

貳拾期

走台步

Chen Mingzhang's
Beitou.
Hot Springs.
Taiwan Songs.

Warm and Relaxing Springs,
Fun of Winter Spas

North

Beitou hot springs,
Jinshan hot springs,
Wulai hot springs

Central

Tai'an hot springs,
Guguan hot springs,
Chingjing hot springs,
Peikong hot springs

South

Tainan Guanziling hot springs,
Kaohsiung Baolai hot springs,
Bulao hot springs,
Pingtung Checheng Sihjhongsi
hot springs

Yilan

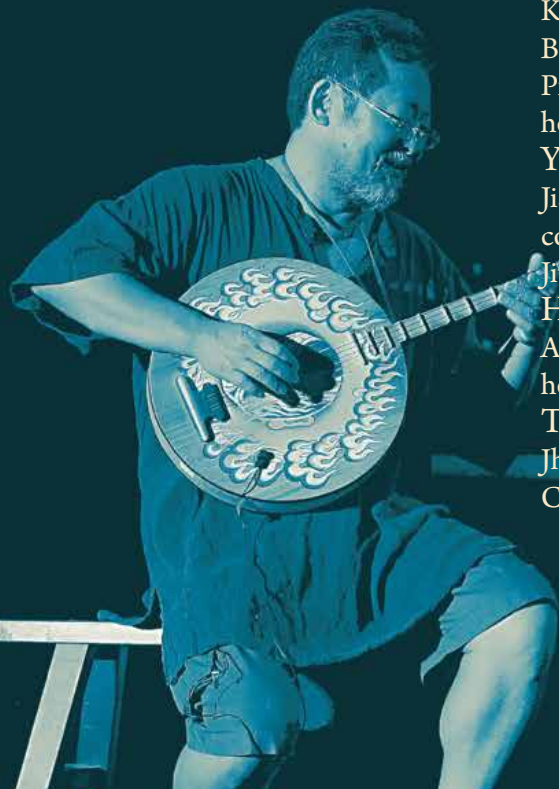
Jiaoxi hot springs, Su'ao
cold springs and
Jiuzhize hot springs

Hualien

Antong hot springs, Ruisui
hot springs

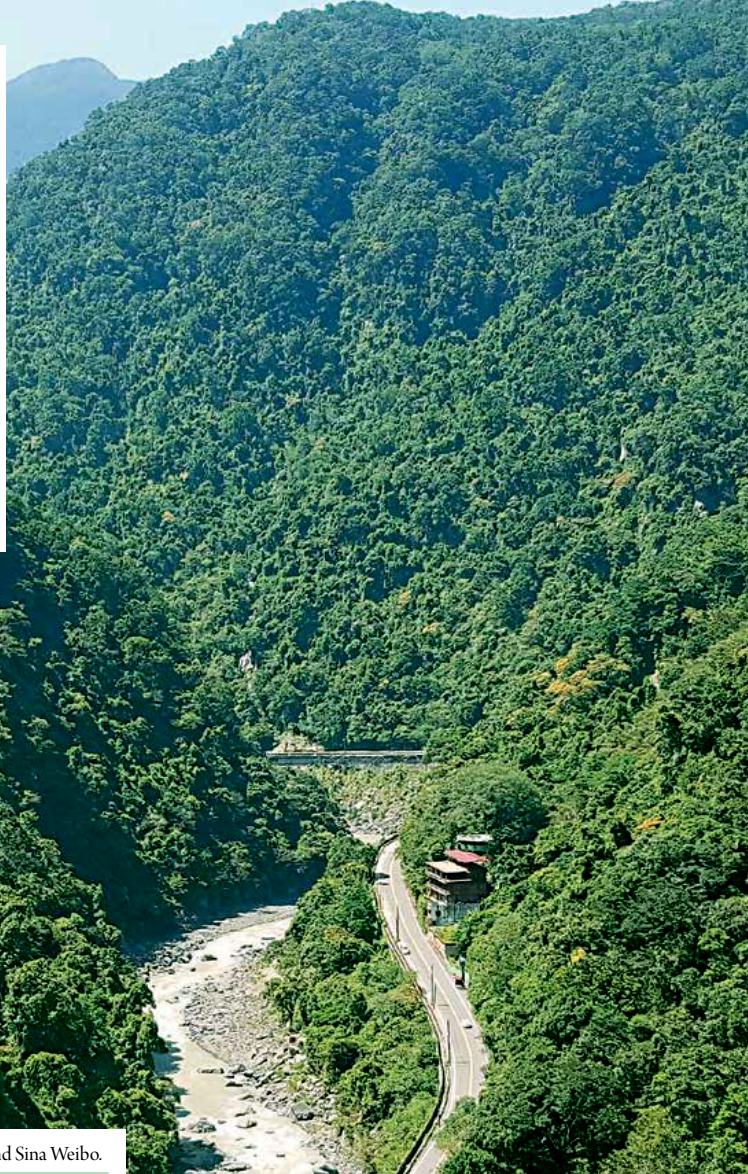
Taitung

Jhaorih hot springs,
Chihpeng hot springs



Editor's Words

Last year we went to Hong Kong to promote Taiwan Steps, and asked the readers what other contents they would like to read from the magazine, they mentioned about Taiwan's tea and spa cultures. Therefore, this issue presents Chen Mingzhang, a guy who grew up in the hot spring environment. We'll listen to the Lao Yueqin playing, and follow the musical notes in quest of the legendary beauty spa that is good for health and beauty.



Welcome to check the "Taiwan Step" magazine on Facebook and Sina Weibo.

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Chen Mingzhang's Beitou Hot Spring Taiwan Songs

Text/Huang Baoxuan Picture/Kang Qiyang & Chen Mingzhang Studio

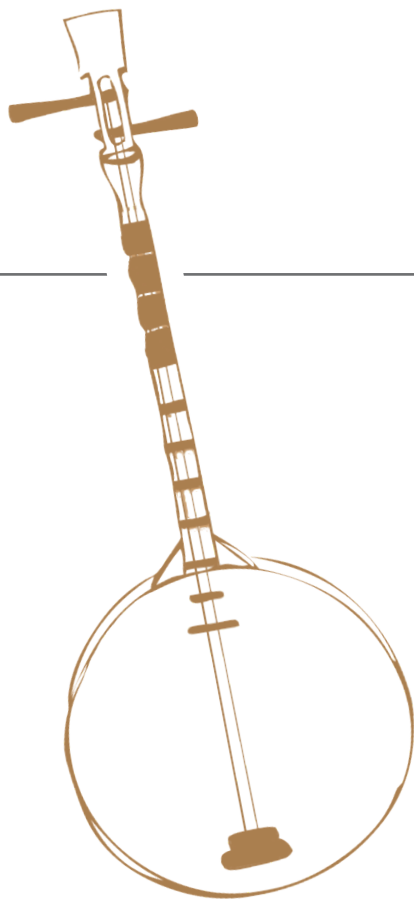


Little trip to Beitou: Hot spring and Nagashi home

Talking about his hometown Beitou, Chen said, “This place is close to Yangmingshan and Tamshui. In the age of 30s, I would ride a motorbike to the northern coasts for inspirations...” Besides the beautiful landscape of mountains and creeks, Beitou is also famous for its hot springs. In its heyday, there were as many as 70 hot spring hotels, while the public bathhouses were like the nearby habitants’ bathrooms. Chen was brought up in the hot spring bathing. Today, the bathhouses have been replaced by magnificent hot spring hotels. Chen Mingzhang also recommends a stroll in the Beitou Park, where you’ll immerse yourself in the hundred-year old maple fragrance,

Japanese-style stone bridge, and the “Beitou Hot Spring Museum” that is a renovation from an original public bathhouse by the legendary Japanese designer Matsuyama Mori.

In the heyday of 60s~70s, hotels offered unique singing-while-walking Nakashi services, which was like today’s miniature live band, playing Nanguan, Beiguan, Japanese music, Taiwanese folk songs, indigenous songs and anything you name it. But this style has already faded away. Chen recalled and said, “Beitou is like Taiwan’s Vienna, and without Nakashi, there would be no Jonathan Lee and me!” Growing in this diversified musical hybrid arena, Chen started to contemplate, “What on earth is Taiwanese music?”



Before spotting Chen Mingzhang, you hear his guitar playing. Walking into his Beitou office, you’ll see Chen Mingzhang in a T-shirt and black shorts, playing an odd musical instrument, which is like a junction of a folk song guitar and Yueqin painted with large colorful Hakka peony flowers. It’s his recent innovation of “Base Marine Guitar”, with chords inspired by Bunun’s eight-part polyphony. In the past decades, Chen has developed a variety of guitar chord systems derived from Chinese pentatonic scale, Yueqin, Nanguan, Beiguan, and Taiwanese opera tunes. Worth the title of “Taiwan Folk Godfather”, Chen is now dedicated to musical education, teaching his lifelong Taiwan music without reservation, hoping to re-root the culture about to be lost and make it strong again.



The 40 years on the road to Taiwanese music

In the age of 20s, Chen Mingzhang was amazingly shocked by Cheng Da's Yueqin playing. And that was the time he began to depart from pop music, getting into the core of every piece of disappearing Taiwan music. "Following Zhu Dingshun to learn Hengshun Yueqin, learning the eight-part polyphony from Pastor Bai in a Bunun tribe, and Beiqiang glove puppetry from Li Tianlu, Nanguan wheel drum from Wu Tianluo, Amis vintage tunes from Guo Yingnan... That was a time when the musical masters were all alive, so that I could record their playing while listening, and then took time to use polyphony to sort out a theoretical system," said Chen.

Over the last four decades, Chen Mingzhang has sorted out eight sets of Taiwan music theories. "Taiwan with diversified ethnic groups has preserved Han culture's Nanguan five music laws and Qin seven music laws. The most notable is the indigenous music, which doesn't need musical instrument, and the rhythm is developed via human voices alone such as the Amis five music laws, Atayal chanting, and Zou's big three chords, which are all great..." said Chen, demonstrating with chanting. And then he suddenly changed the tone by saying, "But, theories alone are no use."

The sea accommodates all – inheritance of Taiwan music

Chen Mingzhang often says that the essential elements of this music theory are Freedom and Sea Accommodation. "See, the Amis singing doesn't count music beats, and the eight-part polyphone and Chen Da's Yueqin are all impromptu to the emotions and



tacit rhythm of the moment, different every time, and that's what I call freedom! There is such a variety of music in Taiwan, and if you don't get back to square one, how can you accommodate such a vast variety like only the sea can do?" While talking, he could not but grab the Yueqin beside him and played. "See, the chords from the strings are beyond the guitar's capacity... without instructions from a master, the mental cultivation can hardly be reached."

In 2008, after being diagnosed with high blood pressure, Chen Mingzhang decided to devote himself to teaching, so that more people could contribute to extend the Taiwan music. Although it is not easy to cultivate teachers, he said optimistically, "I'm thinking that 20 years from now, more and more people will be playing Taiwan music, and more people will find what music they'd like to play." In addition to teaching, he also personally organized the Taiwan Yueqin Folk Festivity, and it is the 6th anniversary this year. "Rooted in own lands, to distinguish from the rest of the world. Getting started from education? Come on! If only we make it bigger and better, without argument, the world will ultimately come over for pilgrimage. They will take our contents back home and add to their text books."



Hundred years old hot springs good for healthy body warmth – Antong Hot Springs and Ruei Suei Hot Springs

Text & Picture / Kathy

Driving all the way from Taipei to Hualien, the destination has to be the famous Antong Hot Springs, situated at the border between Yuli and Fuli, with the nearby Antong Zhuonaun reputed as one of the eight greatest local attractions. I stayed at the Japanese style Water Moon Hot Spring Hotel. That was a raining day. I watched the raindrops falling gently on the smoking spring water, and the ripple of winds put a beautiful hazy curtain on the rich lush green, seemingly manifesting to leave behind all the daily stresses.

Antong Hot Springs – crystal clear water

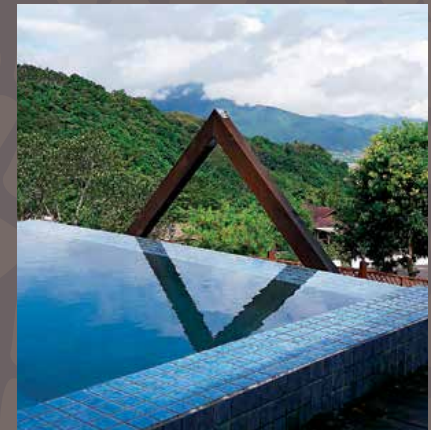
Hot springs in different places have their own stories to tell. It is said that the Antong hot springs were discovered in the Japanese Occupation Era by a Japanese camphor collector, and it was not until the 1930s that public baths were established. Through all the years, this place gradually developed into a hot spring resort. Later on, the premises were purchased by private investors and renovated into today's Antong Hot Spring Hotel.

The Antong hot springs are pure and nearly crystal clear, with a temperature of 66°C. The spring contains weak alkaline chloride sulphate, emitting a hydrogen sulfide smell, which is said to be good for treatment on skin diseases, gastrointestinal diseases, women's

diseases and traumas.

The Water Moon Hot Spring Hotel I stayed at is in business for just a few years. Each guest room has its own independent sightseeing balcony and a standard cypress bath tub for two. After a pleasant spa, sitting on the balcony to overlook the tranquil surroundings is a fantastic treat to release the tresses from everyday hustle and bustle. For a bigger spa bathing space, a parent-child spa house accommodating 3 or 4 persons is recommended.

My knowledge about hot springs was shallow until I met a mogul – Madam Pan Yuexia, Chairwoman of Hualien Antong Hot Springs Tourist Association, from whom I learned a lot of little secrets of the hot springs.





She told me that the Antong hot springs are situated at the fault squeezed by the Eurasia Plate and the Philippine Plate, and as a result, there are 200 to 300 meters of spring outcrops on the northern banks of the Antong River, and the crustal oscillation enriches the spring quality.

Spring water is like the mother's amniotic fluid that warms us

Madam Pan emotionally said, "I'm particularly proud of the Antong hot springs, which are among the very few unpolluted natural hot springs. There are less than 10 hot spring spa businesses here, which have their own distinctive features to offer, and are mindfully protecting the natural gifts. To me, hot spring spa is not only for warmth and health, it is just like the mother's amniotic fluid that warms and protects us, allowing us to let go of everyday annoyances and recover from weariness.

I was amazed by such wonderful words about the hot springs. At the night of Hualien after the rain subsided, I filled up the spa tub with the hot spring water, and then experienced the happiness of immersion in the amniotic fluid, quietly and tranquilly. Next morning, the outdoor infinity hot spring swimming pool was already fully covered by

the sunshine of the dawn. With a little bit of spare time left, I rushed to take a foot spa. When the feel of the spring heat coming out from the bottom of my feet reached inside my body, I experienced the wonder of cozy blood circulation. No wonder people always say hot spring spas are good for health.

Rueil Sui Hot Springs – Taiwan's exclusive carbonate hot springs

In addition to the Antong Hot Springs, the Rueil Sui Hot Springs are also the most representative of the Hualien hot springs. The Rueil Sui hot springs, also known as "Exterior Hot Springs", has Taiwan's one-of-a-kind carbonate spring water, rich in iron and sodium minerals, with a temperature of 48°C. The color of the spring water is unique. It appears light yellow turbidity when oxidized with the air, and tastes a bit of salty and rusty.

Just hearing the introductions of the Rueil Sui Hot Springs makes one think of the "heavy tastes" of the natural hot springs. However, it is exactly the special tastes and colors of the springs that denote the richly diversified minerals, which offer smooth and un-sticky skin touch after the hot spring spa. Therefore, Hualien locals entitle it the "Hot Spring of All Hot Springs".

When I was taking a look around the Rueil

Sui hot spring area, I counted more than a dozen of B&B hostels along the road, some of which are new while others are in business for decades. They are all decorated to exude vintage styles and scents. And then, I ran into very interesting publicity words which read: "It is said that the carbonate spring water has a PH value between 6 and 7, which is of weak alkaline quality good for a higher probability of giving birth to boys if women do the spa frequently. It is also good for treating skin diseases and arthritis." So, if women want to give birth to boys, come and take a hot spring spa!

Hualien's "Heart Spa"

It's a rare treat to escape from the urban hustle and bustle, and come to visit the beautiful landscape of Hualien. This is a place with the widest spread of carbonated hot springs in Taiwan, and the water temperature is lower than that of other areas. In this trip, I finally experienced the wonder of the "Antong Hot Springs" and "Rueil Sui Hot Springs". No wonder these are the favorable destinations for Taiwan urban dwellers to spend their holidays and alleviate their daily stresses.



It is also said that the Hualien hot springs are good for microvascular expansion to stimulate blood circulation, and therefore the spa won't result in palpitations from pulse speed-up. Instead, the reduced burden on the heart can keep the heart warm and protect it. So, the hot spring bathing are called "Heart Spa", a definite treasure gifted by the great mother nature.

Water Moon Hot Spring Hotel

Tel: 03-888-3299

Web: <http://www.wmhotspring.com.tw/>

Address: No. 41-8, Antong Hot Spring Road, Lehe Village, Yuli Township, Hualien County

Rueil Sui Hot Spring Hotel

Tel: 03-887-2170

Web: <http://www.js-hotspring.com.tw/>

Address: No. 23, Hongye Village, Wanrong Township, Hualien County



A Resort Offering Natural Hot Spring Spas with Great Scenery Views – Chao-jih Hot Spring and Zhiben Hot Spring

Text & Picture/ Kathy

One of the world's three ocean springs: Chao-jih Hot Spring

In addition to the Japanese Kyushu and northern Italy, the most convenient shortcut for Hong Kong people to personally experience the world's rare underground hot springs is flying to the offshore Ludao (Green Island) of Taiwan, a district under the governance of Taitung County. Here, the Chao-jih hot springs originate from the surrounding seas or water going through underground and heated by volcano lavas before emerging from intertidal zones. They are precious because they are of igneous rock springs.

From a geographic perspective, the Chao-jih hot spring is close to Guoshangudao (ancient mountain crossing trail), Fanchuanbi (sail boat nose) and Zhiping, facing the Pacific Ocean, toward the rising sun, and was therefore named “Xu-jih Spring” in the Japanese Ruling Era. The spring water is clear with a temperature of 53°C, while at the outcrops it can reach 90°C. With a pH7.5, it is of sulfate chloride spring. The spring doesn't have a strong odor, yet tastes a bit salty. It has no irritation to the skin, thus leaving no stickiness on the skin. Of course, we should be particularly noted that hot spring is for spa only – absolutely not for drinking.

To receive the large number of spa goers,



the Chao-jih Hot Spring Zone provides three circular open air baths, a semi-outdoor spa pool, and a large hot spring swimming pool, capable of accommodating 300-400 people. In addition, there are an egg-cooking area and a swimsuit shop. At daytime, visitors can enjoy the one-of-a-kind sunshine seawater hot spring spa, and at the nighttime immerse in the romance of stars watching bath.

The Taitung No. 1 View: Zhiben Hot Spring

Also a feast of the great natural scenery, the Zhiben Hot Spring is situated at the valley of the Zhiben River. It is of the alkaline carbonic acid spring, odorless and colorless, with a temperature as high as 100°C. With its superior water quality, the spring helps circulate blood, relax muscles and joints, and alleviate stress and weariness. Most of all, the Zhiben Hot Spring area offers magnificent sceneries of canyons and waterfalls, as well as forest recreation areas, thus reputed as the Taitung No. 1 View.

Chao-jih Hot Spring

Address: No. 167, Wenquan Road, Gongguan Village, Ludao Township, Taitung County

Business hours: Summer (June~Sept.) 05:00~02:00
Winter (Oct.~April) 06:00~24:00

By land: taking a ferry at Fugong, Taitung, for a journey of 50 minutes or so.

By air: taking a small plane at Funien, Taitung, for a journey of 15 minutes or so.



A wonderful place for spas all seasons – Jiaoxi hot springs, Su'ao cold springs and the Jiuzhize hot spring

Text & Picture/ Kathy

The Su'ao cold springs and Jiaoxi hot springs, in the south and the north respectively of Yilan County, are both famous Yilan treasures. This time, the report is about the renowned public spa parks in both areas, inspired by a closer look at the everyday life of the locals in beauty spas that offer a refreshing feel all day long. In the nearby Taipingshan National Forest Recreation Area, there is the Jiuzhize hot spring, which offers exuberance of forest phytoncide and spas, with a distinguished style.

Taking a beauty spa – the WuanChuanGo Park and Jiaoxi Spa Park

The two parks are merely 5 minutes of drive apart, frequented by spa goers. There's the Foot Spa Pavilion offering foot spa for free, in addition to cheap public spa baths for man and women separately. The

Japanese style spa baths in the Jiaoxi Spa Park are particularly awesome. The Jiaoxi hot spring is famous for its crystal clear and odor-free water quality, entitled beauty spa. At the Foot Spa Pavilion, I ran into a Lin couple. The husband was a Jiaoxi local, and his father was a public servant at the Yilan County Government. In his childhood, Mr. Lin lived in a government dormitory used to be inhabited by Japanese officials. In the premises, there was a 33-square meter public bath, where he used to take a spa early in the morning before going to school. After school, he took another bath before dinner. And now, he lives in Luodong, but still habitually takes 2 or 3 times of spa bath each week at the WuanChuanGo Park. The water temperature at the Foot Spa Pavilion is about 30-40°C, and taking a 20-minute foot spa is a perfect treat. Lin told me that the WuanChuanGo spa discharges and refills the water at five every

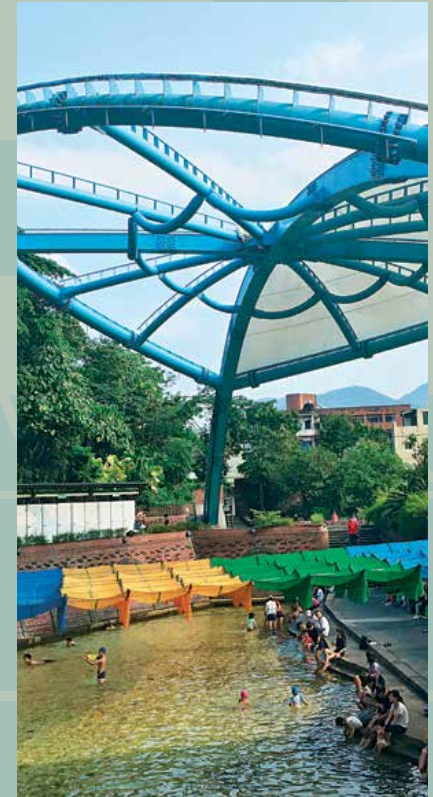


morning, and therefore an early morning spa has the cleanest water.

According to some literatures, the Jiaoxi hot spring contains sodium bicarbonate which moisturizes the skin. Therefore, it is reputed as a “beauty spa”. To women, it's like bathing in a natural cosmetic liquid, giving smooth and moisturizing touch of the skin, soft and tender without stickiness. It also helps whiten the skin and soften cuticles, and inflammation from burn wounds can be alleviated and the scars fade away. In addition, the spring water after being treated can be drunk as mineral water. With so many merits, it is reputed as “the hot spring of all hot springs”.

The hometown of marble ball soda – the cool Su'ao cold spring

Developed after the Jiaoxi hot springs, the Su'ao cold springs are unique with the sodium bicarbonate content, not seen anywhere else in Taiwan. They are scattered from the Lengquan Road to Chungyuan Road, offering





both private and public spa facilities. The temperature of the cold springs is about 21°C. If that concerns you, choose a sauna spa house where you can take hot and cold spas in turns, to keep yourself comfortably warm, and have your blood smoothly circulated as well.

The Su'ao cold springs have a crystal clear water quality. A 1904 analysis conducted by the Yilan Health Laboratory proved the spring water was drinkable. Zhuzong Shinjing, a Japanese military man, settled down in Su'ao during the Japanese Occupation Era. In view that the spring water contained abundant carbon dioxide, Zhuzong started his cold spring production business after retiring from the military. That was Taiwan's first soda factory – Seven Star Drinks. He improved the cold spring water by removing the carbonic acid content and made it into marble ball soda. That drink is an unforgettable memory of older generation Taiwanese. The factory also produced sweet beers. But production of the marble ball soda drinks was discontinued

later on. Today, only the red bean jelly cakes survive to exclusively represent the Su'ao cold spring products, meanwhile the locals also use the cold spring water to produce the uniquely flavored ox-tongue cakes and mocha rice cakes.

Open spas in wilderness of red maple leaves – Jiuzhize Hot Spring on Taipingshan

Heading for Taipingshan, passing through a toll station, not far away is a spot emitting white smoke, and that is the Jiuzhize Hot Spring. This highland is 520 meters above the sea level, where hot spring penetrates through the crevices of hillside rocks and flows down. The temperature at the origin is about 140°C and the downstream spa water is around 38°C. The water is crystal clear without the sulfuric odor. After a par, the skin feels smooth like being just treated with a deep skin care.

In the Japanese Occupation Era, the lumber workers built spa baths and enjoyed the hot

spring spas. Today, this place is facilitated with open air spa pools, men and women separated spa areas, family wild spas, as well as a hot spring swimming pool. A spa bathing brings about hungry stomach. There is a volcanic fountain shape egg cooking area outside the spa villa, where the egg cooking groove is filled with spraying hot spring all year round. Go to the nearby convenient store and buy some food materials and easy cooking utensils, then you are ready for cooking eggs, white bamboo shoots, corns and mushrooms, and set to feast yourself a delicious meal and celebrate the wonderful spa experience.

WuanChuanGo Park

Tel: 039-874-882

Address: No. 99-11, Deyang Road, Jiaoxi Township, Yilan County

Jiaoxi Spa Park

Tel: 039-872-403

Address: No. 16, Gongyuan Road, Jiaoxi Township, Yilan County

Note: The business is temporarily closed due to transition from the old operator to a new one, and it is expected to reopen in November. You are advised to make a phone call to make sure it is already open for business.

Su'ao Cold Spring Park

Tel: 039-960-645

Address: No. 6-4, Lengquan Road, Su'ao Township, Yilan County

Jiuzhize Hot Spring

Tel: 039-809-603

Address: No. 25, Shaoshui Lane., Taiping Village, Datong Township, Yilan County



The No.1 Taiwan Hot Spring – taking a walk in the Guanziling hot spring area

Text & Picture/ Guo Zheng-wei



When talking about hot springs, one may think of the easily accessible Beitou congregation. The thick sulfuric smell gently blowing on your face when stepping out of the MRT station is impressive. Also, the Chihpen hot springs in eastern Taiwan and Chiaohsi cold springs in northeastern Taiwan are also travelers' favorites. This time, however, a few secret resorts are shared – some wonderful hot spring areas in southern Taiwan. May it be a bit tiny, the island of Taiwan has obviously different temperatures in the north and south. When a heavy rain is pouring with strong winds, Kaohsiung in the south or Pingtung may be crystal clear in the sunny sky. With good weather and beautiful landscapes, Tainan, Kaohsiung and Pingtung are travelers' favorites for a sunny trip.

Here comes the exclamation mark: What?! Hot spring bath in such a hot weather? Come let me whisper in your ear. A hot spring bath in a warm afternoon brings you a relaxing laziness exuding from your body, with a pure energy emerging. Such a comfortable feeling is not easily heard in the whispers from the southerners. It's an absolute tip for facing everyday stress. All the daily predicament and depression are quietly soaked wet and softened in the hot spring, seemingly dissolved and evaporated.

Among the famous southern hot springs



are the Guanziling hot spring in Tainan, Baolai and Never-Grow-Old hot springs in Kaohsiung, and Sihjhongsi hot spring in Pingtung Checheng.

Located at the traffic hub of the west section of the southern cross-island highway, Baolai and Never-Grow-Old hot springs are featured with magnificent mountains and gorgeous cliffs, feasting hot spring travelers on the rarely seen scenery. These remote areas allow travelers to observe a variety of indigenous hillside plantation. Along the road is the taro hometown Jiaxian, where one would not want to miss the taro desserts made of red betel nuts. Checheng with Sihjhongsi hot springs and beautiful creeks along the road has specialties to offer. The famous red yolk eggs as well as organic hot spring vegetables and onions are indispensable travel attractions.

In Tainan, the Guanziling hot spring area is definitely a heavy weight. And it is the leading role of this hot spring tour. Located in the east side of Baihe Township, Tainan, this area is surrounded by beautiful mountains, with abundant hot springs flowing all year round. Its alkaline carbonate springs maintain a temperature of 75 degrees Celsius, not drinkable. Yet, the most intriguing and fascinating feature of the Guanziling hot spring is its world's rare mud spring content. In the 20s, my Japanese friend Kagekiyo in his book Guanziling Hot Spring even calls it the Taiwan No. 1 Hot Spring.

The natural Guanziling mud spring contains minor element radium, which locals say helps keep the body young and healthy.

Being situated in the mountains, Guanziling is also a well known tourist attraction, perfect for leisure walks. And its surrounding attractions include the Water & Fire Together which emits natural gas and spring simultaneously, and the class-c monument Huo Shan Bi Yun Si – originally named Huo Shan Temple, as well as the Liuzhong River fall and Liuzhong sodium

bicarbonate hot spring spa, which are must-visit places. Food is also a focus. Baihe grows lotus all year round, offering cuisines of lotus and lotus roots, worth a gourmet taste. Also recommended is the Tainan specialty Bean Vegetable Noodle. Interestingly, one must

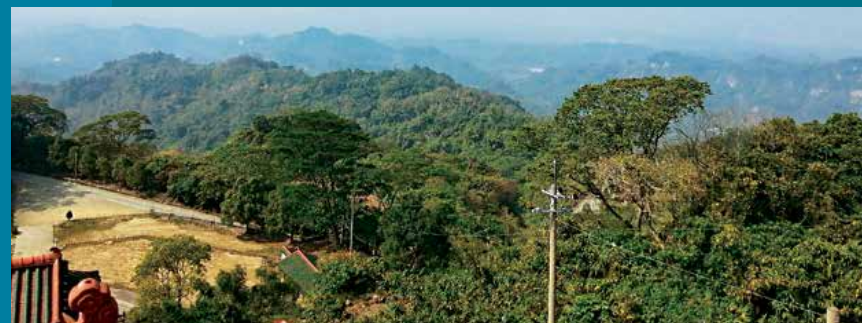


not miss the dozens of urn chicken shops with distinct styles and flavors. The roasted chicken with smooth, oily and crispy skin offers a wonderful foodie healing after a hot spring spa. If your stomach is up with more appetite, the Tainan snack street is just right for you. Displayed in the district are dou hua, meatballs, snow flake ice, and everything you name it. Your appetite satisfaction is guaranteed.

Travelers to southern Taiwan hot spring tours face a common issue – transportation. These attractions are featured with geographically magnificent situation, which however results in lower accessibility. Travelers reach here mostly by private cars, while public transportation heavily relied on by people from the far-away north is not so convenient. Take the Guanziling for an example. Travelers are advised to take a train ride and alight at one of the three stations: Houbi, Hsinying and Chiayi, and then take a transfer bus to the destination.

Here's a tip for travelers to the Guanziling. In recent years, as tourists coming to the Guanziling are increasing, the Tainan Tourism Bureau has organized an annual Guanziling Hot Spring Food Festival. During the festivity period, the tourist navigation and many other activities are offered including free shuttle bus services.

Still remember the fun and the touch of the mud fights in the childhood rainy days? Sitting in the muddy hot spring for the first time will probably bring you such a vintage feel. It's a bit like "Wow, it's hot! A bit filthy." "Hold on! It's odd. How come I feel kind of comfortable?" "Well, I'll do more of the spa..." This is probably the most common mental encounter with the first touch of the muddy spring. Before long, everyone would crazily apply the mud on the face and exclaimed, "Hey, this is good for the body beauty. What a wonderful experience." So, come enjoy the time tunnel, back to the childhood fun. (Being a child again for fun!)



The 2016 Tainan Guanziling Hot Spring Food Festival

Tel: 03-888-3299

Web: <http://www.guanziling.com.tw>

Events: Night Fire King Lantern Patrol, Spa Dishes on the Tip of Tongue, Guanziling Tour in Hot Spring Bathrobe, and Light Sculpture Show.

Nearby attractions:

Water & Fire Together, Hero's Stairs, Huo Shan Bi Yun Si, Hot Spring Park, Hot Spring Old Streets, Da Xian Si, Ridge Park, Red Leaves Park.



Hot Springs Features and Taian Hot Springs Closeup

Text & Picture/ Liu wei-ren

Shut down the laptop, turn off the lights, and lock the mobile phone in the suitcase. Jump on to the driver's seat of a car, heading for a remotest place, away from the city.

When did such a mood initiative start? Consciously 24-hour watching the clock ticking, I had my mind circuit fully occupied by all the vacation SOPs, including the rare trip that was even well planned and scheduled in details. Going out for a hot spring spar, I was thinking about the streets to goof around in the area of the hot spring attractions. What delicacies to feast myself, and what souvenirs I can bring for my friends at home? My conscious mind was obviously fragilely fatigued, yet my head was operating routinely like in the office, with my eyes patrolling around.

If we cannot escape from the modern city anxiety even with a vacation trip, how can we ever get back to ourselves?

In central Taiwan, you can leave all the urban hustle and bustle behind, if only with your desire to do so. Hot springs in central and southern Taiwan are nearly all located in mountains, with each one presenting a distinct mountain landscape filled up with green and clouds in remote eyesight. Due to their geographical locations, more convenient hot spring attractions can easily be crowded. Visitors can choose for either a spa with street



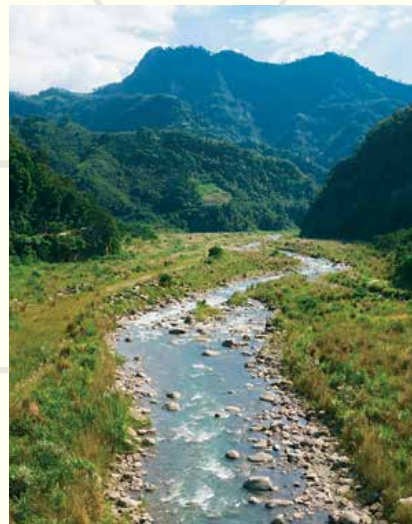
shopping or a short time and space to log out oneself for relaxation, which are offered in different hot spring areas.

For example, the Guguan, merely one hour drive from the Taichung metropolis, is the most famous hot spring area in central Taiwan. Visitors can take a bus to get there, and enjoy the beautiful mountain sceneries along the road. After a nice and comfortable hot spring spa, you can either enter the winding forest trails or get back to the downtown shopping, to experience the different yet all pleasant funs. Another example is the Chingjing Farmland of Nantou

County, where the Swiss-like surroundings immersed in foggy mountain landscape, beautiful and spectacular. You can run on the prairie and play with the grazing sheep. It's like a movie of a family in a happy time, and what else one can ask for more?

What if you ask for something else?

You may wish to get rid of all the bustle and hustle, and push the rattling gears off the



far away horizon, like the White Dwarf star slowing down the sound of a clock's second hand.

You may think hot spring should be tranquil, or the sound and space belong to you only, and is the most intimate friend of yours.

Then, make another choice.

Drive along the Expressway No. 6 heading for the Huisun Forest Area, passing through the Peikong Creek hot springs. There are the famous Atayal Resort and European style hot spring hotels. A bit further across the forest, there is a fork in the road behind the

forest, leading up to the mountains, where the landscape changes dramatically, and a mountain road allowing only one vehicle to pass at a time winds along the cliff all the way down to the creek banks. On the steep cliffs hundreds of meters high like cuts by sharp knives, the human shadows squeezed in between appear so tiny and insignificant in nature. The creek meanders, and big rocks stand in the way. After dozens of miles of the creek running, there is the hot spring emerging from the rocky walls. No rush for the springs and no need for human administrative intervention, the mineral crystals floats on the water naturally. This mysterious valley is for those with a strong desire to let go of daily obsession and seek an adventure into the deepest of the valleys.

At the remote other side, there is Highway No. 1 connecting to Tai Expressway No. 72. At the end of the road, take a right to the Dahu strawberry fields, and take a left all the way to the end of the road is the tranquil Tan'an. Along the country roads are houses of village settlements, except for the midway Xishuikeng Tofu Street famous for its clear whole-milk handmade Tofu products. After a feast of the Tofu snacks, you can climb up along the mountain trails, making turns to pass through mountain cliffs with exposed rocks and clustered houses lined up along the hillsides. The sunlight penetrates through the clouds, particularly burning when shining into the valley.

Stepping into a hot spring hotel of fair-faced concrete style, you'll be amazed by the crawling wisteria covering all over the architecture which looks like a giant rock standing upright beside the bank of the creek. The sceneries of the mountains and river banks caress the eyesight through the

French windows, unabashedly penetrating into every corner of the room. Opening the French windows, you see the modernist style of public baths imbedded on the river banks, with both cold and hot water, gurgling through the river banks outside the thin wall of the architecture. The dragonflies and butterflies whirling above the misty air stop and go.

Close your eyes, you'll hear the sound of wings of dragonflies shuttling on the water surface, a bit farther away is the sound of winds, and again a bit farther is the sound of the creek running. No rustling sound, no footstep sound either! In the spring water, you don't feel people's sound.

The spring water is soft and thickly heavy, like a liquid quilt covering your body.

You slowly caress your arms and body in the water, picking up the sensational touch lost in the daily routines.

The life disturbed by the clock's second hand is now being reclaimed and reorganized little by little, in the Tai'an hot springs.

If you like to take a walk, get into the mountain trails. Tai'an, not like Beitou or

Guguan, has no shopping streets to offer. People coming here for a spa are comfortably settled in their own space— reading a book or doing nothing all day long just by watching the clouds rendering from sunrise to sunset.

Or, at the end of the forest trails, you'll see ribbons tied on the tree branches, indicating the path to the Hushan. The mountaineers' ribbon sings indicate undisclosed treasures right ahead. That was a land beyond the reach of mobile phones. Before unfolding the true single-person trip, save your guessing what to be discovered, and don't estimate how far it is to go and what it looks like at the other end of the road.

Bypassing a few spider nets, on the slopes of withered leaves, the sunshine nests the forest broad leaves onto the sky, like stained glass of a church. You'll begin to pant in your every step. Crossing over the ridge, passing through a bamboo forest, the slope ahead gets steeper and narrower, and the sceneries yet to be seen in the next road adventure becomes more and more tempting.

Keep climbing, just keep going! When you're half exhausted and your hands are dusted by the mud, you'll feel happy and content.



Because you are finally far, far away from cities, in such a remote place.

And then, in complete exhaustion you'll get back to the hot spring for a nice and warm spa. The warm and smooth spring water makes you feel like a fish. You'll let go of everything, to feel the muscle stretching and skin stoma dilation, and listen to the sound of stress and skew from your body undertaking the daily routines, and then let your body get back to its original state, tenderly and gradually.

You'll be completely exhausted. Having some wine can be a good idea, and then you'll fall into the bed asleep.

When awake, you'll be amazed by your empty minded mood, clear of all anxieties.

If this is what you want, of course. If you are from a no-escape city jungle, and if your life is like a huge flying wheel turning restlessly, desperately in seek of a venue for a pause.

Famous hot spring resorts in central Taiwan

Guguan Hot Spring: the most reputed one. It's featured with convenient transportation, advanced development and tourist congregation. The nearby Baxianshan National Forest Entertainment Park is one of the three largest forestry lands in Taiwan.

Chingjing Hot Spring: in the area of the ChingJing Farmland. It offers the Central Europe farmland experience, and is a tourist favorite.

Peikong Creek Hot Spring: in the Huisun Forest Area. It's a resort discovered just in recent years. The nearby Huisun Forest Area has abundant semi-tropical and temperate forest sceneries, suitable for a forest bath hiking. Behind the Huisun Forest Area is the off-road Beigangxi Canyon, where the road is rough and bumpy, passing through steep and high-rise cliffs.

Tai'an Hot Spring: on the Miaoli Country Road No. 62. This is a hot spring area with tranquility. At the end of the country road lies the Hushan. This is a mountaineering spot with moderate difficulty.

Well then, come to central Taiwan. A place for you in between the mountain streams and the valleys, offering hideouts in the glass-like tree leaves, for immersion in the smooth and tender spring water.

No one else but you.

It's you in the nature, alone.



Tai'an shop information

Onsen Papawaqa Hotel: a hot spring hotel with unique fair-faced concrete architecture. Its spatial space makes you serenely forget about time. The dedicated local seasonal delicacies and tourist itineraries allow the tourists to enjoy the local Hakka and farmers' culture after a pleasant hot spring spa.

The Xisuikeng Tofu Street: the "Chingsui" in Hakka reads like "Xisui", meaning a clean water source. Chingsui Villagers use the sweet water to produce handmade tofu, exuding delicate fragrance. The local Chingan Tofu Shop is well known, and its tofu can easily be sold out. The dark skin tofu is also a popular delicacy for tourists.



Secret Backyard Gardens and All Natural Hot Spring Spas in the Wilderness

Text & Picture/Winnie

After a rare summer heat, the late autumn and early winter coolness gives us a relaxing time to slow down our paces. Let's walk out of the city jungle and take a nice and warm spa trip to the mountains in lush green. When the warm and smooth spring water caresses our skin and immerses our bodies, the trip becomes a magic journey, bestowing unparalleled comfort on the soul for sedimentation. Visitors to Taiwan in winter time will be embraced by countless wild creek hot springs, mud hot springs, public bath hot springs, forest hot springs, from north to south of the island, while the derived spa houses and architectures as well as the related cultural looks and gourmet feasts are the wonders of sensational experiences to treat the visitors.

Beitou, a secret backyard garden of the city for a Caoshan (Grass Mountain) hot spring tour

There are more than 100 hot spring retreats all over Taiwan, while the greater Taipei area is famous for its Yangmingshan (known as Caoshan in old days) and Beitou hot springs. Located in the area of the Datun volcanoes, the Beitou hot spring group covers the Thermal Valley hot springs, Xinyi Road Hot Springs, Fenghuang hot springs,



and Longfeng hot springs. The spring water of lightly acidic sulfur quality has a bit of rotten egg smell, but is very good for health by softening cuticles, stopping itch and detoxification. The hot spring bath is also known as the Skin Spa.

The Yangming mountain system offers exuberant natural sceneries, famous historical ruins and architectures, as well as quiet tea houses, cafés, restaurants, and B&B hostels spread out in the mountains and forests. The abundant landscape sceneries and seasonal changes of flowers attract people from home and abroad to enjoy the all seasons retreat, for the beautiful views, spas and delicious food. On the way to the Beitou Xinyi Road, there is the old brand Coconut Grove Spa Gourmet Restaurant with a thick South Pacific vacation style; entering the slope of Xinyi Road Lane No. 300, you'll see a whole lot of spa gourmet restaurants including the





famous Emperor Spa, which offers the world's rare green sulfur spring. You can immerse yourself in a public bath to enjoy the breeze smoothing your skin or lay back in a private spa house to enjoy the tranquility. After a warm and comfortable spa, you may want to order a gourmet recommended pot porridge to satisfy your stomach and get yourself totally relaxed. The nearby Kawayu Spa and Yuse Spa are full of thick Japanese style and landscaping. If time permits, you may want to stay for one night in a hot spring hotel such as the Mountain Star, Gorgeous Hot Spring Resort, Chyuan Du Spring Resort, Shan Shui Yue Resort, Yangmingshan Tien Lai Resort & Spa, Spring City Resort, Grand View Resort, Villa 32, Tsuwu Hot Spring, and so on, where you can enjoy the Taipei suburban mountain relaxation and take a spa in the lush green mountains; sleep in the night curtain under the stars accompanied by the remote bustling night scenes of the Taipei City. What a pleasant satisfaction!

In recent years, free public baths are

disappearing. The old time Beitou Matsu Cave and Lohan Cave were legendary public baths incepted in the Japanese Ruling Period, receiving the warm streams flowing from the mountains. They were the most favorable public baths of the locals, but were dismantled in 2014 by the local authorities due to safety consideration. Many local elders had the habit of taking a morning spa in the public baths and to the public they are an essential memory of the good old leisure time. When listening to them telling the stories, one may feel pity. Beitou also has a “half-body” spa experience to offer – the free foot spa. Near the New Beitou MRT Station are the “Fushin Park Foot Spa Area” and “Quanyuan Park Foot Spa Area” with green sulfur spring. The former is featured with a wooden architecture, full of thick vintage Japanese bath style, while the latter is at the opposite side of the Beitou Yifeng Elementary School, easy to reach and is a highly popular social venue for the local communities. There is also the “Sulfur Valley Foot Spa Area” located on a hillside,



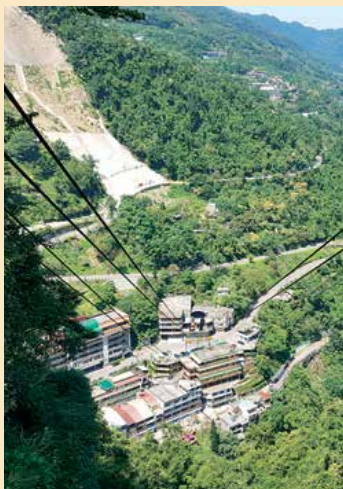
where spa goers can enjoy the tranquility of the mountain landscape, and watch the smoke of geothermal heat fluttering up, while the warmth and comfort channeling from feet all the way to the whole body brings in a very different satisfaction. Before doing the foot spa, be sure to clean your feet first at the adjacent washing area. Prepare a towel, shorts and slippers, and you are ready to enjoy a warm and pleasant foot spa in the cold winter day.

Jinshan, giving you the Old Jinshan Governor's Hot Spring with a rich history

Climbing over Yangmingshan, and moving forward along the Yanjin expressway, you'll be heading for the Jinshan hot spring area, located in the Jinshan District of New Taipei City, adjacent to the northern coasts, and Taiwan's northernmost hot springs. The Jinshan hot springs and Yangmingshan hot springs both belong to the Datun Volcano System. The hot springs flow through Macao,



Jinshan, Wanli and then magically spew out at the seaside. During the Japanese Occupation Era, the Taiwan Governor's Office built a two-story spa boarding house right on the spot of the current Old Jinshan Governor Hot Spring. Today, the new compound of the Old Jinshan Governor's Hot Spring connoting humanity culture and offering spa fun is the top choice for many Taipei spa goers. If you come to the Jinbaoli old streets of downtown Jinshan, it is a must to visit the Jinbaoli Duck Meat and taste the genuine Taiwanese style duck dish and a variety of snacks.



Wulai, a resort featuring aboriginal style and wild creek hot springs

An aboriginal settlement located in the Xiandian District of New Taipei City, Wulai is surrounded by beautiful mountains.

Camping, barbecue and playing in the creek, cherry blossoms tours in autumn and winter, strolling and hiking in the woods, the gondola cable cars and sightseeing cars in the Yun Hsien Amusement Park, and Atayal culture have all contributed to making Wulai a tourist attraction of northern Taiwan. The Wulai hot spring is of weak base carbonate quality, good for softening cuticles and moisturizing skin, thus known as the Beauty Spa.

Along the banks of Nanshi River, Wulai presents luxurious hot spring hotels one after another, but you can enjoy such a beauty spa as good as the ones offered by the hotels by just going to the wild creek under the Lanshen Bridge – it's natural and in open air landscape. In recent years, the local authorities have renovated a few wild creek spa pools with different temperatures.

The hot springs with room temperature are suitable for children and elders, while the near 50°C hot springs give extreme fun to those who love the super warm touch. The local and visiting frequenters to the wild creek spas have spontaneously used locally available equipment to build baking ovens as good as those sold in the sauna market, so that all spa people can enjoy the baking and sweating fun after hot and cold spas in the creek.

Many spa goers are obsessed with the wild creek spa. Its greatest merit is not the free-of-charge; it is the comforting beauty of sceneries blended in the great nature. After a wild creek hot spa and lots of sweating, those who know about the fun will take a short break and then jump into the adjacent cold creek. Mr. Chen, a frequenter, shared his experience and said that the merit of a wild creek spa is to enjoy the pure natural hot and cold sauna in the beauty of great nature, which relaxes the muscle, helps blood circulation, and makes skin flexible and moisturized. Enthusiastically, Mr. Chen continued saying that the spa goers to the Wulai hot springs are

always voluntarily maintaining the cleanness of the environment and show newcomers how to enjoy the wild creek spa fun and respect the spa ethics the frequenters comply with. At age 70-something, Mr. Chen had a sonorous voice. He helped his pals pile up stone bricks and tie up ropes for safety along banks of the wild creek. They all hope that visitors can have fun and be safe in the enjoyment of the Taiwan natural beauty.

Tai'an shop information

Yangmingshan gourmet food and spa website:

<http://www.goyms.com.tw/index.html>

Taipei hot spring website:

<http://www.hot-spring.taipei/>

Taipei City Government Industrial Development

Bureau Foot Spa Area:

<http://www.foot-spa.taipei/>

The Tea World Surrounded by Misty Clouds

Text & Picture/ Chen Shaming

It was a decade ago that I visited the Yulan Village. I rode a motorbike, carrying a foreign friend of mine. The two of us went up the winding mountain road. The air on the mountain was cool, and the valley was slowly covered by the misty clouds. My friend said, "We're like riding the clouds!" Being afraid of height, in the face of the high mountain terrain – actually not too high - I silently cried, "Oh my God! How far is it to reach the end of the road?"

Ten years later, when I revisited this place with my pals in the publication industry, we were already too old to ride motorcycles. We were taking a bus going up along the same winding mountain road, feeling a light dizziness. It was a heavy raining day, with a breathtaking atmosphere added to the journey. When we finally got off the bus, the rain subsided, and the world of the Yulan Village catching my eyes was different from what it was in my memory. Maybe it was the rain flush that made the remote mountains much greener. We stood on the edge of the cliff, overlooking the far-away creeks and valleys, and quietly watched the clouds approaching us inch by inch, till we were

completed surrounded by the misty clouds with a bit cool moisture. The clouds vaguely pulled by the winds passed through us, moving toward the farther hillsides. All of a sudden, the world returned to its crystal green again. At this moment, Mr. Chung, the owner of the Villa Tea where we stayed, appeared at the far-away front door of the villa and shouted, "Would you like some tea?"

We checked into our room, unloaded our packs, and went downstairs. Mr. Chung was already sitting at a low wooden table, waiting for us. As soon as we sat down, he served us with round, cold desserts. "This is our homemade oolong tea ice cream. Come try it!" I took a bite of the ice cream with a wooden scoop. Its thick milky fragrance was wrapped by the oolong tea scent, giving a refreshing taste, not too sweet as ordinary ice

cream is. It reminded me of the trip to Yulan Village a decade ago. We ate a lot of tea food, such as tea jelly, tea baked eggs, and even meat smoked with tea. Each of the delicacies was amazingly tasty, and the refreshing tea fragrance could always lure the deepest desire of appetite, driving you to feast over and over.

After the tea ice cream, Mr. Chung shared the tea knowledge with us. Take the oolong tea as an example, the older the tea leaves, the bitter the tea drink, while red tea is quite the opposite with older leaves exuding sweeter and more fragrant tea drinks. During our chats, the villa owner made other tea drinks with home grown oolong and Jinxiang teas, and showed us how to use the tea utensils and how to smell the tea fragrance. We listened to the sound of his tea drinking with the tea leaves brushing through his teeth, and tried to imitate him, but only to find it was a difficult tea drinking skill. He laughed and said, "Anyone able to make such a tea drinking sound must be a professional tea drinker." Looking at the contentment on our faces, he proudly said that in early days, the Yulan tea farms were doing OEM

businesses, and then they started to promote their own brand, which now seems successful.

Later on, he led us to the courtyard, and introduced the remote rivers and mountain peaks one by one, and then pointed to the tea garden beside the villa, telling us about the tea growing knowledge as well as other featured attractions and shops in the Yulan community. At this moment, a burst of white mist approached us from a distance. We watched the white mist drifting through us, and passing through neighboring tea garden with the winds, crossing mountain tops one after another, caressing the tea trees on the farmlands. I was wandering that perhaps ten years ago when I first visited here, I was surrounded by the very same misty clouds. Perhaps, I should ask Mr. Chung whether he has ten year old red tea, and if he does, I'd like to have a cup of the tea in a toast to the time baptism for the last decade.



Japanese cuisine of Taiwanese style:

Cross-border marriage on the tip of tongue



After the Olympic Games, The Japanese Prime Minister finally admitted he was a Mario.

What a pity. He traveled a long way across the earth to Brazil to come out, but the news was grabbed by the cross-border

marriage of the athlete couples Fukuhara and Jiang Hongjie. Marrying a Japanese girl is a dream of many Taiwanese boys, and yet Fukuhara is a highly popular female athlete in Japan. Such a marriage was supposed to



incur lots of complaints from Fukuhara's fans. However, it could be that Jiang Hongjie was too handsome for the losers in Taiwan and Japan to complain after seeing themselves in the mirror. They had to admit Jiang deserved it. Well, that was how the love affair became a wonderful story.

Inspired by such a beautiful Taiwanese-Japanese marriage, in this issue let's talk about Japanese cuisine fused with Taiwanese features. (Definitely not because of my falling out of love!)

Japanese cuisines debuted in Taiwan in the late 19th century. During the Japanese Occupation period, there were a few very famous "cuisine pavilions", one of which was the Jizhou Um (nunnery) – a venue having lots of art and cultural events in recent days. In the past hundred years, Taiwan dishes were already strongly bound with the Japanese styles. For example, the sashimi (raw fish) is an essential dish in celebration banquets, while Kanto cook, sushi, shabu-shabu are popular choices for diners. Even the terms Wah Shami, Shaxi Mi and Tempura have become part of the Taiwanese dialect. To see the cultural influence of a place, food says it all.

Of course, after such a long evolution there must be genuine, authentic and exquisite Japanese cuisines in Taiwan. But, what we are going to talk about in this issue is Taiwanese-Japanese marriage. Yes, it is the cross-border marriage that we are into. (I accentuate the focusing point because it is crucial, definitely not because of my falling out of love.)

How would you identify a Taiwanese-style Japanese cuisine? As a matter of fact, restaurants of Japanese cuisines in Taiwan label themselves as "Japanese", rarely identified themselves as a Taiwan origin.





feast diners with a load of delicate food. As a result, the bold quantity and dozens of dishes on the table are the features displayed on Taiwanese dining tables. Such a feast added to the already abundant Japanese dishes makes it insane. If not for the interior decoration, the menu alone is not enough to tell whether a restaurant is a quick fry or Japanese cuisine.

Thanks to the surrounding seas, Taiwan has lots of sea food to offer. The sashimi in large pieces is fresh and cheap, especially made of the local Yellow Tail fish. To Taiwanese eaters always asking for high price-performance, eating at a cheap Japanese restaurant is much more satisfactory than in restaurants of exotic cuisines. In addition to the raw fish, the well done dishes of fried Oolong, overnight dried

But from the menu, you see the clues. For example, steam and fry dishes, or smoked shark and vegetable fern, are unique to Taiwanese cuisine.

Of course, there's another critical element to identify Taiwanese cuisines – abundance and satiety.

For no reasons, Taiwanese always want to

fish, Kanto cook, Katsudon (pork rice), and even the Taiwanese-style sushi with cucumber and meat floss content, all guarantee a fully filled stomach.

And then, after making an order, ready for a feast, here's another tip to identify whether the Japanese restaurant is of a Taiwanese genre. Taste the miso soup. If it is a bit sweet, congratulations! It's a Taiwanese recipe. Don't make a rash move by leaving. Be open-minded and let go of the prejudice for genuine Japanese cuisine. Just enjoy the little bit Japanese yet Taiwanese blend flavor, and you'll probably be fond of such an intimate Taiwanese flavor with uncompromised freshness and delicacy. After all, Fukuhara married Jiang Hongjie with everybody's



blessings. I think even Japanese coming to Taiwan will probably like the not-quite-familiar Japanese cuisine of Taiwanese recipe. By the way, such a conclusion has nothing to do with the author's falling out of love. It's true. Definitely not for the sake of Never... I'm going for a Japanese restaurant to eat... Thank you all.

●
美觀園
Mei Guan Yuan
02-23310377
No. 47, Emei Street,
Wanhua District,
Taipei City.

Business hours

It's been 70 years since its inception, this old restaurant has witnessed the history of Ximending. It offers a variety of dishes, including Japanese cuisine and Taiwanese fried dishes, gorgeous yet reasonably priced.

●
春日
Chun Ru
02-27081805
No. 2 Lane 175, Section 1,
Da'an Road, Da'an District,
Taipei City.

Business hours

An old Japanese cuisine in Taipei, Chun Ru offers large pieces of fresh sashimi and butter crabs with crab porridge, deluxe and stomach full guaranteed. The large volume of fried pork loin chop was the schooling memory of those coming to Taipei for study.

●
小巷亭
Xiao Shone Ting
02-25552386
No. 8, Lane 250,
Nanjing West Road,
Tatung District, Taipei City.

Business hours
closed on Tuesdays

Located in an alley in the Ningxia Night Market neighborhood, Xiao Shone Ting started selling Kanto cook and then expanded to dozens of Taiwanese and Japanese dishes. Today, even with a decent store, the eatery still maintains its buffet services, offering delicacies with a distinct style.

●
王將壽司
Wang Jung Sushi
No. 36,
Chunghua Road,
Hualien City

Business hours

This is a famous Japanese style diner offering midnight supper. The main dishes are sushi, salad and Kanto cook, as well as local featured smoke shark and cold vegetable fern. The tamagoyaki (Japanese omelette) is the best seller.

●
和蕎屋
Ho Chiao Wu
02-24261719
No. 91, Yi 2nd road,
Zhongzheng District,
Keelung City.

Business hours

Starting as a trolley food vendor, through the past four decades, He Chiao Wu has transformed into a famous Japanese cuisine restaurant in the city of Keelung. It offers sushi, combo meal, Kanto cook and pot noodle.

●
三味食堂
Sun Way Eatery
02-23892211
No. 116, Section 2,
Guiyang Street, Wanhua
District, Taipei City.

Business hours
closed on Mondays

Located in Taipei Ximending, Sun Way is famous for its large volume of meals. It offers large pieces of fresh sashimi along with main course of fried rice and seafood porridge. Your full stomach is guaranteed, without losing the delicate taste.

Treasure Box containing frozen time – Tunghai University

Text & Picture/ Zheng Youyu



My first dawn at the Tunghai University's girls dormitory was broken by rush knocks on the door. That was a tradition. I was told by the seniors that we needed to say hello to the cattle early in the morning at six o'clock. Reluctantly, I woke up and took a long walk to a tract of pasture. Wow, no kidding! There were cows. When I was a child, I could easily be excited by things short in urban life. On the way to the pasture, I was trying to figure out how to get back to sleep. But when we saw the cows, all the girls started to twitter, teasing the cattle, and get familiar with each other immediately.

One night, a girl told a story of the female ghost bridge. It's said that in the early days when the school was established, there was a student couple whose love affair was denied by parents of both sides, so they decided to meet on the bridge and elope. That was a misty, raining night. The girl awaited her lover on the bridge, alone. When midnight passed, and the boy didn't show up. Some say the girl jumped into the creek to end her own life, while others say she slipped into the creek and was drowned. Since then, in misty, raining

nights, near midnight, boys walking across the bridge alone would see a girl standing on the bridge, and she would ask "What time is it?" Don't answer "12 O'clock." Or

After hearing the story, we the girls unwittingly got together and sneaked to the "could-be" female ghost bridge near the boys' dormitory. A senior sister said there was a wide, deep ditch between the boys' dormitory and the class buildings, and a bridge was built to connect the two sides. Today, it is just a dried groove, accompanied by a concrete facilitating bridge. We the girls pushed and dragged each other, and no one would dare to cross the bridge alone. So we kept each other accompanied in groups of three or four of us and took a round-trip walk through the bridge. Nothing happened. Suddenly, a girl noticed that her water bottle disappeared. There were no others except us, and no winds at all since we got there. Thinking of the weirdness, we were all getting goose bumps, and it was a few minutes from the legendary

12 O'clock. To make things worse, the girls' dormitory gate would be closed at 12 O'clock as well. So, we the six or seven girls screamed and rushed back to the dormitory.

At daytime, Tunghai campus is a quiet and tranquil academic space. When the night sets in, there may be occasional night BBQs, students goofing around, and professor couples taking a walk. The dim yellow lights on the pavement illuminating the Campus Mall Avenue creates a romantic atmosphere, shaping up quite a few corners for lovers and group adventures. The girls' dormitory imposes a rigorous access control. Every time when the dorm supervisor is about to close the dorm gate, girls rush in through the crevices of the metal gate like running for their life. The boys' dormitory, on the contrary, has no midnight restriction. It is like a gathering of vacation bungalows, yet haunted by a number of ghost stories. At 11:58:20pm of Christmas Eve, the church square will start to ring the bell. One may count down from one hundred to one, and

make his or her dream come true; or the couple doing the countdown together will separate right after that. The Tunghai campus has too many traditions and legends, which help newcomers get familiar with all the stories in a snap of fingers.

There is a time capsule on the Campus Mall Avenue, storing the past, present and future of the Tunghai campus. As a matter of fact, Tunghai University seems enveloped by the exuberant shades of time sculpture, and has never changed in the past decade since I said goodbye to it. The church, girls' dormitory, post office, college buildings interleaved on the Campus Mall Avenue, the pasture, faculty dormitory, Tunghai Lake, and even the fresh milk and ice creams displayed in the small milk shop are all the same. Every bit of grass and wood, and every corner and piece of objects, maintain their simple yet vintage scents of memories, connoting all kinds of thoughts and sentimental emotions, like the soft whispers beside the pillows.

Goofing around in the Tunghai neighborhood

- 1. Tunghai Villa:** Behind the Social Science College Building is the Acacia woods track leading to the everyday needs of food, clothing, inhabitation and transportation for those escaping from the dormitory. The famous frozen chicken legs, lotus ice dish, koah-pau (pork buns), and herbal jelly are colorfully displayed over here.
- 2. Art Street:** Distinct from the hustle and bustle of the Tunghai Villa, the nights of Art Street is exotic. The cafes in small alleys as well as the handicraft souvenir shops and restaurants are all worthy a treasure hunt.
- 3. Gaomei Wetland:** This is an ecologically abundant environment. Sitting on the wooden tracks to watch the wonders of setting sun and feel the gentle breeze is a landscape banquet. Come step in the ice cool wetland in a legitimate range.
- 4. Wang Gao Liao:** It offers an absolutely beautiful night scenes of Taichung, seasoned with lots of ghost stories.





Hong Kong and Macao People in Taiwan

Text & Picture/ Kathy

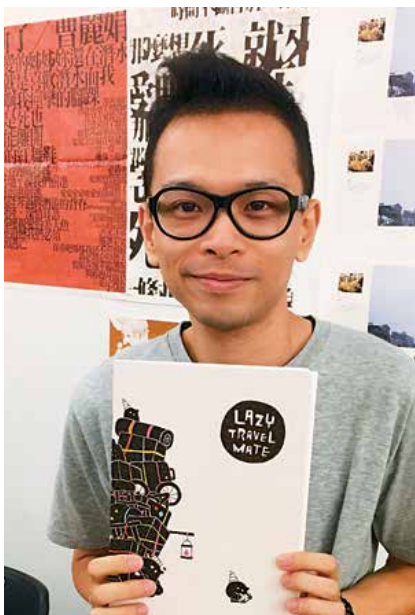
San, born in the post 80s, was a mobile phone game developer in Hong Kong, responsible for art design and game design. Nine months ago, San immigrated to Taipei with the graffiti character Lazy-Burger that he created, aiming to acquire more space and time for his art creativity work. He will continue to take part in various types of business startup markets in Taiwan, hoping to exchange ideas with Taiwan local hand-painting artists for creation of fun stories.

The words “Hong Kong is not for fatties” are nothing new. Young people strive to earn a living and buy an apartment unit, leaving their dreams behind. Young people in Taiwan may face the same situation, but they are at least poised for dreams. When many were worried about inadequate time for making money and shortage of habitation space, the 30 plus year old San was thinking about how to acquire more time and space for art creation work. Nine months ago, San came up with a solution – moving to Taipei.

Dwelling in the bustling New Taipei City, to feel the liveliness of Taiwanese style.

Like many Hong Kong people, San had been to Taiwan many times, and was impressed by this island country. Therefore, when his immigration thought was initiated, the neighboring Taiwan came up to his mind. Today, he is an urban dweller of New Taipei City, where the hustling and bustling traffic and crowds exude a liveliness exclusive to the Taiwanese culture.

He said, “I intended to look for a quiet and tranquil place to stay. But my Taiwanese friends advised me that everyday life mechanism should be the first thing to consider in choosing habitation, for convenient provision of food, clothing,



To know more about Lazy-Burger, please go to the website at <http://lazy-burger.com>.

and transportation.” He continued, “It seemed reasonable. I moved from such a convenient city of Hong Kong, and if I stayed away from the urban center of Taiwan, I might have a hard time in adaptation to remote living and I didn’t have a driver’s license either. I’d be baffled in everyday life.”

With his own created graffiti character, to target the Taiwan cultural creativity market

After settling down, San started to have more time and space to do creativity work. The graffiti character Lazy-Burger looks naughty and funny. According to San, the name Lazy-Burger has no particular meaning. Instead, it was a spontaneous inspiration coming up on an afternoon tea time when reading the menu. Since becoming a full time art creator, his work has been presented in two-panel strips to tell stories with comic imagery, hoping that readers can catch up with the fun from the comic characters. Occasionally, readers may find some unfortunate, frustrating and dark humors.

Before the decision of moving to Taipei, San took half a year to collect relevant market information. With a strong desire of doing art creation, San gradually got into the development of hand-painting creativity market. San has recognized that the more popular artwork in Taiwan is “Youth Paint” or “Authentic Taiwan” style, where the former tends to have light connotation, elegant and



poetic from the Japanese influence, while the latter goes through some genuine local languages and social issues to extend the image creation. Such genres are very popular on the Facebook fan page and Line icons.

Participation in cultural creativity market, to increase cultural exchange between Hong Kong and Taiwan

Sometimes, creation requires knowing oneself and the counterparties. San frankly said, “Taiwan has quite a few forms of successful image creation. This year, there are many Taiwanese art creation workers choosing the Angulan Comics Festival. And you see the fact.” Taiwan looks promising in providing a good land for developing art creation fun into career. In addition to the dedicated creation work, San will also continue to engage in design and book related creativity markets, so that his Lazy-Burger can be introduced to more people. He intends to exchange ideas with local art creators, to learn from and encourage each other, and become better in the encounter with excellence.

A little trip with a book café scent throughout Taipei City, New Taipei City and Taoyuan City

Text/ Taiwan Steps Tourism Team
Picture/ Xie Chengyan, Chen Xiamin,
Chen Fu, Lang Huan Bookstore, Fang Yuan
Studio, Wang Zhiyuan



Duzubooks



Wild Dream II Bookstore

The Taoyuan International Airport is the first stop of many foreign visitors, but when they come to the airport again, it will probably be their departure for home. Maybe it is because Taoyuan is adjacent to Taipei, plus an area too vast to show its specialty features to attract the visitors. Taoyuan becomes a transient stop only. However, since Taoyuan became a municipality directly under the central government, many novel and interesting things are happening, making it a city offering most of novel independent bookstores in Taiwan.

Coming next, Taiwan Steps' tourism team will introduce to you a little trip with book café scents throughout Taipei City, New Taipei City and Taoyuan City by a shuttle train. This intellectual tourist route crosses the three big cities, where transportation within is very convenient. You can get everywhere by a youbike or just by walk, and you'll be accompanied by the book café scents to fulfill your traveling fun. Don't hesitate. Let's go right away!

If you stay in Taipei, you may want to visit the WenRooTing bookstore congregation (on Wenzhou Street, Tingzhou Road, and Roosevelt Road) near the Gongguan MRT station. After the WenRooTing tour, take the MRT to the Taipei Main Station. By the way, don't forget to prepare an EasyCard or iCash

or iPass for taking the MRT. At the Taipei Main Station, take a southbound shuttle train heading for the Fuzhou station at Banqiao, New Taipei City.

Walking out of the Fuzhou station, you'll see the National Taiwan University of Arts within a walking distance. Behind the university campus is a bookstore with a large quantity of second-hand books. It's indeed a bookstore, but don't forget to order a coffee when you get into the store, and then take a good look at the treasure collection of the books. There is one hardcover book always lying quietly on a marble table, whose pages are full of notes written by readers in the past decade. This is the scene you definitely don't want to miss.

When you leave the bookstore, it may probably be an evening time. Go back to the Fuzhou station and take another southbound shuttle train heading for Taoyuan City. Along the railroad, you'll pass through the tiny yet beautiful Shanjia train station. Or, you may want to stop by the station and take a walk to feel the life landscape of the little town on the hillside. From Shanjia heading for Yingge, there is a railroad segment where you can overlook the mountain vastness from a remote distance. The neatly aligned buildings along the road are silhouetted against the setting sun, exuding a strange quiet feeling that can always wash away visitors' tiredness.

The train will pass the Yingge, Taoyuan, Neili and Zhongli stations, and then you'll get off the train at the Puxin station. Check you Google Map, and you'll find a little walking trip of 2km distance welcoming you ahead. You'll be heading for the Fang Yuan Studio, a second-hand bookstore renovated from an old residential house. It's rustic but with humane touch. Its herbal tea is very popular, and the



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FangYuanStudio



Lang-Huan Bookstore

parent-child reading scenes are very common. On your way back, if you are hungry, use Google to search for “Hakka Onion Noodle” (客家蔥香麵) and feast yourself with the genuine Hakka dishes. After that, take a northbound shuttle train and get off at the Neili station. And then take a 10-minute walk to reach the Lang Huan Bookstore near the Yuan Ze University. The bookstore is gender friendly, where the sex equality is promoted. It hosts reading events and seminars from time to time. Welcome to experience the creativity of Taiwan’s youth vitality. The bookstore’s back yard is elegantly arranged, very suitable for friends to get together and have some cool drinks, to enjoy a very different atmosphere. After leaving the Lang Huan bookstore, get back to the Neili train station and take a northbound shuttle train, and alight at the Taoyuan station. Then, take a 10-minute or so walk to reach the Duzu bookstore. Its business hours start at 2:00pm thru 24:00 midnight. Inspired by Hemingway’s short stories, the owner of the bookstore wants to provide a clean and bright place for people staying up late. The handmade cakes and coffee comfort the lonely souls in the midnights, giving them strength to continue reading alone, exploring the words on the books.

Perhaps, you may want to stay overnight in Taoyuan, because there are still many other bookstores waiting for your visits. Wild Dream II Bookstore(荒野夢二書店), Nankan 1567 Small Bookstore(南崁1567小書店), Mao Guai and Friends Children Books Art Studio(毛怪和朋友们藝術童書工作室), Buffalo Bookstore(水牛書店), Kun Yuan Second-Hand Books(鯤元二手書), Qinggengyudu Bookstore(晴耕雨讀小書院), SEAMi Wanjian Bookstore(望見書間), and New Star Lane Books(新星巷弄書屋等) are

just a few notables for your reference.

Transformed from an industrial city to a bookstore world filled with book scents, Taoyuan has undergone the magnificent transformation, absolutely worth a note for and participation by book lovers. Next time when you come to Taiwan by air and stop at the Taoyuan International Airport, be sure to stay overnight in the city of Taoyuan, and you’ll be embraced by the fragrance of the books.



Store information

The Bookstore ~~~~~
02-2967-1203

No. 81, Lane 29, Section 1, Daguan Road,
Banqiao District, New Taipei City

-Fang Yuan Studio ~~~~~
0988-839318

No. 1, Lane 129, Wanda Road,
Yangmei District, Taoyuan City

-Lang Huan Bookstore ~~~~~
03-455-3623

No. 6, Lane 165, Rongmin Road,
Zhongli District, Taoyuan City

-Duzu Bookstore ~~~~~
03-335-5754

No. 6, Tao 2nd Street,
Taoyuan District, Taoyuan City

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For detailed information and business hours of other well known bookstores, please check their individual Facebook pages.



停步是為了走更遠的路，但臉書粉絲頁我們仍會繼續走喔  
<https://www.facebook.com/TaiwanStep/>

