

# King Ling College S5 Grand Tour Report Destination: Taipei, Taiwan 5D (2022-2023)



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# **Introduction**

Our class, 5D, chose Taipei as our destination for the Grand Tour. The 5-day Grand Tour from 31 March to 4 April was successfully completed and we were safely returned to Hong Kong with a myriad of inspirations and new friends from the Minglun Senior High School (MLSH).



## Day 1

On the 31st of March, the beginning of our tour, we gathered at the Hong Kong International Airport at 6 am, thrilled for the departure of the plane to Taiwan. Once we arrived at Taoyuan International Airport, we were well-prepared and could not wait for the 5-day tour in Taipei. As the first stop of our tour, we visited the MLSH and had a walk on their campus, where the students from MLSH introduced their campus to us. We joyfully chit-chatted with them and discussed cultural contrasts between Taiwan and Hong Kong. MLSH was large in scale compared to average secondary schools in Hong Kong, they also had a library consisting of two floors, which we could never imagine to have in Hong Kong. We then went to Taipei 101, one of the landmarks in Taipei. Gazing at the stunning city view of Taipei on the high-rise observation deck was a lovely experience. At night time, we visited the Raohe Night Market (饒河街夜市) and gave Taiwan street cuisines a shot. We were all fond of these mouth-watering and affordable street snacks.





## Day 2

On the 1st of April, the second day of our tour, we visited various tourist spots. In the morning, we went to Tamsui Fisherman's Wharf (淡水漁人碼頭) and Fort San Domingo (淡水紅毛城), originally a wooden fort built in 1628 by the Spanish Empire. We stepped into the buildings and the design of the building is impressive and well-preserved as it doesn't look like decorations built 400 years ago. In the afternoon, we went to Beitou (北投) Museum, Beitou Hot Spring Museum, and the Thermal Valley (地熱谷). Beitou Museum was mainly built of wood, featuring different culture relics from the Qing dynasty and those from Japanese cultures such as plates and bowls with traditional paintings. There were also different landscapes and rooms with tatamis (たたみ) as the floor, which were cozy to sit on. Furthermore, Beitou Hot Spring Museum featured lots of details of traditional hot springs. There was also a large room with tatami flooring which allowed visitors to sit and chat. Nevertheless, in the Thermal Valley, there were literal hot springs allowing us to wash our hands and get them warm. The smoke filling the whole valley was breathtaking and majestic, reminding us of the amazing work of Mother Nature. On account of the rain, the visit sounds a bit lousy. Our clothes got wet which made us feel uncomfortable. Even though it had been raining cats and dogs, it didn't stop us from sightseeing. Eventually, the rain came to a halt. We took a stroll in the Xinbeitou Historic Station (新北投車站) and the Shilin (士林) Night Market. The appealing snacks healed us from the sadness of the cloudburst.



## Day 3

On the 2nd of April, the third day of our tour, we visited the Museum of Contemporary Art and Pinglin (坪林) Tea Museum in the morning, familiarizing ourselves with the tea culture. It was an eye-opening experience, as we gained lots of information. For example, the tea making process and kaleidoscopic varieties of tea. After that, we had a quick walk at Shenkeng Old Street (深坑老街), eating stinky tofu that smells quite awful, however, tasted surprisingly flavorful. Next, we went to Shifen Old Street (十分老街) releasing sky lanterns with our wishes written on, in hopes of our dreams coming true.





## Day 4

On the 3rd of April, the fourth day of our tour, we had a great breakfast buffet at the hotel's restaurant. After two hours of driving by our coach, we arrived at Yehliu (野柳) GeoPark at 11 am. There were many tourists like us, squeezing into the Geopark. We walked along the pavement in the park and enjoyed a memorable sightseeing experience of the spectacular shapes of stones and the boundless ocean beyond shorelines. After a short break for lunch, we visited the Gold Museum and got to know the mining and extraction of gold. Besides, there were different ores shown in the museum, such as ores containing native gold and luzonite, pyrite and the ore of stalactitic limonite and so on. Nevertheless, we also got the opportunity to see the famous gold in the museum which weighed 220.3kg. Moreover, there were numerous traditional Japanese buildings in other parts of the museum, enhancing our cultural knowledge. It was an eye-opening lesson we would always remember. Next, we take a bus to Jiufen (九份) Old Street. We savored several bowls of taro balls (芋圓). They are incredible for their sweetness and chewy texture. Similarly, a large number of tourists are attracted to the old street and causing the street to be packed.





## Day 5

On the 4th April, the last day of our tour. We, the “Science Class” (all of us studying Physics and Chemistry), visited the National Taiwan Science Education Center. Inside the center, there was an area for physics theory related to mechanics and electromagnetism. We applied our knowledge learnt in Physics lessons, predicted how those machines would work and answered questions from the guide correctly. Also, there was a section for Mathematics, introducing different mathematicians like Gauss and some other math-related knowledge like geometry and trigonometry. We then visited the Miniatures Museum of Taiwan. There were different models built in the museum. For example, The Buckingham Palace and The White House. Its details in the buildings were clearly represented and most of us were amazed. Afterwards, we went to Shi-men Ting (西門町) to buy souvenirs for our friends and parents. It was our last stop in Taiwan before going back to Hong Kong. We stepped on the coach and started our last ride to the Taoyuan International Airport. Growing up both mentally and physically returning home. We were happy and grateful to all the teachers, tour guides and the coach driver. It was truly a privilege to have visited this breathtaking city.



# **Taiwan Night Market Culture**

Taiwan night markets are in a league of their own. We have been to Shilin and Raohe Night Market, to get a taste of the inherent part of Taiwan culture.

Shilin is renowned as a one-stop spot for clothing, accessories, and Taiwanese street food. It is giant and teeming with shops, street vendors, and food stalls. Foodies from around the globe come here to sample fried chicken steaks (Shilin's specialty), small sausage in large sausage (大腸包小腸), and stinky tofu.

Raohe is certainly a foodie paradise and perfect for sampling traditional Taiwanese snacks in a lively and crowded night market. Must-try dishes include oyster omelets, pork belly buns (刈包), taro balls, and pepper buns.

Strolling in these night markets is a feast of senses with a phenomenal atmosphere. From the tempting scents of street food to the symphony of chit-chatting sounds.

## Taiwan Street Food

Pepper buns are incredibly addictive street snacks with pork and spring onions stuffed into the dough and baked in the tandoor-like oven. Spicy pepper and white sesame offers an immense flavour and fragrance to the golden buns.