



Taiwan Insights

Thursday 14th to Friday 29th November 2019

Taiwan Insights is a 16 day tour of this fascinatingly diverse island. Named Ilha Formosa, beautiful island, by 16th century Portuguese seafarers, it continues to live up to that description with monumental mountain ranges, lush tropical forests, dramatic sea cliffs and verdant agricultural lands. Complementing the natural attributes of Taiwan there is much to experience: fresh local cuisine, a diverse culture and history, intriguing markets and Taiwan's people who have cultural ties and influences from many roots including, of course, China but also European, Japanese and the 14 aboriginal tribes of Taiwan.

Day 1

Thursday 14th November – Sydney to Taipei

We depart Sydney mid morning (other cities available upon request) mid-morning to Taipei via Hong Kong flying Cathay Pacific. Upon our arrival at Taipei in the late evening, we will meet our local guide and be transferred to our hotel. Taipei is the bustling yet efficient and friendly capital city of Taiwan with a population of about 7 million people. We stay 3 nights at The Grand Formosa Regent Hotel situated in the heart of downtown and close to some of the most fashionable shopping areas of Taipei.

Day 2

Friday 15th November – Taipei



Today we tour Taipei – our city tour includes Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, the Martyrs' Shrine for the guard changing ceremony and the National Palace Museum which houses the finest of the ancient treasures from the Chinese dynasties from the last 5000 years.

After lunch at the San-his-tang Teahouse, we visit Longshan Temple, the Handicraft Centre and Taipei 101 Observatory – a 101 storey skyscraper in the heart of Taipei.

Day 3

Saturday 16th November – Kinmen Island



Shueitou Traditional Village

This morning we fly to Kinmen Island located only 2kms from mainland China. We'll see the underground fortifications and learn of the history of this frontline territory of Taiwan. We visit Jhaishan Tunnel where boats were moored inside a mountain then Shueitou Traditional Village to see the Fujian-style architecture. After lunch we'll visit the Kinmen knife factory where knives are manufactured from spent armament casings. We return to Taipei in the late afternoon and transfer for dinner and show at the See Join traditional Puppet Theatre.

Day 4

Sunday 17th November - Taipei to Chiayi

Today we experience the “bullet” train of Taiwan travelling at up to 300 kph to Taichung where we change for short ride on a regional train to Tianjhong. Our coach will then transfer us to the Tea Home tea plantation where we’ll have a specially arranged guided tour of this organic farming enterprise. After lunch we travel by our coach to the city of Chiayi.

Overnight at Nice Prince Hotel.



Tea Home tea plantation Photos Yvonne Kao

Day 5

Monday 18th November – Chiayi to Alishan

This morning we transfer to Chiayi station to board our specially chartered private train on the Alishan Mountain narrow gauge railway. Our train will climb from near sea level at Chiayi to the town of Fenqihu situated at a height of about 1400m. As we climb from the rich agricultural land of the plains we will witness the stunning mountain scenery and the transformation to alpine vegetation. We continue by our coach to the resort town of Alishan located about 2200m above sea level. This afternoon is free for you to relax and enjoy the beautiful mountain forest – perhaps enjoy a walk in the surrounding Taiwan Red Cypress forest with its ancient trees, some up to 2000 years old.

We stay overnight at Alishan House Hotel which is situated in the forest area.



Insights Tours chartered Alishan Mountain train 2011 and view from Alishan Hotel

Day 6

Tuesday 19th November – Alishan to Sun Moon Lake

Enjoy the view (weather permitting) from our hotel of the peaks of the central mountain range - Taiwan has over 200 peaks above 3000 m elevation. Today we travel by our chartered coach on the spectacular mountain road trip to Sun Moon Lake. We stay 2 nights in lake view rooms at the Hotel Del Lago. Our hotel is perfectly situated on the shore of Sun Moon Lake with direct access to the lake-side boardwalk - ideal for a twilight or early morning walk.

Day 7

Wednesday 20th November - Sun Moon Lake



We walk from our hotel to board our chartered cruise on Sun Moon Lake. On the far side of the lake we will disembark for a cable car ride to the Formosan Aboriginal Cultural Village where we have a guided tour and lunch. This village showcases the cultures of most of the 14 Taiwanese Aboriginal tribes including performances of their dances and songs. There are many authentic buildings and representatives of the local tribespeople, many of whom are engaged in the production of craft and art work. Later we visit the town of Puli and the Guanghun Paper mill where paper is manufactured using traditional methods. Overnight at the Del Lago Hotel

Day 8

Thursday 21st November – Sun Moon Lake to Kaohsiung

Departing from Sun Moon Lake we travel to the Baliatus Renewal Workshop in Chiayi where we'll see first hand the work being performed in educating and assisting the disabled people of the region. This will include their café where we will have lunch and there'll be time to see their jewelry and craft workshops. We will arrive at Kaohsiung in the late afternoon where we will visit the Zuoying Old City wall, Lotus Pond and Holy Rosary Cathedral Minor Basilica. Following dinner, we will walk across the street to the pier to join a city lights cruise on the Love River.

Overnight at the Ambassador Hotel, Kaohsiung.

Day 9

Friday 22nd November – Kaohsiung to Kenting

This morning we board our chartered cruise on Kaohsiung Harbour, one of the world's busiest. Our touring includes a walking interlude to see the Ciji Lighthouse and fort before travelling returning on a regular ferry to the Takow. There we have lunch at the historic, former British Consulate which overlooks the city and harbor. This afternoon we travel by our coach to Kenting at the southern end of the island.

Stay 2 nights at the Chateau Beach Resort, Kenting

Day 10

Saturday 23rd November – Kenting

Today we visit the Kenting National Park - Taiwan's first - and encompassing the Hengchun peninsula at the southern tip of Taiwan. A guide from the National Park authority will introduce us to the special features of the park and accompany us during the day, explaining the natural and historical aspects of the area.

Overnight at the Chateau Beach Resort, Kenting

Day 11

Sunday 24th November – Kenting to Taitung

We travel via secondary roads along the spectacular eastern coastline in some of the most remote parts of Taiwan. Lunch will be at Taitung then we visit an archaeological dig site and afterwards check in to our hotel situated in the nearby mountains at Chipen and featuring hot spring baths and pools. Overnight at the Hotel Royal Chipen.

Day 12

Monday 25th November – Taitung to Hualien

We travel the scenic east coast road to Sansiantai where the graceful 7 arched bridge leads to a small island. Then to the Mataian Wetlands for lunch and a guided tour of the wetlands with an Ami person. The custodians of this area are the aboriginal Ami people and we will be informed of their cultural practices and way of life during our visit. Tonight we stay at the Quality Inn Hualien.

Day 13

Tuesday 26th November – Hualien to Taroko Gorge

Hualien is famous for its limestone and marble production industry. This morning we visit a marble factory then travel a short distance to the Taroko Gorge – the spectacular centrepiece of the 600 square km Taroko National Park. At the National Park Visitor Centre we will have an introductory audio visual presentation of the monumental geological features of the park. Our day includes several stops at lookouts, short walks and lunch at the Leader Village restaurant featuring cuisine of the native Taroko people.

Stay two nights at Silk's Place Hotel in Taroko Gorge in luxury River View suites

Day 14

Wednesday 27th November – Taroko Gorge

This is a relaxing day in one of the most stunning places in Taiwan. There are opportunities for both morning and afternoon walks – including along a path into an infrequently visited section of Taroko National Park (pictured). Alternatively, you may prefer to relax at our hotel - the beautiful “Silk’s Place” and enjoy its facilities such as the indoor and outdoor pools and spa. The hotel is located on the banks of Taroko Gorge in a picturesque position and within easy walking of the village of Tiansiang.



Day 15

Thursday 28th November – Taroko Gorge to Sydney

Morning departure by our coach to Taipei. Enroute we pass along the Cingshui Cliffs where we make several stops to view this spectacular coastline which overlooks the Pacific Ocean. After lunch we check in for our late afternoon flight to Sydney via Hong Kong.

Day 16

Friday 29th November – arrive Sydney

Our Cathay Pacific flight is due to arrive Sydney in the mid morning.

General Information & Booking Conditions

Cost

The tour cost is AUD \$10,550 per person on a twin share basis.

Tour cost includes:

- exclusive chartered train travel on Alishan Mountain Railway on day 5
- return economy class air travel between Sydney and Taipei with Cathay Pacific. Other cities available, please just ask
- return economy class air travel between Taipei and Kinmen Island
- reserved seat on the Taiwan High Speed train on day 4
- economy class seats on Taiwan Regional Railway's train on day 4
- private chartered cruise on Sun Moon Lake and on Kaohsiung Harbour
- seats on the Love River cruise
- accommodation for 14 nights on a twin share basis in first class hotels
- all road transport by private chartered coach
- all sightseeing excursions, guided touring and entrance fees to all places as specified in the itinerary
- all meals
- all taxes, tips and gratuities
- an Insights Tours Escort throughout the tour
- drinking water at throughout the tour
- complimentary Insights Tours refillable water bottle.

Additional costs:

- drinks, travel insurance and items of a personal nature

- any other cost not specifically included in the tour cost

Single accommodation

As always, we negotiate the best possible tariff for our single guests and we pass on only the direct additional costs. The single supplement is AUD \$2,990. If you wish to stay in other than a River Suite on days 13 and 14 we can reduce this supplement.

Booking

This tour is for a maximum of 14 guests. To secure your place on the tour, please complete the enclosed booking form and return it to Insights Tours with your deposit. Deposit is AUD 1000 per person, payable at time of booking.

The balance is due no later than Monday 16th September 2019.

Payment may be made by cheque or direct transfer.

Cancellation Policy

For cancellations prior to or on Monday 16th September 2019 are subject to a cancellation fee of \$500 per person.

Cancellations after Monday 16th September 2019 forfeit the total tariff. That is, there is no refund.

Viability of Tour

In the event that the economic minimum number of guests is not reached, the tour will be cancelled by Insights Tours no later than Wednesday 18th September 2019 and we will refund in full any money paid.

In the event of the Australian dollar falling below our nominated exchange rate threshold before the due date of the final balance, we will write to you and advise of any required supplement.

Changes to Itinerary

There is always the chance that our itinerary could be delayed or curtailed in some way beyond our control. Except for prolonged or unexpected events, the tour will be

conducted as closely as possible to the itinerary stated above. Every reasonable endeavour will be made to conduct the advertised itinerary however we reserve the right to alter the itinerary in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

Insurance

Insights Tours accepts your booking on the proviso that you have comprehensive travel insurance. It must cover cancellation fees, costs incurred due to delays, medical assistance, repatriation and lost luggage. We are an accredited agent of Aussie Travel Cover insurance and can assist with arranging your insurance.

Health & Medical

Insights Tours recommends that to fully enjoy this tour you should be comfortable walking up to 1.5km. Most of the walking will be in national parks on well formed paths, in a tea plantation and in cities and towns.

Visa

Australian passport holders do not require a visa for entry into Taiwan however, passports must be valid for at least 6 months ie 14th May 2020. If you will be travelling on other than an Australian passport, please confer with us when you book.

Luggage

Please limit your luggage to one suitcase and one piece of hand luggage per person. Maximum luggage weight is 23kgs per person for checked luggage and 7kgs for hand luggage.

Money

Taiwan Dollars are the official currency. Credit cards are widely accepted.

Guides

Insights Tours has engaged licensed expert, English-speaking guides for all guided touring throughout the itinerary.

Water

Insights Tours provides complimentary bottled water throughout the tour.

Trains

Insights Tours has arranged the exclusive charter of a one carriage train on the Alishan Mountain Railway. This train will afford you a memorable, special and comfortable experience. Guest numbers are limited to 14 to ensure a spacious and enjoyable experience. For your comfort there is a toilet on board and opening windows.

On day 4 we travel on the Taiwan High Speed Train and a Taiwan Railways regional train. All trains are air conditioned and have a toilet on board. We will have reserved seats on the High Speed Train.

Coach

Insights Tours has chartered an airconditioned coach for all road travel and transfers. The seating capacity of the coach will generally be a minimum of 20 seats to ensure spacious and comfortable travelling conditions.

Tour Escort

As with all Insights Tours' itineraries, this tour is fully escorted. Your tour escort will be John Tuckerman who is there to ensure that all of the pesky administrative and operational aspects of the tour are fulfilled and that the tour runs as smoothly as possible.

Booking Form

Taiwan Insights

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	Guest 1	Guest 2
Name (exactly as on passport)		
Address		
Telephone		
Email		
Passport Details		
Passport number		
Date of Birth		
Expiry Date		
Nationality		
Emergency Contact Person & Telephone		
Any special requirements or requests (especially dietary)		
Room type (please indicate)	<input type="checkbox"/> Twin (2 beds) <input type="checkbox"/> Double (1 large bed) <input type="checkbox"/> Single supplement (additional \$2990)	
Deposit <input type="checkbox"/> Cheque enclosed - Please make cheques payable to "Insights Tours" - or - <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic transfer/direct deposit Account Name: Insights Tours Client Travel Account BSB: 062607 Account Number: 10131313		

I/we acknowledge the terms and conditions of booking

Signature/s

Guest 1

Guest 2