

Explore the enriched ecology on Guishan Island

Geology, nature and biology, culture and landscapes



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 Travel information number: 0800-011-765 (Chinese, English, Japanese)
 Telephone number of Wushih Harbor Visitor Center: 03-978-9078
 Telephone number of Taiwan Cetacean Society: 03-977-0606
 Pictures provided by: Yong-Hua Wu

Traffic information

By car

1. Take National Freeway No. 1 to National Freeway No. 5 and exit at Toucheng Interchange. Take Coastal Highway to Wushih Harbor where visitors can leave for Guishan Island.
2. Take National Freeway No. 3 to National Freeway No. 5 and exit at Toucheng Interchange. Take Coastal Highway to Wushih Harbor where visitors can leave for Guishan Island.

Public transportation

1. Train: Get off the train at Waiao Station and walk 15 minutes along the Coastal Trail to take the ferry at Wushih Harbor.
2. Bus: Take the Zhuangwei Dune Line of Taiwan Tourist Shuttle Bus at Toucheng Railway Station or Yilan Transfer Station to Wushih Harbor. Transfer to Yilan Bus (No. 131 on weekdays and Red 1 on holidays) at Jiaoxi Railway Station to Lanyang Museum or Wushih Harbor. Take the ferry at Wushih Harbor after getting off the bus.
3. Bus: Take Kuo-Kuang Bus No. 1877 (Yuanshan-Wushih Harbor) or Kuo-Kuang Bus No. 1766 (Nanfangan-Wushih Harbor). After getting off the bus, walk to Wushih Harbor and take the ferry to Guishan Island.

Business hours

1. 9am-5pm from March 1 to November 30
2. Guishan Island is closed in any case of force majeure or disasters based on data from the Central Weather Bureau.

Island visitor control

Guishan Island is open to the public on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, with a limit of 1800 tourists per day. It is open to academic units for field trips and ecological or environmental education trainings on Wednesday, with a limit of 500 participants per day.

Apply for an island admission permit

People who would like to visit Guishan Island and 401 Highland are required to apply for a permit online at least 11-20 days before you wish to visit. After completing all the steps online, you will receive an approval number. You need to check the number of people visiting Guishan Island 10 days before your departure. You have to bring the number and registration with you when heading to Guishan Island. International tourists will need to bring their passports with them. People who would like to visit 401 Highland are also required to apply online in addition to the application for Guishan Island. There is a visitor control for people going to 401 Highland, with 100 tourists maximum per day. Moreover, 401 Highland is only open to the public in the morning.

ID inspection

Domestic tourists need to present any ID with their pictures at the check point. International tourists need to present their passports or any ID with pictures. Tourists and team followers visiting 401 Highland also need to present relevant documents at the check point. *Check the website of the Northeast and Yilan Coast National Scenic Area for more details regarding online application.



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A small but beautiful ecological park

Guishan Island is 3.3 kilometers wide from east to west and 1.7 kilometers long, coming to a total area of 2.85 square kilometers, with a coastline of about 10 kilometers. It is the only active volcano in Taiwan. Tourists no matter traveling by car or by boat will glimpse their first view of Guishan Island upon their arrival in Yilan.

Guishan Island is located at 10 kilometers off the coast of northeastern Taiwanese town of Toucheng in Yulan County. This island gained its name for its shape reminiscent of a floating turtle. It once held a population of up to 700 people, but later they all immigrated to the neighborhood in the nearby coastal town, mainly due to the hardship and poverty of life on this island. In 1977, the residents of Guishan Island decided to move together to the Renze Community, which is located in Dashi, Toucheng Town and financed by the government. After years of effort, this community was renamed as Guishan Community in 2001.

Guishan Island was declared a controlled military zone and closed for 23 years. It wasn't until 2000 that the island was opened up again for tourism and sightseeing. This island still preserves rich ecological resources and natural scenery as time goes by.



An island of life to broaden your horizons

Other than the breath-taking scenery, another highlight of the journey from Wushih Harbor to Guishan Island is the encounter with beautiful whales and dolphins. When the boat circles around the island, you get to see a variety of landforms composed of volcanic rocks. There are steep cliffs, hills and peaks, rare cliff vegetation, and clear seawater to amaze you during your visit. After arriving at Guishan Island, you can pay a visit to the 401 Highland (with an admission permit) or take a walk along the Lakeshore Walk for the picturesque view at the Turtle's Tail Lake to experience the traces of history and its unique volcanic landscapes.



A beautiful encounter with whales and dolphins

The flowing Kuroshio Current through the Guishan Island brings warm water which attracts migratory marine creatures, making it one of the major fishing grounds in Taiwan. A large number of whales and dolphins attracted here also makes it a perfect place to watch whales and dolphins. There are more than 10 species of whales and dolphins around the island, mainly as flying dolphins, bottlenose ones, killer whales, and false killer whales. If you are lucky, you can see whales and dolphins jump out of the water and play hide and seek with fishing boats.

Every year, from May to October, it is the most suitable season to watch whales and dolphins. It is recommended to choose a certified whale-watching tour company to ensure travel safety. Do not feed dolphins and whales during the tour. The whale-watching itinerary usually includes whale-watching and circling around Guishan Island for tourists to plan according to their needs.



Map (Taiwan - Guishan Island)

Eight Scenic Highlights on Guishan Island

Among the eight scenic highlights on Guishan Island, Turtle Paying Respects to the Sun and Heavenly Turtle Wearing a Hat are sights formed by weather. The other six highlights are unique landscapes caused by volcanic eruption and wave erosion. Among these, "Spectacle of Turtle Eggs" refers to two rectangle rocks which only appeared southwest of Guishan Island when tides ebb. However, these two rocks disappeared suddenly on one particular evening after a tremendous noise in 1943.



Heavenly Turtle Wearing a Hat

When the weather turns bad, the sky of Guishan Island is always shrouded in clouds and mist from a distance. It looks like a hat on the floating turtle up the ocean surface. Local people always say, "It is going to pour when the turtle wears a hat."



Spectacle of Glass Hole

The "Spectacle of Glass", located on the southern side of Guishan Island, is the most well-known sea cave. It was named for its similarity to a pair of glasses. It is composed of pyroclastic rocks.



Turtle Rock and Precipice

The "Turtle Rock and Precipice" is a unique landform created after a stream of lava was cooled. The horizontal and vertical columnar joints can be seen on the 401 Highland and northwest of the Turtle's Shell.



Turtle Paying Respects to the Sun

With the turtle's head facing east, when the sun rises, it creates a feeling of the turtle worshipping the sun. When it is bright, the sunrise over Guishan Island creates a magnificent view.



Seabed Spa Surging Up High

White bubbles surging out the surface of blue sea on the eastern coast of Guishan Island creates a peculiar hot spring landscape. It can be seen on the boat or on the highland.



Heavenly Turtle Wagging Tail

There is a 1-kilometer long gravel beach located at the Turtle's Tail. The direction of this gravel beach, formed by igneous rocks, varies due to the winds in summer and winter and tides. It creates a feeling that the tail of the turtle moves gradually from time to time.



Sulphur Smoke on Turtle Island

Guishan Island contains a large amount of Sulfur because of volcanic activity. The "Sulphur Smoke on Turtle Island" is a phenomenon formed by the erupted hydrogen sulfide and carbon dioxide.



Map of Turtle's Tail

Spectacular view at Turtle's Tail and walk along the lake



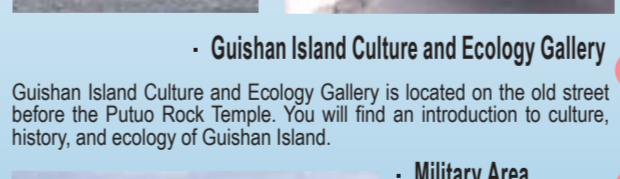
North Coast Wharf

A crossover bridge, built to connect it to the land, has become the passageway to enter and exit the island.



Lighthouse on the Turtle's Tail

It is located on the gravel beach of the Turtle's Tail but is no longer in use.



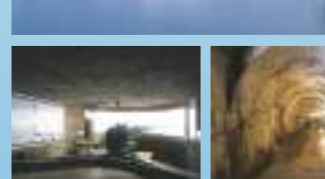
Guishan Island Culture and Ecology Gallery

Guishan Island Culture and Ecology Gallery is located on the old street before the Putuo Rock Temple. You will find an introduction to culture, history, and ecology of Guishan Island.



Military Area

The Military Area, originally Guishan Elementary School, is now rebuilt as the dormitory of the Coast Guard Administration.



Military Tunnel

The 800m long Military Tunnel, with the main tunnel 3.5m high and 3m wide, is equipped with plenty of military equipment, such as 7 artillery positions and 1 machine-gun position. It used to be a significant military site to safeguard the northeast and Lanyang Plain.



Guishan Island Visitor Service Center

It provides travel information, urgent medical service, and sales of souvenirs.

Taiwan Ebony Trail

The 300m Taiwan Ebony Trail has a Taiwan Ebony tree with a diameter over 80 centimeters for about 4 to 5 hundred years. This tree is regarded as a sacred symbol by the local residents. Next to the tree, there is a monument which was set up in memory of the excavation of Guishan Fishing Harbor. There is also a sightseeing balcony for people to gaze at the broad and vast scene in front of them.

Well

The Well is located next to the Lakeshore Walk and near the entrance of the Taiwan Ebony Trail. Its water comes from the rock wall beneath the red cedar forest and used to be one of the major water resources in the old days.

Lakeshore Walk

The Lakeshore Walk, with a total length of 650m, follows the shore of the tranquil and beautiful Turtle's Tail Lake. Along the walk, there are countless natural ecological sights for tourists to linger at, as well as one sculpture of Guanyin. It is the only place where you can overlook the rare native Chinese fan palm in Taiwan. Since the Turtle's Tail Lake was once connected to the sea, the landmark with the inscriptions-"Guishan Fishing Port" still stands at the area.



Map of Guishan Island

Observe nature and ecology - 401 Highland

1. 401 Highland, with a total length of 1400m, consists of 1706 stairs. With the highest peak situated at 398 meters above sea level and a 3-meter high observation deck (originally a military outpost), this highland is named as "401 Highland". There is a rich abundance of natural resources along the trail.



2. There are viewing pavilions at 200^m and 1000^m stairs respectively for tourists to take in a complete view of the Turtle's Tail.



3. After walking up about a third of the highland, you will find an ancient tomb from the Qing dynasty on your right.

