



akokay! Pongso no tao

Learning about the Tao People:

Pongso no tao

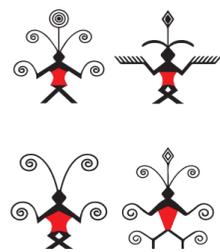


A Pacific paradise Orchid Island

Located 49 nautical miles off Taitung's coast, this beautiful volcanic island of 45 square kilometers is secluded yet rich in marine life, surrounded by vibrant coral reefs. Home to the indigenous Yami (Tao) people who safeguard generations of cultural treasures.



Traditional Attire of the Tao



Orchid Island of the Tao

Originally "Hongtuo Island," later renamed "Orchid Island" (Lan Yu in Mandarin) due to its moth orchids. Locals call it "Pongso no tao" or "Tao Island." In 1897, Japanese anthropologist Torii Ryūzō visited and termed the inhabitants "Yami," while some prefer to use "Tao". Over 80% of the island's 5,200 residents identify as Yami (Tao) 2023 census).



Flying Fish



Sun-dried Flying Fish

Flying fish season.

From January to June, Orchid Island sees a surge of flying fish, known as alibangbang, with the return of the Kuroshio Current. The indigenous Yami (Tao) people view them as a divine gift, shaping their culture and traditions around this event with unique rituals and a Tao lunar calendar.



Orchid Island Scops Owl



Jewel Butterfly



Orchid Island Glossy Snail

Orchid Island's Endemic Wildlife.

Orchid Island boasts diverse native species like the Magellan Birdwing, *Pachyrhynchus sarcitis*, *Phylloporina kotoshoensis*, and *Phasmotaenia lanyuhensis*, Taiwan's largest Phasmid. Its tropical rainforest climate, with stable yet rainy conditions, nurtures rich ecological resources.

Magellan Birdwing: The male butterfly's hindwings reflect stunning hues of yellow, blue, green, and pearl in sunlight.
Opallioystyla: A nearly transparent, pure white tree-dwelling snail.
Orchid Elegant Scops Owl: A unique subspecies, active in the island's forests at night.



Sea Turtles



Coral Reefs

A Blue Paradise Surrounded by Coral

Orchid Island sees flying fish migrate northward each spring with the Kuroshio Current. The Yami (Tao) people make sustainable use of marine resources, preserving the island's rich ecology with traditional taboos. Its stunning coral reefs attract divers year-round with clear waters ideal for exploration.

Visiting Orchid Island

A plane or passenger ship are the only way to reach Orchid Island. Due to weather or tides, schedules may change, so plan flexibly. Check the flight status before departing or arriving at the port or airport early.



Flights to Orchid Island

Daily flights from Taitung Airport take about 25 minutes. Due to limited seating and flight suspensions during the winter and typhoon season, early booking and online confirmation before departure are recommended.

Taitung Airport +886-89-361-111
DAILY Airlines(Taitung Station) +886-89-362-675
DAILY Airlines (Lanyu Station) +886-89-732-278

Ferry to Orchid Island

Ferries from Taitung to Orchid Island leave from Fugang Fishing Port, with a 2.5 to 3-hour journey. Some routes also stop at Green Island, allowing travelers to hop between Orchid Island and Green Island.

Heading to Fugang Fishing Port from Taitung Airport or Train Station takes 20 to 40 minutes by Taiwan Tourist Shuttle, Xingdong Bus, or taxi, costing around 300 to 350 NTD.

Round trip boat ride between Kenting's Houbihu, Orchid Island, and Green Island takes about 2 hours and requires advance booking and a minimum passenger count.

Local transportation routes

Transportation relies on scooters, with a one-hour round trip around the island. The only gas station, located in Nanliao Village, opens from 8 am to 6pm. Travelers can arrange transportation through accommodations, travel agencies, or bring their scooters on the ferry.



Taitung Airport



DAILY Air Corporation



Ezboat Reservation Information

The enchanting Yami (Tao) culture

The Yami (Tao) people live by traditional knowledge, balancing agriculture and fishing, and maintaining an egalitarian society. The island consists of six tribes: Jiyayo, Jiraraley, Jiranmeylek, Jivalino, Jimorod, and Jiratay.



Gender Division of Labor, mutual support.

Gender-based labor division structures indigenous productivity: men fish, farm, and build, while women tend fields, homes, children, and weave.

<Farming> Taro is vital for food and ceremonies; other crops include sweet potatoes, millet, and Chinese yams.

<Fishing> Traditional methods, like flying fish hunting and bottom-dwelling fishing, reflected men's status, with flying fish capture crucial year-round for ceremonies.

<Livestock> Chickens, pigs, and sheep, raised either free-range or penned, are primarily slaughtered during celebrations.



Main House



Visiting Homes on Orchid Island

In tropical climates, frequent typhoons and earthquakes led the indigenous Tao to build their main houses underground. Settlements are nestled on slopes amid beaches and mountains, with traditional homes designed to face both the sea and mountains.

<Main House, vahey> Besides the first and second-door area, there are third and fourth-door areas, each with three levels: cooking and socializing at the bottom, bedrooms and storage in the middle, and storage for armor, smoked fish, and tools at the top.

<Elevated Structures, makarang> Used for summer living and clapping song gatherings. During house or launching ceremonies, people sing here all night.

<Social Hall, tagakal> Main area for summer socializing.

<Courtyard, inaorod> Key area for rituals, like tossing millet.



Taro Fields



Modified Bead Stringing



Sun-dried Flying Fish



Raising Goats



Weaving Craft

Inheritance of Craftsmanship

In the past, the tribe people crafted everything from houses and boats to clothing and utensils. Proficiency in boatbuilding and weaving conferred high social status.

Traditional crafts on the island include woodworking, pottery, and weaving, showcasing the exquisite skills and cultural uniqueness of the Yami (Tao) people.



Woodcarving Craft



Ipanitika

New boat ceremonies

The boat launching ceremony is a vital celebration for the Yami (Tao) people. Large boats are a collective effort by family and relatives. Preparation lasts three years and includes finding suitable trees, cultivating taro fields, and raising pigs for the necessary offering. After carving the boat, a ceremony covers it in taro the next morning. Then, guests witness welcoming rituals and all-night singing, followed by the offering of taro and pork. Finally, the crew, adorned in traditional clothing, sings while men from the tribe lift and toss the boat before its trial run.

Daily greetings of the Yami (Tao) people!

Island Language Classroom

- Greetings ▶ **akokey**
- Very good ▶ **ya apiya**
- Thank you ▶ **ayoy**
- Goodbye ▶ **mey ko na an**
- Hi Ma'am ▶ **kaminan kong**
- Hi Sir ▶ **maran kong**
- Hello Grandpa ▶ **akey kong**
- Hello Grandma ▶ **akes kong**
- Hello Brother/Sister ▶ **kaka kong**
- Hello Younger Brother/Sister ▶ **wari cyong**



Taitung Tourism Website



Township Office Public Services



Accommodation Website



Township Office Travel Information Page

Tourism Administration, M.O.T.C
24-Hour Toll-Free Travel Information Hotline
0800-011-765



Taitung County Tourist Service Center Hotline
+886-89-357-131



LANYU MAP

Map Legend

- Tribal Village
- Airport
- Attractions
- Health Center
- 東80 Township Road
- Other

Orchid Island Travel: Tips & Taboos

- ▶ Respect the biodiversity; Do not collect or disturb the wildlife. Avoid stepping on coral reefs while snorkeling, using sunscreen, and feeding fish.
- ▶ Respect local customs and taboos during traditional festivals.
- ▶ Respect indigenous privacy: ask before photographing private homes, activities, or elders in traditional attire.
- ▶ During flying fish season (around January to June), respect traditional taboos. No touching or climbing onto Ipanitika for photos.
- ▶ Barringtonia are taboo to the Tao. Their leaves and/or branches should not be brought into homes or placed onto Ipanitika.
- ▶ Do not bring oranges to the beach, especially during the Flying Fish Festival. Pregnant women should not touch Ipanitika.
- ▶ No traffic lights on the island, livestock roam on the gravel roads. Drive slowly and safely.
- ▶ Hike with a local guide or in a group; avoid going alone.
- ▶ Local guides are essential for ocean activity safety due to strong currents and undertows.
- ▶ Be cautious of mite bites. If medical assistance is needed, the only clinic is in Hongtuo Village.
- ▶ Most of the island is cash only. ATM locations: Post Office, Farmers' Association Shopping Center, Lanyu Supermarket, and Dongqing and Yeyou Villages.

Yeyou Village Jiyayo Tribe The hub for travelers

Jiyayo means "abundant food," bustling with businesses, emergency services, institutions, supermarkets, and a gas station. Cargo ships dock at Kaiyuan Port weekly, locals shop at the supermarket, and nearby, a market for vegetables, seafood, and crafts thrives.



Mantou Rock

The first landmark when flying into the island is Mantou Rock, also a site for tribal cliff and sea burials.



Tiger Head Slope

The steep volcanic rock formation features trench-like channels, ideal for fishing. Nearby, a pavilion offers a spot to enjoy the ocean view.



Jyakmey sawasawalan (Red Head Rock)

Resembling a human head, also known as Red Head Island, its name is from the summer sunset's red glow reflecting off it.



Honey Moon Bay

Resembling a heart from afar, the bay offers a serene and cozy shoreline.

Lan Dao Village Jiraley Jiyayo Tribe Geo-Cultural Eco Tour

Jiraley signifies "respect and courtesy." Lan Dao Village boasts the richest of natural landscapes, with traditional and modern settlements. The region sees ongoing efforts to rename geographical features reflect the tribe's diverse identity.



Torch Rock (Jade Lady Rock)

According to legend, a quarreling couple, and their child, unable to reconcile, transformed into rocks here. Villagers used torches made of reeds as lighting for nighttime seafood gathering.

Deep Holes (Five-Hole Cave)

The flat shore extends into deep trenches with Five sea caves. Each cave has a distinct name and cultural significance and are off-limits for children due to extreme darkness.



Lan Dao Secret Spot

The must-visit spot for swimming and snorkeling, with crystal-clear blue waters.



Waist-Bundling (Crocodile Rock)

Formed by volcanic debris and coral reef erosion, the rock's joints fracture, creating a cinched waist shape, hence its name "Waist-Bundling." Exercise caution while driving in this windy area.

Dongqing Village Jiranmylek Tribe Jiranmylek is where the sunrise's beauty is embraced

Jiranmylek or ivazogan means "attracting flying fish" and "the place where the sun rises and strong winds blow during the northeast monsoon." It's where visitors can experience paddling Ipanitika. The local night market is also popular.



Twin Lions Rock

Marks the boundary between Dongqing and Lan Dao and was used for sea salt collection. The rock formation resembles two lions.



Dongqing Secret Gem

Surrounded by natural coral reefs, clear ocean is irresistible.



Lover's Cave

Formed over time by wave erosion, this natural arch is a stunning sight at sunrise when the sun shines through it.

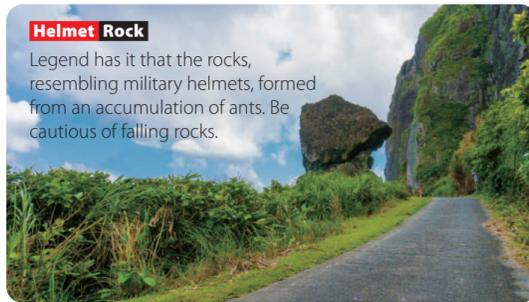


Battleship Rock

Jiaod means "difficult to land" and is a rich fishery of the Dongqing Tribe. Legend is during WWII, the rocks were mistaken for enemy battleships and bombed.

Ye-Yin Village Jivalino Tribe Jivalino Explore main house and legends

Jivalino signifies "abundant bayhops," with a largely intact traditional settlement. The traditional main house design showcases a harmonious blend with nature.



Helmet Rock

Legend has it that the rocks, resembling military helmets, formed from an accumulation of ants. Be cautious of falling rocks.



Ye-Yin Traditional Tribal Village

A well-preserved traditional village, inhabited by many elderly. Please seek local guidance for entry to respect the culture and prevent misunderstandings.



Orchid Island Weather Station

During WWII, Japanese forces mobilized locals to build it in 1940. Despite being a prime viewpoint, it bears bullet holes from wartime attacks. Hiking is required due to safety reasons.



Elephant Trunk Rock

Formed by volcanic activity, this basalt formation resembles an elephant's trunk. Avoid engaging in water activities alone.

Hongtuo Village Jimorod Tribe Jimorod Where the flying fish arrive.

Jimorod, meaning "crowded," is the birthplace of flying fish culture, hosting the first festivals. Its beachfront is a vital site, while Badao Bay and Little Orchid Island are key fishing grounds.



Qingqing Grasslands

The tribal farmland offers stunning sunset views and blooms with wildflowers in spring, transforming into a golden grassland in winter.



Badao Bay

Sea pillar formations resemble an old man and serve as sea snakes' habitat.



Sky Pond (Tienchih)

Formed by volcanic eruptions, the crater collects rainwater, forming lakes, and boasts rich tropical rainforest ecosystems.



Old Man Rock

Sea pillar formations resemble an old man and serve as sea snakes' habitat.



Little Orchid Island

3 nautical miles southeast of Orchid Island, this is an uninhabited fishing ground for all tribes on the island. It is taboo for women to step foot on Little Orchid Island.

Fishman Village Jiratay Tribe Fertile Soil for Taro

Jiratay, meaning "flat and spacious land," is home to a stretched settlement near the Jimorod Tribe. It is known for different families based on the methods of killing fish, distinct from other tribes.



Fertile soil for growing abundant taro.

Taro fields are crucial for the locals, with sheep grazing freely among vast taro farms. The Jiratay's church boasts a century-old, terraced taro field, forming a natural landscape with stone-walled terraced water taro fields.

IGANG

Legend says it's where a fairy descended, near the tribal beach where shells were burned for lime.

Origin of the Fishermen's Festival

During flying fish season, tribal women catch hairy-legged fiddler crabs to prepare delicious meals, showing appreciation for their husbands.