



TOUR OF DETOURS

Taiwan

8-Day Travel Guide

A practical, linked PDF for Kaohsiung, Taichung and Taipei: visa checks, transport, food, useful apps, currency, booking links and a clean day-by-day route.

[Compare hotels](#)

[Find flights](#)

[Get an eSIM](#)

Start south, move north, avoid backtracking.

This guide uses the smooth west-coast rail corridor: Kaohsiung for an easy opening, Taichung for the creative middle, and Taipei for the strongest finish.

BEST TRIP STYLE

Food + rail + city texture

RAIL STRATEGY

THSR between cities

HOTEL RULE

Book near transit

01

02

03

Kaohsiung

2 NIGHTS

Harbor lights, Pier-2, Lotus Pond, Cijin Island, night markets.

Taichung

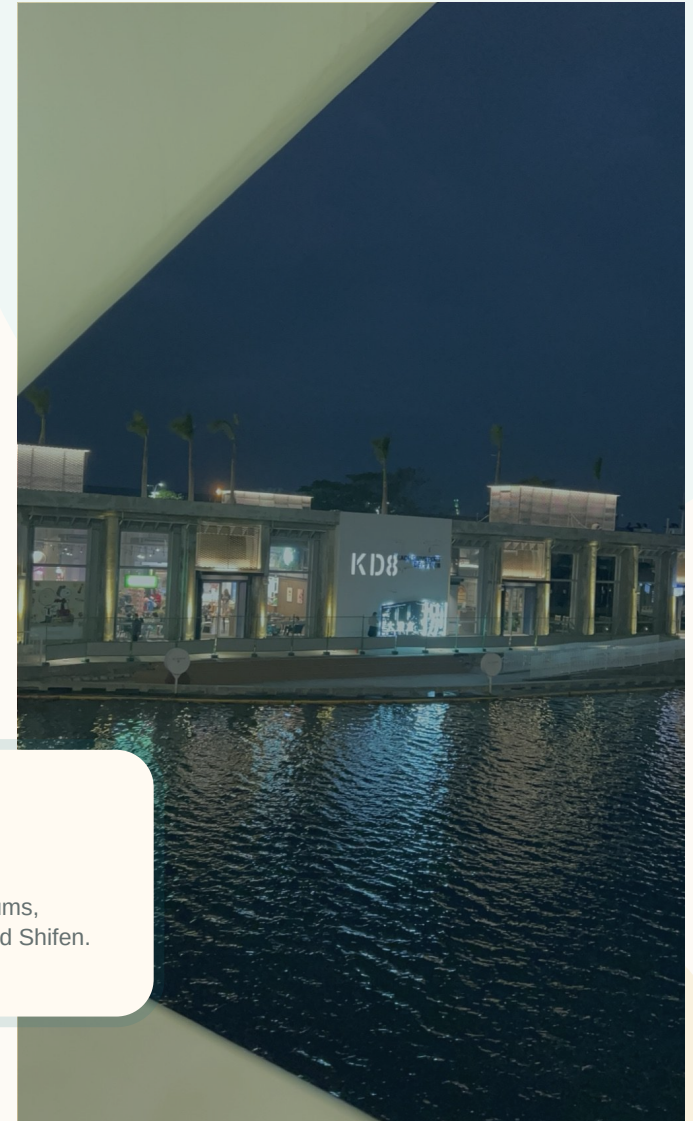
2 NIGHTS

Miyahara, creative districts, cafes, Feng Chia, Gaomei sunset.

Taipei

4 NIGHTS

Dihua, Taipei 101, museums, Beitou, Tamsui, Jiufen and Shifen.



Essential links before you book.

Use official sites for entry rules and rail schedules. Keep these booking shortcuts handy for stays, flights, eSIM, insurance, transport, and day trips.

Visa / TAC check

Indians may be able to use the online Travel Authorization Certificate route if eligible. Otherwise verify visa options through BOCA.

[BOCA](#)

Arrival card

Complete the free Taiwan Arrival Card online within the official pre-arrival window. Avoid paid lookalike sites.

[TWAC](#)

High-speed rail

Check official schedules first, then compare THSR tickets or a tourist rail pass if your route qualifies.

[Official](#)

Hotels

Compare Taipei, Taichung and Kaohsiung areas by station access, not only landmark names.

[Trip.com](#)

Flights

Open-jaw works well: Kaohsiung in and Taipei/Taoyuan out if fares cooperate.

[Skyscanner](#)

Passes and tickets

Compare city passes, EasyCard pickup, Taipei 101, museums and hot springs before locking paid days.

[Passes](#)[Travel insurance](#)[Official tourism site](#)[Official eVisa page](#)[THSR pass](#)[Car rentals](#)

Visa, money and arrival setup.

VISA CHECK

- Check BOCA's Travel Authorization Certificate page first; eligible Indian citizens may use this official online route.
- If TAC does not apply, verify BOCA visa or eVisa rules. Avoid paid lookalike sites.
- Keep passport validity, outbound ticket, stay details and proof of funds ready.

[Open BOCA TAC page](#)

[Visa-exempt rules](#)

CURRENCY

- Currency is New Taiwan Dollar: TWD / NT\$. Carry cash for night markets, local buses, lockers and older shops.
- Cards work well in hotels, malls and many restaurants, but cash still makes Taiwan easier.
- Exchange a small amount at the airport if needed, then use bank ATMs or authorized exchange counters.

[Compare travel insurance](#)

ARRIVAL CHECKLIST

01

Online arrival card

Complete the official free TWAC before arrival.

02

Data

Install eSIM or have roaming ready before leaving the airport.

03

Airport MRT

Book only if it saves time or bundles well for Taipei arrival.

04

Cash

Keep small notes and coins for markets, lockers and local buses.

The 8-day route at a glance.

DAY 1

Kaohsiung arrival

Pier-2, harbor walk, Liuhe or Ruifeng Night Market.

DAY 3

Kaohsiung to Taichung

THSR north, Miyahara, Shen Ji, Calligraphy Greenway.

DAY 5

Taichung to Taipei

THSR to Taipei, Dihua Street, Ningxia or Raohe market.

DAY 7

Day trip

Jiufen + Shifen, or easier Beitou + Tamsui.

DAY 2

Cijin + Lotus Pond

Ferry to Cijin, temples and lakeside photos, relaxed dinner.

DAY 4

Taichung

Cafe/museum morning, Gaomei Wetlands sunset if weather works.

DAY 6

Classic Taipei

National Palace Museum or Huashan, Taipei 101, Elephant Mountain.

DAY 8

Slow finish

Ximending, Yongkang Street, souvenirs, airport buffer.

Three cities, three different jobs.



Kaohsiung

THE WARM OPENING

- Stay near Formosa Boulevard, Central Park or Yanchengpu.
- Best rhythm: harbor first, islands/temples second, night market after.
- Do not over-schedule the first day. Let food and lights do the work.



Taichung

THE CREATIVE RESET

- Choose Calligraphy Greenway for cafes or Feng Chia for market energy.
- Gaomei needs weather and sunset timing. Keep a backup.
- This is the city where slower wandering pays off.



Taipei

THE STRONG FINISH

- Base around Taipei Main, Zhongshan, Ximen or Da'an.
- Use metro-heavy days for low friction and guided tours for tougher day trips.
- Keep one bad-weather day open for museums, malls, cafes and bookstores.

Transport and apps that matter.

TRANSPORT STACK

- THSR: best for Kaohsiung - Taichung - Taipei city hops along the west coast.
- TRA/local trains: useful for day trips and slower regional movement.
- MRT: easiest in Taipei and Kaohsiung. Taichung leans more on buses and taxis.
- EasyCard: use for metro, buses, convenience-store small spends and some local transport.

[Official THSR](#)[THSR deal](#)[Rail pass](#)

USEFUL APPS

- Google Maps: transit, walking routes and saved food pins.
- Google Translate: menus, signs and quick conversations.
- Uber: useful in Taipei and bigger cities; keep a cash/taxi fallback.
- YouBike: short city rides; check the latest app and insurance requirement.
- THSR / railway apps: schedule checks and intercity train planning.

[YouBike official](#)[EasyCard](#)

LOCAL TIPS

- Buy EasyCard early, then top up with enough cash for the next two days.
- Use station lockers on transfer days so hotel check-in timing does not control the day.
- Keep Jiufen, Shifen, Gaomei and viewpoints flexible because weather changes the value of the trip.



Passes, tickets and easy buys.

Check these when they save queue time, airport friction or transfer planning. Skip anything that does not match your route.

INTERCITY

THSR one-way deals

For Kaohsiung, Taichung and Taipei transfers.

HSR deal

THSR tourist pass

Compare for packed rail days or side trips.

Tourist pass

Taiwan PASS

Bundle check: rail, MRT and tourist shuttle options.

Taiwan PASS

ARRIVAL + CITY

Airport MRT

Clean Taoyuan arrival link into Taipei.

Airport MRT

EasyCard pickup

Start with transit credit ready at the airport.

EasyCard

Taipei Fun Pass

Best to compare if you want transport plus sights.

Fun Pass

ATTRACTION PASS

Klook Pass Taipei

Pick several attractions instead of single tickets.

Taipei pass

Taipei 101

Book when weather and visibility look good.

Taipei 101

National Palace Museum

Useful rainy-day anchor with deep cultural payoff.

Museum

01 Maokong Gondola

Tea hills, zoo combo options and skyline views.

Gondola

02 Yehliu Geopark

Good if you are going north without a full tour.

Yehliu

03 Beitou hot spring

Private or public soak in Beitou.

Hot spring

Should you rent a car in Taiwan?

You do not need a car for this 8-day rail route. But if you want the other side of the island, a short self-drive segment can make the east coast, Taroko-area scenery, coastal roads, hot springs, and smaller towns easier to explore.

01

Keep rail for cities

Taipei, Taichung and Kaohsiung are easier by THSR, MRT, buses and taxis. Parking can slow you down inside cities.

02

Rent for the east

Consider a car if you are adding Hualien, Taitung, coastal viewpoints, hot springs, or rural overnight stops.

03

Check license rules

Verify Taiwan's latest IDP and license requirements before booking. Carry your passport, license, IDP if required, and a credit card.

04

Drive conservatively

Mountain roads and weather can change quickly. Keep daylight buffers and avoid turning a scenic day into a long-distance chore.

Best use: add a separate 2-4 day loop after the rail itinerary, rather than renting a car for the whole trip.

[Compare cars](#)

Food map for first-timers.

01

Night markets

Kaohsiung: Liuhe or Ruifeng. Taichung: Feng Chia. Taipei: Ningxia, Raohe or Shilin.

02

Taiwan classics

Beef noodle soup, oyster omelette, scallion pancakes, lu rou fan, gua bao, fried chicken cutlet.

03

Sweet stops

Bubble tea, taro balls, shaved ice, pineapple cake, mochi and peanut ice cream roll.

04

Vegetarian-friendly

Look for Buddhist vegetarian restaurants, buffet-style veggie spots, tofu dishes and scallion pancakes.

05

Cafe culture

Taichung and Taipei are very strong for cafes. Use them as rain buffers and mid-day resets.

06

Ordering tip

Save Chinese names on Google Maps. Photos help more than English names at smaller stalls.

Rule of thumb

Plan one serious meal or night market per day, then leave room for accidental snacks. Taiwan is a grazing destination, and over-planned meals can make the trip feel strangely rigid.

Where to stay on this route.

Choose by station access first. Taiwan rewards hotels that make transfer days easy, especially if you are carrying luggage between cities.

01

Taipei Main Station

Best for first-timers, airport rail, THSR, day trips and rainy-day underground movement.

[City Suites Main Station](#)

02

Ximending / Ximen

Better if you want food, shopping and late-night energy while staying on the MRT.

[CityInn Ximending](#)

03

Taichung Station

Use this for a short stop: Miyahara, railway heritage, buses and easy onward movement.

[CityInn Taichung](#)

04

Taichung Station value

Compact but practical for one night, especially if you want station convenience over resort space.

[Mini Hotel](#)

05

Kaohsiung Station

Most practical for late arrival, THSR/MRT connections and fast movement to Liuhe or Formosa Boulevard.

[Kindness Station](#)

06

Pier-2 / Yancheng

More character: harbor, art district, light rail, cafes and a calmer evening base.

[PAPO'A Harbor](#)[Compare all hotels](#)

Check reviews for soundproofing, laundry, luggage storage and exact MRT exit. Those details matter more than a tiny price difference.

Bookings worth considering.

[Hotels](#)[Flights](#)[Klook eSIM](#)[Insurance](#)

Useful booking shortcuts for the route, with city travel still kept flexible.



Jiufen + Shifen

Best value if you want old streets, waterfall and lantern streets without bus/train puzzles.

[Klook tour](#)

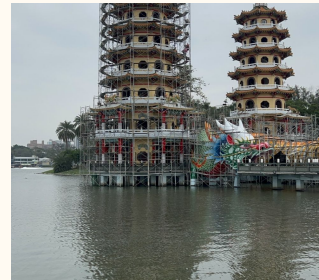
Taipei 101

Book when visibility is good. If the sky is hazy, keep this flexible.

[Klook ticket](#)

Beitou + Yangmingshan

A softer Taipei day: hot springs, volcanic landscapes and less city density.

[Klook tour](#)

Kaohsiung city tour

Useful if time is short and you want temples, Lotus Pond and context in one clean block.

[Klook tour](#)

Final planning checklist.

DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Passport validity checked
- ☐ BOCA/TAC/visa route verified
- ☐ TWAC arrival card reminder set
- ☐ Insurance policy downloaded

BOOKINGS

- ☐ Open-jaw flights compared
- ☐ Hotels near useful stations
- ☐ THSR transfer days checked
- ☐ Day trips left flexible for weather

ON ARRIVAL

- ☐ eSIM activated
- ☐ EasyCard bought/top-up loaded
- ☐ Small TWD cash withdrawn
- ☐ Google Maps lists saved

Compare hotels

Klook eSIM

THSR schedules