

# Discover Taiwan

Be endlessly surprised!



# 5 Great Reasons to Visit Beautiful Taiwan!

## 1 Majestic Mountains

Visiting Taiwan for the first time, you will no doubt be impressed by how mountainous the island is. There are 268 peaks soaring past 3,000 meters, and the breathtaking terrain variation makes it a paradise for hiking enthusiasts. Much of its space is taken up by the majestic Central Mountain Range, with its highest peak, Mt. Jade (Yushan), a must-do if you are serious about mountain climbing. Among the most popular and beautiful mountain areas you'll want to explore are the Taroko Gorge, a world-class natural and scenic wonder, and the Alishan National Scenic Area, known for spectacular sunrises, a heritage alpine railway, and strikingly photogenic high-mountain tea plantations.



## 2 Alluring Ocean

The island of Taiwan faces the mighty Pacific Ocean to the east and the Taiwan Strait to the west. Its long coastline presents you with diverse landscapes and myriad opportunities for outdoor fun. The most popular beach resort location is Kenting National Park in the far south, which boasts a rich natural environment and fine-sand beaches. Ideal surfing conditions await you along the coast of Taitung in the southeast, and the windy offshore Penghu Islands are ideal for windsurfing. If you're looking for snorkeling and diving adventures among tropical reefs, Green Island and Orchid Island are first-rate options. Exploring unique rock formations, for example those at Yehliu Geopark on the North Coast, is another great way to spend time by the sea and take in the marvelous coastal scenery.



## 3 Indigenous Peoples

When visiting Taiwan, make sure to meet members of its indigenous tribes, renowned for their passionate singing, intricate handicrafts, a lifestyle close to nature, and hearty food. Exciting annual harvest festivals give you the opportunity to witness the beauty of tribal culture on full display. The majority of the island's indigenous peoples live in eastern Taiwan and in mountainous areas elsewhere, each tribe possessing its own distinctive cultural traditions, rites, and ceremonies. Numerous tribal villages welcome visitors and offer unique cultural experiences, such as participating in harvest festival activities and going on guided village and forest tours.



## 4 Intriguing Culture

Taiwan is well-known for its unique mix of ultra-modern city life and deep-rooted traditions. Make sure to visit old local centers of religion such as Longshan Temple and Bao'an Temple in Taipei, and other outstanding examples of traditional temple architecture. If you happen to encounter a traditional temple festival, you'll certainly be impressed by the faithful believers' fervor and devotion. You also don't want to miss one of the large annual folk festivals, such as the Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival, to experience how the Taiwanese go about celebrating special occasions. Another way to immerse yourself in local culture is by visiting one of the old villages of the Hakka people, a Han ethnic minority with a distinctive cultural character.

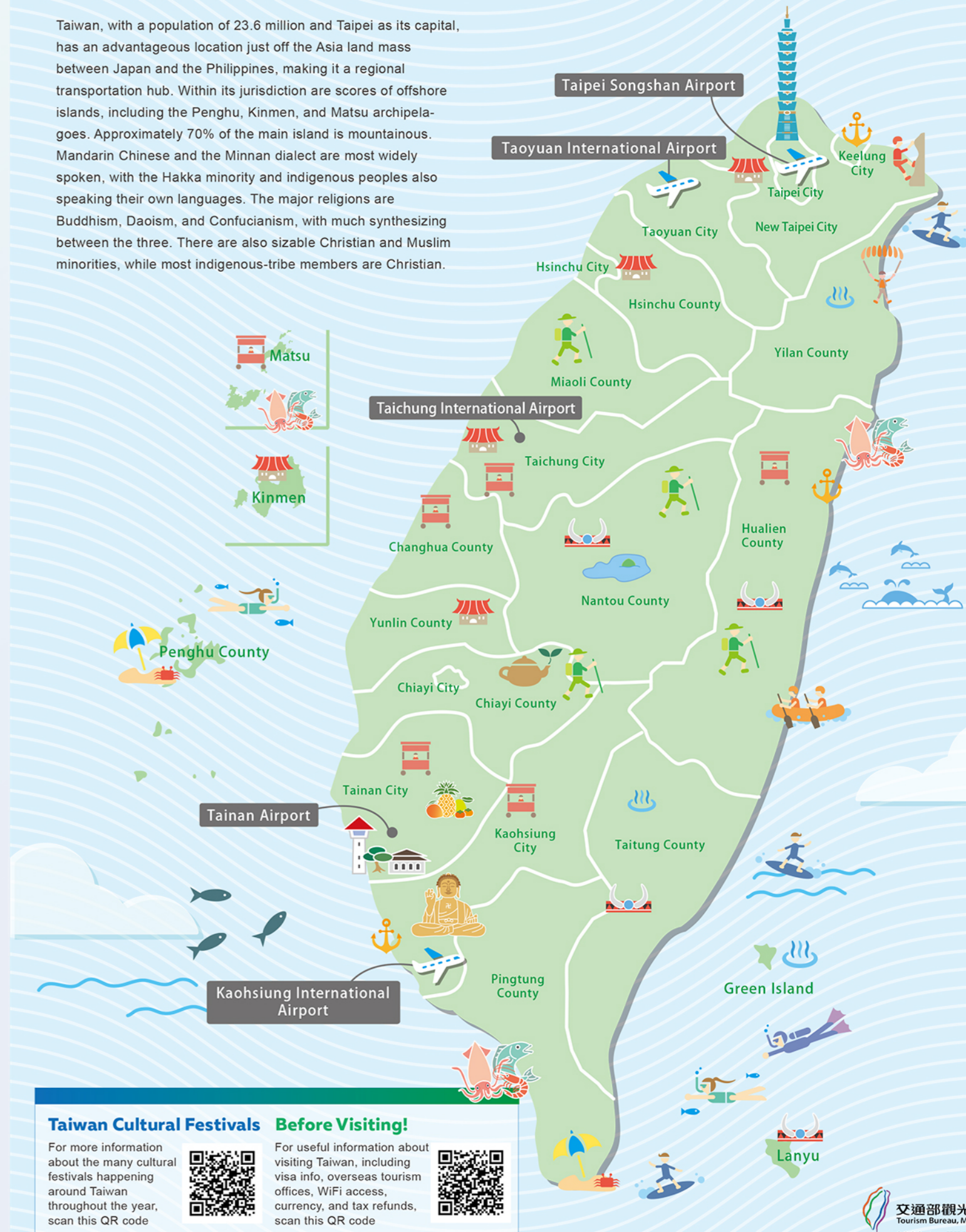


## 5 Wonderful Food

If you love food, you will enjoy your time in Taiwan, one of the world's great food emporiums. Here you can indulge in local Taiwanese specialties and the cuisines of all regions in mainland China. Surrounded by the sea, seafood is an essential part of the local food culture, and its quality and freshness are exceptional. Because of its unique topography and climate, Taiwan also produces an amazing range of fruits, from tropical mangoes to temperate-zone pears and apples. Innovative and creative cuisine is trending in Taiwan these days, and chefs are constantly searching for new ways to please the palates of demanding diners, meaning that despite your best efforts you'll find it impossible to run out of options for truly amazing food creations.

# Taiwan

Taiwan, with a population of 23.6 million and Taipei as its capital, has an advantageous location just off the Asia land mass between Japan and the Philippines, making it a regional transportation hub. Within its jurisdiction are scores of offshore islands, including the Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu archipelagoes. Approximately 70% of the main island is mountainous. Mandarin Chinese and the Minnan dialect are most widely spoken, with the Hakka minority and indigenous peoples also speaking their own languages. The major religions are Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism, with much synthesizing between the three. There are also sizable Christian and Muslim minorities, while most indigenous-tribe members are Christian.



### Taiwan Cultural Festivals Before Visiting!

For more information about the many cultural festivals happening around Taiwan throughout the year, scan this QR code



For useful information about visiting Taiwan, including visa info, overseas tourism offices, WiFi access, currency, and tax refunds, scan this QR code





# Whatever Your Heart Desires You'll Find It in Taiwan!

## Join Cultural Celebrations!

Exciting cultural festivals take place throughout the year in Taiwan, presenting you with great opportunities to celebrate together with the locals. Early in the year, make sure to catch one of the numerous Lantern Festival events marking the end of the Lunar New Year period, including the official Taiwan Lantern Festival and the heartwarming Pingxi Sky Lantern Festival. Standing out among the myriad annual cultural events is the Dajia Mazu Pilgrimage, one of the world's biggest religious festivals. Other festivals you don't want to miss during your stay in Taiwan are the Dragon Boat Festival, with entertaining dragon boat races taking place in various locations, and the Mid-Autumn Festival, during which the Taiwanese admire the beauty of the full moon while enjoying BBQ, mooncakes, and pomelo fruit. Ending the year with a big bang is the Taipei New Year's Eve Countdown Party; the Taipei 101 skyscraper virtually explodes in a bedazzling show of fireworks.

## Take the Railway!

Taiwan's inexpensive public-transport system is world-class – modern, clean, and efficient – and a great option for getting around the island. If in a hurry, you can take the High Speed Rail service that runs north-south in the west. For round-the-island journeys, take the conventional-rail lines, and for explorations of the cities of Taipei and Kaohsiung, the modern and convenient metro systems are your best choice. If you're a railway enthusiast, you'll love the tourism-oriented branch lines, including the Alishan Forest Railway and Pingxi, Neiwai, and Jiji lines. For many places of interest not connected to the railway system, you can take the buses of the convenient Taiwan Tourist Shuttle bus network, with stops at both high-speed and conventional-rail stations, and go on Taiwan Tour Bus organized tours.



## Indulge in the Fine Cuisine!

Taiwan is a food paradise, and no visit to the island is complete without trying the enticing local specialties. From simple night-market stalls to five-star hotel restaurants, foodies are spoiled for choice in the cities. For fresh seafood, you'll want to make a trip to the many fishing harbors along the coast. Among the top snack-delicacy choices for visitors are beef noodles, soup dumplings, and mango ice. You also want to try the island's excellent tea products, including high-mountain tea or the popular pearl milk tea, which was invented here. The island is also well-known for its hand-shake-beverage shops. For help with the finest restaurants in Taipei City, you can consult the Michelin Guide Taipei.

## Go on a Bicycle Trip!

Known as a producer of high-quality bicycles, in recent years Taiwan has also become a great destination for bicycling trips thanks to a nationwide system of dedicated paths and road routes in scenic areas. If you want to bike in cities like Taipei, you can make use of the popular YouBike public bike-rental system, and if looking for a more challenging way to explore Taiwan, you might attempt completing the well-marked round-island cycling route. Among the most popular cycling locations are Taipei's riverside bike paths, the route around Sun Moon Lake in central Taiwan, and bikeways in the idyllic East Rift Valley. Each year a festival dedicated to bicycling is held, the Taiwan Cycling Festival, with many enjoyable cycling activities you can participate in.

## Go on Outdoor Adventures!

Taiwan is a playground for adventurous types where you can literally hike in the high mountains and play on a beach on the same day. From easy hikes close to the city to challenging treks in the high mountains, the island offers something for every hiker. One of the most thrilling hikes you can choose is the dramatic cliff-edge Zhulu Old Trail in Taroko Gorge. The mountainous areas are also perfect for river tracing and for eco-explorations. If you're looking for an adrenaline rush, consider rafting on the Xiuguan River in East Taiwan and paragliding on the North Coast and in other locations around the island. Among the many other outdoor-fun options are rock climbing on the Northeast Coast and hot-air balloon flights in Taitung County.



## Explore the Modern Cities!

Taiwan's cities are vibrant and modern. Taipei's Xinyi commercial district, the island's trendsetter in fashion and defining the modern lifestyle, is the best location for your next shopping spree. There you'll definitely want to check out towering Taipei 101, a modern architectural masterpiece and the best vantage point for seeing the city from above. In Taipei and in equally modern Taichung and Kaohsiung you'll find countless fine restaurants, cafés, and teahouses as well as bars, pubs, and nightclubs. To witness the fascinating transformation of old industrial sites into cultural-creative hubs, head to the Songshan Cultural and Creative Park in Taipei and the Pier-2 Art District in Kaohsiung. If interested in exploring a truly historic city, head to Tainan, Taiwan's old imperial-era capital!

## Relax in the Hot Springs!

At the end of a long sightseeing day, what better way to relax than by taking a soothing hot-spring bath? The Japanese introduced their love for hot-spring bathing to the island during their period of colonial rule (1895–1945). Taiwan is home to over 100 hot-spring locations, and has scores of high-quality resort hotels, inns, and public facilities you can choose from. Each spring area has its own distinctive scenery and character, and also mineral waters of different types noted for specific health and beauty benefits. The sulfurous waters of Yangmingshan/Beitou can help with skin issues such as eczema, while Guanziling's mud springs are known to help with arthritis. If you want to soak in perhaps the most unique of all hot springs in Taiwan, head to Green Island's saltwater Zhaori Hot Spring, where you'll enjoy unforgettable sunrises from outdoor pools right by the Pacific Ocean.

