



Yushan National Park & Western Taiwan

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Best Places to Sleep

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Why Go?

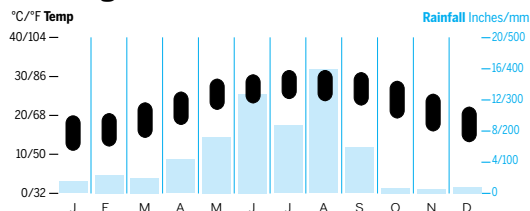
If you're looking for variety in your Taiwan travel experience, go west. The Matsuo Pilgrimage, one of the country's biggest and holiest celebrations, is definitely a highlight. This nine-day parade across half of Taiwan is an extravaganza of feasting, prostrating, praying and great acts of generosity.

Keen on the outdoors? Head to Yushan National Park to climb the highest peak in Northeast Asia; if you continue down the back-route trails you'll be in total wilderness for days at a time. Alternatively, feel the breeze in your hair and the mud between your toes at Gaomei Wetlands. For a glimpse of indigenous traditions, spend the night at one of the firefly-lit villages in the Alishan Range.

Fancy a taste of Taiwanese nostalgia? Look no further than the Japanese-era railway legacy in Alishan and Chiayi, or Lukang's quaint red-tiled streets, all of which provide inspiring examples of the Taiwan of yore.

When to Go

Taichung



Apr The Matsuo Pilgrimage is a nine-day procession for the patron goddess of seafarers and fisherfolk.

Mar–Jun Firefly-watching in Alishan.

Sep–Dec Best time for hiking in Yushan National Park.

i Getting There & Around

Taichung has one airport for both international and domestic services.

Regular trains run frequently down the coast, connecting all major and minor cities, and there are decent bus services to most smaller towns. The High Speed Rail (HSR) is in service here, but

stations are located quite far away from city centres. A narrow-gauge alpine train called Alishan Forest Railway (partly out of commission due to the Typhoon Morakot) does the route from Chiayi to Alishan.

The only areas where public transport is inconvenient are Yushan National Park, the more



Yushan National Park & Western Taiwan Highlights

- 1 Taichung** (p203) Enjoying the excellent museums, strolling in lovely parks, and partying at hidden dives.
- 2 Matsu Pilgrimage** (p214) Seeking the spiritual at this legendary procession, which starts in Dajia.
- 3 Chiayi** (p214) Exploring historic temples and the traditional shops in their

- vicinity, not forgetting to sample the local treats.
- 4 Sitou** (p232) Strolling to birdsong in the clouds in dreamy Sitou Nature Education Centre.
- 5 Yushan National Park** (p49) Conquering Northeast Asia's highest mountain and experiencing different climate zones within the same day.

- 6 Alishan** (p211) Loading up on restorative negative ions and admiring the sun-and-cloud drama as you hike in ancient forests.
- 7 Sun Moon Lake** (p234) Cycling, boating and strolling at one of Taiwan's best-known scenic spots.
- 8 Lukang** (p223) Visiting the breathtaking Longshan Temple before losing your way in winding streets.