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A Taiwan Itinerary for 1, 2, or 3 weeks (Slow & Fast Options!)

March 14, 2023 · Nick Kembel

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One of the most [common questions about Taiwan](#) that I get from my readers is how to plan the perfect Taiwan travel itinerary.



It's a common story: people look at the map of Taiwan and see that it's a pretty small country. So they think 7 days in Taiwan will be enough. Once they start planning their trip, they realize one week is not enough because there are SO MANY [things to do in Taiwan](#). So they book 2 weeks in Taiwan. Then, the more they plan the finer details of their Taiwan itinerary, the more they wish they had actually booked 3 weeks or even one month in Taiwan!

In this article, I'm going to exactly how to plan your Taiwan travel schedule, no matter how many day's you've got. After checking hundreds of people's itineraries in my [Taiwan Travel Planning Group](#), I've come to realize that the way people plan their itinerary varies A LOT. So many visitors cram two weeks of activities into one week or less. So I'm going to give itineraries for both slower travelers and for fast ones. I'll also give a nature-focused itinerary and a city/culture one.

I've been [living in Taiwan](#) for over 10 years. I've written a book about Taiwan and articles for CNN, National Geographic Traveller, and others. I've planned numerous trips around Taiwan so the recommendations in this article are based on multiple first-hand experiences.

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Hey, I'm Nick!

This website is my full-time passion project. I've always been drawn to the religious centers and spiritual sights of the world. After years of backpacking, I now call two places home: Edmonton, Canada and Taipei, Taiwan. When

Taiwan Itinerary Essentials

- Read my general [Taiwan travel guide](#) and these [FAQs about Taiwan](#). Figure out the [best time to visit Taiwan](#), the [top festivals](#), and [which budget airlines fly there](#).
- Find all your day tours, drivers, discounted attraction tickets, and more on Klook! Use my referral link to [get TWD 100 off your first booking](#). Learn about others [apps for traveling in Taiwan](#) and find more [private drivers here](#).
- Buy your [SIM card](#) / [eSIM](#) / [WiFi device](#), [EasyCard](#), and [HSR tickets](#) online before you arrive. Also consider getting a [Taipei Fun Pass](#) (read [my review of the pass here](#)).
- If you are looking for a customized luxury tour of Taiwan, I recommend [Life of Taiwan](#). Tell them Nick sent you over!
- If you're visiting Taiwan as a family, I've written a similar [Taiwan itinerary with kids](#).
- Learn all about about [Taiwanese food](#) and my recommended [restaurants](#) and [night markets in Taipei](#).

I'm not writing or compulsively planning every detail of our next family trip, I'm most likely playing kitty games with Sage and Lavender, my two kids.



– See [my recommended hotels, hostels, and luxury resorts](#).

Sample Taiwan Itineraries

Here's a brief outline of the itineraries I'll be covering in this article. Since so many visitors only visit Taiwan for one week (I know because I've checked so many of your itineraries!), and because I know you try to squeeze in as much as you can, I'm provided both a slower (recommended!) and more rushed itinerary.

Typically, visitors want to squeeze in Taipei, Hualien/Taroko Gorge on the east coast, plus Sun Moon Lake and/or Alishan (on the west coast) in a short period of time. It might look like a quick drive across the island from Taroko Gorge to Sun Moon lake, but it is NOT!

There is a chain of high mountains in the center of Taiwan, with no public transportation. Even if you drive, the cross-island highway is often destroyed by landslides and impossible to cross. This means you'll need to go from east coast to west coast via Taipei, so keep that in mind!

For the two-week itinerary, I've provided a nature-focused one and a city/



culture-focused one, with some overlap. The three-week itinerary basically just covers all the stops of these two itineraries.

For each of the below outlines, I'll explain how to do them in great detail below.

Taiwan in 1 Week: Slow

- Days 1-3: Taipei
- Days 4-5: [Day trips from Taipei](#)
- Days 6-7: Short trip outside the city, choose ONE of these: Hualien/Taroko Gorge, Taichung/Sun Moon Lake/Cingjing Farm, Alishan, Tainan, or Kaohsiung

Taiwan in 1 Week: Fast

- Days 1-2: Taipei
- Day 3: Day trip from Taipei ([this one](#) covers the top spots in one day!)
- Day 4: Long day trip to Taroko Gorge (details below)
- Day 5: Sun Moon Lake and/or Cingjing Farm
- Day 6: Alishan
- Day 7 Back to Taipei or directly to Taoyuan International Airport



Taiwan in 2 Weeks: Nature-Focused

If you want to do a full circle around Taiwan, two weeks is a reasonable amount of time. You can't easily hit every stop without rushing, though. This itinerary focused on natural places and skips some of the big cities.

- Days 1-3 :Taipei (including day trip)
- Days 4-5: Hualien and Taroko Gorge
- Day 6-7: Taitung (Chishang)
- Days 8-9: Xiaoliuqiu or Kenting National Park
- Days 10-11: Alishan
- Days 12-13: Sun Moon Lake and/or Cingjing Farm
- Days 14: To Taipei or Taoyuan International Airport

Two Weeks in Taiwan: City/Culture-Focused

- Days 1-3 :Taipei (including day trip)
- Days 4-5: Hualien and Taroko Gorge
- Day 6-7: Taitung city
- Days 8-9: Kaohsiung
- Days 10-11: Tainan
- Days 12-13: Taichung



- Days 14: To Taipei or Taoyuan International Airport

Taiwan in 3 weeks

If you are able to spend more than two weeks in Taiwan, you can visit all the main stops I mentioned above, but add an extra night at each for a more relaxed pace.

Or, you can add more smaller stops and side trips to your schedule. Here' just one example of what that could look like:

- Days 1-4: Taipei
- Days 5-6: Hualien / Taroko Gorge
- Days 6-7: Taitung
- Days 8-9: Kenting National Park or Xiaoliuqiu Island
- Days 10-11: Kaohsiung
- Days 12-13: Tainan
- Day 14: Fenqihu or Shizhuo
- Day 15: Alishan
- Days 16-17: Sun Moon Lake
- Day 18: Cingjing Farm
- Day 19: Lukang



- Day 20: Taichung
- Day 21: Back to Taipei or directly to Taoyuan Airport

Transportation Info

In this section, I'll cover everything you need to know about transportation for completing these itineraries in Taiwan.

Airport to Taipei

My itineraries assume you'll be arriving at [Taoyuan International Airport](#), Taipei's main airport. There's also a smaller city center airport called Songshan Airport, as well as international airports in Taichung and Kaohsiung.

On Day 1, to get from the airport to Taipei city center, hop in the Airport MRT. It runs frequently from around 6 AM to midnight, taking 35 or 50 minutes (every second one is express) and costing only TWD 160 one-way (or cheaper if you [buy it here](#)).

You can pay in cash at the machine or ticket window, or swipe an **EasyCard**, the transportation card which almost all locals use in Taiwan. You can buy



your EasyCard (TWD 100 non-refundable deposit + however much money you want to load onto it) from the ticket window, but the window isn't always open. Or you can [pre-order and pre-load your EasyCard](#) for pickup when you arrive at the airport. Kids under 6 are free, while kids 6-12 and seniors can ask for a Concessionaire card (at the station only). Read more about it in my [EasyCard guide](#).

There are also regular [buses to the city](#) (one hour). If you arrive between midnight at 6 AM, you'll need to take a taxi (45 min, TWD 1000 to 1200), or arrange a [private transfer](#) (usually a little cheaper than taxi).

How to Rent a Car in Taiwan

If you do decide to [rent a car in Taiwan](#), you can pick it up from the various locations, including the Taoyuan Airport or in the city center. However, a lot of people find it easier to explore Taipei by MRT, ride the express train to Hualien (which is faster and easier than driving), then start their car rental in Hualien.

Getting around Taipei





The Taipei MRT, one of the best metro systems in the world.

Getting around Taipei is a breeze thanks to the amazing Taipei MRT system. Simply buy and load an [EasyCard online](#), from any station, or from any convenience store, and use it swipe in and out of stations. You can also use it to pay at convenience stores, some taxis, other city buses and MRTs across Taiwan, some ferries, and even some food stalls. When in Taiwan, you can only use cash to load your EasyCard.



Also consider getting an [Unlimited Fun Pass](#), which is a 1-3 day pass for tourists only. It includes unlimited MRT and bus rides in Taipei and [New Taipei City](#), five tourist shuttle buses to attractions all over Northern Taiwan, and entrance fees to 16 major Taipei attractions. It can save you a lot of time and trouble! There's also a cheaper [transport-only pass](#) that doesn't include the attractions. Read my [guide to using Taipei Fun Passes](#) to decide whether they are worth the money, and whether you need to get one for your kids.

TRA Trains Around Taiwan





Riding the regular (TRA) train with my kids

Taiwan Railways Administration (TRA) runs trains in a full circle around Taiwan. There are a variety of train types/speeds, and all of their schedules can be searched and booked (from 28 days in advance) on the official [TRA website](https://www.tra.gov.tw/).

Train types include LOCAL (no seat booking possible, just swipe your



EasyCard), Tze-Chiang and Chu-Kuang (seat reservations recommended but you can always swipe EasyCard for standing ticket), and EXPRESS (seat reservation essential, as these trains often sell out). If you're traveling during a long weekend or national holiday, booking train seats is essential.

In all my recommended Taiwan itineraries, you'll be riding TRA trains from Taipei to Hualien (the express one here is especially popular and likely to sell out). It is also your only option from Hualien to Taitung and from Taitung to Kaohsiung.

From Kaohsiung to Taipei, and all the big cities between, you'll have the choice of TRA trains or the High Speed Rail. TRA stations are usually more convenient because all of them are in the city center.

For Alishan and Sun Moon Lake, you'll need to take some buses to reach them.

High Speed Rail (HSR)





We ride the HSR with style

Taiwan's High Speed Rail (HSR) runs from Taipei City down the west coast to Kaohsiung (Zuoying Station). It has some very clear advantages and disadvantages (I do a more detailed comparison of TRA and HSR trains in my [HSR booking guide](#)).

On the plus side, the HSR is twice as fast (but also twice as expensive).



However, besides Taipei, every HSR station is inconveniently located outside of the city center. It means once you reach Taichung, Tainan, or Kaohsiung, you have to take local transport to reach the city center. Two cases where this isn't a problem are [Chiayi](#) HSR station (where you can catch a direct bus to Alishan) or Taichung HSR station (where you can catch a direct bus to Sun Moon Lake).

If you book your tickets in advance (on the [official site](#)) or [here on Klook](#), you can get a discount. However, you can also just show up at the station and buy a non-reserved ticket, even last minute, even on sold out trains, and sit in the non-reserved section (cars 10-12).

You don't actually need to use the HSR on my recommended Taiwan itineraries. In most cases, the TRA will suffice and will be more convenient. I would only recommend it if (for example), you want to quickly travel one of the big cities (Kaohsiung, Tainan, Chiayi, Taichung) to [Taoyuan](#) (where you can catch the Airport MRT to Taoyuan International Airport) or to Taipei.

Insider's Tips: HSR tickets

Book your [HSR tickets in advance online](#) to save money. But if you prefer flexibility, you can always buy a full-price HSR ticket at



the last minute and sit in cars 10-12 (non-reserved section).

We've even done this at the busiest time of the year ([Lunar New Year](#), when all HSR tickets sell out instantly) and only had to wait under an hour to get on a train and even get a seat. The same is true for any long weekends in Taiwan.

If you order your HSR tickets online, you'll still need to pick up physical copies in Taiwan from a convenience store or HSR station window. If you want to get digital tickets, use the [T Express app](#).

1 Week Itinerary Details

If you've only got 7 days in Taiwan, obviously you aren't going to tour the whole country, but it's still enough time to get a very good taste of it. What most likely will happen is that you'll finish your trip and start thinking about when you can come back again to see more of the country. I'm only repeating what many, many travelers say!

Here are my detailed itineraries for slow or fast travelers!



Slow Itinerary

For my slow one week itinerary, I recommend spending most of your time in Taipei, including some day trips from the city (keep in mind that you can see many parts of Taiwan as a day trip from Taipei!) There's just so much to see in and around Taipei that it's not really necessary to do a lot of traveling and changing hotels when you've only got a week.

Then I recommend one trip out of the city, perhaps for 2-3 nights. I'll give several options!

Days 1-3 in Taipei





Yong Kang Park in Taipei

You need at least two fulls days just to cover the main sights on Taipei. Trust me, you won't run out of [things to do in Taipei](#)!

I've suggested three days here assuming you won't see and do much on Day 1. The exact number of numbers you stay in Taipei might depend on what time you arrive on Day 1. Will you have much time to explore the city on Day 1 or



not? Will you be super tired after your long flight? Just a few things to consider.

I've got several separate articles to help you plan your time in Taipei. Start with my [two day](#), [three day](#), [four day](#) or [five day](#) itineraries for Taipei, which cover the main sights and how to see them most efficiently.

Also have a look at my guide to [where to stay in Taipei](#), [Taipei's night markets](#), the [best restaurants](#), and the [best temples in Taipei](#). For Taipei-specific weather advice, see the [best time to visit Taipei](#).

Also read about Taipei's famous food streets and markets, like [Yongkang Street](#), [Shenkeng Old Street](#), [Danshui Old Street](#), and [Addiction Aquatic Development seafood supermarket](#).

Days 4-5: Day Trips from Taipei





Jiufen, the most popular day trip from Taipei (See [what camera I always use for traveling](#) and the [best lenses for it](#))

There are so many incredible day trips from Taipei that I suggest reserving 1-2 days in your itinerary for it. Here are my 40 [recommended day trips from Taipei](#).

Several of the most popular places to visit around Taipei can be combined into one epic day trip. Many people include several (but not all!) of the



following into one day: Shifen Waterfall, Jiufen Old Street, Jinguashi Gold Ecological Park, Golden Waterfall, Houtong Cat Village, [Keelung Night Market](#), and Yehliu Geopark. [This guided day tour](#) visits several of them in one day, or you can follow my guides for doing it all on your own (see my day trips article linked above).

I've also got dedicated articles to the most famous day trips from Taipei: [Jiufen Old Street](#), [how to get to Jiufen](#), [Wulai aboriginal village](#), and [Jiaoxi Hot Spring](#). You may also want to visit some of [Taipei's best beaches](#) or one of these fun [amusement parks](#).

For families, consider [visiting Yilan](#), which is loaded with kid-friendly museum, leisure farms, and other activities.

Days 6-7: Somewhere Outside Taipei





Magnificent Taroko Gorge

Depending on how many nights you decide to spend in Taipei, you can schedule 2-3 nights for staying somewhere outside Taipei.

Taroko Gorge in [Hualien](#) is a popular option. Here's my [Taroko Gorge guide](#). You can get there in only two hours on the fastest train (booking essential), or 3-4 hours on slower ones. It is possible to do Taroko Gorge as a rushed day trip



from Taipei, but for our slower itinerary, I recommend spending a minimum of one night there, and two is better. Most people visit the gorge as a full-day tour such as [this one](#), or with a private driver such as [this one](#).

Another popular option is **Sun Moon Lake or Cingjing Farm**, the most famous [places to visit in Nantou](#). Sun Moon Lake is a beautiful lake with temples, gondola, night markets, and other things to do. Cingjing Farm is a high mountain farm with beautiful mountain views, European-style buildings, and farm animals.

Both places can be reached via Taichung city. The regular train or bus to Taichung takes 2 hours, or the High Speed Rail takes one hour. From either station, it's 1.5 hour bus ride to Sun Moon Lake or 2.5 hours to Cingjing Farm.

There are several options here. You might choose to spend 1 night in Taichung (see the main [things to do in Taichung](#)), one night in Sun Moon Lake (see my [Sun Moon Lake guide](#)), and one night in Cingjing Farm. Or you might skip Taichung and choose only SML or Cingjing. It's up to you!

There are various transportation options and tours available on Klook for these visiting these places efficiently. Here's a [Taichung tour](#), [Sun Moon Lake tour](#), [shared transfer](#), [private transfer](#), [Cingjing and Hehuan Mountain tour](#), and [SML and Cinjing combined tour](#).





Pretty Sun Moon Lake

Yet another option for your trip outside Taipei would be **Alishan**. This is Taiwan's most popular mountain resort. It is famous for its beautiful sunrises, small gauge forest railway line, huge ancient trees, and high mountain tea. Here's my [guide to Alishan](#) and [how to get there](#). For this relaxed itinerary, I recommend riding the High Speed Rail to Chiayi station (1.5 hrs) then taking the bus (2 hrs) to get there.



One night is the bare minimum at Alishan, but two nights is more relaxed. You can consider one night in Fenqihu or Shizhuo villages on the way there, and one night in Alishan National Forest Recreation area. All the details are in my Alishan guide. Book your Alishan hotel early as they often sell out.

Other options for your stay outside of Taipei would be the cities of [Tainan](#) (the country's ancient capital) or [Kaohsiung](#) (the country's largest port city).

On your final day, you can ride the HSR from Taichung, Chiayi, Tainan or Kaohsiung to Taoyuan HSR station, then connect to the Airport MRT for getting to the Taoyuan International Airport. If coming from Hualien, you'll need to ride the TRA train to Taipei Main Station then connect to the Airport MRT from there.





The Alishan Forest Railway

1 Week Fast Itinerary Details

So many visitors to Taiwan want to see Taipei + the Big Three Sights (Taroko, Sun Moon Lake, Alishan), but they only book one week or less to do it. This is too rushed, in my opinion, but it can be done. Here's how:

Days 1-2: Taipei



Of course you can't miss Taipei. Two full days here is enough to see the main sights.

Day 3: Day trip from Taipei

You can't miss this either! I recommend [this tour](#) for visiting some of the best sights in one day.

Day 4: Day trip to Taroko Gorge

Since your schedule is very tight, I recommend visiting Taroko Gorge as a day trip from Taipei. If you take the earliest train of the day, you can make it just in time for this [Taroko Gorge day tour](#). Or, come at a later time, and just [hire a driver](#) to take you around. There's also this [Taroko Gorge tour from Taipei](#), but I don't recommend it because it involves too much driving time in one day.

If you prefer to spend a night in Hualien when you visit the gorge, it's also possible in this itinerary. Follow the above instructions for getting to Taroko Gorge, then spend a night in one of the hotels in the gorge, in Xincheng village nearby, or in Hualien city (see my [Taroko guide](#) for my hotel recommendations). Then, the next morning, ride an early train back to Taipei, and onward to Taichung for getting to Sun Moon Lake. It means your time at Sun Moon Lake will be shorter, though, so go as early as possible.



Day 5: Sun Moon Lake and/or Cingjing Farm

From Taipei, ride the High Speed Rail to Tauchung station (1 hr). If you spend a night in Hualien, ride the regular train all the way to Taichung (slowest), or regular train to Taipei Main then transfer to the High Speed Rail.

If you choose Sun Moon Lake, there's a direct bus from the HSR station (90 min). Try to go as early as possible so you can have a full day for exploring Sun Moon Lake. Spend the night in Shuishe village at Sun Moon Lake, which is where you'll need to catch the bus to Alishan the next morning.

If you choose Cingjing Farm, you probably shouldn't spend the night there, because it will take a long time to get to Alishan the next day. You can visit Cingjing and Hehuanshan as a [day tour from Taichung](#), or choose this [Cinging and Sun Moon Lake day tour](#) to visit both places in one day.

See more info in my [Cingjing guide](#), [how to get to Cingjing](#), my guide to [visiting Hehuanshan](#), and [how to stay at Songsyue Lodge](#), the only hotel at Hehuanshan.

Day 6: Alishan

If you spend the night at Sun Moon Lake, there's only one bus per day to Alishan, departing Shuishe village at 8 AM and arriving at Alishan around 11 AM. This will give you all afternoon for hiking and exploring Alishan, which is



lots of time.

If you chose to spend the night at Cingjing, you can wake up early for sunrise, then go back to Taichung as early as possible for getting to Alishan.

If you did one of the SML or Cingjing tours, you probably finished in Taichung and spent the night there. To get from Taichung to Alishan, ride the regular train or High Speed Rail to Chiayi, then take the direct bus from Chiayi HSR station or Chiayi TRA station to Alishan (2 hrs). You can see all the [bus times here](#). Try to reach Alishan by the early afternoon so you have some time for exploring there.

Day 7: Alishan Sunrise and Back to Taipei/Airport

On your last day, wake up super early to see the famous Alishan sunrise. Then, if you aren't too rushed to get back to Taipei or to the airport for your flight, you can spend a few more hours hiking around Alishan.

Ride the bus from Alishan to the Chiayi HSR station for the fastest way back to Taoyuan (for the airport) or Taipei Main Station. For the airport, ride it to Taoyuan HSR station then take the Airport MRT to the airport.

Or take the bus to the Chiayi TRA station for the slower but cheaper way to go back. If you want to go directly to the airport, ride the TRA train to Taoyuan



station, then take a taxi from there.

Taiwan 2 Week Itinerary

Two weeks is a good amount of time if you want to do a full circle around Taiwan. You won't be able to hit every stop along the way (unless you are willing to rush and change hotels/locations almost every night). But you can at least cover most of the main ones.

If you plan to travel around Taiwan in two weeks, I'm going to give you two different itinerary options. One is more focused on nature and the other on history and culture. You maybe want to modify or combine the two itineraries as you see fit.

Nature-Focused Itinerary



Riding a scooter on Xiaoliuqiu

For my nature-focused itinerary, traveling clockwise around Taiwan, you will stop at Taroko Gorge, rural Taitung County, Alishan National Scenic Area, and Sun Moon Lake. Why clockwise? Well, that way just feels natural to me, plus I being able to ride the High Speed Rail directly to Taoyuan for getting to the airport on the final day, avoiding the need to go to



To avoid repeating a lot in this article, I'm going to describe each of these stops in detail (including hotel recommendations) below in my recommended 3-week itinerary. The route is the same, but you'll just have to skip over a few stops. Essentially, my 3-week itinerary hits every one of the stops on these two 2-week itineraries.

- Days 1-3 : Taipei (including day trip)
- Days 4-5: Hualien and Taroko Gorge
- Day 6-7: Taitung (Chishang)
- Days 8-9: Xiaoliuqiu or Kenting National Park
- Days 10-11: Alishan
- Days 12-13: Sun Moon Lake and/or Cingjing Farm
- Days 14: To Taipei or Taoyuan International Airport

Just a few things to mention about this specific itinerary. For Hualien, make sure to book your train early. Choose to stay at one of the hotels in the gorge or in Xinsheng village nearby for a quieter and more natural experience. If you do so, the next day, you might have to catch a local train from Xinsheng to Hualien first. From there, there are more trains onward to Chishang.

I recommend staying in one of the villages in Taitung for experiencing this beautiful, this rural part of Taiwan. Chishang is my top choice and is famous for cycling in the rice paddies. But other choices are Yuli, Guanshuan, and Luye. Read about them all in my guide to the [East Coast of Taiwan](#).



For the next stop, [Xiaoliuqiu](#) is a small island where you can snorkel with sea turtles. To get there, ride the train from Chishang to Taitung city first. Then ride a train from Taitung city to Fangliao and take a taxi to the ferry port in Donggang for riding the ferry to Xiaoliuqiu.

Alternatively, follow the same steps to Fangliao then catch a bus to Kenting National Park, which has the [best beaches on the mainland of Taiwan](#) and many resorts or B&Bs to choose from.

From either one, return to Fangliao, then take the train to Chiayi. If you ride Fangliao to Kaohsiung, and then Kaohsiung to Chiayi, there will be more trains to choose from. Try to get to Chiayi before the last bus to Alishan. If you can't, [spend the night in Chiayi](#) and go to Alishan then next day. Here's my guide to [getting to Alishan](#) and [visiting Alishan](#).

From Alishan, there's one minibus per day to Sun Moon Lake, departing at 1 PM and arriving at SML at 4 PM. Spend the next day at Sun Moon Lake plus another night. Catch the shuttle bus from Sun Moon Lake to Taichung High Speed Rail station for connecting to the airport or Taipei.

Alternatively, after one night and one day visiting Sun Moon Lake, move to Cingjing Farm for your last night. You can get there by bus via Puli (budget about 2 hours) or take a [shared transfer](#). On the final day, bus from Cingjing to Taichung via Puli (2.5 hrs), or take a shared another [shared transfer](#) (1.5 hrs).



City & Culture-Focused Itinerary

A temple ceremony in Tainan

If you're more into the arts, culture, and urban explorations, then this itinerary is for you. You'll still visit Taroko Gorge in Hualien, because I can't justify skipping that. You can also experience Taiwanese aboriginal culture in Hualien, for example by taking this [aboriginal cooking course](#).



Then you'll do a circle around Taiwan via its main cities, stopping in each one to experience local attractions and culture. This won't be all urban-sprawl – there are plenty of chances within the cities to get outside in nature.

- Days 1-3 :Taipei (including day trip)
- Days 4-5: Hualien and Taroko Gorge
- Day 6-7: Taitung city
- Days 8-9: Kaohsiung
- Days 10-11: Tainan
- Days 12-13: Taichung
- Days 14: To Taipei or Taoyuan International Airport

There are a few more things to be said here that I haven't already mentioned above. First, Taitung city is not the most exciting city. It's hardly a city. It feels more like a small country town. But it has a few interesting cultural attractions (read these [things to do in Taitung](#)), and you can use it as a home base for doing this [tea culture day tour](#).

The Kaohsiung and Tainan portions are self explanatory. Just ride the regular (TRA) train to those cities and enjoy! Don't bother with the HSR, because the stations for Kaohsiung, Tainan, and Taichung are all outside of the city centers.



Read my guides to [Kaohsiung](#), [Tainan](#), and [Taichung](#) for all the juicy details. I'll also cover them in more detail below.

Taiwan 3 week itinerary

OK, now I'm going to get down to some serious day-by-day details. The following is precisely how I would plan a 3 week itinerary for Taiwan. If you want to see all the places that I've mentioned in both 2-week itineraries without rushing, then you'll need 2 to 3 weeks in Taiwan.

I'll also sprinkle the itinerary with ideas for additional stops or side trips along way, including some more off-the-beaten-track attractions. how you what is possible, and how to cover all the main stops in Taiwan in three weeks, for those who want to. This is exactly how I travel, but I know others are different!



- Days 1-4: Taipei
- Days 5-6: Hualien / Taroko Gorge
- Days 6-7: Taitung
- Days 8-9: Kenting National Park or Xiaoliuqiu Island
- Days 10-11: Kaohsiung



- Days 12-13: Tainan
- Day 14: Fenqihu or Shizhuo
- Day 15: Alishan
- Days 16-17: Sun Moon Lake
- Day 18: Cingjing Farm
- Day 19: Lukang
- Day 20: Taichung
- Day 21: Back to Taipei or directly to Taoyuan Airport

Days 1-4: Taipei



CKS Memorial Hall: One of the top attractions in Taipei

Spend your first 3-4 day in Taipei, including one or two days for a day trip out of the city. The exact number of nights you spend in Taipei might depend on what time you arrive on Day 1. Will you have much time (or energy?) to do much on Day 1? Generally, I recommend at least two full days for exploring Taipei, plus 1-2 days for day trips.

Consult my itineraries for [2 days](#) or [3 days in Taipei](#), my [top things to do in Taipei](#), guide to the [best temples](#), [restaurants](#), [night markets](#), and



[amusement parks in Taipei](#).

Also see my neighborhood guides to funky [Ximending](#), historic [Dihua Street](#), food-focused [Yongkang Street](#), [Shenkeng stinky tofu street](#), and the [hot springs of Beitou](#). Enjoy the [best views of Taipei 101 from these spots](#).

See my [Taipei accommodation guide](#) for the best hotels in Taipei covering all budgets and types of travelers. Last but not least, check out my recommended [day trips from Taipei](#), [best beaches](#), and guides to [Jiaoxi](#), [Yilan](#), [Wulai](#), [Jiufen](#), [Shifen](#), [Keelung](#), and [Tamsui](#) (all possible day trips).



Keelung Night Market, my favorite one in Taiwan and an easy trip from Taipei

Days 4-5: Hualien and Taroko Gorge



Dramatic Qingshui Cliffs near Taroko Gorge

On day 4, catch a morning TRA train to Hualien (make sure to book in advance, up to 28 days, especially for the express train). Check in to your hotel and begin exploring some of the [things to do in Hualien](#). See my recommended [Hualien itinerary](#) for planning your schedule.

If you've got time, consider taking this highly recommended [aboriginal cooking course](#).



Where to Stay in Hualien

There are three main places you can stay in Hualien County for visiting Taroko Gorge, and they are all quite different.

1. Hualien City: This offers the best choice of restaurants, accommodations of all price ranges, and other things to do, but it is the furthest from Taroko Gorge (30-40 minutes by car). Most Taroko tours start from here. **Just Walk** ([see on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is an excellent hostel choice. **Happiness is my Home** ([see on Booking](#)) is an excellent mid-range B&B. **Farglory Resort** ([see on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is the best luxury seaside resort and has a sea-themed park attached (you can even [sleep in it!](#))

2. Xincheng: This is a very small town closest to the entrance to Taroko Gorge. There isn't much there, but it's quiet and there are some great hotels. It's only a 10-minute drive to Taroko Gorge. You can also have the Taroko tours pick you up here. You can get off the train at Xincheng (Taroko Gorge station), one stop before Hualien on the express train from Taipei. When traveling on from here, you might have to train to Hualien city first, then catch your next train south. **Liwu Hotel** ([see on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) /



[TripAdvisor](#)) is the closest to Taroko Gorge. **Liiko Hotel** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is the best hotel in town.

3. In Taroko Gorge: There are only a few hotels right inside Taroko Gorge. Aboriginal-themed **Taroko Village Hotel** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is halfway up the gorge on a beautiful terrace with suspension bridge nearby and an aboriginal buffet restaurant. Ultra-luxurious **Silks Place Taroko** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) at the top of the gorge is the best hotel in all of Hualien county. Both should offer pick-up and tour services.

See my [Taroko Gorge article](#) for everything you need to know for planning a trip to Taroko Gorge on the 5th day. If you're looking for a tour, I recommend [this one](#). Even better, [hire a driver for a day](#) to take you to the best spots.

You can also rent a scooter in Hualien City or in Xincheng (IDP or Taiwanese license needed) and visit the gorge yourself, but beware of the narrow road and possible landslides. Do not visit the gorge during or right after heavy rain, especially by scooter or bicycle.

You will want to wake up early for this one, and you'll probably spend a long,



full day visiting the various attractions, views, shrines, and hikes in the gorge, not to mention beautiful Qixingtan Beach and the dramatic Qingshui Cliffs nearby, which can also be included in your Taroko Gorge tour if you plan it right.

Other things to do in Hualien

– If visiting [Taiwan in winter](#), check out [Wenshan Hot Spring](#), a natural hot spring in Taroko Gorge that was damaged by a typhoon, and is now semi-open (you might have to climb around a fence or two).

– Other amazing experiences in Hualien include [whale watching](#), [paragliding](#), [river tracing](#), [rafting](#), [seeing cute animals](#), [sleeping inside an aquarium](#), and [ATVing on a beach](#).

Day 6-7: Taitung

Your next stop is one of the most remote and beautiful corners of Taiwan, Taitung County. Also called the “rice basket of Taiwan”, Taitung is known for



its clean air, fresh water, quaint rural scenery, and the stunning East Rift Valley.

For more details, learn [how to plan your full Taitung itinerary here](#).

Typical rural scenery in the East Rift Valley



For Taitung county, you'll have to decide which town to stay in. Some great choices are Yuli (actually in southern Hualien county, but near Taitung), Chishang, Guanshang, Luye, and Taitung city. I describe each town in more detail in my [East Coast guide](#).

It only takes 1-3 hours to get there on the train from Hualien, depending on which town you decide to stay in, and what speed of train you catch.

Yuli is very rural and you can cycle or ride a scooter to a waterfall, amazing hike, or hot springs. [Chishang](#) is the most popular town for its famous cycling paths among rice paddies. Guanshan is also known for cycling but less popular than Chishang. [Luye](#) is super rural and famous for the International Balloon Festival in summer and for its tea farms.

Taitung city is my least favorite option, but it does have [some things to see and do](#), too. In all of these places, riding a bicycle or scooter to explore is best, but there are also tours like [this one](#) and [this one](#).

There are direct [flights from Taipei's Songshan airport to Taitung City](#) if you want to access the region faster.

How to Rent a Bike or Scooter in Taitung



Exploring rural Taitung is best by bicycle or scooter. You can [order your bicycle for Chishang here](#), or just get one from the many shops when you get there. Other towns in Taitung also have bicycle rental shops, usually around the train station, or you can inquire if your hotel has them. Guanshan definitely has lots, while Luye may not.

It's also possible to rent a scooter from a small shop outside each train station (Taiwanese license or IDP needed). You can [reserve one in advance here for Yuli, Chishang, Guanshan, or Taitung station](#) (electric scooter also available). I recommend doing this to avoid not finding one upon arrival.

Where to stay in Taitung County

In **Yuli**, I highly recommend **Wisdom Garden** (see [on Agoda / Booking / TripAdvisor](#)).

In **Chishang**: we liked **Good Harvest B&B** (see [on Booking / Agoda / TripAdvisor](#)), which is just out of town (ride a



bike there!) but very close to the famous cycling paths. A fancier option is **Papago International** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)).

In **Guanshan, Remindful Homestay** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is a nice B&B in with free bikes available.

In **Luye, Jamie's Guesthouse** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is a popular choice in town, while **Luminous Hot Spring Resort** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is a larger (but older) hotel with indoor hot spring, outdoor pool, and balconies facing nature.

In **Taitung city, Begonia B&B** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is an excellent B&B, while **The Gaya** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) has a great location by the Railway Village and a rooftop pool.



My kids at the annual Taitung Hot Air Balloon Festival in Luye

Green Island and Orchid Island

If you've got more time or want to focus your trip mainly on this part of Taiwan, hop on a ferry and spend a few days at **Green Island** (Lu Dao). This small island has more of a tropical feel, with great snorkeling/scuba diving, and has one of only three



salt water hot springs in the world. Book your [Green Island ferry tickets here](#).

Orchid Island (Lanyu) is home to Taiwan's most remote aboriginal tribe. A trip there involves more planning, so you'll definitely want to consult my detailed [guide to Orchid Island](#).

Days 8-9: Kenting National Park or Xiaoliuqiu



Beautiful beaches in Kenting

Kenting National Park occupies the southern tip of Taiwan and is home to Mainland [Taiwan's best beaches](#) (the real best ones are on the offshore islands, like [Penghu](#)). For more info than I'll provide here, please see [my Kenting travel guide](#) and [list of things to do in Kenting](#).

Still, the park offers gorgeous scenery and many activities, so if you're looking



for a beach vacation, do consider it! Kenting has three main beaches to choose from, in the order you would pass them: Nanwan (South Bay), Kenting Main Beach (or Kenting Night Market), and Sail Rock.

Nanwan and Sail Rock are small beaches with just a few simple hotels and great swimming. Kenting Main Beach is the largest town and has the most resorts and other hotels, but swimming is not technically allowed there.

There is also a very famous aquarium in Hengchun, a small city near Kenting, called the [National Museum of Marine Biology](#). Here's the local [shuttle bus](#) for getting to the aquarium and other places in Kenting.

To get there, ride a train from wherever you stayed in Hualien to Fangliao station (you will get more train options if you ride to Taitung city first, then catch a new train from Taitung onward). At Fangliao, you can board the shuttle bus to Kenting. Budget about four hours for getting to from Taitung to Kenting.

Where to Stay in Kenting

In Nanwan, try **The First** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)), a fun capsule hotel just off the beach or **Nanwan Station** (see [on](#)



[Booking](#) / [Agoda](#)) for a B&B.

Kenting Main Street area has the biggest selection of accommodations, including some of the best resorts in Kenting, like **Howard Beach Resort** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) and **Caesar Park** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)).

Sail Rock Beach, the furthest from Kaohsiung, has more excellent accommodations, like the snazzy **Kenting 4 Sisters Villa** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)).



Secret Beach on Xiaoliuqiu

Xiaoliqiu (also called Little Liuqiu or Lambai Island) is a small coral island off the coast of [Pingtung](#), just below Kaohsiung city. Here's my detailed [guide to Little Liuqiu Island](#).

The top reason to come here is to go snorkeling with the islands resident giant turtles. There are hundreds of them and you are guaranteed to see



them. The island also makes for the perfect tropical getaway and I can't speak highly enough of it.

The time to reach Xiaoliuqiu is almost the same as getting to Kenting, so you'll have to make a tough choice here. Coming from Taitung, you'll also want to take the train to Fangliao station. From there, you can just hop in a taxi to get to the Xiaoliuqiu ferry port in Donggang city. Don't miss the excellent seafood market in the port!

Where to Stay on Xiaoliuqiu

We loved our stay at **Ocean Dream** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#)). It was right in the main town, so you can don't need a scooter to get there. Our balcony overlooking a quiet corner of the harbor and we could even see across the ocean to Kaohsiung city in the distance. Our hotel arranged our scooter and snorkeling experience.

You can also [rent a scooter or electric bicycle](#) and book your [Xiaoliuqiu snorkeling experience here](#).



Days 10-11: Kaohsiung

Love River, Kaohsiung

Kaohsiung is the largest port in Taiwan and the country's second largest city. Street art enthusiasts will find some of Taiwan's best [street art in Kaohsiung](#), and the newly renovated waterfront around [Pier 2 Art Center](#) is a must. In the evening, check out one or more of [the city's bustling night markets](#).



Other things to do include hiking on Shoushan and connecting Chaishan mountains, where you can spot loads of wild macaques. Nearby, you can visit the restored British Consulate at Takow, which offers beautiful seaside views. Or head to [Cijin Island](#) for a few hours, which has a nice beach, fort, and art installations you can cycle to along the coast.

Don't miss the awesome [Lotus Pond](#), which features multiple temples, near Kaohsiung's High Speed Rail Station (Zuoying). The KMRT also goes there.

Last but not least, some people's main reason for coming to Kaohsiung is to visit the impressive Buddha Museum at [Fo Guang Shan Monastery](#), the largest Buddha and monastery in Taiwan. You can even spend the night in the monastery!

If you're coming from Kenting, you can ride the [shuttle bus to Kaohsiung](#). From the Xiaoliuqiu ferry harbor, you can take local buses to Kaohsiung.

Where to Stay in Kaohsiung

Whenever we visit Kaohsiung, we like to stay around the point where the Love River flows into the harbor, which is a romantic area at night. **Harbour 10 Hotel** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) /



[TripAdvisor](#)) has nice river views, but it's about 10 min walk to the nearest MRT.

Hotel Yam Lagom (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is another choice with harbor/sea view from the higher rooms and close to Pier 2 and the MRT.

I also had a good experience staying in **KLA B&B** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)), which has private rooms and capsule dorm rooms, in the same convenient neighborhood as the last one.

Days 12-13: Tainan



Confucius Temple in Tainan

A quick hop on the train (30 min to 1 hour) going north will bring you to Tainan, Taiwan's former capital. You can read about all the city has to offer in my guide to [things to do in Tainan](#).

History buffs will find several of Taiwan's oldest [temples in Tainan](#). Also make sure to head over to Anping district (about 45 min by bus from central Tainan



city) to see [Anping Fort](#), [Anping Old Street](#), and [Anping Tree House](#). Also consider a side trip to [Sicao Green Tunnel](#).

Most Taiwanese people regard Tainan as the cultural and food capital of Taiwan, so don't miss the city's famous street food. Read my guide to the [best night markets in Tainan](#) and learn about the individual dishes in my [Taiwanese street food guide](#).

For something totally off-the-beaten-track, you can discover the remains of Tainan's now defunct salt industry. Check out Cigu Salt Mountain and Salt Museum north of Tainan's city center, or the visually stunning Jingzijiao Wapan Salt Fields further north near the border with Chiayi County. Read my guide to [Tainan's Salt Mountain and Salt Fields](#) for all the details.

Last but not least, [Guanziling mud hot spring](#) in northeastern Tainan is one-of-a-kind, but it'll take a little more effort to get there. Although Guanziling is technically in Tainan, it is closer to Chiayi city, so if you want to visit it, I suggest you travel to Chiayi city first (which you'll have to in order to get to the next stops on this itinerary), then visit it as a half-day trip from there.

Where to Stay in Tainan



Budget travelers can try **Quiet Hostel** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [Tripadvisor](#)), while **A Fat at Home** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#)) is a local guesthouse in a great location by the Confucius Temple and is run by friendly hosts (don't ask me about the name!)

For families, nothing beats **Hotel Cozzi** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)), which has some amazing facilities and play areas for kids.

In Anping district, I loved **An-Ping Inn Here** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)).

Day 14: Fenqihu or Shizhuo



Cute little Fenqihu village

On day 14, travel from Tainan to [Chiayi](#), the departure place for buses and trains to Fenqihu, Shizhuo, and Alishan.

Most tourists rush up to Alishan, Taiwan's most famous mountain resort. But I personally recommend spending one night in either Fenqihu or Shizhuo villages on the way there. Fenqihu is famous for its bento lunchboxes and hikes through bamboo forests. Shizhuo is known for its Alishan High Mountain tea plantations where you can even spend the night.



Getting from Chiayi to Shizhuo, Fenqihu, and Alishan is a little complicated, with lots of options. I suggest you read my [guide to Fenqihu, Shizhuo, and Alishan](#), as well as my guide to [getting to Alishan](#).

My friends at the Alishan Forest Railway at Fenqihu station

If you choose **Fenqihu**, you can either go there by riding the famous Alishan Forest Railway (slower but more scenic, only 1-2 departures per morning, [need to book](#)) or a regular bus (faster, with frequent departures, no booking



needed). This train no longer goes all the way to Alishan because the upper portion of the railway line was destroyed in a landslide several years ago.

Fenqihu is a cute little mountain village with an Old Street. Its busy in the daytime when everyone stops there for lunchboxes on the way to Alishan. But at night it is super quiet and you can sometimes see fireflies there. The excellent Fenrui Historic Trail through bamboo forests starts here.

The next day, you can catch a bus from Fenqihu to get to Alishan.



Cuiti Guesthouse, where we stayed in Shizhuo

Shizhuo is another small village very close to Fenqihu. The train doesn't go there, but every bus from Chiayi to Alishan drives through it (Fenqihu is off the main highway, so only some of the buses make the small detour to it). For much more info than I provide here, head over to [my Shizhuo guide!](#)

Shizhuo is where most Alishan High Mountain Tea (Taiwan's most famous

^

tea) is grown. Some of the guesthouses along the highway are run by tea farmers, but for the best ones (like where we stayed), you'll have to walk up the hill beside town or ask them to pick you up from either Fenqihu train station or Shizhuo bus station.

Shizhuo is quite off-the-beaten-track, especially compared to popular Alishan. But the scenery there is fantastic, including hiking trails through the tea farms and beautiful sunsets.

Where to Stay in Fenqihu and Shizhuo

We enjoyed our stay at **Fenchihu Hotel** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)), built above the only 7-Eleven in town.

We had an amazing experience staying on a tea farm at **Cuiti Guesthouse** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)). It was close to some hiking trails, had a beautiful sunset, and the farmer picked us up from the stations. You'll need to bring dinner or hike into town for it. Breakfast is provided.

If you want one that's easier to get to, **Alishan Hinoki B&B** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#)) is right on the highway, with Chiayi to



Alishan buses going right past it, and is run by a tea farming family.

Day 15: Alishan

Amazingly huge trees at Alishan



On day 15, make your way from Fenqihu or Shizhuo up to Alishan National Scenic Area, Taiwan's most famous mountain resort, by bus.

Alishan is famous for Alishan High Mountain tea (you won't see the tea farms unless you stop in Shizhuo), hiking trails through old growth forests with enormous and oddly shaped cypress trees, the three Alishan Forest Railway lines still operating in the park, and the breathtaking phenomenon of sunrises over seas of clouds.

For all these reasons, Alishan does attract tour group masses, but it's still one of my favorite places in Taiwan. My [guide to Alishan](#) offers more information than you'll find anywhere else, including how to get away from the crowds at Alishan.

If you happen to be coming when the [cherry blossoms are blooming](#) at Alishan ([March](#) to [April](#)), getting a room can be difficult or impossible. Many places to open their rooms up until around 3 months in advance, and then they all sell out right away.

On the day you arrive at Alishan, spend the afternoon doing the main tourist hiking loop around the scenic area, which only takes a few hours. Here you'll have a chance to ride a few short legs of the Alishan Forest Railway, and if you're lucky, you'll get one of the train cars made entirely of wood like we did. They smell amazing inside!



My kids inside a wooden car of the Alishan Forest Railway. Read about visiting [Alishan with kids](#) here.

On the morning of the 16th, wake up disturbingly early to take the small train line to the famous sunrise viewing point. The train is usually packed with notoriously loud tourists, so you can also consult my Alishan guide to find out how to hike up to the viewpoint, or to find other sunrise viewpoints with no tourists.



After that, you'll have a few more hours to hike around before checking out and catch the only bus of the day (1 PM) to Sun Moon Lake.

Don't forget to bring warm clothes, even in summer. Although rare, you may even see snow at Alishan in winter!

Where to Stay in Alishan

The selection of hotels at Alishan is pretty weak. Most of the hotels are old and overpriced and located in a little tourist village around the main parking lot, train station, and collection of restaurant's and shops. I recommend **Shermuh Hotel** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) mainly because they offer free pickup from the bus station (double check to make sure they're still offering it).

Alishan Hotel (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is the nicest hotel at Alishan, but even it is a little old, too. It is often filled up by tour groups and it is located deeper in the park, away from all the amenities. They do offer pickup from the bus station, though.



Unfortunately, there is no longer a hostel at Alishan. Budget travelers can consider just visiting as a day trip and staying in one of the hostels in Chiayi city, [like this one](#).

Day 16-17: Sun Moon Lake

Iconic view of Sun Moon Lake from Wenwu Temple



The next stop on this Taiwan itinerary is Sun Moon Lake. Because there's only 1 bus per day from Alishan to Sun Moon Lake (departing 1 PM, arriving 4 PM), I recommend two nights here. You won't have time to see or do anything after you arrive on Day 1.

Like Alishan, you'll have to battle with some tourist crowds here, but I don't personally find it that bad and I really love Sun Moon Lake. Some of the top attractions here include the [Sun Moon Lake ropeway](#), riding [boats across the lake](#), temples with amazing lake views, and a local night market.

See my extremely detailed [guide to Sun Moon Lake](#) here, including how to get off the beaten track.

You may want to consider getting a [Sun Moon Lake Pass](#). I've also got articles on the [best Sun Moon Lake tours](#) and [Sun Moon Lake's amazing black tea](#).

Where to Stay at Sun Moon Lake

There are two main villages on Sun Moon Lake. The main tourist village is called Shuishe. It's more convenient, because it's where your bus will arrive from Alishan, and where you will catch a bus



to Taichung when you leave. In Shuishe, I recommend **Shaoguang188** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)), a lovely guesthouse with stone bath tubs.

I personally prefer Ita Thao, the aboriginal village on the other side of the lake. It's a tourist town as well, but has a more local and less resorty feel. We loved staying at these rustic **cabins on Sun Moon Lake** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#)), which were in a lush area just a few minutes walk out of Ita Thao. There are also some rooms with beautiful lake views right in town, such as **Hu Yue Lakeview Hotel** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)).

Day 18: Cingjing Farm



High mountain farm at Cingjing

Right up there with Alishan, Cingjing Farm is one of Taiwan's most popular mountain resorts. This one is a little different: it's actually a high mountain farm! (Find all the info in my [Cingjing Farm guide](#) and read about [why I'm not the biggest fan of Cingjing](#)).

Besides beautiful mountain views from most guesthouses, you'll find a



working European-style farm with farm animals. Other attractions include [cherry blossoms](#) (Feb to Mar), beautiful sunrises/sunsets, Cingjing Skywalk, and morning [sunrise tours](#) to Hehuanshan (one of the most famous places for [seeing snow in Taiwan](#)).

It will take you about two hours to travel from Sun Moon Lake to Cingjing Farm by bus (via Puli), or you can take this [shared transfer service](#). From Cingjing to Taichung (the next stop), budget 2.5 hours, again via Puli, or this [shared transfer service](#).

Where to Stay at Cingjing Farm

Besides the [official accommodation](#) on the farm, there are loads of guesthouses at Cingjing, many of which offer spectacular views. **The Old England** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is a very famous landmark hotel with afternoon tea.

Iris Farmhouse (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is a simple but very friendly guesthouse with great views and hot pot dinner available. This is where I stayed when I visited. One downside is it's a 30-minute uphill walk to the farm.



More convenient options are **Bokelai** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) or **Cotsworld Villa** (see [on Booking](#) / [Agoda](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)). Both are close to the northern entrance of the farm.

Days 19-20: Taichung

Taichung Cultural Heritage Park



The final stop on our Taiwan tour itinerary is Taichung! Taiwan's "middle city" is known as the place where pearl milk tea was invented (you can still visit the original shop!)

Other top attractions in the city include [Rainbow Village](#) (read about how [Rainbow Village has been partially destroyed](#)), 921 Earthquake Museum, and [Feng Chia Night Market](#). Outside of the city, popular day trips include [Gaomei Wetland](#), and [Zhongshe Flower Market](#), and [Lihpao Discovery Land](#) (one of the newest and best amusement parks in Taiwan).

For all the info you need, see my [guide to Taichung](#), recommended [Taichung itinerary](#), and the best [day trips from Taichung](#).

Where to Stay in Taichung

Norden Ruder (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is a new, highly rated hostel in town.

Red Dot (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) features a slide into the lobby, while **Inhouse Hotel Grand** (see [on Agoda](#) / [Booking](#) / [TripAdvisor](#)) is a good mid-range choice.



Day 21: Back to Taipei or Taoyuan Airport

That wraps up our Taiwan itinerary! From Taichung, you can hop on the High Speed Rail to Taoyuan station, where you can transfer to the Taoyuan International Airport. There are also direct buses to the airport from Taichung bus station, just north of the TRA train station in the city center.

More Places to Consider

Whether you are [living in Taiwan](#), have more time in your schedule, or prefer off-the-beaten-track destinations, here are even more ideas for your Taiwan itinerary!

Miaoli County



Picking strawberries in Miaoli

Miaoli is a less-visited county in between Taichung and Taipei, but it has so much to offer. Some of the top spots include [picking strawberries in Dahu](#) (winter only), remote [Tai'an Hot Springs](#), hiking or sleeping in a temple on [Lion's Head Mountain](#), the fun [Flying Cow Leisure Farm](#), or visiting Hobbit Houses [here](#) and [here](#).



I've got even more ideas for exploring the area in my Miaoli guide. Please note, it takes more time to travel around Miaoli, so [renting a car](#) is a good idea for getting around.

Yilan county

Wefengqi Waterfall in Yilan

Yilan is considered the family-friendly county of Taiwan. Only 60-90 minutes



from Taipei, the county has dozens of kid-friendly museums, leisure farms ([meet capybaras here!](#)), kid-friendly hot springs, [glamping](#), beaches, and more. It is also known for its many excellent *minsu* (local guesthouses).

Jiaoxi, Yilan City, and Luodong are the three main towns in Yilan. Jiaoxi is famous for hot springs while Luodong is known for [Luodong Night Market](#). [Renting a car](#) or [hiring a driver](#) is best if you want to explore the county. Yilan also has a famous mountain park called [Taipingshan](#), with its Bong Bong Train and chance to see snow in winter.

For all the info you need, see my favorite [things to do in Yilan](#) and my [guide to Jiaoxi](#), the most kid-friendly hot spring area in Taiwan.

Penghu Islands



Famous heart weir in Penghu

The Penghu archipelago is a collection of Taiwanese islands in the Taiwan strait between Taiwan and China. They are super easy to visit thanks to direct flights from Taipei's city-center Songshan Airport, Taichung, or Kaohsiung.

Some fun things to do in Penghu include island-hopping by scooter or boat, some of the country's best beaches, traditional houses made of coral, tasting



cactus ice cream, and the Penghu International Fireworks Festival. It's best to avoid winter, when it's super windy.

All the details are in my [Penghu travel guide](#).

Well, that brings us to the end of my Taiwan itinerary. I hope you've found more than enough info for planning your visit. Let me know in the comments if you have any questions!

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45 thoughts on “A Taiwan Itinerary for 1, 2, or 3 weeks (Slow & Fast Options!)”

Jesse

[September 23, 2019 at 3:19 pm](#)



Hi! My wife and I speak mandarin but we are both from UK and US. We have four days to travel outside of Taipei and are unsure how to use that time. The places we are considering is:

Taroko Gorge – Alishan – SunMoon Lake, do you think it would be wise to do all 3? Or just pick 1 or 2? Any advice would be appreciated.

[Reply](#)

lafillenrose

November 18, 2019 at 7:13 pm

I'm planning a slightly longer than week long trip to Taiwan and your tips and detailed writing really helped clear my mind. Just wanted to say a big thank you!

[Reply](#)



Nick

November 18, 2019 at 9:43 pm

You're very welcome!

[Reply](#)

Mira Nagy

December 13, 2019 at 7:14 am



Hej Nick, just planing a trip to Taiwan after a wedding in Hong Kong and so glad to have stumbled over your blog. Really helpful information. I will make sure to study it all. We are currently looking for a good 'base camp' somewhere in a pretty little town where we would like to spend most our time and plan trips from... Could I trouble you to ask for your advice? Is there any place you would recommend? We will be flying to and from Taichung City and probably want to do Taipeh, Taroko Gorge and Sun Moon Lake. Many thanks, Mira

[Reply](#)

Nick

[December 16, 2019 at 11:04 am](#)

Hi Mira,

Based on where you are planning to go, I can't really think of an ideal "base camp", since the places you are planning are really far from each other. It would only really make sense to stay in Hualien for visiting Taroko Gorge, stay in Taipei for visiting Taipei, and stay at Sun Moon Lake for visiting Sun



Moon Lake. It would not be feasible to choose somewhere in between all of those, because your day trips to each place would be really far and you'd spend all your time on the road. I hope this helps, but do get in touch if you have any further questions!

[Reply](#)

Mira Nagy

[January 4, 2020 at 5:38 pm](#)

Thank you for your reply. I figured it would not be possible without travelling around somewhat. Do you still have a recommendation for a particularly nice, maybe a bit more remote spot with a relaxed holiday feeling somewhere to spend a few days longer? Would you say Hualien or Sun Moon Lake would lend themselves more to do so? Many thanks.

[Reply](#)



Nick

January 5, 2020 at 8:55 pm

Hi Mira,

If you are looking for something more relaxed, I would say Hualien and Sun Moon Lake are not exactly that. Hualien City is just a pretty normal medium sized city, nothing special at all. If you staying somewhere closer to Taroko Gorge, like in Xincheng or even right in Taroko Gorge, definitely it will have more of a countryside/nature vibe, but still not really the “holiday” vibe I think you are looking for. Meanwhile, Sun Moon Lake I would say has more of a tourist vibe than anything. For both locations, though, the hotel you stay in will make a big difference. If you are staying in a nice resort, then certainly you can enjoy a relaxing holiday feeling at either place. But in a budget hotel, not so much...

One area you might consider is Miaoli



County. It's quite off the beaten track as most foreign visitors don't go there, but locals certainly do. Miaoli is most rural scenery and has been chosen as one of the world's "slow living, slow travel" places. There are loads of B&Bs in small, quaint villages. See my Miaoli article for lots of pics and details. Another option you might consider is spending a few days in a hotel near one of Norther Taiwan's beaches. They aren't the best beaches in the world, but definitely you will find a more laid back, beachy vibe. You can look up my article on "Taipei Beaches" for ideas. I hope this all helps!

[Reply](#)**Mira**[January 18, 2020 at 4:03 pm](#)

Brilliant. Thanks for this idea! I wish we had a couple of months rather than weeks really 😊

[Reply](#)

Madeline

[March 17, 2020 at 1:34 am](#)

Hey Nick, great article, thanks! You wrote about so many temple in Taipei, maybe you know what temple is the best to meditate. Sometimes i dont want to do it in classes or at home. Looking forward to your reply!

[Reply](#)

Nick

[March 23, 2020 at 9:47 am](#)



Hi Madeline!

If you are just looking for a quiet temple to meditate in by yourself, then I would consider the following:

-Lion's Head Mountain (in Hsinchu & Miaoli counties): there are many temples there and you can even spend the night.

See my article about Lion's Head Mountain for all the info.

-Linji Huguo Temple: If you go up the stairs behind the main building, there is a quiet section in the woods above that may be suitable.

– Songshan Tianbao Temple: It's an old temple with some parts in ruins, but it is located in the forest on the edge of town, so you can surely find some peace and quiet spots there with no people at all.

– Silver Stream Cave at Maokong: also in the forest and very few people

– Guandu Temple: there's a quiet section at the back looking down on the temple where you could sit

– Dharma Drum Mountain Nung Chan Monastery: some people like to sit by the large pool there and meditate

You can find more info about all of these here:

<http://www.nickkembel.com/best-taipei-temples-taiwan/>

I hope that helps!



[Reply](#)**Brian**[October 24, 2021 at 11:47 pm](#)

Hi Nick

Thank you for your truly fantastic coverage of Taiwan! I'm in New Zealand, looking well ahead for a trip for my birthday next October, but obviously pending sorting out all this Covid mess. Hopefully both Taiwan's and NZ's borders will be open by then (and hopefully Taiwan will still be safe to visit, not disrupted by military activities...). Is there perhaps any reliable reference as to the progress with regards the Covid and border opening situations? Where can we look to monitor progress and the rules about travel (pre-dep tests, tests on arrival, quarantine on arrival, border opening dates, which countries' visitors will be allowed, etc.)?

I thought two weeks would be enough time, but no way! Will need three weeks! Hopefully all of it actually traveling, not stuck in an isolation facility.

Take care



[Reply](#)**Nick**[October 25, 2021 at 8:39 am](#)

Hey Brian, the closest to what you describe is the Taiwan Center for Disease Control website. But it's not the best resource...there are lots of updates that won't affect you, the English is sometimes bad/confusing, and the current restrictions are not clearly explained. When Taiwan starts opening up, it is going to be big news. I would suggest checking into the main Taiwan news sites once in a while and check the travel sections. Also please join my Facebook group "Taiwan Travel Planning". We have over 1000 members highly anticipating these changes, so there will be posts and discussions the moment these changes are announced. Best of luck, and for next October, I would be optimistic!

[Reply](#)

Jeff

November 18, 2022 at 1:15 am

Hey, great article and site. Just wanted to see if I was missing something but it looks like you can book the Eastern main line trains over a month in advance now: <http://www.railway.gov.tw>.

[Reply](#)

Nick

November 23, 2022 at 2:38 pm

This is something I'll have to look deeper into, as the TRA guidelines still stay 28 days. Thank you!

[Reply](#)



Aaron

January 15, 2023 at 7:59 am

Hey there! Thanks for the details, it's really informative and it indeed helped me so much with the planning. Just a quick question – Do you recommend going to Jiufen and Shifen on a weekday like Mon/ Tues instead of the weekend – will the shops be closed? Since it's more crowded on the weekends.

[Reply](#)

Nick

January 16, 2023 at 3:13 pm



Some other visitors have reported that the shops around Shifen station (where you can usually buy sky lanterns, snacks, etc) are mostly closed on Monday. If you only want to see the waterfall, though, this is not a big deal. As for Jiufen, it will be quite a bit quieter on Monday or Tuesday, and some shops take a break, but most should still be open.

[Reply](#)

Cherene Saradar

[May 1, 2023 at 6:20 pm](#)

So glad I stumbled upon your blog. Is wonderfully helpful for planning. As a fellow blogger I am definitely inspired to write better itineraries! Anyway, I only have a week sadly. I want to spend day 1-3 in Taipei as you suggest and day 4/5 Haulien Torako Gorge. Would spending days 6/7 in Taichung be feasible? Would this work as a not too hectic 7 day trip? Wondering about transport from Haulien to Taichung. Thank you so much.



[Reply](#)**Nick**[May 22, 2023 at 9:10 pm](#)

Thanks so much Cherene! And yes, this sounds totally doable. Although looking at the map, it may seem like it should be easy to cross the island directly from Hualien to Taichung, this high mountain highway has no public transportation and is very difficult to drive because the road is frequently damaged by landslides and closed due to reconstruction work. So the best/fastest way is to get the train back to Taipei (express ones are only 2 hours but essential to book well in advance, while others take 3-4 hours) then the High Speed Rail to Taichung (1 hr). Hope you enjoy your trip!

[Reply](#)

A.Lin[June 4, 2023 at 5:11 am](#)

Thank you Nick for your generous sharing.
Am planning to visit the southern part of Taiwan this winter. Your itinerary kept going back to Taipei, any chance of moving forth from say, Alishan onwards without returning to Taipei first and are they private drivers to book instead of the public bus?

[Reply](#)**Nick**[June 4, 2023 at 7:28 pm](#)

My itineraries are not set in stone. Feel free to modify them as you wish. Once you create a draft itinerary, please feel free to share it in my Facebook group “Taiwan travel planning” and we can give you feedback on it there! For drivers, I have a whole article on this site covering how to find a private driver and my personal recommended drivers, so please search



“drivers” on my website to find it.

[Reply](#)

Margaret

[August 8, 2023 at 7:11 pm](#)



Hello Nick,

Really love your detailed explanation.

This is my first time at Kaoshing. I am in dilemma about whether to stay in KLA B&B or Hotel Yam Lagom for two nights. I will be traveling during mid Oct to Kaohsiung. Or should I stay near Kaoshiung Main Station?

Also, deciding to stay in Beauty Hotels Taipei – Hotel B6 or Diary of Ximen Hotel II-Liu Fu Branch. These two are hotels in Taipei near to Ximending.

Your advice is much appreciated.

[Reply](#)

Nick

[August 11, 2023 at 4:19 pm](#)

Chose KLA for more of a hostel vibe. It's quite small, no sign



outside that I remember, and there's a small shared room/kitchen space where you could meet people (but definitely not a party hostel or anything). Yam Lagom is more like a typical hotel. The highlight here would be that some upper floors have views. Both are in a convenient enough location for exploring this part of Kaohsiung, like Pier 2 and the ferry to Cijin Island. But if you stay near Kaohsiung Station, that will be more convenient for arriving in and departing from the city. Sorry I'm not familiar with the Ximending ones!

[Reply](#)

Sue Lynch

August 9, 2023 at 2:40 pm

Thanx for all the detail, Nick. Looking at your “cultural” tour — is there a reason for the city order as you have it? Wondering if it has to do with train schedules, or some other logic?

[Reply](#)

Nick

August 11, 2023 at 4:14 pm

I chose it like this to make a clockwise tour around Taiwan. Somehow that feels more natural to me, although some people have commented that they feel the other way (counterclockwise) feels more natural to them. However, I do like how this one allows you to go directly back to Taoyuan Airport at the end instead, so you don’t need to go to Taipei twice, making it more efficient. You could do the same thing in reverse, of course, but most people tend to go to Taipei



first, then around the island, so if you did this in a counter-clockwise way, you'd have to pass through Taipei twice on your trip.

[Reply](#)

Jeffrey Lim

[August 12, 2023 at 12:18 am](#)

Hello Nick. First i just want to say your blog is really helpful for me arranging itinerary and what to see in Taiwan and how effectively arranging our schedule. I have also sent my request to join your facebook group but request still pending. anyway would like to share my draft here and hopefully i can get some comments from you or others. A little about myself, we're traveling group of 4, with my wife and 2 kids (12 yrs old and 6 yrs old). we'll be traveling in December 2023.

20 dec : Arrival evening, stay in Taipei

21 dec : city tour (101, cks, etc)

22 dec : jiufen, shifen, yehliu



23 dec : transfer to Yilan, do hotspring and stay in Yilan

24 dec : Yilan – Toroko Gorge, stay in Toroko

25 dec : Toroko – Hehuanshan – Cingjing Farm – Sun Moon Lake, stay in Sun Moon Lake

26 dec : Sun Moon Lake activity, afternoon transfer to Alishan, stay in Alishan Hotel

27 dec : Alishan activity, afternoon transfer to Kaohsiung, stay in Kaohsiung

28 dec : Kaohsiung – Taichung, stay in Taichung

29 dec : Taichung city tour

30 dec : Taichung – Taipei

31 dec : free

1 jan : fly back home

[Reply](#)

Nick

[August 30, 2023 at 9:50 pm](#)



Sorry about the slow reply on this. Were you able to join my group and did you ask the question there? If not, please send me a message directly via my FB account Spiritual Travels

[Reply](#)

Nava dolev

[September 1, 2023 at 3:38 pm](#)

Wel like your post very much
we plan to travel for 3 + weeks in tiwan in October' november we
would like to see the nature and fill the calthecher as well as taking
some traditional art workshop in clay and ceramics work, paper
work, gold work, waby saby idea's and other oriental art skills (not
cligraphy and tee ceremony)
and as well we wont some day's in a health and hot spring resort in
nature. We can not rush since we are 74 years old and i have some
problems to walk and climb a lot.
we wont to take the time
To absorve the atmosphere the nature and different culture's this is



the main reason for our trip
We are looking to get recommendations from you
Thanks

[Reply](#)

Danny Dolev

[September 2, 2023 at 5:25 am](#)

Hi,

We are seniors that consider traveling to Taiwan during oct-nov period this year. My wife is a ceramic artist. We wish to add visits to artists places or villages during your 3 weeks tour idea. Are there places you can point out?

Thanks

[Reply](#)



Nick[September 19, 2023 at 10:25 pm](#)

Besides the several art galleries in Taipei, you could also visit Treasure Hill Artists Village (see my “things to do in Taipei” article for description). Yingge Pottery Street and Yingge Ceramics Museum are great (see my “Yingge” article). Just a 30-minute train ride from Taipei. And if you don’t mind to get off the beaten track, we once stayed at a guesthouse run by a potter, called “Yanzitao Pottery & Coffee B&B” in Nanzhuang area, Miaoli. Read my “Lion’s Head Mountain” article for the details.

[Reply](#)**Julien**[September 21, 2023 at 3:20 pm](#)

Hello,



I'm beginning to plan my itinerary for my 3 week trip end of October and your site is definitely super useful, thank you for all the work (especially on tea!).

I would have a maybe unusual general question for you about hostels: I'm used not to book anything in advance except the first stop (that would be Taipei) AND not having a smartphone when traveling (so not booking at all even during the trip). Do you think I can do in Taiwan as I do in other countries i.e. just showing at the hostel not too late in the day and check if I like it and if there are beds available? I only used to have the Lonely planet guide book to do that but now, I generally add before departure some additional booking.com / agoda addresses on the LP map to get more up to date possibilities.

What do you think?

By the way, do you see any situations where not having a smartphone would be an issue?

Thank you.

Cheers.

[Reply](#)

Nick

[October 3, 2023 at 10:33 am](#)



That's how I used to travel too (I miss those days!) But taiwan today is not very friendly to this approach. In some famous (like Alishan or Sun Moon Lake), every single hotel sells out for weeks in advance, especially on weekends, long weekends, holidays, or cherry blossom season. In big cities, it is more possible to show up and find something, but you may end up with crappier choices, or more expensive choices than you hoped, or you might spend hours wandering around trying to find something. In most cities, the area around the main train station is the best place to look for last-minute budget rooms. Basically, you can probably do this for big cities, you won't be able to for famous tourist places, and be especially carefully with any weekends or holidays during your trip. Also note that some hostels and even hotels nowadays have self check-in, so for those, it would be impossible to just show up, because they may not even have staff on site. Taiwan is a country that loves advance bookings, doing things online, cashless payments, etc, and COVID and amplified this. Situations when smartphone is useful: checking upcoming bus times, not getting lost, booking train tickets, communicating with hotels (most hotels will want to communicate with guests via LINE app), finding out about coming typhoons and



associated highway closures or stay-at-home orders), registering for YouBike, making restaurant reservations, emergency calls, online check in for flights, buying discounted tickets for things on Klook, just to name a few. I mean you could still survive, but the conveniences it adds nowadays are endless.

[Reply](#)

Julien

[October 4, 2023 at 6:42 pm](#)

Hello, thanks for the answers.
You're about to convince me to break my oath of smartphone free journeying (and also because it was not so easy last year in Korea) at least for the hostels booking, which is really very annoying when it goes wrong as you rightly say. For the rest, I guess I can cope (which forces me to interact with people most of the time). I'd have to buy a basic smartphone then, because mine is almost dead and does not allow proper web browsing!



Still, in this case, as my exact itinerary is not final (the usual “if a I like/dislike a place, I want to be free to adapt the agenda” thing), I would book one or two days in advance. But are you really saying that for Alishan, Taroko and SML, this is not possible and you really have to book weeks in advance? In this case, there’s no flexibility possible whatsoever and I should book right away from my PC!

I’ll be there between end of October and mid-November.

Btw, I’ll try to join your FB group to discuss my theoretical itinerary soon (I’m struggling to write it down by lack of time and difficulties to know what to include, except at least 7 days in Taipei).

Thank you.

[Reply](#)

Nick

[November 2, 2023 at 9:35 am](#)

Sorry about my slow reply, you may already



be in Taiwan! What did you decide in the end? And yes, it's common for all hotels at Alishan to sell out. Hualien and SML have more it's less likely to happen, but I did hear of people not being able to find a room at SML on a really busy long weekend.

[Reply](#)

Lavanya Mittal

[September 22, 2023 at 1:27 pm](#)

Hi there!

Thanks for this post! Our group used some suggestions for our trip to Taiwan that we just got back from a few days ago.

Just wanted to quickly drop a note about one of the places you suggested.

We went to Huang's Oyster Omelet shop inside the hat shop and it



tasted amazing. The man who owns the shop is SO sweet and lovely.

However, we got TERRIBLE food poisoning from eating (presumably) the grilled oysters. We highly suspect it's from this shop as one member who didn't join us for this one meal did not get food poisoning and oysters are known to be risky. We had also eaten the omelets but it's more likely the grilled oysters that caused it. Just a warning to other travelers!!

[Reply](#)



Nick[September 23, 2023 at 2:29 pm](#)

Hi, I don't recommend any oyster omelet shops in this article. Could you please clarify which city it was in or which article I recommended it is in? I have more than 100 articles about Taiwan so it's hard to know which one you are talking about.

[Reply](#)**Julien**[September 25, 2023 at 5:03 pm](#)

Hello (and thank you for all the quality work done here, especially on tea),

I already posted a similar message but as I can't see it, I'll try to rewrite it. Sorry if I missed something.

I'm preparing a 3 weeks trip in Taiwan for the end of October and I



am a little worried about my usual way of traveling i.e. not having a smartphone and not booking accomodation in advance except the first town (whe arriving into a new city, I just visit the hostels spotted on the Lonley planet or on the net while preparing the trip).

Do you think it's an issue ?

Also, do you see any other reason (apart from the hostels booking) why it could be an issue not having a smartphone in Taiwan?

Thank you.

Cheers.

Julien

[Reply](#)

Nick

[November 2, 2023 at 9:21 am](#)

Sorry that I missed this message earlier! I assume you are already in Taiwan, so let us know how it goes if you see this!

[Reply](#)



Julien

October 6, 2023 at 5:43 pm

Hello again,

Another topic : the guidebook. With one piece of information for fellow travellers and one question.

– the information: I always use the LP when possible, and I just got it from an English-speaking library. I was very happy of this (it has just been published and was not available elsewhere) until I began to read: there's almost nothing left of what was useful in the LP guidebooks i.e. the practical, detailed information: less restaurants and hotels listed, with no directions, no phone numbers and no prices (and some of them don't even appear on the maps), only a few maps with too big a scale, no "getting there and away" section (no time tables distances, prices), no opening times and prices for the sights (museums, etc.), no classification between regular and major sights. Less readable maps with no mention of tourist offices, banks, stations, , etc. This is a complete disaster! But there are a lot of colored pictures, so... I'm under the impression of reading a magazine you can find in the planes.

I used 4 different guidebooks brands during my travelling history and this is by far the worst thing I have seen.



– and the question: I saw on another page that you recommended LP (previous edition obviously) and Bradt. I don't know Bradt guidebooks. Which one would you recommend between the two (older LP or latest Bradt) for getting useful, practical information? Thank you.

[Reply](#)

Nick

[November 2, 2023 at 9:47 am](#)

Hey Julien, that new LP does sound terrible! Honestly, for many years ago, I only use LP for my very initial trip planning, like for the general country understanding, maps, and to make a very general outline of where I want to go in that country and around how long I'll need. After that, for more detailed planning, it's all Google, blogs, and GoogleMaps. Things change so quickly. By the time an LP author researches, writes, then LP publishes, usually already a year or more has passed. The info is unavoidably outdated from the date it is published. Maybe that's why they don't even bother with so many details anymore, as all those things



change so quickly. I recommend Bradt because it's written by local travel expert Steven Crook who has been in Taiwan for 20+ years. But the same issue (about things changing) will apply. You can also join my Facebook group Taiwan Travel Planning for even more current information than blogs. For example, in the last few months the highway is damaged in Taroko Gorge and only open 5 times per day. You won't find this information in any blogs and certainly not in any guidebooks.

[Reply](#)

Z

[December 6, 2023 at 11:31 am](#)

Hi Nick,

thank you so much for this wonderful blog! It's such a great source of knowledge. I have no idea what I would do without it. I am currently planning my first trip to Taiwan in January. I am a female solo traveler and would like to avoid driving therefore I would really on



public transport (trains and buses) or organised mini tours (although I am trying to avoid those as I'm quite fit and independent explorer and those usually bring tones of frustration on my end).

I am trying to have a sense check – do you think this trip is realistic and also will I get the most out of it? I am of course planning to see some of the main sights but also always happy to explore less common destinations.

day 0 (late night) – landing in Taipei

1- 3 (full days) – Taipei

4 (taking off from Taipei) – 5 – Hualien & Taroko Gorge

6 – Lion's Head Mountain & Miaoli (hotsprings)

7 – 9 Taichung (with a day trip to SunMoon Lake if possible)

9 – 8 pm / flight back

Would it be realistic only relying on buses and trains?

Thank you so much in advance!

[Reply](#)

Nick

[December 8, 2023 at 10:45 am](#)



The itinerary overall sounds great and not too rushed! For Taipei to Hualien train, try to book it early (up to 28 days in advance) because they often sell out. Hualien to Zhunan direct train, then bus to Lion's Head Mountain. Unfortunately there's no bus to Tai'an hot spring in Miaoli. You could book a private transfer on Tripool if you can accept the cost.

[Reply](#)

Miguel

[January 5, 2024 at 3:22 pm](#)



Hello,

Thank you very much for the information, we are thinking of doing the three-week itinerary, but we have our arrival flight in Kaohsiung, how do you recommend I reorganize the itinerary? Thank you very much

[Reply](#)



Nick

January 16, 2024 at 2:01 pm

It's really just a matter of shifting around my recommended route. It doesn't really matter whether you go in a clockwise or counter-clockwise route around Taiwan – some seem prefer one or the other. For me, going from Kaohsiung, somehow it feels more natural to go up the west coast first – nice, shorter rides, more cities, to Taipei, then return to Kaohsiung via the more natural east coast.

[Reply](#)

Nina

February 21, 2024 at 3:50 am

Hi, I'm planning an adventure using your 21-day itinerary as a guide (thanks for sharing your wisdom!). I was thinking of throwing in a surprise horse riding experience for my travelling buddy, who will



have to endure all the cycling I will likely throw her way. I asked a Taiwanese friend about horse riding there and she wasn't...enthused XD Do you have any opinion regarding horse riding experience providers in Taiwan? (The service I found was at Kenting south beach)

kind regards

Nina

[Reply](#)

Nick

[February 23, 2024 at 4:03 pm](#)

Hi Nina, I don't have any personal experience with riding horses in Taiwan, or even talked to anyone who has. So I'm afraid I can't comment on that. Best of luck, and hope your friend enjoys it!

[Reply](#)



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