creative Park, located one block west of the metro station, were originally part of a brewery complex established on the city's then eastern margin during the Japanese era – yes, in 1914. Because of water purity and other issues encountered as the environs were urbanized, production was transferred in 1987 to the edge of the Taipei Basin in what is today New Taipei City's Linkou District.

The site of many intact structures, which was abandoned for a time, is today a priceless window into the city's industry and everyday working life during the days of yesteryear, and treasured as well because it is an oasis of large open spaces for public recreational use right in the heart of today's densely developed metropolis. Transformed into a cultural-creative hub starting in the 2000s, home to exhibition galleries, an indie-film theater, an independent bookstore, cultural-creative shops and pop-up stores, cafés, eateries, and bars, it has become a key city cultural-events platform. The busy schedule includes large-scale exhibitions and live performances, such as theatrical and music stage productions, as well as busking.



SPOT Huashan



Huashan Grassland



Huashan Theater is an expansive grassy plaza that fronts the complex. With fully open access – no fencing or perimeter walls – it is a favorite gathering spot for park visitors and neighborhood residents, filling up in the afternoons and evenings. Street performers provide entertainment, most heavily on weekends/holidays.

Be sure to visit the Service Center, in one of the Tower Area Historical Buildings at the plaza's edge, for details on the original function of the structures in the complex and which cultural-arts/commercial venture today occupies each. The two interconnected three-story “towers” (one significantly higher than the other) were originally occupied by research and quality-control facilities.

The former Packaging Factory today houses SPOT Huashan, SPOT Designs, and SPOT Café Lumière. SPOT Huashan is an art-house cinema (two screens) emphasizing alternative films from Taiwan and abroad, offering original, unconventional perspectives. SPOT Designs is a boutique shop packed with memento-style cultural-creative merchandise, and the café is a stylish combination café/lounge bar.

What was then the Compounded Liquor Factory is now the lair of Legacy Taipei, one of the city's most important live-music venues, with shows put on by both alternative and mainstream musicians – primarily emerging acts – from Taiwan and overseas.

The Huashan Grassland, situated just to the northwest of the Huashan complex, is a favorite spot for picnics, taking selfies with delightful installations, and relaxed play. The neighboring children's playground provides entertainment for kids with a zip line and a chimney-shaped tower equipped with two long slides.

HUASHAN 1914 CREATIVE PARK

華山 1914 文化創意產業園區

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

☎ (02) 2358-1914

🌐 www.huashan1914.com



Taiwan Literature Base

A little over a block west/southwest of the metro station, the Qidong Street Japanese Houses are a concentration of Japanese-era dormitory residences that have been saved from the wrecking ball, restored, and given new functions. Along and nearby Qidong Street, they form one of the city's best-preserved such heritage groupings. Taipei is home to about 2,000 wood-built structures from the Japanese era, along with approximately 4,000 protected trees grown on their grounds.

Short, curving Qidong Street is the only remaining downtown section of an old Qing Dynasty-era pathway connecting today's Wanhua District with Keelung on the north coast, used for transporting rice, coal, and other daily necessities. The traditional Japanese-style abodes, built of wood and capped with ceramic-tile roofing, were built between 1920 and 1940 as accommodation for government officials and senior civil servants. After the close of the Second World War, the Japanese returned to the motherland,



and Bank of Taiwan personnel as well as other government officials took up residence.

Slated for demolition by developers in the early 2000s after the Bank of Taiwan sold off the land, members of the surrounding community rallied to protect the dilapidated-yet-invaluable structures – at times standing toe to toe with demolition crews – and good fortune arrived with a decision by the forerunner of the present Department of Cultural Affairs to become involved, which has since worked with the relevant local community representatives to rejuvenate the surviving buildings.





Qidong House

A key resident of a number of the carefully renovated heritage buildings is the Taiwan Literature Base, affiliated with the National Museum of Taiwan Literature (located in Tainan City), established in 2014. Originally called the Qidong Poetry House, the number of restored buildings it occupies has steadily expanded over the years, and now constitutes the city's largest and best-restored dormitory cluster.

Taiwan Literature Base has a regular schedule of exhibitions, cultural-arts performances, and courses/lectures, as well as a writers-in-residence program with Taiwan and writers from around the globe participating. Visitors have the chance to interact with these writers on weekends. There is one permanent exhibition, entitled *The Birth of the Literature Base: A New Chapter of the Old Houses*, housed in the largest

building, Qidong House, whose name clearly reflects its legacy. Free guided tours of the whole complex are also provided Sat/Sun at 2 pm (advance registration up to 15 min. before start).

The on-site eatery PING AN JING Matcha One, featuring a retro Japanese décor, serves classic Japanese and Western dessert treats, including wagashi. It's the perfect place to relax after exploring the area around Zhongxiao Xinsheng Station. 📍

TAIWAN LITERATURE BASE

台灣文學基地

📍 27, Sec. 2, Jinan Rd., Zhongzheng Dist.

☎ (02) 2327-9657

🌐 tlb.nmtl.gov.tw

🕒 Tue-Sun 10:00am-6:00pm



©PING AN JING Matcha One



Compounded Liquor Factory | 再製酒作業場

Guang Hua Digital Plaza | 光華數位新天地

Tower Area Historical Buildings | 高塔區

Huashan Grassland | 華山大草原

Huashan Theater | 華山劇場

Packaging Factory | 包裝工場

PING AN JING | 平安京

SPOT Café Lumière | 光點咖啡時光

SPOT Designs | 光點生活

SPOT Huashan | 光點華山



MAP

MT. JINMIAN AND BEYOND

A Pick-Your-Own-Ending Adventure in the Hills North of Central Taipei

TEXT | AMI BARNES PHOTOS | VISION



Just north of where the Keelung River cuts through Taipei, a probing finger of mountainous green juts into the city, cleaving a wedge between Neihu District's shiny office buildings and the older district of Shilin. Among the peaks jostling for space here, Mt. Jinmian is one of the best-known, and a walk based around scaling its rocky flanks presents a multitude of options for hikers seeking somewhere to stretch their legs.

A rabbit warren of interconnecting trails threads through the hills around Mt. Jinmian, with entry and exit points secreted away in quiet lanes where trees come close to the houses. One of the easier-to-locate entrances can be found a 10min walk away from MRT Xihu Station. Turning left out of Exit 1, head up Lane 285 of Section 1, Neihu Road. The street is lined with drink shops, eateries, and convenience stores, making it ideal for pre-fueling or picking up provisions (pro tip: if you're going for a morning walk, visit Sister Liu's Rice Balls, inside Alley 67, and grab yourself a top-notch hiking snack). At the top of Lane 285, hook a right onto Huanshan Road, cross the street, then turn left on Huanshan Road, Lane 136 – when you run out of road, you'll find yourself at the start of the trail.

Tall camphor trees tower over a pagoda in the trailhead park, and on spring evenings, it's not uncommon to spot giant flying squirrels picking their way through the canopy in search of fresh leaves. Heading upwards, the trail immediately splits in two beside the remains of an old Qing Dynasty-era quarry (rocks from this location were used in the



Sister Liu's Rice Balls



construction of Taipei's old imperial-city walls). Both options will get you to the same place, but the right-hand route does so in the most dramatic style. Steps fashioned from wooden boards and compacted earth lead gently uphill for the first 300m, then the path veers left and begins to ascend more steeply, soon arriving at a grand exposed slab of sandstone, which – when the light hits just right – shimmers golden on account of its high quartz content.

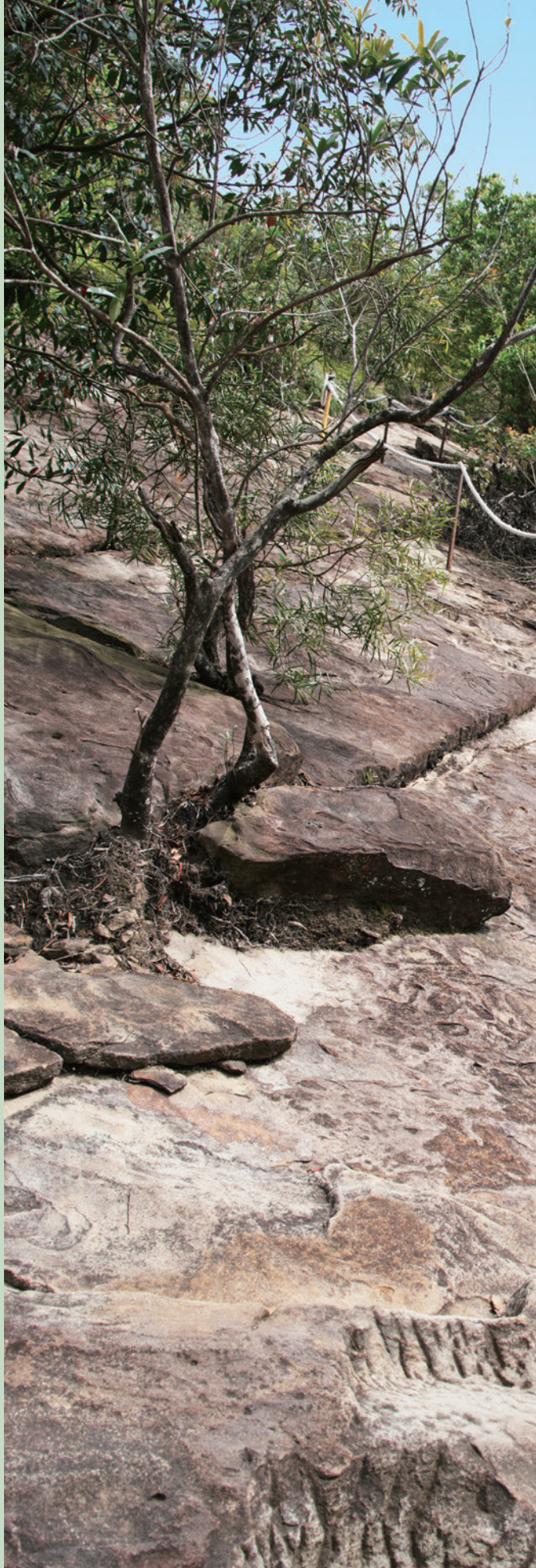


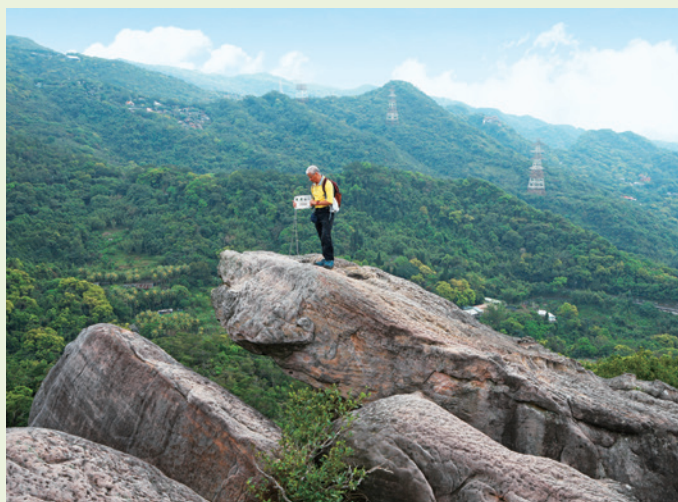
Lunjian Pagoda

Hikers scaling the great rock face are assisted by shallow footholds and a sturdy roped handrail, and although plenty of first-timers bring hiking gloves to help with the rope-grabbing, they are not strictly necessary. This section is tiring on account of the steep gradient, but it's neither difficult nor dangerous – besides, the exertion involved affords you ample opportunity to pause and enjoy the view. There's one particularly impressive vantage point that comes just at the top of the longest exposed section. If you turn to look back as you begin to dip under the trees, the steep slope fills the foreground and Taipei 101 stands out in the distance, flanked by Xinyi District's knot of high-rises, all captured within a leafy frame. If you're hoping to score photos of you and your hiking buddies looking intrepid, this is the spot.

Continuing upwards, you'll soon reconnect with the other path running up from the trailhead, and if you turn right and keep heading uphill for another five minutes, you'll reach the wood-built Lunjian Pagoda. This two-story shelter is a popular haunt with health-conscious locals, and you're likely to find someone here whatever time of day you visit – early risers cranking out pre-dawn pull-ups, afternoon tea-drinkers catching their breath, and as dusk falls, you might meet the trail's resident felines impatiently awaiting supper.

Scissors Rock – the focal point for this walk – can be found a few dozen meters beyond Lunjian Pagoda. The name comes from a pair of angled rock slabs that stab skywards as if poised to snip the clouds asunder. Atop the upper blade – if you dare scramble over to it – you'll find a metal summit marker that reads “Mt. Jinmian,” although this low mountain's true peak lies a couple of hundred meters further east in an unassuming clearing. It's my humble opinion that the views from Scissors Rock are even better than those offered along the more popular Mount Elephant Trail near Taipei 101.





Scissors Rock



Looking beyond Taipei Songshan Airport, Taipei's urban sprawl spills out in all directions across the Taipei Basin, hemmed in by hills at every turn. To the south, the tall peaks in New Taipei City's Wulai District form a green wall, Linkou District and central Taoyuan City are discernable as clusters of high-rises on the horizon to the west, if you look east you can make out the distant triangular form of Mt. Jilong, and to the north, Mt. Datun peeks out from behind a closer ridge.

I'm lucky to live within a short walk of this trail network, and after extensive research, I can say that the best times to visit are at either end of a clear day – at dawn, as the city is waking up, or in the evening when you can sit on the still-warm sun-baked rocks to watch it shimmy into its twinkling night garb. I've spent many a morning up here watching the sky pale from indigo through pink, orange, and yellow until it finally settles on the day's preferred shade of blue, and it is without doubt one of my favorite ways to greet a new Taipei day.



Bihu Park's administration center, nicknamed "Little White House"

©Department of Information and Tourism

When it comes time to head down, you have several options. The swiftest and easiest is to retrace your steps past Lunjian Pagoda and then follow the exposed rock spine down to where you started, but if your legs still have juice, there are many more kilometers to explore.

One short but interesting option involves continuing straight over Scissors Rock. If you keep heading along the crest of the ridge (east), you'll eventually descend near Neihu's Bihu Park, but if you take the first left (under a pylon) and follow signs for Daitian Temple, you can walk down a secluded and infrequently visited lantern-lined boardwalk that feels like something out of a Miyazaki film.

Longer routes await in the hills to the north. From just west of the Scissors Rock summit, follow signs for Mt. Dalunwei Hiking Trail and roll with the dips and rises until you reach a junction where an open-sided mountain shelter overlooks an outdoor gym. This is a popular stopping point for folks walking Section 5 of the Taipei Grand Trail. From here, keep following the fingerposts pointing towards Mt. Dalunwei. The path crosses Jinlong Industrial Road twice, and after diving back under the cover of the treeline for a second time, it begins a steep and steady uphill slog. Taking the sting out of the climb is the close-in beauty along this stretch – a gorgeous bamboo corridor, stems bending to meet each other and forming a shady green tunnel. In spring, the leaves quiver with mixed flocks of Taiwan barbets, white-bellied erpornises, Formosan scimitar babblers, and Japanese white-eyes, and in warmer months, each footstep sends skinks and lizards skittering across dry leaves.



Trail to Daitian Temple

Upon reaching a “stamper” station (bring paper and a crayon if you wish to make use of this facility), the trail splits in two, and hikers bound for Mt. Dalunwei and Mt. Daluntou part ways. (“Tou” and “Wei” respectively mean head and tail, indicating that these two peaks mark the ends of the mountain range) The shorter of the two options is the left-hand route, which takes you to the summit of Mt. Dalunwei and then down to Section 2, Zhongshe Road, where you can catch a bus down to central Shilin District. Meanwhile, the route on the right joins Bishan Road close to the recently revamped Bishan Camping Ground. If you’ve done enough hiking for the day, you could follow this road left or right until you reach civilization, but for the extra-energetic among your group, heading straight ahead up Lane 44 of Bishan Road will soon deposit you at the start of the climb to Mt. Daluntou – a spot marked by a small pool. About 40m uphill, you come to a fork, marked by a whimsical statue of a frog wearing a crown.

Choose between twin routes – one with stone steps, the other a rutted dirt track – which head up parallel to each other, and within 20min you should find yourself atop Mt. Daluntou. The summit is one of Taiwan’s “Small Baiyue” (also known as 100 Minor Peaks, which is a list of a hundred peaks located along suburban hiking trails that local hikers enjoy bagging), and from the Chengfenpao Deck you can enjoy near-panoramic views over Taipei and the surrounding hills before heading west down Mt. Daluntou Forest Trail’s pretty boardwalk steps to the bus stop at Neishuangxi Nature Center. Just watch out for the grumpy squirrels that haunt this route – they are numerous and very vocal when it comes to letting us pesky humans know how unimpressed they are by our presence. 📷



Bihu Park | 碧湖公園
 Bishan Camping Ground | 碧山露營場
 Chengfenpao Deck | 乘風堡
 Daitian Temple | 代天府
 Lunjian Pagoda | 論劍亭
 Mt. Daluntou | 大崙頭山
 Mt. Dalunwei | 大崙尾山
 Mt. Datun | 大屯山
 Mt. Elephant | 象山
 Mt. Jilong | 基隆山
 Mt. Jinmian | 金面山
 Neishuangxi Nature Center | 內雙溪自然中心
 Scissors Rock | 剪刀石
 Sister Liu’s Rice Balls | 劉姊姊飯糰



MAP

Stamper Station



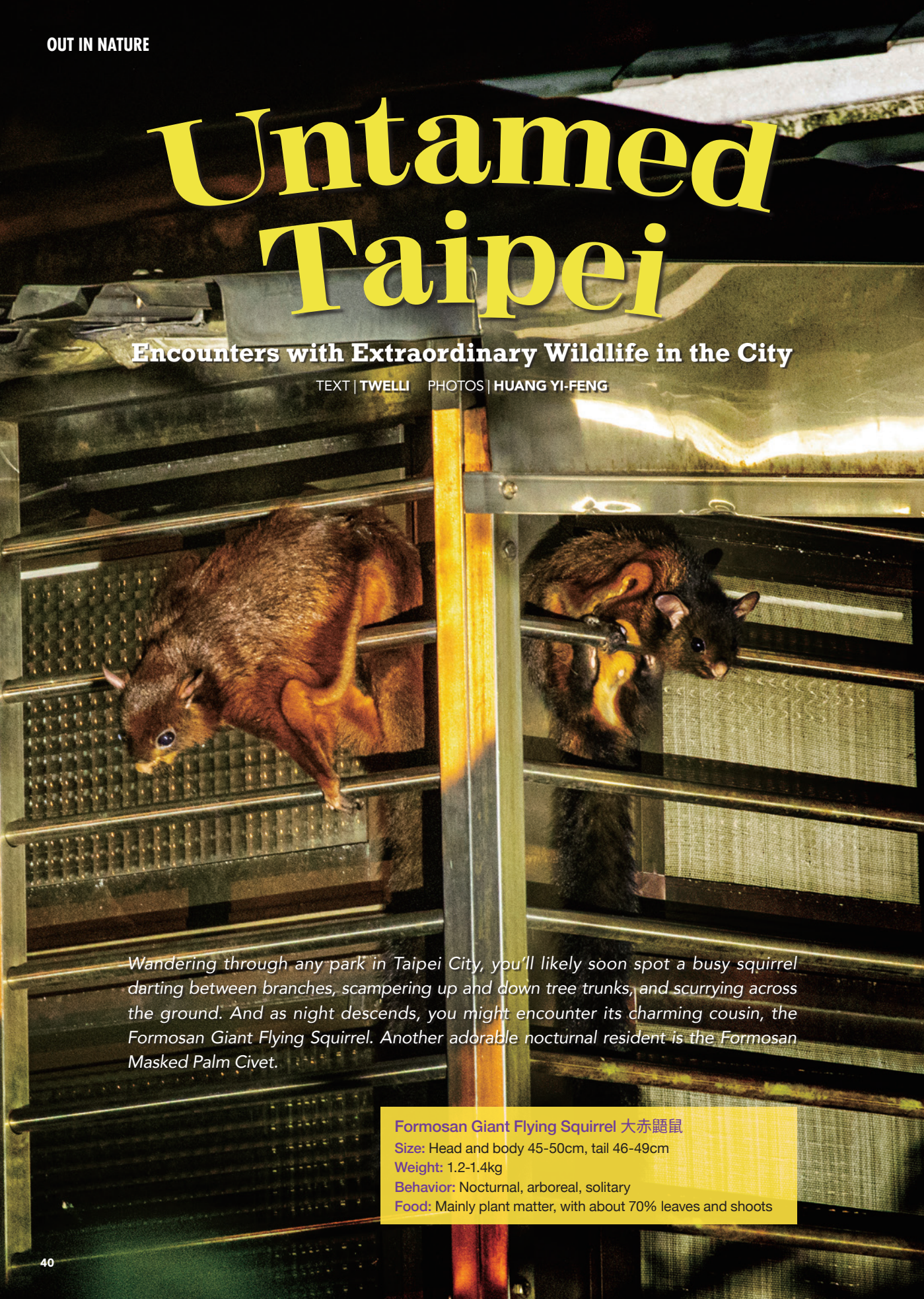
View from Chengfenpao Deck



Untamed Taipei

Encounters with Extraordinary Wildlife in the City

TEXT | TWELLI PHOTOS | HUANG YI-FENG

A photograph of two Formosan Giant Flying Squirrels on a metal structure. One squirrel is on the left, facing left, and the other is on the right, facing right. They are both perched on horizontal metal bars. The background is dark and blurry, suggesting an indoor or nighttime setting.

Wandering through any park in Taipei City, you'll likely soon spot a busy squirrel darting between branches, scampering up and down tree trunks, and scurrying across the ground. And as night descends, you might encounter its charming cousin, the Formosan Giant Flying Squirrel. Another adorable nocturnal resident is the Formosan Masked Palm Civet.

Formosan Giant Flying Squirrel 大赤鱗鼠

Size: Head and body 45-50cm, tail 46-49cm

Weight: 1.2-1.4kg

Behavior: Nocturnal, arboreal, solitary

Food: Mainly plant matter, with about 70% leaves and shoots

Formosan Giant Flying Squirrel

The Formosan Giant Flying Squirrel (*Petaurista grandis*) is notably larger than a common squirrel and possesses a significantly longer tail. Its most remarkable feature is its ability to “fly” – more accurately described as gliding – between trees. This aerial movement is facilitated by a specialized fur-covered membrane, called the patagium, which stretches between its front and hind legs. The squirrel has a vivid reddish-chestnut to dark-rufous-red upper body, contrasting with its typically orange-ochre or whitish underparts. Another striking characteristic is its tail, mostly black with a red tint. Fuyang Eco Park is an easily accessible spot to observe these fascinating creatures at night. Well-adapted to urban life, they are often seen in residential neighborhoods as well. Keep an ear out for the distinctive, sharp zipper-like sounds that reveal their presence in the trees.

Formosan Masked Palm Civet

The Formosan Masked Palm Civet (*Paguma larvata*) has a black head with a distinct white stripe running from its forehead down to its nose; it also has white patches above and below its eyes. It was previously on the endangered species list in Taiwan, but successful conservation efforts have led to its reclassification as “general wildlife” in 2019. In Taipei City, this civet can be observed in parks, on campuses, and in residential areas, as well as in ditches, tree holes, and sometimes even on the street, typically at night, but with increasing sightings during daytime. The animal’s claws are retractable, making it an excellent climber. Its anal glands can release a foul-smelling scent (far less potent than that of a skunk) to deter predators. Due to its fondness for fruit, it is commonly referred to by Taiwanese as the “fruit civet.” 📌

About the Photographer

Four-time Golden Tripod Award-winning science writer and ecological educator Huang Yi-feng (黃一峯) is a multi-talented creator who remarkably discovers nature’s wonders in urban settings. His diverse artistic output includes writing, painting, photography, documentaries, art, and spatial design, transforming natural elements into vibrant expressions through a scientific lens.

Formosan Masked Palm Civet 白鼻心

Size: 45-65cm

Weight: 3.5-5kg

Behavior: Nocturnal, arboreal, generally solitary but facultatively social during the breeding season

Food: Omnivorous, mainly fruits, but also insects, snails, rodents, etc.

Bamboo Basket Weaving

Learning About a Traditional Taiwanese Craft in a Relaxing Class

TEXT | **HOLLIE YOUNGER** PHOTOS | **VISION**

As temperatures soar during Taipei's hazy summer days, DIY classes offer a relaxing respite from the daytime heat. At CHUZI Dialogue, spend a chilled afternoon among the sleepy lanes of Daan District — use locally sourced materials to craft a cute keepsake, learn a new skill, and embrace Taiwan's traditional handicraft culture.





Located on quiet Chaozhou Street just to the north of National Taiwan Normal University, CHUZI Dialogue blends a shop – selling crafts, books, flowers, etc. – with a craft studio and a café.

Sunlight bursts through the glass-paned storefront, the bright and airy interior space blooms with orchids sold by the resident florist, and the aroma of fresh-ground coffee wafts from the café bar, inviting us in.

Intricate bamboo ornaments sway from the ceiling, handmade by co-owner and bamboo master Yang Chu-chun, who says their flowing designs were inspired by the tree beside her childhood home in central Taiwan's Changhua County. Yang has learned her craft from some of Taiwan's finest artisans, and treasures the slow, meditative process of making something by hand. It's about the journey, not the destination, she says.

As she shows us a small, handwoven frog that looks like it's about to leap across the table, Yang explains that bamboo weaving has a long tradition in Taiwan, practiced by the Hoklo and the Hakka people as well as indigenous groups. For centuries, artisans have crafted rustic toys and everyday objects from materials found in the natural environment surrounding their homes. This includes bamboo, which covers up to six percent of Taiwan's forest land area, growing wild along mountainsides, where its rhythmic chiming serves as the backdrop to long hikes.

Here in Taipei, Yang continues to revive this fading heritage as she teaches small classes how to take raw bamboo and turn it into beautiful handmade keepsakes. Visitors can craft a toy frog in just twenty minutes, make a hand-sized basket to hold jewelry or tea lights in half an hour, or attend a series of classes over several hours and learn to weave more intricate designs into larger baskets and bags.





There are numerous courses available, from simple designs up to hexagonal storage baskets. We opt to weave a small basket, a beginner-friendly 1-hour class. Instructions are primarily given in Chinese, though Yang does offer classes in English and has also guided Japanese tourists through the process, as it's more of a hands-on, observation-based experience, she says.

She first shows us the raw product, a long hollow tube of bamboo, and takes a carving knife to cleanly cut it in half and split it into sections at its natural seams. She then expertly trims the bark into smooth centimeter-wide strips. This part is certainly not for beginners, but a demonstration to honor where our materials have come from.

The strips we're using today have been pre-carved by an artisan, the bamboo sourced from Hsinchu County. We each have eight strips of the classic bamboo color, and eight of a rich mahogany shade. The darker color is still 100% natural, Yang says, the bamboo dyed by burning wood from the longan tree in a week-long smoking process, which lends the strips a warm, bonfire-like scent.

We begin by laying out our bamboo strips in a crisscross arrangement. We lightly spray them with water to increase friction against the tabletop, making them easier to handle. Yang reassures us that the bamboo





is incredibly pliable and won't snap; we can even tie it in knots. The process is a little complicated and fiddly, but Yang guides us step by step and encourages us as we go, following our pace and making the class slow, laid-back, and enjoyable.

Using only our hands, we overlap, weave, and knot until the basket's final form starts to take shape, before taking pliers to trim any loose ends and set everything in place. Our final product is a hand-sized shikainami basket. *Shikainami* is a Japanese word meaning "four ocean waves," as each of the basket's four sides has an undulating, curved pattern to represent four waves. Each basket is unique in style and form, giving them that personalized, hand-made finish.

Before leaving, we browse the curated collection of handmade curiosities for sale, from bejeweled rings and hand-painted pottery to natural perfumes and all manner of bamboo ornaments, including incense sticks and place mats. CHUZI Dialogue is also home to Where's Flower, a floral studio selling gorgeous bouquets and individual exotic flowers. It also offers two-hour flower-arranging classes.

Beyond bamboo weaving, CHUZI Dialogue also has workshops for *kintsugi* – the Japanese art of repairing pottery with gold or silver lacquer, a meaningful tradition of making something new from something broken.

From a small menu, you can also order specialty coffees, sandwiches, and seasonal desserts that look almost too pretty to eat. And for the artistically inclined, look out for the exhibitions and events regularly held at CHUZI Dialogue. 📍

CHUZI DIALOGUE

📍 137, Chaozhou St., Daan Dist.

🌐 www.chuzicraft.com

🕒 By reservation only



CHUZI | 筑子

Yang Chu-chun | 楊筑鈞

Where's Flower | 卉蘭花藝



Cool Creations

Silky Gelato and Innovative Shaved Ice

TEXT | ASH BODEN PHOTOS | VISION

Whether you prefer the silky richness of artisanal gelato or the fluffy sweetness of traditional shaved ice, Taipei's vast array of frozen desserts is becoming ever more creative. Shaved-ice shops celebrate the seasons with fresh ingredients like mango and watermelon, and artisanal gelaterias focus on responsibly sourced materials, creating refreshing treats with a unique local character. In this article, we introduce three representative options.



DoubleV

This ice-cream shop, situated on Yanji Street approximately 300m southwest of Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, features a shop design that is both classy and humble. Playful blue and white stripes adorn its façade, complemented by warm lighting and stylish wooden window and door frames. A distinctive revolving door welcomes visitors into a space featuring a glass-paneled gelato counter where your frozen treat is prepared. To the left, the names of the day's flavor selections are displayed on small chalkboards. This regularly updated menu, highly influenced by seasonal ingredients, is a showcase of this ice-cream maker's skill in and commitment to crafting delicious gelato, as well as sorbet and granita. The shop selects the day's ice cream texture and flavors according to the weather. On colder days, expect richer ice cream, and on hotter days, look for lighter sorbets.

DoubleV offers an inviting atmosphere with seating for around ten guests. Playful posters highlighting some of the shop's unique flavor combinations decorate the space. The emphasis here is on seasonal specials crafted with fruits sourced in Taiwan. While classic flavors like vanilla, chocolate, and – a Taiwan classic – high-mountain oolong tea (from the island's Alishan region) are frequent features, less-common options such as peanut and praline are also available. Despite the countless flavor possibilities the shop can create, only about ten are on offer each day.



Two flavors in one serving



Affogato

A standout option is the vanilla gelato, made with vanilla from local producers. This smooth-texture delight features tiny dark specks that impart a subtly smoky note. Like other ice options available, it's served topped with a delicate tuile cookie and accompanied by a crunchy, fruity meringue at the bottom. You can also combine two of your preferred flavors in a single serving, offering the chance to pair, for instance, a rich gelato with a refreshing fruit sorbet.

Another exceptional choice is the peanut gelato. It has a rich, earthy aroma and a subtly grainy texture derived from Taiwan's Tainung No. 11 peanut variety, which is known for its high omega-9 fatty acid content. For a classical Italian-style treat, try the Affogato: creamy vanilla gelato “drowned” in fragrant, steaming-hot espresso.

DOUBLEV

- 📍 234, Yanji St., Daan Dist.
- ☎ (02) 2701-0325
- 📱 [instagram.com/studiodoublev](https://www.instagram.com/studiodoublev)
- 🕒 Thu-Fri 3:00pm-9:00pm
Sat 1:30pm-9:00pm
Sun 1:30pm-8:30pm

Snowflower

You'll find this ice shop on Dabei Road, on the north edge of the popular Shilin Night Market area. Snowflower has a minimalist aesthetic defined by bright lighting, concrete accents, and simple fixtures. Here, the spotlight shines on unique shaved-ice desserts that reimagine the classic Taiwan-style treat. The shop has seats for about 20 guests. Popular menu items include the Sesame Snow Ice with Red Bean & Cream and the Matcha Snow Ice with Red Bean & Cream.

Snowflower distinguishes itself through its dedication to responsibly sourced ingredients and the meticulous preparation of its signature pillowy-soft snow ice. A prime example of this commitment is the just-mentioned sesame and red bean confection. Delicately shaved sesame-infused ice is crowned with sweetened cream and accompanied by chewy taro balls and sweetened adzuki beans. This dessert achieves a delightful harmony of textures and flavors, the creamy sweetness of the adzuki beans meeting the earthy notes of sesame. The taro balls are especially beloved for their chewiness.

The shop also offers refreshing summer fruit selections, like watermelon and mango snow ice, creating an ideal retreat to satisfy cravings and escape the summer heat. Beyond the popular snow ice option, the menu also features waffles. These are served with a rich pudding cream and your choice of fresh fruit, including mango, banana, strawberry, and grapes.



Mango and watermelon snow ice



Sesame Snow Ice with Red Bean

SNOWFLOWER 花藏雪

📍 27, Dabei Rd., Shilin Dist.

☎ (02) 2883-3807

📱 [instagram.com/snowflowerice](https://www.instagram.com/snowflowerice)

🕒 Mon-Fri 1:00pm-8:00pm

Sat-Sun 1:00pm-8:30pm



Jingimoo dorayaki

Jingimoo

This shaved-ice joint, in a lane off the tourist-popular Yongkang Street, is best known for its ingenious crème brûlée-topped shaved ice. The warmly lit, delicately light-wood exterior invites you inside, where you'll find around 10 tables. Scan the QR code on your table to open a bilingual menu that has some truly mouthwatering options.

The true standout here is the Crème Brûlée Matcha shaved ice, a delightful creation featuring sweetened glutinous-rice balls and adzuki beans with matcha jelly concealed beneath a generous mound of matcha tea-infused shaved ice. What truly sets Jingimoo apart is the captivating tableside preparation of the crème brûlée, in which your server expertly blowtorches a flawlessly crisp caramelized topping. The matcha-flavored ice stands out for its vibrant green hue, delicate texture, and its remarkable combination of bitterness and sweetness. The glutinous-rice balls contribute a chewy sweetness that works well with the rich matcha jelly and sweet adzuki beans.

A notable seasonal delight at Jingimoo is its Crème Brûlée Mango, crafted with exceptionally flavorful Irwin mangoes sourced from southern Taiwan. An ideal treat for Taipei's humid summers, this creation features luscious mango and raspberry puree cascading over delicate shaved ice. It comes with jasmine tea jelly and Hakka-style *tangyuan* (sweet rice balls) on the side. 📺



Guava honey soda



Crème Brûlée Mango



Crème Brûlée Matcha

JINGIMOO 金雞母

- 📍 11, Ln. 7, Lishui St., Daan Dist.
- ☎ (02) 2393-9990
- 🌐 www.jingimoo.com
- 🕒 Sun-Mon 12:30pm-8:30pm



Alishan | 阿里山
Shilin Night Market | 士林夜市
Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall | 國父紀念館



MAP

TIME-TRAVELING TIPPLES

Local Culture and a Dash of Nostalgia at Taipei's
Coolest Cocktail Spots

TEXT | **HOLLIE YOUNGER** PHOTOS | **VISION**

Taipei comes alive in the twilight, and Taiwanese culture is showcased across the city in many a tipples sure to tickle your fancy. For example, head to the 1990s for tea-infused cocktails backed by throwback Mandarin love ballads, or return to the 1980s to go retro Japanese style and immerse yourself in anime culture and arcade gaming.



SPEEDRUN BY VG TAIPEI

In video-game speak, a “speedrun” means finishing a game in record time. But at SpeedRun by VG Taipei, the speakeasy’s secret entrance, nostalgia-laced cocktails, and addictive arcade showdowns will have you staying much longer than planned for “just one more round.”

Tucked in beside Linjiang Street Night Market and a short walk from MRT Xinyi Anhe Station, the bar is hidden above one of Taipei’s best duck rice joints. Don’t be distracted by the crowd lining up downstairs – you’re in the know. Slip inside the restaurant, scoot around the counter, and look for a glowing retro gaming screen in the corner. Press the button. The secret door unlocks.

Upstairs, the scene shifts from an upscale eatery to a 1980s Taipei arcade, inspired by Japanese cool. Everything – from decor to drinks – channels childhood memories. The owner, once a schoolkid riding the bus to spend pocket change in arcade parlors, designed the space as an homage to afternoons lost in flashing screens.

Seats mimic old Taipei buses – press the stop sign to call your server – and cheeky signs like “No Pain, No Game” hang above six old-school Japanese arcade machines. Every table gets ten coins to play; cocktails earn you two more. Rotate through street-fighting classic *The King of Fighters* or test your Tetris reflexes.



The intimate space glows with moody red lights – ideal for sparking friendly rivalry on a first date or bonding with friends. Even the cocktail menu plays along: designed like Yu-Gi-Oh! cards, each drink is a nod to an iconic anime.

Shingeki no Kyojin (aka *Attack on Titan*) is a smoky banana sangria, the main body a rich ruby port, finished at the table with burning cedar incense. *Doraemon*, a brandy-based martini, comes as baby blue as its cartoon cat namesake, mixed with orange blossom and red bean and topped with a mini *dorayaki* pancake. The rest of the menu is just as daring – think pork floss or curry leaf-infused creations – but always expertly balanced by the bar’s mixologists.

And SpeedRun’s ultimate cheat code? Order the secret upstairs-only duck rice bowl. It repurposes the unused cuts from downstairs into a bar snack donburi bowl topped with tender meat and creamy Kewpie mayo. Game on!

SPEEDRUN BY VG TAIPEI

📍 2F, 79, Tongan St., Daan Dist.

☎ 0912-529-098

📷 [instagram.com/vg_speedrun.tw](https://www.instagram.com/vg_speedrun.tw)



Your Name
Engraved Herein

★ HEARTBREAK CLUB

For the nostalgic and the lovelorn, Heartbreak Club in Songshan District serves up cheesy Mando-pop love ballads, throws it back with decor inspired by Tokyo's Ginza lounge bars, and shakes up cocktails with distinctively Taiwanese twists. From pandan leaf and thyme to jasmine tea and a cheese milk cap, local flavors shine from the carefully curated menu, designed by in-house mixologists and rotated seasonally.

The DJ booth, signposted "CRYING ROOM," spins tracks every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday night from 10:30pm, but the playlist impresses each night of the week. Taiwanese sing-along classics pull at the heartstrings and hark back to 1990s vinyls and 2000s radio tunes.

The spot is located a 10min walk from MRT Zhongxiao Dunhua Station and a stone's throw from

Liaoning Street Night Market. From the outside, it looks pretty unassuming with its white-and-silver retro façade. But step inside and you'll find a large space made cozy with black-leather booths and metal finishes. Apron-clad mixologists whiz about behind a sleek red-backlit bar.

Choose from the creative cocktail menu of drinks named for famous love ballads, grab a favorite from the classics list, or even ask the bartenders to whip up something special just for you. Inspired by the classic Hong Kong dessert of mango pomelo sago, the Your Name Engraved Herein cocktail, named for the beloved 2020 ballad by Taiwanese singer/songwriter Crowd Lu, is a fruity summer spritz featuring pandan leaf, vanilla, and mango with a Bacardi base. The mixologists infuse the beverage with carbon dioxide to knock out the sweetness and top it with an orange peel filled with fruit jelly.





Elope to the Moon



The Distance of Love, named after the classic Eric Chou tune, is like a tea-lover's take on an espresso martini. Mixing Jin Xuan tea with a citrus Yuzu twist and spiked with sake, this one is served martini-style with a toasted coffee bean floating atop.

And to test your palate, Elope to the Moon, named after a hit by local rock band Mayday, is a gin-based, froth-topped guava cocktail punched with thyme and marked with oh-so-Instagrammable pink lettering spelling out "Heartbreak Club."

The food menu also plays on classic local flavors – dumplings, mala numbing-spicy noodles, and chunks of addictively juicy Taiwanese fried chicken are great to share with your friends.

Whether kicking back from a long day of sightseeing to enjoy local flavors – shaken not stirred – or, perhaps more aptly, using liquid therapy to heal a broken heart, Heartbreak Club hits just the spot. 📍



Distance of Love



HEARTBREAK CLUB 傷心酒店

📍 103, Sec. 4, Civic Blvd., Songshan Dist.

📱 [instagram.com/heartbreakclub_tpe](https://www.instagram.com/heartbreakclub_tpe)



MAP

🚫 Please drink responsibly

The unassuming entrance of Heartbreak Club



Where to Find Masterpieces

The National Palace Museum Is Celebrating Its Centennial This Year!

TEXT & PHOTOS | VISION, NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM

Established in 1925 in Beijing's Forbidden City and relocated to its current Taipei site in 1965, the world-renowned National Palace Museum (NPM) commemorates its 100th birthday this year.



Jadeite Cabbage

Meat-shaped Stone

The year 2025 not only marks the centennial of the museum's founding but also the 75th anniversary of its relocation to Taiwan, the 60th anniversary of its current home in Waishuangxi, Shilin District, and the 10th anniversary of the opening of its southern branch in Chiayi County.

After the museum was established in Beijing in 1925, its invaluable collections were laboriously moved across China during wartime to safeguard them. As the Nationalist forces retreated to Taiwan, a significant portion of these treasures was also shipped across the strait. After a period of temporary storage in central Taiwan, the museum found a new home at the base of the Yangmingshan mountains in 1965, where the historically and culturally significant artifacts continue to be conserved, researched, and exhibited to the world. Established in 2015, the museum's southern branch in Chiayi has been a significant expansion. Its focus is on showcasing Asian art and culture, encompassing Taiwanese culture within that broader scope.

To commemorate its 100th anniversary, the special exhibition *Enduring Legacy: A Centennial Celebration of the National Palace Museum* (甲子萬年), will be staged simultaneously in Taipei and Chiayi from October 4th to January 4th next year. The main museum (northern branch) will explore the NPM's evolution and present precious artifacts on loan from Japan's Kyushu National Museum. An AI-integrated exhibition is also set to showcase NPM's innovative applications. In a historic first, the southern branch will feature the museum's three renowned landscape painting masterpieces: Fan Kuan's *Travelers Among Mountains and Streams*, Guo Xi's *Early Spring*, and Li Tang's *Wind in Pines Among a Myriad Valleys*. It will also exhibit antique blue-and-white porcelain from the Museum of Oriental Ceramics, Osaka. A joint ticket for the NPM's two branches is being planned, along with package tours developed with airlines, Taiwan High Speed Rail, and hotel partners.

Why You Should Visit the National Palace Museum

The NPM offers a rare opportunity to immerse yourself in the beauty and history of Chinese art and culture. It houses one of the world's most extensive and highest-quality collections of Chinese imperial artifacts, spanning over 10,000 years of history. From exquisite jade carvings and delicate porcelains to intricate bronzes, calligraphy masterpieces, and stunning paintings, the sheer artistry and historical significance of the collection are breathtaking.

Travelers Among Mountains and Streams



Among its countless gems are the famed Three National Treasures: the *Jadeite Cabbage*, a Qing Dynasty carving of a head of cabbage with a locust and a katydid; the *Meat-shaped Stone*, a piece of jasper carved and dyed to resemble a succulent piece of Dongpo pork, also from the Qing Dynasty; and the *Ding Cauldron of Duke Mao*, a bronze tripod vessel from the late Western Zhou Dynasty, which is highly significant not only for its age and craftsmanship but also for the long inscription on its interior.

The museum itself is located in a picturesque setting, mountainside as backdrop. The well-organized displays, informative signage (often in multiple languages), and modern facilities make for an enjoyable and enriching visitor experience.

If you visit the NPM this year, be sure to explore the museum's gift shop. It features several new items commemorating this centennial year, including the adorable NPM Small Cabbage Doll. 🍆

NATIONAL PALACE MUSEUM

國立故宮博物院

📍 221, Sec. 2, Zhishan Rd., Shilin Dist.

☎ (02) 2881-2021

🌐 www.npm.gov.tw

🕒 Tue-Sun 9:00am-5:00pm

TRAVEL INFO

METRO TAIPEI

Service Hours: 6:00am - 12:00 midnight

Customer Service Hotline: (02)218-12345



EasyCard
NT\$200
(NT\$100 value incl.)



**SINGLE-JOURNEY
TICKET**
NT\$20 - NT\$65



DAY PASS
NT\$150



24HR PASS
NT\$180



48HR PASS
NT\$280



72HR PASS
NT\$380

TAIPEI CITY BUS

TICKET PRICE

Adult: NT\$15, regardless of using cash or an EasyCard

Student: NT\$15 when paying cash; NT\$12 when using an EasyCard (Student ID required)

Child under 115cm or under six years old: Free (ID required)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Taipei eBus
ebus.gov.taipei

Taipei Sightseeing Bus

The open-top, double-decker buses offer a hop-on/hop-off service, allowing tourists to take in the cityscape and visit many of Taipei's prime destinations.

Website: taipeisightseeing.com.tw



Taipei Restaurant Bus

Taiwan's only sightseeing bus with a luxury dining experience. Savor exquisite cuisine while a multilingual audio guide unveils Taipei's hidden charm.

Website: taipeirestaurantbus.com



YOUBIKE

YouBike is Taipei's public rental bike system. Register with an EasyCard at youbike.com.tw/region/taipei/register to rent a bike, enjoy free insurance, and a member-only subsidy. The fee per 30 minutes is listed below.

Within 30 minutes	30 minutes to 4 hours	4 hours to 8 hours	Over 8 hours
NT\$0 with member-only subsidy	NT\$10 per 30 minutes	NT\$20 per 30 minutes	NT\$40 per 30 minutes

The electric-assisted Youbike 2.0E charges NT\$20 per 30 minutes for the first 2 hours, and NT\$40 per 30 minutes thereafter. No subsidy is given.

TAIPEI FUN PASS

There are four types of Taipei Fun Pass available: the Unlimited version (attractions+transportation), the Exploring version (attractions+EasyCard), the Classic version (2 attractions+EasyCard) and the Transportation version (transportation only). You can visit Taipei City, New Taipei City, Keelung City, and Taoyuan City within the validity.



Unlimited
1 Day Pass/
2 Day Pass/
3 Day Pass
NT\$1,300/1,700/2,000



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



Classic
Taipei 101 +
National Palace Museum
14-Day Valid
NT\$950



Transportation
1 Day Pass/2 Day Pass/
3 Day Pass/5 Day Pass
NT\$210/340/470/730

TRAVEL INFORMATION SERVICES

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

Information for Foreigners in Taiwan: 1990

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

Taipei Travel Net: travel.taipei/en; presents travel information on Taipei City in Chinese, English, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Indonesian, Vietnamese, and Spanish

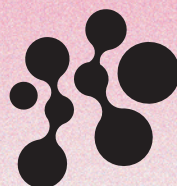




2025
08.25 (Mon)

2025
09.07 (Sun)

潮臺北 一直鬧



TRENDY
TAIPEI Music
X Innovation

Music · Fashion · Tech · Audio Visual · Game · Art

SUPERVISOR | ORGANIZER |

AD



27TH TAIPEI
FILM FESTIVAL

台北電影節

27TH TAIPEI
FILM FESTIVAL
台北電影節

27TH TAIPEI
FILM FESTIVAL

台北電影節

27TH TAIPEI
FILM FESTIVAL
台北電影節



2025.06.20
→ 07.05

指導單位 | 台北市政府
SUPERVISOR | TAIPEI 臺北市府

文化部 影視及流行音樂產業局
Bureau of Audiovisual and Music Industry Development, Ministry of Culture

主辦單位 | 台北市文化局
ORGANIZER | 台北市文化局

台北市文化基金會
Taipei Culture Foundation

台北電影節
TAIPEI FILM FESTIVAL

Zhongshan Hall
VIESHOW CINEMAS (Xinyi)
SPOT Huashan

AD