



Hénán

POP 100 MILLION

Includes ➔

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Best Villages

- ➔ Guōliàngcūn (p421)
- ➔ Zhūxiān (p427)
- ➔ Nánjiēcūn (p413)

Best Historic Sites

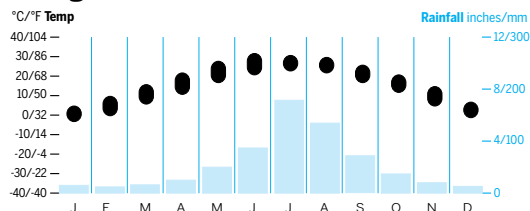
- ➔ Shàolín Temple (p413)
- ➔ Kāifēng (p422)
- ➔ Luòyáng (p416)

Why Go?

Affluent Chinese roll their eyes at the mention of impoverished and land-locked Hénán (河南), yet the province's heritage takes us back to the earliest days of Chinese antiquity. Ancient capitals rose and fell in Hénán's north, where the capricious Yellow River (Huáng Hé) nourished the flowering of a great civilisation. Hénán is home to China's oldest surviving Buddhist temple and one of the country's most astonishing collections of Buddhist carvings, the Lóngmén Caves. There is also the Shàolín Temple, that legendary institution where the martial way and Buddhism found an unlikely but powerful alliance. Hénán's inability to catch up with the rest of the land perhaps helps explain why the unusual village of Nánjiēcūn still sees a future in Maoist collectivism. Hénán is also home to the excellent walled town of Kāifēng and the 1000-year-old craft of woodblock printing in Zhūxiān.

When to Go

Zhèngzhōu



Apr Wángchéng Park in Luòyáng is a blaze of floral colour during the peony festival.

Jun Trips to cool Guōliàngcūn up in the Ten Thousand Immortals Mountains.

Sep & Oct Catch the lovely and fleeting north China autumn.



Hénán Highlights

- 1 Fathom the martial mysteries of Shaolin boxing at the **Shàolín Temple** (p413)
- 2 Seek enlightenment among the carved Bodhisattvas at the **Lóngmén Caves** (p419)
- 3 Take a trip back in time to **Kāifēng** (p422) and engage in

some adventurous snacking at the night market

- 4 Hide away in cliff-top **Guóliàngcūn** (p421) – don't forget your sketchpad
- 5 Explore China's oldest Buddhist shrine: the **White Horse Temple** (p115) outside Luòyáng

- 6 Get acquainted with the ancient craft of Chinese woodblock printing in **Zhūxiān** (p413)
- 7 Rediscover communism with Chinese characteristics at **Nánjiēcūn** (p413)