

Formosa Club



Date: 9/30/05

Topic: Brief introduction of Taiwan part I

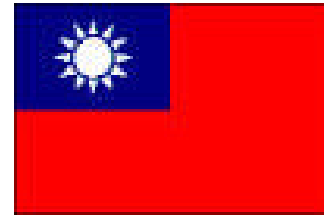
? Area : 36,000 square kilometers

? Population: 23 million

? Capital : Ta ipei City

? Language : Mandarin/Taiwanese/Hakka

? Religion : Buddhism/Taoism/Christian/Islam/Catholicism



? our national flag

Taiwan's total land area is only about 3,6000 square kilometers; it is shaped like a tobacco leaf that is narrow at both ends. It lies off the southeastern coast of mainland Asia, across the Taiwan Straits from Mainland China-- a solitary island on the western edge of the Pacific Ocean. To the north lies Japan and Okinawa, to the south is the Philippines. Many airlines fly to Taiwan, helping make it the perfect travel destination.

Taiwan lies on the western edge of the Pacific "rim of fire," and continuous tectonic movements have created majestic peaks, rolling hills and plains, basins, coastlines, and other wonders. Taiwan sees climates of many types: tropical, sub-tropical, and temperate, providing clear differentiation between the different seasons. There are about 18,400 species of wildlife on the island, with more than 20% belonging to rare or endangered species; among these are the land-locked salmon, Taiwan mountain goat, Formosan rock monkey, Formosan black bear, blue magpie, Mikado pheasant, Hsuehshan grass lizard, and many more. The government has established 6 national parks and 12 national scenic areas to preserve Taiwan's best natural ecological environment and cultural sites. Take in the splendor and sheer heights of the cliffs at Taroko Gorge; take a ride on the Alishan train --one of only three mountain railways in the world--and experience the breathtaking sunset and sea of clouds; hike up to the summit of Northeast Asia's highest peak, Jade Mountain. You can also soak up the sun in Kending, Asia's version of Hawaii; stand at the edge of Sun Moon Lake; traipse through the East Rift Valley; or visit the offshore islands of Kinmen and Penghu. It's fun in capital letters as well as an awesome journey of natural discovery!

The cultural aspects also not to be missed. The blending of Hakka, Taiwanese, and mainland Chinese cultures has produced a rich plethora of cultural and social color. Whether it is religion, architecture, language, living habits, or food, it's just one big exciting melting pot! Food is the best representative of this cultural mixing and matching. Aside from cuisines from different parts of the mainland such as Zhejiang,

