

Welcome to the Verdant land of the
East Rift Valley!

Emerald Paradise



Embracing Nature

A paradise on Earth, the East Rift Valley is blessed with natural beautiful landscapes and scenery. Clean water and fertile soil make it an excellent farmland where rice paddies stretch out as far as the eye can see. In recent years, art and culture and aesthetics have been integrated in agricultural development to add more charm and character to the beautiful rural sights. The peaceful rustic views never fail to slow down the pace of visitors, as they wander carefree around this heavenly land.

Sea of Flowers

Flower watching is a popular travel pursuit, and the seas of flowers in different seasons in the East Rift Valley will certainly leave a very deep impression.

From December, when farming work has come to an end, until February the following year, the rice paddies are covered with oilseed rape flowers like an orange-yellow carpet. Small white butterflies flutter in and out, creating a picturesque scene. In March, when small white pomelo blossoms begin to open up one after another, the aroma fills every corner of Hegang Village, and these white elegant spring beauties capture the attention of visitors. The golden daily blooms spreading all over Chihke Mountain and Sixty Stone Mountain Hill in August are equally as dazzling and unforgettable.



Farms and Pastures

The natural environment here is perfect for the development of the agricultural and livestock industries. There are therefore many large farms and ranches, such as Chao Feng Ranch and Resort, suitable for family visits because of its rich ecological resources. Ruesuei Ranch that produces all kinds of dairy products, and Chulu Ranch where visitors can experience the pleasure of hay rolling. These farms and ranches have gradually transformed into tourism-oriented locations over the years. They offer accommodation and dining services to afford visitors with different experiences. There is also the Hualien Sugar Factory that was established in 1913. The facilities still stand in perfect condition, recounting the history of the Taiwanese sugar industry.



Geology and Topography



The East Rift Valley lies between the Central Mountain Range and the Coastal Mountain Range. Impact and encroachment from the three major river systems in the valley have created magnificent cliffs and gorges. Impressive thundering waterfalls have taken shape at some of the sheer drops in this landscape like the ones in Luoshan and Fonghuang. Furthermore, the barren and desolate Liji Badlands, where hardly any plants grow in the muddy marine soil squeezed up by the movements of the earth's crust from the ocean floor are a rare geological wonder in Taiwan.



Land of the Indigenous Peoples

In addition to the Ami Tribe, the Truku Tribe, the Puyuma Tribe, the Bunun Tribe, the Sakizaya Tribe and the Seediq Tribe that have lived in this region for generations, there are also Hakka people, making the local culture an interesting mix. Each year the aborigine tribes have their own festivals, such as the harvest festival of the Amis and the Manah Tainga (Ear-shooting Festival) of the Bumins in July and August, the Basibas (Monkey Hunting Ritual) of the Puyumas, the peace prayers and harvest celebrations during Sinapuh Utux Rudan (paying respects to ancestral spirits) of the Trukus, the Sakizayas' various rituals scheduled in line with the millet growing season, and the sowing and harvest festivals of the Seediqs. The special features of these activities can help people get a better understanding of the culture behind them.



Two other places in the East Rift Valley have been proclaimed as prehistoric cultural sites: the Saoba Stone Pillars and Gongpu Archaeological Site. Both Puyuma cultural remains from around the end of the New Stone Age reveal the historical depth of the East Rift Valley.



Ecological Treasures

The plant communities in the East Rift Valley include warm temperate evergreen broad-leaved forests, tropical rainforests, and shrubs and thickets that are the food sources and habitats for many species of birds, mammals, freshwater fish, and amphibians.

Among the animals, the varieties of birds are the most impressive, such as Taiwan bulbuls, maroon orioles, Hodgson's hawk eagles, Taiwan blue magpies, and white-bellied yuhinas. The mammals include Taiwan macaques, gem-faced civets, Taiwan Serows, and Formosan barking deer, which are all rare endangered species.



Taiwan ku fish and Taiwan Venus fish are rare Taiwanese endemic freshwater fish species. The amphibians include Chinese tree frogs, Latouche's frogs, and rice paddy frogs. In summer evenings, all kinds of fireflies can be seen.

The ecological environment of Mataian Wetland is unique, and very different from that of dry land. There are different varieties of green plants, aquatic algae and insects everywhere. Throughout the year, butterflies, fireflies, frogs and migratory birds take turns exhibiting the vibrancy of this land.



Itineraries

2-Day Mountain and Coastal Tour (Northern loop)

◎ Hualien City → Shouei Township → Fongjin Town → Guangfu Township → Ruesuei Township → Yuli Town → Yuchang Highway → Changbin Township → Fongbin Township → Shouei Township → Hualien City
Hualien City → Liyu Lake → Chao Feng Ranch and Resort → Fonghuang Village → Liantianshan Forest Ranch → Hualien Sugar Factory → Mataian Wetland Ecological Park → Hegang Pomelo Tourist Fruit Garden → Ruesuei Hot Springs → Hongye Hot Springs → Saoba Stone Pillars → Tropic of Cancer Monument Park → Chihke Mountain → Antong Hot Springs → Yuchang Highway → Basandong Recreation Area → Dagangkou → Yuedong Recreation Area → Shihping Recreation Area → Hualien Ocean Park → Hualien City

1-Day Mountain and Coastal Tour (Central loop)

◎ Ruesuei Township → Rueigang Highway → Fongbin Township → Changbin Township → Yuchang Highway → Yuli Town → Ruesuei Township
Ruesuei → East Rift Valley National Scenic Area Administration → Hegang Pomelo Tourist Fruit Garden → Ruesuei Rafting → Rueigang Highway → Dagangkou → Yuchang Highway → Antong Hot Springs → Chihke Mountain → Tropic of Cancer Monument Park → Saoba Stone Pillars → Ruesuei Ranch → Ruesuei Hot Springs → Hongye Hot Springs → Ruesuei

1-Day Mountain and Coastal Tour (Southern loop)

◎ Taitung City → Beinan Township → Yanping Township → Luye Township → Guanshan Town → Haiduan Township → Chihshang Township → Fuli Township → Jhuosi Township → Yuli Town → Yuchang Highway → Changbin Township → Chenggong Town → Donghe Township → Beinan Township → Taitung City
Taitung City → Liji Badlands → Siao Huangshan → Taitung Yuansheng Applied Botanical Garden → Chulu Ranch → Hongye Hot Springs → Luye Gaotai → Guanshan Town Bicycle Trail → Wulu Hot Springs → Oilseed Rape Flower Sea → Dapuodi → Luoshan Recreation Area → Sixty Stone Mountain → Antong Hot Springs → Yuchang Highway → Shihyusan Recreation Area → Sansiantai Recreation Area → Chenggong Fishing Harbor → Taiyuan Valley → Jinjun Recreation Area → Shanyuan Beach → Taitung City

(Visitors can make their own route arrangements in accordance with their time and interests, and the season in which they visit.)



Action and Fun

Unlike other scenic areas where sightseeing is the only thing to do, the East Rift Valley also offers activities such as breath-taking rafting and hang gliding, and bicycling for people of various age groups. There are also the super marathon and the triathlon competitions which are held annually.

Rafting

Siougulan Creek cuts through the Coastal Mountain Range and along its winding course are many strong currents and challenging passes. The difficulties and excitement of rafting in Siougulan Creek make it the most celebrated rafting spot in Taiwan. The spectacular rock formations along the magnificent gorge make for unusual sights. The rafting competition held in June each year often attracts crowds of people either to watch or to take part in the excitement of racing in these turbulent waters.

Hang Gliding

For those who are interested in experiencing the sensation of riding the wind in the sky, Luye Gaotai is an ideal place for hang gliding. Carried by the southerly winds, one can experience the fun of flying while enjoying the full view of the green fields in the rift valley down below. Hang gliding is a challenging leisure sport that has gained in popularity in Taiwan in recent years. The competitions in July and August always attract a large number of hang gliding experts from all over.

Bicycle Trails

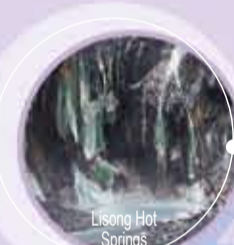
The beautiful sights in the East Rift Valley can also be enjoyed on a relaxing bicycle ride. For those who wish to chase the wind, there are many trails to choose from, such as the one at the Liyu Lake with its complete recreational facilities, the Guanshan peripheral bicycle trail that runs through a variety of landscapes, the trail in Dapuodi where arts and idyllic sights are perfectly combined, and the one at Mataian Wetland with its ecological beauty and indigenous culture. All these trails have been carefully designed to encompass beautiful and relaxing views and have become very popular.

Triathlon

The annual International Triathlon Elite Competition held at Liyu Lake in May attracts top athletes from all over the world. Traffic controls are imposed along the route, and the contestants must swim 1.5km, cycle 40km and run 10km on the road within a limited time. The beautiful landscape gives a soft tone to the competition and makes it seem not as tough.

Super Marathon

The Super Marathon held in the East Rift Valley begins in Shoufong Township. Contestants run on County Highway 193 along the beautiful landscape and pass one rice paddy and oilseed rape flower field after another. The towering Central Mountain Range is in sight. The contestants will also cross meandering streams and run through different tribal villages. It is surely one of the most beautiful marathon routes.



Hot Spring Baths and Health

The fast pace of every day life builds up tension and pressure, and people are always looking for a place to relax. This is exactly what the hot springs in the East Rift Valley have to offer. Take a dip in one of them and pay a visit to the Yuansheng Applied Botanical Garden – a one-of-its-kind establishment in Taiwan – to ease your pressure. Donghe Recreational Farm is also nearby.

Yuansheng Applied Botanical Garden

Taitung is home to a great variety of Taiwanese medicinal herbs. More than 2000 herbs could be found here at one point. In recent years, people have paid more and more attention to their health. With the right timing, land and people, this garden has integrated herb cultivation with healthcare and recreation, and developed into a tourist recreation park. Plants grown in the garden are used to make all kinds of products for health improvement.

Hot Springs

There are many famous hot springs in the rift valley, such as the Ruesuei Hot Springs with their iron and barium-rich carbonated water; the hot springs in Fuyuan Butterfly Valley that come from the most ancient and primitive sources in the Central Mountain Range; the Hualien Hongye Hot Springs where the facilities from the Japanese Colonial Period are still in use; the Antong Hot Springs that lie in the middle of wilderness; the Shin Kong Chao Feng Hot Springs, nicknamed Beauty Spring, that are suitable for family visits; the Fonghuang Village Hot Springs that have an abundance of recreational resources; the Wulu Hot Springs where the hot spring water flows out from mountain walls and fuchsia Taiwan cherry trees are in full bloom in winter; and the Taitung Hongye Hot Springs with their complete facilities. Each place has its own special features and none of them should be missed.



Local Products

The isolation of the rift valley has protected it from pollution and destruction. It is a blessed land, far away from dust and clamor. The clean air and fine water facilitate the growth of many quality agricultural products. Under the influence of multiple cultures, the handicrafts are full of subtleties and surprises.

Agricultural Products

Different agricultural products come in season throughout the year. There is the tasty and nutritious rice, various dairy products which are rich in flavor and aroma, sweet and juicy pomelos, luscious and fleshy Buddha head fruit, healthy shitake mushrooms, golden and crunchy dried daylilies, the rich and aromatic Wuhe coffee, and the sweet and soothing Fulu tea, etc. Every one of them leaves a taste that is impossible to forget.

Handicrafts

The rift valley abounds in stones and timber. The creative ideas and fine craftsmanship of local artists turn them into beautiful handicraft products. The green supple Fongtian jade and the simple woodcarvings, for example, are fine handmade products from local materials. The colorful glass beads and intricately woven fabrics are also excellent handicraft items to be found in the area.



Transportation Information

Railway Information
◎ Taiwan Railways Administration: <http://www.railway.gov.tw>
◎ Hualien Station Information Tel: 03-8355941, 03-8355943
◎ Taitung Station Information Tel: 089-229687

Bus Information
◎ Hualien Bus Company: 03-8323485
◎ Kuokuang Motor Transport Taitung Station: <http://www.kingbus.com.tw/> Tel: 089-322027
◎ Dingdong Bus Mountain Routes <http://ett333023.com.tw/> Tel: 089-333023
◎ Traffic Updates, Directorate General of Highways, Ministry of Transportation and Communications: <http://www.gbh.gov.tw>
◎ Directorate General of Highways, Hualien Section (East Rift Valley Route): 03-8230570
◎ Directorate General of Highways, Taitung Section: 089-322164

Flight Information
◎ Hualien Airport Travel Information Service: 03-8210625
◎ Taitung Airport Travel Information Service 089-362476
◎ TransAsia Airways: <http://www.tna.com.tw/> Hualien Office: 03-8329181
◎ Mandarin Airlines: <http://www.tna.com.tw/> Hualien Office: 03-8329181
◎ Uni Air: <http://www.uni-air.com.tw/> Taitung Office: 089-362626

Hospitals
◎ Hualien Hospital: 03-8358141
◎ Mennonite Christian Hospital: 03-8241234
◎ Buddhist Tzu Chi General Hospital: 03-8561825
◎ Hualien Armed Forces General Hospital/Beipu Headquarters: 03-8260601
◎ Jinfong Outpatient Service: 03-8335730
◎ Fonglin Veterans Hospital: 03-8763331
◎ Yuli Veterans Hospital: 03-8883141
◎ Buddhist Tzu Chi General Hospital Yuli Branch: 03-8882718
◎ Buddhist Tzu Chi General Hospital Guanshan Branch: 089-814880
◎ Taitung Hospital: 089-324112
◎ Mackay Memorial Hospital Taitung Branch: 089-310150
◎ Taitung St. Mary's Hospital: 089-322833
◎ Taitung Christian Hospital: 089-960888



Eastern Rift Valley National Scenic Area Administration
Website: <http://www.erv.nsa.gov.tw>
Address: No.168, Single Road, Section 2, Lin 17, Hegang Village, Ruesuei Township, Hualien County 97844
Tel: 03-8875306 Fax: 03-8875358

Liyu Lake Visitor Center
Address: No.100, Huanan North Road, Chihnan Village, Shoufong Township, Hualien County 97455
Tel: 03-8641691 Fax: 03-8641703

Luoshan Visitor Center
Address: No.15-1, Lin 9, Luoshan Village, Fuli Township, Hualien County 98342
Tel: 03-8821725 Fax: 03-8821464

Luye Visitor Center
Address: No.46, Gaotai Road, Yongan Village, Luye Township, Taitung County 95541
Tel: 089-551637 Fax: 089-551466

◎ Consumer Hotline: 1950
◎ Toll-free Consumer Hotline: 0800-060515
◎ Tour Bus Service: <http://www.taiwantourbus.com.tw> Tel: 02-23491500

