

mabuhay

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PARADISE FOUND

Fashion entrepreneur
Paloma Urquijo Zobel seeks
inspiration in Puerto Princesa

Indonesian flavors win back
Bali's fine-dining scene

The modern reinvention of
Sydney's old industrial buildings

Coral reef preservation takes
top priority in Guam

Taiwan

Island of bicycles

Home to rugged mountains, sprawling rice terraces and pristine coastlines, Taiwan is a cyclist's paradise – even for beginners

CYCLING

A subtropical island, Taiwan is blessed with pine forests in the north and warm beaches in the south, making it one of the best places to explore by bike – especially in the spring. YouBike (a bike-sharing system with kiosks throughout the capital) is ubiquitous in Taipei, and nowadays, it's easy to rent bicycles outside of the city. From coastal routes to paths cutting through charming villages, here are four of Taiwan's most picturesque biking trails.

**North of Taipei:
Guandu to Tamsui**

The fishing village of Tamsui boasts one of the most scenic cycling routes near Taipei. Start by renting a bike from Bicycle Classroom outside of Guandu MRT station, a few stops from the city center, and breeze through Guandu Nature Park. Follow the marked mangrove trail from Guandu Temple along the Tamsui River for 30 minutes (about 11km) towards Fisherman's Wharf, where vendors sell fried squid and skewered fish balls.



**Hualien:
Qixingtan Bike Trail**

The express train from Taipei Main Station to Hualien zips through black sand beaches and limestone cliffs for two and a half hours before arriving at Hualien train station, where Giant Bicycles is conveniently located. From there, follow Huaxi Road to Qixingtan Scenic Area where the 15km bike trail begins near pebbly, crescent-shaped Qixingtan Beach. Follow the trail south along the Pacific coast, where cyclists can stop at Hualien Harbor for fresh sashimi.



**Dulan:
Highway 11**

For a more ambitious ride from Taitung, there's Dulan. Known as a surfer's paradise, Dulan is a small village about 23km north of Taitung City, and is home to scenic bike trails. Rent a bike from Giant Bicycles at Taitung train station and follow Highway 11 up the coast, while listening to lapping waves and songs sung by the Amis tribe in the mountains. Donghe and Dulan beaches are worth a visit during the day, and cyclists can end the night at live-music venue Dulan Sugar Factory.



WORDS: DANA TER IMAGES (GUANDU, DULAN, TAITUNG), ALAMY (HUALIEN)