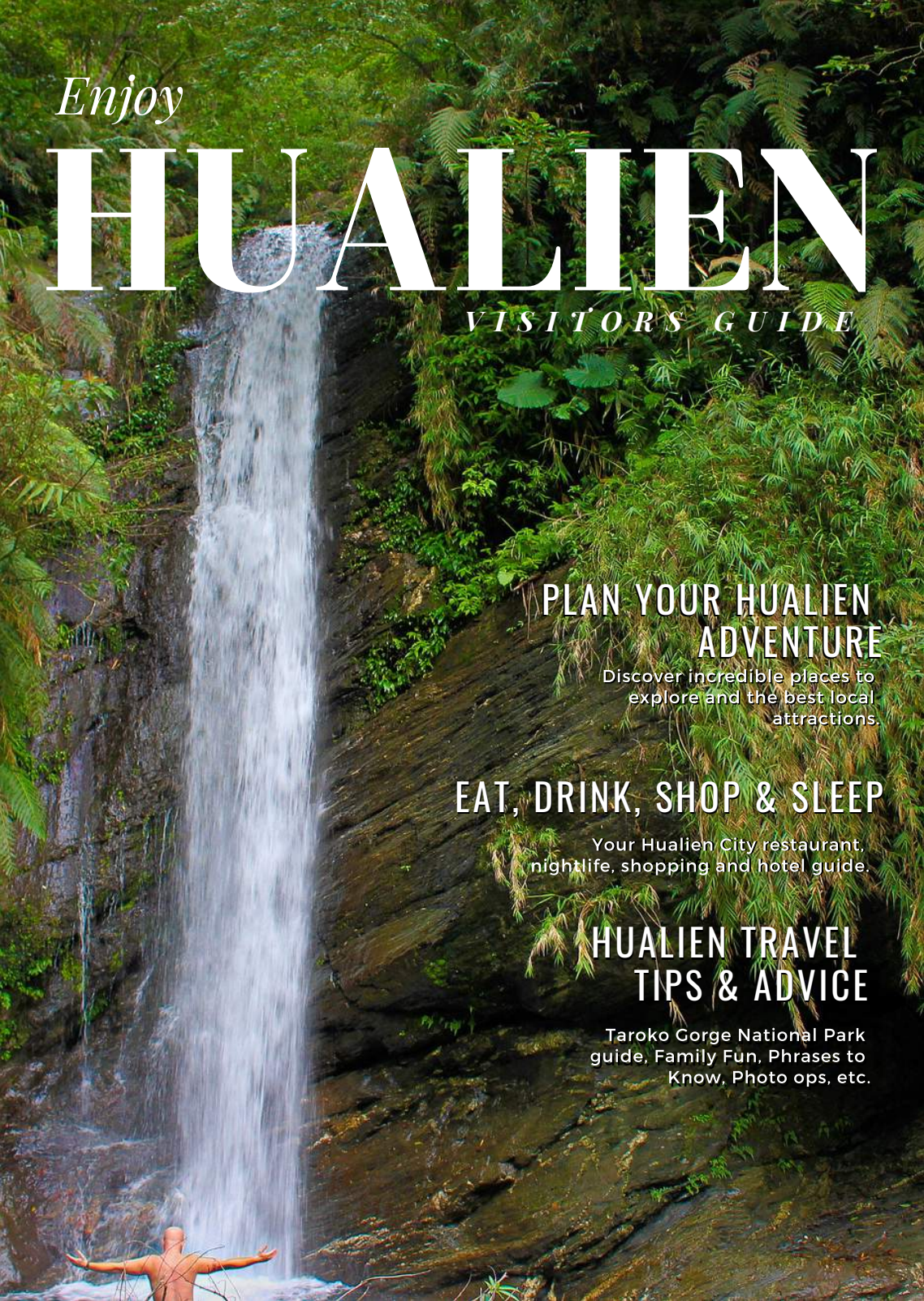




Enjoy

HUALIEN

VISITORS GUIDE

PLAN YOUR HUALIEN ADVENTURE

Discover incredible places to
explore and the best local
attractions.

EAT, DRINK, SHOP & SLEEP

Your Hualien City restaurant,
nightlife, shopping and hotel guide.

HUALIEN TRAVEL TIPS & ADVICE

Taroko Gorge National Park
guide, Family Fun, Phrases to
Know, Photo ops, etc.



ISLAND LIFE TAIWAN

ADVENTURES & EXPERIENCES

Your Hualien Adventure Begins Here



Taroko Gorge - Beaches - Hot Springs
Temples - Waterfalls - Mountains & More!



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UNIQUE CULTURE. WILD ADVENTURE. **THIS IS HUALIEN.**



It's easy to pass by the small island of Taiwan on a map of the World. When most westerners think of Taiwan, they rarely think "tropical island" and all too often think of the "made in" tags on their computers and consumer electronics. What many people don't realize however, is that Taiwan is actually one of the most stunning islands on Earth. And a place that surprisingly few people are talking about. Yet.

In 1544, a Portugese merchant ship passing by the island of Taiwan wrote in their logs the name *Illa Formosa*. A title meaning most simply... beautiful island. At the time, Taiwan lay as an unspoiled gem in the Pacific, blessed with verdant green tropical and subtropical forests, towering mountains, sandy beaches, sparkling blue rivers and more waterfalls than one could even imagine. Home to a diverse collection of indigenous cultures unlike anywhere else on Earth, Taiwan also has the distinct honor of being the birthplace of the entire Austronesian language family. The third largest language family in the world.

Today, one can still get a taste of that Taiwan of old. Graced with abounding natural beauty and unique indigenous culture, the East coast of Taiwan is ready and waiting to take your breath away. So welcome to our wild piece of paradise. Welcome to Hualien.



ENJOY HUALIEN VISITORS GUIDE

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THINGS TO DO HUALIEN

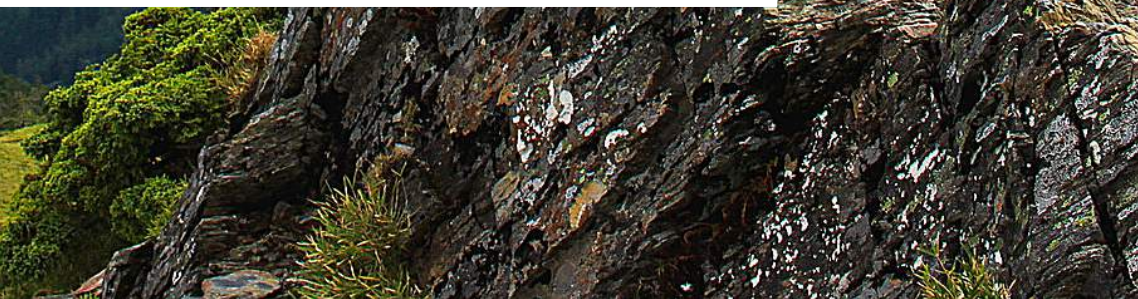
Some of the best things in life happen when we leave our
everyday behind to experience things in an entirely new way.
Vacation isn't just about photos and great views....

Its about the moments we spend together
making memories to last a lifetime.



EXPLORE HUALIEN'S ***WILD SIDE***

From the World's largest marble canyon, to an ocean side lunar landscape. Lush jungles, to high altitude peaks. Hualien has a universe of outdoor wonders to discover.



Taroko Gorge National Park

Experience One of the Most Spectacular Places on Earth

The undisputed king of Taiwan's National Parks, Taroko Gorge is the quintessential must experience destination on Taiwan's east coast. Towering marble valleys, thundering waterfalls, forest hikes and mountain to mountain suspension bridges are just a few of the spectacular features of this grand park. Carved by the Liwu river over millions of years, the spectacular Gorge is the largest marble canyon in the world and boasts a wide variety of trails, temples and landscapes. See our Taroko TIPS section for more.



Taroko Gorge National Park



Rock Formations at Shihtiping

Coastal Highway 11

Don't Forget Your Sunblock and Your Sense of Adventure!

From hidden beaches to wild mountain viewpoints, the winding palm lined Coastal Highway 11 will take you past dozens of breath-taking spots. Try out a traditional long bow at a hunting camp in Shuilian, then head down to the hidden beach oasis of Cow Mountain (Niushan Huting). Take an ocean swim at beautiful Jici Beach, then gawk at the precipitous depths of Fanshuliao Gorge. Go for a walk beside tidal pools in the dramatic lunar landscape of Shihtiping or stand in two climate zones at the Tropic of Cancer Marker. There is so much to explore along the coastal highway, you'll see why it's one of the best road trips on the island!

The Mugua River Gorge

From Swimming Holes to Waterfalls, there's so Much to Explore!

Home to some of the best places to swim in Hualien, the Mugua River Gorge watershed is an area blessed with mesmerizing, turquoise blue swimming holes, gushing waterfalls, lush forests and unique aboriginal culture. This area is listed as one of the East Coast "highlights" in the Lonely Planet Taiwan Guide book, and for good reason. Within the Mugua River Gorge itself and in the surrounding area, there are numerous places to explore, including Emerald Valley, the aboriginal village of Tongmen, Liyu Lake, Wunlan, Zimu Waterfall, the Miyawan River, Rainbow Falls and more!



The East Rift Valley

Take a Ride Through the Green Land Between the Mountains!

Heading south on Highway 9 or scenic Old Highway 193 from Hualien City, it becomes clear, quite quickly, what a spectacular day is in store for you. With the Coastal Mountain Range rising on your left, and the Central Mountain Range on your right, the green and fertile East Rift Valley stretches south, littered with glistening rice paddies, wild rivers, waterfalls, hot springs and more. Take a bike ride through Danong Dafu Forest Park, view countless orchids and critters in the Matai'an Wetlands, see many of Taiwan's 450+ butterfly species in Butterfly Valley and so much more.

Liyu Lake

Spend the Day at Hualien's Biggest Lake!

This serene lake lies at the foot of Liyu Mountain and is the largest freshwater lake in Hualien County. The name “Liyutan”, literally means Carp Lake, and stories vary as to the origin of the name: Did the lake used to be filled with carp? Does Liyu mountain look like a carp when viewed from across the lake? One thing is for sure, the beauty and tranquility of the lake is the reason so many travelers have stopped for a rest by its shores. There is a beautiful bicycle path around the lake and kayaks and paddle boats are available for rent. Visit in April and enjoy a marvelous sight as hundreds of fireflies come out in the evening, making the whole lake shimmer with lights!



Paddle Boats at Liyu Lake



The Towering Qingshui Cliffs

The Qingshui Cliffs

Where the Mountains Meet the Sea.

Along the Eastern seashore of Taiwan lies an awe inspiring testament to the sheer power of Earth plate tectonics. Massive cliffs of stone seem to defy reason in their precipitous plummet from Taiwan's Central Mountain Range into the azure turquoise waters of the Pacific Ocean far below. If you're looking for something literally awesome to do in Taiwan, put a visit to the Qingshui Cliffs (Chingshui Cliffs) near the top of your list. For added adventure, take an ATV on the beach from Chongde out to the base of the cliffs!

The Zhuilu Old Trail

Walk on the Cliffs Edge 700 meters up on the Adventure of a Lifetime!

High in the mountains above Taroko Gorge National Park, lies a trail unlike any most people ever experience in their lives. Carved into the face of a cliff of solid marble, the Zhuilu Old Trail sits perilously more than 700 meters above the canyon floor below. With limited (often no) guardrail along the trails edge, one can stare down past their toes at the great Liwu river winding like a little creek over half a mile down. As if that wasn't enough, the 500-meter-long cliffside portion at the top is only 90cm wide!



The Zhuilu Old Trail



Looking Out from the Walami Trail

The Walami Trail

Take a Sensational Walk through History

Plunge into a beautiful tropical jungle and immerse yourself in the lush world of Taiwan's great outdoors! Taiwan's historic Walami Trail winds up into the Central Mountain range, where the air is filled with the perfume of warm greenery and the song of nature's soundtrack. If you're looking for something special to do in Taiwan, this is one of your best opportunities to get out and see all that Taiwan's natural world has to offer. Waterfalls, suspension bridges, epic views and more await!



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DISCOVER HUALIEN'S ***LIVING CULTURE***

Temples, teas, tribes and more, Hualien is a treasured place to explore the unique cultural history of Taiwan. From aboriginal delicacies to Japanese era lumber camps. Traditional tea farms to ornate folk religion temples. Hualien is sure to give you a special glimpse into the island's eclectic and storied past.

Gong Tian Temple

This massive temple complex is dedicated to the sea goddess Matsu.

The largest temple in Hualien, Gong Tian is dedicated to the goddess of the sea Matsu, and is a truly impressive site against a backdrop of towering green mountains. Born in China in 960AD, Matsu is the protector of fishermen, and revered in China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia for bringing safe return to the seafarers of the area. Two massive cylindrical stairwells with dragons heads as entrances, make this a real site to behold. Located off Zhongshan road about a 10 minute drive from Hualien Main Station.



Gongtian Temple



Lintianshan Forestry Park

Lintianshan Forestry Park

Take a Sensational Walk through History

This Japanese era logging camp and lumber factory is much more scenic and interesting than one would expect. Nestled beside a river in the verdant green East Rift Valley, this restored historic site includes several beautiful wooden buildings from the early 1900's, a museum and hundreds of unique wood sculptures throughout. The famous "Formosan Cypress" was once harvested here, and the fragrant smell still pervades the area. Trinkets made of the special wood are available to purchase in the shop.

Jian Qingxiu Temple

This Japanese era temple has a rich and storied past.

This beautiful Japanese Buddhist temple complex in Ji'an Township, just a few minutes from Hualien City, was founded in 1917 during the 50 year period of Japanese occupation. At the time, many Japanese settled in this part of the country to develop the agriculture of the region, and this lovely temple complex and gardens were constructed for the Shingon Esoteric sect of Buddhism, a traditionally vegetarian branch of the religion. Restored in 2003, this is a wonderful place to catch a glimpse of Taiwan's unique history and relax.

Jian Qingxiu Temple



The Pine Garden

This "Kamikazi Clubhouse" is a Japanese Occupation era must see

Constructed in 1942 amidst a grove of pine trees on the tallest hill in Hualien City, this unique historic military site has often been dubbed the "Kamikaze Clubhouse" for the people who frequented it. At the peak of World War II, Japanese kamikaze pilots would have their "wine of the heavenly emperor" here before heading out the following morning on their deadly missions. Today the ocean view site is restored and is a beautiful place to visit within the city. Be sure to search the property for the old bomb shelter!



The Pine Garden



MOST SHAREABLE PHOTOS

Ready to share some photos to social media that will leave your friends and family jealously begging “WHERE IS THAT?!” Here are some of the best photo ops in Hualien County!

1. Qingshui Cliffs

North of Hualien City and just past the entrance to Taroko Gorge lies the awe inspiring Qingshui Cliffs. Crashing down thousands of meters from peaks to the sea, these massive cliffs are best viewed from a viewing area off the Suhua Highway or from a beach accessible via ATV from Chongde.

2. Xiangde Temple

Towering high on a hillside above the small hamlet of Tianxiang in Taroko Gorge National Park, this charming Buddhist complex of temples, ornate statues and pagodas is photogenic beyond words. Serenity now.

3. Shihtiping

With massive otherworldly rock formations of uplifted coral reef and sweeping coastal mountain views, there are few places as epic and bizarre as Shihtiping. About 1.5 hours south of Hualien City, Shihtiping is well worth the journey.

FUN FOR FAMILIES

Travelling with the whole family this vacation. No problem! Hualien is a safe and family friendly place with oodles of activities for all to enjoy!



Taroko Sports Bowling Alley

Great family friendly bowling alley with bowling, darts, basketball and more.

 No. 58, Guolian 5th Rd.



Dongdamen Night Market

This lively night market is fun for the family with live music, carnival style games and food stalls aplenty.

 Downtown off Zjongsan Rd.



Showtime Movie Theater

US blockbusters in English (with Chinese subs) and a few Taiwanese films. Kids movies sometimes are dubbed so be sure to ask.

 No. 74, Guolian 5th Rd



Liyu Lake

Lovely lake with paddle boats, kayaks and a leisurely, lake encircling bicycle path! Bike & boat rentals at the cute visitor center.

 20 minutes SW of Hualien City



Happy Farm

This beautiful seaside park and animal farm is a great way to spend an afternoon. Peacocks, Flamingos & more

 Huazhong Road, Hualien



Beibin Park

Great park with a bike path, beach volleyball nets, picnic tables, a skate park, play fountains and kite rentals on breezy days.

 Hualien City waterfront



Farglory Ocean Park

This sprawling ocean themed amusement park offers fun rides, aquatic animal shows, an aquarium, acrobat shows and more! With stellar views overlooking the Pacific Ocean, youngsters are sure to have a fun day out!

 On Hwy. 11 – 20 mins S of Hualien City



EAT TO YOUR HEARTS CONTENT

When they said variety is the spice of life, they'd clearly never tried Taiwanese chili peppers! From savory bowls of traditional beef noodles, to spicy Burmese curries. American style barbecue to bizarre night market snacks. Hualien is sure to have something to tickle your taste buds... and have you coming back for more.



FLAVORS OF HUALIEN

TASTE INTERNATIONAL CUISINE



SALT LICK BBQ & PIZZA - American style BBQ. Favorites include the slow cooked Pulled Pork (sandwich or plate), the Seasonal Salad (best in town), the Cajun Chicken Sandwich, the Chicago Deep Dish Pizza and the Smoked Ribs.

📍 No. 151, Zhongshan Road



FARMERS KITCHEN - This delicious vegetarian restaurant serves a wide variety of dishes and grow their own organic produce locally. Our favorites include the spinach calzone, the Caprese salad and the chick pea cottage pie.

📍 No. 407, Zhongshan Road



BOOM BURGER - Affordable and tasty burgers, pizza, salads and more. Our favorites include the mushroom burger, the Hawaiian burger with fresh pineapple and the mozzarella sticks with garlic aioli. A good late spot near-ish the train station.

📍 No. 28, Zhuangjing Road



THREE KOALAS - Very reasonably priced American & Italian fare. Paninis, Personal Pizzas, Burgers and more. Our favorite is the steak sandwich with goat cheese and balsamic onion jam. A popular place for families.

📍 No. 122, Bo'ai Street



Thai

Siam Thai Cuisine

📍 No. 71, Fuxing Street

French

OH LA LA Crepery

📍 No. 611, Zhongshan Rd.

Indian

Medina Pakistani & Indian Cuisine

📍 No. 482, Heping Rd.

KIMAMAYA JAPANESE CUISINE

This hip Japanese BBQ spot is a favorite amongst both locals and visitors alike. With a large menu of meats and vegetables to choose from, it's a great place for groups to gather around a table center BBQ grill. Kimamaya uses fresh coals, not propane burners, so the flavor is better than many of the other spots locally. Our favorites are the steak and the mushrooms.

📍 No. 144, Bo'ai St.



DOS TACOS – Tex Mex cuisine such as tacos, enchiladas and burritos. Several Mexican beers available in bottles. Our favorite bites include the giant nachos and the sizzling fajitas. Not exactly authentic Mexican food but hey, it's Asia!

📍 No. 92, Fuxing Street



COUNTRY MOTHERS BRUNCH – American/ European brunch restaurant with country home ambiance. Our favorites include the European Omelet with Dijon Sauce, the wholegrain waffles and the Eggs Benedicts with home fried potatoes.

📍 No. 34, Fuqian Road



Social Poll Best Brunch



Brunch is a BIG DEAL in Hualien, so we asked our Facebook fans and a number of locals: Where is your favorite brunch spot? Here are the top five replies.

1. **Country Mothers** – No. 34, Fuqian Road
2. **The Baker Brunch** – No. 586, Zhongzheng Road
3. **1939 Cafe** – No. 16, Lane 80, Minguo Road
4. **Happiness Sunlight** – No. 20, Guofeng Street
5. **Farmers Kitchen** – (Vegetarian) – No. 407, Zhongshan Road



DONGDAMEN NIGHT MARKET

Located on the grounds of the old Hualien Train Station, this sprawling night market is the largest in Hualien County, and a must visit while in Hualien City. On the eastern side of downtown by the junction of Zhongshan Rd. and the ocean, Dongdamen Night Market has hundreds of stalls of food, games, trinkets and more. Prepare yourself for a wonderland of aromas as you pass by grilled steak and sausages, aboriginal delicacies, traditional Chinese favorites and of course... Stinky Tofu! With numerous carnival style games, this is a fun and safe place for families and all to enjoy a vibrant evening in Hualien.



Downtown Hualien City (See Map)



OLD BANYAN TREE RESTAURANT - This bustling local place has an “English” menu with pictures. Dishes come in good portions for sharing. We recommend the dry green beans, pepper fried chicken and more. Everything is delicious.

📍 No.69 Mingzhi Street



KOUFU BEEF NOODLES- This is a local favorite for a Taiwanese classic dish! Beef Noodles are a mainstay of Taiwanese cuisine, large bowls of simmering broth, noodles, vegetables and slow cooked beef pieces.

📍 No.533, Fujian St.



ZHOU STEAMED DUMPLINGS - This decades old famous steamed bun shop serves a local version of Xiao Long Bao and is widely considered the best in Hualien. Grab a bag to eat on the street. Lines form on weekend evenings. Don't forget the sauce!

📍 No. 4-20, Gongzheng St.



HAI PO OYSTER OMELET STAND - CHALLENGE FOOD ALERT! Wanna try something really different? This Hualien specialty looks like a trainwreck but is surprisingly tasty. Scrambled eggs with oysters, green onion and hot sauce. This is THE local spot.

📍 No. 88 Ziyu St.



HUALIEN'S MOST FAMOUS WONTONS



Dai Ji's Wonton Soup Restaurant

📍 No. 120, Zhonghua Rd.

Another Hualien institution. In a town where wonton soup is considered a specialty, Dai Ji's is widely considered the best. For 80 years this family institution has been preparing their dumpling soup and the recipe has never changed. Don't fix what isn't broken we suppose! With only a handful of tables, locals often sit on stools next to the shop slurping up their favorite soup after a long days work. Be sure to take advantage of the various condiments available to customize your soup with chili oil, vinegars and more!



HE JIA HUAN NAN BEI YAO

As if the name wasn't already a mouthful, this well priced Taiwanese restaurant offers delicious meals that are a cut above the rest. From duck breast to pork feet, local greens to dumplings, this place is sure to have something for everyone. Though they don't have an English menu yet, they do have pictures and the friendly staff are great at helping with suggestions.

📍 No. 228, Zhonghe Street



BA FANG YUN JI FRIED DUMPLING – These small chain shops of fried and steamed dumplings are inexpensive and delicious. At \$5 TWD per dumpling, mix and match or try them all! Be sure to check out the sauce station as well. Veggie options available.

📍 No. 696, Zhongshan Rd. & No. 93, Guolian 3rd Rd



WANG'S TEA HOUSE – This tea house and restaurant offers relaxing atmosphere and a wide range of teas and snacks to choose from. A few set meals are available as well but most just come for the tea and tranquility. English menu available.

📍 No. 565, Zhongshan Road



A MEAL WORTH THE JOURNEY

Cifadahan Traditional Amis Restaurant

📍 No. 16, Lane 62, Daquan Street, Guangfu Township

Famous farmers and fishermen, the Amis tribe are the largest aboriginal group in Taiwan. At this unique restaurant, one can sample some of the finest Amis food in Taiwan. Known for their “stone soup”, this treat is prepared beside you in a large bowl made of banana leaves. Local wild vegetables, prawns and fish are added to the broth, and then large, hot stones are added to the bowl, cooking the soup right beside you! Besides this dish, you could also try salt cooked whole fish prepared in charcoal, wild mountain vegetables or various other dishes specific.



Adding stones to the soup



TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

While Hualien isn't known for it's nightlife, one can still find a nice spot to wind down after a long day of excitement. Craft cocktails, live music, streetside BBQ and more. Here is our small, but potent, guide to Hualien nightlife. Gambei! (down the hatch)



THE GINSMAN

Easily the best place in town for a craft made cocktail, this small and swanky artisan cocktail bar has the best drinks in town with the high prices to match.

Leather sofas and mood lighting make for a chill environment.

 No. 62 Xingang St



SALT LICK BBQ & TAP

American style BBQ restaurant with a long handmade wooden bar, cocktails and numerous Taiwanese craft beers ON TAP. If you like beer and good food, definitely worth a stop by. Happy Hour weekdays 5-6pm.

 No. 151 Zhongshan Rd.



ALL STAR BISTRO

The All Star Bistro & Live House serves up bar food, beer and cocktails in a large-ish venue. Live music on Friday & Saturday nights can be hit or miss but it's typically worth stopping in to check what's on offer.

 No. 403 Linsen Rd.



CORNER BAR & BBQ

This new place offers a unique outdoor location at one of Hualien City's busiest intersections, Head to Zhongshan and Linsen and you can't miss this colorful bar and BBQ. Ask about availability and prices.

 No. 383, Linsen Road

THE RIVER

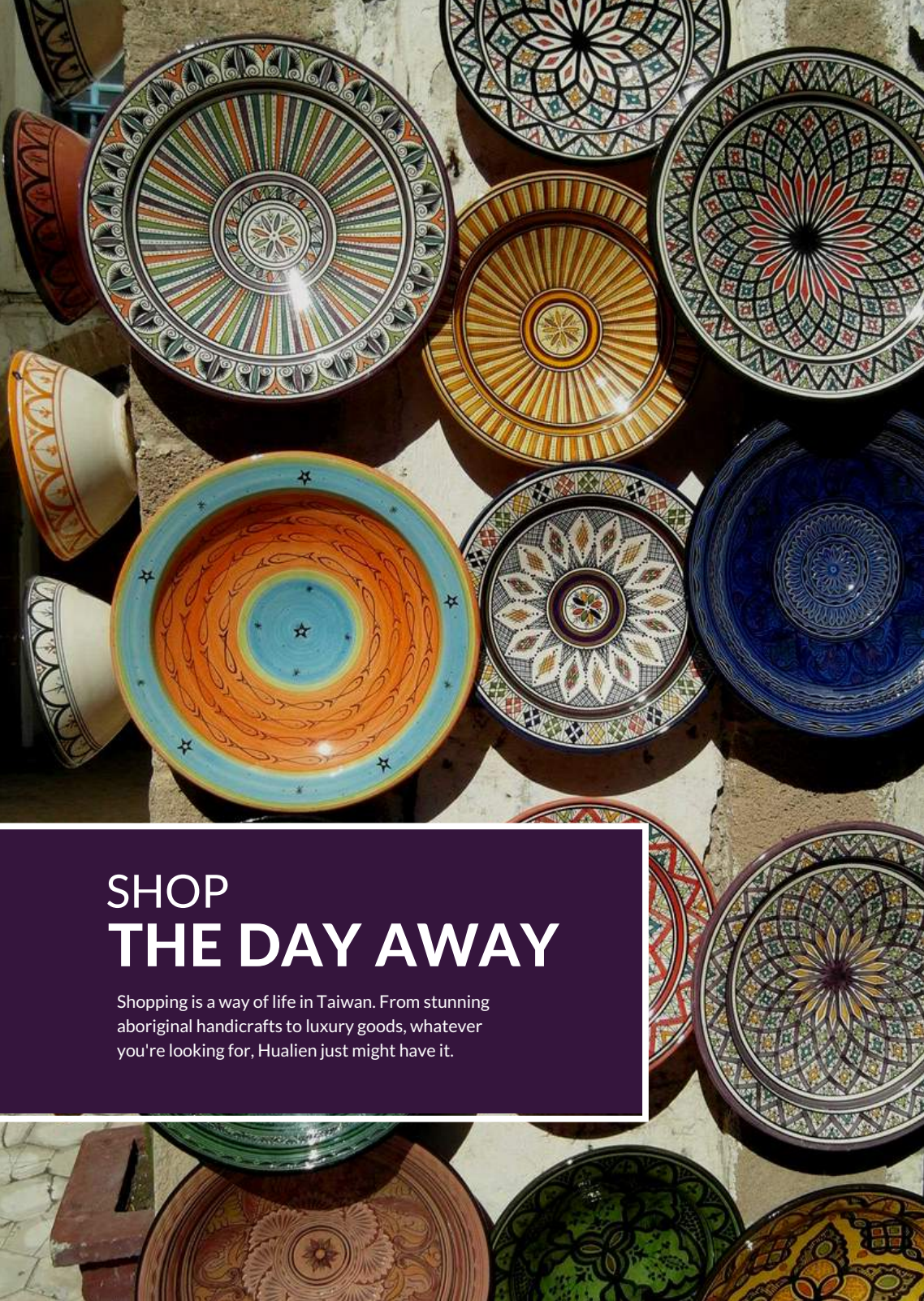
Next door to the All Star Bistro & Live House, the River is pretty much the only place in town you might find dancing or late night fun. This place looks like an ordinary bar with a DJ, but can really get going late night (midnight to 1am) when DJ's can sometimes get the dance floor going. This place is often frequented by police inspections, so if the music stops and officers enter the bar, just smile and be prepared to show ID. They are usually gone in 10-15 minutes.

 No. 407 Linsen Road



DRINKING & BAR ETIQUETTE

Taiwanese are typically a warm and welcoming people, but here are a few tips so you have the best time enjoying nightlife in Hualien. First and foremost, it is considered an insult to hit on or proposition a girl or woman in a bar who is with male accompaniment. Young Taiwanese men can be very protective of their girlfriends, especially around foreign men. Don't do anything silly and you'll be welcome by all. Secondly, young intoxicated Taiwanese men can be VERY affectionate to both male and female foreigners. They will likely want to take a selfie with you, so just smile and humor them. It's always great to make new friends!



SHOP THE DAY AWAY

Shopping is a way of life in Taiwan. From stunning aboriginal handicrafts to luxury goods, whatever you're looking for, Hualien just might have it.

FOUR GREAT MARKETS

FOUR UNIQUE EXPERIENCES



HUALIEN DAY MARKET

Located downtown off Zhongshan and Zhongzheng roads, the numerous pedestrian roads and alleyways that make up the Hualien Day Market are lined with stalls and shops of all varieties. From trinkets to housewares, artisan crafts to clothing, produce to fresh fish, the Hualien Day Market is loaded with a little something for everyone.



A-ZONE CULTURE PARK

Located in downtown off Zhonghua Rd., this sprawling complex on the site of the old Hualien distillery is a must visit while in Hualien City. Inside the numerous buildings are various artisan craft makers selling a wide variety of arts, candles, woodworkings and more. Outside, vendors set up tables selling everything from jewelry to handmade scones! Visit on a weekend if possible.



HUALIEN STONE MARKET

Located adjacent to the Dongdamen Night Market off Chongqing Road, the Hualien Stone Market is a great way to pick up some polished or carved stone pieces in the evening. Watch as artisan stone workers make everything from small jewelry pieces to massive polished stone picnic tables. Hualien County is famous worldwide for its stone, why not take a piece home with you!



HUALIEN PORT FISH MARKET

Overlooking the Hualien Fishing Port, this local fish market is the best place to pick up some of the day's catch, or enjoy a lovely waterside lunch! Several makeshift stalls will prepare meals for you from fried prawns to grilled fish and more. A real local experience, the Hualien Fish Market is your best bet for fresh inexpensive seafood in Hualien City!

A photograph of a hotel room. The top half shows a bed with several white pillows and a white sheet. The bottom half shows a patterned blanket with a repeating circular design. In the bottom left corner, there is a brown and white patterned bag. In the bottom right corner, there is a brown leather suitcase with two US passports on top of it. The passports are dark blue with the gold eagle emblem and the words "PASSPORT" and "United States of America".

REST, RELAX, **RENEW**

Say goodbye to the hustle and bustle of Taipei and the West coast cities, and hello to the relaxing urban enclave of Hualien. From B&B's to five star hotels, home stays to hostels, there is no shortage of accommodations to choose from in Hualien.

A SAMPLING OF HUALIEN ACCOMMODATIONS

Budget

Dropby B&B

No. 42, Zhongxiao Street

Journey Hostel

No. 147, Fuguo Road

Sleeping Boot Hostel

No. 73, Jinfeng Street

Just Walk Backpacker Hostel

No. 160, Guolian 5th Road

Mini Voyage Hostel

No. 103, Guolian 1st Road

Cave Hostel

No. 248, Zhonghua Road

Mid-Range

1999 B&B

No. 5, Lane 80, Minguo Road

You Worth Inn

No. 82, Guoxing 3rd Street

90 Percent B&B

No. 148, Guoxing 5th Street

Ing B&B

No. 27, Guomin 2nd Street

F Hotel Hualien Zhongxiao

No. 65, Zhongxiao Street

Holland Windmill B&B

No. 117, Guo-Ming 8th Street

High-End

Chateau De Chine

No. 2 Yongxing Road.

Meci Hotel

No. 201, Guolian 1st Street

Lakeshore Hotel

No. 142, Zhongmei Road

Azure Hotel

No. 590, Zhongzheng Road

Hotelday +

No. 39, Guolian 1st Road

Just Sleep Hualien Zhongzheng

No. 396, Zhongzheng Road



KADDA HOTEL HUALIEN

With the only infinity pool with views of the ocean, the Kadda Hotel is a unique new addition to the Hualien City skyline. This boutique hotel is located a 5 minute taxi ride from downtown and offers modern rooms, exercise facilities, a restaurant and an eclectic bicycling theme. Which make sense since the waterfront cycling path is directly across the road!

No. 2-6 Minquan Road



LUXURY IN AND AROUND HUALIEN



SILKS PLACE TAROKO

The only luxury hotel inside of Taroko Gorge National park, Silks Place is nearly as impressive as it's natural surroundings. On the edge of the secluded town of Tianxiang, Silks Place is perched above the Liwu River amidst green mountains and craggy cliffs aplenty. With rooftop pools and hot tubs, in house yoga rooms and exercise facilities, and white linen dining, the Silks Place is THE place to get away from it all. Note that Silks Place is 1.5-2 hours from Hualien City.



PARKVIEW HOTEL HUALIEN

With stellar views of the Hualien Golf Course, sprawling green lawns and the biggest swimming pool in Hualien County, Parkview Hotel is an oasis in Hualien City unlike any other. Shops, waterslides, a garden view buffet restaurant, workout facilities and more make this the complete package for all types of travelers. In the warm season, the pool makes this a family favorite and the loaction within Hualien City allows easy access to dining and shopping in town.



FARGLORY RESORT & SPA

High above Hualien City, perched over the Pacific Ocean, lies the incredible Farglory Resort & Spa. With views not only of the sweeping sea below, but of the Farglory Ocean Park Amusement Park down the hillside, it's location is only part of the allure of this massive complex. A 30 minutes drive from Hualien City, the Farglory Resort holds indoor and outdoor pools with ocean views, a spa, several restaurants and bars, exercise facilities, sprawling gardens, an atrium, a game room

and more.

A full-page background image showing a group of hikers walking along a narrow, rocky trail on a steep mountain slope. The trail is carved into the rock face. In the background, there are lush green mountains and a deep valley. The sky is blue with some white clouds. The text 'TAROKO GORGE NATIONAL PARK VISITORS GUIDE' is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image.

TAROKO GORGE NATIONAL PARK VISITORS GUIDE

WELCOME TO TAROKO GORGE

Easily visited from Hualien City on Taiwan's green East Coast, Taroko Gorge is the largest marble canyon in the world. Towering cliffs, gushing waterfalls, turquoise rivers, and hundreds of species of butterflies, birds, insects, reptiles and mammals make this one of the most abundant natural areas in Asia. Plan ahead and book a tour to hike the famed Zhuilu Old Trail, a former tribal hunting path carved into a cliff 700 meters above the gorge! Or take a walk along the majestic blue Shakadang River on the "Mysterious Valley Trail". The massive Taroko Gorge National Park and all its wonders can't be missed!

9 TIPS FROM LOCALS WHEN VISITING TAROKO GORGE



1. GO EARLY

By 10am, most of the walking paths throughout Taroko Gorge National Park begin to fill with large tour groups. Many of their guides even bring megaphones to yell information to their groups. So when trying to enjoy the serene grandiosity of Taroko and the sounds of nature, this can be quite distracting. For these, and many other reasons, we suggest getting to Taroko as early as possible. One great option is hitching a ride with Island Life Taiwan who offer a Taroko Gorge Tour that leaves Hualien at 7:30am .



2. BRING AN UMBRELLA

Some days the sun can be blindingly hot... other days a cloud can roll through the gorge and dump rain unexpectedly. Having a small umbrella with you can protect against both! Like our parents always said, it's better to have and not need, than need and not have!

3. TRY AN ABORIGINAL SAUSAGE ON SHAKADANG TRAIL

You may have tasted a Taiwan sausage on a stick by the time you visit Taroko Gorge National Park, but not like these! The old Truku man who sells them, claims they're the best in Taiwan. And while we can't go that far, they certainly are up there. Made with local *Magao* black peppercorns grown in the park, they are unlike any others in Taiwan. Near the 1.5 km mark on the Shakadang Trail you'll find several aboriginal stands selling their wares. You can't miss the sausage man!

TAROKO GORGE TIDBITS

Established: 1986

Entrance Location: 41km North of Hualien City

Park Hours: 8:30AM - 5PM

Entry Fee For Park: 0TWD\$ (Permits & Fees Required For Special Trails Including Zhuilu Old Trail)

Top Trails: Shakadang Trail, Swallows Grotto, Baiyang Waterfalls Trail, Lushui Trail, Zhuilu Old Trail, Eternal Springs Shrine Trail, Bell Tower Trail



DID YOU KNOW?

The national park was originally founded in 1937 as the Tsugitaka-Taroko NP by the ruling Governor General of Taiwan under the Empire of Japan. After Japans defeat in 1945, the park was abolished, and then wasn't reestablished until 1986. Tourists have been coming since the 30's, but only in significant numbers since the completion of the Central Cross Island Highway in 1960.

Taroko Tips

4. AVOID THE LARGE TOUR BUS COMPANIES

While the low prices of the large tour bus companies visiting Taroko Gorge each day can make them tempting, take a look at what you're actually getting. Most of the busses don't have an English speaking guide to explain anything to you or give you any history or geology of the region. They typically all use the same route at the same times so you can expect 2-10 other bus loads of people to be at any place you are at the same time. That can mean 200 people at the same viewing area as you. We highly recommend small group tours, private tours or if you're feeling daring, DIY.

5. DON'T PLAN ON WALKING BETWEEN TRAILHEADS & VIEWPOINTS

While some guidebooks foolishly suggest that you could walk completely through Taroko, we highly advise against it. The distance from trail head to trail head can often be 5-10 kilometers on winding narrow roads with NO shoulder. Add to that, speeding tour busses, tunnels with no lights and you have a recipe for a terrifying and LONG walk.

6. BOOK A ZHULIU OLD TRAIL TOUR

Do you like the idea of walking on a 90cm wide trail carved into the side of a cliff, 700 METERS above the canyon floor?! Did we mention, no ropes or guardrails? Welcome to the Zhuliu Old Trail. An old Truku tribe hunting path, widened slightly by the Japanese military during Taiwans occupation, this trail is a once in a lifetime experience for the daring amongst us. Book ahead as only a few permits are issued each day.

WHO ARE THE TRUKU?

The Taroko Gorge takes its name from the Truku tribe, one of the 14 remaining tribes of Taiwan. Settling in the gorge between 1680 and 1740, the Truku migrated from the Nantou area near Sun Moon Lake. Relocating due to overused hunting grounds in the west, they crossed the Central Mountain Range and settled in the mountainous areas of Hualien. Isolated from their Atayal brethren in the west for 250 years, they soon developed customs and dialects of their own. A fierce but united tribe (the Truku were historically headhunters), they lived communally by sharing the land among themselves. The remains of 79 Truku villages have been found within the park.



FACIAL TATOOS

At age 7 or 8, Truku boys and girls would customarily get the start of a tattoo on their forehead with a symbol signifying they were part of the tribe. It was at this point that boys were allowed to begin hunting for a human head. When they eventually accomplished this task, the tattoo on their head was completed, and they would get a tattoo on their chin. From that point forward, they were considered a man and allowed to marry.

Truku girls meanwhile, were taught to sew 4 items to reach womanhood. Then they too would get their face tattoos, a band over their lips from ear to ear. These tattoos were believed to be a "passport" to the lands of the afterlife.

Taroko Tips

7. IF YOU DECIDE TO DIY, CHECK FOR TRAIL CLOSURES

Taiwan is Typhoon country and the mountains throughout Hualien County often have landslides during big storms. Taroko Gorge is no different and several trails are closed every month for maintenance. If you decide to DIY it, be sure to check for the latest trail closures online and consult with a ranger at the visitor center, OR just use a tour company that will take you to the best places currently available.

8. SPOTTING WILDLIFE

There are over 300 kinds of butterflies in Taroko Gorge National Park, 150 kinds of birds, 46 large mammals including the Formosan Black Bear, the Formosan Macaque (Grey Rock Monkey) and the Sambar Deer, and countless lizards, snakes, insects and other wildlife in the park. The best time to see wildlife is early in the morning before throngs of tourists enter the park and scare them into the hills. While you probably won't spot any bears or deer, the Formosan Macaque tends to hang around throughout the park. Good places for spotting them include the trees behind the 7-11 in Tianxiang, the small path behind the visitor center, and in the trees around the Qingshui Cliffs.

9. BRING A WIDE ANGLE LENS FOR YOUR CAMERA

The views through the gorge can be sweeping beyond words. If you have a DSLR camera, or even an Iphone with a lens kit, a wide-angle lens can really help capture the grandiosity of the park. While tripods are typically unnecessary, a wide angle lens can help you get that towering mountain above you, the sprawling cliff to your left, the waterfall to your right, and the river below you into one spectacular shot.

Taroko Wildlife

Grey Rock Monkeys, Sambar deer, countless lizard and spider species, 144 bird species, more than 250 kinds of butterfly, rivers teeming with fish, freshwater shrimp, crab, numerous species of frog and so much more fill the jungles and forests of Taroko Gorge. Taking a walk on one of the park's many trails, it becomes pretty obvious at once that you are not alone!



..... **Green Tree Frog**



..... **Swallowtail Butterfly**



..... **Formosan Macaque**



..... **Muller's Barbet**



..... **Sambar Deer**



..... **Grass Lizard**



..... **Formosan Black Bear**



VISITORS TIPS

Travel Info, Maps and More! Planning your visit can be difficult. Here's some more useful info to get you started.



GETTING TO HUALIEN

Option 1: Take the Train



This is the most popular and affordable method of getting to Hualien from Taipei. The express trains will get you to Hualien in about 2 hours, while the non-express trains can take 3–4 hours. It is important to book your train tickets ahead of time, especially on weekends and holidays, as the trains do sell out. Train tickets go on sale 14 days before the travel date. A one way ticket will cost \$440 TWD per person. You can book train tickets online at:

<http://railway.hinet.net/Foreign/US/index.htm>

Option 2: Take the Plane



This option can save you time and is easily booked online. The Uniair flights take around 50 minutes and typically cost around \$1,000 TWD per person. It should be noted that these flights depart from Taipei Songshan Airport (TSA), NOT Taoyuan International Airport. You can book plane tickets at:

www.uniair.com.tw

GETTING AROUND

Taxis

Taxis are cheap and plentiful in Hualien. Look for taxis that have a red light on in their front window as this means they're available. Expect to pay \$100–\$150 to pretty much anywhere in central Hualien city. Taxi drivers in Hualien always use their meter, no need to ask. Taxis are considered safe for women and there are many female taxi drivers in Hualien.



Bicycle

The cheapest and probably healthiest way to see Hualien, bicycles can be rented at several shops around the Hualien Train Station. Most shops can give you a map of bike paths throughout the city. Riding on main roads can seem a little hairy, but just stay to the right and vehicles will pass on your left.



Car or Scooter Rental

There are many car and scooter rental shops around the train station. International drivers licenses are required at most. Be warned however, that there are no stop signs in Hualien and red lights are often considered a suggestion. If you choose to rent a vehicle, drive slowly and cautiously.

Walking



Walking in downtown Hualien is easy and pleasant with many shops, restaurants and kiosks to catch your eye. The train station is about a 20 minute walk from the heart of downtown, an area centered on Zhongshan Rd. from Linsen Rd. to the Dongdamen Night Market.



There are some REALLY beautiful bike paths in Hualien

PHRASES TO KNOW

Hello – **Nee-how**

Thanks – **Shieh-Shieh** (say it fast!)

You're welcome or don't mention it – **Boo-kuh-chi**

I don't understand – **Ting-boo-dong**

Pardon Me/ Excuse Me – **Boo-how-ee-si**

How much does this cost? – **Duo-shauw-chee-an?**

No thank you or no I don't want that – **Boo-yong**

Where is... - **Dzai-nah-lee**

Where is the bathroom? - **Tse-soo-oh dzai-nah-lee**

Do you have... - **Yo-mayo**

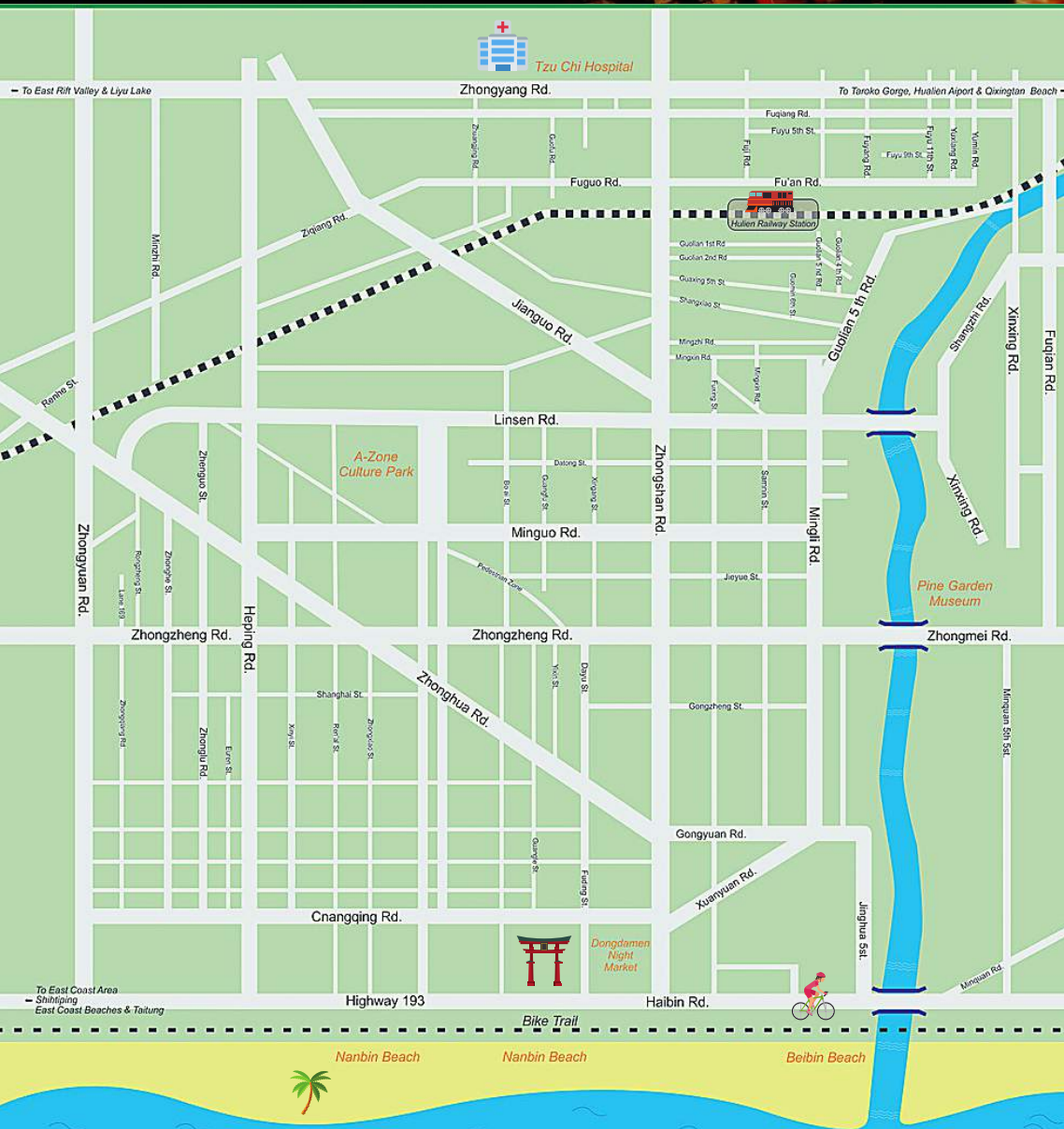
I want this – **Woah-yow-jeh-guh**

I don't want... – **Boo-yow**

Delicious – **Hun-how-chi**

Now you can speak some Mandarin!

HUALIEN CITY MAP





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