

ACCOMMODATION & TRANSPORT

Hotels utilised will vary based on the category selected at the time of booking; standard or superior. In each instance, properties are clean, comfortable and with western facilities. If you are travelling as a couple please note that we cannot guarantee the availability of double beds. Not all hotels have tea and coffee making facilities in their rooms. **Transport** throughout the tour is on an air conditioned vehicle. These are right hand drive and fairly modern roads can be found in the more populated regions.

MEALS

Breakfast is usually included as part of your package and served at your hotel, buffet style. There will be recommendations made by your guide for suitable lunch and dinner options and these will be at your own expense. You should allow approximately \$10 USD per person per meal for an adequate meal. Special dietary needs and food allergies should be advised to Wendy Wu Tours. We do recommend that you confirm with your Tour Leader upon arrival who will do their best to ensure your requirements are met. Unfortunately we cannot guarantee this especially in rural areas. Alcohol is readily available from convenience stores and supermarkets. However, wine is not always readily available in many restaurants as the Taiwanese do not commonly drink wine with meals.

CONFECTIONARY & CONDIMENTS

Fresh milk, western tea and instant coffee are easily obtainable from convenience stores, scattered throughout the country. For those travelers who may crave western food we suggest that you bring some favourites.

WATER & MILK

Do not drink the local tap water, including ice with drinks. Bottled water and carbonated soft drinks are widely available; be sure to check for an unbroken seal. Most hotels do provide free water, which is clean and sterilised and with which you are able to brush your teeth and clean your face. Be very careful with street vendors and food stalls.

HAGGLING & SHOPPING

Department and mid-range stores have fixed prices, however in most marketplaces bargaining is acceptable and expected. As a general rule, respond with an offer of 20% and negotiate from there. Please remember that this process is a bit of fun and should be undertaken with a generous dose of

humour and patience, resulting in both parties reaching a mutually beneficial outcome. Taiwan is a shopper's haven, with the night markets a highlight. There are specialty market areas for a variety of items ranging from clothing, electrical, toys, home wares, and locally made trinkets to specialty food.

PHARMACEUTICAL GOODS

It is recommended that you take any products that you may require with you whilst travelling. This could include sleeping pills, tablets to relieve stomach upsets, headaches, motion sickness and any other medication that you usually take. For any prescribed medication we strongly recommend that you have a letter from your doctor.

TIPPING

As with most countries, tipping is a recognised part of life in the local tourism industry. We recommend that you allocate; US \$10 per person per day, for the Tour Leader/Guides and US \$5 per person per day, for the drivers.

This amount will not be paid in Australia to your travel agent or Wendy Wu Tours. It is paid locally in USD to cover the tips for your main service providers. Most hotels and restaurants include a 10% service charge on the bill.

WEATHER

Taiwan enjoys an oceanic, sub-tropical monsoon climate. Weather conditions fluctuate during spring and winter, while in summer and autumn the weather is more consistent and stable. The warm and humid summer lasts from May until September, the mild winter from December until February. During the summertime, typhoons sometimes approach or hit the country. The best time to travel to the region is September to December and March to May when temperatures are cool and rainfall is the lowest.

WHAT TO WEAR

Clothing: We recommend you take light, comfortable cotton clothing. Casual wear is acceptable for most occasions. It would be advisable to pack light rain wear, sun screen and a sun hat. **Footwear:** Comfortable walking shoes and/or sandals are recommended for most days, however closed, non-slippery shoes are recommended on days where the itinerary is full. **Equipment:** A backpack/day pack will come in handy as well as a reusable water bottle.

PHOTOGRAPHY

You should always ask permission before taking anyone's photograph and respect their decision if they say no. Your

Guide/Tour Leader will indicate when you cannot take photographs, or better still, ask him/her if you are unsure.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Taiwan is a very friendly and hospitable country to visit, however, as with any unfamiliar area, it is recommended that you exercise more caution, especially at night. Please be aware of your personal belongings and keep them with you at all times. Do not leave any valuables unattended in your hotel room. We advise you to lock away any cash, credit cards, airline tickets, passports, jewellery, etc. in the safe (either in your room or at Reception). Not all hotels will have in-room safes so, if this is not possible, you must either carry these things with you, or put them in the hotel safe. Wearing a money belt under your clothing is strongly recommended.

It is also recommended that you do not bring valuables with you. We suggest that you take photocopies of passport details and place them in well concealed sections of your luggage - i.e. not where the original documents are kept! Likewise, do not leave any valuables unattended on the bus. It is your own responsibility to ensure that you carry your money and valuables on you at all times.

VISAS & IMMIGRATION

A visa is not required for Australian passport holders intending to stay in Taiwan for up to 30 days. You will however, be required to fill in an Immigration Form prior to your arrival. Validity on passports should be 6 months from your return date. There are severe penalties for drug traffickers.

LUGGAGE & INCIDENTAL ITEMS

On all tours, passengers are limited to 1 suitcase per person, weighing no more than 20kg and 1 piece of hand luggage under 7 kg.

INSURANCE & HEALTH

Comprehensive Travel Insurance is highly recommended. If you have chosen to decline the insurance offered by your travel agent or Wendy Wu Tours please ensure you have arranged the appropriate cover for your holiday, as overseas medical costs are expensive and Medicare and Australian private health insurance will not cover you outside of Australia. If you are taking out travel insurance with your **credit card company**, you need to investigate the policy's inclusions and conditions fully. You should receive a policy number, an international access phone number to contact them in an emergency and a copy of full conditions.

Health: Consult your doctor or contact the Travellers Medical and Vaccination Centre as inoculations may be required at least 6 weeks prior to departure. We strongly encourage all passengers to take necessary measures to avoid insect bites, including using insect repellent at all times. Water-borne, food-borne, parasitic and other infectious diseases (including typhoid and hepatitis) are also prevalent. You should also check the latest Travel Advice and Health Alerts for all the countries being visited at www.smarttraveller.gov.au for up to the minute information.

MONEY

Local Currency: The Taiwanese unit of currency is the NT (New Taiwanese Dollar), where 1 AUD = 30.51 TWD. Notes come in denominations up to NT2000 while coins come in units of NT1, NT5, NT10 and NT50. Unlike many other countries, Taiwan utilises their own currency exclusively.

Changing Money, Credit Cards and ATM's: The use and acceptance of credit cards is widespread, except for some regional areas.

Most reputable outlets take all major credit cards (smaller market stalls, however will not) and ATM machines are readily available. Some carry a sizeable surcharge so check with your credit card company beforehand. Not all ATM machines take all kinds of cards; many will not take Visa or MasterCard, or will take one but not the other. Please ensure that you look for the credit card logos on the ATM signs. The widespread 7Eleven stores offer ATMs with the international Plus and Cirrus networks. When exchanging money, you may easily do so from either a bank or most hotels for a small fee. The most widely accepted currency for money exchange is US Dollars. It is advisable to inform your credit card company/bank that you intend to be in Taiwan prior to your departure.

TIME DIFFERENCE

While on holidays, most people like to contact their family members or friends but it is often difficult to work out the time back home. Taiwan is eight hours ahead of GMT; the same time zone as Beijing, Hong Kong, Singapore and Perth.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Phones – Calls can be made from your hotel, however, please check the cost before you make a call as it can be expensive. To call Wendy Wu Tours in Sydney you would need to dial 009 or 002, then 61 2 9224 8888. Pre-paid telephone cards or E-Call cards are widely available from 7Eleven stores.

Mobile phones - Mobile phones are popular and should have coverage as long as you have activated Global Roaming. You may need to speak to your Mobile provider prior to departure in order to organise this. The cheapest and easiest way to stay in touch is with Skype; a free service if the person on the other end is also set up with Skype on a computer.

Internet & Email - There are internet cafes around where you can access your email. This is often the easiest and cheapest way to keep in touch. The business centres in most hotels has internet access – once again, please check relevant costs.

ELECTRICITY

Voltage: The electricity in Taiwan is 110 volts, 60 cycles per second. Most receptacles in Taiwan have either two flat prongs with a hole near the tip or two flat parallel prongs and a grounding pin as illustrated below;



Two flat prongs with a hole near the tip

Two flat parallel prongs and a grounding pin

LANGUAGE & RELIGION

Mandarin is the official national language and is thus spoken by the majority of the population. The locals practice a variety of religions, with Buddhism being the most common at approximately 35.1% of the population. This is followed by Taoism at 33% and I-Kuan Tao at 3.5%. I-Kuan Tao is a relatively new movement which incorporates elements of Confucianism, Taoism and Chinese Buddhism.

OUR GROUND OPERATOR

If you have any concerns prior to your departure, please contact our office on 1300 727 998 or your local travel agent during office hours.

If it is outside of hours and your query is urgent please email: afterhrsassistance@wendywutours.com.au. Wendy Wu Tours wish to ensure that your holiday runs as smoothly as possible and so if, during your trip you are dissatisfied with any element of your arrangements please notify your Tour Leader who will endeavour to resolve the issue at the time. Your land arrangements will be handled by our partners – Golden Foundations Tours. Their office contact details are: **Golden Foundation Tours Corp** - www.gftours.com.tw. Tel: 886 2 2773 3266, Fax: 886 2 2772 3449 and Email: gftour@gftours.com.tw.

24- Hour Emergency telephone contact: 886 938 568 036

TAIWAN

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO



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