

Travel in

2023  
SEP & OCT

# TAIWAN

No. 119

## LOCAL STAY

GUESTHOUSES AND  
HOTELS IN PENGHU

## GOOD FOOD

SEAFOOD RESTAURANTS  
IN TAIPEI

## EXPERT TALK

A VISIT TO AN HERBAL  
TEA SHOP

## THE ISLANDS OF PENGHU

Offshore Islands in the North and South  
Old Communities on Penghu Main Island  
Festivals and Happenings



交通部觀光局  
Tourism Bureau, MOTC

Issue



Website





# Welcome to Taiwan!



## Publisher's Note

Dear Traveler,

The year is turning – September has arrived, bringing a relief from Taiwan's high summer temperatures and bringing a clear lowering of visitor numbers from summer highs at tourist venues, especially during the work week.

Precisely for these reasons, foreign visitors especially love exploring the culturally and geologically unique sun-drenched Penghu Islands in the autumn and spring seasons. Each of the larger islands in this wide-flung Taiwan Strait archipelago is like a one-of-a-kind theme park, with one key thing in common – their culture, history, food, geology, and recreation-amusement options form a vacation combination a world apart from what you'll find while exploring the Taiwan mainland.

In our main Penghu article we take you on outings to various islands in what are called the North Sea and South Sea – north and south of the main island grouping – having such fun as going on self-drive scooter meanderings, snorkeling expeditions, and a visit to Penghu's lonely, reef-surrounded northernmost island, big enough for a beautiful lighthouse and keeper quarters and not much more.

In one accompanying article you'll be spending a day walking old villages on Penghu main island with rich heritage harvests, along with such other village-associated tourist attractions as an underground military-tunnel complex and a lime-burning kiln facility. In another we introduce the robust Penghu events calendar, filled with large-scale happenings throughout the year to entice visitors through every season, the biggest joyfest being the Penghu International Fireworks Festival. And we round things out Penghu-wise in our regular *Local Stay* article with a look at stylish great-value accommodations in three different areas of Penghu main island that are especially enticing for cyclists – cycling the islands being a favorite tourist pursuit.

Presenting points elsewhere for you to discover in this land of islands, in this edition's *Good Food* file our gastronomic destination is the superb seafood of big-city Taipei, where your palate is entertained with everything "from traditional-market sashimi to boisterous stir-fry joints to classy resto bars." In *Expert Talk* you're again in the capital, learning about its famed Herb Alley and visiting Healing Herbar, a renowned family-run herbal tea shop where today the modern and newfangled is expertly infused with tradition and timelessness.

Cool autumn greetings to you – welcome to our beautiful, and endlessly intriguing, island home!

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Historic residence in Nanliao  
(Photo by Ray Chang)

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# TAIWAN

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10

01

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

04

TAIWAN TOURISM  
EVENTS

06

TRAVEL NEWS  
- HAPPENING IN TAIWAN NOW

08

CULTURE & ART  
- CONCERTS, THEATER,  
EXHIBITIONS, FESTIVALS, SHOWS

## FEATURE



10

### PENGHU / ISLAND FUN

WESTWARD HO! INTO THE TAIWAN STRAIT!  
To and Through the Sun-Drenched  
Penghu Islands

22

### PENGHU / HUXI TOWNSHIP

A DAY IN OLD PENGHU COMMUNITIES  
Glimpses Into Old-Time Ways in a  
World So Different from Your Own

28

### PENGHU / EVENTS

PENGHU PARTYING YEAR ROUND  
Big Modern Festivals that Bring  
in the Tourists

32

### PENGHU / LOCAL STAY

WHERE TO SPEND YOUR PENGHU NIGHTS?  
A Trio of Places Great for  
Cycling Enthusiasts

38

### GOOD FOOD / SEAFOOD

MARITIME MORSELS IN THE METRO  
Taipei Seafood Options Ranging from Traditional-Market  
Sashimi to Boisterous Stir-Fry Joints and Classy Resto Bars

44

### LITTLE THINGS / STREET MARKETS

WEEKEND WANDERS  
Creative Street Markets  
in Taiwan

46

### EXPERT TALK / HERBS

HERBAL HEALING -  
Visiting a Decades-Old  
Herbal Tea Shop







## Taipei MRT Foreign Language Services

The Taipei Metro system is world-class in many regards, including cleanliness, punctuality, and services offered to commuters and visitors alike. To further accommodate the many tourists from Korea taking the MRT, the metro management corporation has recently introduced Korean-language announcements in the 15 stations frequented most by Korean tourists, including Taipei Main Station, Ximen, Dongmen, and Taipei 101/World Trade Center. The number of stations with Japanese announcements has also increased from 13 to 21. In addition, the Taipei Metro app is now available in Korean and Japanese, in addition to Chinese and English. [english.metro.taipei](http://english.metro.taipei)

## New Hotels

### 1. Hotel Jiji | 集集鐵道旅館

Located in the town of Jiji, Nantou County, a 5min walk from Jiji Railway Station; railway theme; grand opening in June 2023  
[www.hoteljijiplus.com.tw](http://www.hoteljijiplus.com.tw)

### 2. Solaris Nishitetsu Hotel Taipei | 索拉利亞西鐵飯店台北西門

Located in Taipei City's Ximending area, an 8min walk from MRT Beimen Station; 298 guestrooms; grand opening this August  
[ntr-h.com/solaris/taipei/oc/](http://ntr-h.com/solaris/taipei/oc/)

### 3. Fullon Poshtel Kaohsiung | 福容蔴坡高雄

Located in Kaohsiung City's Cianjin District, close to KMRT City Council Station; 136 guestrooms; grand opening in July 2023  
[www.fullon-hotels.com.tw/fullon-poshtels/ks/tw/](http://www.fullon-hotels.com.tw/fullon-poshtels/ks/tw/)



Photos courtesy of hotels

## Taiwan Tour Bus Three-for-Two Deals

The website for the Taiwan Tour Bus service, not to be confused with the Taiwan Tourist Shuttle bus service, currently offers a total of 93 itineraries, with the bus trips run by 24 tour operators. The tours are provided to local and foreign independent travelers who wish to enjoy visiting tourist attractions without having to deal with public transport or self-driving. Until the end of this year, three persons traveling together can enjoy most of the tours for the price of two. For more information, visit: [www.taiwantourbus.com.tw/C/us/twbus-home/news/buy1get1freeqa](http://www.taiwantourbus.com.tw/C/us/twbus-home/news/buy1get1freeqa).



## Transportation Yilan-Yonaguni Ferry

Considering how close Japan's westernmost island, Yonaguni, is to Taiwan's east coast (about 100km), it has been frustrating to many how cumbersome visiting the island has been for travelers from Taiwan, usually requiring a flight from Taipei to Naha on Okinawa Island, then a flight to Ishigaki, then a ferry ride to Yonaguni. This is going to change in the near future, with ferry services soon being offered from the port town of Su'ao in southern Yilan County directly to the Japanese island (start of the service is slated for March 2024). The trip by high-speed craft will take just about two hours one way.





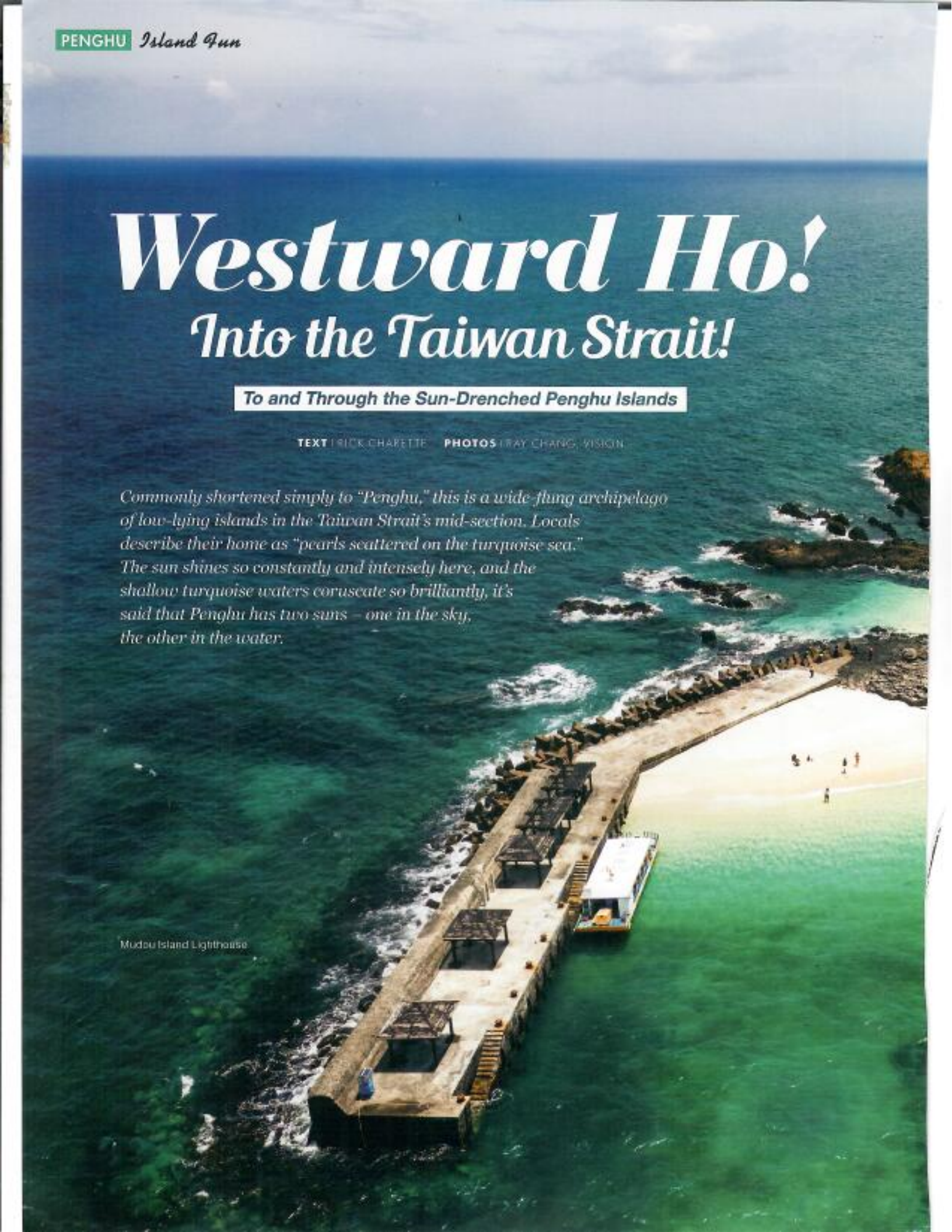
# Westward Ho! Into the Taiwan Strait!

**To and Through the Sun-Drenched Penghu Islands**

TEXT | RICK CHAPETTE    PHOTOS | GRAY CHANG, WISION

*Commonly shortened simply to “Penghu,” this is a wide-flung archipelago of low-lying islands in the Taiwan Strait’s mid-section. Locals describe their home as “pearls scattered on the turquoise sea.” The sun shines so constantly and intensely here, and the shallow turquoise waters coruscate so brilliantly, it’s said that Penghu has two suns – one in the sky, the other in the water.*

Mudou Island Lighthouse







This is a slow-paced realm of old fishing villages, old temples, old lighthouses, and old fort ruins. Small farm plots are protected from the fabled winter winds that rush down the street by hoary stacked-coral walls. The main islands, connected by bridges, form the outer walls of the comparatively calm Inner Sea. Sailing and other sports are popular on the water, snorkeling and diving in the water, scooter and cycle touring on the land. The archipelago is rocky, with massive formations of exposed volcanic basalt columns prominent and seascapes dramatic. Ferry rides to the outlying North Sea and South Sea islands are popular, as are nighttime squid-fishing outings.



# Northern Islands



## Jibei Island

The islands north of Penghu's main island grouping float in what is called the North Sea. Travel to Jibei is by ferry from **Chikan Fishing Harbor**, on the north shore of the island of Baisha. There are multiple departures daily, by different operators (and multiple return trips from Jibei).

The small island's best-known feature, by far, is the **Jibei Sand Tail**, Penghu's largest, which is clearly seen from planes as flights approach/leave Magong Airport. Extending into the pastel-hue waters at the island's south end, it is about 800m long and 200 wide. The landform has been crafted by the ocean tides and currents, with fine coral debris and shell sand accumulating. The local currents change in accordance with seasonal directions, ever-changing the shape and size of the ginormous sand

spit. Locals call this the island's "wagging tail." The spit is a popular swimming/snorkeling location.

The standard tourist means for moving about the island is the same here as on Penghu's other islands of size – **rented scooter**. These are available aplenty at Jibei's harbor; all Penghu scooter-rental operations are vetted by the local authorities. The standard tour route, which delivers you to all major Jibei sights, is the narrow paved road that runs around the island's perimeter (a short side road brings you to parking facilities at the Jibei Sand Spit's north end). Be sure to always have good sun protection with you when in the Penghu outdoors; shade, nature- and human-created, is in short supply.

On the coast a few hundred meters northwest of the Jibei Sand Tail is **Xikan Hill**, separated from it by a

long, wide beach. This hill is just 18m in elevation, its flat-top pinnacle the island's highest point. Once a basalt-column reef separate from the Jibei mainland, long-term accumulation of coral debris long ago filled in the gap. A boardwalk pathway leads from a small north-side parking lot to two wood-built lookouts perched right

at the seaside basalt-cliff edge. From here sweeping, unobstructed views are enjoyed south, west, and north. An information board with good English helps you pinpoint the various large and small islands in far-off view, and describes the latter's special geological/biological features.



Getting around Jibei by motor scooter





Jibei Sand Tail seen from above

Penghu is home to about 600 well-preserved **stone weirs**, an ancient fishing device, likely the highest concentration in the world. Walls of stacked rocks are created in intertidal zones; fish swim in when the tide is in, and are trapped when it goes out. When seen from high vantage points the weir clusters remind many of the Nazca Lines, especially when just under the water's surface. Jibei has Penghu's largest stone weir collection, with over 80. The best viewing spot is the island's north tip – there are a number of the archipelago's iconic heart-shaped fish traps

here, and access is easy for up-close inspection at low tide (be sure to first check the tide schedule at the harbor's visitor center).

As so many do, end your Jibei frolic with a heat-defeating shaved-ice dessert treat at the invariably busy **Xiangxiang Ice Shop**, which has big-window views of the ferry-docking harbor area and out toward Baisha. Two of the most popular selections are assorted fruits with shaved ice served in a seashell and cactus ice + cactus jelly shaved ice served in a shell. Cactus ice, made from cactus fruit, is a classic Penghu treat.



View from Xiangxiang Ice Shop



Cactus ice served in a seashell

**XIANGXIANG ICE SHOP**  
(香香冰店)

📍 No. 182-13, Jibei Village, Baisha Township,  
Penghu County  
(澎湖縣白沙鄉古良村 182-13 號)





Water fun activities near Jibei Sand Tail

Along with the Jibei Sand Tail, **Jibei water-recreation fun** is an intrinsic element of the Jibei brand and experience. The main action venue is the aforementioned long beach that runs between the sand tail and Xikan Hill, which has a heady range of water-play toys. There are covered rest areas and umbrella-shade seating, shower and toilet facilities, and counters serving drinks and light foods.

The stars here are engine-powered vehicles, the jet-ski and speedboat, especially the former. What can you get up to? Most popular on the long choice list are the various types of jet-ski drags, on banana boats, flying sofas, doughnut boats, sea UFOs, magic carpets, and other inflatables. You can also enjoy fast jet-ski rides – no, you won't be driving – in which the operator makes your sea-steed bounce around the waves like a bucking bronco. Jet-skis are also used for the in-demand power snorkeling outings, with groups pulled along holding onto a raft-like inflatable, enjoying the world of the underwater coral reefs.

Speedboats are used for the parasailing experiences. And if desiring a slower tempo, head out on your own in the quieter area between the main play zone and Xikan Hill on a stand-up paddleboard or inflatable sea kayak.



A few points to note: on-site personnel usually do not speak English; activity participants must wear life vests and safety helmets (no helmets during snorkeling outings); instruction is provided before all activities.



# Mudou Island



Mudou Island Lighthouse seen from above



Small beach and pier on Mudou Island

While here, many travelers also choose to take a pleasant boat trip to the miniscule island of Mudou, north of Jibei, which can be seen from Xikan Hill and north shore spots. More specifically, it is Mudou's renowned lighthouse that catches the eye out amidst the vast swathe of turquoise water, standing prominent atop the high, pretty much barren rocky outcrop. Looking so lonely out there by itself, it's hard to imagine people once voluntarily lived there. Mudou is the Penghu Archipelago's northernmost island.

A large, open-sided barge-like boat with low prow and sides pulls up close to shore, you wade in and climb a prow ladder, and off you go. A tip: do not sit right at the front – the flattish prow can send up a good deal of spray, and the roof does not

extend right to the front, meaning extra sun exposure. The ride, slow and leisurely compared to the Penghu ferries and charters, takes about 25mins one way.

The boat lets you off on a sandy beach beside a high, long concrete pier built to create a sheltered landing spot, and you are then free to wander the rugged, parched outcrop on your own. At a set time after landing, about 20mins, everyone is loaded back on and you're off again, Jibei-bound.

Built in 1902, the **Mudou Island Lighthouse** has a height of 39.9m. Strikingly painted with thick black and white horizontal stripes, this is the tallest lighthouse in Taiwan as well as the tallest steel-frame lighthouse in East Asia. At its base are concrete-built residential and storage facilities. All are closed to public entry; the lighthouse is now automated. Looking outward from the island's high points, you'll clearly see the ominous black shapes that are the lighthouse's *raison d'être* – the surrounding waters bristle with hidden reefs that have snared many a passing ship.

*Note: You can buy your Jibei ferry tickets at the harborside North Sea Visitor Center, but it's recommended to do so in advance online (klook.com, kaday.com, etc.), especially during the busy summer season. Tickets for the water-fun activities and Mudou excursion can be bought in combination with the ferry tickets, and this is also recommended.*



# Southern Islands



## Tongpan and Hujing Islands

The place to catch ferries to the various South Sea Islands is the **South Sea Visitor Center**, at Magong City's Magong Harbor. Note that at the center you'll also find info/ticket desks for operators that offer special boat tours, such as the snorkeling-centered excursion to the South Penghu Marine National Park introduced later.

The islands of Tongpan and Hujing, just southwest of Penghu main island, are clearly visible as your craft exits Magong Harbor and makes its south-heading turn. Hujing is much the larger of the two.

Though **Tongpan**, north of Hujing, has few roads and no scooter rentals, it's small enough that walking is not a problem. This island, famously, has what is considered Penghu's greatest display of basalt columns. It is a typical basalt mesa landform, and a solid exposed shoreline wall of tall and almost perfectly symmetrical columns stretches from the northwest corner to the southwest and on to the southeast corner. This spectacular showcase of nature's wondrous sculptural talent is the focus of the **Tongpan Geology Park**.

The lone fishing village and harbor are in the middle on the north side. There are few full-time island inhabitants left, and you'll come across many abandoned old residences in and outside the village.

To get to the basalt columns, most tourists take the pathway over the mesa to the southwest area. You can also take a pathway that leads around the island at the base of the columnar cliffs. On the former, you move through a full small neighborhood of abandoned imperial-era traditional residences that demonstrate the wealth this island once produced, with exterior walls

featuring cut stone rather than the more common simple coral blocks, and decorated with delicate painted-artwork ceramic tiling.

On a sea-eroded platform on the island's southwest shore, accessible via the aforementioned perimeter pathway, is the **Lotus Seat**. This is a large stepped basin with a raised middle "seat," created from columns in concentric circles eroded down to their roots.



Basalt rock wall on Tongpan Island





Hujing Island's only settlement, seen from atop Xishan



Lotus Seat rock formation



**Hujing** has a distinctive shape that roughly resembles half a giant dumbbell. The middle section, made of gathered sand and coral, is flat and low. This is the location of the island's somnambulant fishing settlement and harbor. The two large "dumbbell ends," Xishan and much bigger/longer Dongshan ("West Mountain" and "East Mountain") are large, high formations made of basalt columns. These are flat-topped and feature steep columned cliffs, some with rock exposed, some covered with vegetation.

Visitors are limited to the village and Xishan area; the Dongshan area is a military restricted zone with limited access for locals. Up on Xishan, on the north is cliff-edge **Guanyin Park**, a small, tranquil grass-lawn park dramatically filled with large Buddhist statues of the Goddess of Mercy and 18 Arhats, plus a Ping An ("Peace and Security") Bell. About mid-

way along the plateau road you pass through an area thick with abandoned military facilities, all accessible on foot (no entry inside structures), including a command post, bomb shelter, barracks, and pillboxes. And in the southeast corner is another grassy cliff-edge park, this with a **Tropic of Cancer** theme that looks directly down into Hujing's fishing village. A long, wide blue Tropic of Cancer marker line runs along flagstone pavement, "pointing through" two sets of large Lotus Hands statues off either end, through which graceful framed scenic photos can be taken.



Temple on Tongpan Island



Blue line marking the Tropic of Cancer



## Qimei and Wang'an Islands

These are the two largest islands in the South Sea, and Qimei is the region's southernmost.

On **Qimei**, you head out east from harborside in the southwest along the island-perimeter circumnavigation road and quickly find yourself atop its wide grassland plateau, the road providing terrific views down to the rocky shores from along plateau-edge lookouts. Meandering grass-chomping goats far outnumber wheeled vehicles – even the hordes of tourist-toting scooters in high summer. Qimei's iconic symbol is the **Twin Hearts Stone Weir**, at its northeast tip, which can be reached from the top of the adjacent bluffs via a paved, stepped path. The romance and scenic beauty of this place entice a steady tide of soon-to-be-newlyweds for wedding-photo shoots.

Another key Qimei enticement is the island's shoreline collection of unusual nature-art rock formations. Best-known is **Little Taiwan**, about mid-way on the east side, a giant flat stone slab that sticks out from the mainland and does look uncannily like a map of mainland Taiwan, with its distinctive tobacco-leaf shape.

South of this on the east side, a short side road leads down to the **Yueli Bay Recreation Area**, site of a lovely arcing bay, Qimei's sole sand beach (soft white coral

sand). The coral reefs in the bay and abundant colorful tropical fish make this a great snorkeling spot; guided sessions and camping facilities are offered.

The name "Qimei" means "Seven Beauties". Legend says the **Tomb of the Seven Beauties**, on the plateau just southeast of the harbor, is built around a well down which chaste Ming Dynasty damsels tossed themselves when ne'er-do-well wako pirates attacked.



Yueli Bay Recreation Area



Twin Hearts Stone Weir



Little Taiwan



**Wang'an** is to Qimei's northeast. Low in the south, it rises to 53m (Tiantai Hill) in the north. Studded by peninsulas, its main road does not strictly follow the coastline; you take side roads to get out to the peninsula tips.

The ferry harbor is in the southeast. Clearly visible to the east, across a patch of water, is the small island of **Jiangjun'ao** (see next section) and its single, building-dense fishing village. Immediately north of the ferry harbor is the **Wangan Green Turtle Tourism and Conservation Center**, overlooking a protected sandy beach where sea turtles come to lay their eggs (guided in-season viewings, with limited spaces). Its exterior is in the stylized shape of a turtle, and inside are displays on Penghu's marine ecology, with English provided. There's an English introductory video, and English-speaking guides can be booked. The highlight is a small aquarium that is a temporary home for turtles undergoing rehabilitation after being found sick or injured.

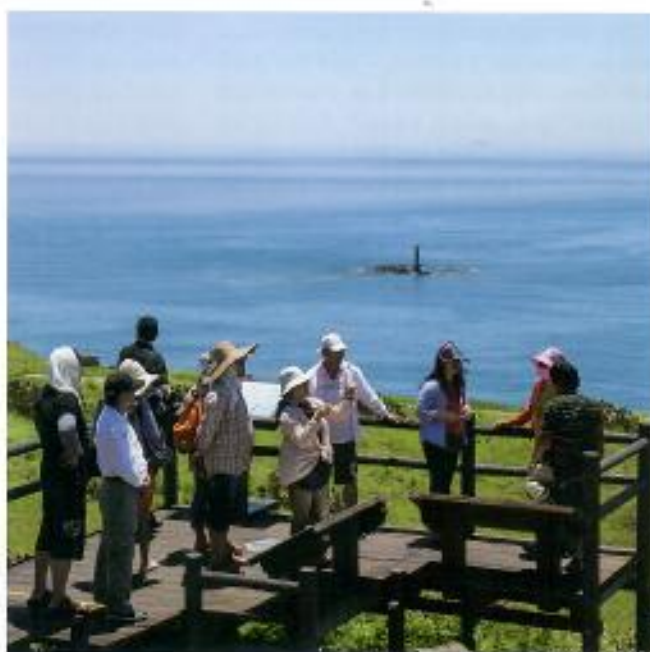
Mighty **Tiantai Hill** – at least in comparison to the flat land and sea surrounding it – presents boundless views over Wang'an and its numerous nearby islands. The mount has a high basalt-column foundation, with a

dramatically exposed seaside section viewable to adventurous types willing to tackle the in-places steep 15min pathway walk from the hilltop.

**Zhongshe** is an old fishing village of narrow alleys and tight-clustered heritage residences (protection against wind and pirate attack) dating to China's Qing Dynasty era, almost all stone/coral-built. The majority are still inhabited, and many have been returned to their original state to attract tourists. The refurbished homes of the rich of former days are easy to identify – white stucco covers exterior walls to reflect the intense sun, and exteriors are decorated with elegant glazed ceramic tiles featuring individual paintings.



Old house in Zhongshe village



Tiantai Hill



Sea turtle in Wangan Green Turtle Tourism and Conversation Center



# South Penghu Marine National Park

This park, created in 2014, is southeast of Wang'an, northeast of Qimei. Just under 360 square kilometers in size, it contains four islands and numerous islets. As elsewhere in Penghu, these feature basalt landforms, including columnar-basalt formations. The park area was once home to thousands of humans; today there are less than a hundred permanent residents. Cold weather in 2008 and 2010 severely impacted marine life around Penghu – the warmer southern area somewhat less so than the northern – and the park was thereafter established as a protected Penghu “germplasm bank.” Among its underwater denizens are 254 fish species, including 28 since discovered, and 154 coral species.

For a visit, consider the **Blue Paradise One Day Tour by Penghu Coral Reef Travel** ([www.excitingpenghu.com.tw](http://www.excitingpenghu.com.tw)), a full-day snorkeling/yacht touring guided adventure. You meet up at 8 in the morning at the South Sea Visitor Center and are brought back between 5-7 in the evening. Some of the key highlights: snorkeling prep and coral-reef snorkeling off two different South Sea islands, one inside the marine park; an eco-walk on an unpopulated reef island; a seafood feast on a large open-water moored barge, followed, after a rest, by barge-based water fun (“cliff jumping” from second level, “sea walking” contest on floating pads, etc.). As well, all through the day the Coral Reef Travel crew will be providing info (in Chinese) on a wide range of topics – ecology, culture, history, etc.

Your first stop is the aforementioned **Jiangjun'ao** – more specifically, a moored double-decker barge off the island, just meters off **Jinguazai Reef**, a tiny uninhabited island. The first guided snorkeling session is in the calm, shallow waters here.

After this, a boat run further south into the marine park, to a broad bay on the island of **Dongyuping's** north side, passing the park's dramatic-outline, soaring **Steeple Islet** (no access permitted), an important tern-breeding spot.

In the bay, an open-water snorkeling adventure; you jump in right from the boat, a hundred-or-so meters offshore directly before an ancient, mostly abandoned fishing village with many traditional Penghu coral-wall houses. The winds, waves, and currents are stronger here, and the underwater community more lively and colorful – turtles and stingrays are sometimes spotted.

Now, a boat ride back to your barge base, where you're first taken for an eco-walk on Jinguazai Reef, which is a few hundred meters in diameter and has a 30m-high mini-plateau area in the middle, followed by a hearty seafood meal on the barge – downing neritic squid, large prawn, oyster, abalone, and other fresh-harvested bounty.

The day's final act is the barge-based sea-surface sporting fun, including the aforementioned “cliff jumping” and “sea walking” contest, plus “surfing” session with jet-skis zipping you over the waves on different types of floating frolicker-transport tools. 🌊



Penghu Coral Reef Travel also offers camping on Jinguazai Reef





Snorkeling in the South Penghu Marine National Park



### HOW TO GET TO PENGHU MAIN ISLAND AND WHERE TO FIND MORE INFO

There are regular flights and ferry runs between Penghu main island and various locations on Taiwan proper. Flights come in at Penghu Airport, near Magong City, and ferries come in at Magong Harbor, right in the city. The air trip takes about 40mins, ferry trips about 4hrs. A limited number of flights are also offered from Kaohsiung City to Qimei and Wang'an islands, respectively, and one ferry service to/from Chiayi County also stops in at Qimei.

For further information on these and other related Penghu-adventuring practical subjects, visit the Penghu National Scenic Area website ([www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw](http://www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw)) and Penghu County Government website ([www.penghu.gov.tw](http://www.penghu.gov.tw)).



Motor boat water fun

#### ENGLISH AND CHINESE

- Baisha 白沙
- Chikan Fishing Harbor 赤崁漁港
- Dongyuping 東嶼坪
- heart-shaped fish trap 心型石罟
- Hujing 虎井
- Jiangjun'ao 將軍澳
- Jinguzai Reef 金瓜仔礁
- Jibei 吉貝
- Jibei Sand Tail 吉貝沙尾
- Little Taiwan 小台灣
- Lotus Seat 蓮花座
- Magong 馬公
- Mudou Island (Lighthouse) 日斗嶼 (燈塔)
- Qimei 七美
- South Penghu Marine National Park 南方四島國家公園
- Sleeple Islet 旗中嶼
- Tiantai Hill 天台山
- Tongpan Geology Park 桶盤地質公園
- Tongpan 桶盤
- Twin Hearts Stone Weir 雙心石堰
- Wang'an 望安
- Wangan Green Turtle Tourism and Conservation Center 望安綠蠵龜觀光保育中心
- Xikan Hill 西坎山
- Yuef Bay Recreation Area 月姬灣遊憩區
- Zhongshe 中社



MAP



# A Day in Old Penghu Communities

TEXT | RICK CHARETTE    PHOTOS | RAY CHANG

Glimpses into Old-Time Ways in a World So Different from Your Own



*Spend a day meandering the same old village arteries Penghu locals have trodden for centuries while on their way to boats or to tend their small coral-walled farm plots, and also take in a selection of other recommended vicinity attractions, nature- and manmade, age-old and modern-day.*

Penghu was settled about a thousand years back, and when you wander the narrow streets and alleys of its living-museum villages, you get the feeling you're peering directly into the deep past. Famously, the rich trove of heritage buildings in Erkan Village on Xiyu Island has been thoroughly renovated and the village is tourist-targeted, with cafés, gift shops, eateries, and other establishments set up. In this article we bring you to three time-capsule settlements in Penghu main island's east where locals still live in old houses and go about their old-timey business, but where at the same time a balanced modicum of tourist-enticing attractions have been developed.

Old house in Nanliao



## Nanliao Community

This community, in the main island's northeastern corner just off County Road 202, brims with traditional old residences. It is one of Penghu's settlements most seriously hit by youth out-migration and population aging, and the remaining residents, in cooperation with outside organizations, have made it a model for rural regeneration, with a focus on sustainable tourism.

Incongruously, this fishing village is not even within rock-throwing distance of saltwater. It's inland at the base of a north-south peninsula. "Nanliao" means "south hamlet"; sister settlement Beiliao, or "north hamlet," is on the peninsula's northwest shore. In past days when boats were smaller, Nanliao's harbor was at the peninsula's base; today it is right beside Beiliao's much bigger harbor. Nanliao was never able to match Beiliao's fishing success, so locals also turned to fish processing, fishing net repair, and farming.

Begin your tour at the ornate two-story **Nanliao Baoning Temple**, beside County Road 14. The narrow street that begins before the temple is the village's main artery. You'll immediately notice how the village is today festooned with spherical fishing-floats-cum-artworks and bright-color murals depicting archetypal olden-days village images. The balls are now lucky tigers and cats, scarecrows, turtles, etc. Murals depict scenes such as a farmer woman, covered head-to-toe for sun protection in the traditional Penghu style, driving a cart pulled by a yellow ox.



Old village well besides the Cowpat Trough hut



Tourists like to post in front of this fishing-boat art installation



Nanliao historic residence



Xu Fan Ancient House and fish ovens (top left) in Nanliao



Not far up the main street is the traditional **Nanliao Fish Ovens** set. These are lidded structures that look like wells in which fish, usually sardines, were boiled, taken out for sun-drying, and sold.

The fuel used in the pits, and commonly in homes, was cow manure cakes, made from manure mixed with crushed peanut shells to increase flammability. Further up the street you'll see a stone hut containing piles of the cakes inside, which look like giant mushroom heads; curing was required before use. On the hut's exterior you'll see **Cowpat Trough** posted in English.

Beside the fish ovens is an expansive old residence, contained within high perimeter walls, that has long been

abandoned and has been completely taken over by trees and bushes, creating a compelling man-meets-nature artwork. It has been dubbed the **Nanliao Tree House**. A signboard (Chinese) explains how coral blocks would be sourced at low tide, piling them on rafts, which would be floated to shore for transfer to ox carts at high tide. The blocks would have to be sun-cured for two years before construction use.

Two lots further along the street is the **Xu Fan Ancient House**, perhaps the most aesthetically appealing of the coterie of carefully renovated heritage homes. Built 1851–1861, this classical three-sided courtyard residence has an exquisite façade featuring such artistic adornments indicating wealth as delicately detailed

ceramic-tile paintings. Inside are displays, with text (Chinese), images, and artifacts, on the clan that long resided in this house.

Note: The village volunteer group "**Gui Bi Gang She – Penghu Nanliao**" provides free guided tours (Chinese) to visitors arriving via the Taiwan Tourist Shuttle's Magong Huxi route buses (see "Getting Around" section below). "Gui Bi Gang" is literally "Turtle Wall Harbor," Nanliao's original name; "She" means "Society." The original settlers felt a hill north of the settlement was shaped like a turtle. If you don't arrive by shuttle bus you can contact the group in advance to arrange for a guided tour at [www.facebook.com/nanliaopenghu](http://www.facebook.com/nanliaopenghu).





Guoye Kiln



Coastline at Guoye Kiln



Guoye Sunrise Observatory (in background)



Guoye beach

## Guoye Community

This community is on the east shore of the island, right where County Road 202 makes a 90-degree turn to head to the island's southeast corner. The village is just north of the northern tip of long, white-sand Longmen Beach (see next section).

This settlement has become a popular destination for tourists to watch the sunrise, and the attractive wood-built, two-level **Guoye Sunrise Observatory** has been specially built as a gathering spot. Featuring lookout pavilions on the upper level, it's right on the shore, beside the compact fishing harbor. Concrete steps designed in a gentle lapping-wave pattern lead down directly onto the white-sand beach. On clear mornings, before any haze establishes itself, the central mountains can be clearly espied on the far-off Taiwan mainland.

Between harbor and observatory, you'll see a large dynamic sculpture in the shape of rolling waves, brightly painted with the rising sun, fishing boats, and dainty-yet-resolute sea hibiscus. You'll find wind/salt-tolerant sea hibiscus all around Guoye, and all around Penghu. Islanders colloquially call them "fruit leaf," or *guoye* – the adopted village name.

The **Guoye Kiln** is on a promontory behind a sea wall just to the village's south. This long, narrow rectangular complex has a distinctive castle look, and its high rooftop is popular with sunrise-watchers. The kiln was built in 1960 by a local man, using basalt and mortar. A lime-burning kiln industry flourished in Penghu from the late 1800s into the 1970s, using the abundant coral-stone and shell fragments. The lime-burning method was introduced from mainland Taiwan, and most product was sold back to the west coast.

Today, from a peak of 41 kilns in 1956, only the Guoye Kiln and remains of a Baikeng Village kiln are still extant. The county government renovated the complex in 2015, and today it works with the community to run an on-site tourist information and gift shop.





Entrance of Longmen Military Outpost



War games room

## Longmen Community

This community is in the island's southeast corner, on the south side at the base of a northwest-southeast peninsula. County Road 202 runs right through the village, and ends just before Lizhengjiao Beach at the peninsula's south shore.

The **Longmen Military Outpost** is an underground complex hidden within the hill at Longmen Harbor's southeast edge, with apertures facing the sea. Tickets are bought – guided tours only (Chinese) – at a small single-story edifice before the hillside entranceway that takes you into the warren of narrow tunnels.

This was one of the first tourism-focused community-regeneration project in which the county government converted a site with potential and the local community manages it. Opened for visits in 2020, all guides and other personnel are Longmen folk. Surplus from ticket fees is used for community meals and welfare activities for seniors.

Inside the facility, which could accommodate an infantry company of about 150, are 705m of tunnels, just 60–80cm wide and about 1.8m high (in places significantly less). The original construction dates to the 1895–1945 period of Japanese rule. In 1980 the ROC military added a command post, machine gun and artillery emplacements (weapons on display), ammunition store, war games room, and radar station.

In the war games room are murals by a Penghu artist depicting the 1895 Japanese landing at Lizhengjiao, on the hill's east – where Penghu main island's defenses were found weakest – and showing villagers forced to dig out the fortification.

If desirous of a soothing lull at one of Penghu's biggest, most beautiful, and most secluded beaches, **Longmen Beach** fits the bill. On the peninsula's north shore, it's reached from the village via a long single-vehicle-wide road through an area of scrubland and tiny patchwork coral-wall farm plots. There are public toilet/shower facilities, apropos in a building shaped like a tank, facing the sea.

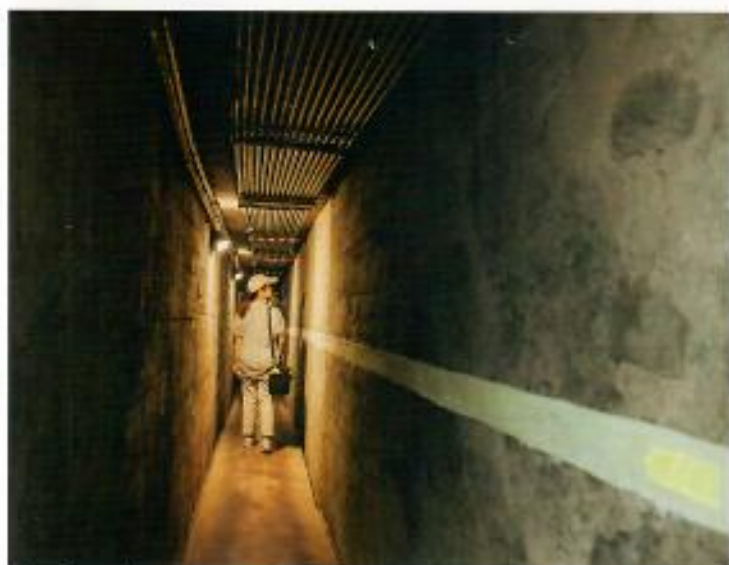


Tank-shaped toilet/shower building



Longmen Beach





Narrow tunnel



Artillery emplacement

## Other Places for Unique Penghu Experiences

**Pong-Food Traditional Cuisine** is located a short distance west of Nanliao on County Road 202. You'll see the English name posted prominently on the hard-to-miss yolk-yellow façade of the single-story building that is its home. This is the retail operation of a beloved old-time Penghu food producer, Furong Food, maker of traditional-style treats, factory located directly behind.

The third generation that today runs the business has brought innovative new thinking in opening Pong-Food. As posted in English on the storefront, visit for Penghu local specialties, experience activities, and Penghu "famous gifts." The culinary stars, all Penghu classics, are deep-fried glutinous-rice balls ("fried jujubes"), peanut candy, flour tea, puffed-rice crackers, and peanuts.

When purchasing, your delicious rice balls are made-on-order here. Glutinous-rice turtle DIY classes are also given (Chinese). In addition to the original-flavor version, brown sugar, lemon, strawberry, and chocolate versions are now also offered.

**Penghu Fish** is the brand of a Penghu in-depth tourism specialist with a unique focus on the everyday local fishing village world. Among the experiences provided in its guided tours (Chinese) are a visit to a local harbor, learning about Penghu auction methods, Penghu seasonal species, choosing fresh fish, local cooking methods, and local fishing methods and sustainable practices. Especially popular are the DIY activities, which include using traditional methods to handle and dry fish (with both on-site cooking + eating and take-home options) and a beach-seine fishing outing led by experienced local fishermen (with the catch divided equally among participants). 📍

### ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Baikang Village 白坑村  
 Beiliao 北寮  
 Cowpat Trough 牛屎窟  
 Erkan Village 二崁聚落  
 Furong Food 福榮食品廠  
 "Gui Bi Gang She - Penghu Nanliao" 龜壁港社 - 澎湖南寮  
 Guoye Community 菓葉社區  
 Guoye Kiln 菓葉灰窯

Guoye Sunrise Observatory 菓葉觀日樓  
 Lizhengjiao Beach 裡正角沙灘  
 Longmen Beach 龍門沙灘  
 Longmen Community 龍門社區  
 Longmen Military Outpost 龍門開訓陣地  
 Nanliao Baoning Temple 南寮保寧宮  
 Nanliao Community 南寮社區  
 Nanliao Fish Ovens 南寮魚灶  
 Nanliao Tree House 南寮樹屋  
 Xu Fan Ancient House 許返古宅



Glutinous-rice turtle DIY



Dry fish processing DIY

### GETTING THERE AND AROUND

For those not self-driving or being part of a bus-tour group, check out the Taiwan Tourist Shuttle website ([www.taiwantrip.com.tw](http://www.taiwantrip.com.tw)). This is an inexpensive hop-on/hop-off public bus service specially designed for tourist travel. There are two Penghu routes; the Magong Huxi route has stops at the Magong City bus station, Magong Airport, Nanliao Community, Guoye Kiln, and Longmen Military Outpost. An on-board guide provides commentary (Chinese).



MAP



*Penghu's tourism is heavily concentrated in the short summer period when Taiwan's youth is out of school. To entice travelers to visit outside of this time bracket, in the past two decades the local authorities have inaugurated numerous large-scale festivals and events of other type. These sport widely differing characters to ensure something irresistible for all age brackets.*



# PENGHU PARTYING YEAR ROUND

## Big Modern Festivals that Bring in the Tourists

TEXT | RICK CHARETTE    PHOTOS | PENGHU NATIONAL SCENIC AREA, PENGHU COUNTY GOVT.

**E**njoy inspired artistic expression? How about fireworks fests by some of the world's greatest pyrotechnics maestros? Lighting installation and lantern artworks by award-winning talent? A cavalcade of popular music performers spanning varied genres?

You like health-enhancing exercise activities? Select from options such as heading out on a supremely scenic marathon

run, launching on cycle tours, or SUPing out over saltwater on guided outings to take in the fireworks shows.

Here's a parade of five of the biggest party-style happenings of 2023. We've got a fireworks festival, lighting art festival, music festival, cycling festival, and cross-sea marathon. If not this year – book your party spot for next!





## Penghu International Fireworks Festival

Boom! Kaaa-boom! This is Penghu's modern-festival granddaddy, first held way back in 2003, on a far more limited scale. Celebrity singers and musical groups entertain in relay in stage shows augmenting the bomb-bursting-in-air pyrotechnics extravaganzas.

The main venue is Guanyinting Recreation Area on Magong City's east side, facing the Inner Sea, home to two well-known tourist attractions, Guanyin Pavilion (an important heritage temple) and the soaring Xiyang Rainbow Bridge (a pedestrian-only arch bridge spanning a small-harbor mouth). The spectaculars happen above harbor and bridge every Monday/Thursday night through the months-long celebration, bursting lights reflected on the sparkling sea, preceded by the music shows. One music/fireworks-fest each, smaller in scale, is also staged on Jibei, Qimei, and Wang'an islands. At the main venue, you can watch within the park itself, from boats (fee) that come around from Magong Harbor, and from special large SUP boards (fee; 8-10 people/1-2 guides per board).

The 2023 jamboree was April 20-June 29. This year The Walt Disney Company's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated under the slogan "A Century of Fantasy, An Eternity of Wonder." Disney was first a part of the festival in 2020, with a Marvel-themed drone show. Drone-created art was more dazzlingly central this edition, a secondary goal beyond the techno-artistic possibilities being reduction of the event's environmental impact. Among the high-altitude renditions of Disney characters magically created were Mickey and Minnie, Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*, and Alice with her *Wonderland* amigos. An army of 700 drones performed each show, 900 for the opening and closing ceremonies.



## Penghu International Lighting Art Festival

This annual multi-month festival is staged in the Penghu Third Fishing Port International Plaza, very close to Magong Harbor's South Sea Visitor Center. It runs from the near-denouement of one year into the next – the last edition from October 1, 2022 to February 28, 2023.

Visitors are beguiled with inspired large-scale land art installations and creative lighting with island themes – examples from this round include a pod of leaping dolphins and a golden field of ripening grain. Augmenting this stimulation is interactive technology, musical stage performances ranging from well-known vocalists to a local symphony orchestra, other types of artistic performances such as buskers and art forums.

### COLORFUL LIGHTS

Both the Penghu International Fireworks Festival and the Penghu International Lighting Art Festival impress with mesmerizing displays of night sky illumination effects.





## Penghu Music Festival

Integrating music, light, and Penghu's famed sea breezes, this festival presents a musical feast of light and fantasy. In 2022, the Penghu National Scenic Area Administration decided to transform the annual International Bay Light Festival into the Penghu Music Festival. This year's shows are being staged every Saturday from August 19 to September 30. The happening's overarching theme is chasing the wind in the late summer and early autumn – "chasing the wind" is part of the event's official Chinese name. A stellar lineup of eminent musical talent will regale audiences sitting in an environment of romantic creative-art mood lighting. Among the big-name Mandopop talents starring this round are Singapore's Tanya Chua and the Taiwanese band WONFU.

Venue is the Guanyinting Recreation Area. The high-tech lighting art, with projection mapping and installation artworks used, has a Penghu theme and is closely synchronized with the coastal landscape – schools of fish on the move, sunlight shimmering off the waves of the bright-blue sea, and so on. Carnival-style floats have also been added this year to bring a Brazilian party-style atmosphere.

In conjunction with the Mid-Autumn Festival long weekend (September 30), there will also be a special kite performance, with a fleet of large illuminated kites riding the high Penghu winds.



## ■ Penghu Cycling Festival

This annual shindig runs from the head of March to September's tail, dense with varied cycling-related activities. Overseen by the Penghu National Scenic Area Administration, as with the cross-sea marathon next on our list, the organizational goal is two-fold: promotion of Penghu's dramatic scenic gems and of sustainable eco-friendly tourism.

The keystone event is the Penghu Cycling Festival – 101K Hopping Bike excursion, being held September 17 this year. This is a relaxed group ride rather than a competitive race. A joined cycling experience, one group tackles a more challenging 101km route (400 entrants), and another enjoys a slower-pace 22km leisure jaunt (200 entrants). Both rides start and end at the Administration headquarters on Penghu's main island. While riders on the shorter route will head southwest to the Fenggui Cave and return, the cyclists on the longer route will, after covering part of the same route, make their way all the way to the Yuwendao Lighthouse in the southwest corner of Xiyu Island, on the way "hopping" across the islands of Zhongtun and Baisha via the connecting bridges.

Another popular festival draw is the Penghu NSA's March-June Guided Cycling Tour program, launched this year. Cyclists can book seven days in advance to have trained volunteers lead them on free guided rides.



## Gaillardia Islands Penghu Cross-sea Marathon

First run in the late 2010s, organized by the Penghu NSA Administration, this is Taiwan's sole island-hopping marathon. It takes place each November on Penghu's main-island grouping. The 2023 event will happen on November 5. Among the major sights that runners pass by – or on – are Yuwendao Lighthouse on Xiyu's southwest tip, Xiyu's Daguoye Columnar Basalt formations, and the 2,494m-long Penghu Great Bridge, which connects Xiyu and Baisha. Along the route runners can stop at route-side Penghu Creative Gourmet Supply Stations offering samples of Penghu delicacies (about 60 selections in total), such as oyster porridge, cuttlefish balls, and lobster.

There are a number of run categories in this internationally certified event to choose from: 42km full marathon, 42km relay race, 21km, 11km, and 5km. The latter two are specially oriented toward parent-youngster participation. Post-race is the Windcrazy Party, with pop/rock bands from around Taiwan performing, and the Penghu Food Carnival, giving racers who did not fill up their tanks en route a second delectable-sampling opp.

Note that translators are on hand and English/Chinese signage put up to make things easiest for non-Chinese-speaking participants.

For more on the Penghu NSA Administration events/activities, including applications, visit [www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw/English](http://www.penghu-nsa.gov.tw/English)



### 🌐 ENGLISH AND CHINESE

101K Hopping Bike 澎湖跳島 101K 自行車活動  
 "chasing the wind" 追風  
 Daguoye Columnar Basalt 大菓葉柱狀玄武岩  
 Fenggui Cave 風櫃洞  
 Gaillardia Islands Penghu Cross-sea Marathon  
 萊奧澎湖跨海馬拉松  
 Guanyin Pavilion 觀音亭  
 Guanyinting Recreation Area 觀音亭親水遊憩區  
 Penghu Cycling Festival 澎湖自行車嘉年華  
 Penghu Great Bridge 澎湖跨海大橋  
 Penghu International Fireworks Festival  
 澎湖國際海上花火節  
 Penghu International Lighting Art Festival  
 澎湖國際燈光藝術節  
 Penghu Third Fishing Port International Plaza  
 澎湖第三漁港國際廣場  
 Penghu Music Festival 澎湖編曲音樂節  
 Xiyung Rainbow Bridge 西嶼虹橋  
 Yuwendao Lighthouse 漁翁島燈塔

AROUND THE ISLANDS  
 Both the Penghu Cycling Festival and the Gaillardia Islands Penghu Cross-sea Marathon take participants on routes through Penghu's main islands.



# W H E R E T O S P E N D Y O U R P E N G H U N I G H T S ?

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## A Trio of Places Great for Cycling Enthusiasts

TEXT TRICK CHARETTE    PHOTOS RAY CHANG, VISION

*Though the Penghu Islands are just a short hour-less hop by plane from mainland Taiwan, almost no visitors are day-trippers. Serving the constantly arriving flocks of revelers is an ever-growing force of accommodations, from hotels/inns (almost all in Magong City) to simple through swish guesthouses. Here we present three spots spread out in different locales of Penghu main island perfect for in-depth cycling exploration of their respective regions.*



## Somewhere Guesthouse

This dynamic-look young dedicated-built guesthouse is just off the coast on the south side of Penghu main island. On a rise amidst the thick hedge acacia ubiquitous around Penghu, it looks down on the west end of long, popular Shanshui Beach, and out to Shanshui 30 Highland Park, which occupies a coast-side hill beside the west end. The beach has a bustling cluster of beach-bum-style eateries and cafés; the park is a showcase of now-abandoned military fortifications such as tunnels, bunkers, and pillboxes.

For the overall design, the owner of the guesthouse, a Taipei business-world retiree, decided on the long, slender abodes that overlook ports around the globe. A north-south orientation is used so sunlight does not shine directly inside guestrooms or interior public spaces, keeping the innards cooler. Windows are also strategically placed to allow north-south breezes to stream through.

All exterior/interior walls are fair-faced concrete, creating a chill post-modernist feel. Inside, in public areas and guestrooms, an open-concept design is adopted, and furnishings are muted and uncluttered, engendering a mood-relaxing ambience. The high-ceilinged lobby/reception space has windows high up that allow indirect sunlight to wash in at oblique angles, begetting a soothing air – church-like or Zen-like, depending on your cultural background. The polished cosmopolitan interior design and décor are targeted toward Penghu's largest tourism demographic, 25–35-year-olds.

There are five guestrooms, four doubles and one room for four people, all featuring subdued colors to complement the gray walls and floors. To foster a home-away-from-away experience, each room has an interior landing-style area before its entrance and a glassed-in balcony. Bathrooms are large, and set in building corners with big windows to allow big views.

The uncovered communal rooftop terrace, which features café-style high tables and chairs and an almost 360-degree panorama, is very popular. Breakfast is not provided; the owner provides info on beach-area brekky joints. The reception area has a free-use capsule coffee machine and microwave.

The owner is a passionate cyclist, Penghu Cycling Association member, and annual Penghu Cycling Festival volunteer (see our "Penghu/Events" article). At Somewhere, bike-storage space is provided on the guestroom landing-style areas. Maintenance and simple repair service is also available, and assistance in getting help for tougher tasks is provided.



Guestroom



Public area



Rooftop terrace

### SOMEWHERE GUESTHOUSE (曙光·角落)

☎ (06) 985-3108

📍 No. 120-10, Zhujiang, Shanshui Borough, Magong City, Penghu County  
(澎湖縣馬公市山水里珠江 120-10 號)

🌐 [www.facebook.com/somewherguesthouse](http://www.facebook.com/somewherguesthouse)





Green Hotel

floor-to-ceiling glass, with treadmills, weight-training machines, and dumbbell sets. Beside it, also facing into the lobby through glass, is a restaurant facility with wooden long-table seating for 32. As of the time of writing this is not yet operational, and the hotel does not provide breakfast, but management states plans are to bring its F&B service on line in the not-too-distant future. The fitness center and restaurant facility face each other through another full wall of glass. Free coffee is available 24H in the lobby, self-using an imported premium-caliber capsule coffee maker.

Interaction between guests is encouraged by the hotel through provision of long bar-style high-chair tables in the lobby and through a Friendship Lounge with plush single-person chairs and small circular glass-top café-style tables on the third floor.

Other services: with a stay of two nights or more, Magong Airport/Magong Harbor pick-up and drop-off; free-use beach towels.

## Green Hotel

This young, fashionable four-story hotel facility is in a quiet, primarily residential old-time neighborhood of Magong City. Its location is optimal for those who like walking for exercise and at the same time want to be close to the city's main tourist draws – spread out easy 15~20-minute on-foot saunters away, from southwest to southeast (among others) are the Guanyinting Recreation Area, Duxingshi Village, Zhongyang Old Street, and Magong Harbor/South Sea Visitor Center.

The hotel's motto is to create "a place that is most like home on an outlying island". There are five room types (28 guestrooms in total), all minimalist contemporary-design style, ranging from Standard Twin Room to Family Room and Six People Suite selections. The family rooms feature kid-frolic slides and mini-tents, the suites regular and loft beds. All rooms have extra-large bathrooms.

There's a stylish fitness center on the first level, facing the lobby area through



Family room with slide



Stylish lobby



## Biker

This guesthouse, opened in late 2021, is in the center of Penghu main island, just west of the airport. It's at the base of the peninsula through which County Road 203 runs, leading to the interconnected islands in the north and northwest/west (see "Biking in Penghu" section below). Connection with County Road 202, which runs west to Magong City and east to the east coast of the main island, is just a few hundred meters away.

As its English name indicates, this getaway is dedicated to cyclists – and to backpackers, as its Chinese name stresses. And to divers. It's run by another Taipei transplant, a young woman, cycling/diving/travel enthusiast, who fell in love with the low-stress Penghu way of life. It is the end unit in a row of modern-design new townhouse residences, another row exactly the same facing it across a paved entrance driveway.

There's a comfy covered patio out front, and on the first level inside a compact communal area for dining and watching TV (free Netflix, snacks and drinks sold; no TVs in guestrooms). Storage lockers are also provided in this area, along with a mini-shop with various frolicking-in-the-sun necessities. Beside this is a small shared open kitchen; Biker also serves a simple gratis breakfast – toast, spreads, coffee, soy milk, and such – to guests staying two nights or more. "Penghu gourmet lazy bags" are also available for

wanderers who want to bring their own food on the road.

In the first-level rear is a shared area with outdoor shower, toilet, and laundry facilities. Cycling and diving outings and other types of customized itinerary planning is provided for guests, and a free-use sun-dry space and cleaning/drying facilities are also available here for guests' paraphernalia. Management states that the combination of flat roads and climbing roads in Biker's environs make it a great spot for cycle training, and the guesthouse attracts many who come for Ironman training.

Guestrooms: one mixed room for 8 people, single and double beds; one room for 6 females, single beds; and one mixed room for 6, single beds.



Guesthouse sign



Mixed room for eight



Mini shop on first floor



Patio out front

### GREEN HOTEL (綠的旅店)

- ☎ (06) 927-8801
- 📍 No. 27-3, Guang Rd., Magong City, Penghu County (澎湖縣馬公市文光路 27-3 號)
- 🌐 [www.greenhotels.com.tw](http://www.greenhotels.com.tw) (Chinese)
- 📘 [www.facebook.com/greenhomestays](https://www.facebook.com/greenhomestays)

### BIKER (玩野包廬)

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Bicycling in Penghu

## Biking in Penghu

Penghu is pretty much tailor-designed for cycling enthusiasts, its flatness and sunny, exotic, laid-back South Seas atmosphere making for long, leisurely jaunts that gently release the stresses binding one's soul.

There's a noticeable lack of motor vehicles, even in and immediately around Magong City, where over half of the 107,000 population lives. Penghu main island and three close-by others are conjoined by bridge. On the islands of Wang'an and Qimei, accessed from the main island by ferry, you'll find nary a four-wheeled motor vehicle at all – the narrow roadways on these small islands are more like bike paths.

Tourists are by far most numerous in July/August; the standard means of moving around, especially with younger folk, is rented motor scooter. This time of year is characterized by blazing heat, so be aware and prepared. Winter brings forceful, almost constant winds from the northeast, making cycling outings of any distance a challenge for most but the most fit. But a benefit for many such folk is the lack of tourists and almost completely empty roads. The March~June and September~November periods are optimal.

As said, most Penghu cycle outings are on flat land. Magong City's older section is on sloping ground, with gentle grades. Outer islands, notably

Wang'an and Qimei, are a bit hillier, but the uphill lengths are either short or longer and comparatively gentle, presenting easy challenges for multi-speed bikes.

Note that there are commercial enterprises aplenty in Magong City, with food, drink, and supplies needed for lengthy rides easy to find, but the more distant villages on the larger islands and the ferry-reached outer islands are comparatively isolated, so it's best to stock up on necessities before heading out.



Daguyao Columnar Basalt



Traditional building in Erkan Village



## Excursion Recommendations

The most popular expedition for fit cycling enthusiasts is along County Road 203 from Magong City, on Penghu main island's west edge, up through Zhongtun and Baisha to Xiyu Western Fort near Xiyu's southwest tip. The distance is about 35km, the hills along the way genial.

There is fulfilling diversity in the sights encountered along the journey, among your major encounters the Zhongtun Wind Farm on Zhongtun, Penghu Aquarium and Tongliang Great Banyan on Baisha, and the fort, heritage Erkan Village, and Daguoye Columnar Basalt formations on Xiyu (latter two requiring short side-foray cycles).

Another growingly favored option is following the route (full or sections) of the Penghu Cycling Festival – 101K Hopping Bike event (see our “Penghu/Events” article). This takes you all around Penghu main island before heading up Route 203 through the other main islands. 📍

### ENGLISH AND CHINESE

Baisha 白沙  
Daguoye Columnar Basalt 大菓葉玄武岩  
Duxingqin Village 篤行十村  
Erkan Village 二三里聚落  
Guanyinding Recreation Area 船仔半觀光遊憩區  
Penghu Aquarium 澎湖水族館  
Qimai 七美  
Shanshui 30 Highland Park 山水 30 高州公園  
Shanshui Beach 山水沙灘  
South Sea Visitor Center 南島遊客中心  
Tongliang Great Banyan 桐蔭古柏  
Wang'an 望安  
Xiyu 西嶼  
Xiyu Western Fort 西嶼西臺  
Zhongtun 中屯  
Zhongtun Wind Farm 中屯風力園區  
Zhongyang Old Street 中街老街



MAP

Pavilion at Fenggui Cave on Penghu main island



# Maritime Morsels

**Taipei Seafood Options Ranging from Traditional-Market Sashimi to Boisterous Stir-Fry Joints and Classy Resto Bars**

TEXT | HAN CHEUNG    PHOTOS | POWEI CHEN, VISION

*Taipei residents don't have to travel to coastal fishing ports to enjoy the fresh bounty of the ocean. Some sort of fish, shrimp, and squid dish can be found in virtually any city restaurant, but there are also specialized restaurants who do it so well that people are willing to queue up to satisfy their taste buds.*



"Pompous Seafood Congee" (All In One)