

EXPLORE!



Made in Taiwan

14 days

Taiwan - Trip code TAI

Made in Taiwan

For a small country Taiwan offers great variety. On this tour we take in the highlights, from the ultra-modern skyscrapers and ancient temples of Taipei to the plum plantations in the cool highlands of Alishan. We take short walks through the dramatic Taroko Gorge and stroll around the picturesque Sun Moon Lake. We also spend time with the monks at Foguanshan Monastery and try our hand at traditional calligraphy.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Taipei** - Sightseeing in Taiwan's vibrant capital
- ★ **Taroko Gorge** - Explore the stunning landscapes of the Taroko Gorge National Park
- ★ **Sun Moon Lake** - Visit the Wen Wu Temple and enjoy the beauty of one of Taiwan's most impressive National Scenic Areas
- ★ **Alishan** - Explore Taiwan's most popular national park
- ★ **Foguanshan** - Experience an evening in Taiwan's largest Buddhist monastery followed by a calligraphy lesson

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:**Moderate**

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

GROUP SIZE:**10 - 16**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join tour in Taipei

Our adventure begins today in Taipei, the capital city of the Republic of China (ROC). Located at the northern tip of Taiwan, the city was founded in the 18th century, going on to become an important trading centre under the Qing dynasty before being taken over by the Japanese in 1895. Following the end of the Chinese Civil War it became home to the defeated Kuomintang, who relocated the ROC government here in 1949. Today it is Taiwan's economic, political and cultural centre.



Accommodation: Papersun Apartment (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Discover Taiwan's history at Taipei's National Museum

After breakfast this morning we take a drive out to the city's National Palace Museum, home to a permanent collection of nearly 700,000 pieces of Chinese artefacts and artworks. One of the largest museums in the world, it spans some 5,000 years of Chinese history, from the Neolithic period to the late Qing dynasty. Driving back into the city we then head for Taipei 101, one of the world's tallest buildings, where we'll take in the city views from its 89th floor. This afternoon has been reserved for a visit to the Lungshan Temple. This evening we then have a chance to explore the city's Roahe Night Market, one of Taipei's most popular after dark destinations.



Accommodation: Papersun Apartment (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 3 - Drive to Taroko Gorge, visit the Eternal Spring Shrine

Leaving Taipei this morning we drive along Taiwan's eastern coast, towards the impressive grandeur of the Taroko Gorge National Park. Home to deer, wild boar, bears and some 144 species of birds, the 19 kilometre long canyon spans a remarkable diversity of landscapes, from rugged coastal cliffs to subtropical forested canyons and high subalpine coniferous forests. The name 'Taroko' comes from the aboriginal Truku language and translates as 'magnificent and splendid' and we'll get our first chance to enjoy something of this natural beauty today with short walks around the Gorge Gateway and the Eternal Spring Shrine. Along with the rich bird and mammal life found here, the gorge can also boast over 250 species of butterflies. It is not uncommon for trails in the gorge to be shut at short notice due to rock falls so on arrival we will get the latest information from the authorities and plan our walks accordingly.



Accommodation: Leader Village (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 4 - Walk through the dramatic canyons of Taroko Gorge

A full day in the gorge today offers us a chance to really enjoy this stunning natural gem. We'll take a walk along the Baiyang Trail this morning, passing through a series of tunnels as we make our way towards the spectacular (and wet) Water Curtain Tunnel. Famed for its marble and its jade, Taroko Gorge is home to some of the tallest peaks in Taiwan, rising steeply from sea level to over 3,400 metres in a distance of around just 60 kilometres. The magnificent slot canyons that carve their way through this spectacular landscape are very reminiscent to those found in the southwestern United States.



Accommodation: Leader Village (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 5 - Free time to explore Taroko Gorge's beautiful trails

Today is left free to explore the many paths and trails through Taroko Gorge. You may chose to retrace some of the paths we have walked over the previous two days at your own pace, or your Explore Leader and local guide will be able to suggest plenty of alternatives. Our accommodation in Taroko Gorge offers many spots to sit and enjoy the natural beauty so if you fancy a more restful day this is a good chance to relax.



Accommodation: Leader Village (or similar)



Standard Cabins



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 6 - Travel to Sun Moon Lake and visit Wen Wu Temple

Today we drive to the Sun Moon Lake National Scenic Area, the largest body of water in Taiwan. Traditional homeland of the aboriginal Thao people, the lake covers nearly eight square kilometres and surrounds the tiny island of Lalu. Its name derives from the fact that the lake to the east of the island resembles a sun, whilst its western counterpart takes on the aspects of the moon. The journey there takes us by way of the imposing Wen Wu Temple, located on the northern shores of the lake and dedicated to Kaiji, the God of Literature, Guang Gong, God of Justice and Confucius, the great teacher. After a chance to visit the temple, we'll then continue the short distance to our guesthouse close to the lakeshore.



Accommodation: Lea Lea Garden Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 7 - Free time to explore Sun Moon Lake

We have a free day to explore this beautiful area at our leisure today. Declared one of the eight wonders of Taiwan, the lake and its surrounding countryside offers a choice of walking and cycling trails. Indeed, its cycling paths are considered amongst the most beautiful anywhere and the 13 kilometre circuit of the lake takes in lake, sky and land. There are also boat trips available on the lake, whilst the forests bordering the lakeshore are great for bird watching, with Chinese bulbuls, bamboo partridges and colonies of black-crowned night herons making their homes here.



Accommodation: Lea Lea Garden Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 8 - Visit a traditional plum farm en route to Alishan

This morning we drive to Alishan National Scenic Area in Chiayi County. Taiwan's most popular national park, Alishan encompasses a range of mountain peaks and dense forests that include giant Taiwanese red cypresses, tea plantations and an old Japanese narrow-gauge railway that dates back to 1912. Today we'll visit a small family run Plum Garden, before making our way to our accommodation. From our hotel tonight there are several short walks that we can enjoy, either walking through forest to a small train station, walking to visit Shou Cheng Temple or following the Sacred Tree Trail.



Accommodation: Alishan House (New Wing) (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 9 - Explore the Confucius Temple in Tainan City

There is the option this morning to take a small train through the forest to a viewing platform at Chushan to watch the sunrise. After breakfast we will drive to Tainan. Facing the Taiwan Strait, Tainan is the oldest city in the country, initially established as a trading base by the Dutch East India Company. It is also renowned as one of Taiwan's cultural centres, with a rich history of Taoist tradition and more Buddhist and Taoist temples than any other city in Taiwan. We'll visit the 17th century Confucius Temple and the old fort at Chihkhan Towers, originally built by the Dutch but later expanded by Ming, Qing, Japanese and Kuomintang masters.



Accommodation: JJ West Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 10 - Discover the harbour town of Anping

Today we will drive out to the old harbour town of Anping, where we will get a chance to explore its old streets and visit the old Tait & Co. Merchant House, one of the few colonial buildings left in Tainan. We'll also pay a visit to the Anping Castle, formerly the Dutch fort of Zeelandia, before returning to Tainan for the evening.



Accommodation: JJ West Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 11 - Visit Kaohsiung City; overnight at Foguanshan Monastery

After a free morning in Tainan, we drive out of the city this afternoon and head to Kaohsiung, located in the south-west of the country. Taiwan's largest port, it began life as a small fishing village in the 17th century, going on to become the country's second largest city. We'll visit the harbours of Kaosiung and Cijing and take a short ferry ride, before driving on to Foguangshan Monastery. The largest Buddhist monastery in Taiwan, Foguangshan was founded in 1967 to promote Humanistic Buddhism. An international Chinese Mahayana Buddhist monastic order we spend this evening soaking up the calm atmosphere at the monastery.



Accommodation: Foguanshan Monastery (or similar)



Simple Monastery



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 12 - Morning chanting with monks; train to Taipei

An early start this morning allows us a chance to experience morning service with the monks, before we have the chance to try our hands at Chinese calligraphy writing. Following our lesson we drive back into Kaohsiung. We then take the mid-afternoon high speed train back to Taipei. Arriving early this evening we then have the rest of the night to enjoy some free time back in the Taiwanese capital.



Accommodation: Papersun Apartment (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 13 - Morning walking tour of Taipei and free afternoon

A walking tour of the city this morning takes in the Qing dynasty Tien-Ho Temple and the bustling markets around Dihua Street, an important centre of commerce in the city since the 1850s. We'll pass by shops selling traditional Chinese medicine, incense and Taiwanese tea, before paying a visit to the century-old Temple of the Chinese Cupid and the 200 year old Lin An Tai Historical Home, one of the oldest houses in the city. The afternoon is free for you to explore as you wish. You may like to return to the National Museum, which has enough exhibits to warrant a second visit. Alternatively you could pay a visit to Wang Yi-Shun's Confucius Temple, built in the early 1900s and favouring a style typically used in southern Taiwan. There are plenty of markets to explore and excellent places to stop and enjoy some fresh street food snacks.



Accommodation: Papersun Apartment (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

DAY 14 - Tour ends in Taipei

Our tour ends in Taipei this morning after breakfast.



Meals Provided: Breakfast



Why book this trip

This tour is ideal if you want to combine cultural sightseeing with some gentle walking surrounded by stunning natural scenery. Ideal for the first time visitor it offers a chance to experience Taiwan's ancient and modern sides as well as exploring the natural phenomena of Taroko Gorge.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 13
Dinner: 2



Transport

Bus
Train



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Driver(s)
Local Guide(s)



Accommodation

3 nights standard cabins
9 nights standard hotel
1 nights simple monastery

Trip information

Country information

Taiwan Trips

Climate

The annual average temperature of the northern part of Taiwan is around 21.7C (71F) while the southern part of the island is warmer with an average of 24.1C (75F). The coldest months are typically from January to March with the lowest temperature to about 10C (50F). In some rare cases, there will be frost or snow on the high mountain. The hottest months are from June to August with the highest temperature up to around 38C (100F). June to October is the typhoon season in Taiwan where heavy rainfall is expected on most days.

Time difference to GMT

-12

Plugs

2 Pin Flat

Religion

Buddhism

Language

Mandarin and Taiwanese.

Budgeting and packing

Clothing

Lightweight clothing for day times and warmer layers for the evenings. Light waterproofs are advisable all year round.

Footwear

Comfortable shoes for sightseeing.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece and a day pack. You will need to carry your luggage at times so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

There are some journeys along steep, winding roads, particularly on the drive to Sun Moon Lake so you may wish to bring travel sickness pills with you if you normally suffer. A torch will be useful for some of the walks in Taroko Gorge.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. In this area, tipping is a recognised part of life. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow for £20.

Country Information

Taiwan Trips

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£10

Dinner price

£15

Beer price

£3

Water price

£1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

New Taiwan Dollar

Recommended Currency For Exchange

US dollars is the most widely accepted exchange currency. It can be difficult to change British Pounds at many locations.

Where To Exchange

Taipei airport

ATM Availability

ATMs widely available but often do not accept UK cards.

Credit Card Acceptance

Accepted in most mid to top range restaurants and hotels.

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques are accepted in some locations. It is best if your travellers cheques are in US dollars.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Train

Essential information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa Information

Taiwan: A visa is not required for stays of less than 90 days for British passport holders. Requirements for all other nationalities vary and we advise that you check with your nearest embassy well before your departure date as changes in regulations do occur from time to time.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Taiwan Trips

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against hepatitis A and B, tetanus and Japanese encephalitis. Malaria is not normally present in Taiwan. Rabies is endemic to Taiwan, a hospital is never more than 5 hours away if treatment is required. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.