



Southern Taiwan

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Stay

- » Teacher's Hostel (p237)
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- » Sunset Beach Resort & Spa (p252)
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- » Chateau Beach Resort (p269)

Why Go?

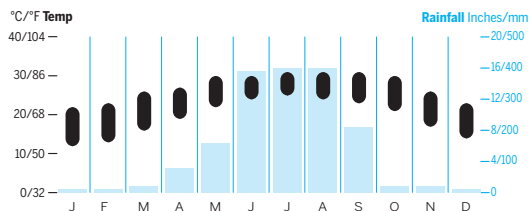
They burn boats down here. Not as political protest (although this is the hotbed of Taiwan independence), but as a reminder of the hardships their ancestors faced in adapting to a new world. In the south, ties to tradition and folk culture are strong and the yearly calendar is chock-full of some of Taiwan's most unforgettable festivals.

Outside of Taipei, the cities most worth visiting are in the south. Tainan, the island's former capital, is a treasure trove of temples, relics and original night-market snacks. Kaohsiung has turned its industrial heritage on its head, converting warehouse districts into art studios and harbour fronts into biking routes.

Southern summers are scorching, but no one cares when the beaches of Kenting National Park are so close. Winters are balmy and some 15 million purple butterflies return each year to overwinter in the pristine mountain valleys around Maolin. They've chosen well.

When to Go

Tainan



February Yenshui fireworks festival.

April 'Spring Scream' music festival in Kenting National Park.

September–October Raptor migration over Kenting National Park.

National Parks & Forest Recreation Areas

There are three national parks in the south: Kenting, a beach playground with some well-protected areas into which few people venture; Taijiang, Taiwan's newest national park and a storehouse for ecological and cultural heritage along the southwest coast;

and Yushan, unfortunately now inaccessible from the south because of typhoon damage.

Beautiful, remote Maolin Forest Recreation Area is a stronghold for aboriginal culture but also holds an important overwintering valley for the purple butterfly. Shuangliou Forest Recreation Area has a



Highlights

- 1 Explore Taiwan's temple heritage in and around the old capital of **Tainan** (p232)
- 2 Swim, surf and cycle year-round in **Kenting National Park** (p266)
- 3 Soak in rare mud springs among the maple trees at **Guanziling hot springs** (p244)
- 4 **Bird- and butterfly-watch** year-round at some of Taiwan's top protected areas
- 5 Cycle charming back-country routes like the **Dongshan Coffee Road** (p247)
- 6 Climb **Beidawushan** (p265), the most southerly of the 3000m-plus peaks in
- 7 Get rained on with fireworks at **Yenshui** (p243)
- 8 Scooter and snorkel around Taiwan's only coral island, **Little Liuchiu Island** (p262)
- 9 Watch a ceremonial boat burn to the ground in **Donggang** (p260)