

Taiwan in brief



Area
36,000 sq km

Population
23 million

Languages
Mandarin, Taiwanese, Hakka & Indigenous languages

Time zone
GMT+8 (2.5 hours ahead of India)

Flights
A number of airlines such as China Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Singapore Airlines and Thai Airways fly directly from India, or via a stopover, to Taiwan.

Currency
New Taiwan Dollar (NT\$). The exchange rate of NT\$ to INR is approximately 1 : 2.3 (Oct 2019).

Electricity
Taiwan uses electric current of 110 volts at 60 cycles. Many buildings have sockets with 220 volts, especially for the use of air conditioners.

Local climate
Taiwan enjoys warm weather all year round. The average temperature is 28°C in the summer and 17°C during winter.

GETTING AROUND

High Speed Rail
Taiwan High Speed Rail running from Taipei to Zuoying, Kaohsiung, takes only 90 minutes from northern Taiwan to the island's southern tip.
www.tshrc.com.tw

Taiwan Tour Bus
Taiwan Tour Bus offers 36 recommended itineraries along the major scenic spots of Taiwan. There is also a travel agency list for you to select the best option for sightseeing. For those wishing to visit tourist attractions Taiwan
Tourist Shuttle take passengers to the main tourist attractions in Taiwan.
taiwantourbus.com.tw
taiwantrip.com.tw

Taxis
Taxis here are well-marked yellow vehicles easily recognised by visitors. The two largest ones are **Taiwan Taxi**, often referred to as 55688, which is also their phone number or **Metro Taxi**, 55178. To make it easier, you can download **FindTaxi** app from Google Play or App Store.

EasyCard / iPass
When getting around on MRT or busses the easiest way to pay is to use an EasyCard or iPass. Both cards function as e-wallets and can also be used as a payment method in certain retail outlets.
easycard.com.tw/en
i-pass.com.tw/en

Mobile SIM cards
When travel to Taiwan, do not miss the chance of staying connected. There are several operators to choose from, the most common are: **Chunghua Telecom**, **Taiwan Mobile**, **FET Net** and **TSTAR**, and the easiest way to buy, is to purchase this at the airport when arriving.

Visas
There are both online, electronic and paper visas available for Indian nationals to choose from when planning to visit Taiwan. Contact TECC for more information.
https://www.roc-taiwan.org/in_en/cat/11.html

Round-the-Island Railway Network
There are three main railways and several branch railways in Taiwan, forming a complete circle of rail transportation on the island.
railway.gov.tw/en

Metro Systems
Metro systems are available in the two biggest cities in Taiwan. Taipei Metro has five main lines while Kaohsiung Rapid Transit includes two main lines.
english.metro.taipei
www.krtc.com.tw/eng

Taiwan
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Taiwan.net.tw

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Get to know Taipei's districts

For those seeking some more unusual or one-of-a-kind products, then you should set your sights on the more artisan shopping areas. Here we list out the most popular ones.

Dadaocheng District

Taipei City's **Dihua Street** is the kind of place where it seems perfectly reasonable to come across an English-style teahouse that once housed Taiwan's first Western-style drugstore, named A.S. Watson and Co., with traditional shops selling dried goods and herbal medicines existing alongside chic cafés and mini art galleries. Don't underestimate it for being only about 800 meters long – the atmospheric street's many identities provide for a whole day of exploration (and shopping).

Places to scout:
 ASW Tea House for a classic English breakfast. To learn more about Dadaocheng's tea trade, head to **Sin Hong Choon Tea Museum** or scout some vintage American and industrial-style design items at **A Design & Life Project**.

Fujin Street

A quaint little destination for having some time off the hustle-bustle of the city and indulge in some authentic allure. Fujin street is situated away from the hip and happening city centre but has become a hub for the Japanese and locals who have settled there making it a creative community. It is home to some rustic cafes, charming boutiques and vibrant restaurants.

Places to scout:
 Fujin Tree 352 – A furniture shop, developed by the Fujin Tree Group.



The group operates many shops in the area and it can be visited for some creative inspiration. Each piece of furniture is creatively designed and is worthy of being clicked. All design and art enthusiasts must visit this place for some creative juices to flow. Open 12.00-20.30.

Songshan

Songshan district is much loved by tourists for its vibrant atmosphere and the choices it offers to explore. It is well connected through the MRT station in the centre of the district. Multiple options are there to shop, eat, move

Taipei Main Station

Spread over a huge underground network, this is often the first stop for tourists who arrive in Taipei. But



Red House Theater

it's not just a station. It acts as a meeting place for Southeast Asian expats, houses various chic food joints and cafés and has shops to keep you engaged. It is also the 25th busiest station in the world with announcements made in four languages. You can take a quick bite or relish a full meal at the sit-down restaurants.

Places to scout:
 Taipei City Mall offers a complete shopping experience. You should head to **New World Shopping Center** or **Zhongshan Metro Mall** for a varied shopping experience within the main station complex. Other places include **Breeze Taipei Station**, **Q Square**, and **NOVA Computer Market** can be found in or around Taipei Main Station.

Ximending

Ximending attracts an average of three million shoppers per month



Xinyi District

Places to scout:
 Wan Nian Building. All kinds of goods available here, but it is popular for its wide range of toys and games. **Shinjuku Plaza** is a good option for affordable shoes and clothing, while **Cosmed** and **Watsons** can provide you cosmetics of all types. **Red House Market** hosts the Ximen Red House Weekend Arts and Crafts Market full of local art and crafts items peculiar to Taiwan. Open 14:00-19:30 every Saturday and Sunday. Closed on Mondays.

Xinyi District

An uptown urban district, close to Taipei 101, that hosts the majority of the city's high-end shopping malls from **Taipei 101 Mall** itself to **Breeze Xinyi** and **Breeze Songgao**, **Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Xinyi Place**, **Neo19**,

Places to scout:
 Taipei 101 is the ultimate destination for shopping any kind of goods, things which are unique to Taiwan and souvenirs. You can also enjoy coffee at the highest Starbucks café of the world – which is located on the 35th floor of Taipei 101. Open 9:00-22:00. **Kun's Crystal at EsLite Spectrum Department Store** in Xinyi district is something art lovers would enjoy. They offer a wide range of glassware items. Open from 11:00-22:00.



Zhongxiao Dunhua

Zhongxiao Dunhua

Zhongxiao Dunhua shopping district is an amazing area to shop around. It is home to various restaurants, cafés, and bars. It offers both the posh stores for the brand conscious and in the alleys, you can find unique traditional Taiwanese things and food. Independent retailers sell handmade crafts and one-of-a-kind products, which you may not find anywhere else. May it be the handmade glasses, jewellery or leather goods. The crowds start gathering on the streets at night and the cafés, restaurants and stores make it lively with pop music and a welcoming atmosphere.

Places to scout:
 Zhongxiao Dunhua alleys offers great boutique shopping experience. Small obscure shops offer much more than you think! Be ready to take your pick from accessories, clothing, eye wear, jewellery, cosmetics, toys, and phone accessories, as well as other arts & crafts.

A Shopper's GUIDE TO TAIWAN



Taiwan
THE HEART OF ASIA

Fancy some local souvenirs

Globetrotters love to collect memoirs from the places that they visit. Here are some Taiwan collectibles that you should bring back.

Souvenirs are collectibles that people love to flaunt and gift to their families and friends. They range from local delicacies to magnets, jewellery to wall hangings, clothes to small take-away items. Taiwan offers you multiple choices to take home and relive the moments of fun, joy and happiness. What are the things that Taiwan offers as souvenirs that are unique to it and you won't find anywhere else?

1 Pineapple Cake

Not only is this delicacy admired by those who have a sweet tooth but people love to take it home too! One of the most popular sweets available everywhere in Taiwan, the pineapple cake is delicious and is bound to make you ask for more. A buttery pastry with pineapple filling in its centre, it's an easy pick to take back home.

Where you can buy:
Sunny Hills on the Park, No. 1, Minsheng East Road, Alley 4, Section 5, Taipei 105, Taiwan

2 Mini Sky Lanterns

Taiwan's lantern festival is quite popular among the tourists and a good way to commemorate this cultural extravaganza is to buy some mini versions of the lanterns. Mini Sky lanterns have become one of the hot picks by the travellers over years. It's a sight to behold when the lanterns illuminate the sky during the

3 Finest Porcelain

Yingge is the country's undisputed center of pottery and ceramics, and one of the most interesting day trips from Taipei for anyone interested in ceramics and the arts. Yingge's pottery ranges wildly in price and quality, from cheap, factory-produced functional ware, to gorgeous, astronomically expensive works sold from shops that look more like art galleries. It's impossible that you won't find something to suit your taste and budget. Most shops are open 10:00 or 11:00 to 18:00.

Well worth a visit:
Yingge Porcelain Museum, No. 200, Wenhua Road, New Taipei City 239, Taiwan

4 Taiwanese Tea

Taiwan is known for its amazing tea varieties and distinct tea culture. People love to drink tea in Taiwan and

it's a heaven for tea-lovers. The good part is that you can buy Taiwanese tea and indulge in the real flavours back home too. Choose from any famous varieties such as Oolong tea, green tea, black tea or white tea to suit your taste. Pinglin District in New Taipei City offers original tea varieties as tea plantation takes place there and there are multiple tea shops.

Where you can buy:
Ten Ren's Tea, 1F, No. 107, Section 4, Zhongxiao East Road, Taipei 110, Taiwan
Wang De Chuan Fine Chinese Tea, No. 95, Section 1, Zhongshan North Road, Taipei 104, Taiwan

5 Kaoliang

The best known Taiwanese Kaoliang is produced on the outlying island of **Kinmen**, part of the territory administered by the Taiwanese government. Given its high alcohol content, drinking kaoliang is often a sort of masculinity ritual among older men to see who can drink the most. In many ways, kaoliang is Taiwan's

"official alcohol." Whenever a new president takes power, for example, a commemorative kaoliang is produced by the government.

Where to buy:
Kinmen Kaoliang Liquor, No. 9, Songshou Road, Taipei 110, Taiwan
No. 62, Taoying Road, Taoyuan City 330, Taiwan

6 Sun Cakes

Sun cakes are like buns which are flaky pastries and with a sweet and sticky filling. Taichung is famous for its variety of sun cakes. The original flavour is the best to be relished but now it's available in flavours such as green tea and other light flavours as well. Lately many pastry shops have been replacing the animal shortening – used as the material oil for suncakes, with vegetable oils to cater to a bigger global vegetarian population.

Where you can buy:
Ah Ming Shi Sun Cake Shop, No. 11, Section 2, Ziyou Road, Taichung City 400, Taiwan



Many tea shops can be found in some of the larger department stores

7 Taiwanese Peanut Nougat

No, it's not your typical candy bar! Rather it's a perfect blend of light sweetness, crunchy nuts and chewy taste. Some bars will also contain sesame and some may treat you with pieces of brown sugar in them. Peanut Nougat bars are savoured everywhere in Taiwan and you can easily find their boxes for take away.

Where you can buy:
Sugar & Spice, B2, No.251, Section 3, Taiwan Boulevard, Taichung Top City Store, Taichung 407, Taiwan

9 Handicrafts

There's a range of handmade traditional and cultural handicrafts to purchase and take back home as gifts for your near and dear ones. **Yongle Fabric Market** is filled with shops selling accessories, laces, embroidery, all you will ever need. Traditional restaurants nearby, selling Chinese herb tea, fried Spanish mackerel thick soup, silver needle noodles and tempura, are also a huge attraction that leaves people lingering for hours.

Where you can buy:
Yongle Fabric Market, 3F, No. 21, Section 1, Dihua Street, Taipei 103, Taiwan

8 Oil Paper Umbrellas

Oil-paper umbrella has emerged as the cultural symbol of the Hakka tribe in **Meinong District** of Kaohsiung. The art of decorating the umbrellas with colourful and unique designs using traditional methods of making oil-paper umbrellas has won many accolades. Retaining its traditional ethnicity, these gorgeous hand-painted umbrellas are a must buy for tourists to take back as a souvenir.

Where you can buy:
Meinong Prosperity Paper Umbrella Store, No. 361, Section 1, Jhongshan Road, Kaohsiung City 843, Taiwan
National Palace Museum Shop, No. 221, Section 2, Zhiehan Road, Taipei 111, Taiwan

10 Kavalan Whisky

For anyone who's fond of whiskey or looking for an off-the-beaten-path adventure in Taiwan, **Kavalan Distillery** should be on your list. Tours are available in English, but make sure you make a reservation beforehand to avoid disappointment. Greeted by the strong whiskey aroma upon entering the distillery, you'll get to learn how Kavalan turns barleys and water into world-class whiskey, and all tours end with a free tasting. Visitors get free samples to sip on, plus smell different labels of whiskeys from the distillery.

Where you can buy:
Kavalan Whisky, No. 326, Section 2, Yuanshan Road, Yilan 264, Taiwan



Make time for inspired shopping

Make some shopping bargains in Taiwan's impressive malls with hundreds of outlets or visit day-time markets and late-night bazaars. Taiwan shopping defies definition.



Huashan 1914 Creative Park



Bellavita

Bellavita styles itself as a bespoke luxury mall, specialising in high-quality retailing in chic surroundings. The classical-styled building contains 9 levels, with names like **Vera Wang, Yohji Yamamoto, Giorgio Armani** and **Tiffany & Co.** grace its floors.

Open daily 10.30-22:00
No. 28, Songren Road, Taipei 110, Taiwan



Breeze Center

Breeze Center is a massive mall on **Fuxing South Road**, stretching from a supermarket on B2 up to a cinema on the 9th floor. In between, you'll find an impressive number of high and mid-range quality stores, such as **Calvin Klein, Louis Vuitton** and **Jimmy Choo**.

Sun-Wed 11:00-21:30, Thu-Sat 11:00-22:00
No. 39, Section 1, Fuxing South Road, Taipei 105, Taiwan

Dream Mall

Among the biggest malls in Asia, with a selection of major international brands and entertainment complexes. It has everything from a cinema to a gym to a rooftop Ferris wheel – the famous **Kaohsiung Eye**.

Mon-Fri from 11:00-22:00, Sat 10.30-22:30, Sun 10.30-22:00
No. 789, Zhonghua 5th Road, Kaohsiung City 806, Taiwan

Eslite Bookstore

One of the largest retail bookstore chains in Taiwan. It also provides one of the largest English language publications and translation materials in Taiwan.

Daily 10:00-22:00
2F, No. 11, Songgao Road, Taipei 110, Taiwan

Far Eastern SOGO

Far Eastern SOGO covers 14 spacious floors of big brand shopping, mostly focusing on fashion. You'll find everything from children's wear to sports equipment,



to lingerie and accessories, as well as practically everything in between.

Mon-Fri 11:00-21:30, Sat 10.30-22:00, Sun 10.30-21:30
No. 300, Section 3, Zhongxiao East Road, Taipei 106, Taiwan

Guanghua Digital Plaza

The largest electronics marketplace in Taiwan. In addition to the main, 6-story building, the lanes and alleys directly south of the complex are home to countless shops selling literally anything and everything tech.

Daily 10:00-21:00
No. 8, Section 3, Civic Boulevard, Taipei 100, Taiwan

Huashan 1914 Creative Park

Known as Taiwan's creative pulse, Huashan 1914 is now home to many designers and artists. Probably considered any young hipster's dream. You will see quirky shops of indie brands, stationery and bookshops, digital and interactive museums, a theatre, and even a concert venue. Music lovers will love the mini outdoor concerts featuring Taipei's most promising young musicians.

Sun-Thu 9:30-21:00, Fri-Sat 9:30-22:00
No. 1, Section 1, Bade Road, Taipei 100, Taiwan

Shin Kong Mitsukoshi

The Taipei Station store is the biggest and most popular of the four Shin Kong Mitsukoshi malls. Housed inside the Shin Kong Tower, it has a broad range of stores, covering brands from the budget end of the spectrum up to the top end.

Sun-Thu 11:00-21:30, Fri-Sat 11:00-22:00
No. 12, Songgao Road, Taipei 110, Taiwan

Taichung Mitsui Outlet

Taichung Mitsui Outlet is the latest and largest outlet park in Taiwan. Its main attraction is the absolutely amazing Ferris wheel that overlooks



Taipei 101 Mall

Occupying the first few floors of the iconic Taipei 101 tower at the heart **Xinyi District**, Taipei 101 Mall specialises in luxurious shops from around the world. Top-end boutiques like **French Connection, Armani Exchange** and **Versace** are among the many well-known brands available.

Sun-Thu 11:00-21:30, Fri-Sat 11:00-22:00
No. 45, Shifu Road, Taipei 110, Taiwan

NIGHTMARKETS

The night-time culture of Taiwan, all across the island, is actually dominated by the institution of the *yeshi* – night



market. From Taipei to Kaohsiung, there are dozens of cities famous for them, and for every one of those there are dozens more lesser-known but equally fascinating versions.

At the night market, locals, expatriates and tourists come together to get some snacks, buy clothing from small and independent retailers. The night markets don't have any official closing time, if it's stormy and rainy, the market might close as early as midnight or 1am. On a nice night though, don't be surprised if it's still kicking until 5:00.

TAIPEI: **Ningxia**, Ningxia Road, Taipei 103, Taiwan; **Raohe**, Raohe Street, Taipei 105, Taiwan; **Shilin**, Zhongshan North Road, Taipei 111, Taiwan
TAICHUNG: Fengjia, Wenhua Road, Taichung City 407, Taiwan
KAOSIUNG: Ruifeng, Yucheng Road, Kaohsiung City 804, Taiwan



Shin Kong Mitsukoshi