

TAIPEI 台北

STORIES FROM THE CAPITAL

WINTER 2019

| VOL.18

TAIPEI'S
HOLIDAY
CHARM



A Good Start

The Joys of the Western and
Lunar New Year in Taipei

New Year Shopping in Taipei

Where the Locals Go,
What They Buy, and Why

**Celebrating Lunar New Year
in Taipei**

A Guide to Proper Etiquette

Hoshing Pastry Shop

Unrolling over 70 Years of
Delicious Treats

TAIPEI 台北

STORIES FROM THE CAPITAL

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Notes from a Taipei Winter

Winter is upon us in Taipei, and when the weather cools down, thoughts inevitably turn to the arrival of a brand new year. In Taiwan, as it is throughout much of Asia, the term “New Year” takes on a double meaning (and double the reason to celebrate). As there is of course the standard New Year's Eve, according to the Gregorian calendar, to ring in. But then there is also the Lunar New Year to commemorate with great food, friends, and family.

In this issue, *TAIPEI* has invited a pair of seasoned experts to discuss both New Year's Eve and the Lunar New Year holidays from the Western and Eastern point of view, along with intros to the hottest hotels in town to take in the New Year's Eve festivities, and the best Lunar New Year shopping markets in the city, too.

For long-term expats and short-term visitors alike, the Lunar New Year can be a confusing time, full of unfamiliar customs and many an opportunity for an unintended cultural faux pas. If you happen to be the guest of a local family at this wonderful time of year, *TAIPEI* also has you covered with our comprehensive guide to Lunar New Year etiquette. And don't worry, it's not all familial obligations and somber ceremony. Winter also marks the arrival of the wondrous Lantern Festival — a shining spectacle that is well worth a visit.

Yes, the humid Taipei air can get downright chilly during the winter months, a time when ten degrees Celsius feels closer to freezing. But there's no better remedy than stepping out and feeling the warmth of the local people, and there's no better place to do so than at some of the city's most storied shops. In the pages to follow, we've got the stories (and storytellers) of three such traditional establishments — Rui-Cheng, Ri Xing, and Hoshing —which might sell different products, but share a common love for keeping the welcoming, hospitable nature and old-school craftsmanship of our beloved capital alive.

Another great way to warm up in winter is by having a nice, steaming bowl of *tangyuan*, and we've got your guide to this favorite winter staple. And for those homesick expats, we've got you covered as well, with five restaurants serving up Western and Japanese fare that will make you feel right at home just when you might be missing it the most.

Happy New Year to one and all, from our family to yours, during this, the most festive of seasons in Taipei.



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(Photo / Lin Qinghua)



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Calendar of Good Times

DECEMBER

11/30 - 12/31

Gongguan Christmas Season

The annual Gongguan Christmas Season (公館聖誕季) is held as usual in Taipei Water Park (台北自來水園區) this year. For celebrating Christmas, the venue is lit up by sparkling light decoration and festive Christmas flower garlands all through December. The highlight of the season will take place on December 21, when a symphony orchestra has been invited to hold a grand Christmas concert, bringing music and blessings to showcase the artistic charm of the Gongguan riverside. Moreover, the park's century-old monument, Guanyinshan Water Cistern (觀音山蓄水池), which was just opened to the public at the beginning of this year, offers regular guided tour services on weekends. During the event periods, tickets are on sale at the ticket booth on-site daily from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Opening hours of the park are extended to 8:00 pm on weekends, while the park remains closed on Mondays.



12/31

The 2020 Taipei New Year's Eve Party

On December 31, the 2020 Taipei New Year's Eve Party (台北最High新年城跨年晚會) will take place at Taipei City Hall Square at 6:30 pm. The party will invite popular artists to perform on the stage, and the highlight of Taipei 101's countdown fireworks display will illuminate the first day of 2020. This party will take the word "mix" as its core concept, highlighting the fact that Taipei is gathering people from all over the world to create diversity with an unlimited imagination. The series of events are kicking off from November 9, including outdoor cinema screenings held on Friday to Sunday night from 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm at Liugong Park (瑠公公園), and light exhibitions at Taipei City Hall that will brighten the city up every evening from 5:30 pm.

12/15

2019 Taipei Marathon

The Taipei Marathon (台北馬拉松) is one of the grand annual sporting events in Taipei. This year, the course route starts from Taipei City Hall and passes through Taipei's major attractions, including Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, the Presidential Office Building, the Grand Hotel (圓山大飯店) and the National Revolutionary Martyrs' Shrine (國民革命忠烈祠). Running from the new town of Eastern Taipei all the way to the old town of Western Taipei allows participants to conquer the race while enjoying the city's modern and ancient sides. The event is expected to have a total of 28,000 runners this year, and everyone is welcome to join the event by cheering for the contestants along the race route. For more information, please refer to the official website: www.taipeicitymarathon.com/en



1/31 - 2/4

The 8th Taipei International Comics & Animation Festival

The Taipei International Comics & Animation Festival (台北國際動漫節) is entering its eighth year in 2020. With the theme of "Incredible Anime," the festival will be held at Taipei Nangang Exhibition Center, Hall 2 (台北南港展覽館 2 館) every day from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm with activities scheduled on an unprecedented scale. In addition to special and unique vendors, the festival will display limited edition items of popular animation and promotional products. Meanwhile, cartoonists/illustrators from all over the world and voice actors and idols from Japan and Taiwan will hold fan meetings and signing events in Taipei. Animation industry professionals and comic fans, check out more information at www.facebook.com/tca.tw/



2/8 - 2/16

2020 Taipei Lantern Festival

The 2020 Taipei Lantern Festival (台北燈節), for the first time, will expand its scale to plan a dual-venue presentation in both the Eastern and Western areas of Taipei. The West End stage is centered around Ximending (西門町) and stretching all the way to North Gate Square (北門廣場); The East End stage is centered around Nanxing Park (南興公園) and Nangang Station. The whole event will be designed to celebrate the coming Year of the Rat, and the multimedia light shows and the lantern displays will amp up the energy of this ever-moving city. Whether you are a local or a tourist, Taipei welcomes you to participate in this traditional Taipei Lantern Festival.

2/4 - 2/9

The 28th Taipei International Book Exhibition

The Taipei International Book Exhibition (台北國際書展, TiBE) is the biggest event for the publishing industry in Taiwan. In 2020, TiBE will host exhibitors from around the world on the first and second floor of Taipei World Trade Center, Hall 1 (台北世貿中心展覽 1 館). Featuring the theme of "Reading the New Landscapes," it provides various special exhibitions to allow book fans to learn more about publications from different perspectives. The grand opening will be held on February 4. With Korea being the guest of honor this year, a large Korean pavilion will be set up at the exhibition to showcase popular publications and the publishing culture in Korea. Meanwhile, there will be free admission for foreign guests with passports, welcoming book fans from all over the world to enjoy the event. Furthermore, the "Book Fair Market" will be launched on the second floor of Hall 1 for the first time. You definitely do not want to miss this if you are a reader who likes to shop for exquisite and entertaining literature.







A Good Start: The Joys of the Western and Lunar New Year in Taipei

East and West Look
at Each Other

WORDS BY
Rick Charette

PHOTOS BY
Gao Zanzian, Valentin Petkov, Yenyi Lin, Taiwan Scene,
MyTaiwanTour, Liu Jiawen

A few decades ago, in Taipei the long period spanning the Western New Year and Lunar New Year was one of relative quiet. Things have changed. This long season is now packed with special activities. And whereas in the past travel to Taipei during this “down time” was something generally avoided by the international traveler, today the back-to-back Christmas/Western New Year and Lunar New Year seasons are actively targeted by travelers from overseas, knowing they can fill their schedules with unique happenings and experiences.

1 | 2

1. **The Taipei 101 New Year countdown fireworks show attracts tens of thousands of tourists every year.** (Photo / Gao Zanzian)
2. **Lunar New Year is one of the most important cultural festivals for people in Taiwan.** (Photo / Valentin Petkov)



Though not a Christian nation, Taiwan has embraced the joys of the Christmas/Western New Year season, with public celebrations large and small through much of December.

In the past, Lunar New Year in Taipei was unusually quiet, because so many people left the city. This was because so many had come to the north from other areas during Taiwan's Economic Miracle period, and returned to their parents' homes for the holidays. No more — today, a large percentage of families are firmly rooted in Taipei, and there is surging demand for holiday fun. Business owners, notably in shopping areas and night markets, have been happy to oblige, taking their own holidays after the general public settles back into their regular routines.

|| EAST AND WEST REPRESENTERS

We're off on a mini-tour through the twin season, and we've specially invited two VIP guests, Keoni Everington and Queenie Li (李佩書), to serve as cultural co-navigators. This tour has two themes. The first presents key cultural adventures; the second is cross-cultural comparison, Keoni representing the West, Queenie the East.



(Photo / Yenyi Lin)

Keoni, from the US, is a member of the journalist team at Taiwan News, a digital news site that publishes reports both on Taiwanese society and on modern global trends.

Queenie, born and raised in Taipei, is Associate Managing Editor with the New Business Department in the CommonWealth Magazine group. It's Smile Taiwan unit has many insightful English-language articles written by Queenie herself.

|| THE WESTERN NEW YEAR

Without question, our two co-navigators agree, for locals, expatriates, and visiting international tourists, the main event for the Christmas/Western New Year season is the grand finale, Taipei New Year's Eve Party (台北最High新年城跨年晚會). The Xinyi District fills up with a sea of humanity, centered around Taipei City Hall and Taipei 101. The big draws are the hours-long stage show outside City Hall, featuring a cavalcade of high-caliber pop stars, and the magnificent fireworks and laser-show spectacle at midnight, launched from the tower's outdoor decks.

Though Taiwan is a Buddhist/Daoist/Confucian country, says Queenie, with only a small Christian minority, "the spiritual essentials of the Christmas/Western New Year are understood and are also felt genuinely, with a desire to share the celebrations with your closest family members and friends."

Keoni strongly recommends scouting out the area in advance, and showing up early on the day to assure yourself a good vantage point, especially for the laser show, which is only on one side of the tower

(around the Vie Show Cinemas Taipei Xinyi, 台北信義威秀影城, is best). Bring raingear, he adds. Finally, note that the metro system runs for the whole night, but expect long waits. Consider a "post-party party plan" that keeps you in the area an extra while at a bar/nightclub as the area slowly empties.

Crowded celebrations are iconic to the Western New Year, but another phenomenon of the season that seems to be shared by those from both East and West, Queenie adds, is the fact that when you switch from your younger, freer days to working life and/or young-family life, your New Year's Eve preference changes from fun in huge crowds to more intimate outings with loved ones.

"My favorite student-day New Year's Eve outings were 'classical Taiwanese' nights with friends up in the hills in the popular Maokong (貓空) tea plantation area, enjoying the great teas and tea cuisine, and watching the beautiful Taipei 101 fireworks-fest far off in the distance. I think foreigners looking for a 'quiet version' of New Year's Eve would also much enjoy this."



- 1 1. **Taipei embraces Western new year with the hours-long stage show centered around Taipei City Hall and Taipei 101.**
(Photo / Gao Zanzian)
- 2 2. **Xia Hai City God Temple is known for its elaborate prayer rituals which help people find their true love.**
(Photo / Taiwan Scene)

|| THE LUNAR NEW YEAR



The Lunar New Year public holidays go at least through the first few days of the new lunar year, and frequently longer. Queenie wonders if most Westerners — new expatriates and visiting tourists — likely think the Lunar New Year holidays, in terms of public spectacle, are more like the boisterous Western New Year's Eve than the quiet, home-centered Christmastime. Keoni agrees this is indeed true for many. “The shopping period leading up to the holidays is very busy for locals,” he says, “stocking up on the countless auspicious goodies you need. But many Westerners are not aware that then, at least for the first few days of the holidays, it is significantly quieter — though public fun has picked up markedly in recent years.”

Prayer is an important ritual element, offered both to deities and ancestors, and Keoni recommends that tourists visit major temples, where some of the most lively scenes are to be found. Busy Longshan Temple (艋舺龍山寺), “one of the city's oldest, is always fascinating for tourists. Fireworks go off all around the city at midnight as the old year ends, dispelling evil demons, and the big temples fill up. Tourists are also fascinated by the elaborate prayer rituals with the Old Man under the Moon (月下老人) at Xia Hai City God Temple (台北霞海城隍廟), who helps people find their true love.”

COVER STORY

Another quintessential Taipei experience during the cool-temperature holidays, both Keoni and Queenie agree, is a trip to the Beitou (北投) hot-spring resort area, which Queenie feels would be especially attractive to European visitors who are into retro styles. This mountain-base enclave in northwest Taipei was developed by the Japanese during their 1895-1945 period of colonial rule, and today attractive old Japanese wooden buildings share the space with modern five-star hotels and inexpensive public baths.

For international tourists looking for the stereotypical Chinese-culture celebration spectacles such as grand temple activities praying for blessings and traditional lantern shows, Keoni suggests visiting Taipei during the annual Taipei Lantern Festival, a celebration which lasts over a week, centered on the Lantern Festival Day which takes place on the 15th day of the 1st lunar month. This big party features large brilliant-color floats, laser-art shows, extensive lantern-display areas, street performers galore, a massive grand finale carnival parade, and endless other amusements.



|| THE MOST REPRESENTATIVE NEW YEAR MOMENTS

The Western New Year

From Keoni's point of view, the Western New Year is pretty straightforward — it's the countdown to midnight, which occurs in publicly shared celebrations around the world, symbolizing a new beginning. This is a very emotional moment for many, who want to share it with loved ones, family, and good friends. He compares it to the desire for family reunion during the Lunar New Year holiday, and the love for others expressed through prayer, seeking good health and fortune for those you cherish.

The Lunar New Year

Queenie knows that only a limited number of Westerners, notably those who have married into local families, get an in-depth experience of the family-reunion joys of the period. However, the more public shopping period leading up to the Lunar New Year and the season-ending Lantern Festival celebrations are just as meaningful for locals, and she thinks visitors experiencing these will be quite moved. This intuition seems borne out when she asks Keoni what has left the deepest impression on him over the years. "I absolutely adore the different Chinese zodiac animal each Lunar New Year" he says, "With so much wild, crazy, super-cute theme visuals concocted, from the giant Taipei Lantern Festival floats to the laser shows to the cute lucky decorations in homes."

Keoni is one of those lucky Westerners who gets to be part of local-family reunions, and savors the ageless quintessentials, "such as the fireworks and ubiquitous red, and how mythical stories tie customs together in the same way things like Santa Claus myths explain Christmas. The 'Nian (年)' monster myth, for example, ties many things together. As the story goes, the terrible Nian came yearly — the character for Nian also means 'year' and 'new year' — killing wantonly, with a special appetite for eating children. Slowly, people learned that it fears loud noises, bright lights, and the color red — i.e., fireworks, wearing lucky red clothing, and so on."

For Queenie, it's the New Year's Eve giving of lucky red envelopes and bursting of firecrackers. "Kids are given red envelopes with money at the family dinner table, but they pass them on to parents immediately, so it has limited meaning," she says. "What had deeper meaning as a child was my Mom taking us to the park to set off firecrackers," which is said to scare away otherworldly evil influences. Today she cherishes passing out red envelopes to others, "especially to parents, because this means you've become a fully mature and responsible adult and contribute to others' welfare."

During the New Year holidays, an endless variety of auspicious foods are consumed (see our Shopping article). Queenie believes that more adults in the West tend to have a sweet tooth, and wonders what Keoni's favorite Lunar New Year food is.

"I do indeed have a bit of a sweet tooth," he says, "and my favorite is the sweet version of *niangao* (年糕, New Year's cake). Though it compares vaguely with something like mochi, there's really nothing like it in the US." As it happens, this is Queenie's seasonal favorite as well.



1
2 | 3

1. **Footbath is one of the top attractions in Beitou for tourists who love hot springs.** (Photo / MyTaiwanTour)
2. **Dihua Street is a place where people go to get gifts right before the Lunar New Year.** (Photo / Liu Jiawen)
3. **Lantern Festival celebrates the end of lunar new year and is just as meaningful for locals.** (Photo / Gao Zanzian)

|| SEASONAL DOS AND DON'TS

The giving of cash gifts is not a tradition in the West, and Keoni wonders if Queenie can provide some easy-to-follow essentials for foreigners in Taipei when giving red envelopes to people.

“Wow, this one is almost impossible to answer concisely,” she says, “because it depends on the relationship between the two people, and the permutations seem endless. It’s hard even for locals to figure out. In general, for a foreigner invited to spend time with a local family, I suggest envelopes for the elder generation, to show respect, and also for any kids. Only token amounts are necessary for kids; NT\$200, 600, or 800 are all fine, and the adults will appreciate the kind thought. For an elder, NT\$1,000 or more, say NT\$1,200, will be fine.”

Noting the difference in relations between men and women in the West and East, Queenie assumes that many Westerners must have trouble with the custom that married women can only visit their parents on the second day of the Lunar New Year holidays, never the first. Keoni confirms that he indeed was quite vexed by this in the beginning. “I understand now that, traditionally, upon marriage women usually moved a fair distance away from their parents’ homes. They first had to show respect/piety for the parents in their ‘new’ home, and this cultural rule clarified things for everyone.”

Now married, Queenie states that this is truly a point of sadness for many ladies, and causes special heartbreak for newly married women, who aren’t used to the custom. “Thankfully, I feel things are now changing, with more couples talking and seeking better balance, perhaps sometimes just spending time together, or perhaps sometimes spending the first few days with one side of the family, then switching to the other.”

Queenie notes that while it seems Westerners enjoy being part of huge crowds on special occasions, notably Western New Year’s Eve, the love of crowds and *renao* (熱鬧, hot and noisy) environments that runs so deep in Chinese/Taiwanese society is unique. Nevertheless, as in the West, this begins to wear off as people hit their “30-somethings.”


These days, says Queenie, “I like a good restaurant with friends on Western New Year’s Eve, and with

family during Lunar New Year, when good restaurants begin opening up again after the first few days. But a word of advice — demand is very high, so book as far in advance as possible.”

For Keoni, the quiet of the first Lunar New Year days can be a bit tedious for foreigners not lucky enough to spend family-reunion time with locals, with public facilities such as museums and libraries closed, and with limitations in food offerings because so many eateries are closed, just as in Western counties during Christmas. But like Queenie, he notes that things seem to be picking up with each passing year, and naturally, since international tourists love night markets and they tend to be open now except for Lunar New Year’s Eve, nighttime cultural-exploration satisfaction is now pretty much guaranteed. He asks Queenie, as a seasoned reporter on local happenings, where foreigners can get good info on what’s open and happening during the holidays.

In terms of temple happenings, she says, “Since prayer during this period is crucial, most temples around the city will be open. The Taiwan Tourism Bureau website and Taipei Travel are good sources on related activities. There won’t be big events like temple parades, lion-dance shows, etc., because the temples are busy handling all the *baibai* (拜拜, prayer or worship) activities, which are simpler and more straightforward. Special activities might be something like the R.O.C. President or Taipei mayor showing up to pass out lucky red envelopes.”

In terms of opening times for restaurants, stores, and public buildings, Queenie states that “with each passing year, the city seems to stay more and more filled up. Since most everyone wants to come out to play, businesses oblige. Things will be quiet on New Year’s Eve, but some big restaurants, for example, those in international hotels in particular, will reopen even on New Year’s Day. As a general rule, they’ll open later in the day than usual. Many night-market vendors will open, and shopping areas such as Dihua Street (迪化街) will open, because so many people want to do last-minute gift buying. Detailed opening info can be hard to find, so I’d say if you’re targeting a specific business, phone ahead.”

Season’s greetings — and happy celebrating! 



Dry goods such as mullet roe and sausage are common delicacies enjoyed during Lunar New Year gatherings. (Photo / Gao Zanzhan)

Happy
New
Year!

Welcome the New Year at the Chic and Trendy Hotels in Taipei

WORDS BY / TRANSLATION BY
Cai Minzi / Joe Henley, JR Wu

PHOTOS BY
Zhang Weiming, Grand Hyatt Taipei, Taipei Marriott Hotel, Suz & Catorze Hotel

As the year's end approaches, the streets of Taipei are filled with a bustling and festive atmosphere. Many travelers visit Taipei to say goodbye to the old year and ring in the new. Whether they are taking in the nighttime view, shopping, or going to the bar for a drink, indulging in Taipei's abundant nightlife and celebrating New Year's Eve are must-dos. In this issue, *TAIPEI* features three hotels. Each has its own unique charm when it comes to nightlife options, introducing travelers to different New Year's Eve experiences in Taipei.



The Xinyi District has a number of department stores serving up the unique urban style of Taipei. (Photo / Zhang Weiming)

THE GRAND HYATT TAIPEI — AN IDEAL PLACE FOR A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF THE TAIPEI 101 FIREWORKS DISPLAY

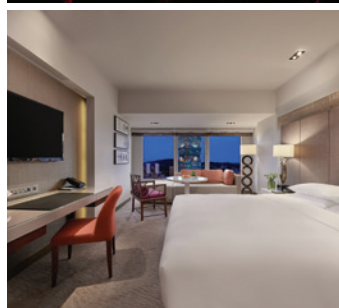
Grand Hyatt Taipei

The Grand Hyatt Taipei (台北君悅酒店) is well-regarded as one of Taipei's premier five-star hotels. Since its grand opening in 1990, the Grand Hyatt has witnessed the Xinyi district move from practically barren to positively prosperous. Even though new hotels are springing up in Taipei, it is its long history and up-close view of the annual Taipei 101 fireworks show from the rooms that have always won western travelers' hearts.

For those who want to stay in the hotel for the night, Italian restaurant ZIGA ZAGA and Cheers Lounge are the top choices for eats and entertainment. Lee Weitai (李偉台), Grand Hyatt's top PR professional, says that ZIGA ZAGA offers live music performances at night, whereas Cheers is a great place to relax, chat and have a drink or two. And the Residence (凱寓廳), located on the 2nd floor, with the best view of the New Year's Eve fireworks, will host a lively and dazzling "New Year's Eve Fireworks Party" at 10pm on December 31. In addition to a wide range of delicacies and fine wines, a variety of exciting music and interactive performances, tarot readings and other entertaining programs will be presented to unveil the new chapter for 2020!

In addition, there are many department stores around the Grand Hyatt, including Shin Kong Mitsukoshi (新光三越), Bellavita (寶麗廣場), and Breeze Plaza (微風廣場), to satisfy even the most discerning shopaholics.

For those who prefer night tours, you can buy tickets for the Taipei 101 observation deck to see the dazzling night scenes of Taipei. You may also go to Vie Show Cinemas Taipei Xinyi (台北信義威秀影城) to watch a midnight movie, or check out the area's many nightclubs, enjoying the music and dancing the night away. The Xinyi area is dotted with department stores, restaurants, entertainment venues, street performances and more, a great place to either check out the local fashion scene or just party all night long.



- 1, 2. Located near Taipei 101, the Grand Hyatt Taipei's rooms offer a great spot to enjoy the fireworks on New Year's Eve.
(Photo / Grand Hyatt Taipei)
3. With beautiful lighting and a warm atmosphere, ZIGA ZAGA offers a casual-chic setting for drinks with friends.
(Photo / Grand Hyatt Taipei)

THE TAIPEI MARRIOTT HOTEL — COMPLETE WITH AN EXCLUSIVE PANORAMIC NIGHT VIEW OF TAIPEI SONGSHAN AIRPORT

Located in Dazhi (大直), the Taipei Marriott Hotel (台北萬豪酒店) is surrounded by the Miramar Ferris Wheel (美麗華摩天輪), cinemas, shopping malls and Michelin-starred restaurants, satisfying travelers' needs for both audio-visual entertainment and great food.

One of the highlights of the Taipei Marriott Hotel is INGE'S Bar & Grill on the 20th floor, which is claimed by netizens as the best place to enjoy the nighttime view of Taipei. INGE'S Bar & Grill was designed with a 270-degree panoramic view of the surrounding cityscape. There is a gigantic rooftop observation deck outside the bar, where people can have drinks while enjoying the sunset and awaiting the unfolding of the bustling night view. In addition, since the hotel is adjacent to Taipei Songshan Airport (台北松山機場), aircraft aficionados are able to see aircraft take-off and land, and see their taillights dancing in the night sky as they ascend and descend upon the city.

INGE'S Bar & Grill has always attracted many visitors who want to enjoy the fireworks on New Year's Eve. Having a view of Taipei 101 at the front and the Miramar Ferris Wheel on the right side of the bar, it's a doubly romantic, never-duplicated way to greet the new year.



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1. **The Taipei Marriott Hotel offers the best view of Taipei city and attracts a large number of travelers.** (Photo / Taipei Marriott Hotel)

2. **The outdoor dining area at the Taipei Marriott Hotel offers a tasteful and atmospheric environment, overlooking the night view of the Taipei cityscape.**

(Photo / Taipei Marriott Hotel)



SUZ & CATORZE HOTEL — DINE AT THE TOP FLOOR RESTAURANT WITH A SPECTACULAR VIEW

Suz & Catorze

Located in Ximending (西門町), the famous nightlife district of Taipei, Suz & Catorze Hotel (宿之酒店) is surrounded by Taipei's well-known cinema-lined Movie Street and many late-night diners recommended by netizens, like A Cai Milkfish (阿財虱目魚肚), Ay-Chung Flour Rice Noodles (阿宗麵線) and A Tien Lamb Potage (阿添羊肉羹). The Red House (西門紅樓), where office workers often gather together for drinks at the many bars and restaurants surrounding this Japanese-era red-brick building, is also only 10-minute walk from the hotel.

Famous for being a hotel suitable for both business and leisure trips, Suz & Catorze Hotel offers a chance to experience the lively local life while the one-of-a-kind view gives guests a moment to relax. The trendy restaurant Catorze is located on the top floor and has a 270-degree panoramic view of the Tamsui River (淡水河), Dahan River (大漢溪), and Xindian River (新店溪), as well as Guanyinshan (aka Mt. Guanyin, 觀音山) and Yangmingshan (aka Mt. Yangming, 陽明山). The chandeliers are dazzling as

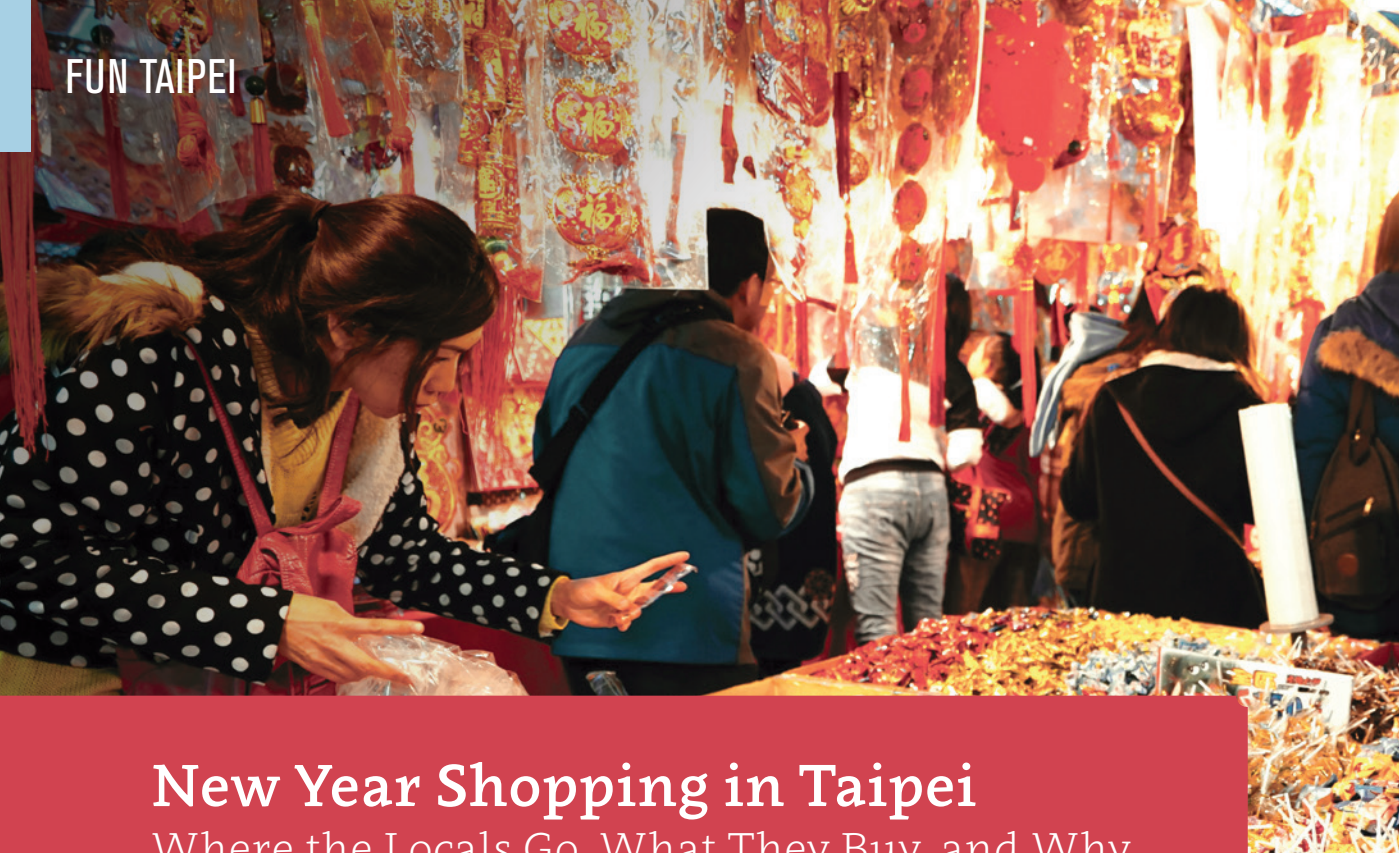
well, decorated with a large number of crystals. The beautiful lighting and excellent ambiance make customer's dining experience extra romantic.

There are four different types of rooms in the hotel — Kakure Studio, River Studio, River Corner Studio and River Corner Suite. Each type is outfitted with luxury furniture and appliances to provide guests with an unforgettably comfy stay. Among them, the River Corner Suite contains not only high-end audio-visual equipment but also an island bar in the kitchen. Guests can order a glass of wine, or bring their own wine and late-night snacks, spending a quiet and leisurely night with their travel companions in the room during New Year's Eve without going to the crowded Lounge Bar.

As 2020 approaches, the Taipei City streets are filled with rich and romantic colors to welcome the new year. Are you ready for an unforgettable New Year's Eve experience in Taipei? 



The River Corner Suite at Suz & Catorze Hotel offers a stunning panoramic view of the many rivers winding their way through Taipei. (Photo / Suz & Catorze Hotel)



New Year Shopping in Taipei

Where the Locals Go, What They Buy, and Why

WORDS BY / PHOTOS BY
Rick Charette / Liu Jiawen, MyTaiwanTour

As with Christmas, the Lunar New Year holidays are essentially a time of thankfulness — of festive family reunions and get-togethers with one's dearest relatives and friends. And as with the Christmas season run-up to the big day, the period leading up to the first day of the Lunar New Year brims with warm, gleeful feelings and excited anticipation.

A cherished cultural centerpiece of these lead-in weeks is the joy of heading to busy and colorful New Year markets to stock up on *nianhuo* (年貨), literally “New Year goods,” meaning all the goodies, decorations, and other traditional items that fill homes with auspicious symbolism. There's an impressive amount of stocking up to do, for during the long holidays there is near constant feasting and entertaining. Most food and snack items are bought beforehand, because most retail operators shut down operations, at least for the first few days of the holiday.

A Historical Aside:

One theory on the determined holiday partying — throughout much of Chinese history, 90%-plus of the population have been farm folk, tedious work filling almost all days, the monotony interrupted only by a few annual festival breaks. People made the most of these, letting loose with abundance in all sensory stimulations, filling the celebrations with food, noise, and color. In the home, abundance in this was/is itself auspicious, inviting good fortune to flow in freely all through the year to come.

Another cherished cultural centerpiece that gives rise to wide-ranging shopping needs prior to the Lunar New Year's Day is the concept *chu jiu bu xin* (除舊布新), or “driving out the old and bringing in the new.” Households are cleaned spic-and-span beforehand, debts are settled, etc. New items, particularly clothing, are purchased, and the tradition is to wear new apparel when the new year arrives. The idea is to dispel any ill-fortune to make room for a new beginning.



WHERE TO SHOP

POPULAR NEW YEAR MARKETS

The more visually florid and aurally raucous the better — this applies to the New Year markets as well, which see great seas of happy people, who come for necessities but also to enjoy the carnival-like hubbub. As you might know, the most auspicious color in Chinese culture is red, and you'll see it everywhere, from the decorative lanterns festooning the streets to the colors of the necessities themselves.

Another Historical Aside:

One theory about the origin of “auspicious red” is that it comes from the color of blood; i.e., that in days of yore farm animals were extremely precious commodities, and their liberal slaughter for New Year celebrations represented an abundance and good fortune.

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1. Every year in anticipation of the Lunar New Year, crowds flow into New Year markets in Taipei to shop and prepare for the holiday. (Photo / Liu Jiawen)
2. There are lots of shops selling red envelopes and spring couplets in new year markets during Lunar new year. (Photo / Liu Jiawen)

Here are some quickie intros to three of Taipei's most boisterous and popular New Year markets, which also happen to be, through no coincidence, among the most visited by international tourists.





1 **DIHUA STREET LUNAR NEW YEAR SHOPPING AREA** [迪化街年貨大街]

Old Dihua Street and its offshoot lanes form metro Taipei's mecca for *nianhuo* shopping. Located in west Taipei's Dadaocheng (大稻埕), one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, Dihua street is Taipei's oldest commercial street and its most important and best-preserved heritage thoroughfare. Shophouses began to sprout here in the mid-19th century, and it has been northern Taiwan's most important entrepot for regional specialty goods since the late-1800s, notably for dry goods, with heavy concentrations of specialists in Chinese medicines and traditional fabrics as well.

In 1996, Dihua Street vendors organized the first version of the Taipei Lunar New Year Festival, which today runs two full weeks before the holidays. This is both a shopping and a cultural festival that educates visitors on New Year traditions while celebrating them. Today the festival, now overseen by the city government, encompasses numerous other New Year market areas as well, including the Railway Rear Station/Huayin Street (華陰街) shopping area introduced below.

During the festival, proprietors set up stands outside their shops all along Dihua Street (and in the other zones), bursting with *nianhuo* treasure. There is a pronounced party atmosphere, with miked-up hawkers vying to outdo each other, streams of people ambling along window-shopping, and samples of goodies liberally provided.

A wide array of special theme activities are also staged at the various festival markets. On Dihua street, these are concentrated around the plaza fronting the famed Yongle Fabric Market (永樂布業商場), a multi-story building packed with sellers of traditional fabrics (note: second-floor shops also do custom-tailoring of *qipao* (旗袍), traditional men's shirts, etc.). Also, Taipei's mayor makes appearances to distribute "good fortune money" every year, and there are multi-language guided tours, special costume photo ops, AR photo ops, decorative displays highlighting New Year in different lands, street performers, art-experience sessions such as calligraphy sessions with masters helping you write auspicious couplets, and much else.

- 1 | 1. **Numerous choices of gifts and dry foods add to the already palpable New Year atmosphere on Dihua Street.** (Photo / Liu Jiawen)

2 TAIPEI RAILWAY REAR STATION SHOPPING AREA — HUAYIN STREET

[台北後站商圈 — 華陰街]

Dihua Street/Dadaocheng is in the north area of the city's heritage-rich Datong District, which has the Tamsui River as its western border. The commercial area encompassing the Taipei Railway Rear Station Shopping Area and Huayin Street is directly north of Taipei Main Station, in Datong's south. This area is very popular with commuters, students, tourists, and new immigrants/migrant workers. Every year before the Lunar New Year, each shop hangs red lanterns at the front door. People swarm in to get holiday decorations and new clothes, as the station is the city's primary transportation interchange, and a famed bargain-hunting emporium.

The station-rear grid, centered on Taiyuan Road (太原路), is packed with shops selling a mind-boggling array of trendy clothing and accessories, jewelry, handicrafts, daily-use items, home appliances, decorations, festival/holiday gifts, DIY materials, wrapping papers, and other merchandise. This area saw its commercial rise during the Taiwan Economic Miracle era, when it filled up with Taiwanese workers and students from the south seeking better opportunities, and as many as 50 career centers were in operation. Many of the special Taipei Lunar New Year Festival activities are centered on Taiyuan Square (太原廣場), aka Nostalgia Square (懷舊廣場).

Expect to be regaled with the heady fragrance of worked leather when you browse narrow Huayin Street, known for wholesale leather products along with luggage items, apparel, cosmetics, and beauty products. The street's New Year special activity, praying for blessings, are concentrated around Puji Temple (普濟寺).

- 1, 2. **Huayin street is known for selling clothing and daily items, offering people in Taipei a place to “drive out the old and bring in the new.”** (Photo / Liu Jiawen)
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3 BANGKA — HUAXI STREET NIGHT MARKET

[艋舺 — 華西街夜市]

Bangka (艋舺), or Wanhua District, was the first area settled in what is today Taipei, and its Huaxi Street Tourist Night Market (華西街觀光夜市) is one of the city's most venerable. Also known as Snake Alley (蛇街), its main claim to fame is, yes, snakes. Since ancient times, snake has been seen as a nourishing, health-enhancing food. Market eateries serve the meat, blood, etc. in soups, wines, and cooked dishes. Some of this market's other highlight attractions are braised pork on rice, *aiyu* jelly (愛玉冰), shaved-ice treats, thick cuttlefish soup, and traditional Chinese massage parlors.

Whereas the city in general is quiet on Lunar New Year's Eve, things are festively raucous at the major temples and tourist night markets. This night market is close to Taipei's oldest Buddhist temple, the magnificent Longshan Temple, which dates back to 1738 and is a tourist favorite. Many people come out for "new beginning" prayer at temples in the wee hours of Lunar New Year's Day, a time seen to

be especially efficacious, and hit the night market before and/or after. Also bringing streams of revelers is the belief that staying up late on Lunar New Year's Eve adds to parents' longevity, which creates late-night rumbling tummies.

📖 A Few Words of Advice:

When I said earlier that the New Year markets "see great seas of happy people," there was no hyperbole. Said seas are densest in the week right before the holidays, so if you tend to get a little claustrophobic, go in the weeks prior. As well, parking in these areas is almost impossible, even for scooters, so use public transport. All three markets showcased here have Taipei Metro stations nearby.

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1. **Huaxi Street Tourist Night Market is not just busy during the Lunar New Year, but can be full of people even on a regular weekday.** (Photo / Liu Jiawen)
2. **Nian gao, fa gao, peanut brittle and malao are very popular food/gift options during the Lunar New Year.** (Photo / MyTaiwanTour)





Peanut Brittle

Malao

Fa Gao

Nian Gao

WHAT TO BUY

THE SYMBOLISM BEHIND SOME FAVORITE NIANHUA CHOICES

As explained earlier, wearing new clothing at the Lunar New Year, especially red items, is itself auspicious. But take things a step further with one-of-a-kind embroidered clothing, accessories, and footwear treasures from Little Garden (小花園), located behind Dihua Street's visitor center (on Lane 32). This family business began in Shanghai in 1936; the Chinese Civil War brought the founder to Taipei in 1949. There are traditional-style shoes, *qipao*, kid's outfits, and more, plus stylish purses, scarves, and other designer works. The embroidery visuals all have auspicious meaning — goldfish, for example, symbolize wealth (resembling ancient Chinese gold ingots), and dragons symbolize royalty/nobility (and by extension, elevated position).

In Chinese, the words for “cake” and “high” are both pronounced *gao*, and thus various traditional baked items are required *nianhua* purchases. One is a sweetened sticky-rice cake called *nian gao* (年糕), literally “New Year cake,” which represents the auspicious expression “*nian nian gao sheng* (年年高升)”, meaning “year by year ever higher.”

Another is called *fa gao* (發糕), a steamed, lightly sweetened spongy rice-flour cupcake. The name literally means “prosperity cake”; “*fa*” means “emit/burst forth,” and here denotes the rising up or “bursting” of the little cakes and the “bursting forth” of wealth, as in the expression “*fa cai*” (發財), or “get rich.”

In the Taiwan of earlier times, sweet treats were something largely reserved for the rich at Lunar New Year. The masses instead ate nuts and seeds as their special treats. Today families are fond of placing things like pistachios and sunflower seeds on living-room coffee tables as nostalgia-inducing facilitators for family-reunion chatting.

Sweets, as one might expect, are a favorite New Year treat, especially with youngsters. An old-time rhyming expression goes “*chi tian tian, zhuan da qian* (吃甜甜·賺大錢)”, literally “eat sweet after sweet, make big money.” The expression's *tian tian*, meaning “sweet upon sweet,” is a homonym for “day by day” (天天). Among the myriad sweet New Year candies and other confections you'll no doubt find delectable are peanut brittle and *malao* (麻糬), and fried maltose cookies, sometimes called “Taiwanese rice crispies.” Such treasures are especially recommended as gifts if visiting local families during the season, and are good take-home gifts as well because of their longevity. **T**

Celebrating Lunar New Year in Taipei: A Guide to Proper Etiquette

WORDS BY

Jenna Lynn Cody

PHOTOS BY

yongtick, MIA Studio, olindana, jyugem, yaophotograph, Tom Wang, vixenkristy





When the music in the stores changes, you know it's coming. When the red and gold decorations go up and entire storefronts in Taipei turn glittering and crimson, it's getting closer. Then the Dihua Street neighborhood turns into a massive holiday market — there are others but Dihua Street is the most crowded and famous — and you know it's only a week or two away. Of course, this is Taipei, so it's not Christmas that's drawing closer, it's Lunar New Year.

If you are in Taipei for Lunar New Year, you might find the smaller towns and cities more *renao* (熱鬧, hot and noisy, which sometimes means fun, exciting and crowded too) as many locals return to their hometowns for the holiday. In contrast to the weeks leading up to the long holiday, Taipei itself is much quieter, and those who want to walk around the city without urban crowds might enjoy it more. Although some foreign residents prefer to leave town for the holiday, it can be a fine time to travel around the country (just don't try to travel on the roads or long-distance public transit on Lunar New Year's Eve or New Year's Day). If you're very lucky, you might be invited to celebrate the holiday with a friend, meet their family and partake in their reunion dinner, which is not unlike a family holiday dinner in the West.

If you are invited to a Lunar New Year celebration, here are some etiquette guidelines around gift-giving to various family members that will ensure you're always welcome back next year.

While experiencing the festive atmosphere in Taipei is important, don't forget to pay attention to the etiquette of Lunar New Year. (Photo / yongtick)



|| RED ENVELOPES

A common joke in Taiwan is to reply to the standard New Year greeting of “gong xi fa cai (恭喜發財, have a happy and prosperous new year) with “hongbao na lai (紅包拿來, Give me red envelopes). It makes sense when you consider the literal translation of gong xi fa cai: “congratulations, and get rich!” The joke is somewhat sarcastic as those who make it are often the ones giving — not receiving — red envelopes! But in fact, there are a number of rules about how to give and receive them.

Parents, grandparents and older relatives typically all give red envelopes to younger children. Adult children who are not yet working or married may still receive them from parents (and possibly grandparents, depending on the family). Once “settled” — often, though not always, defined by family members as married and gainfully employed — adult children are then expected to give red envelopes to their elders as well as children in their family, which may include nieces and nephews as well as their own children. Some complain about this while others say it's a blessing, as giving out red envelopes means you are financially independent, and able to take care of your family.

Lunar New Year is also the time when companies pay out employee bonuses, which are often equivalent to one or even several months' salary. These occasionally come in red envelopes. Some extra bonuses might be used as prizes in the games and contests played at weiya (尾牙, year-end parties) and are put in red envelopes as a symbol of prosperity.

Just as with red envelopes given at weddings, the amount of money matters. Avoid amounts with the number “4” in them as it's a homophone for death,

and stick to auspicious or safe numbers. Anything starting with or including a “6” (a homophone for smoothness) is a good bet.

If you are invited to a friend's home for Lunar New Year, it's a good idea to bring the oldest relatives and any children red envelopes. As a guest rather than a family member, the amount needn't be large — perhaps a few hundred New Taiwan dollars each for the children, and a bit more for the older relatives. The point is to offer your good wishes, not enrich the recipient. Your friend might even insist on preparing these themselves for you to give their family. It's polite to insist that you are happy to do it with your own money, but if your friend has already decided to do this for you, don't expect to succeed!

In the weeks leading up to New Year, stationery and all-purpose stores as well as pop-up businesses across Taipei sell red envelopes for this purpose. If you know you'll visit a family over the holiday, it's a good idea to stock up. The envelopes no longer specifically need to be red (or even red and gold). Envelopes decorated with Japanese-style patterns have become popular, while rainbow envelopes flecked with gold can also be found everywhere recently. However, if giving an envelope to a very senior family member, traditional red is the way to go.

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1. ***One of the most important customs during Lunar New Year is to give out red envelopes to young kids in the family.***
(Photo / MIA Studio)
2. ***Oranges are a popular choice for New Year gift-giving, as their color is reminiscent of gold and the pronunciation sounds like “luck” in Chinese.***
(Photo / olindana)





|| GIFT-GIVING

Although red envelopes are the most standard Lunar New Year gift, other gifts may be given as well, especially to co-workers, friends and acquaintances. They're appropriate for anyone you would not traditionally give a red envelope to. Some bring their building janitors a small gift instead of a red envelope, as the latter implies that he/she is your employee.

If you are invited to a Lunar New Year celebration, it's a good idea to bring a gift and present it to the parents (the grandparents would get red envelopes). Large gift boxes of cookies, cakes, candies and most kinds of fruit, which are widely available for sale at grocery and convenience stores, are always good choices and are securely and attractively packaged. Grapes, plums, pineapples, and jujubes — the tart green dates that look like oblong apples — are always a good choice as well, as they have positive connotations of prosperity. Jujubes from Dashe (大社) in Kaohsiung are especially well-known in Taiwan and make great gifts. Kumquats and oranges are probably the most popular choices as their golden orange color is reminiscent of, well, gold. Apples are also a strong choice, for their name, which is pronounced as *pingguo* in Mandarin, is a homophone for harmony (*ping*, 平) in the Chinese-

speaking world. Try to buy fruits that are attractively packaged in red and gold specifically for gift-giving.

Just as with wedding presents, there are some things you should never give as a Lunar New Year gift. Interestingly, most of these are based on negative homophones: items whose names sound like some form of bad luck or ill will.

Avoid pears, as the word for pear (*li*, 梨) is a homophone for the "li" in *fen li* (分離), which means "separation." Avoid clocks of any kind, including watches, because the clock (*zhong*, 鐘) in Mandarin sounds like the *zhong* of *zhongjie* (終結), which means "the end." Such a gift — a ticking clock — recalls counting down the days until death, just as the phrase "*the clock is ticking*" implies in English. Books are also a bad choice, as the word for book (*shu*, 書) sounds like the word for "lose" (*shu*, 輸). Knives are on the banned list as well, as they imply the severing of a relationship or even a life. Although it's unlikely that you'd choose to give an umbrella as a gift, avoid these as well, as the word for umbrella (the *san* in *yusan*, 雨傘) is a homophone for another way of saying separation or scattering: *li san* (離散).



|| YEAR-SPECIFIC GREETINGS

Lunar New Year, not January 1, is when the Chinese Zodiac changes over, and the new year is represented by one of the 12 animals. That means that every Lunar New Year, there are greetings specific to the upcoming year's animal. You may remember *da ji da li* (大雞大利, big chicken, big profit), which is a play on 大吉大利 — with almost the same pronunciation — which simply means “great luck,” a few years ago for the year of the rooster. 2020 is the year of the rat, so the greeting for the upcoming New Year is 鼠年行大運, pronounced *shu nian xing da yun* or “the year of rat brings great luck.” It's a play on 數年行大運, which means “years of luck.” Another greeting for 2020 is 鼠來報吉祥, pronounced *shu lai bao ji xiang*, or “rats bring auspicious times.”



|| THE LUNAR NEW YEAR DINNER

There are a few rules for the big dinner on Lunar New Year as well. Younger people will typically serve tea to their elders, for one, and it's generally polite to never serve yourself tea. While there should always be leftovers of the meal itself implying prosperity and abundance by being able to afford more than enough food — it's polite to finish all of your rice. Don't over-season your food. Doing so is akin to telling the chef they didn't do a good job. Always compliment the food, especially if it's homemade. Never turn over a fish, even if the side facing up is picked clean: doing so recalls a capsized boat, which of course is bad luck. This is an old fisherman's tale, but Taiwan is an island nation with a deep and historic connection to the sea. Sea-based folk tales carry a lot of weight here.

Taipei can be a lovely place to spend Lunar New Year, especially if you have friends who bring you home to spend time with their family to have a wonderful dinner. If you live in Taipei, you might want to join everyone else in doing a deep clean of

your apartment as one of the customs is to “sweep” away bad luck before new year. Doing so during or after the period is considered bad luck (or rather, as sweeping away good luck), and stock up on books to read in advance. If you have some lucky scrolls hung up around your door, this is the time to change them (you can get new ones all over the city).

If you do join a friend's family for the holiday, put on some red clothing and follow the etiquette guide above. It will serve you well in terms of being a good guest. **T**

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1. **Greet your friends in 2020 with “鼠年行大運”, meaning the year of rat brings great luck!** (Photo / jyugem)
2. **The 12 Chinese Zodiac change over whenever a year passed. 2020 will be the year of Rat.** (Photo / vixenkristy)
3. **Put on some red clothes and have some fun if you're invited to a Lunar new year party!** (Photo / Tom Wang)





Everything Is Illuminated — Taipei During the Lantern Festival

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The Lantern Festival (元宵節), also known as “Little New Year,” is on the 15th day of the first month of the lunar calendar. On this first full moon of the year, every family decorates their house with lanterns and streamers. The bustling streets are filled with people who are heading to enjoy the illuminated lantern festivals, join lantern riddle games, and eat *yuanxiao* (元宵) to celebrate the holiday and enjoy precious, quality family time.

Lin Mingde (林明德), chairman of the Chinese Folk-Arts Foundation (中華民俗藝術基金會), shares the story of the origin of the Lantern Festival. “Legend has it that Emperor Ming of Eastern Han Dynasty (漢明帝) was an advocate of Buddhism. He began lighting lanterns to show respect to Buddha on the 15th day of the first lunar month.” The custom gradually became a grand festival among the people. Along with the Taoist San-Yuan Festival (三元節) and the birthday of Emperor of Heaven (天官大帝), also on the same date, people would celebrate the day by holding a vegan feast and lighting lanterns for blessings. As the years passed, it turned into the Lantern Festival we all love and enjoy.



GULPING DOWN YUANXIAO, WATCHING LANTERN SHOWS AND THE ART OF CHINESE PAPER CUTTING

Among all the customs of the Lantern Festival, eating *yuanxiao* for good fortune is the most well-known custom. The difference between *yuanxiao* and *tangyuan* (湯圓), which people often get confused, is that *yuanxiao* is the term used in northern China while *tangyuan* is used in southern China. Apart from the name varying from place to place, more slight differences lie in the way they are made. *Yuanxiao* is made by having the filling rolled in a bamboo basket containing dry glutinous rice flour. The step is repeated until the ball grows into a suitable round shape. By contrast, *tangyuan* is made of a wet glutinous rice wrapper which covers the filling, and is kneaded into a round ball by hand.

It goes without saying that after having *yuanxiao*, getting ready to go out to view lanterns is the next logical step. Compared with other Chinese regions, the Lantern Festival in Taiwan has its own

characteristics. In the early years, festivals were held in local temples. Women would crawl underneath the temple lanterns to supplicate for a son. In addition, riddles are written on the lanterns for people to guess the meanings. The art of “paper-cutting” is another indispensable tradition of the Lantern Festival. Paper cut-outs with folk images pasted to the lanterns represent both a sense of artistry and profound humanity.

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1. ***The 2020 Taipei Lantern Festival will feature a brilliant showcase of illumination technology at North Gate Square.*** (Photo / Department of Information and Tourism, Taipei City Government)
2. ***“Lucky Dragon Brings Prosperity and Good Fortune (祥龍獻瑞)” exhibited during the 2012 Taipei Lantern Festival.*** (Photo / Lin Jianer)

LANTERNS SHINE WITH THEIR OWN CREATIVITY DAY AND NIGHT

As the main activity of the Lantern Festival, lantern shows used to be an event solely prepared by local temples. There were a variety of large and small lanterns for people to look upon, with exquisite workmanship presenting a wide variety of colorful images. Nowadays, lantern shows are often organized by local governments. By combining local natural landscapes and cultural characteristics, the city becomes a feast for the eyes as the Lantern Festival draws near.

Lin Jianer (林健兒), former chairman of the Chinese Artistic Lantern Association (中華花燈藝術學會) and a light artist who has been involved in the creation of lanterns for more than 30 years, shares his comments. "When making traditional lanterns, thin bamboo strips and rods were used to make the frames and then covered in paper. Today's lanterns are modified by using iron wire for the frame. After welding, a transparent elastic cloth will be applied to the lanterns' covers. Later on, the lanterns' surfaces are decorated with paintings to bring out layers of bright colors."

The overall structure, creative design, decorative materials and lighting colors are key elements that make up the art of crafting lanterns. Lin says that the lanterns in the form of human figures are the most difficult type to make. "The proportions of the human body will be distorted after several times of magnification. It usually needs to be sketched and prototyped before officially being put into production."

FLYING DRAGON DEBUT CREATES AN OVERNIGHT SENSATION IN TAIPEI CITY


Speaking of the history of Taiwan's Lantern festive events, Lin indicates that the large-scale lantern parade held at the Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall since 1983 can be regarded as the antecedent of Taiwan's Lantern Festivals nowadays. And *yige* (藝閣, floats), in which children played roles in historical plays, in the folk temple fairs has gradually evolved into displays of electric lanterns that are exhibited on site today.

In Lin's opinion, the lantern "Auspicious Millennial and Nine Dragons Lantern (千禧祥瑞九龍燈)" exhibited in 2000 at Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, was the most magnificent and unforgettable work in recent years. "Taiwanese believe that a dragon brings water to the world. During the lantern festival that year, it rained for more than ten days in a row, and so people had to enjoy the show together in the rain!" Lin shares, tone rippling with excitement.

YEAR OF THE MOUSE TURNS TAIPEI INTO A CITY OF STREET ART

The 2020 Taipei Lantern Festival will be held from February 8 to 16, and for the first time, it will be presented in a pair of zones on opposite sides of the city. The West Zone will light up the Ximending (西門町) area, section one of Zhonghua Road (中華路), North Gate Square (北門廣場), Taipei Travel Plaza Part II (交八廣場) and so forth. The East Zone will be around the Nanxing Park (南興公園) and Nangang Station areas to create a fresh, modern atmosphere for Taipei through interactive displays.

What's more, don't miss the traditional lantern lighting ceremony. For example, Longshan Temple conducts the lantern blessing event every year from January 15 to February 19 of the lunar calendar. One main lantern representing peace and the other Chinese zodiac lanterns symbolizing blessings for the new year are carefully arranged, to welcome people walking underneath and praying for peace. Moreover, lanterns are hung on the east and west wings, and along the arched ceilings of the temple, further adding to the joy of the festive season.

To experience the importance of traditional gatherings firsthand and come together in celebration, do not miss the tremendous upcoming Taipei Lantern Festival! 

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1. **Lin Jianer has 30 years of experience making traditional lanterns.** (Photo / Lin Jianer)
2. **The ultra-realistic horse lanterns that Lin Jianer created in 2014.** (Photo / Lin Jianer)



Ri Xing Type Foundry: Fresh Impressions of a Fading Legacy

WORDS BY
Catherine Shin

PHOTOS BY
Yi Choon Tang

Located on a quiet alley off a bustling street near Taipei Main Station lies a storefront that looks largely untouched since the 1960s, Ri Xing Type Foundry (日星鑄字行). The owner, Zhang Jieguan (張介冠), cheerfully appears at the door, probably accustomed to having visitors walk right up to the entrance out of sheer curiosity. He welcomes *TAIPEI* in, and immediately we stand at the door gaping at towering aisle after aisle of Chinese lead type characters awaiting us inside. Every Chinese character you could ever imagine has been packed tightly in neatly-stacked rows based on radicals (部首) or common phrases. And as if the first floor wasn't astounding enough, we follow Zhang down the steps leading to a basement filled with yet even more rows of lead type characters. What is this place and how did Zhang single-handedly bear such a large undertaking?

A FADING TRADITION STANDING STILL IN TAIPEI

The origins of letterpress printing can actually be traced as far back as the mid-15th century in Germany to Johannes Gutenberg. At a time when all manuscripts were written painstakingly by hand, letterpress printing was an efficient form of printing that could produce as much as six pages a day. By locking movable type into a "bed" and adding a layer of ink, the ink from the type would be pressed firmly onto the sheet of paper, leaving a deep impression of words on the sheet. Not only did this technology pave the way for the future of computer printing, but it also made information more accessible to a wider audience at the time. The letterpress printing industry thrived in Taipei from the 1950s and supported a then blooming publishing industry, witnessing the rise of the Economic Miracle period in Taiwan.

Although a late player to the game — Ri Xing was established in 1969 near the tail end of the industry's peak — today it is arguably the last-standing Traditional Chinese type foundry in the entire world. Having seen shop after shop close down in the early 2000s, Zhang bravely made up his mind to keep his shop going, not wanting to see this traditional method of letterpress printing die out. But for a language like Chinese with over 50,000 characters, this unprecedented, almost unheard-of scale is one even Gutenberg himself could never have imagined!

When you enter Ri Xing Type Foundry, the first thing that comes into view are the lead character types packed tight in neatly-stacked rows.



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HOW LEAD CHARACTER TYPES ARE CAST

In order to create lead character types, lead must be added to a heated pot in a machine, boiled to 300 degrees Celsius, and then released using a plunger that forces the liquid metal into a mold, casting the correct character. The machine Zhang demonstrates for us cranks out 10 characters at a time. Just how heavy can these characters get? "Well, lead is 13.6 times heavier than water. So, for the largest character, it's about 20 characters per kilogram. And for the smallest one, it's about 644 characters," Zhang replies matter-of-factly.

In terms of Chinese typefaces, Ri Xing produces only three kinds: *Kaiti* (楷體), *Songti* (宋體), and *Heiti* (黑體). But don't be fooled. Each typeface set consists of ten sizes, multiplied by over 13,000 characters each — meaning each individual typeface set contains over 130,000 characters. Imagine having to pick out a single character from over 130,000 choices! Add into the mix Japanese and English letter types, with most containing more than one copy, and you've easily got more than 10 million lead character types available for printing or sale at any given time.



THE PEAK OF THE INDUSTRY

The name "Ri Xing (日星)," when broken down into three individual Chinese characters, actually means "efficient and prosperous every day (日日生)." Zhang and his family are certainly a testament to that. At the height of the industry, he and his father would alternate between 12+ hour work shifts cranking out customer orders. "At the beginning, we couldn't even afford a motorcycle," he recalls. "So, to deliver orders, I'd bike 200 kilometers from Taipei south to Hsinchu (新竹) or north to Keelung (基隆) carrying 100 to 200 kilograms of boxes containing lead type on the back of my bike. I couldn't even make it up or down Taipei Bridge (台北大橋) without having to get off and walk my bike halfway because it was so heavy!" Zhang now chuckles at the arduous memory.

Starting off as a small family business, he and his father would cast lead type, while his sister would pick out words for client orders and his mother would handle accounting. They eventually grew to 30 employees at the business's peak, which at the time was still small, considering other companies in Taipei had nearly 200 employees. This would later prove to their advantage as many of the larger type foundries were unable to withstand the pressure of the digital era and the introduction of computer printing around the turn of the new millennium due to the burden of personnel costs.

|| HISTORY OF TAIPEI & RI XING

Tracing further back to the Japanese era, the Wanhua District of Taipei was and still is the heart of Taiwan's largest newspaper publishers. Ri Xing lies at the outskirts of the district, located between the borders of Wanhua and Dadaocheng. "My father had just founded the company after going his separate way from a business partner, so he had limited funds to set up shop at the time," Zhang recalls, "But we were located right behind Taipei Main Station, which gave us an edge over the other type foundries at the time."

However, over the course of the past two decades, Zhang has inevitably seen his share of change in the culture and landscape of the city. Speaking of his thoughts on Taipei now, he tells us, "Taipei is similar to the Chinese character '化 (Hua)'. There is balance in the word itself because it can stand alone to mean 'people (亻)' and 'compare or contradistinction (匕)'. When you put them back together it means 'change (化)'. It's the 'people's contradistinction' which makes Taipei an ever-changing city. It might be a little messy, yet there exists some level of structure within the mess." And when asked how he would sum up Taipei in one line, he smiles with pride. "I would say: 'The hidden gem and beauty of Chinese characters lies right in the heart of Taipei (漢字之美在台北)'. That's how I would want locals and foreigners alike to experience Ri Xing and Taipei."



- 1 2 3 4
1. After the temperature reaches 300 degrees Celsius, the machine then cranks out 10 characters at a time.
 2. Master Zhang demonstrates how to create lead character types with the specialized machine
 3. As the digital era continues, letterpress printing has gradually become a forgotten area of expertise.
 4. Nowadays, Master Zhang is one of a few of the craftsmens who are still familiar with movable type.



► Video Interview

|| THE DECLINE OF AN INDUSTRY AND TRANSFORMATION



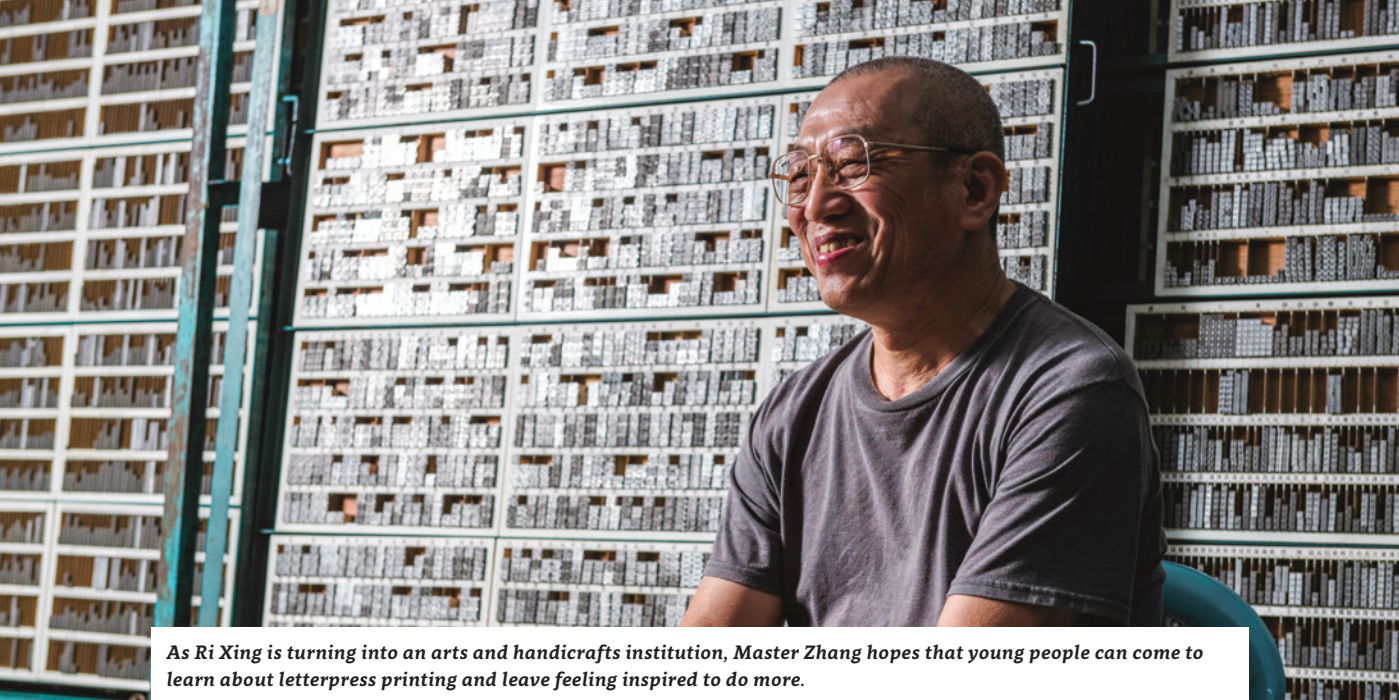
As a machinery enthusiast, Zhang recalls, “I needed to buy some components for a speaker I was building. And just around the corner on Zhonghua Road, I saw the brand-new Apple II computer in the window. I knew right then and there the future of letterpress printing would take a different turn, not just in Taipei but also in the world.” He wasn’t wrong. By 1995, the world was obsessed with typography on a different scale — a digital one. And by 2005, a mere ten years later, after the other two remaining type foundry shops closed down in Taipei, Ri Xing was the last one standing. “I knew it would be selfish of me to close down as well. It would have inevitably sealed the fate for Traditional Chinese letterpress printing and Traditional Chinese type foundry as a whole,” he recalls.

So, in 2005, against the wishes of his family, he decided to re-establish Ri Xing as an arts and handicrafts institution instead, preserving the last traditional Chinese type foundry in the world. “I wanted to be sure this was something that wasn’t read about only in textbooks. It needed to be a living technology you could still reach out and touch or feel, not observed from behind a dusty window pane in a museum.”

While other type foundries all over Europe have eventually found their way into museums, Ri Xing is still a living, breathing type foundry in Taipei — still creating new letterpress molds to this day. “We even made a Tibetan type set for the Dalai Lama a few years ago. It took us just under three months to complete,” Zhang smiles with pride. And there have been many Japanese visitors coming to Ri Xing to request certain Japanese lead character types, with their own molds and machinery no longer available.



1. One of the important steps of letterpress printing is to lock the movable type tightly into a “bed.”
2. Master Zhang printed out 7 Chinese characters “你所未見的台北” for TAIPEI, meaning “undiscovered Taipei.”



As Ri Xing is turning into an arts and handicrafts institution, Master Zhang hopes that young people can come to learn about letterpress printing and leave feeling inspired to do more.

RULES WHEN VISITING RI XING

There are a few rules when visiting Ri Xing:

1) Upon arrival, place all your belongings to the side of the entrance in the cubbies available (God forbid if you were to accidentally swing your bag and knock over an entire shelf!), and 2) If you pick up a letter type, you buy it. No exceptions.

Ri Xing is extremely rigorous about picking up words, but this particular rule is actually reflective of the entire industry as a whole. “My father worked in a printing press during the Martial Law era, and one of his colleagues went missing overnight when he accidentally added a single word to the press.” When asked which word was added, he replies, “He added ‘People (人)’ to the ‘Republic of China (中華民國),’ making it the ‘People’s Republic of China (中華人民國).’” Therefore, it’s safe to say Zhang has inherited the same diligence of his father’s time.

Upon picking your letter type, it’s simple: If you pick it up, you buy it. “It makes more sense economically for me to cast another ten words than for you to put it back,” he scoffs. “I have no doubt you can put it back in its correct place once. Even twice. But 10,000 times? Impossible.” And for a language that uses over 130,000 words on a daily basis, we surely can’t blame him.

THE FUTURE OF RI XING, A TAIPEI TREASURE

According to Zhang, “It takes double the time for any dying industry to be reborn again. More importantly, it needs young people and capital. And seeing that letterpress printing has been gone for 20 years now, this means it may take another 40 to 50 years for it to start up again.” Now as an arts and handicrafts institution, his hope is that young people can come to Ri Xing to learn about letterpress printing — and leave feeling inspired to do more. “We offer daily group tours and even educational courses on how to use the machines and letterpress,” Zhang encourages.

However, be advised that courses are offered primarily in Chinese, but foreign visitors who simply want to admire the beauty of Chinese characters are always welcome to Ri Xing to bring back a lead character type as a souvenir, as finding the character you want from the rack could always be a fun and enjoyable experience.

Preserving traditional Chinese characters has never been an easy task, and the mission has become even harder for Ri Xing when Zhang decided to carry on with a dying industry. While the world moves on rapidly as the digital era continues, we know that Zhang and Ri Xing will still start the fire every day to cast the memory of the last generation in Taipei. **T**



Zhang Baoren and his wife runs their century-old cotton quilt shop. Its good reputation online has brought great success. (Photo / Wang Hanshun)

Rui-Cheng Embroidered Red Calabash Passed down Through Five Generations of Warm Winter

WORDS BY
Chen Wanyu

TRANSLATION BY
Joe Henley

PHOTOS BY
Wang Hanshun, Marianne Krohn, MyTaiwanTour

In the early afternoon, only a few shops on Dadong Road (大東路) at Shilin Night Market (士林夜市) are open for business. However, you may already see customers entering Rui-Cheng Handmade Cotton Quilt Shop (瑞成手工棉被店), a 130-year-old shop hidden in the alley with a signboard that says “Dowry.”

HANDMADE COTTON QUILTS ENJOYED POPULARITY FOR A TIME

Zhang Baoren (張寶仁), the fifth-generation owner of this 130-year-old shop, has been working in the cotton quilt shop and factory since elementary school. With 40 years of experience, he serves as a long-term observer of the cotton quilt industry. Looking back on the history of his family business, he says that Rui-Cheng Handmade Cotton Quilt Shop was established 130 years ago in Dayuan Township in Taoyuan (桃園市大園鄉). In the old times, people purchased cotton quilts from quilt masters they were familiar with. Therefore, the handcrafted cotton quilts were distinguished by their red embroidered calabash trademark. Later, the family home in Dayuan was destroyed by a fire, so the third-generation owner, Li Huolin (李火琳), decided to start over in Taipei. Li was a grounded and cunning businessman. When it comes to cotton quilts, the older generations in the Shilin and Yangmingshan areas would immediately think of the calabash trademark and its owner "Uncle Huolin."

Zhang mentions the time when the older generations made cotton quilts by hand. Since humidity may deteriorate the quality of the natural cotton used in quilts, all the hand-picked cotton of the day must be quilted to prevent it from producing dew after contact with air, so the quilt masters usually worked long hours every day. Operating the cotton fluffing instrument was very

energy consuming, and winter quilts were usually made during the hot months of summer and autumn. The cotton fibers flying in the air was harmful for the respiratory system. Therefore, the handmade cotton quilt was the fruit of the excellent skills and immense effort of the quilt masters. Because the raw material was pure cotton fiber, cotton quilts would not harden easily, and were considered exceptionally warm and comfortable.

According to Zhang, during Taiwan's agrarian period, life was plain and simple, and quilts were a high value commodity that could be pawned. Afterwards when the economy took off during the industrial period, the sales for quilts surged higher because adults and children had their own demand for quilts. Zhang recalls the golden years when his parents were running the quilt shop. It was during the 1970s when Taiwan's economy was gradually taking off, and buying new cotton quilts as a wedding dowry was still the tradition. Rui-Cheng became a synonym for selling orthodox handmade quilts, and the sales reached their peak in 1977. Zhang shares his mother's words about the prosperity of the industry in the past. Around 30 cotton quilts were handcrafted by 10 quilt masters every day. The price of a 6 kilogram cotton quilt was NT\$800, or the equivalent of half a month's average salary at that time.



(Photo / Marianne Krohn)



|| HOW THE INTERNET HAS REVIVED THE OLD BRAND

However, the prosperity of the traditional industry proved difficult to continue. More than 20 years ago, Zhang took over the shop and faced the challenge of transformation. In 1987, Rui-Cheng changed their business model from making and selling quilts by themselves to selling less expensive chemical fiber quilts to meet the needs of students. Meanwhile, they expanded their product offerings, selling trendy duvets and wool quilts, along with a new bargain basement low-price strategy commonly used in night markets to gradually bring the business back to life.

“Nowadays, sales of handmade cotton quilts account for only one tenth of the revenue, while latecomer items of bedding and home furnishings have gradually become the main sales drivers,” says Zhang. He doesn’t deny that many businesses have encountered major changes since Taiwan joined World Trade Organization in 2002. Afterwards, the rise of smartphones allowed people to compare prices and shop online, which caused major sales declines for traditional brick-and-mortar shops. Fortunately, Zhang went with the tailwind of the online shopping revolution by launching the century-old business’s website as another marketing channel.

“In addition to the existing official website and fan page, I would proactively reply to consumers’ questions online to increase our publicity,” he says. He also admits frankly that people nowadays are worried about the quality of the products online, so they will first review the shop’s reputation online before calling for more information. Currently, online orders from search results account for 50% of Rui-Cheng’s sales volume.

The once expensive handmade cotton quilts have become a necessity available to all. Facing stiff competition, Rui-Cheng, the century-old shop, gets people in Taipei through every chilly winter with its pure and down to earth nature. **T**

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1. **Rui-Cheng is now selling all kinds of trendy duvets and wool quilts, giving customers multiple choices to purchase.**
(Photo / MyTaiwanTour)
2. **Calabash embroidered with red thread has been the classic trademark of Rui-Cheng for five generations.**
(Photo / Wang Hanshun)





HOSHING PASTRY SHOP: UNROLLING OVER 70 YEARS OF DELICIOUS TREATS

WORDS BY
Catherine Shin

PHOTOS BY
Yi Choon Tang, Liu Jiawen

Tucked away in a corner of Taipei's bustling Nanmen Market (南門市場), lies a storefront that many of Taipei's oldest residents would recognize by its fragrant aromas and delightful sights alone: Shanghai Hoshing Pastry Shop (上海合興糕粿店). As the interview day marked the grand opening of their new location at the temporary Nanmen Market on Hangzhou South Road (杭州南路), with the original market currently undergoing a three-year construction plan, second-generation Shanghainese owner Ren Tai-hsing (任台興) could barely spare an hour amid all the hustle and bustle to sit down and chat with *TAIPEI* about his store's legacy.

|| ORIGINS OF HOSHING

The history of Hoshing can be traced back to 1947; its name, Hoshing, actually came from Ren's father's master, who brought several apprentices from Shanghai, including Ren's father, after the Chinese Civil War to scout out Taipei's economy and local market. "My father's master decided on this name because 'Ho (合)' stands for 'to collaborate' and 'Shing (興)' for 'feelings of excitement' — the feeling that they all shared in starting something new together in this country," Ren exclaims. "And, of course, it also carried the meaning, 'Great things are born from collaboration.'" So, what eventually happened to his father's master? "Actually, a year later, he left to go back to China to bring his family over. But he never came back, and so my father continued to run the business," Ren replies.

Another unique thing about Hoshing's name reflects its Shanghai origins as well. Unlike other traditional Taiwanese pastry shops named *gaobing* (糕餅), they chose to stay true to their Shanghaiese roots by using *gaotuan* (糕團) instead. The term *gaotuan*, referring to two types of delicacies offered: *gao* (糕), or cake flour, and *tuan* (團), or glutinous rice flour, is a name commonly seen in and around Shanghai pastry shops even today. And this name is rather fitting for the variety of items found in their storefront, with delicacies ranging anywhere from traditional red bean peach-shaped buns (壽桃), red bean cakes (紅豆年糕), sponge cakes (鬆糕), steamed nut or pumpkin bread rolls (堅果饅頭、南瓜饅頭), to the ever-popular silver thread rolls (銀絲卷). And these are just to name a few!



► Video Interview

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|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 1. Ren Tai-hsing, the second generation of Shanghai Hoshing Pastry Shop, has lived and worked in Nanmen market for over 60 years. (Photo / Yi Choon Tang) |
| | 3 | |
| | 4 | |
| | 5 | 2-5. Sponge cakes, peach-shaped buns, red bean buns, and steamed nut or pumpkin bread rolls are among the many popular products at Hoshing. (Photo / Yi Choon Tang) |



HOSHING & TAIPEI'S NANMEN MARKET

As a child growing up in an attic right above the original Nanmen Market storefront where his father sold his pastries, Ren's life literally began in the market. "They didn't have doctors at the time, only midwives. So, I was born right here in an attic, just above the market," Ren's eyes twinkle. "At the time, the market was still called Thousand-Years Market (千歲町), and it was by far the largest and most well-established market in Taipei then, which is why my parents decided to set up shop here." It would later prove to their advantage. For many civil servants having just immigrated to Taiwan and residing in far-away districts like Xindian (新店), Nanmen Market acted as the central hub for buses and transportation, even more popular at the time than Taipei Main Station. Eventually, it came to be known as the "Market of the North and South (南北雜貨店)," being the main center of ingredients and supplies for all different tastes and cuisines alike.

Upon finishing his compulsory military service at the age of 25, Ren chose to take over the family business and, 40 years on, is still running it almost singlehandedly. "It wasn't difficult for me, honestly. I grew up here and had spent my whole life watching my father's apprentices at work. And it was expected of children back then to help out on

the weekends, which I did," he tells us. Now, at 65 years old, Ren still stands proudly as the owner of Hoshing, along with his daughter who is running their other Dihua Street branch, Hoshing 1947. And apparently, loyalty and determination like theirs is not uncommon in the industry. One of his oldest apprentices is now 54 years old, having joined the company at the young age of 14. "Our turnover rate is really low because all of our apprentices start from when they're young, enroll in the army, and then come back afterwards to continue learning with us," Ren says proudly. Currently, Hoshing is still very much a small family business, employing only 12 workers, which includes his wife, daughter, and son-in-law, who help run Hoshing 1947.





|| PREPARATION OF PASTRIES

Even with the availability and ease of modern machinery and bulk-purchasing today, Ren is still insistent on making his own glutinous rice flour. "It's what makes us stand out from the rest in Taipei," he says, "I don't care about anything else but quality, even if that means making everything from scratch." With most pastry shops choosing to use imported or pre-packaged glutinous rice flour, Ren creates his own by arduously grinding rice into fine powder. He recalls, "Back in the day, the sound of the grinding machines was so loud. Even if you were too tired and wanted to sleep in, the loud whickety-whacking at 5:00 am. would force you awake anyway!" he laughs. Nowadays, they use a similar machine designed exclusively for Hoshing, costing around NT\$200,000. "It's smaller and definitely not as loud as before, and it does the job." Even his daughter's store uses the same high-quality ingredients: "I have only one rule," says Ren, "You must taste it before you sell it. If you don't even like what you're selling, don't bother."

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1. **Nanmen Market has always been a hub for buying ingredients and supplies for locals in Taipei.**
(Photo / Yi Choon Tang)
2. **Vendors and customers in Nanmen market have forged a profound bond through years of friendship.**
(Photo / Yi Choon Tang)
- 3, 4. **Customers can witness the preparing of sponge cake at Hoshing's market stall.** (Photo / Yi Choon Tang)
5. **The best way to eat sponge cakes is to have one that is freshly-made!**
(Photo / Yi Choon Tang)



HOSHING PASTRY SELECTIONS AND THE TASTE OF TAIPEI

With all the selections that Hoshing offers, where does one start? Well, for their cake flour delicacies, Ren personally recommends trying their famous steamed nut bread rolls, traditional red bean peach-shaped buns, and silver thread rolls. “Our steamed nut bread rolls are made with just cake flour and nuts — no sugar, salt, or oil added. So you can really taste the freshness of the nuts,” he says, “And also, our traditional red bean peach-shaped buns are made with half-yeast and half-cake flour, giving it a chewier texture than others on the market.”

In terms of glutinous rice flour treats, he recommends their hot-selling cakes like Ai grass cake (艾草糕) and gold cake (金糕), both of which are available only during the weekends; and *anggugui* (紅龜粿), red bean cake, or lotus seed cake (蓮子糕), all of which are available regularly. Ai grass cake is something Ren is particularly proud of, with the ingredients being locally grown on his wife's family farmland in the countryside. He tells us, “Many of our old customers really enjoy our Ai grass cake. So, to maintain the quality of our ingredients, we plant our own grass and go down there whenever it's time to reap the harvest.” Imagine that — a world-renowned pastry shop with local “roots”!

In terms of seasonal items, he says, “My father always believed in offering food based on the seasons or festivities. So whatever season or festivity was going on at the time, you would offer that particular food.” For traditional Chinese culture, that means having New Year cake on the Lunar New Year, *tangyuan* on the Winter Solstice and *yuanxiao* on the Lantern Festival, *zongzi* (粽子) for the Dragonboat Festival, and moon cakes (月餅) during the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival.” Although for Hoshing, *tangyuan*, or glutinous rice balls, are considered an everyday dessert for the older generation, meaning they are actually offered year-round.

And what would Ren recommend to tourists visiting Taipei for the first time? “Well, one of our most famous items is our sponge cake. They are a must-try! Even our Shanghainese customers come all the way from Shanghai just to try it. They say it tastes even more local and delicious than the ones back home!” he smiles with pride. As for Japanese and Western visitors, their taste buds can vary a bit. “Usually, the Japanese love anything red bean, so I'd definitely suggest trying our red bean cake. And they also love the shape of the traditional red bean peach-shaped buns. By contrast, Europeans and Americans don't care so much for shape in general. Instead, they like our steamed vegetable buns (菜包). Moreover, being used to more sugar, they also enjoy




our jujube treats (棗泥). It has a sweet but also tangy taste to it.” When pairing these delicacies, oolong tea or green tea tends to be the perfect mix. “For heavier flavors, oolong tea is an excellent choice to wash away some of the sweetness or saltiness. And for a lighter feel, green tea is also great,” Ren recommends.

With 70 years of experience, Hoshing has gradually developed a more “modern” taste of Shanghai pastry to meet the needs of people in Taipei. “Well, people prefer less oil and sugar nowadays,” Ren shares candidly, “which is why we try to make our pastry healthier by using vegetable oil and less sugar.”

KEEPING UP WITH TRENDS AND A FUTURE VISION

With three branches around Taipei, Hoshing offers a unique taste and feel for each location. Their Nanmen Market store is the longest-running and also the most traditional, catering to a mostly older generation, while their Wanhua District and Dihua Street locations offer a more comfortable experience with in-store seating and tea sold on site while the pastries are made into a more colorful and smaller size to meet modern people’s taste. The new business model, in Ren’s opinion, is a new and excellent way to introduce traditional pastries to the next generation.

When asked about Hoshing’s vision for the future, Ren replies, “I just want to preserve the tradition of making delicious pastries and see them get passed down from generation to generation. It’s okay for the size and shape of the actual pastries to change over time, but the ingredients and texture should not. Some of our old customers keep coming back for more because it’s what they grew up eating. It’s the same pastries that their parents ate, that their parents’ parents ate, and so on and so forth. So, for them, it feels just like coming home.”

We’ve never doubted that Taipei’s trendy restaurants have their advantages, but it’s the traditional tastes like those offered at Hoshing that always remind people of home. It’s not easy to find a sense of belonging with a single bite of food, yet Hoshing has made it so for the last 70 years, and will certainly pass on this sense of pride and compassion to the next generation. 



1 2

1. **For decades, Hoshing provides all kinds of handmade treats that retain their original recipe and flavor.** (Photo / Liu Jiawen)
2. **Ren’s biggest mission now is to pass on his love of traditional pastry to the next generation.** (Photo / Yi Choon Tang)



HOSHING PASTRY BRANCHES 合興糕餅店



SHANGHAI HOSHING PASTRY SHOP



55, Sec. 2, Hangzhou S. Rd., Daan Dist.



7:00am - 6:30pm (Closed on Monday)



HOSHING 1947



223, Sec. 1, Dihua St., Datong Dist.



11:00am - 7:00pm (Closed on Monday)



BASHIHBATING BY HOSHING 1947



70, Sanshui St., Wanhua Dist.



11:00am - 6:00pm (Closed on Monday)



Handmade Tangyuan — Every One a Treasure unto Its Own

WORDS BY
Chen Wanyu

TRANSLATION BY
Joe Henley, April Chen

PHOTOS BY
Lin Junyao, Lin Yuwei

Dongzhi (冬至), also known as the Winter Solstice Festival (冬節), has long been celebrated in Taiwan as one of the 24 Solar Terms (二十四節氣). The *Taiwan Prefecture Gazetteer* (台灣府志) recorded during the Qing Dynasty that, “On the Winter Solstice, every household makes rice balls to worship the gods and their ancestors. The whole family gather together to eat these rice balls, which are commonly called *tiansui*, meaning ‘growing older.’” (冬至，人家作米丸祀眾神及祖先，舉家孳陸而食之，謂之添歲也。) Rice balls, as such, are the ancient version of *tangyuan*. Eating *tangyuan* on the Winter Solstice symbolizes growing a year older, and praying for reunion and perfection.

In Taiwan's early agrarian society, people would grind glutinous rice and prepare seasoning on the eve of the Winter Solstice. The whole family would gather together to make *tangyuan* and eat them at the table after making a sacrifice for their ancestors. Although the modern lifestyle has changed and people rarely make *tangyuan* by themselves anymore, the custom of eating *tangyuan* on the Winter Solstice continues, getting a taste of satisfaction and happiness. There are many handmade *tangyuan* stores in Taipei, each with its own unique characteristics. At the turn of the year, you too should get a bowl of hot *tangyuan* to welcome the Winter Solstice.

FERMENTED RICE SOUP WITH EGGS WARMS YOUR HEART AND STOMACH

Tangyuan served with fermented rice (jiuniang, 酒釀) soup and eggs is the most popular tangyuan dish in winter. In Chinese medicine, fermented rice is regarded as the best choice for nourishing your stomach and intestines in winter, but its pungent acidic smell and taste put some people off. However, the owner of Badong Rice Ball (八棟圓仔湯) at Nanjichang Night Market (南機場夜市) says with confidence, "If our fermented rice does not suit your taste, you won't find other fermented rice that does."

Badong makes their own fermented rice, which is fermented for about ten days and then refrigerated immediately to keep it from continuous fermentation and turning too sour. In addition, half of the glutinous rice is black glutinous rice, which

enriches the aroma and color. The secret of making fluffy egg-drop is to use traceable native eggs. These native eggs are less fishy, slightly salty and most importantly, stored at room temperature, making the eggs easier to whip, puff up and float on the surface during the cooking process. The dish is beautiful and delicious, and the soft and moist rice balls warm you up on even the coldest winter day.



Badong Rice Ball 八棟圓仔湯

- 📍 20, Ln. 309, Sec. 2, Zhonghua Rd., Zhongzheng Dist.
- 🕒 3:00pm - 1:00am
- ☎ (02) 2332-9617



Having a bowl of sesame tangyuan in sweet fermented rice soup with eggs in the cold weather soothes the soul and warms you up. (Photo / Lin Junyao)

FIRE AND ICE EXCITE YOUR TASTE BUDS

Street food in Taiwan is always creative, and boiling hot *tangyuan* are no exception. Yu Pin Yuan Iced and Hot Tangyuan (御品元冰火湯圓) is famous at home and abroad for their combination of fiery hot *tangyuan* and shaved ice. The plating is a feast for the eyes and the flavor caters to shaved ice lovers and captures the hearts of many loyal *tangyuan* customers.

One of Yu Pin Yuan's signature dishes is the Sesame Tangyuan with Osmanthus Soup (桂花芝麻湯圓). The osmanthus sugar water is drizzled onto the shaved ice, which is twice the height of the bowl, with hot *tangyuan* as the topping. The instant collision of ice and fire causes the bowl to steam up, which is pretty spectacular. The dish is always served with a kind reminder: eat the *tangyuan* while they are hot so they won't harden.

After you finish your *tangyuan*, you can add lemon juice and osmanthus syrup provided by the store for free to the remaining shaved ice, so it becomes sweet and sour osmanthus lemon shaved ice.



Yu Pin Yuan Iced and Hot Tangyuan
(Raohe Store) 御品元冰火湯圓



142, Raohe St., Songshan Dist.



Sunday to Thursday, 5:00pm - 12:00 midnight
Friday & Saturday, 5:00pm - 0:30am



0989-647-826




Shaved snow ice with osmanthus syrup and hot tangyuan is soft, chewy and delicious. (Photo / Lin Yuwei)

SAVORY AND TENDER MEAT TANGYUAN

If you have a craving for something savory, meat *tangyuan* should be your first choice. The selling point of meat *tangyuan* is their meat filling. For typical Taiwanese *tangyuan*, the filling is a mixture of ground pork, celery, shiitake mushrooms, shallots and dried shrimp, whereas Jiangsu (江蘇) and Zhejiang (浙江) meat *tangyuan* retain the original flavor and taste of ground pork. Jiu Ru Shang Hao (九如商號) is famous for its authentic Jiangsu and Zhejiang dim sum. The chef generously shares his recipe to make the filling — combine half pork belly and half pork ham with liquid eggs and white soy sauce. Then stir to mix the ingredients evenly, place the mixture in the freezer for cooling and sauce absorption, and take the mixture out before it's frozen.


The chef emphasizes that traditional Ningbo (寧波) *tangyuan* is produced with water-milled glutinous rice powder. Since water-milled glutinous rice powder is made right after glutinous rice is grinded into rice milk, it contains more moisture,

which makes it difficult to knead. Therefore, nimble fingers are critical to knead the dough and produce soft and chewy *tangyuan*. Finally, the cooked *tangyuan* are added to bone broth with a bit of Chinese cabbage and shredded preserved mustard stems, and we have authentic Ningbo meat *tangyuan*.


The large variety of *tangyuan*, including meat *tangyuan*, satisfy different tastes with their unique flavor. The most heart-warming moment of this Winter Solstice is the lingering taste of the *tangyuan* after just one bite. Watch out, it's HOT! 



Jiu Ru Shang Hao 九如商號

 69, Sec. 4, Renai Rd., Daan Dist.

 9:00am - 9:30pm

 (02) 2751-7666



Authentic Ningbo meat tangyuan is soft and tender. (Photo / Lin Junyao)

Warming, Hearty, Comforting Year-End Hot Pot Gatherings

WORDS BY

Hong Chuanyu

TRANSLATION BY

Joe Henley

PHOTOS BY

Lin Weikai, Lin Yuwei

In Taiwan, hot pot has become the first choice for communal feasts in winter. Whether it is served in Chinese, Japanese or Western style, hot pot warms you up when the weather turns chilly and serves as a reward for another year of hard work. Gathering around a warm hot pot with several friends while chatting about what has happened this year creates an intimate atmosphere that warms your body and heart.



The broth of "Oxtail Spicy Hot Pot with Poppy Sauce" tastes fresh, sweet and refreshing. (Photo / Lin Weikai)

1

OXTAIL SPICY HOT POT WITH POPPY SAUCE: SWEET AND NOURISHING



When it comes to hot pot, there's nothing better than being able to enjoy spicy and clear broth at the same time, especially when the spiciness warms up the whole body, inviting a comfortable and refreshing sensation.

Loyal Chef (食徒) is known for its unique spicy hot pot which contains a large amount of spices and Chinese herbs, along with the unique numbing flavor of Sichuan pepper, the spiciness of dried red chili pepper called *Chao Tian Jiao* (朝天椒) and the aroma of the chili that make the broth irresistibly delicious.

The signature "Oxtail Spicy Hot Pot with Poppy Sauce" is very different from the other typical spicy hot pot dishes. First simmer the beef bone broth over low heat for more than 24 hours, and then add the oxtail for further simmering until the gelatin of the oxtail completely dissolves in the soup. The sweetness of the oxtail balances out the intense spiciness and brings out a wonderful depth of flavor in the broth. Therefore, the spicy broth of Loyal Chef is not only drinkable, but the spicier it is, the better it tastes.



A VARIETY OF FLAVORFUL HOT POT WITH GREAT PORTION AND GREAT PRICE



With Hai Pa Wang Group as its parent company, TAKAO 1972 (打狗霸) has the advantage of providing premium quality ingredients in its set meal at an affordable price, such as prime beef, fresh seafood directly delivered from the Taiwan coastal regions, healthy meat balls and dumplings made in-house, and even wild bluefin tuna sashimi.

Apart from the basic Japanese seaweed soup base, TAKAO 1972 also offers Sichuan spicy soup base, stone hot pot and sukiyaki. Additionally, two new soup bases will be introduced every season to wow hot pot aficionados. Moreover, the set meals are thoughtfully categorized by food portions. Customers who want to reward themselves can order the premium Surf and Turf Hot Pot. Big eaters can go for All You Can Eat Hot Pot. The soup base and set meals of TAKAO 1972 are available in all varieties, satisfying different palates and needs.



There are rich ingredients and plenty of soup bases to choose from at TAKAO 1972. (Photo / Lin Weikai)



LOYAL CHEF 食徒

- 📍 20, Sec. 1, Fuxing S. Rd., Zhongshan Dist.
- 🕒 11:30am - 2:30pm, 5:30pm - 10:00pm
(Closed on Tuesdays)
- ☎ (02) 2711-9508



TAKAO 1972 (Kunming Branch) 打狗霸

- 📍 46, Kunming St., Wanhua Dist.
- 🕒 11:00am - 9:00pm
- ☎ (02) 2331-3677



Akakara serves Akakara Nabe, a spicy hot pot with secret ingredients that offers a variety of spiciness levels for customers to choose from. (Photo / Lin Yuwei)

3

NAGOYA RED MISO HOT POT — AS SPICY AS YOU WANT



Red miso is a specialty of Nagoya, Japan, and it gives rise to a variety of red miso dishes. Akakara, the largest hot pot chain restaurant in Nagoya, brings the most authentic red miso hot pot to Taiwan.

Akakara serves Akakara Nabe, a spicy hot pot that uses the secret blend of chili peppers and red miso from Nagoya. Customers can choose the spiciness of the hot pot from a scale of 0 to 10.

For those who are not good with spicy food, Level 1 allows you to taste the aroma of the chili pepper. Level 3 is equivalent to the spiciness of kimchi and suitable for those who can accept mildly spicy flavors. Level 5 is equal to the average minimum spiciness level of a typical spicy hot pot. From there, the sky is the limit.

If level 10 is still not spicy enough for you, you are recommended to try the "Hellish Spicy Hot Pot" exclusively offered by Akakara Taiwan stores. In addition to red miso, "Hellish Spicy Hot Pot" contains flavorings such as Taiwanese miso (which is sweeter than Japanese miso), devil pepper and chili, thereby making the whole hot pot spicier and moderately salty. Do you have friends fond of spicy food? Why not come here for a spice challenge and enjoy a hot and spicy New Year's Eve together!

3

Akakara (Zhongshan Flagship Store) 赤から鍋

- 📍 71, Sec. 1, Zhongshan N. Rd., Zhongshan Dist.
- 🕒 Monday to Friday, 5:00pm - 12:00 midnight
Saturday & Sunday, 11:30am - 12:00 midnight
- ☎️ (02) 2523-8922

4

TIGI HOT POT (Heping Original Store) 鐵支涮火鍋

- 📍 6-1, Ln. 141, Sec. 1, Heping E. Rd., Daan Dist.
- 🕒 11:30am - 2:30pm, 5:30pm - 11:00pm
- ☎️ (02) 2391-1798



CONSOMMÉ: THE LONGER YOU COOK THE SOUP, THE BETTER THE FLAVOR



Consommé is a classic French clarified stock that requires a complicated simmering and clarifying process until the broth is crystal clear and golden. It is considered the Rolls Royce of broths.

TIGI HOT POT (鐵支涮火鍋) prepares the consommé by simmering old hen and native chicken wings with proportions of garlic sprouts, celery, carrots, thyme, bay leaves and more for six hours. Impurities on the surface of the stock are repeatedly removed during the process. The final broth is flavorful and becomes even more tasty after absorbing the different flavors of fresh hot pot ingredients during the cooking process.

During the meal, the staff will provide services such as removing the shells of the shrimps and splitting the handmade meat balls. Their friendly interaction and intimate service warms up even the chilliest winter day. T



Consommé hot pot broth is crystal-clear and golden in color. (Photo / Lin Yuwei)



(Photo / Samil Kuo)

A Taste of Home: Hungry for Some Home Cooking? TAIPEI Has You Covered

WORDS BY
Adam Hopkins

PHOTOS BY
Samil Kuo, Taiwan Scene

We all know the food in Taipei is incredible. Whether you've been here ten minutes or ten years, you'll already be well aware of *xiaolongbao* (soup dumplings, 小籠包), beef noodles, braised pork on rice, shaved ice and a host of others. However, regardless of how delicious Taiwanese food is, sometimes it just isn't what we're looking for. There are days when there are only so many *guabao* (刈包) or scallion pancakes we can stomach — some days, only a taste of home will do.


While holidays are often a time for reunion, not all expats can make it home to celebrate with their families. Food is a big part of many Western holidays — particularly the likes of Christmas and Thanksgiving — and sometimes it's foods from back home that we miss the most.

Quality exotic food might not be something you particularly associate with Taipei, but the Taiwanese capital not only does it, but does it well. *TAIPEI* has rounded up some of Taipei's best authentic foreign restaurants to give homesick expats an alternative to Taiwanese cuisine when they're missing home the most (not that there's anything wrong with Taiwanese food, of course).

KIWI GOURMET BURGERS (KGB)

Comfort Food 1 

 5, Ln. 114, Shida Rd., Daan Dist.

 Monday to Saturday, 11:30am – 10:00pm ; Sunday, 11:30am – 9:30pm

Everybody loves a good burger, and Kiwi Gourmet Burgers might just do the best burgers in Taipei. Tucked away down an unassuming lane off Shida Road (師大路), KGB's interior is bright and welcoming, with the options of both table and bar seating. The atmosphere is laid back in true New Zealand fashion, and the staff are friendly and proficient in English and Chinese, with the menu available in English for people whose *hanzi* (漢字) recognition isn't too hot. Their burgers use quality meats imported from New Zealand, and their salads are fresh and tasty — don't sleep on the apple and walnut. The fridge is stocked with both local and imported beers and ciders, while milkshakes, teas and other soft drinks are also available and definitely hit the spot.

Recommendation

The KGB cheeseburger is a New Zealand grass-fed beef patty with a choice of either swiss or cheddar cheese, topped with lettuce, tomato, grilled onions, red onion and ginger lime aioli. Upgrade your cheese to camembert or blue cheese if you're feeling fancy. It's very, very *haochi*!



(Photo / Samil Kuo)

 DRINK RESPONSIBLY

MACHO TACOS (SHIDA BRANCH)

Comfort Food 2



📍 15, Pucheng St., Daan Dist.

🕒 Monday to Thursday, 11:30am – 3:00pm, 5:00pm – 9:00pm
Friday, 11:30am – 3:00pm, 5:00pm – 10:00pm

Saturday, 11:30am – 10:00pm

Sunday, 11:30am – 9:00pm

Mexican food, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, isn't too hard to find in Taipei, and Macho Tacos, luchador wrestler mascot and all, is more than just a contender for the city's top spot. Incredibly popular amongst Taipei's student contingent, the simply decorated restaurant with its long service counter and tattered brickwork serves all the Mexican fare you'd expect. We're talking soft tacos, hard tacos, burritos, nachos, rice bowls quesadillas and more, while drinks on offer include margaritas, tequila and even authentic horchata. The staff can take your order in English and Chinese, and everyone there speaks the universal language of Taco Tuesdays, when all tacos are NT\$45 with purchase of a drink. ¡Excelente!

👑 Recommendation

It's three tacos (soft or hard) for NT\$200 with your choice of protein. The staff recommends pork, chicken and taco meat. Taco meat might sound icky but it is simply mixed ground pork and beef, which is absolutely delectable. So there's nothing wrong with a little mystery, is there?




(Photo / Samil Kuo)

ALLEYCAT'S PIZZA

Comfort Food 3 

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

 Sunday to Thursday, 11:00am – 11:00pm
Friday & Saturday, 11:00am – 12:00 midnight

As an expat, finding a good pizza spot is important. Sure, you need to find a job, start learning the language and maybe sort yourself out an apartment, but pizza is also definitely a priority. Boasting the slogan “probably the best pizza in town,” after one visit to Alleycat's Pizza you could quickly find yourself agreeing with them. Sporting a stylish interior with a friendly, comfortable atmosphere, Alleycat's specializes in stone-oven-baked pizza, and has a diverse menu offering pies ranging from classic favorites like Margherita and Hawaiian to more creative, locally-inspired creations, such as Three-Cup Chicken (三杯雞) and Kung Pao Chicken (宮保雞丁). To wash it all down, they also have an extensive drinks menu consisting of international beers, ciders, wines, cocktails and even shooters.

Recommendation

The Maialona pizza is perfect for meat-lovers and is generously topped with homemade Italian sausage, pepperoni, chorizo and salami. The Oreo milkshake is another must and is all kinds of thicccccck.



(Photo / Samil Kuo)

OMA URSELS GERMAN RESTAURANT & BAKERY

Comfort Food 4



📍 8, Ln. 10, Yongkang St., Daan Dist.

🕒 Monday to Thursday, 11:30am – 2:00pm, 5:00pm – 9:30pm
Friday, 11:30am – 2:00pm, 5:00pm – 10:00pm

Saturday, 11:30am – 2:30pm, 5:00pm – 10:00pm
Sunday, 11:30am – 2:30pm, 5:00pm – 9:30pm

Hidden down an alley off the immensely popular tourist haven Yongkang Street (永康街) near MRT Dongmen station (捷運東門站), you can find a little slice of Deutschland right here in Taipei. Bright and cozy, the restaurant area sits separately from a small bakery where you can find various breads, pastries and treats. The female waitstaff wears traditional dirndl dresses (think Oktoberfest), and the menu is packed with genuine German dishes, such as bratwurst, schnitzel and pork knuckle. You can also definitely expect a selection of great German beers, steins and all. Prost!

👑 Recommendation

The braised pork strips in white sauce served with mushroom and mashed potatoes is a delight, while you can't go wrong with the mixed sausage plate — a mantra to live by.



(Photo / Samil Kuo)

KOUYOU OKONOMIYAKI 紅葉お好み焼き

Comfort Food 5



📍 4, Ln. 18, Jinjiang St., Zhongzheng Dist. ⌚ 11:30am – 2:00pm, 5:00pm – 9:00pm ; Closed on Wednesday

Okonomiyaki is a savory Japanese pancake basically translating to “cooked how you like.” Usually consisting of a wheat-flour and cabbage base, your choice of ingredients is added to make it just “how you like.” At Kouyou, the menu is only available in Japanese and Chinese, so it might prove slightly difficult to order for people unfamiliar with these two languages, but this, plus the fact that the owner hails from Osaka — a city dubbed by many as “Japan’s kitchen” — just adds to the little restaurant’s authenticity and charm. Seating perhaps ten people max — like many restaurants in Japan — Kouyou is a solid option to get your Japanese fix here in Taipei, a city with no shortage of quality Japanese eateries.



Recommendation

Add noodles, pork and a fried egg to your okonomiyaki for a delicious, filling dish just like they eat in the Land of the Rising Sun.



(Photo / Taiwan Scene)



There's nothing quite as comforting as food. A good meal can lift our spirits, change our mood and bring back fond memories of friends, family and home. While a trip to these eateries might not quite be able to replicate your favorite home-cooked meal or compete with that hometown spot you'd go to every week growing up, if it's a taste of home that you're after, or just something to temporarily distract you from life in the Taiwanese capital — which we all need from time to time — you can't go wrong with a bite to eat at one of these top restaurants. **T**

TRAVEL INFORMATION

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

TAXI

Service locations: West side of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal I and west side of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal II

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

Terminal I Arrivals Hall taxi-service counter: Tel: (03) 398-2832

Terminal II Arrivals Hall taxi-service counter: Tel: (03) 398-3599

PASSENGER SHUTTLE BUS

Service locations: Terminal 1 bus pickup point: Bus pickup zone at B1 Arrivals Hall. Terminal 2 bus pickup point: Bus pickup zone at the east arcade of the 1st floor Arrivals Hall.

Shuttle-service companies: Kuo-Kuang Motor Transportation, Evergreen Bus, Citi Air Bus

One-way fare: NT\$65~145

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

Schedule: Every 15~30 minutes

TAOYUAN AIRPORT MRT

Service Locations: A12 Airport Terminal 1 Station & A13 Airport Terminal 2 Station

One-way fare: NT\$150

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

METRO TAIPEI

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

METRO TICKETS



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



DAY PASS
NT\$150



24HR PASS
NT\$180



48HR PASS
NT\$280



72HR PASS
NT\$380

IC CARDS

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



TAIPEI FUN PASS

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



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



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



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

TRAVEL INFORMATION SERVICES

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

Information for Foreigner in Taiwan: 0800-024-111

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



Visitor Information Center



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TAIPEI

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NOV. ~ FEB.

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廣告

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TAIPEI XMAS

TAIPEI CITY HALL SQUARE

East District

12/31

18:30

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iQIYI 愛奇藝 Global exclusive live stream

Organizer: 台北觀光傳播局
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