



Northern Taiwan

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Best Places to Eat

- » Keelung Miaokou (p126)
- » City God Temple Market (p145)
- » Shenlin Shui An (p137)
- » Aux Cimes de la Fontaine (p154)
- » Osmanthus Lane (p151)

Best Places to Stay

- » Sunrise Hot Spring Hotel (p154)
- » Full Moon Spa (p114)
- » Chuanhua Tang (p150)
- » Shi Shan Shui Chan (p130)
- » Shui Yun Jian (p152)

Why Go?

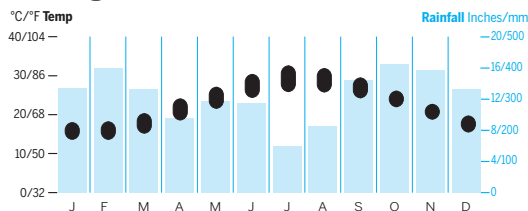
For many travellers, heading outside Taipei gives them their first taste of what many consider to be the 'real Taiwan'. To some this means rural Nanzhuang, where hard-working tea farmers in straw hats sing under the midday sun. To others it's Smangus, a self-sufficient aboriginal hamlet a four-hour drive up a crumbling mountain road.

In the north, art lovers find their niche in temple-dotted towns devoted to traditional industries such as pottery, glass and woodcarving. Birdwatchers set goals for spotting endemic species, and as often as not reach them.

You'll find that the real Taiwan is a pretty diverse place. Like hiking? Like cycling? So do the locals, and if your idea of a fun weekend is climbing the Snow Mountains, or riding across the rugged North Cross-Island Hwy, you're going to find plenty of company. For real.

When to Go

Keelung



April Youtong flowers in bloom.

September–December Best months for cycling and hiking.

December Start of hot-spring season.



Highlights

- 1 Explore the quaint mining villages of **Jiufen** and **Jinguashi** (p128)
- 2 Hike, swim and cycle under a jungle canopy in **Wulai** (p111)
- 3 View the work of Taiwan's master carver at the **Juming Museum** (see boxed text, p125)
- 4 Enjoy wild vistas and natural hot springs on the **North Cross-Island Highway** (p136)
- 5 **Cycle** coastal and mountain routes all over the north of Taiwan
- 6 Spend the night in a temple on the slopes of **Shitoushan** (p150)
- 7 Soak in top-quality hot-spring water in **Taian** (p152)
- 8 Hike for days along the Holy Ridge's vertiginous paths in **Sheipa National Park** (p143)