



BLOG POSTS

Our 2024 Guide to Taitung 台東懶人包

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Taitung has some of the most beautiful scenery in Taiwan, two amazing offshore islands, a striking coastline, deep mountains, and most of all it is bursting with unique aboriginal culture, with indigenous people making up over one-third of the population. It is an unmissable stop on your next trip to Taiwan. Here we have compiled our full guide to Taitung County.



Qing dynasty Chinese farmers started settling there in 1873, as a reaction to the Mudan Incident of 1871 (in which a crew of shipwrecked Japanese sailors were beheaded by Taiwan aborigines) and the Japanese punitive expedition to Taiwan in 1874. After the Japanese took control of Taiwan, Taitung's main industries were growing sugar cane and rice. The eastern railway line was completed in 1926, linking Taitung to the rest of Taiwan.

After the ROC took control of Taiwan, Taitung Airport opened in 1981, which further improved transportation links to the region, however, Taitung has remained relatively undeveloped when compared to the rest of Taiwan, and the population of about 200,000 has been in decline for years. However Taitung has become an important tourist destination, and the local government has invested heavily in tourism development.

With its untamed and undeveloped landscape, towering mountains, beautiful coastline, and vibrant aboriginal culture, Taitung has become a tourist hot spot in Taiwan.

When to go:

The best time to go they say is around May when it is not too hot and there are no northeasterly winds or typhoons which can cancel your transportation to the island.

The typhoon season lasts from around June to October. The busy season is during summer break from June to August, during which time it can be hard to book a hostel or airplane ticket. Winter is the less crowded season, but the water will be colder, there will be constant wind (which could cancel transportation), and it will rain more often.

How to get there:

By Plane:

Traveling to Taitung by plane is the fastest way to get there. The trip only takes one hour from Taipei, and there are planes that leave daily through Mandarin Airlines and Uni Air. From Taitung, where you can switch to Saily Air which will take you the rest of the way to Green Island or Orchid Island. A plane ticket to Taitung takes about one hour and costs about 5000 NT per round trip. You can book discount tickets to Taitung on KKday here. You can also book cheap flights to Kinmen on Trip.com or CheapO Air. You can also search for cheap flights in Taiwan here.

By Train:

The train ride from Taipei to Taitung takes 3-4 hours and costs about 800 NT one way. Book tickets via the normal train (TRA) on Klook here.

By Car/Scooter:

From Taipei, a car ride to Taitung takes about six hours, and a scooter ride takes about eight hours. You can rent a scooter from Taitung Station on Klook or KKday. Scooter rental is about 300 NT per day. You can check out our scooter rental guide here.

How to get around:

Rent a scooter! Unless you are travelling with small children or elderly people you should not need to rent a car. You can rent bicycles but you will not be able to travel as fast. You can also hire a driver to take you on tours.

By scooter: You can rent a scooter from Taitung Station on Klook or KKday. Scooter rental is about 300 NT per day. You can check out our scooter rental guide here.

By car / taxi: You can also rent a car for about 1500 NT per day. You can rent a car on Qeeq here or Klook here.

You can hire a driver or tax; you can charter a car here.

You can check out our car rental guide here.

By Bicycle: Cycling is the best way to enjoy Taiwan's landscapes if you have the time and energy. Looking for bicycle rentals in Taiwan? You can search on KKday here and search for tours on Klook here. You can also check out our Taiwan cycling guide here.

Accommodation:

Booking accommodation in the Taitung can be difficult in the summer months and on weekends. We suggest a better quality selection on Agoda.com.

We have stayed at and recommend the Papago International Resort in Chishang (you can book on Agoda here, Booking.com here, Hotels.com here, or Expedia here), which is a five star hotel with private villas with pools for each



Tours.

There are many companies offering snorkeling, diving, SUPing, Surfing, Speed Boating, Glamping, River tracing, and other tours in Taitung. You can find more tours of Taitung on [Klook here](#) or [KKday here](#).

Just to let you know, if you book using the links above, we get some commission at no cost to you, and you can help support our blog.

You can click [here](#) to receive \$5 USD on your first [Klook](#) purchase.

Map:

See a map of the places we will cover in this blog below:

Places we will cover in this blog:

- [Green Island 綠島](#)
- [Green Island White Terror Memorial Park 白色恐怖綠島紀念園區](#)
- [Zhorì Hot Springs 朝日溫泉](#)
- [Orchid Island \(Lanyu\) 蘭嶼](#)
- [Taiwan International Balloon Festival 台灣國際熱氣球嘉年華](#)
- [Luye Highland 鹿野高臺](#)
- [Taitung Longtian Green Tunnel 台東龍田綠色隧道](#)
- [Wulu Fort 霧鹿砲台](#)



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- [Donghe Buns 東河包子](#)
 - [Custard Apples 釋迦](#)
 - [Dulan 都蘭](#)
 - [Water Running Up 水往上流](#)
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 - [Highway 11](#)

Let's get started!

Green Island 綠島

Green Island is a paradise off the southeastern coast of Taiwan. Once a prison for political enemies of the KMT, it is now a tourist hot spot. It is one of the best places to snorkel and dive in Taiwan, one of only three salt water hot springs in the world, and it also includes amazing volcanic rock formations and scenery all around the island...[read more](#)

There are many companies offering [snorkeling](#), [diving](#), [SUPing](#), and other tours on Green Island. You can search for



One of the most popular tourist attractions on the island is the White Terror Museum, which is an old prison for political prisoners during the white terror or martial law period of Taiwan, that has now been opened to the public. There are now quite a few exhibits set up in these buildings.

Zhori Hot Springs 朝日溫泉



Zhaori (or Chaori) hot spring is one of only three saltwater hot springs in the world. It is truly a world class location worth checking out. The hot springs have also been turned into hot tubs and swimming pools above, and below is a more close to nature experience.

Admission is usually 200 NT per person.

You can also book discount tickets to Zhaori Hot Spring [on KKday here](#).

There are many companies offering [snorkeling](#), [diving](#), [SUPing](#), and other tours on Green Island.

Orchid Island (Lanyu) 蘭嶼



Orchid Island (not to be confused with the Fijian Island of the same name), known in the local Tao language as Ponso No Tao (Island of the people), and in Chinese as Lanyu (蘭嶼) is a secret indigenous people's paradise off the southeastern coast of Taiwan. It is different than any other place in Taiwan, and has the best preserved indigenous culture anywhere in the country. If Taiwan's best tourist activity is experiencing the culture of Taiwan's indigenous peoples, then Lanyu has the best tourist experience anywhere in Taiwan...[read more](#)

You can book multiple tours and activities on Orchid Island such as a **Tribal Tour, Underground House Tour, day hiking, night hiking, snorkeling, scuba Diving, SUPing / Paddle Boarding, and Freediving**. You can search for more tours through [Klook here](#) or [KKday here](#).

Taiwan International Balloon Festival 台灣國際熱氣球嘉年華



Taiwan's International Hot Air Balloon Festival, held every year in Taitung County during the summer, is one of the premiere tourism events in the country. Prepare to be amazed by an array of balloons, or enjoy the amazing natural scenery in Taitung by taking a tethered or non-tethered hot air balloon ride...[read more](#)

Tethered Balloon Ride (熱氣球繫留體驗): 4PM- 6:30PM or 4:30AM to 6:30AM (July to August). The ride lasts about 5 minutes.

Ticketing website: [KKday](#)

Untethered balloon ride (熱氣球空中自由飛行): Usually between 4AM and 6AM

Ticketing website: [Klook](#)

Luye Highland 鹿野高臺



Luye Highland (aka Luye Platform, Luye Gaotai), is a hill in Taitung County's Eastern Rift Valley, and is one of the most popular spots in the country for hot air ballooning and paragliding. Every summer since 2011, the longest running hot air balloon festival in Taiwan has been held here. Even if you are not a fan of going high in the sky, the area has beautiful scenery, especially of the surrounding eastern rift valley...[read more](#)
You can book a paragliding experience in Taiwan [on Klook here](#).

Taitung Longtian Green Tunnel 台東龍田綠色隧道



Luye's Longtian Green Tunnel in Taitung County is one of many "green tunnels" in Taiwan, made up of a row of trees on either side of a road making a tunnel of leaves, which to locals is kind of a rare sight. The tunnel attracts many cyclists and Instagrammers year-round...[read more](#)

You can book Wifi and SIM cards for Taiwan on [Gigago here](#).

Wulu Fort 霧鹿砲台



Wulu Fort in Haiduan Township of Taitung County was originally made by the Japanese to suppress an uprising by the Bunun indigenous tribe. Now it stands as a monument to Taiwan's colonial past. The area also has great views of the Wulu Gorge and Wulu Village along Taiwan's South Cross-Island Highway...[read more](#)

Chishang 池上



Are you a fan of rice fields, biandang, and rice in general? Chishang is the place for you! As the unofficial rice capital of Taiwan, its unspoiled views of rice fields with a backdrop of the eastern rift valley is one of the most unique and unspoiled scenic areas in Taiwan...[read more](#)

Papago International Resort 日輝國際渡假村



This is the hotel resort (Papago International Resort) that we stayed at. Back in the day, Takeshi Kaneshiro also stayed at this resort, and his name is hung outside where he stayed. I guess this is another reason that people come to stay here. The resort is very close to Brown Boulevard and offers bike rental as well as day trips to sixty stone mountain.



The resort included three buffet meals and private swimming pools for each residence. You can book [Papago International Resort](#) on [Agoda](#) [here](#).

Guanshan Sea of Flowers 關山花海

Guanshan Floral Sea is open in the winter from about December to February. Floral Seas in Taiwan (aka sea of flowers; flower sea; flower/floral ocean) are a popular attraction for locals all around the island. Many farmers actually harvest



The Baxian Caves (aka Baxiandong) on the east coast in Taitung County have the earliest evidence of humans living in Taiwan, including stone tools dating back to over 30,000 years ago. In recent times the caves were converted into Taiwan folk religion temples, but now all of the 30 caves in the area have been reclaimed by the government to preserve this important archaeological site. The area is now open to the public, and there are trails and a large park in front of the caves...[read more](#)

Sanxiantai 三仙台 (Platform of the Three Immortals)



Sanxiantai is one of the most beautiful spots on the East Coast, an area full of beautiful geology and natural scenery. It is known for its iconic arching footbridge that leads to the island of the three immortals (Sanxiantai, literally three immortals platform). The ocean views and unique rock formations make it an ideal place to take a stroll and enjoy nature's beauty...(read more)

Chenggong Sea of Flowers 成功花海



Along Provincial Highway 11, you will run across many fields of flowers, but you should stop at the Chenggong Sea of Flowers which is a particularly large area of flower fields where you can photos. For more information about floral seas in Taiwan, [read here](#).

If you keep going north, you'll come to Donghe, another small town on the coast. This place is famous for its steamed bun shop: Donghe Baozi (東和包子). The buns are huge, delicious, and reasonably priced.



Custard Apples (aka soursop or Annonaceae) are a delicacy in Taitung. You will often see them being sold on the roadside throughout Taitung County. They are super sweet and also have a soft texture and fragrant aroma. The only downside is that there are many large black seeds in the flesh that you have to spit out.

The best kind of custard apple is Pineapple Custard Apple (鳳梨釋迦 fènglí shìjiā) pictured above, because it has a firmer texture and the fruit doesn't just melt away when you cut it open like the normal variety pictured below.



Pictured above is the normal variety of Custard Apple, which has a much mushier texture and tends to melt in your mouth.

For our full guide to Taiwan's fruit, click [here](#).

Dulan 都蘭



Water Running Up is a gravity defying stream that appears to run uphill in Donghe Township near Dulan, Taitung County. As one of the stranger sights in Taiwan that seems to defy nature and the laws of physics, it attracts people year round. Does the water really run uphill? Let's find out...[read more](#)

Little Yehliu Geopark (Xiaoyeliu) 小野柳地質公園



Little Yehliu (aka Xiaoyeliu) Geopark is a unique geological area on the coast of Taitung City. It bears the same name as Yeliu Geopark (famous for the Queen's Head Rock), because the rocks look similar to its more famous namesake. However Little Yehliu is much smaller as the name suggests, and its rock formations less spectacular. Despite this, it is still a beautiful and unique stretch of coastline...[read more](#)

Taitung White House 臺東阿伯小白屋



The Taitung White House is a strange-looking house built by hand by a former KMT soldier. It's a popular location and you can usually spot an Instagrammer or two here taking photos of the oddly shaped house, which reminds people of *Howl's Moving House*...[read more](#)

Taitung Haibin Park Beach 台東海濱公園



Taitung's Haibin Park (literarily Ocean Coastal Park) stretches along the east coast next to downtown Taitung City and includes the nearest beach, as well as bicycle paths, grassy areas, wetlands, and artwork. It is a great place to relax and enjoy ocean views within walking distance of the city center...[read more](#)

Liji Moon World (Badlands) 利吉月世界 (惡地)



Liji Moon World (aka Liji Badlands) is a rare geological formation right next to Taitung City in eastern Taiwan (not to be confused with the larger and better [Tianliao Moon World](#)). It is composed of easily eroding clay deposits, that erode faster than plants can grow on them, creating a unique moon-like landscape. If you are in Taitung, you should take the short trip across the Beinan River and enjoy these beautiful eroding masses of clay and dirt...[read more](#)

Zhiben Hot Springs 知本温泉



Zhiben Hot Springs is one of the most popular hot spring areas in Taiwan, similar to Beitou or Wulai. In addition to the hot springs, you can also enjoy beautiful mountain scenery and aboriginal cuisine and culture. You can book a hot spring hotel at Zhiben Hot Springs on [Agoda](#), or [here](#) and [here](#).

Taimali 太麻里



This is the best I could do of the most amazing sunrise in Taiwan, in Taimali. It was too early for me. This is the view from the front door of Mountain and Ocean B & B.



We also recommend just going down provincial highway 11 down the coast on a scooter or in a car, and stopping to enjoy the mountain and ocean scenery as much as possible. It is a beautiful road that also connects with [Hualien](#).

Places and activities we missed:

- [Chulu Ranch](#) 初鹿牧場
- [Yuan Sen Garden](#) 原生應用植物園
- South Cross-Island Highway 南橫公路
- Lisong Hot Spring 栗松溫泉
- Jiaming Lake 嘉明湖
- Taitung Night Market 台東觀光夜市
- Green Water Lake 綠水湖
- [SUPing / Paddle Boarding](#)
- [Surfing](#) 衝浪
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- [Pilot Training Experience](#)
- [Zhiben National Forest Recreation Area](#) 知本國家森林遊樂區
- [Dapo Pool](#) 大坡池
- Beinan Site 卑南遺址
- Taitung Forest Park 台東森林公園
- National Museum of Prehistory 國立台灣史前博物館
- ...and many many more. Get out there and explore for yourself!



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Author 作家

I am an American expat who has extensive experience living, working, and traveling in Taiwan. In my day, I had to



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Kenting 墾丁

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Lakes And Reservoirs 湖及水庫

Lighthouses 燈塔

Longdong 龍洞

Lukang 鹿港

Luodong Night Market 羅東夜市

Maolin 茂林

Martyrs' Shrines 忠烈祠

Matsu Islands 馬祖列島

Mazuism 媽祖

Miaoli 苗栗

Migrant Workers 外籍勞動

Monkeys 猴子

Monkeys 猴子

Mountain Biking 越野

Mountain Biking 越野

Museums 博物館

Nangang 南港

Nantou 南投

National Forest Recreation Areas 國家森林游樂區

National Palace Museum 故宮

National Parks 國家公園

Natural Scenery 自然風景

New Taipei 新北市

Night Market 夜市

Northern Coast 北海岸

Not Taiwan 台灣以外的地方

Nuclear Power 核能

Nuclear Power 核能

Offroading 越野

Old City Gates 古城門

Old Streets 老街

Old Trails 古道

Orchid Island (Lanyu 蘭嶼)

Outer Islands 外島

Paragliding 跳傘

Pathos And Logos 情與理

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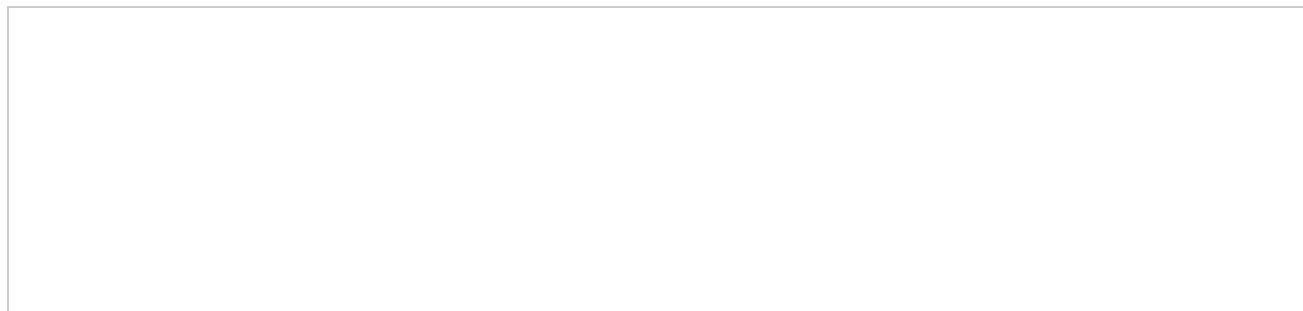
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