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DISCOVER TAIPEI

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Department of Information and Tourism • Taipei City Government

Springtime – Taipei Mountain and River Music

Taipei's Beautiful Mountains – Exploring the City's Hilly Surroundings

Taipei's Waterways – The Scenic Pleasures of Its Four Rivers

Spring in Taipei – A Perfect Time to Appreciate Flowers

The Discovery Center of Taipei: Renovation of the "Taipei's Streets" Exhibit

Calligraphy Brushes From a Bygone Era Make a Comeback in Taiwan

Spring in Taipei Means Strawberry-Picking in Neihu!

Taipei's Roaming Street Performers



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Springtime – Taipei Mountain and River Music

Taipei is one of the few great cities on Earth where citizens have immediate access to both mountain and river. In spring, when all the world is in bloom, day-trips up into the hills to enjoy floral colors and back down to the riverside to enjoy the impressive scenic vistas there are a one-of-a-kind package. In this issue, themed "Taipei Mountain and River Music," we introduce the trails of the five mountain ranges that ring this city, head up and down the Tamsui and Jilong rivers that run through it, and take you to places, both in the hills and on the flatlands, where you'll find the most beautiful of the spring-season floral blooms that color Taipei.

In our Taipei Metamorphosis department we throw open the doors to a "new shopping paradise" duo, Citylink (Nangang Store) and Hasdaq Plaza, to the "Taipei's Streets" exhibition from Discovery Center of Taipei, and to the Dihua Sports Park Cross-Dike Viewing Platform. Shopping, sightseeing, or both – new horizons await!

Calligraphy is a Chinese art form millennia old. Want to know about the unique qualities of the calligraphy brush? In our In-Depth City Culture Explorations piece, we interview a master brush-maker, who teaches the art of choosing the best brush. Then, stepping into our Exploring Taipei Tastes & Gifts gallery, we present you with a sampler of the city's garden restaurants, where spring sunshine is a key ingredient in the delicious experience. And if you're the sort of person who loves a sense of design flair in every little practical purchase you make, be sure to spend time browsing the ingenious gift items we suggest in this issue's pages, brimming with the warm and clever character of their local creators.

Over in our Taipei Slow Living unit, we head into the Neihu hills for a day of picking strawberries at local farms, and introduce you to a colorful element of the city's "mobile scenery" – its street performers – and to its creative trendy hotels, which fill the days of travel-loving folk with the serenity they so enjoy. Elsewhere, we let you know about two fun experiences for the whole family: the BIORHYTHM – Music and the Body Exhibition and the Get Rhythm with Paul Klee Interactive Exhibit and Workshop Series, sure to overturn your perceptions on the beauty found in sound and dance art.

This spring, use your eyes to search out Taipei's sights, nose to discern its aromas, mouth to taste its freshness, and ears to hear its voice. You'll find all the myriad elements that make up this unique city's very special spring character are now in full bloom! 





Discover Taipei

Taipei City Government

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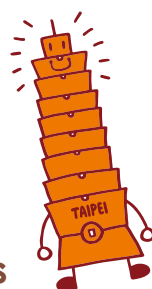
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Taipei's Beautiful Mountains – Exploring the City's Hilly Surroundings

The city of Taipei is surrounded by mountains, and nature sits right on its doorstep, easily accessible via public transport. This has made the hilly environs one of the city's key attractions. North from Yangmingshan National Park (陽明山國家公園) and south to the area of Zhinan Temple (指南宮) and Maokong (貓空) on Erge Mountain (二格山), there are five mountain ranges around the city – the Datun Mountain Range (大屯山系), Qixing Mountain Range (七星山系), Wuzhi Mountain Range (五指山系), Nangang Mountain Range (南港山系), and Erge Mountain Range. To enable hikers to experience the full range of Taipei's mountain beauty, the city government has established a network of 20 hiking trails.



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1. This city has mountains on all sides; to enjoy Taipei's abundant natural delights, simply hop on the metro system. (Photo courtesy of Lin Hiroshi)
2. Rich in different flora and fauna, Yangmingshan is affectionately called "Taipei's backyard garden."
3. Wuzhi Mountain Stratum Geological Observation Boardwalk.



4. Yangmingshan's Zhuzihu Industrial Road bursts with brilliant clusters of cherry blossoms.

5. There are two camping sites along the Guizikeng Hiking Trail, named the "100 Terrace" and "110 Terrace."

6. The lush surrounding greenery is reflected in the quiet pond in Guizikeng Water and Soil Conservation Education Park.



Taipei's Backyard Garden – Yangmingshan National Park

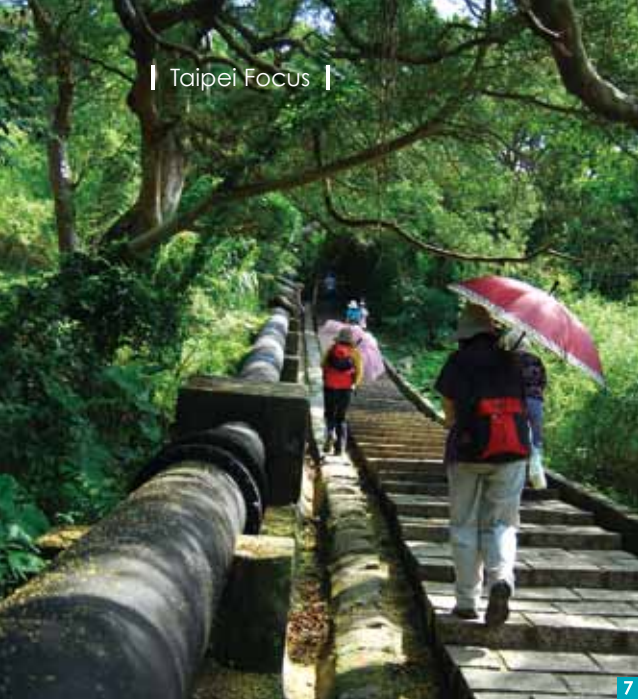
Yangmingshan, or Yangming Mountain, was originally called Caoshan (草山), or Grass Mountain. Back when the Japanese controlled Taiwan, they planted black pine, Taiwan acacia, and Taiwan sweetgum trees throughout the area and developed the local hot springs, opening up Yangmingshan for tourism. Its original name was changed in 1950 to honor the Ming Dynasty (明朝) scholar Wang Yangming (王陽明), and in 1985 Yangmingshan National Park was established. Its beauty and easy accessibility has made the park a much-loved leisure and recreation destination, affectionately dubbed "Taipei's backyard garden."

Yangmingshan is rich in flora and fauna. The annual Yangmingshan Flower Festival is a great visual feast, the exuberantly colorful azaleas, Taiwan cherry blossoms, and Zhuzihu (竹子湖) calla lilies delighting visitors. Come October, huge swathes of white-flowered silver grass sway with the breezes, and the branches of the late-fall maple trees ripple with red leaves. Winter is a time of cold and drizzle, the Yangmingshan world becoming one of cloud and mist. The differing characters of the seasons make it a unique place to enjoy both flowers and hot springs.

The First Hiking Route – Guizikeng Hiking Trail

Guizikeng Hiking Trail (貴子坑親山步道), in the Datun Mountain Range, was the first hiking trail developed by the Taipei City Government, and features a first-rate rest and leisure area with camping facilities, the Water and Soil Conservation Education Park, and a loop trail up the mountain above. The two camping areas, the "100 Terrace" (100平臺) and the "110 Terrace" (110平臺), offer a distinctive leisure experience.

According to Shia Shiantung (夏賢統), section chief of the Industrial and Trail Section (道路步道科) at the Geotechnical Engineering Office (大地工程處) in the city's Public Works Department (工務局), by visiting the Guizikeng Water and Soil Conservation Education Park (貴子坑水土保持教學園區) you can see the oldest geological stratum in the Taipei area, the "Wuzhi Mountain Stratum" (五指山層), as well as an attractive pond in which the lush greenery of the surrounding trees is reflected. As you stroll in this peaceful mountain setting you may well encounter bamboo partridge, Chinese bulbul, and other birds, including the occasional eagle hovering high in the blue sky.



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Fun in Tianmu – Old Tianmu Hiking Trail

Tianmu (天母) is an international enclave that draws many travelers. Many come especially to try the Old Tianmu Hiking Trail (天母古道親山步道), on the foothills of the Qixing Mountain Range. Many are also surprised that Tianmu still has such a radiant and unspoilt natural landscape. Also called the Shuiguan Road Trail (水管路步道), it was developed during the Japanese era (1895-1945) as a conduit to bring spring water from the 3rd Water Source Zone down to Tianmu and Shilin. Declared an official city heritage site in 2004, this is Tianmu's premier heritage attraction and also Taiwan's first "water supply system heritage site". Built over 80 years ago, it was completed in 1932, and although the flow from the water source has lessened over the years and there is no way to increase the supply, the facility continues to provide a portion of Tianmu's water. The trail is bordered on both sides by dense foliage and shade, and the large, black water pipe beside it, made of high-pressure cast iron, is 647 meters long. Walkers often lean up close to the pipe to listen to the gurgling spring water inside. The distinctive pipe, pleasant forest cover, and attractive trailside plant life such as ferns and giant elephant's ear make for a soothing walk, but also an introduction to Taipei's water-resources.

Mountains and Scenic Beauty – Jiantanshan Hiking Trail

The Grand Hotel (圓山大飯店), with its resplendent Chinese palace-style exterior, has been in operation for

over 60 years. Among its many celebrity guests over the years have been international film stars Elizabeth Taylor and Alain Delon and US President Dwight Eisenhower. The hotel's own star continues to shine bright on the international stage. Splendid views of the beautiful hotel can be had from on high by walking the Jiantanshan Hiking Trail (劍潭山親山步道), which starts at the bottom of the hillside behind. This is one of the most popular trails in the Wuzhi Mountain Range, with a well-preserved natural ecology. Traversing what was once a military control zone, another major feature is a number of abandoned military facilities. Up on the crest, the scenery is splendid, with expansive views over the Grand Hotel, nearby riverside parks, and the Miramar Ferris Wheel (美麗華摩天輪). The best-known facility along the trail is the Old Place Plane-Spotting Platform (老地方觀機平臺), presenting a thrilling panorama of aircraft taking off and landing at Taipei Songshan Airport (臺北松山機場).

A Restful City Idyll – Nature Walks by Hushan Stream

If you've ever enjoyed the views over Taipei from Xiangshan (象山), be sure to try the Hushan Hiking Trail (虎山生態步道), also in the Nangang Mountain Range. In April and May each year fireflies put on a show around the area's Hushan Stream (虎山溪). Beside Songshan Zhenshan Temple (松山鎮山宮) is a special butterfly viewing area with a boardwalk and two observation platforms, from which there are great views of Taipei 101 and the Miramar Ferris Wheel as well. On clear evenings during firefly season the scenery here is breathtaking.

The Popular Erge Mountain System Route – Zhinan Temple Maokong Hiking Trail



Between Taipei Zoo Station (動物園站) and Zhinan Temple Station on the Maokong Gondola (貓空纜車) system is the Zhinangong Maokong Hiking Trail (指南宮貓空親山步道), divided into three routes. The Zhinangong trail (指南宮步道) was constructed during the Japanese era. The stone lanterns set up along the way give it a strong Japanese feel. The stairway trail brings you up from valley floor to the mountainside temple, where the magnificent architecture is a major attraction. Also well worth seeing is the lovely "May Snow" seen along the Dacheng Hall Trail (大成殿步道) when the tung trees bloom each year. Along the Tea Promotion Center Trail (茶展中心步道) are stream views, tea plantations, terraced fields, and other scenic beauties. A special attraction are the pot holes; the name "Maokong" literally means "cat's hollows," because the pot holes in the stream-bed rocks reminded people long ago of imprints left by cats with their paws.

Pink Cherry Blossom Greets the Returning Spring in Taipei's Mountain Regions

As flowers start to open in the returning warmth of spring, in addition to the above-described trails, says the city government's Shia Shiantung, there are numerous other trails very popular with locals for viewing cherry blossoms, notably Beitou District's Fengwei Trail (風尾步道) and newly opened Baigong Shanzhuang Trail (白宮山莊步道), which has three routes, Zhulin Trail (竹林步道) in Shilin District, and Bishanyan Trail (碧山巖步道) in Neihu District. While visiting Taipei, head to the hills, and one or more of these favorite mountain spots. Whether for sightseeing or exercise, natural pleasures are guaranteed. 🌸



Transportation:

Guizikeng Hiking Trail 貴子坑親山步道

Take MRT Tamsui-Xinyi Line (捷運淡水信義線) to Fuxinggang Station (復興崗站). On exiting, turn right and follow the signs to enter the MRT green corridor, then walk to the trailhead. Alternatively, take bus 216 or 218 and get off at MRT Fuxinggang Station or the Xiushan Road intersection stop (秀山路口站).

Old Tianmu Hiking Trail 天母古道親山步道

Take MRT Tamsui-Xinyi Line to Jiantan Station (劍潭站), transfer to bus Red 5 or 260, get off at Shanzaihou stop (山仔后站), and walk to upper trailhead on Aifu 3rd Street (愛富三街). Alternatively, take bus 220 or 224 to Tianmu stop (天母站), then walk in direction of Tianmu Police Station (天母派出所) to end of Sec. 7, Zhongshan N. Rd. (中山北路7段).

Jiantanshan Hiking Trail 劍潭山親山步道

Take MRT Tamsui-Xinyi Line to Jiantan Station and walk to trailhead, or take public bus 203 or 218 and get off at Jiantan stop.

Hushan Hiking Trail 虎山生態步道

Take MRT Bannan Line (捷運板南線) and get off at Houshanpi Station (後山埤站), then walk along Zhongpo S. Rd. (中坡南路) to Fude St. (福德街), reaching the trailhead by Cihui Temple (慈惠堂) on Ln. 251, Fude St. (福德街251巷) in about 20 minutes.

Zhinangong Maokong Hiking Trail 指南宮貓空親山步道

Take MRT Wenhui Line (捷運文湖線) to Taipei Zoo Station (動物園站), transfer to bus 236 or 237, get off at National Chengchi University stop (政治大學站), walk in direction of Zhinan Rd. (指南路). After passing NCCU campus entrance, the trailhead is found at Ln. 33, Sec. 3, Zhinan Rd.

To return, an option is to walk from the Taipei Tea Promotion Center for Tieguanyin and Baozhong (臺北市鐵觀音包種茶研發推廣中心) to the cable-car station beside Sanxuan Temple (三玄宮), riding the Maokong Gondola (貓空纜車) down to MRT Taipei Zoo Station (動物園站).

7. Tianmu's Shuiguan Road Trail is Taiwan's first "water supply system heritage site."
8. The popular Jiantanshan Hiking Trail traverses well-preserved natural ecology.
9. The Old Place Plane-Spotting Platform is a great spot to watch planes taking off and landing at Taipei Songshan Airport.
10. Fireflies light up the Hushan Hiking Trail nights in April and May.
11. Enjoy the lovely "May Snow" landscape along the Dacheng Hall Trail during the annual tung-tree bloom.
12. Along the Tea Promotion Center Trail (茶展中心步道) are stream views, tea plantations, terraced fields, and other scenic beauty.
13. Bishanyan Trail offer beautiful scenery and popular for hiking and viewing flowers.

(Photos courtesy of Geotechnical Engineering Office, Public Works Department, Taipei City Government.)

Information

Yangmingshan National Park Administration
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Tel: (02)2861-3601

Website: www.ymsnp.gov.tw



Taipei's Waterways – The Scenic Pleasures of Its Four Rivers

Taipei is a city of rivers. Walk around the Dadaocheng (大稻埕), Yuanshan (圓山), Dazhi (大直) and Neihu areas and you'll enjoy plenty of river views. Travelers who ride a bicycle will know about the city's comprehensive, interlinked system of riverside bikeways, with a total length of 112 kilometers along the Tamsui, Keelung, Xindian, and Jingmei rivers.



2



3

The History of Tamsui River

In former times, the Tamsui River played a key role in local communication and goods transportation, and was at the center of the city's rise. In the 18th century soldiers were sent by the Qing Dynasty (清朝) government to garrison Taiwan, and in the Taipei area the Tamsui River system was the primary channel of communication with the outside world. The main trade and transport node in the area was along the Xinzhuang (新莊) shore. Silting became a serious problem after 1767, and commerce began a slow shift downriver to Bangka (艋舺), today called Wanhua (萬華) in Mandarin Chinese. However, it too began to suffer from serious silting, restricting and finally halting rivercraft access. Bangka's slow decline marked Dadaocheng's rise as the Taipei region's main goods and materials entrepot. Many foreign traders and wealthy Chinese merchants moved in to set up operations, and Dadaocheng flourished as a distribution center for regional specialty goods, tea, and fabrics.



1. The scenery along the Xindian River is an urban oasis.
2. There are a number of well-known scenic spots along the Keelung River such as Taipei Grand Hotel, and the riverside bikeways are popular with cyclists.
3. Riverside Dadaocheng long flourished as a distribution center for regional specialty goods, tea, and fabrics.
4. The scenic attractions by Dadaocheng Wharf include a scale mock-up of a Tang Dynasty junk, wharf arch bridge, and riverside park.
5. Ride a bike from the wharves at Dadaocheng to Guandu, enjoying the riverside scenery along the way.
6. Zhuangxiefu Cultural History Pavilion, an official city heritage site.

During this era, most land along the riverbanks in today's Taipei was farmed. In addition to the major centers of population and commercial activity – the old walled city, Bangka, and Dadaocheng – a number of smaller trading hubs for agricultural and household items took shape, notably the towns of Shilin St. (士林街), Dalongdong St. (大龍峒街), and Xikou St. (錫口街). The end of the 19th century saw the fading away of river transport as a result of silting, and the emergence of railway transport. Their role as water-traffic nodes gone, the river port towns went into decline.

The Four Rivers – Scenery, Boat Tours, Cycle Paths

According to Chen Shihao (陳世浩), the director of the Hydraulic Engineering Office (水利工程處), Public Works Department, Taipei City Government, the main function of the Tamsui and other city rivers is now leisure and recreation. Riverside parks and nature reserves line the riversides, and what is locally called the Blue Highway (藍色公路) has been reopened, with Blue Highway yacht cruises offering residents and visitors the opportunity to enjoy the riverside scenery and natural

ecology from the water. The office has established an interlinked system of riverside bikeways totaling 112 kilometers in length, presenting grand views from Jingmei (景美) in the south and Neihu in the east and extending downstream to the wetlands of Guandu (關渡) in the north.

A Sprawling Canvas of Historic Sites and Natural Landscapes

The main boat-traffic points on the Tamsui River Blue Highway were Dadaocheng Wharf (大稻埕碼頭) and Guandu Wharf (關渡碼頭), and there was heavy traffic between the river-mouth port towns of Tamsui and Bali (八里). Dadaocheng was the last place to flourish in the days of river transport, so start your tour on foot here, where many precious cultural and historical relics have been preserved. A good example is the Zhuangxiefu Cultural History Pavilion (莊協發港町文史講亭), an official city heritage site, which stands at the junction of Guide Street (貴德街) and Xining North Road (西寧北路), where the docks used to be before silting altered the shoreline. Built in the late 1920s, this was originally a common family-run grocery store; after renovation it was opened



7. Dihua Street was at the center of the last era for Tamsui River sailing craft; many old works of architecture remain.
8. Guandu Nature Park is an important natural ecology area.
9. Li Linqiu's Residence was the home of a lyricist popular in the 1930s.
10. Taipei Walking Tour outings are held each Saturday, with guides speaking Chinese, English, and Japanese taking foreign visitors on walkabouts through Dadaocheng's old streets.

to the public as a cultural-history pavilion. Also on Xining North Road is another building constructed in the 1920s, the former residence of Li Linqiu (李臨秋). Li, a lyricist, wrote the words for many popular Taiwan tunes, including the 1930s hits "Craving for the Spring Breeze" (望春風) and "Four Seasons of Red" (四季紅). There are many commemorative items on display at both locations (advance registration required).

The head of the Cultural Heritage Division (文化資產科) of the city's Department of Cultural Affairs, Lin Changchieh (林長杰), says that the building of port facilities at Dadaocheng made it a "world trade center." The area's Guide Street was also the first in Taipei to feature Western-style buildings. The Zhuangxiefu site brims with the scent of this bygone era, an eyewitness to its heyday and its decline, serving as a viewing platform into history. Every Saturday, Taipei Walking Tour (台北城市導覽) offers a fixed time/location tour in Chinese, English, and Japanese: an invaluable way for foreign travelers to explore Dadaocheng's old streets.

After gorging yourself on the area's historic spots, walk to the river and Dadaocheng Wharf via its water gate. The rich, panoramic landscape here includes a scale mock-up of a Tang Dynasty junk, a wharf arch bridge, and Yanping Riverside Park (延平河濱公園). Board a craft plying the Blue Highway Tamsui-Xinyi Line (淡水信義線) and head to Guandu Nature Park (關渡自然公

園), then on to Tamsui to browse Tamsui Old Street (淡水老街), trying its well-known traditional snack treats. Head back to the city center on the Taipei Metro. On this Blue Highway outing you can also choose to disembark at Guandu, rent a bike, and explore the natural delights of the Guandu Nature Park, an important wildlife habitat. The park's ecology has three foci, waterfowl, wetlands, and insects, and trained professionals are available to take guided tours following these themes.

Another fun touring option is to soak up the appealing riverside scenery on a long, leisurely bike ride. You can start off on the Guandu Bikeway. Head out from Guandu Temple (關渡宮), pass by Guandu Nature Park, follow the Guizikeng Stream (貴子坑溪), and head back once you come to the hiking trail entrance. Along the way there are fine views of Mt. Guanyin (觀音山), a large swath of mangrove forest, flocks of waterfowl in flight, and other magnificent natural sights.

The Resplendent Keelung River Nightscape – Deepening Night, Deepening Beauty

Many nighttime scenic attractions are to be found along the banks of the Keelung River – among them the lights of the Grand Hotel and Miramar Ferris Wheel and the multicolor lighting of the Rainbow Bridge (彩虹橋). This is a favorite area with many who enjoy cycling



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at night. Bikeways follow both the left and right banks, enabling a leisurely look at all the many different night attractions for cycle enthusiasts, accompanied by a gentle night breeze. A daytime Blue Highway tour offers an entirely different experience; embark at the Dajia Wharf (大佳碼頭) in Dajia Riverside Park (大佳河濱公園) and the boat passes under Dazhi Bridge (大直橋), along the Dazhi waterfront to the Taipei Neihu Technology Park (臺北內湖科技園區) and then back again. The star here is the beauty of the Taipei cityscape – along the way you'll enjoy close-up views of aircraft landing and taking off at Taipei Songshan Airport, the Grand Hotel, and the Miramar Ferris Wheel, as well as the soaring Taipei 101 tower in the distance.

The Xindian and Jingmei Rivers – Bike Rides Through Landscaped Green Spaces

The Xindian River and Jingmei River riversides are key urban-core green spaces. Join the riverside bikeway at Fuhe Bridge (福和橋), along the right bank of the Xindian River, and the scenery slowly changes from cityscape to expansive green spaces. You'll pass by Treasure Hill Artist Village (寶藏巖國際藝術村), through Guting Riverside Park (古亭河濱公園) and by Taipei City Hakka Cultural Park (臺北市客家文化主題公園). Time and again you'll be inspired to stop off and enjoy wonderful scenes, such as flocks of birds. There are bikeways along both banks of the Jingmei River, interlinked via Daonan Bridge (道南橋) and Yishou Bridge (一壽橋). The contrast of the red flowers and green grass at Jingmei Bridge (景美橋), seen along the route, creates an especially striking scene.

Though the days are long gone where the Tamsui River teemed with merchant craft heading to and from busy marketplaces, sails billowing in the wind, outings on the river by yacht, or along the river by bike, bring the same refreshing spring breezes, matched with the novel vistas and experiences of a new day. 🚲

Information

Taipei Riverside Bikeways

臺北河濱自行車道

Website: www.riversidepark.taipei.gov.tw

Tel: (02)2258-7425

Rescue Service Hotline: 0982-780-780

Blue Highway Route Information

藍色公路營運航線資訊

Keelung River 基隆河 :

River Tour Points: Dajia – Meiti

大佳——美堤

Tel: (02)2928-4665

Tamsui River 淡水河 :

River Tour Points: Dadaocheng – Guandu

大稻埕——關渡

Tel: (02)2558-5519

River Tour Points: Guandu – Tamsui Old Street

關渡——淡水老街

Tel: (02)2805-9022

Zhuangxiefu Cultural History Pavilion

莊協發港町文史講亭

Add: 16, Ln. 86, Xining N. Rd.
(西寧北路86巷16號)

Tel: (02)2556-0651

Li Linqiu's Residence 李臨秋故居

Add: 2F, 4, Ln. 86, Xining N. Rd.
(西寧北路86巷4號2樓)

Time: 09:00~17:00

Tel: (02)2586-5985

Taipei Walking Tour 台北城市導覽

Tel: (02)2552-9021

Website: www.taipei-walkingtour.tw

11. Formerly a hub for river transport, today Dadaocheng is the launch point for Blue Highway river cruises.
12. Riding along the bike path on the Xindian River's right bank takes you by Treasure Hill Artist Village.
13. Taipei City Hakka Cultural Park is a fine spot to learn about Hakka culture.



Spring in Taipei –

A Perfect Time to Appreciate Flowers

Taipei enjoys some fine weather in March and April. The warmth of spring embraces the land, flowers bloom, and the city transforms into what seems like a grand urban garden, its canvas painted with cherry blossoms, azaleas, calla lilies, roses and lilies. Both mountain areas and lowlands come alive with color, and the city's wonderfully convenient public-transport system means all the best viewing spots are close at hand, so whatever destination you've in mind, in the city or up in the mountains, embracing the romance of spring is easy.

Yangmingshan Flower Festival & Calla Lily Festival – The Most Popular Destination for Enjoying Spring Flowers

Fondly called "Taipei's backyard garden," Yangmingshan becomes a grand tapestry of floral colors each spring. Day-trippers come in great numbers in February and March to enjoy the kaleidoscopic beauty of



1. Visitors flood the hills during the Yangmingshan Flower Festival to enjoy the grand floral spectacular.
- 2-3. Yangming Park spots many flower-viewing hotspots.



- 4. Pretty in all seasons, the Flower Clock is a favorite backdrop for memento photos.
- 5-6. Many come to pick calla lilies during their annual bloom.
- 7. A new landmark was created when locals planted cherry trees along the Lohas Park protective embankment in Donghu. (Photo courtesy of Ciou Shengwang)

the Yangmingshan Flower Festival. In the sprawling 100-hectare Yangming Park (陽明公園), a lineup of unique landscapes awaits at each of its scenic attractions, notably the Flower Clock (花鐘), Water Fountain, theme gardens, and cherry-blossom forest. Enjoy the Yangming Park Cherry Blossom Forest (櫻花林區), Hushan Green (湖山綠地), Qianshan Park (前山公園), and Yangmingshan Car Park No. 2 (陽明山第二停車場). You'll find the island's own beautiful Taiwan cherry in delicate bloom around Qianshan Park's fountain and car park, where you can also enjoy the lovely pink-petaled Yoshino cherry. The azaleas begin to pop up right after the festival, extending the spring's floral pageantry while changing its character.

The March to May period is calla-lily season in Yangmingshan's Zhuzihu. The formal opening and closing dates of this year's Calla Lily Festival are March 20th and April 26th. Zhuzihu is often veiled in mist, and to complement this ethereal beauty the Beitou Farmers' Association has designed a special series of activities with an "Adventures in Wonderland" theme. You'll see characters from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, there will be a number of calla-lily landscape-design

exhibits spread about the area's calla-lily farms, and also a special artistic landscaping installation at the car park located at Zhuzihu entrance area. During the festival visitors can pick their own calla lilies in the fields of the many local tourist farms, and buy cut flowers, potted plants, and herbs. The city government has also established a number of streamside walking trails in the area, taking from 10 to 50 minutes, with calla-lily fields and terraced plots to enjoy along the way.

A First Choice for Enjoying Blossoms in the Lowlands – Donghu Cherry Blossom Forest

If looking for cherry blossoms right in the city, Lohas Park (樂活公園) in Donghu (東湖) is your destination. On the corner of Donghu Road and Kangle Street (康樂街), by the Neigou Stream (內溝溪), a number of years ago local flower-loving residents began planting cherry trees along the park's protective embankment. Now, as a result of their hard work and attentive care, the park has become a prime attraction for viewing cherry blossom. Each year during the season a grand mix of white and



pink flowers sway in the breeze, bringing out a large and appreciative audience of sakura admirers.

If you missed the January winter blossoms in Lohas Park and the Yaezakura and Showa cherry blossoms on show in February along the Lekang Trail (樂康步道) on the middle stretch of the Neigou Stream, fret not. At the end of March, you'll find Yoshino cherry trees in bloom around the trail along the Neigou Stream in Wufenpi (五分埤). In April enjoy Shogetsu and Amagi Yoshino blossoms around the Donghu Sakura Forest (東湖櫻花林), nearby Donghu Junior High School (東湖國中), and the second section of the Lekang Trail. Be sure to head out to these places for a taste of natural beauty.

Shilin Official Residence Rose Festival – Experience an Era's Aura of Elegance

Another fine spot for admiring flowers is in the grounds of the Shilin Official Residence (士林官邸). This complex was originally set up by the Taiwan Governor-General's Office (臺灣總督府) – the Shilin Horticultural Experimental Station (士林園藝試驗分所). It later became the official residence of President Chiang Kaishek and Madane Chiang. Because Madame Chiang loved roses, rose gardens measuring about 4,200 square meters in area were set up in the 1970s before and behind the main residence, featuring around 200 species and more than 5,000

varieties. The wonderful scents and colors add even more to the enchantment of these European-style rose gardens.

Preserving the beauty of this unique floral oasis, the city's Public Works Department's Parks and Street Lights Office (公園路燈工程管理處) is continuing to plant 150 species and 3,000-plus rose varieties. This year's Shilin Official Residence Rose Festival runs April 1st to 12th, with rose-themed painted leather bags and other items on display in the greenhouses, along with all sorts of cut-rose floral arrangements and potted roses. Many graceful varieties are being showcased in the rose gardens.

Baishihu Tassel Flower and Lily Competition

Under the direction of the city's Geotechnical Engineering Office, Public Works Department, in recent years the Baishihu area in Neihu District has become a favorite outdoor leisure and recreation destination. The government body has integrated the local tourist attractions, including the Baishihu Suspension Bridge (白石湖吊橋) and nearby Tongxin Pool ("One Heart" Pool; 同心池), Guzhu Wall ("Ancient Stone" Wall; 古錐埤), Fuqi Trees ("Husband and Wife" Trees; 夫妻樹), and Xuyuan Trail ("Wish" Trail; 許願步道).

April is the prime period for enjoying local floral blooms and the local strawberry farms, meaning an unbeatable day-trip combination of flower viewing and strawberry picking. The tassel flowers (流蘇花) are so named because of their long and fine petals, similar to the tassels on the garments of ladies of refinement in ancient times. When in full bloom the trees and surrounding earth covered in bright, fallen petals are often called "April snow" (四月雪).

In May, lilies will burst into bloom around the Tongxin Pool. The flower reminds locals of the *suona* (嗩吶), a traditional double-reed musical instrument. When in full bloom it sways in the breeze, as if being played in a tune of welcome. According to the head of the Geotechnical Engineering Office, Huang Liyuan (黃立遠), two endemic Taiwan varieties have been cultivated around the pool: the Taiwan lily and Longflower lily. At first glance the two look alike, but look closer. The petals of the Longflower are pure-white inside and outside, and the plant has short, broad leaves. The white petals of the Taiwan lily have burgundy stripes, and the leaves are significantly smaller.

Flower-appreciation outings are an intrinsic element of the Taipei experience. Note, however, that on weekends and holidays roads get very crowded, so public transportation, always more convenient, is highly recommended. Mountain weather conditions can vary, so dress warm and be sure to bring raingear and warm clothes too. ☔



8. People stream to Lohas Park when its cherry blossoms burst into life. (Photo courtesy of Wu Jinyuan)

9-10. Because Madame Chiang loved roses, rose gardens measuring about 4,200 square meters in area were set up at the Shilin Official residence.

11. The cableless "invisible" styling of the Baishihu Suspension Bridge has made it a favorite Neihu day-tripper destination.

12. The carpet of Chinese fringe flowers, like "April snow" on the ground, is a sight to behold.

13. In May, thousands of lilies around Tongxin Pool draw a large number of admirers.

(Photos 11-13 courtesy of Geotechnical Engineering Office, Public Works Department, Taipei City Government.)

Information

2015 Yangmingshan Flower Festival 2015 陽明山花季

Time: Until 3/15

Transportation:

Outside MRT Jiantan Station (捷運劍潭站), take Red 5 (紅5) bus to Yangmingshan terminus (陽明山總站), transfer to Leisure Bus 108 (休閒公車108), get off at desired tourist spot; or take 260, 260 shuttle (260 區), Citizen Mini Bus M3 (市民小巴M3), or Red 5 to Yangmingshan terminus, transfer to Leisure Bus 108, get off at desired spot.

2015 Zhuzihu Calla Lily Festival 2015 竹子湖海芋季

Time: 3/20~4/26

Transportation:

At MRT Shipai Station (捷運石牌站), take Leisure Bus 128 (休閒公車128) or Small No. 8 (小8) bus. At MRT Beitou Station (捷運北投站), take bus 129 or Small No. 9 (小9) / Taipei Tourist Shuttle Beitou-Zhuzihu Route; 台灣好行北投竹子湖線).

Donghu Lohas Park 東湖樂活公園

Venue: Entrance of Ln. 61, Kangle St. (康樂街61巷巷口)

Transportation:

Take MRT Wenhui Line (捷運文湖線) to Donghu Station (東湖站), walk about 9 minutes.

Shilin Official Residence Rose Festival 士林官邸玫瑰展

Time: 4/1~4/12

Add: 60, Fulin Rd. (福林路60號)

Transportation:

Take MRT Tamsui Line (捷運淡水線) to Shilin Station (士林站), walk about 10 minutes.

Baishihu 白石湖

Transportation:

Take public bus to Bihu Elementary School stop (碧湖國小站), take Small No. 2 (小2); or take MRT Wenhui Line (捷運文湖線) to Neihu Station (內湖站), transfer to Small No. 2.



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Relaxed, Worry-Free Accommodation in Taipei

Budget travelers visiting Taipei are invariably struck by the city's convenient public transportation and its rich culture, as well as the spontaneous friendliness, hospitality, and helpfulness of Taipei's people. Now, with the help of government-established travel-info websites, these travelers can find detail on guaranteed-safe accommodations, making their visit easier and bringing greater peace of mind.

Zhang Kunhai (張坤海), division chief at the city's Tourism Industry Division, Department of Information and Tourism (觀光傳播局觀光產業科), says that in 2014 a total of 30 new licensed hotels and hostels were set up in Taipei. The management practices at each have been certified, and each cooperates with relevant government units, undergoing periodic spot-check evaluation of their fire-safety facilities, thus ensuring that travelers who stay there can do so with a sense of security and ease. To determine if a Taipei hostel is a legal establishment, the first step is to check at the front door and counter for the professional lodging-industry logo and lodging registration certificate conferred by the city government. You can also visit the TaipeiTravel Net(臺北旅遊網) and TaiwanStay (臺灣旅宿網) websites, which provide details on safe, certified hostels, letting you enjoy your time here to the maximum by providing peace of mind.

Many budget travelers have come to know the TaipeiTravel Net very well. Run by the Department of Information and Tourism, it provides info in five languages:

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Chinese, English, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish. In the Accommodation section, simply enter a keyword in the field presented and you're whisked to listings of all matching lodgings, with detailed background text and visuals plus additional information on area businesses. This section also simplifies your searches further by presenting International Tourist Class, Tourist Class, and Budget Hotel category selections, as well as search fields with easy-to-find listings of city districts, Taipei Metro stations, etc. There are also guest room search fields for desired price range, bed type, etc., facilitating an exact match for your needs. A Hotel-related Certification Labels reference page has also been set up presenting all relevant hotel star markings, registration certificates, and business licenses.

The Tourism Bureau of the Ministry of Transportation and Communications (交通部觀光局) has integrated Star Hotels and Taiwan Host (homestays) search services on its TaiwanStay website. Information is available in Chinese, English, and Japanese. The easy-to-navigate design makes researching certified lodgings a snap. Fill in the easy-to-use Search column and you're immediately presented with full info on lodgings. Homestays are evaluated by mystery-shopper guests and by netizen votes. Maps, photos, and info text are



provided for all lodgings, and there are also reviews from past customers. The Lodging Quick Search function enables fast searches for quality accommodation near major night markets, in/near major business districts, etc.

The Department of Information and Tourism has long dedicated its resources to professionalization and legal certification in the local accommodation industry. This spring, one of the best times to visit the city, come and pick one of our vetted places to stay and hit the streets with peace of mind, diving into Taipei's wonderful world of local culinary delicacies and our many other cultural attractions. 

1. Taipei's licensed accommodations, with certified management practices, guarantee safety and offer you peace of mind.
- 2-3. Two government-established travel-info websites, TaipeiTravel Net and TaiwanStay, provide travelers with info on safe, certified places to stay.
- 4-5. Visitors can navigate the websites according to their budget, transportation, and other preferences, and choose places according to class – hostel, tourist hotel, etc.
6. Visitors from overseas can access the government-run traveler-info websites for background on accommodation safety.

Information

TaipeiTravel Net 臺北旅遊網

Website: www.travel.taipei

TaiwanStay 臺灣旅宿網

Website: taiwanstay.net.tw



Taipei Two “New Shopping Paradises”

Five major transport arteries converge at or around Nangang Railway Station: the Taiwan High Speed Rail (台灣高鐵), Taiwan Railway (臺灣鐵路), MRT Bannan Line, Huandong Expressway (環東快速道路), and a national freeway interchange. The Department of Transportation and Communications's Taiwan Railways Administration (臺灣鐵路管理局) opened the large Citylink shopping mall at Nangang Station (南港車站) late last year. Together with the recently opened Hasdaq Plaza (華斯達克廣場), located across from Taipei Main Station (臺北車站), it forms a pair of “new shopping paradises” offering superb transportation convenience and a diverse range of stores. Offering an easy option as travelers and commuters shift between travel modes, they are attracting great numbers of people.

Citylink (Nangang Store), 14 stories high, has a “diversified development and integration” concept. International brands such as National Geographic and leading Japanese baby & child footwear brand MoonStar have been invited to set up outlets. There's

also food for people from all lands and all palates – floors 7 through 10 are filled with specialty restaurants such as the kiddy-playland Elephant Garden (象園咖啡) and family restaurant, the flagship outlet for the popular American-style fried-chicken chain Original Chicken Tender (O.C.T 賭城嫩雞), and the first Retro Deli Café (甲級寫字樓) opened by N.Y. Bagels Cafe.

As you walk into Citylink's 1F lobby you are met with the Jimmy Blowing Bubble Installation Exhibit (幾米吹泡泡裝置展), created by the well-known Taiwanese illustrator Jimmy Liao, popularly known simply as Jimmy (幾米). The theme is “Lie to Me?” (真的假的啊?), from his picture book of the same name. This large-scale work of art has an air of fantasy, and echoes another Nangang Railway Station work created by the same artist, a mural found on the metro-system platform entitled *Subway* (地下鐵). In passing through the picture book's bubble-blowing environment, the safe and embracing dream world of the viewers' youth is evoked. In its combination of animated imagery and 3D technology, the installation serves as a guardian of innocent childhood dreams.

The city's other new shopping landmark, Hasdaq Plaza, was opened early this year. Originally dubbed the WutuAkiba IT Mall (五鐵秋葉原), Hasdaq Plaza has almost 50,000 square meters of floor space. Another facility standing at the center of many converging transport networks, travelers can walk directly from the area's underground mass-transport facilities to Hasdaq Plaza's B3 level, protected from the wind and rain while passing by a range of retail stores along the way. On a Hasdaq Plaza tour you can taste fine foods from around the globe, such as Korean tofu pot, Indian curries, and Japanese ramen, or a variety of light foods and sandwiches, etc. All the brands most beloved by today's youth are also to be found here, such as MUJI (無印良品)

and Sasa Beauty Shop (莎莎美妝館). There's also a variety of cultural-creative marts and stores selling daily sundries. Whatever you desire, you're likely to find. You can even browse a bricks-and-mortar store selling Mèlasse and many other of the hottest online-sales brands with netizens.

While exploring Taipei, take advantage of the ultra-convenient public transportation network to zip over to Citylink for a leisurely browse of Jimmy's installation art, and spend a little quality time at Hasdaq Plaza as well, shopping, tasting first-rate food, and enjoying or even taking part in the periodic entertainment and recreation activities staged on the outdoor plaza. Your two vibrant "new shopping paradises" await! 📍



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- 1-2. Citylink (Nangang Store)'s 1F lobby features the children's fantasy-style work Jimmy Blowing Bubble Installation Exhibit, by well-known Taiwan illustrator Jimmy Liao.
3. Inside Citylink, in addition to an elephant-theme family-friendly café, you'll find many international eateries.
4. "You can" walk directly underground from the station to the Hasdaq Plaza B3 level, with much of consumer interest along the way.
- 5-6. Hasdaq Plaza is an emporium of the latest youth brands, bursting with cultural-creative and practical everyday items, and even featuring online-marketing bricks-and-mortar outlets.

Information

Citylink (Nangang Store; 南港店)

Add: 369, Sec.7, Zhongxiao E. Rd (忠孝東路7段369號)

Hours: Mon~Thu and Sun 11:00~21:30, Fri~Sat 11:00~22:00

Tel: (02)2652-9000

Hasdaq Plaza 華斯達克廣場

Add: 50, Sec. 1, Zhongxiao W. Rd. (忠孝西路1段50號)

Hours: 11:00~22:00

Tel: (02)2371-1122

The Discovery Center of Taipei: Renovation of the "Taipei's Streets" Exhibit



The "Taipei's Streets" (臺北大街風情) exhibition on the third floor of the Discovery Center of Taipei (台北探索館) has been given a makeover! The Center has spent a number of months planning and renovating the exhibit to make content more interesting. It was officially opened on February 6th. Painstakingly-made models and photos, as well as on February interesting, fun, interactive multimedia installations, make the Center an even more suitable place for families to come and explore their home city of Taipei together.

The six avenues passing through Taipei can be seen in "Taipei's Streets": Zhongshan North Road (中山北路), Zhongxiao East Road (忠孝東路), Dunhua North and South Roads (敦化南北路), Zhonghua Road (中華路), Xinsheng South Road (新生南路) and Ketagalan Boulevard (凱達格蘭大道). The different characteristics of each avenue and the context of Taipei's development are presented through pictures made through image composition, eye-catching films, high-tech interactive installations and multi-layered mixed media, using techniques such as static and dynamic displays, and contrast between space and emptiness.

In the "See Taipei's Historic Sites" (看見台北古蹟) exhibition, the window frames of Taipei's 10 most characterful examples of historic architecture have been chosen and reproductions are displayed on a wall of the exhibition, presenting Taipei's life story through the ages.

To make the exhibition's content more substantial and attractive, the Center invited expert scholars and public figures in many disciplines to participate in the planning

and production of the exhibition, as well as editing the textual material used, enhancing its persuasiveness.

Furthermore, the famous scholar Lee Qianlang (李乾朗) provided text, old photographs, and related information for the architecture of Zhonghua Road; the nature and culture writer Liu Keshiang (劉克襄) wrote the *Traveling the Tianmu Trail* (天母古道行旅) flip book especially for the area on Zhongshan North Road; the photographer Chen Minming (陳敏明) provided aerial photographs of Xinsheng South Road and Daan Park (大安森林公園); the illustrator Pan Yuyuo (潘羽祐) also produced the dazzling, colorful "Travel Map of Taipei City" (臺北城隅漫遊圖) for Zhonghua Road's multimedia installations.

Are you curious about the new appearance of the Discovery Center of Taipei? After the "Taipei's Streets" exhibition has reopened, we invite you to come and see it and experience the many faces of Taipei through a lifelike, interesting exhibition. 📍

The revamped Discovery Center of Taipei has brand-new interactive multimedia installations fun and interesting for the whole family.

Information

The Discovery Center of Taipei 台北探索館

Add: 1~4F, 1, City Hall Rd. (go in the West Door of the Taipei City Hall and turn right)

Tel: 1999 (02-2720-8889 outside Taipei City); ext. 8630

Website: discovery.gov.taipei

The Dihua Viewing Platform – A New Viewpoint on Taipei



The Tamsui River waterfront in Dadaocheng was one of the key centers of Taipei's early commercial development, and the community's classical temple architecture and traditional culture make it a must-visit destination for many tourists visiting Taipei. Adding further to its attractions is a new Taipei landmark only recently completed, the Dihua Sports Park Cross-Dike Viewing Platform (迪化運動公園跨堤景觀平臺), a large-scale facility with a special design.

The platform looks out over the Tamsui River banks and stretches from Dihua Sports Park to Huanhe North Road (環河北路), connecting with Dunhuang Wharf (敦煌碼頭). The platform copies the approach taken by the city with the large-scale cross-dike platform at the Taipei City Hakka Cultural Park. Walk along the sports park's rose-pattern promenade and look up at the three-story platform landscape. White is the primary color, punctuated with special semi-circular hanging cables, and the circular entrance arch symbolizes the old Taipei walled city. Its protruding riverside location has made it a prominent new Taipei-entryway landmark.

The platform ties together a string of key city attractions, including the Taipei Confucius Temple (臺北市孔廟), Dalongdong Baoan Temple (大龍峒保安宮), Dalong Street Night Market (大龍街夜市), Taipei Expo Park (花博公園), and Taipei Fine Arts Museum (臺北市立美術館). It also provides panoramic views over the Tamsui River and its riverside-park areas. Yao Wencheng (姚文成), head of the Dihua Sewage Treatment Plant (迪化污水處理廠), states that the viewing platform can

accommodate approximately 3,000 people, and that it has family water-play facilities as well as a stage area where outdoor performances, shows, and various other activities will be periodically put on for the enjoyment of visitors. At night the platform's circular arch is lit up in radiant purplish-red, the glass screens continually change color, reflected in the nearby surface waters, to add extra scenic value. As one can well imagine, this is an especially good spot for sweethearts when night falls.

One lazy afternoon soon, take a breezy bike ride to the viewing platform and take in one of its outdoor shows, then revel in the lovely nightly sunset show over the river, enjoying leisurely living, the Taipei way! 🚲

The radiant lighting and river-surface reflections at the Dihua Sports Park Cross-Dike Viewing Platform create a compelling nightscape, attracting many sweetheart couples.

(Photo courtesy of Guo Fengxiao)

Information

Dihua Sports Park Cross-Dike Viewing Platform 迪化運動公園跨堤景觀平臺

Location: Between Jiuquan St. (酒泉街) and Qingchang Bridge (慶昌橋); enter at 200, Sec. 4, Yanping N. Rd. (延平北路4段200號)

Tel: (02)2597-3193

Transportation:

Take Taipei Metro to Yuanshan Station (圓山站), use Exit 2, walk toward Jiuquan St. via Kulun St. (庫倫街), and enter at 200, Sec. 4, Yanping N. Rd.

Calligraphy Brushes

From a Bygone Era Make a Comeback in Taiwan

In China and throughout the East Asian cultural sphere, calligraphy is a highly revered form of art. The graceful strokes of masterful calligraphers exude an elegance that harks back to an era when writing was exclusively a pastime of the literati. The Four Treasures of the Study (文房四寶), namely the brush, ink, paper, and ink stone were all invented in China. While usage of ink brushes has declined with the takeover of modern pens, they are making a comeback in Taiwan in the form of human baby hair brushes. We recently met up with veteran ink brush-maker Guo Wenxi (郭文溪) to find out how the ink brush business is doing these days.



The Evolution of Chinese Calligraphy and Brush-Making

Ink was first made in China as early as the 23rd century BC. These inks were composed of natural dyes from plants, animals, and minerals. The most common type of ink in early times was made of graphite in an aqueous solution, which was applied to the raised surface of pictures or characters carved into stone. By the 12th century BC, a type of ink made of pine soot, lamp oil, animal glue, and musk was in common use.

Around the time of the Warring States Period (戰國時代), the first solid inks, precursors to modern ink sticks,

first appeared. These small ink pellets could be ground on ink stones and mixed with water when needed. Improvements in ink and papermaking technology also generated the need for a refined device for applying the ink, and so the ink brush was invented.

The oldest intact brush we have today comes from around the same time that ink pellets started being used. It was made of a wooden stalk and bamboo tube that secured the bundle of animal hair to the stalk. Bamboo later became the norm for the brush stalks, though a wide variety of other materials could be used, such as jade, gold, silver, ivory, and different types of wood. The most common hairs used for the tip were goat, rabbit,

wolf, and weasel, though more exotic hairs such as tiger and fowl were occasionally used.

As Chinese writing developed and sets of characters became standardized, calligraphy became increasingly stylized. A multitude of factors can affect the quality of a calligrapher's work, from the characteristics of the brush, ink and paper to the skills and techniques used, including the inclination, direction and pressure applied to the brush. The calligrapher's body position and manner of holding the brush dictate the fluidity of the strokes, and so masters of calligraphy consider movement a key aspect of their art form.

Calligraphy developed in parallel with ink and wash paintings, and both were considered educational pursuits requiring years of training. Practice typically in-

that I had to watch for six months before I was allowed to try. We used to work 12-hour-plus days in the shop, trying to keep up with demand."

Following his military service, Guo moved to Kaohsiung (高雄) to set up shop. Around the same time, education reforms were made in Taiwan so that students were no longer required to use ink brushes. As a result, Guo's business went into sharp decline, and things only got worse as modern plastic pens gained in popularity across Taiwan. That's when he decided to move to Taipei and opened the Guo Family Ink Brush Shop (郭家筆墨莊) near the former Taipei City Hall in Zhongzheng District where many government offices, in which traditional writing implements were still required for official documents, were located.

"Back in those days we sold exclusively to government officials and calligraphy enthusiasts. The former were our best customers, with their huge government budgets. They would just strut in, point at this and that, and spend thousands of dollars in less than a minute."

Still, business was not what it used to be. All that would change when the baby hair brush fad erupted in Taiwan in the 1980s.

Adapting to a Niche Market: Baby Hair Brushes

Legend has it that in the Tang Dynasty (唐朝) there lived a young man whose family was too poor to buy an ink brush before he went to the capital to take the civil service examination. The innovative mother used a lock of her son's own baby hair, which she had saved since his birth, to make a brush for him. When the man aced his tests, the baby hair brush, later also referred to as "champion brush," (狀元筆) was hailed as a symbol of good luck. The tradition also spread to Japan, where it has persisted into modern times.



involved the meticulous copying of exemplary works. Calligraphy was a component of the imperial examinations for government positions. In Taiwan students were still required to write their test compositions using ink brushes until the 1960s.

The Guo Family Ink Brush Shop

Guo Wenxi first learned how to make brushes in the traditional manner in Tainan when he was 13. Following the early death of his father, Guo's eldest brother picked up the art form under the tutelage of a master from Fujian Province (福建省) and taught it to his brothers and male cousins. "Making ink brushes is so difficult

1. Various brushes produced by the Guo Family Ink Brush Shop.
2. The Guo Family Ink Brush Shop on Zhongshan North Road.
3. Sheep, wolf, rabbit, and weasel are the most common hairs used for brushes.
4. Guo Wenxi first learned the traditional art of Chinese brush making at the age of 13 in Tainan. (Photo courtesy of Guo Wenxi)
5. To this day, Guo Wenxi still makes all his brushes by hand.



According to Guo, ink brush production came to a halt in China during World War II and the ensuing civil war. As a result, Taiwan turned to Japan for supplies. It was when Guo's older brother was making purchasing expeditions in Japan that he first noticed baby hair brushes were still popular there, and he thought of pushing the idea in Taiwan. For whatever reason, the baby brush phenomenon did take off on its own in Taiwan, and the Guo's relate that the baby brush craze in fact saved their business.

"My son had just finished doing his military service and didn't really want to take over the family business. But upon my insistence, and his realization of the potential profitability in the baby hair brush industry, he decided to accept the challenge."

Currently the bulk of the Guo family's production is concerned with making baby hair brushes, and business is thriving. At the age of 72, Guo himself still makes the brushes, along with his son's wives, while his second oldest son focuses on marketing and picking up the locks of hair from clients in Taipei. Another shop is run in Hsinchu (新竹) by Guo's eldest son, whose wife is currently teaching Guo's 28-year-old grandson the art form late at night when he gets home from his day job. More of Guo's relatives run shops of the same name in Kaohsiung, Tainan (臺南), and Chiayi (嘉義).

Guo claims that his shops are unique in that they still make every part of the brush by hand, a process that involves no less than 80 steps. Many other shops simply purchase parts and assemble them.

The Chinese believe that a lock of baby hair is one of the three "treasures" associated with the birth of a child, the other two being the baby's umbilical cord and footprint. The Guo Family Ink Brush Shop provides custom-made boxes that include all three. The interior of the box's lid bears the child's footprint, while the baby hair brush and a name stamp containing the baby's umbilical cord are contained within. The baby's name and words of good luck are carved into the exterior of the box, providing a memento to be cherished for a lifetime.

Besides making baby hair brushes, Guo has also made a number of oversized ink brushes, putting him in the media spotlight. His largest usable ink brush measured a staggering 338 centimeters and was featured in an exhibition at the National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall (國立中正紀念堂), where it was used to paint enormous characters on the ground. But Guo's all-time largest brush is over four meters long, weighing in at 130 kilograms, making it the world's largest ink brush, but only a superhero would possess the strength to lift this titanic writing implement.

The Taiwanese Head Shaving Ceremony

The shaving of a baby's head is still a commonly celebrated milestone in Taiwan. It is typically done when the baby is either 24 days or one month old, whichever date is deemed luckier according to the lunar calendar. Eight items are required for the ceremony:

1. Two hardboiled chicken eggs, ensuring the child will be well-loved.
2. Two hardboiled duck eggs, representing strength.
3. One rock, representing bravery.
4. Six or eight NT\$10 coins and six or eight NT\$50 coins, representing silver and gold.
5. Three bunches of scallions (蔥), which sounds like the word "smart" (聰) in Chinese.
6. Three bunches of chives (韭菜), which recall the expression "wishing for longevity" (長壽長久).
7. Three bunches of celery (芹菜), which in Chinese recalls the word "industrious" (勤勞).
8. A round wash basin that symbolizes the ability to hold all things.

All the objects are tied with strips of red paper, and then held in turn before the baby while the parents recite expressions of good luck. The parents then save a lock of the baby's hair as a keepsake or use it have a baby hair brush made. Baby hair brushes are made in the same manner as traditional animal hair brushes. However, since human baby hair is exceptionally soft, it is glued around a base of animal hair.



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Choosing a Quality Ink Brush

According to Guo, there are a few important things to check for when selecting the perfect brush, which depend largely on what you want to use the brush for. If you intend to use it for calligraphy, opt for a mixed-hair brush, which typically contains goat, pig, and/or rabbit hair. Check closely to make sure that the brush hairs are not curved and look neat. If you will be using the brush to paint, you want to get one made of weasel hair for painting bamboo, goat hair for flowers, and pig hair for

mountains or other landscapes. Generally speaking, harder brushes are easier to work with. After purchasing a brush, you don't need to wash it. Just press it down gently on paper before using to loosen it up. Rinse with water after using, pointing the hairs in the same direction as the flow of water, and then squeeze the water out of the brush by hand. Before using the brush the second time and henceforth, lay the brush horizontally with the hairs submerged in a saucer of water, allowing them to soak for five minutes. 12



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- 6-7. The process of making brushes by hand is incredibly complex, requiring more than 80 steps.
8. Guo Wenxi also makes supersize brushes, one of which was featured at an exhibition at National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, where he used it to give a writing demonstration. (Photo courtesy of Guo Wenxi)
9. Guo Family Ink Brush Shop's customized boxes, featuring the three treasures of birth: a baby footprint inside the box lid, umbilical cord name stamp, and baby hair brush.
10. The baby head-shaving ceremony. (Photo courtesy of Guo Family Ink Brush Shop)
11. Items required for the head-shaving ceremony.
12. Rise the brush after the first use, with the hairs pointing in the same direction as the flow of water. Before using it the second time and subsequent times, soak horizontally in a dish of warm water for five minutes.

Taipei Garden Restaurants in Springtime – Good Taste, Good Times

Taipei bursts into floral bloom in spring, and in both the city and its outskirts spacious garden restaurants await – superb spots for the international traveler visiting Taipei to savor this city's delicious foods and equally delicious scenery.





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Taipei Maple Resort – LOHAS Manor: Maple-Red Springtime Landscape

Just outside Yangmingshan National Park is a manor restaurant in a wood of maple trees: Taipei Maple Resort – LOHAS Manor (台北奧萬大——樂活莊園). Over a thousand specimens of a special variety, the green maple, are cultivated on the grounds. In spring red buds and leaves sprout forth; the trees then serve as a painter's canvas, changing from red to yellow to green. Prime green maple time is March to April, when the red of the maples is incorporated into the dining menu to dramatic effect. Prime green maple viewing time is late March to early May, when the Taipei Maple Resort dining experience is at its most romantic.

Owner Zheng Zhengguo (鄭正國) says that when he created this European garden-style getaway 15 years ago, personally planting all the maple, camellia, cherry, black pine, and other trees and plants, his goal was to have a steady succession of floral blooms, presenting guests with different scenery in different seasons. Beside the garden area is Jingfeng Stream (菁風溪), which flows down from the foot of Mt. Qixing (七星山), great for family water-play fun in the summer.



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A total of 60 cottage-style dining spaces are spread around the gardens. The menu emphasizes healthy vegetarian fare, with vegetables grown right next door in the resort-owned farm area. Each day there is fresh sweet cabbage, napa cabbage, radish, sweet potato, etc., and pumpkin, tomato, and other soup-stock selections for the hotpot. Try the deep-fried green-veggie platter with old-style sesame-oil fried rice. Your meal is a guaranteed hearty, filling, satisfying experience. Afterward, take a walk along the nearby maple-viewing trail, immersing yourself in the wonderfully picturesque reds of springtime maple.

Two House – Fun With Animals

Hidden away in a small wood off Zhishan Road (至善路) near the National Palace Museum (國立故宮博物院), Two House (兔子餐廳) has a garden area bouncing with cute bunnies, plus goats, chickens, ducks, geese, and other critters. Families love the place – tots can pet, feed, and interact with the animals. There's also a range of children's play facilities, all designed to encourage parents and kids to play together. The proprietor, Miss Wen (溫), says her own love for animals brought about her decision to open a restaurant right in the city where animals and people could spend time together. The tame rabbits make them especially suitable for interaction with the kids, and she added the domestic fowl

1. Taipei Maple Resort – LOHAS Manor has many hotpot selections, with the pumpkin and tomato options the most popular.
- 2-3. Taipei Maple Resort – LOHAS Manor is a European-style garden hideaway, home to over a thousand maple trees and overwhelmed with maple-red in spring.
4. The different animals raised at Two House, notably rabbits, goats, and chickens, bring many families for critter-experience fun.
5. Each day Taipei Maple Resort – LOHAS Manor serves up fresh-picked sweet cabbage, napa cabbage, radish, sweet potato, and other veggies.



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and goats to widen the range of animal-world inhabitants rarely seen in an urban setting, giving life to a unique city oasis where little people and little members of the animal world could get to know each other.

The restaurant features a main dining area and small huts spread around the grounds. Diners choose from a wide array of Western-style set menu offerings. One example is the Italian pasta selection featuring in-season vegetables, appetizing and richly colored. Another is the Mexican-style chicken leg rice, the roasted fresh chicken leg featuring delectably tender meat and crispy skin, Mexican chili powder sprinkled atop. Among the other tasty entrees is risotto with smoked chicken and cream sauce and sirloin steak. This garden restaurant is a fine destination for a happy family outing.

Elephant Garden: Enjoying the Scenery at Bihu

Opposite Bihu Park (碧湖公園) across from Section 2, Neihu Road (內湖路) is Elephant Garden, a café/restaurant, an establishment from which patrons enjoy a majestic sweeping view over the entire lake and park.

The owner of Elephant Garden, surnamed Qiu (邱), says the name was inspired by a rock formation on the cliff behind his café/restaurant, which looks like an elephant's trunk. At the restaurant entranceway you'll pass four brightly-colored elephant figures, put there as photo-ops for visitors. Qiu has also designed numerous elephant-theme merchandise items, including mugs, tableware, coin banks, and children's paper bibs, which have become popular souvenir items. The business has



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an indoor dining area, outdoor café area, and outdoor courtyard dining. Patrons can use the courtyard-area kids' play facilities on weekends and holidays; there's also live jazz music entertainment at these times.

The menu here is quite distinctive. The rich and filling signature "Spanish Bullfighter" (西班牙鬥牛士) brunch has grilled beef chunks accompanied by stir-fried wild mushrooms, mashed potatoes, and egg salad, along with a serving of croissants. The house-special sweet treat "Elephant Waffle with Puddin'" (小象樂園) features three standing elephant-shaped waffles with a delicious combo of pudding, chocolate shavings, and fresh cream between. Pile these dreamy things atop each other and a good mood is guaranteed. Other treats include a special brownie coffee and a cute, eye-catching latte decorated with the image of a small elephant atop. The restaurant has also created special caffeine-free floral teas for expectant mothers and tots, and "Baby Congee" (寶寶粥) for toddlers aged 6 months to 1 year. If looking for a family place to wile away a spring day, you'll find no better spot than Elephant Garden.



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Secret Garden – Southeast Asian Delicacies

The Taipei Pot Plant Auction (臺北花木批發市場) facility on Xinglong Road (興隆路) is a veritable shopping paradise for gardeners. To the side of the first level is Secret Garden (秘境森林庭園餐廳), a wonderful extension of the flower market's charm. This restaurant, an oasis of palm trees, broadleaf plants, and stone-carving installations, brings the character of the outdoor courtyard area and provides a leisurely dining spot in a "garden secreted away" in the city's heart.

There is both an outdoor courtyard dining area and an indoor dining area. Key visuals in the latter are the exquisitely delicate Vietnamese red lanterns. A rich array of tropical plants, rattan seating, and stone carvings also graces the space, transporting customers to Vietnam. The menu has a blend of Vietnamese and Chinese classics, including beef satay, featuring grilled skewers with beef cubes, onion, green pepper, tomato and a special satay sauce, and spicy chicken, featuring mouthwatering deep-fried chicken with crispy skin and tender meat accompanied by a zesty sweet-and-sour sauce and shredded cabbage.

The Chinese selections include dry-fried string beans (乾煸四季豆; a Sichuan classic in which the beans are stir-fried in medium-hot oil along with ground pork), sweet-and-sour pork ribs (糖醋排骨; prepared with pineapple and both green and red pepper) and three-cup chicken (三杯雞), which has a terrific savory sauce. All are delicious choices that go well with rice. After your meal enjoy the flowers in the courtyard, or sit down in the garden area for a post-repast coffee, leisurely savoring the pleasant afternoon. 11



6. At Two House animals and people get to know each other better.
7. The Mexican-style chicken leg rice at Two House.
8. The scenic panorama at Bihu Park is spread out for patrons at Elephant Garden.
9. Elephant Garden's cute "Elephant Waffle with Puddin'" house-special sweet treat, and brownie coffee, bring instant smiles.
10. The restaurant offers special treats for moms-to-be and tots aged 6 months to 1 year, including "Baby Congee."
11. The Secret Garden menu is a blend of Vietnamese dishes and Chinese classics.
- 12-13. The Secret Garden outdoor dining has a strong tropical ambience, while its interior dining area has south-eastern Asia's atmosphere.

Information

Taipei Maple Resort – LOHAS Manor 台北奧萬大——樂活莊園

Add: 19, Ln. 10, Pingjing St. (平菁街10巷19號)

Tel: (02)2861-9862

Two House 兔子餐廳

Add: 342, Sec. 3, Zhishan Rd. (至善路3段342號)

Tel: (02)2841-3791

Elephant Garden 象園咖啡

Add: 192, Sec. 2, Neihu Rd. (內湖路2段192號)

Tel: (02)2792-6080

Secret Garden 秘境森林庭園餐廳

Add: 15, Sec. 1, Xinglong Rd. (興隆路1段15號)

Tel: (02)2930-8999



1

Warmth and Personality – Taipei Cultural-Creative Gift Ideas

Taipei's exuberant cultural-creative vitality was one of the prime reasons for its selection as 2016 World Design Capital. This local design prowess is seen aplenty in the countless cultural-creative shops found along its lanes and alleys, where a cornucopia of creative treasures is to be found. Even the most practical items possess impressive design sense. Prime examples are O'Ringo (林果良品), purveyor of stylish dress shoes, Drifter (旅人), maker of quality leather goods for 30 years, Overdue, which makes fancy socks that tell a story, and FOLDnFOLD (福爾福創意工作坊), which crafts such nifty creations as the fold-up FoFoCup (折折杯). Their many offerings make wonderful gifts.



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Drifter – Passing On the Art of Leather Craftsmanship

Drifter, tucked away in the grid of lanes and alleys off Nanjing West Road (南京西路), has a distinctive shop sign that is often mistaken for that of a hotel. It is in fact a leather studio. The proprietor, Xu Qi (許騏), says that in recent times society has changed, factories have been moved abroad, and Taiwan's skilled craftsmen have sadly been left wasting their expertise on minor work such as repairing brand-name leather bags. Fortuitously, fate gave him and an aunt the opportunity to rent this store space, and he has been able to give a number of master leather-goods makers a new stage.

At Drifter, everything from bonding, sewing, and button attachment to final trimming and protection is done by hand, in a return to traditional methods of making leather bags. In the Heritage series, for example, you'll see no flashy designs; the focus is on simplicity and the functions served by the bag and its



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different compartments. The bags can be carried in the hand, on the shoulder, or on the back. Among the store's most popular items, the well-crafted bags have an expected lifespan of 30 years. The store is willing to offer such a long guarantee because it uses only premium leather. Xu exclusively uses vegetable-tanned leather, as the tannins extracted are the most eco-friendly tanning agents. The color of the leather also deepens with time and exposure to sunlight, and the natural aroma of the leather is emitted, it too increasing with age.

Since opening Drifter, Xu has found many people have an interest in leather art, and in creating their own works. He has thus created the Drifter+ handicraft classroom, where students get to try their hand at all elements in the leather-goods production process. Craftsmen are on hand to provide explanation and careful guidance through each step, from pattern making to cutting, sewing, and finishing, as students craft their uniquely personalized, one-of-a-kind bags.

O'Ringo Hand-Tailored Shoes – Venerable Masters With Originality

O'Ringo started online, and has created brand buzz by focusing on excellence in quality and after-sales service. Its factory and master shoemakers are in Taiwan, as are its sources of leather and other materials. The firm offers a new avenue of opportunity for Taiwan's handmade-footwear sector.

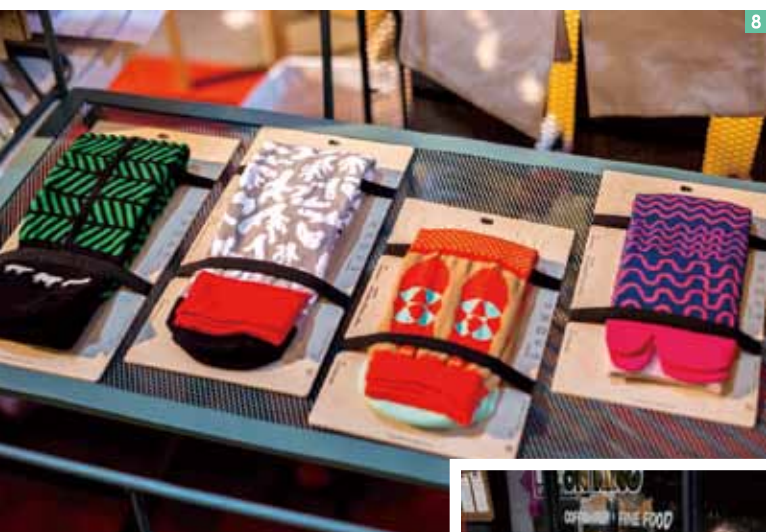


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The firm's Chinese name contains the term *liangpin* (良品), literally "good product," signifying O'Ringo's commitment to quality. According to the two founders, Gary and Zeng Xinru (曾信儒), the firm's brand spirit is a "return to the golden years of show craftsmanship". Each shoe originates with a customized original design, all done in-house, from the shoe last (mould) to the leather and from sole width to instep height – to the color of the stitching. Originally O'Ringo was exclusively an online store, and there was of course no way for its customers to try on shoes, so the firm opened a bricks-and-mortar outlet in January 2013 on Zhongshan North Road, inviting patrons to come in person for an even more personalized service.

Taiwan once had a world-renowned footwear industry, with many expert craftsmen. O'Ringo has specially recruited two masters in the art of hand-crafting leather-sole shoes to provide a custom service making shoes of especially large and small measurements. Consumers who have difficulty finding shoes that fit properly need merely drop in at the O'Ringo store to find exactly what fits their needs.

1. The popular items in Drifter's Heritage bag series have a promised lifespan of 30 years. (Photo courtesy of Drifter)
- 2-3. Drifter only uses eco-friendly vegetable tannin for its shoe leather; the color deepens with time and exposure to sunlight. The natural aroma fills the shop.
- 4-5. From its online to bricks-and-mortar presence, O'Ringo offers a different avenue of opportunity for Taiwan's handcrafted-footwear sector.
- 6-7. All O'Ringo shoes are designed in-house, its experienced masters bringing deep experience and artistry to bear. The double-stitch design of its wing-pattern Oxford shoes creates an elegant look. (Photos courtesy of O'Ringo)



Overdue – Socks That Tell a Tale

Overdue is a brand of sock established by two young women. The intimate designs tell a story, and make their products conversation pieces that are worn on the feet.

Overdue subcontracts the production of its items to an experienced sock factory in, Township of Shetou, Changhua County (彰化縣社頭鄉). Everything is handled locally, from raw materials to finished product to packaging. Ingenuity is seen in all elements of production; for example, absorbent terry fabric is used in the toe and heel sections, and lycra is used in the sock tops to help maintain their shape when washed. Both founders, nicknamed "Little Huang" (小黃) and "Little Chen" (小陳), are vegetarians and also animal-care organization members, and their concern for a caring environment and eco-conservation is reflected in the colors and patterns of their products. An example is the design concepts used for the models in their "Dilemma" (兩難) series – Beef, Coral, Glacier, and Sink – collectively telling the eco-crisis story of our times, from hyper-intensive

livestock raising adding to excessive carbon dioxide levels, to mankind's actions leading to rising sea levels and land submergence, reminding us that each of our small decisions greatly impacts the future.

Overdue also takes pains to ensure its products are eco-friendly. For example the hard cardboard used as packaging, can be used as a clipboard. All defective products that roll off its production line are recycled, and the materials are used to make comfortable eyeshades stitched by hand.

FOLDnFOLD – Innovative Eco-Friendly Folding Cups

Carrying your own eco-friendly cup around has become a trend. Normally bulky, wouldn't it be great to have a cup that folds down into near nothingness, taking up next to no space?! Wish has become reality with the FoFoCup, created by FOLDnFOLD. Inventor Chen Zhongyu (陳忠郁) based his design on the ancient Chinese cosmic concept that heaven is round and the

earth is square (天圓地方). The bottom is square, the mouth is round. Chen spent over 3 years working on how to make its segments overlap and fold down into a slim sheet, make it leakproof, and finalize mold creation and production specifications before the FoFoCup was ready for mass production.

Made of polypropylene, the FoFoCup comes in three sizes: 20oz, 16oz, and 8oz. When folded it is not even a centimeter in thickness, with next to no weight, making the eco-cup ultra-portable. The cups can be reused more than 1,000 times, and have been granted a range of certifications, including US FDA, EU SGS, and Taiwan food-container safety approval. It can hold liquids up to 120°C, and the cups are also acid- and alkali-resistant. Its safety and ease of use have brought it numerous awards, including an iF product Design Award from Germany, Golden Pin Design Mark (金點設計標章) from Taiwan, and Taipei International Invention Gold Awards (臺北國際發明展金獎). 



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8-9. The Overdue sock brand has a focus on eco-issues; its "Dilemma" series has four eco-themes, Beef, Coral, Glacier, and Sink (picture 8, from left to right), telling the eco-crisis story of our times.

10-11. Overdue's intimate designs and storytelling printing make their products "foot-worn conversation pieces"!

12-13. Overdue recycles defective socks from its production line, using the material comfy and fashionable hand-stitched eyeshades.

(Photos 8~13 courtesy of Overdue)

14. FOLDnFOLD's creative FoFoCup has won many awards.

15-16. The FoFoCup folds down into a slim sheet, making it extremely convenient to carry around.

(Photos 14~16 courtesy of FOLDnFOLD)



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Information

Drifter 旅人

Add: 18-6, Ln. 25, Nanjing W. Rd.
(南京西路25巷18之6號)

Tel: (02)2559-1969

Website: www.facebook.com/DrifterLuRen

O'Ringo (Zhongshan Flagship Store) 林果良品 (中山本店)

Add: 18-1, Ln. 72, Sec. 2, Zhongshan N. Rd.
(中山北路2段72巷18之1號)

Tel: (02)2562-0991

Website: www.oringoshoes.com

Overdue

Salespoint: 2F, 6, Ln. 161, Sec. 1, Dunhua S. Rd.
(敦化南路1段161巷6號2樓)

Tel: (02)2751-6006

Website: overduestudio.com

FOLDnFOLD 福爾福創意工作坊

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Spring in Taipei Means Strawberry-Picking in Neihu!



ROUTE

MT Toast (breakfast) → Strawberry Farms on Bishan Rd. (strawberry-picking) → Farmhouse Cafe Trattoria (lunch) → Baishihu Suspension Bridge, Bishanyan (stroll) → Woodcraft Workshop (viewing wooden furniture) → Moooon River Café & Books (dinner)

The peak season for the Taiwanese strawberry crop is between March and May, when tender, juicy strawberries taste the most tart and sweet. Come to Taipei and you need only take the bus into the hills above Neihu to enjoy picking strawberries and appreciate the natural spring scenery for yourself, as well as the opportunity to enjoy unique cuisine, and savor the profusion of sensations of Taipei during this season.

Strawberry-Picking at the Tourist Farms on Bishan Road

Before climbing the mountain, fill up with the most local traditional Taiwan-style breakfast! MT Toast (麥町吐司工房), around five minutes' walk from MRT Neihu Station (捷運內湖站), provides competitive prices and a clean space, and is always occupied by an endless stream of customers at breakfast time. The restaurant's staple dish, Mid-Autumn Roast Pork Toast (中秋烤肉蛋吐司), which features cured and grilled pork with mayonnaise sandwiched inside soft toast, with an added fried egg for nutrition, is a taste well-known to every family in Taiwan. Aside from this, the French Drumstick Burger (國王厚牛美式漢堡) and Chinese Omelet (香蔥美蛋餅) are also popular choices, accompanied by freshly-



1-3. Most of the strawberries grow on Neihu's farms are greenhouse-grown. Visitors can have fun picking their own strawberries but not have to worry about rain and mud.

4-5. MT Toast's breakfast are made to order, Mid-Autumn Roast Pork Toast and Chinese Omelet are very popular breakfasts.



brewed soybean milk, sure to make everyone greet every day full of energy.

After breakfast, go straight to the alley in front of you and take the Small No. 2 bus (小2公車), to begin a day-trip around the spring fields. There are more than ten tourist farms scattered around Bishan Road, including Bishan Tourism Strawberry Farm (碧山草莓園), Baishihu Tourism Farm (白石湖草莓園), Shanying Strawberry Farm (山櫻草莓園), Berry Garden Tourism and Leisure Farm (莓園觀光休閒果園), and Wild Flower and Fruit Organic Farm (野草花果有機農場), all of which are inspected weekly by the Taipei City Government's Department of Economic Development (臺北市府產業發展局), allowing guests to pick strawberries at ease, and eat them with confidence. As well as strawberry-picking, some farms provide diverse experiences such as DIY sweet potato roasting, strawberry daifukumochi (a Japanese mochi stuffed with sweet filling), and ecological experiences. However, when the strawberries ripen, they draw many tourists to experience spring on weekends and holidays, and we recommend that you telephone the strawberry farm to inquire about availability prior to visiting, to save disappointment.

| Enjoy Fields, Gardens and Natural Food

For the complete strawberry experience, head for No. 38 Bishan Road, and you will pass the romantic Tongxin Pool. This once-desolate spring has been made into an ecological wetland in the shape of double hearts, and is very lovely. Next, turn a small corner, and the scene before you resembles another country – this is the Farmhouse Cafe Trattoria (農舍田園咖啡義大利菜), founded by a local farmer, Lin Jiamin (林家民).

Lin's ancestors and parents lived and ran a farm here, but following the development of tourism in the Baishihu Lake community, he changed the old farmhouse hidden in a bamboo forest into a restaurant with its own inimitable style, and installed equipment for kids' games like hopscotch outside, allowing everyone to share in the fun here.

The lunch dishes provided are also very characterful. For example, the spinach fettuccine and flat fettuccine, which combine olive oil with fried fresh seasonable vegetables, giving every bite a great natural taste; this aside, the series of dishes made with the farm's own



6. Along Bishan Rd. you have your choice of over 10 strawberry farms.

7-8. The season for strawberry picking is from March to May, the berry, with thick, dense flesh, featuring an unusually strong fragrance.

9. Farmhouse Cafe Trattoria is an Italian style restaurant providing fresh vegetables and cake and pastries made with the farm's own strawberries.

10-11. The owner transformed the old farmhouse into an exotic space and installed play equipment for kids' games, allowing everyone to share in the fun here.





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strawberries, such as strawberry pancake and strawberry *au lait*, can't be missed. No pesticides or growth hormones are added to the strawberries, which are small, sweet, tart and juicy. Combined with fresh hand-made cream, they warm the heart and delight the eyes, and also taste great.

Baishihu Community: Feasting Your Eyes on Natural Scenery

After your meal, follow the small path beside the farmhouse, and you will come to "Baishihu Suspension Bridge." Baishihu, which lies beneath the suspension bridge, is not a real lake but a valley because the previous inhabitants of this place called it a "lake" and is also named bai shi, for the white pebbles common in the area.

The suspension bridge is shaped like a dragon skeleton, the spine arching up piece by piece, symbolizing a massive dragon flying over the valley, and also symbolizing how one's wishes come true when walking across the

bridge. As well as making your dreams come true when you cross the bridge, you can also broaden your horizons and feast your eyes on the elegance of the fields and mountains.

Next, you can choose to take the bus from the Baishihu Suspension Bridge to the city or to further enjoy nature. Continue down the path, and you can reach Bishanyan (碧山巖), the Fuqi Trees, and some hiking trails; the Small No.2 bus, which can be hailed anywhere along the road, will take you to any of the scenic spots along the road.

Aside from this, travelers with an interest in craftsmanship and woodworking can pay the Woodcraft Workshop (木想工作室) a visit, and appreciate the artistic furniture produced by Huang Guotai (黃國泰) with traditional woodworking techniques and natural cypress timber. Huang has forty years' experience of woodworking, and here you can see a master at work, and hear him sharing local stories.



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A New Highlight of NeiHu: A Space for Savoring the Scent of Books and Fine Cuisine

Towards evening, take the bus back to NeiHu and get off at intersection of Ruiguang Road (瑞光路) and Gangqian Road (港墘路), then go to the Moooon River Café & Books to enjoy your evening meal. Combining the concepts of a library and a restaurant, Moooon River café, provides guests who eat there with books for purchase or to be read at the venue free of charge, holds irregular book exhibitions and book exchanges, and also provides tablet computers to search for the latest books on the market. The classical design inside the café, with a towering triforium and sofa seating, is both comfortable and provides privacy, allowing guests to enjoy a quiet eating and reading space.

When night descends and your journey draws to a close, it couldn't hurt to order a drink and a few of the Cafe's signature sandwiches: Honey Mustard Chicken (蜂蜜芥末菠菜雞), Spinach Chicken Fillet (菠菜乳酪烤雞腿) and Lava Chocolate (任性妮濃) to accompany a leisurely viewing of the spring twilight, bringing this nature-scented spring break to a peaceful close. 📖



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12. Follow the hiking trails and you can reach Bishanyan.
- 13-14. The Woodcraft Workshop is packed full of handmade furniture, every one as unique as a work of art.
15. Tongxin Pool has been made into an ecological wetland in the shape of double hearts; it draws many couples and families who take photos here.
16. Two lofty Taiwan Incense Cedars standing together are known as the Fuqi Tree, and they are a scenic spot that will be passed on the way up Bishan Road.
17. BaishiHu Suspension Bridge draws many tourists to experience nature at weekends and holiday times.
18. Moooon River Café & Books' special meal is Spinach Chicken Fillet.
- 19-20. Moooon River Café & Books' European style raised ceiling and comfy sofa chairs allow people to sit and read or eat in comfort. The menu is cleverly hidden inside old books.

Information

MT Toast 麥町吐司工房 (內湖貳店)

Add: 2-1, Aly. 1, Ln. 60, Sec. 3, NeiHu Rd.; NeiHu Branch No. 2 (內湖路3段60巷1弄2之1號)

Tel: (02)2793-6396

Bishan Tourism Strawberry Farm 碧山草莓園

Venue: 47-12, Bishan Rd. (碧山路47之12號)

Tel: (02)2793-1382

BaishiHu Tourism Farm 白石湖草莓園

Venue: 40, Bishan Rd. (碧山路40號)

Tel: (02)2790-2785, 0927-151-119

Shanying Strawberry Farm 山櫻草莓園

Venue: 40, Bishan Rd. (碧山路40號)

Tel: 0933-065-537

Berry Garden Tourism and Leisure Farm 莓園觀光休閒農園

Venue: 38-2, Bishan Rd. (碧山路38之2號)

Tel: (02)2790-2492, 0937-458-986

Wild Flower and Fruit Organic Farm 野草花果有機農場

Venue: 38, Bishan Rd. (碧山路38號)

Tel: (02)2790-2706

Farmhouse Cafe Trattoria 農舍田園咖啡義大利菜

Venue: 38, Bishan Rd. (碧山路38號)

Tel: (02)2793-5448

Woodcraft Workshop 木想工作室

Add: 30, Bishan Rd. (碧山路30號)

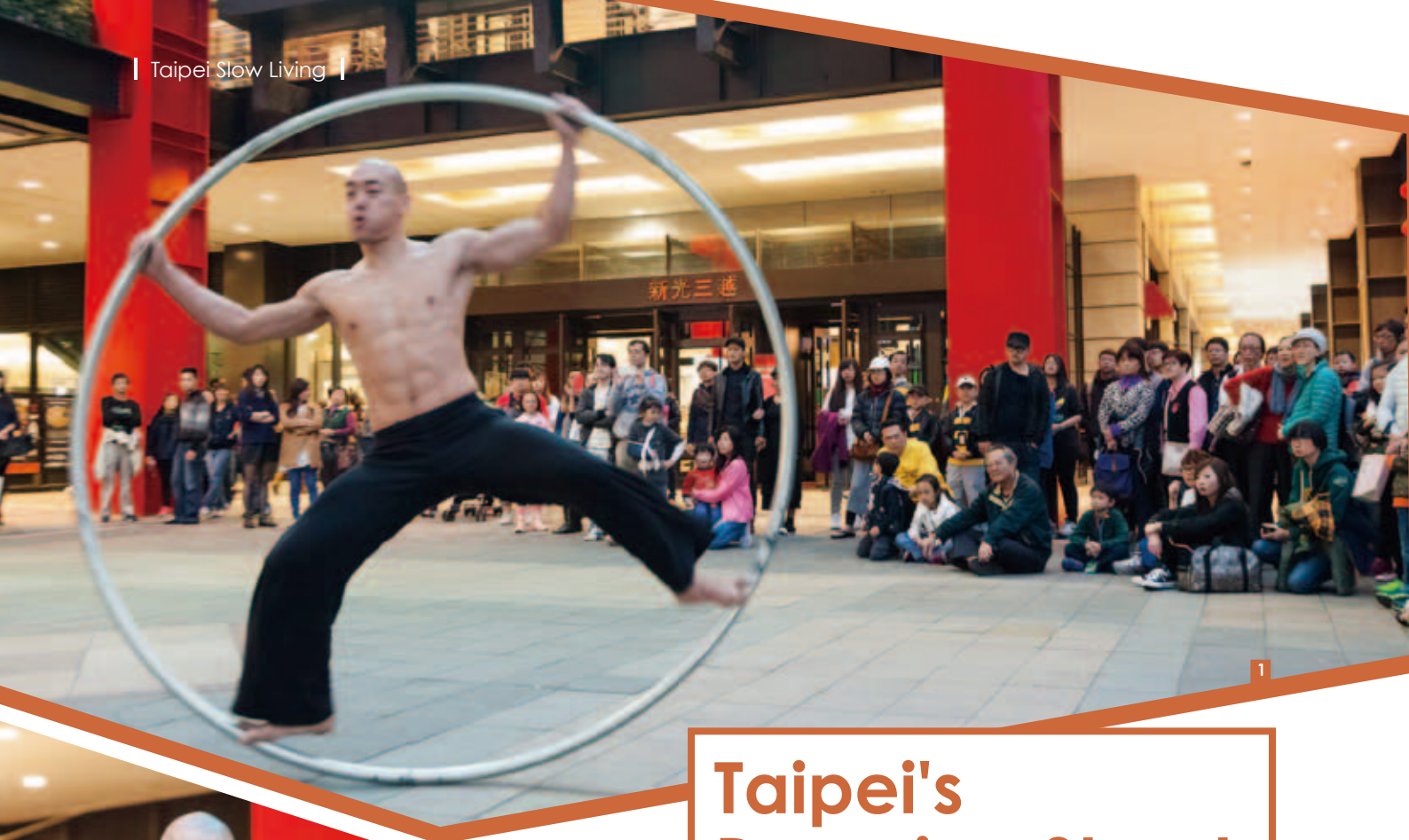
Tel: (02)2791-3623

Moooon River Café & Books

Add: 218, Ruiguang Rd. (瑞光路218號)

Tel: (02)7720-2070

Please refer to the map provided on P.66



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Taipei's Roaming Street Performers

The countdown to World Design Capital Taipei 2016, on the theme "Adaptive City, Design in Motion," has already begun, and creative individuals from around the world will be invited to witness Taipei fulfill its promise to make a more beautiful "livable city" a reality by means of exuberant, innovative vitality.

People Are the Most Beautiful Scenery, Redoubling the City's Charm

Guests visiting from afar are sure to discover that Taipei's most beautiful scenery is its people, and that Taipei's street performers are one of the attractions that has brought the title of World Design Capital to Taipei.

Taipei has 67 areas for street performers, among them the popular Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Xinyi Plaza (信義新光三越香堤大道廣場), and Vieshow Cinemas Plaza (信義威秀廣場), the Ximending Pedestrian District (西門町行人徒步區), Songshan Cultural and Creative Park (松山文創園區), Taipei Water Park (自來水園區), and MRT Xinbeitou and Tamsui Stations (捷運新北投及淡水站), where street performers of every kind can be seen, providing a feast for the eyes and ears.



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While walking around the busy Xinyi or Ximending areas, tourists may well run into Kent John, strumming and singing with guitar in hand. John, a native of the Caribbean, has been performing on the streets of Taipei for many years, and is a familiar face to many citizens of Taipei, his resonant, powerful voice halting passers-by in their tracks. The other cartoonist, Jongo, can draw a cartoon portrait of you in just 15 minutes, a souvenir you can take home.

Participate in Appraising Taipei's Street Performers

Vigorous development of Taipei's cultural creativity has driven the city's ascent to the status of World Design Capital, following cumulative, long-term development. Taipei was the first Taiwanese city to promote street performers, establishing street performer exams and a permit system in 2005, and already has an abundance of street performance talent. More than a few artists have started their careers on the streets and then stepped onto the international stage, becoming world-famous.

"I don't want to be the best, but to be irreplaceable" is how Yang Yuanqin (楊元慶) describes his aim. He became Taiwanese yo-yo champion in 2007, and obtained a street performance permit for Taipei in 2009, thereafter performing on streets around the world. His perfectionist attitude eventually made him the holder of a Guinness World Record in the yo-yo category in 2014.

As well as performing on the streets, Chang Yuhsia (張玉霞) a partially-sighted singer who once enthralled audiences on the Mainland China song contest TV show "The Voice of China" with her heavenly voice, and is known as the "Little Ter-



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- 1-2. The "crystal ball expert," Chinese-American Hu Qizhi, amazes passersby with his Cry wheel and highly skilled crystal ball performance.
- 3-4. Taipei street performers of every kind can be seen, enriching the cityscape.
5. The street performer, Yang Yuanqin, was once Taiwanese yo-yo champion and the holder of a Guinness World Record in the yo-yo category.
6. The other cartoonist, Jongo, can draw a cartoon portrait of you in just 15 minutes, a souvenir you can take home.
7. Kent John, a native of the Caribbean, his resonant, powerful voice halting passers-by in their tracks.



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esa Teng" (小鄧麗君), has performed on TV cabaret shows and in large arts performances. So too has the "crystal ball expert," Chinese-American Hu Qizhi (胡啓志), whose act was the second-last performance of the 2012 CCTV Spring Festival Gala.

Beneficial competition has driven the quality and diversity of Taipei's street performers, and Guo Peiyu (郭佩瑜), the head of the Taipei City Government Department of Cultural Affairs' Arts Development Division (文化局藝術發展科), says that Taipei's street performer permit is widely recognized as the hardest to get in Taiwan, and that, while previously two examination sessions were held annually, the number was reduced to one last year to further improve quality. The regulations concerning registration for the award are expected to be published at some point in the first third of May, and the examination session will be held at the end of June. The exact date, time and location of the session will all be published on the Taipei City Government Department of Cultural Affairs' website.

Applicants need to be 16 years old to qualify for registration, which can be done as an individual or as part of a group of less than 10 people. If foreign applicants have a residence permit issued by the National Immigration Agency, Ministry of the Interior (內政部入出國及移民署), they can also display their talent, and if they pass the exam like Kent John, become official Taipei street performers.

Taipei City has already issued 1,471 street performer permits for individuals or groups who fall within the three main categories of performing arts, visual arts, and creative crafts. The vast majority are performing artists, 1,100 individuals or groups have been awarded permits over the last 10 years. Once a permit has been obtained, it need only be renewed once every two years for qualification as a street performer to be retained indefinitely.

Creativity Around Every Corner

Chen Zhenfu (陳振福), who has been named one of the Taiwan Busker Development Association's (台灣街頭藝人發展協會) "Ten Outstanding Street Performers," did not apply for a street performers' permit until he had retired at the age of 59. Undaunted by age and fear of failure, he rediscovered the sense of rhythm he had acquired when part of a jazz band in his youth, he interacts in a fun way with his audience, making his realistic portraits more interesting. He later developed a way to produce paper cut portraits, producing them as he interacts with guests in Ximending Pedestrian District. Having created a unique papercut artist style, he finds his late-life career joyful and fulfilling, which also brings happiness.

While the "Cat God" (貓神) performance art piece which is often performed in Xinyi District on holidays, features movements as nimble and soft as a cat, the performer is actually a man. There's also the human statue, "Jungle Street Artist" (Jungle行動雕像), who plays an endless variety of roles, includ-



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ing a terracotta warrior, the Statue of Liberty, a chess-board piece, a poker card, and a vampire. He has also participated in cultural activities such as the exhibition "A Splendid Time—the Heritage of Imperial Rome" (輝煌時代—羅馬帝國特展), and "Monet: Landscapes of Mind" exhibition (印象·經典—莫內), acting the roles of a Roman soldier and Monet respectively in order to promote each activity. "On P Young" (紅鼻子劇團), Songshan Cultural and Creative Park's resident group, is made up of four big men who often delight audiences for a whole day with vaudeville and stunt performances. Lin Mingren (林明仁), a music teacher with 30 years' experience, often gives flute performances at the Taipei Expo Park and Daan Park, his melodious music attracting many tourists. He has become a delightful surprise to visitors strolling in the Park.

These vivid performers have made Taipei into a city in which one can turn a corner and be enthralled. This kind of aesthetic education is one that can't be taught in school, and has contributed to a new form of soft power in the new century. It's also something of which the people of Taipei can be deeply proud as it becomes the 2016 World Design Capital. 🐾



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8. Chang Yuhsia is a partially-sighted singer and is known as the "Little Teresa Teng".

9. Chen Zhenfu did not apply for a street performers' permit until he had retired at the age of 59. He later developed a unique way to produce paper cut portraits, and brings happiness as he interacts with guests.

10-11. The human statue, Jungle Street Artist, who plays variety of roles, provides a feast for the eyes.

12. The "Cat God" features movements as nimble and soft as a cat. The performer is actually a man.

13. Lin Mingren often gives flute performances at Taipei Expo Park and Daan Park. His melodious music has become a delightful surprise to visitors strolling in the Park.

14. On P Young, Songshan Cultural and Creative Park's resident group, is made up of four men who often delight audiences for a whole day with vaudeville and stunt performances.



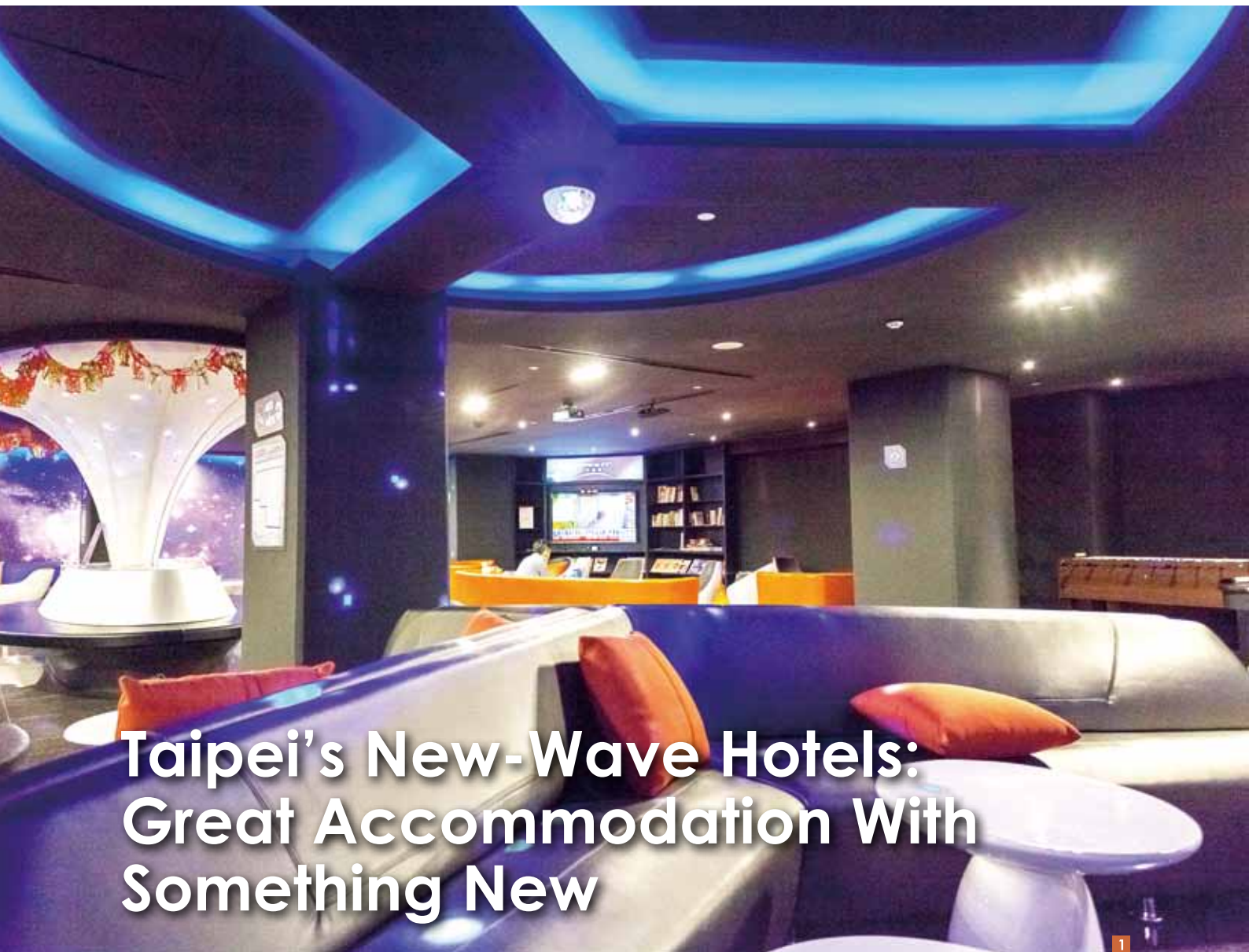
11

Information

Taipei City Street Performer

Tel: 1999 (02-2720-8889 outside Taipei City); ext. 3534

Website: www.culture.gov.taipei



Taipei's New-Wave Hotels: Great Accommodation With Something New

After retaining an honored position as one of the *New York Times*' "52 Places to Go in 2014," this year it has once again won a place in *National Geographic Traveler*'s "20 Go-Now Destinations." Around thirty new hotels opened in Taipei last year, of which three new-wave hotels have been selected for this issue. Their styles range from old-fashioned industrial and warm North European to a fantastic space style. We invite travelers to come and experience this unique, novel accommodation!



SPACE INN: A Hotel Like no Other

The SPACE INN (太空艙), situated on Hengyang Road (衡陽路), has adapted to the advent of the era of cheap flights with an average rate of NT\$700 to NT\$800 for backpackers. In the less than half a year since it opened last

August, it has attracted many guests from places including Europe, America, Japan, and Korea, who fall over each other to experience an accommodation space filled with the atmosphere of the Milky Way. The SPACE INN's cold temperatures and metal space design, together with staff wearing space suits, make one feel as if one is in space. The hotel uses electronic sensor locks to enter and exit, which are both secure and add a sense of high tech. Signs give explanations in simple pictures rather than writing, allowing backpackers from any country to understand them at a glance.

The SPACE INN occupies approx. 2,640 square meters, and has a total of 43 cabins and 298 beds. Gender-segregated areas provide rooms containing from four to twelve bunks, and every bed has a curtain, ensuring individual privacy. At the same time, every guest has their



own socket, reading light, private locker and charging socket, ensuring that they can enjoy their own little haven. To further the interstellar theme, room numbers are projected on the floor – creativity permeates the SPACE INN.

Emphasizing the accommodation's entertainment value and space promoting friendly exchange, guests can bring and enjoy their own food in the Inn's lounge, or play foosball, exchange travel information, and meet new friends from all points of the compass. A love of new-wave design and diligent service is plainly visible on the guestboard: someone has said "the space ship is too awesome, I don't want to return to Earth!" Someone else meanwhile has written a blessing in "Martian."



The Bee House: Recreating the Warm Relaxation of Home

The Bee House (蜂巢旅店), which has used local culture and creative concepts to transform an old house, is near the rear of Taipei Main Station (臺北車站). This convenient position provides it with an outstanding geographic advantage. Inspiration for the name "The Bee House" came from the image of a diligent hive of bees, symbolizing travelers touring every corner of the globe, and finally returning to a warm home. The Northern European style was used as the design concept for The Bee House, accompanied

1. The SPACE INN's lounge has the atmosphere of the Milky Way, giving backpackers a novel feeling.
2. The SPACE INN's beds are made of cold metal. Every bed has its own socket, reading light, private locker and charging socket.
3. The SPACE INN's lounge has free Internet.
4. The SPACE INN uses electronic sensor locks for entry and exit and all signs are presented in the form easy to understand pictures that backpackers from around the world can follow with ease.
5. The deep affection of guests for Space Inn is displayed in full on the guest message board.

by a warm, sunny yellow, in the hope of creating a feeling of "home." The Bee House won the "Best Cultural Product Award" (最佳文創產品獎) in the "2014 Taiwanese Cultural and Creative Industry Top 100 Awards" (2014臺灣文化創意產業100大獎).

The Bee House's story begins with its sign, which displays the address number "57" and comprises thirty-two brass hex screws, which symbolize the hotel's thirty-two rooms. The natural quality of wood is a prominent visual factor in the furnishings in the lobby and rooms, lending the Bee House a simple atmosphere.

Although the Bee House is not large, the considerate service and well-prepared rooms allow guests to enjoy a five-star experience. Travelers can enjoy coffee and cakes in La Fusion Bakery in the first-floor lobby. Work by the famous Malaysian illustrator Lim Heng Swee, simple yet interesting, hangs on the walls of every floor, allowing guests to discover new surprises every time they turn a corner. To



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accompany these funny, cute illustrations, the explanatory

prompts in public spaces are very mischievous and lively. You can proceed to the reading area on the second floor to recharge your soul and welcome the next stage of your journey. Although the rooms in the Bee House are small (occupying an average of between about 15 and 20 square meters), they are comprehensively equipped. There is a hot tub and gym on the 7th floor in which fitness equipment is provided free of charge, allowing guests to relax their exhausted muscles at any time.



The CHECK inn: Graffiti Everywhere, Full of Surprises

Unlike the splendor of most hotel lobbies, the CHECK inn's (雀客旅館) first-floor reception is a cafe. Decorated in light yellow, white paired with a crisp black, it is remarkably relaxed and comfortable. Dai Dongjie (戴東杰), a passionate traveler and the hotel's owner, drew inspiration from his experience of studying in New York, using a hotel and a cafe as business concepts. With regard to space and design, he has fused old-fashioned

industrial elements: the whole building features red brick walls and rusty iron door signs, presenting a unique, fashionable boutique hotel.

The CHECK inn, which opened last August, caters primarily to young, fashionable independent travelers. A flat price of between NT\$2,900 to NT\$3,300 per room provides a space to rest for travelers. Excluding the cafe on the 1st and 2nd floors, the 3rd to 13th floors contain a total of sixty-five rooms. It's worth mentioning that the 13th floor is the graffiti floor: two famous street artists, Rookie from Taiwan and Sinic from Hong Kong, were invited to use the varied colors of graffiti to create a fashionable hip-hop style. The whole floor is filled with surprises, from the walls in the corridors to the rooms. This aside, the most remarkable thing about the CHECK inn is the symmetric design in some of the twin bedrooms, which allow friends rooming together some privacy as well as allowing them to talk.

Located near the MRT Xingtian Temple Station (捷運行天宮站), the CHECK inn has also produced its own Chinese and English maps and travel information about the surrounding area, and has also designed many extras,



such as slippers and adapters, which are both useful and can be kept as souvenirs.

This city's vitality and passion have been gathered in these diverse hotels. pack your suitcase and plan a journey around Taipei in Spring, the best time to travel, and experience Taipei's new-wave hotels for yourself! 🍯

6-7. The Bee House's design is Northern European style, accompanied by a sunny yellow color, the aim being to create a warm feeling of "home." Using the bee logo, bee toy figures and other souvenirs were developed.

8-9. "The Bee House's rooms were inspired by diligent hives of bees. Guests use yellow cushions and hex lockers; hive related design can be seen everywhere. La Fusion Bakery is in the first-floor lobby, allowing travelers to enjoy coffee and cakes and pastries.

10-11. The CHECK inn's first-floor reception is a cafe. Travellers can enjoy and relax while enjoying a cake or pastry, and this has become one of its characteristic features.

12-13. The 13th floor is the graffiti floor and guest rooms. The whole floor is filled with surprises and the varied colors of graffiti create a fashionable hip-hop style.

14. The recreational area on the 2nd floor of the CHECK inn provides travel information and displays works by Taiwanese artists.

15. The CHECK inn has produced and designed many commemorative items that are useful and also fashionable.

Information

SPACE INN 太空艙

Add: B1, 51, Hengyang Rd. (衡陽路51號B1)

Tel: (02)2381-3666

Website: www.spaceinn.com.tw

Bee House 蜂巢旅店

Add: 57, Taiyuan Rd. (太原路57號)

Tel: (02)2559-9000

Website: www.b-house.com.tw

CHECK inn 雀客旅館

Add: 253, Songjiang Rd. (松江路253號)

Tel: (02)7726-6277

Website: www.checkinn.com.tw

Liu Zheyu: Giving Taiwanese the Motivation to Travel, One Backpack at a Time



Liu Zheyu

- Pen Name: Lan Bai Tuo
- English Name: Fisher
- Occupation: writer, lecturer, founder of "Keep Backpacking."

Four years ago, Liu Zheyu (劉哲瑜) made a life-changing decision. Abandoning a well-paid engineering job, he randomly chose a destination and hopped onto a flight departing Taiwan, leaving a note to inform his family. He now admits guiltily, "I shouldn't have done it like that. I was basically running away."

Thirteen countries and one year later, he was a changed man. "By traveling alone, I learned how to be a responsible person. I noticed that people in other countries seemed to enjoy their jobs more, because their jobs weren't everything. They also made time in their lives for other pursuits, so they seemed happier overall." Liu recalls meeting one westerner who had run out of money and taken a job working in a restaurant in Vietnam. "Taiwanese people would feel so pathetic if they got stuck in that situation. But this person seemed to be happy about it!"

Liu's travels took him through Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. Getting by in impoverished countries like Egypt and India taught him to be more conscious of his surroundings and the people around him. Staying in budget accommodations, he relates how, in one bizarre incident, he returned from dinner to find that someone had stolen his underwear, while his money and laptop remained untouched.

About six months into his trip, he found he was spending too much money moving between countries. He happened to be in Rome at the time, so he just stayed there for two months, spending NT\$6,000 per month on accommodation for a hostel bed. By the end of the year, he'd managed to spend only NT\$300,000 on all travel-related costs. "I realized that it doesn't even matter how much you spend on the road. What matters more is your mental approach to traveling."

In Taiwanese culture, people are taught that traveling alone is dangerous, an idea that Liu sought to transform after returning to Taiwan. Since then, he has penned four books, held photo exhibitions, and given regular lectures to college students, all with the purpose of encouraging them to go backpacking. He writes under the pen name Lan Bai Tuo (藍白拖), after the ubiquitous blue and white plastic sandals used in homes across Taiwan which, cheap and ugly as they may be, are a classic Made-in-Taiwan product that he feels is a symbol of Taiwanese culture.

"Youths that I talk to in Taiwan are always concerned about three things: lack of money, lack of language skills, and lack of bravery." To address the first concern, he reminds them of how little he spent on his entire year of traveling. For the second, he points out that he can barely speak English, not to mention that some countries he visited were not even English-speaking ones. "All you have to do is use keywords. If you want a coffee, everybody knows that word. If all else fails, you can just point. Really, a language barrier is not a major obstacle to travel." Liu even volunteered for Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata, helping the sick and dying, a position that he points out required minimal language skills.

And to address Taiwanese people's perceived fear of traveling, Liu has gone one step further. He asserts that Taiwanese people are in fact brave, but they just need a little push. In order to provide that push, Liu has established an organization called "Keep Backpacking." Modeled on the concept of couchsurfing, a website on which people can find a free place to crash while backpacking, Liu's program offers free backpacks for hire.

"When most Taiwanese backpackers return home from a trip, they go back to work and don't use their backpacks again for a long time. By donating or lending them to us, they can provide young travelers with low budgets the opportunity to get out there." Each backpack is given a name by the initial user, and a record is kept of all the countries it travels to, along with any stories borrowers wish to add. People can log on to www.keepbackpacking.com to find a list of available backpacks, including details about where the packs have been taken to recently.

Liu feels that by seeing where the backpack has been, users may be inspired to also visit some of those countries. Moreover, the backpacks are hired out from coffee shops whose owners are avid backpackers and are keen to share their travel experiences with others.



1. Continuing the spirit of backpacking by lending backpacks.

2. A backpack lending station.

3. The original owner of each backpack gives it a name, and subsequent borrowers record which countries they take the backpack to.

(Photos courtesy of Liu Zheyu)

"It's my dream that this program can propagate the spirit of backpacking," says Liu. Nearly a hundred backpacks are currently available at 11 locations across Taiwan, and Liu hopes to make them available in every city. He's also currently looking at expanding the program to other Chinese-speaking countries.

Recently, Liu has also been collaborating with Hostels Club in Italy on the Marco Polo Project, which offers Taiwanese backpackers the opportunity to stay for free in 20-plus hostels across Europe, so long as they share some photos of their trip.

Liu has received such positive feedback from Taiwanese that his fourth book is dedicated to interesting letters and travel stories from his fans. He is currently working on his fifth book, introducing inspiring travel stories from around the world. 🌍

Oqba Al-Homoud:

Bringing a Touch of Jordan to Taipei



Oqba Al-Homoud

Place of origin: Jordan

- Occupation: Sand picture artist
- Follow him: www.facebook.com/JordanianSandBottleArt

Of the mere 300 or so Jordanian sand artists in the world, who would have thought one of them could be living right here in Taipei? Unlikely though it may seem, Oqba Al-Homoud has become a fixture at the Red House (西門紅樓) weekend arts and crafts market in Ximending. You will see him sitting at his stall attentively spooning brightly colored sands into glass bottles and then meticulously arranging the grains to form multicolored scenes.

Al-Homoud first developed a keen interest in Chinese culture while studying law in Morocco. After living in Beijing and Hong Kong, he decided to give Taiwan a try. He arrived in Taipei in 1986 to study Chinese at the National Taiwan Normal University (國立臺灣師範大學), and later zoology at the National Taiwan University (國立臺灣大學). When asked why he stayed in Taipei, he chuckles heartily and replies, "I was 22. A 22-year-old could live comfortably anywhere in the world!"

Al-Homoud recalls how comparatively small the Taipei City of the late 1980s was. "Wanhua to Keelung Road: that was it! What is now Xinyi District was nothing but farmland." His only problem living here was avoiding pork. "Taiwan was much more closed then. I used to have to fly to Hong Kong just to buy cheese!"

When Al-Homoud brought his wife Wenzhi to Jordan, she had no idea that he had known how to do sand art since he was 15. When visiting Petra, whose rock-hewn sandstone dwellings are considered one of the world's great architectural wonders, she wanted to purchase several of the sand bottles that were being sold by all the souvenir vendors there. "I told her they were ugly and poorly made, but she wouldn't listen and bought them anyways."



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1. The colorful sand art pieces at the Red House weekend arts and crafts market in Ximending, made by Jordanian sand artists Oqba Al-Homoud.
2. Beyond standard desert scenes, Al-Homoud has also incorporated different motifs such as New Year's couplets and Taiwanese sceneries.
3. When Al-Homoud demonstrated how to make his classic desert bottle, a crowd formed and onlookers were amazed.
4. Al-Homoud acquires his high quality, fine-grained sands from locals of Petra who get it from select mountaintops in the region.
5. When making sand art, Al-Homoud rotated the jar with one hand as he distributed flecks of colored sand with a spoon in the other.

Back in Taiwan, Al-Homoud decided to surprise her and make her one. Unable to find colored sands in Taipei, he instead used cement powder. The material was inferior, but she was nevertheless impressed. He went on to experiment with cat litter and coffee grinds, but finally realized that importing proper Jordanian sand was the only viable option.

The deserts in the Petra region are known for their vividly colored sands in seven natural colors. While some tricksters use sand directly from the desert in their bottles, with grains too large to stay in place permanently, Al-Homoud acquires his high quality, fine-grained sands from people who get it from select mountaintops in the region. The sands he uses are so fine that they feel like chalk powder.


Al-Homoud's artwork entered the public eye in 2008 when he began participating in exhibitions on Middle Eastern culture and regularly appearing on the news and talk shows. "At first, the Taiwanese didn't believe that my artwork was real. They couldn't imagine how I could draw intricate designs on the insides of bottles using sand. Even now, they ask me the same questions over and over again, like "Will it get mixed up if I shake it?" to which I respond by picking one up and shaking it vigorously for them to see."

At some point, Al-Homoud realized he had to expand his repertoire beyond standard desert scenes. He began incorporating Chinese motifs, such as New Year's couplets, Buddhist deities, and Taiwanese scenic areas like Wulai Waterfall (烏來瀑布). With emotion in his voice, he states, "I want to mix the cultures of Jordan and Taiwan together.

I also want to encourage Taiwanese people to visit my country. Jordan is safe, and its people are friendly and hospitable. If you want to experience real travel, come to Jordan."

Sitting at his little table in the Red House market, Al-Homoud pulls up a chair for me and shows me the steps involved in making his classic desert bottle. Within moments a crowd forms, as his wife circulates among them, answering questions. Using a set of tools consisting mostly of broken chopsticks and bent spoons, he rotates the jar with one hand as he distributes flecks of colored sand with a spoon in the other. As the layers are built up, he uses a metal hook jammed into the end of a chopstick to guide the sand into just the right spots, and a silhouetted camel takes form. Next come mountains, sky, sun, and birds. Reaching the top, he stands up, clears a space on the table, and slams the bottle down with his hands to compress the sand, startling onlookers. Finally, he glues a cork in place and offers the piece to me as a gift.

All in all the jar only took 40 minutes to make, though some of his larger bottles with more detailed designs take several weeks. He is constantly occupied with custom requests from locals, particularly marriage proposal designs. One wealthy collector from Tainan ordered so many bottles he had to take a break from the Red House market for three months to fulfill the order.

Al-Homoud feels perfectly at home in Taiwan and has never really experienced culture shock. "I'm Jordanian; my people are there, my family is there, but every time I go back, after only a week or two I just miss Taiwan." 

The Red Cliff: Taiwan-Inspired Folk Rock

Fans of The Red Cliff are attracted to their performances by their distinctive brand of acoustic folk rock, featuring heartfelt vocals and percussive guitar riffs. Best friends Caleb Cole and Mark Darvill have been collaborating musically since they first met only weeks after they both arrived in Taipei in 2009. They credit their compatibility as musicians to the depth of their friendship and mutual respect for one another's abilities.

Cole and Darvill independently decided to leave Taiwan in 2012 and 2013, respectively. After a lapse of approximately one year, both have since decided to return, reuniting The Red Cliff with the addition of drummer Moshe Foster.

Cole first came to Taiwan to try his hand at teaching, and was later joined by his girlfriend, and now wife, Mika Groscoast. He was initially smitten with the locals' willingness to help visitors, and the ease of travel in Taiwan. As time passed, he developed a passion for hiking that rivaled his love for music. "The exceptional thing about Taipei is that you can get to a steep, rugged trail within an hour. Every time I go hiking, I remark on how lucky we are to live in a city that affords that kind of access to nature." Cole relies heavily on Richard Saunders' *Taipei Escapes* in planning his hikes, aspiring to complete every hike in the books.

Darvill originally chose teaching in Taiwan as a second choice to Japan. After living here for several years, he finally moved to Japan, but after only eight months decided to move back to Taiwan with the goal of transforming his Mandarin into an employable skill. Like Cole, Darvill is an avid hiker, though he claims that the noise of Taipei is one of its biggest draws, "When people use the phrase "teeming with life", they tend to be referring to natural settings. For me, nothing makes me feel more alive than riding my scooter around Taipei." Besides music, Darvill has also dabbled in stand-up comedy.

Cole and Darvill possess surprisingly different musical backgrounds. Cole honed his skills playing bass for a jazz quintet in Alabama, while Darvill was a self-professed "shredder," playing metal riffs on the electric guitar since the age of ten. After university, Darvill traveled to Austria for a workshop in percussive guitar and fingerstyle, experimental techniques in which the body of the guitar is tapped in conjunction with traditional picking and working

of the fret board. Darvill has adapted and incorporated fingerstyle into most of The Red Cliff's tunes.

The duo's entry into Taipei's music scene began when they befriended Ben Lin (林子曦), a budding Taiwanese pop star, at an open mic night and subsequently became his backup band. Doing their own thing as The Red Cliff, they performed primarily folk music. Inspired by Taiwan's history, one of the first songs Cole wrote was "Koxinga," in honor of the Japanese-Chinese military leader who was one of Taiwan's founders, while many of Darvill's lyrics are based on by his experiences here.

With Foster, who has drummed for Taipei bands spanning a wide range of styles, now on board, the band has evolved a heavier, rock-oriented edge. Each performance features a mix of new work, Red Cliff classics, and unexpected covers ranging from Radiohead to Stevie Wonder. For information on upcoming shows, follow them on Facebook or give them a listen at soundcloud.com/the-red-cliff. 🎧



1. The Red Cliff's performances feature heartfelt vocals and percussive guitar riffs.

2. Englishman Mark Darvill and American Caleb Cole are avid hikers.

How to Talk to TAIPEI

Here are a few sentences in Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese that backpackers can use while in Taipei to ensure smooth sailing.

Is the cost of the self-picked strawberries based on weight?

Mandarin Chinese

採草莓是秤重算錢的嗎？

Cǎi cǎoméi shì chéng zhòng suàn qián de ma?



How long is it to the end of this mountain trail?

Taiwanese

這條山路還要走多久？

Tse liáu suann-lōo iú beh kiánn guā-kú?



Excuse me. Can you tell me how to get to Yangmingshan?

Mandarin Chinese

請問，怎麼去陽明山？

Qǐngwèn, zěnmē qù yángmíng shān?

What is the price for this bunch of calla lilies?

Mandarin Chinese

這束海芋多少錢？

Zhè shù hǎi yù duōshǎo qián?



What type of flower is this?

Taiwanese

這是什麼花？

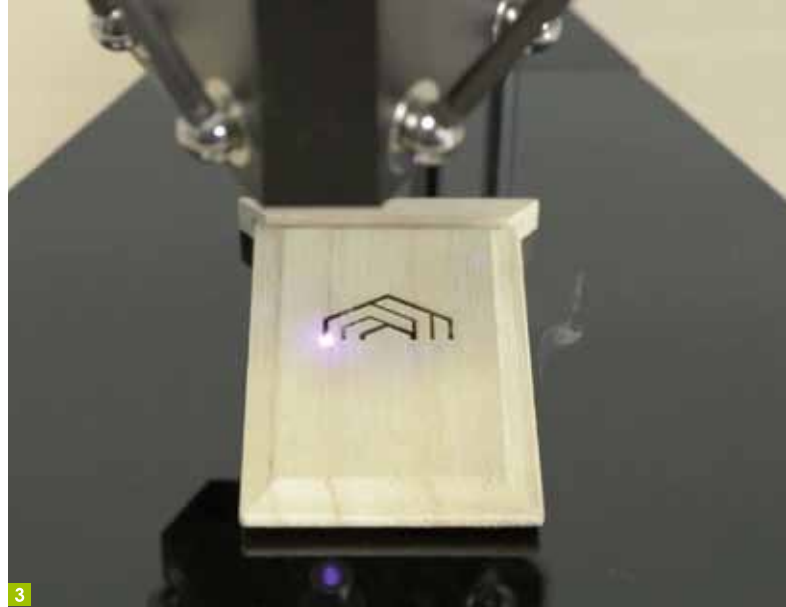
Tse sī siánn-mih hue?



Cutting-Edge Taiwanese Design Stands at the Forefront of International Exhibitions



1 3



Necessity plus creativity is the beginning of good design, and the fact that the work of many cutting-edge Taiwanese designers has won major international awards, and has drawn attention in all fields proves that the creative strength of young Taiwanese people and groups is second to none in the world. Their creativity is truly the core strength which has made Taipei the World Design Capital 2016.



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FLUX: Creating the 3D Printer of Your Dreams

Although 3D printing is not a new concept, wouldn't a 3D printer which had the further functions of 3D scanning, laser carving, and even food printing be still more attractive? FLUX, an innovative group made up of several students of National Taiwan University (國立臺灣大學) with an average age of 23, has developed a multi-functional 3D printer, which not only performs excellent 3D printing and can print objects after scanning them, but can also print ceramics and pastries. When the printing head is exchanged for a laser cutter head, it can also carve wood – making it a veritable desktop factory.

The FLUX team's original idea was to produce a desktop 3D printer which was easy to use, reducing the difficulty of operating it, thus making it accessible to everyone, and no longer the preserve of technology



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hobbyists. This 3D printer was initially funded on the American website Kickstarter, where over US\$1.6 million (around NT\$51 million) was raised, setting a new record for the amount of money raised by a Taiwanese group on Kickstarter. FLUX also won an angel investment plan from "SVT Angels," and they went to Silicon Valley to learn about entrepreneurship. They are confident that their model will be available on the market before long.

Sha Yao's "Eatwell": Thoughtful Creativity

Sometimes concern for others is the beginning of creativity. Eatwell's designer, Sha Yao (姚彥慈), designed a tableware set of anti-spill, stable cups, bowls and plates to help her grandmother, who suffers from cognitive impairment. This invention was recognized when she won first prize at the 2014 Stanford Center on Longevity Design Challenge.

This set of tableware not only has ergonomically-designed spoons and plates, the angles of the tablespoon and fork have also been well-designed, making them easy to hold and allowing the user to scoop up food easily. The height of the cup keeps the straw in place and easy to drink from, also reducing the chance of spillage. One of the judges at the Design Competition, Juliet Holt

Klinger, Vice President of Dementia Care for Brookdale Senior Living, surprised and

moved, said of Sha Yao's design, "I love this stuff. I've been looking forever for this. We're going to work with it."

After Sha Yao graduated from university, she began further study at the San Francisco Art Institute, working as a volunteer at centers and homes for the elderly in her spare time, and learned much from occupational therapists, nurses, and volunteers. She came to understand the daily needs and living situations of those suffering from dementia through long-term observation, and used this knowledge when designing her tableware. She has used the prize money to establish the SHA Design Studio and is actively increasing the number of "Eatwell" tableware sets produced and the channels through which it is sold, taking the next step in making her entrepreneurial dream come true.

1-2. FLUX has developed a multi-functional 3-D printer, which has the functions of 3-D printing, 3-D scanning, and module design and can print objects after scanning them.

3-4. When the printing head is exchanged for a laser cutter head, it can also carve wood; it can be seen as a super-factory on the desktop.

(Photos 1~4 courtesy of FLUX)

5. Eatwell's designer, Sha Yao, designed tableware set for people with impaired movement.

6. Eatwell's tableware sets have bright colors and the angles of the tableware are designed perfectly, making it easy to hold.

7. The shape of the handle gives support to the hand holding the Eatwell cup.

8. The arc of Eatwell's spoons and bowls match and the angle of the inner edge of the tableware makes spooning up food easier.

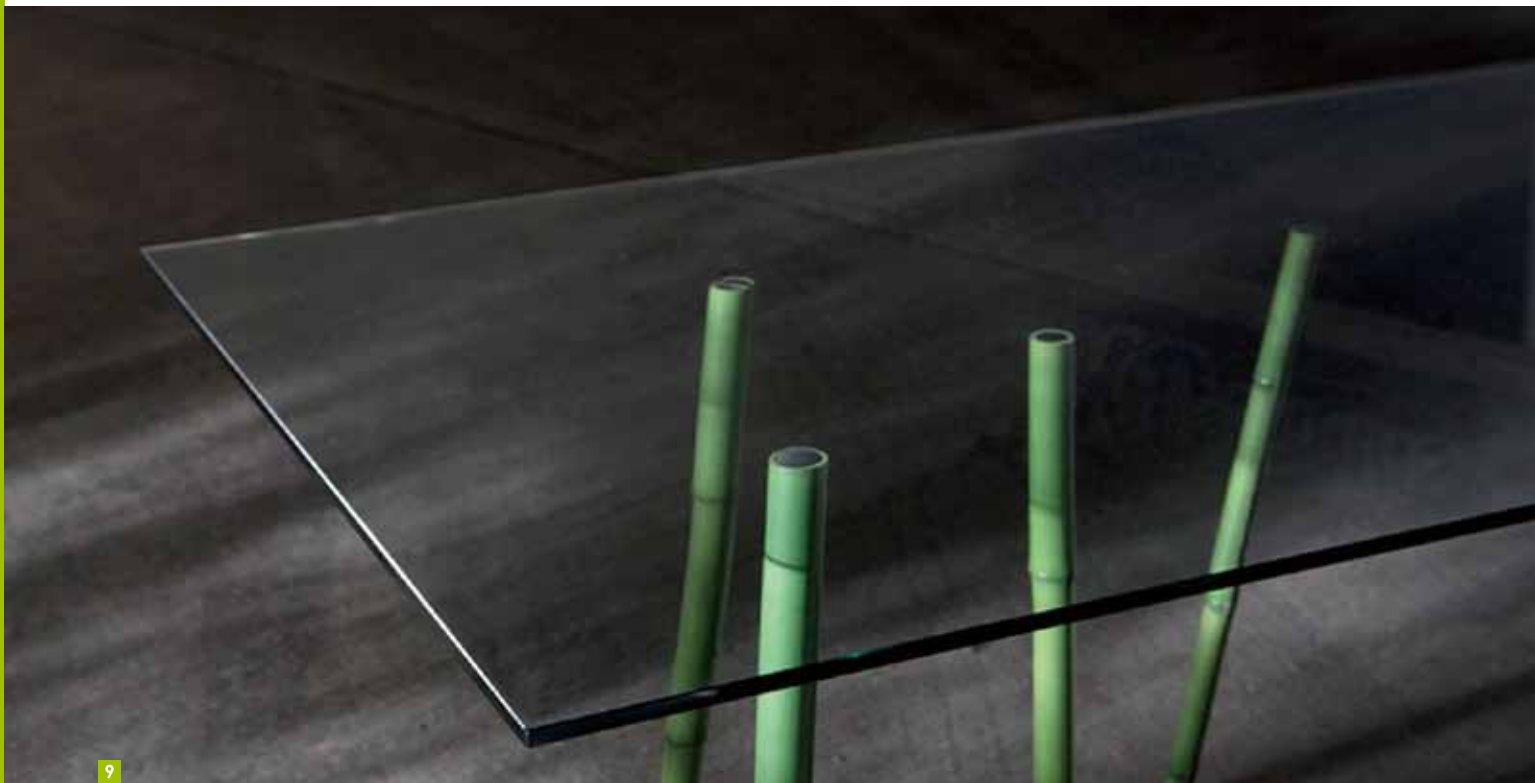
(Photos 5~8 courtesy of Sha Yao)



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Let Design Improve Life: Taiwanese Designers Shine in Europe

Poetic Lab (詩研設計事務所), a design studio in London founded by two cutting-edge Taiwanese designers, Tseng Shikai (曾熙凱) and Chen Hanhsi (陳函谿) has been a Salone Satellite Award finalist at the International Festival Fair in Milan for two consecutive years. Their entry in 2013, the "Ripple" (波光) lamp, won third place in the Salone Satellite Award. Their second entry, their new work, the "Bamboo Forest" (竹林) dining table was a finalist in 2014. The Bamboo Forest uses Eastern imagery and Taiwanese bamboo serves as its legs. It combines traditional crafts and materials such as glass and bamboo, incorporating them within a modern design.

Tseng and Chen met while studying design in London. After graduating from National Taiwan University of Science and Technology's Department of Industrial and Commercial Design (國立臺灣科技大學設計研究所), Tseng proceeded to study at the Royal College of Art in the UK. Chen, however, moved into the field of design after graduating from National Taiwan University's Department of Physics, and entered the Royal College of Art to study for a Master's in Product Design. As far as they are concerned, design is the longing for a better life, and also a tool for communication. Design can improve bad life experience, and can also embody inspiration accumulated through life. Their sparkling accomplishments are also proof that Taiwan's design talent is second to none.





A Prizewinner for Being Both Environmentally Friendly and Creative

Entering a design contest and winning an award is also a good opportunity for young people to show their ability. The Taiwan International Student Design Competition (臺灣國際學生創意設計大賽), held by the Youth Development Administration, of the Ministry of Education (教育部青年發展署), has already been held seven times, and is one of the world's largest student design contests. The 2014 contest, which has just ended, attracted a total of 4,073 entries from artists in 43 countries and regions.

Huang Rueifeng (黃睿烽), the cutting-edge animation director who won the prestigious annual "Grand Prix," spent three years producing *Red Spot* (紅斑點), a short 3D animation about seal hunting, based on the idea that "animals cannot speak, so animation should be used to speak for them." This eight-minute film personifies two seals as a brother and a sister, recounting the annual slaughter of over three hundred thousand seals in Canada. The hunters use iron clubs to stun the seals, skin them alive and drag the blood-covered animals onto their boat. The "red spot" symbolizes the fate which seals are helpless to resist. The film's content is shocking and deeply thought-provoking, as Huang



uses animation to awaken public concern for conservation and environmental awareness.

But it was "Air Conditioner Whale" (空調鯨魚), by Deng Peichih (鄧培志), a graduate of National Taipei University of Technology (國立臺北科技大學), which won the "Best Commercial Potential Award." Air Conditioner Whale purifies and treats the water which accumulates in air-conditioner units, subsequently spraying it out to reduce room temperature. Not only does it reduce the temperature of a room, it also increases the humidity of an air-conditioned room, ensuring that beauty-conscious women need no longer worry about dry skin, and also saves energy and reduces carbon emissions: it is a design which is both environmentally-friendly and innovative.

These cutting-edge Taiwanese designers constantly seek the sparks of inspiration in life. They believe that design can bring a better quality of life and can also bring progress and wonder to the cities in which we live. 🌱

9. The Bamboo Forest dining table design by Poetic Lab was a Salone Satellite Award finalist at the International Festival Fair in Milan for two consecutive years and uses Eastern imagery as its design idea.

10. The Bamboo Forest combines traditional crafts and materials such as glass and bamboo, incorporating them within a modern design.

11. The Bamboo series of work gives bamboo an entirely new image.

(Photos 9-11 courtesy of Poetic Lab)

12. Huang Ruei-Feng, the cutting-edge animation director, spent three years producing *Red Spot*, an eight-minute short 3-D animation.

13. The film's content is shocking and deeply thought-provoking, as Huang uses the *Red Spot* animation to awaken public concern for conservation and environmental awareness.

14. Air Conditioner Whale, by Deng Peichih, is a design which is both environmentally-friendly and innovative.



Light to the Homecoming – 2015 Treasure Hill Environmental Art Lantern Festival

This year sees the fourth Treasure Hill Environmental Art Lantern Festival (寶藏巖藝術燈節). The theme for this edition is “Light to the Homecoming” (「燈」你回來), and creators from lands around the globe have been invited to participate, showcasing traditional Chinese lantern culture through their chosen creative mediums. Members of the public can explore Treasure Hill's many nooks and crannies to savor the artistic landscape of each of the works unveiled.

First staged in 2010, the festival is a combination of traditional rituals and observances with artistic culture, following the classical Chinese Spring Festival “push out the old, in with the new” spirit with creativity, delighting those who come out to see the results. On the program this year are opening ceremonies, static installations, dynamic performances, and the Treasure Hill Homeland (寶藏家園). The cross-discipline performances and installations create a uniquely artistic lantern landscape.

The festival's kickoff performance will be a fusion of installation art, music, theater, and dance. Chou Yucheng (周育正), winner of a Taipei Arts Awards First Prize, is using ceramic tiles in a large-scale installation to accompany performances by the Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company (稻草人現代舞蹈團) in the Historical Façades area, in exuberant cross-domain shows full of festive emotion.

Installation and video artist Luo Jrshin (羅智信) and sound artist Zheng Yipin (鄭宜蘋) have teamed up for a work called *Summer Practice – Never Enough Balls* (夏日之練——球之不得), transforming a water tank into a ping-pong pool, a flavor of summer juxtaposed against the cold reality of winter, spotlighting the contrast between reality and the imagination.

While roaming about the Treasure Hill Artist Village, and following the path of the artists' works, visitors enter the world of the artist, and this interactivity enhances the fun.



One example is a work by artist He Cairou (何采柔) that bestrides theater and the visual arts, with the artist building a rocking swing in an incandescent bulb, using LEDs to project the image into a room. The pendulum-like swaying image symbolizes a return to the old times in the Treasure Hill community, in what feels like a dreamscape, the viewer imperceptibly, irresistibly drawn into the fantasy space. Probing the relationship between sound, body, and space, Tseng Weihao (曾偉豪) pulls the viewer into interaction with his work. When coming into contact with the piece, sound and light one has never before experienced from this source are emitted.

This year numerous works have the local environment as their creative foundation, outlining Treasure Hill's special landscape. Chen Sungchih (陳松志) uses second-hand clothing and pieces of fabric as his installation materials, composing a living space that resembles a theater. Dai Hanhong (戴翰泓), who uses light as his medium of expression, and Yu Yenfang (余彥芳), a dance artist, each present new works that echo the spirit of environmental art.

In keeping with this year's "Go, Borders" concept, Japanese artists Nao Nishihara and Abe Nyubo use a sound installation and a large-scale wood sculpture,



1. The Treasure Hill Environmental Art Lantern Festival last year had a happy dance atmosphere for its kickoff gala.
 2. Installation and video artist Luo Jrshin uses cast-off everyday items to create his works.
 3. Tseng Weihao's work *Sheng Dong* ("Sound Moves") interacts with viewers, emitting sound and light effects.
 4. The Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company will bring modern movement vocabulary to traditional festival expression.
- (Photos courtesy of Taipei Artist Village)

respectively, to express the Japanese perspective on traditional festivals. The festival's borders have also been extended to Taipei Artist Village (台北國際藝術村), where artist Zhou Dongyan (周東彥) takes part in the festival celebration with a cross-domain installation work. Producing a sense of interactive spirit through the cross-boundary encompassing of creativity, country, and exhibit site, festival-goers enjoy an in-depth experience of Treasure Hill's special symbiotic character while enjoying a colorful, multicultural Lantern Festival. 131

Information

2015 Treasure Hill Environmental Art Lantern Festival

2015寶藏巖藝術燈節

Time: 3/28~4/26 (Tue~Sun 11:00~22:00)

Venue: Treasure Hill Artist Village; 2, Aly. 14, Ln. 230, Tingzhou Rd.
(寶藏巖國際藝術村; 汀州路3段230巷14弄2號)

Taipei Artist Village; 7, Beiping E. Rd.
(台北國際藝術村; 北平東路7號)

Tel: (02)2364-5313

Website: www.artistvillage.org



Get Rhythm With Paul Klee – Appreciating the Beauty of Dance Movement in Art

The Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM) Children's Art Education Center (兒童藝術教育中心) and Kindermuseum Creaviva at the Zentrum Paul Klee in Bern, Switzerland, have merged their creative energies in the creation of "Get Rhythm With Paul Klee" (跟著保羅·克利的節奏), combining interactive exhibits and workshops that inspire a deeper understanding of Germany's Paul Klee, one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, and enabling visitors to explore and experience the workings of his creative spirit.

Klee, born in Switzerland in 1879, was a musician and poet as well as a painter. His childlike artistic expression possesses a strong musical bent, with a cross-kneading of visual and auditory elements used in his unique, playful style. His works draw children in and immerse them in the world of art, and enable adults to enter the world of the child's imagination.

There is an Interactive Exhibit area in which game devices are used to demonstrate Klee's various creative elements. There are five sections, focused on lines, colors, music, rhythm, and symbolism. They show off the poetic cadence in his work, with visitors crafting a *pas de deux* arising from their own free-flowing imagination and Klee's rich palette of creative elements during the interactive process.


The workshop area focuses on Klee's rhythm, bringing the inspiration of artistic beauty to both body and mind. The 456 Art in Motion program is designed for kids 4 to 6 years old. The Cloud Gate Dance School (雲門舞集舞蹈教室) team provides specialized classes in which body rhythms are used to express Klee's musicality, with youngsters experiencing the sheer fun of moving hands and feet as a form of art. Paul's Little Painting Workshop and Paul's Big Painting Workshop are designed for kids



1. Paul's Big Painting Workshop provides youngsters with a free-range space for creative expression.
2. The color-focused space in the Interactive Area uses dynamic colors to stimulate kids' imagination.
3. The music-focused space in the Interactive Area gives youngsters a vivid sense of the rhythm in Paul Klee's style.
4. Klee's Fish is an interactive creative zone with fish used as subject.
5. In Paul's Big Painting Workshop, kids wield their brushes with happy free reign.

(Photos courtesy of Taipei Fine Arts Museum)

illustrated book with the same title as this event. Through the intertwining of static and dynamic activities, this exhibition will deepen your understanding of this greatly accomplished man and his art.

The TFAM's Children's Art Education Center and the Kindermuseum Creaviva have been involved in educating children about the arts for many years. They recognize the importance of art education, and stress the importance of unified perception through the mind, heart, and hand. This concept is clearly an intrinsic element in this event, which hopes to provide the public with an intimate look at how Klee laid equal emphasis on concept and practice. 

aged 7~10 and 10~15, respectively. They explore the creative themes that Klee was particularly fond of – the first colors, animals and nature, the second rhythms and symbols, fostering understanding of these creative elements via painting as a sensory experience.

In the Interactive Area, open to people of all ages, adults and kids work together on creations on the themes of fish, music, and other subjects, in sections with titles such as "Klee's Fish" and "Frolicking Notes." In the Music without a Sound Studio, reserved for the hearing impaired (no age limit), participants use sight and touch to create a world in which they and Klee interact.

To learn more about Klee's life, spend time in the Reading Area. On display are his diary and the Paul Klee Pedagogical Sketchbook, which he wrote during his time teaching at the Bauhaus, as well as an

Information

Get Rhythm With Paul Klee Interactive Exhibit and Workshop Series

跟著保羅·克利的節奏——互動展示&工作坊

Time: Until 4/12 (Tue~Sun 09:30~17:30;
Sat 09:30~20:30, free admission)

Venue: Taipei Fine Arts Museum; 181, Sec. 3,
Zhongshan N. Rd.
(臺北市立美術館; 中山北路3段181號)

Tel: (02)2595-7656

Website: www.tfam.museum/kid

The Musician That Dwells in Our Body – Overturning Perceptions of Sound



Cooperating across continents, the National Taiwan Science Education Center (NTSEC; 國立臺灣科學教育館) and Science Gallery of Dublin, Ireland have created the BIORHYTHM – Music and the Body Exhibition (「生物律動——住在身體裡的音樂家」特展). The show features 14 interactive works combining new media, installation, science, and other elements. The focus is on interactive experiences designed to promote a deeper understanding of the relationship between music and the body & mind.

The exhibition breaks through the usual differentiation between art and science shows. The NTSEC invited the Science Gallery, which has long been committed to the cross-discipline integration of science and art, to use music and sound. Creators from nine countries, including Ireland, Britain, France, Italy, Holland, the United States, and Japan, have works on display. These help explain the significance of different cultural perspectives regarding sound, and exhibit a series of

sensory experience which go beyond simple hearing sense, stimulating visitors' scientific curiosity.

With the *Sonic Bed*, from Britain, sound waves are emitted from subwoofers. Lying in a bed, you experience the unique sensation of music traveling along your skin. In the same vein is the marvelous *Sonic Chair*, exploring the impact of frequency on mood.

Music, Emotion and Empathy, experimental in spirit, uses a heartbeat monitor and galvanic skin response to explore the body's preferred reactions to music. *Heart N' Beat*, using optical sensors to detect and measure a heartbeat, is able to control the characteristics of sound.

The works in the show do not only explore how the body feels sound; some use the body to create music. With *The Theremin Inspectors*, just move your hands around to make music – no need to touch



any controls. For *Body Snatcher* first press a button and then emit a high-pitched rhythmic sound into the microphone to immediately receive in return a unique dance-melody remix incorporating your sound. The creation *Sound Capsule* lets the listener both hear and feel sound, combining two loudspeakers with six sensors, creating a 3D auditory and tactile experience inside the capsule.

In addition to the interactive-experience installations, a number of thought-provoking educational videos, intended to help visitors better understand how sound affects our emotions, are being screened, including the BBC's *Human Senses – Hearing and Balance* and the *Power of Sound and Hearing* episode from the Hello Brain series, which recently won a Golden Bell award for best science program.

The exhibition's easy and simple interactive approach makes the grasping of music and the body's relationship to it an easy and inviting exploration. The show has already spent time in New York, Singapore, the Philippines, and other locations, and during its stopover in Taipei, if you happen to be at the new Taipei Children's Amusement Park (臺北市立兒童新樂園) why not head over to the NTSEC for an infectious session of edu-tainment fun. 🎧

1. The BIORHYTHM – Music and the Body Exhibition features interactive new-media cross-domain artworks fusing science and art.
2. Lay in the Sonic Bed, connected to the sensory organs, and you feel the transmission of sound.
3. The interactive installation *Body Snatcher* captures sound with the body.
4. *Heart N' Beat* uses analog synthesis to control the characteristics of sound.
5. *Reactable* creates different sounds in accordance with the movements of different objects.

(Photos courtesy of NTSEC)

Information

BIORHYTHM – Music and the Body Exhibition

「生物律動——住在身體裡的音樂家」特展

Time: Until 6/10 (Mon~Fri 09:00~17:00; weekends/holidays 09:00~18:00)

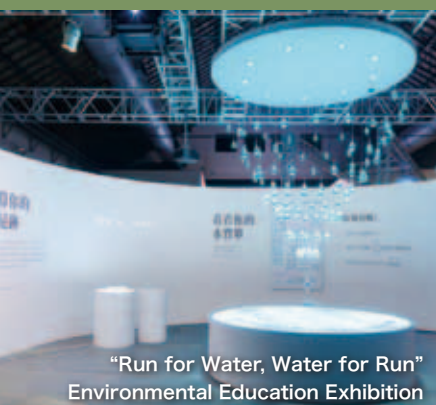
Venue: National Taiwan Science Education Center;
189, Shishang Rd.
(國立臺灣科學教育館; 士商路189號)

Tel: (02) 6610-1234

Website: www.ntsec.gov.tw



The Testimony of Food:
Ideas and Food



"Run for Water, Water for Run"
Environmental Education Exhibition



The Singleton Sensorial Space



The Taste of Vintage Formosa

National Palace Museum

Tel: (02)2881-2021

Add: 221, Sec. 2, Zhishan Rd. (至善路 2 段 221 號)

Website: www.npm.gov.tw

Until 3/25

Tusu Wine: The Emperor's First Drink of the Chinese New Year

Until 4/30

Painting Animation: Along the River During the Qingming Festival

Until 6/28

The Dao of Book Protection: Special Exhibition on the Art of Traditional Chinese Book Binding and Decoration

Until 9/9

The Enchanting Splendor of Vases and Planters: A Special Exhibition of Flower Vessels from the Ming and Qing Dynasties

Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts

Tel: (02)2896-1000 ext. 2432

Add: 1, Xueyuan Rd. (學園路 1 號)

Website: www.kdmofa.tnua.edu.tw

Until 4/26

Base Piece – E Chen Solo Exhibition

Until 5/3

2015 Outstanding Art Prize Exhibition: This is Not a Poisoned Apple

Until 5/3

"Maintaining _ Body" Movement Topology & Tracks in the City

Digital Art Center, Taipei

Tel: (02)7736-0708

Add: 180, Fuhua Rd. (福華路 180 號)

Website: www.dac.tw

3/14~5/3

Black Contemporary Animation – Solo Exhibition by Zhang Xu Zhan

5/16~6/18

Post Necromancy

Until 7/10

Digital Graphic Wall

Taiyuan Asian Puppet Theatre Museum

Tel: (02)2556-8909

Add: 79-3, Xining N.Rd. (西寧北路 79 之 3 號)

Website: www.taipeipuppet.com

Until 8/31

Die Blaue Stunde

Die Blaue Stunde National Taiwan Museum

Tel: (02)2382-2566

Add: 2, Xiangyang Rd. (襄陽路 2 號)

Website: Website: www.ntm.gov.tw

Until 11/29

Organic Life Style – Maomao's Journey to the Kingdom of Holes

Lin An Tai Historical House & Museum

Tel: (02)2599-6026

Add: 5, Binjiang St. (濱江街 5 號)

Website: lin-an-tai.net

Until 4/30

A Taste of Vintage Formosa

Taipei Fine Arts Museum

Tel: (02)2595-7656

Add: 181, Sec. 3, Zhongshan N. Rd. (中山北路 3 段 181 號)

Website: www.tfam.museum

Until 4/26

Chen Shun-Chu: Coral Stone Mountain

Until 5/3

The Wondrous All: Leading Edge of Eastern Thought

Until 5/3

The Testimony of Food: Ideas and Food

Former Air Force Command Headquarter

Tel: (02)2767-7684 ext. 786

Add: 55, Sec. 3, Renai Rd. (仁愛路 3 段 55 號)

Website: formerairforce.taipei.gov.tw

Until 4/9

"Run for Water, Water for Run" Environmental Education Exhibition

Until 4/12

Spatial Development of Formosa

Songshan Cultural and Creative Park

Tel: (02)2765-1388

Add: 133, Guangfu S. Rd. (光復南路 133 號)

Website: www.songshanculturalpark.org

Until 3/29

"Taiwanese Design Faces" Special Exhibition

Until 4/5

Into Peanuts Comic Strip: Snoopy 65th Anniversary Exhibition

5/6~6/9

The 4th Graduate Exposition in Songshan Cultural and Creative Park

Huashan 1914 Creative Park

Tel: (02)2358-1914

Add: 1, Sec. 1, Bade Rd. (八德路 1 段 1 號)

Website: web.huashan1914.com

4/29~5/4

Creative EXPO Taiwan 2015

Until 5/31

The Singleton Sensorial Space

National Theater & Concert Hall

Tel: (02)3393-9888

Add: 21-1, Zhongshan S. Rd. (中山南路 21 之 1 號)

Website: www.ntch.edu.tw

3/20~3/22

Wall of Fog



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

Taxi

Service locations:
North of the Arrivals hall of Terminal I and South 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:
Southwest of the Arrivals hall of Terminal I (exterior vehicle pickup corridor) and Northeast of the Arrivals hall of Terminal II (exterior vehicle pickup corridor)

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




One-way fare: NT\$85~145

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

Schedule: Every 15~20 minutes

Metro Taipei

Service Hours: 06:00~24:00 24-Hour Customer Service Hotline: (02)218-12345

Ticket	Price
One-way Trip 	NT\$20-NT\$65
Day Pass 	NT\$150
EasyCard 	Initial purchase: NT\$500 (incl. NT\$400 applicable to transit fares and NT\$100 deposit). The card provides discounts on transit fares and can also be used for small purchases at convenience stores and other designated shops.

Ticket	Price
Taipei Pass     	The Taipei Pass is activated upon first use on bus or metro ticket readers and valid for unlimited use till expiration. The Taipei Pass can be purchased at all Metro stations, and is used on the Taipei Metro and on Taipei and New Taipei City public buses (with Taipei Pass stickers showing). One-day pass: NT\$180 Two-day pass: NT\$310 Three-day pass: NT\$440 Five-day pass: NT\$700 Maokong Gondola One-day pass: NT\$250

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In order to facilitate inquiries by the public, the city government has set up the 1999 Taipei Citizen Hotline. Whether by telephone, cell phone, or Voice over IP (payphone excluded), dial 1999 for free access. There is a time limit, with service personnel restricted to 10-minute service availability, and a 10-minute limit on call transfers. Citizens are asked to make the most efficient use of this resource, making all calls as brief as possible.

For more information, call 1999 or visit www.rdec.taipei.gov.tw

TAIWAN EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Police / 110
Crimes, traffic accidents, and other incidents for which police assistance is needed

Fire and Emergency / 119
Fire, injury or accident, or other urgent matters for which emergency relief is needed

Women and Children Protection Hotline / 113 ext. 0
24-hour emergency, legal information, and psychological services for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse.

NON-EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Unit	Tel. No.
Taipei City Govt. Citizen Hotline	1999 (02-2720-8889 outside Taipei city)
English Directory Service	106
IDD Telephone Service Hotline	0800-080-100 ext.9
Time-of-Day Service	117
Weather Service	166
Traffic Reports	168
Tourism Bureau (MOTC) 24-Hour Toll-Free Travel Information Hotline	0800-011-765
Tourism Bureau (MOTC) Toll-Free Traveler Complaints Hotline	0800-211-734
International Community Service Hotline	0800-024-111
Tourism Bureau Information Counter, Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport	Terminal 1: (03)398-2194 Terminal 2: (03)398-3341
Bureau of Foreign Trade	(02)2351-0271
Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA)	(02)2725-5200
Taiwan Visitors Association	(02)2594-3261
The Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Taipei	(02)2522-2163
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	(02)2348-2999
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Citizens Hotline	(02)2380-5678
Police Broadcasting Station	(02)2388-8099
English Hotline for Taxi Service	0800-055-850 ext.2
Consumer Service Center Hotline	1950
Bureau of National Health Insurance Information Hotline	0800-030-598
AIDS Information Hotline	0800-888-995

Source for Above Information:
Information For Foreigners Service / Tel: 0800-024-111
Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications
Tel: (02) 2349-1500
※ Entries in green indicate service in English provided

LIST OF TAIPEI VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS

Taipei Main Station (02)2312-3256 1F, 3, Beiping W. Rd.	MRT Jiantan Station (02)2883-0313 65, Sec. 5, Zhongshan N. Rd.	Miramar Entertainment Park Visitor Center (02)8501-2762 20, Jingye 3 rd Rd.
Songshan Airport (02)2546-4741 340-10, Dunhua N. Rd.	MRT Beitou Station (02)2894-6923 1, Guangming Rd.	Maokong Gondola Taipei Zoo Station (02)8661-7627 2, Ln. 10, Sec. 2, Xinguang Rd. (1F, Maokong Gondola Service Center)
East Metro Mall (02)6638-0059 4-2, 77, Sec. 1, Daan Rd. (Underground Mall)	MRT Taipei 101/World Trade Center Station (02)2758-6593 B1, 20, Sec. 5, Xinyi Rd.	Maokong Gondola Maokong Station (02)2937-8563 35, Ln. 38, Sec. 3, Zhinan Rd. (Exit area, Maokong Station)
MRT Ximen Station (02)2375-3096 B1, 32-1, Baoqing Rd.	Taipei City Hall Bus Station (02)2723-6836 6, Sec. 5, Zhongxiao E. Rd.	
MRT Yuanshan Station (02)2591-6130 9-1, Jiuquan St.	Plum Garden Visitor Center (02)2897-2647 6, Zhongshan Rd.	



Spring in Taipei Means Strawberry-Picking in Neihu! (P.34~37) Map



Spring in Taipei Means Strawberry-Picking in Neihu! (P.34~37) Tour Information



Spring in Taipei Means Strawberry-Picking in Neihu!

MT Toast 麥町吐司工房 (內湖貳店)

Add: 2-1, Aly. 1, Ln. 60, Sec. 3, Neihu Rd.;
Neihu Branch No. 2
(內湖路3段60巷1弄2之1號)
Tel: (02)2793-6396

Bishan Tourism Strawberry Farm
碧山草莓園

Venue: 47-12, Bishan Rd.
(碧山路47之12號)
Tel: (02)2793-1382

Baishihu Tourism Farm
白石湖草莓園

Venue: 40, Bishan Rd. (碧山路40號)
Tel: (02)2790-2785, 0927-151-119

Shanying Strawberry Farm
山櫻草莓園

Venue: 40, Bishan Rd. (碧山路40號)
Tel: 0933-065-537

Berry Garden Tourism and
Leisure Farm 莓園觀光休閒農園

Venue: 38-2, Bishan Rd.
(碧山路38之2號)
Tel: (02)2790-2492, 0937-458-986

Wild Flower and Fruit Organic Farm
野草花果有機農場

Venue: 38, Bishan Rd. (碧山路38號)
Tel: (02)2790-2706

Farmhouse Cafe Trattoria
穠舍田園咖啡義大利菜

Venue: 38, Bishan Rd. (碧山路38號)
Tel: (02)2793-5448

Woodcraft Workshop 木想工作室

Add: 30, Bishan Rd. (碧山路30號)

Tel: (02)2791-3623

Moooon River Café & Books

Add: 218, Ruiguang Rd.
(瑞光路218號)
Tel: (02)7720-2070

Transportation Information

MT Toast, Strawberry Farms on
Bishan Rd.

Take MRT Wenhua line → MRT Neihu Station Exit 1 and walk left along Sec. 4, Chenggong Rd. for 3 min. → Turn left on Jinlong Rd. walk straight for 5 min. → Turn right on Ln. 59, Sec. 3, Neihu Rd. and walk forward → MT Toast → Turn right and go straight on Sec. 3 Neihu Rd. to the intersection of Bishan Rd. and take the Small No. 2 bus → Get off at 47, Bishan Rd., follow the mountain trail → Bishan Tourism Strawberry Farm / Baishihu Tourism Farm / Shanying Strawberry Farm / Berry Garden Tourism and Leisure Farm / Wild Flower and Fruit Organic Farm

Farmhouse Cafe Trattoria

Walk right from 38, Bishan Rd. and follow the mountain trail for 5 min. → Tongxin Pool → Follow the trail, turn right and walk for 2 min. → Farmhouse Cafe Trattoria → Follow the trail next to farmhouse for 5 min. → Baishihu Suspension Bridge

Baishihu Suspension Bridge, Bishanyan

Stroll along Baishihu Suspension Bridge for 10-15 min. → Leave the bridge and walk left for 5 min. → Bishanyan stone steps → Walk up the steps for approx. 5 min. → Door of Bishanyan → Walk down the steps → Take the Small No. 2 bus

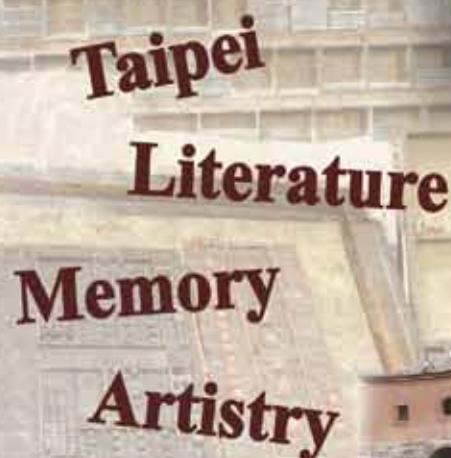
Woodcraft Workshop, Moooon
River Café & Books

Take the Small No. 2 bus → 30, Bishan Rd. Woodcraft Workshop → Hail the Small No. 2 Bus at the front door of workshop → Get off at intersection of Ruiguang Rd. and Gangqian Rd., walk towards Ruiguang Rd. for approx. 10 min. → Moooon River Café & Books



台北文學季
Feb - May

Feb - May



Taipei
Literature
Memory
Artistry

Memory
 “Taipei Public Library”
 Made by Han

Taipei Literature • Reading and Video Exhibition

"Taipei Publishing Memories: The Era of Literature Made by Hand" Exhibition

East Asia Literature / Culture City Forum

Taipei Literature Festival • City Library
Good Books Exhibition

Taipei Literature Reading Lectures

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Support | 台北教育大學、臺北市政府教育局、財團法人弘道文教基金會、紀州庵、財團法人弘道文教基金會、創藝人生活空間發展協會、國泰世華銀行基金會、國泰世華藝術中心、金石堂書店、金車文學創作獎、金車文藝中心、廣居。

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