

MONDAY, OCTOBER 19

Today, head south from Taipei to **Taichung**, the hub of central Taiwan and the best base for visiting **Sun Moon Lake**. Note that you don't need to make your seat reservation in advance—simply turn up to the counter at **Taipei Main Station** and buy tickets.

TRAIN: Taipei Main Station to Taichung HSR Station, HSR 121, 10:32-11:18

After arriving at **Taichung HSR Station**, you can either ride the free **THSR Shuttle to Taichung Station**, or ride a local train (TIP: You can use your EasyCard for this!) from **Xinwuri to Taichung**. Once you arrive at the station, make the 20-minute walk to your excellent hotel, where you can drop your bags if your room is not ready for check-in.

LUNCH: Fu Ding Wan—<https://bit.ly/2Kkq4nc>

From your hotel, it's about a 10-minute walk to your lunch restaurant, where you can enjoy melt-in-your-mouth *lu rou fan*, a type of pork rice that is famous throughout Taiwan, but originally came from Taichung. From here, walk to the nearest **U-Bike** station. As is the case in Taipei, you can use your EasyCard to rent one of these.

Chart a course for **Taichung Confucius Temple**, which is about 15-minutes away by bike. In my opinion, this temple (which is relatively new—it was built in 1976) is probably the second-best such temple in Taiwan. It's not as nice as Taipei's, but is better than Tainan's. After you finish up here (I imagine you'll spend 30-60 minutes), continue biking northward to **Paochueh Temple**, which is most impressive for its massive golden Buddha.

At this point, I imagine you will still have an hour or two before you're able to return to your hotel and complete check-in; you can pass this time at the impressive (inside—the outside is a bit rough) **Taiwan National Museum of Natural Science**. After check-in, make the vigorous 30-minute bike ride southwestward to the Instagram-famous **Rainbow Village**, which is at its most beautiful in the hour or so before the sun sets.

Dinner tonight is something of a "Taichung two-step." After biking eastward back into the city center, optionally stopping at ornate **Wenchang Temple** (directions here: <https://bit.ly/3asQPR5>) on your way back, make a sugar stop at **Chun Shui Tang**, which is known to be the birthplace of Taiwan's national drink, bubble milk tea.

From here, it's just a few minutes by bike to the **Zhongxiao Road Night Market**, which is not Taichung's most popular such market (that would be **Feng Chia**), but is definitely the most authentic.

SLEEP: Cloud Hotel Taichung—<https://bit.ly/3eK2crc>

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20

Eat breakfast in your hotel, then make your way to **Taichung Bus Station** to begin your journey to **Sun Moon Lake**.