

Fújiàn 福建



Once home to snake-headed barbarians and elusive immortals, Fújiàn is a region of steep mountains, river valleys and a lush subtropical coastline. While the coastal cities have been engaging in trade for hundreds of years, its mountainous interior remained inaccessible until as late as the 1960s, when the communists built roads through the dense jungle. Rumour has it that the legendary South China tiger still lurks in the most remote mountain regions.

Modern-day Fújiàn's coastline is flourishing, just like it has for centuries. The capital, Fúzhōu, is a 21st-century boomtown, with soaring skyscrapers and never-ending development. The historical port of Xiàmén is much quieter, and unlike Fúzhōu it has managed to keep much of its character over the years. Off its coast, the former foreign enclave of Gùlàng Yú boasts wonderfully preserved colonial buildings and traffic-free streets, making it a refreshing breather from the frenzy of modern China. The enclave is only a stone's throw from the Taiwan-claimed island of Jīnmén (Kinmen), once the site of ferocious battles between mainland communists and the Nationalist party. The old trading centre of Quánzhōu, with its ancient mosque and maritime museum, are potent reminders of the city's once illustrious past, when it was one of the most international ports in the world.

Fújiàn's rugged inland remains relatively unknown, with the exception of the tourist resort of Wúyí Shān in the northwest and Taimu Mountain near the border of Zhèjiāng province. Both mountains offer fantastic hiking opportunities. Southwest Fújiàn, near Yǒngdìng, is the place to see the unique earthhouses of the Hakka people, one of Fújiàn's many ethnic groups.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Scale one of the last remaining walled cities in China at the ancient city of **Chóngwǔ** (p353)
- Search for immortality among the granite peaks of **Taimu Mountain** (p343), home to Taoist gods and fairies
- See first-hand the junks that once plied the waters off China's coast at the Maritime Museum in **Quánzhōu** (p351)
- Come face to face with ghosts of the past on the sleepy island of **Gùlàng Yú** (p348)
- Kick up some dust at the fascinating Hakka earthhouses of **Yǒngdìng** (p350)



■ POPULATION: 42.1 MILLION

■ www.amoymagic.com

History

The coastal region of Fújiàn, known in English as Fukien or Hokkien, has been part of the Chinese empire since the Qin dynasty (221–207 BC), when it was known as Min.

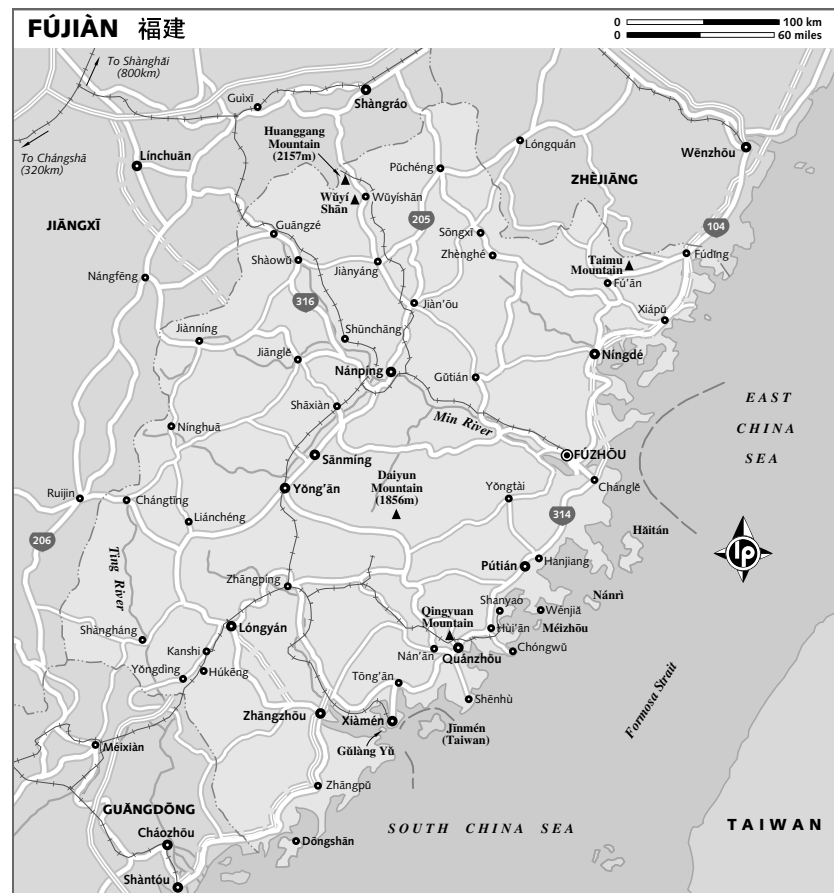
Sea trade transformed the region from a frontier into one of the centres of the Chinese world. During the Song and Yuan dynasties the coastal city of Quánzhōu was one of the main ports of call on the maritime silk route, which transported not only silk but other textiles, precious stones, porcelain and a host of other valuables. The city was home to more than 100,000 Arab merchants, missionaries and travellers.

Despite a decline in the province's fortunes after the Ming dynasty restricted maritime

commerce in the 15th century, the resourcefulness of the Fújiàn people proved itself in the numbers heading for Taiwan, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. Overseas links were forged that continue today, contributing much to the modern character of the province.

Climate

Fújiàn has a subtropical climate, with hot, humid summers and drizzly cold winters. June through August brings soaring temperatures and humidity, with torrential rains and typhoons common. In the mountainous regions, winters can be fiercely cold. The best time to visit is spring (March–May) and autumn (September–October).



Language

Because of its isolated topography Fújiàn is one of the most linguistically diverse provinces in China. Locals speak variations of the Min dialect, which includes Taiwanese. Min is divided into various subgroups – you can expect to hear Southern Min (Minnán Huà) in Xiàmén and Quánzhōu, and Eastern Min (Dōng Mǐn) in Fúzhōu.

Getting There & Away

Fújiàn is well connected to the neighbouring provinces of Guǎngdōng and Jiāngxī by train and coastal highway. Xiàmén and Fúzhōu have airline connections to most of the country, including Hong Kong, and Taipei and Kaohsiung in Taiwan. Wúyí Shān has flight connections to China's larger cities, including Běijīng, Shànghǎi and Hong Kong. The coastal freeway also goes all the way to Hong Kong from Xiàmén.

Getting Around

Getting around Fújiàn coastal areas is a breeze, thanks to the well-maintained coastal highway. For exploring the interior, trains are slow but more comfortable and safer than travelling by bus. Wúyí Shān is linked to Fúzhōu, Quánzhōu and Xiàmén by train. If the train is too slow, there are daily flights between Xiàmén, Fúzhōu and Wúyí Shān. See the Getting There & Away information in the relevant sections of this chapter for more details.

FÚZHŌU 福州

☎ 591 / pop 6.6 million

Fúzhōu, capital of Fújiàn, is a prosperous modern city that attracts a significant amount of Taiwanese investment, reflected in innumerable shopping centres and expensive restaurants. Unless you're here on business the city holds very little interest, except as a launching pad for visiting Wúyí Shān or Taimu Mountain.

The city dates back to the 3rd century AD, and over the years became an important trading centre for tea. Marco Polo described the city as a 'veritable marvel', perhaps as applicable then as it is today, considering the scope of recent development.

Orientation

Fúzhōu's city centre sprawls northward from the Min River (Mín Jiāng). The train station is in the northeast of the city, while most of the

accommodation is on Wusi Lu, sandwiched between Hualin Lu and Dongda Lu. Travellers arriving by bus will be dropped off either at the north long-distance bus station, close to the train station, or the south long-distance bus station at the intersection of Guohuo Xilu and Wuyi Zhonglu. The airport is 50km south of the city.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS 网吧

Look for internet cafés in the alleys running south of Dong Jie near the intersection with Wuyi Beilu. Most places charge Y2 to Y3 an hour.

INTERNET RESOURCES

ChinaTS Network (www.chinats.com/fuzhou) Provides background on Fúzhōu's history and cultural attractions.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Fujian Provincial Hospital (Shèng Èr Rénmín Yīyuàn; 134 Dong Jie) Conveniently located in the city centre.

MONEY

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 136 Wusi Lu; ☎ 8am-6pm) The main branch changes travellers cheques and cash, and has an ATM which handles foreign cards.

POST & TELEPHONE

Post and telephone office (Yóudiàn Dàlóu) On the southeast corner of Dong Jie and Baiyiqi Lu.

PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU

PSB (Gōngānjú; 107 Beihuan Zhonglu) Opposite the Sports Centre in the northern part of town.

TOURIST INFORMATION & TRAVEL AGENCIES

China Travel Service (CTS; Zhōngguó Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 8753 6250; 128 Wusi Lu) Sells airline tickets and offers a number of tours to areas around Fújiàn, but it doesn't book train tickets.

Sights & Activities

Fúzhōu has only a few places of interest for visitors. Most people just pass through the city or use it as a base for sites further afield.

The **Jade Hill Scenic Area** (Yú Shān Fēngjǐngqū), a rocky hill in the centre of Fúzhōu, is attractive enough to spend an hour or so. The hill once overlooked the city but is now dwarfed by the surrounding skyscrapers and shopping plazas. Its principal attraction

is the seven-storey **White Pagoda** (Bái Tǎ), built in AD 904. From the top of the pagoda you have peek-a-boo views of the city. Near the pagoda is a small exhibit hall showcasing two silk-wrapped mummies from the Song dynasty. A stern-faced statue of **Mao Zedong** (Máo Zhǔxī Xiàng) salutes the sea of traffic at the foot of Jade Hill.

Near Jade Hill is the granite **Black Pagoda** (Wū Tǎ), which stands on the southern slope of Black Hill (Wū Shān) and dates from the 8th century. It contains some fierce-looking statues of guardian deities. During the Lunar New Year Festival, both the White and Black pagodas are strung with lanterns and look quite festive.

In the northwest of Fúzhōu is **West Lake Park** (Xīhú Gōngyuán; admission Y15; ☎ 6am-10pm), with a large artificial lake. It's a popular hang-out for locals on the weekends. The **Fujian Provincial Museum** (Fújiàn Shèng Bówùguǎn; admission Y20; ☎ 9am-4pm) in the park is very sci-fi, with lots of columns and spires. Despite its tacky exterior, the exhibits inside are pretty good and include a fascinating 3445-year-old 'boat coffin' unearthed from a cliff in Wúyíshān.

South of the Min River, across from Jiefang Bridge, is the former **foreign concession area**, now a ramshackle collection of old and new developments. You'll see a few dilapidated colonial buildings, mixed in with more recent construction.

To experience river life along the Min River, consider taking a boat tour from **Taijiang Harbour** (Tǎijiāng Mǎtōu). Boats leave according to demand and prices vary depending upon the number of people who want to take the tour. Most hotels and travel agencies can arrange this trip.

Sleeping

Fúzhōu accommodation falls mainly in the midrange and top-end categories. Many hotels offer discounts, making them affordable even for those on tight budgets. Wusi Lu and Dongda Lu are the best places to look for places to stay. Most hotels are equipped with broadband internet, though you might pay up to Y30 a day for access.

BUDGET & MIDRANGE

Fuzhou Hotel (Fúzhōu Dàjiǔjiā; ☎ 8755 6631; fax 8755 5795; 18 Dongda Lu; 东大路18号; s Y398, d Y358-396, tr Y498) This centrally located hotel has respectable, good-sized rooms with comfortable beds. The

bathrooms are outdated but clean. It's a five-minute walk from here to Jade Hill.

Juchunyuán Hotel (Jūchūnyuán Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 8750 2328; fax 8750 2228; 2 Dong Jie; 东街2号; s Y498, d Y438-498, ste Y568) This smart three-star hotel has a monster-size lobby with several restaurants and expensive shopping centres. Rooms are quite large and come with minibars and video on demand. The restaurant of the same name has an excellent reputation for serving some of the best Fújiàn cuisine in town (see below).

Jin Ye Hotel (Jīnyè Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 8757 5888; fax 8758 5888; 378 Hualin Lu; 华林路378号; s Y583-638, d Y530-580) The Jin Ye has cosy, tastefully decorated rooms conveniently located near the train station but a bit far from everything else. Ask for a room on the top floor to avoid the noisy street. Half-price discounts are the norm here.

Yushan Hotel (Yúshān Bīnguǎn; ☎ 8335 1668; fax 8335 7694; 10 Yushan Lu; 于山路10号; s Y583-638, d Y539) Located on the grassy park-like grounds of Jade Hill, the Yushan offers fresh, peaceful rooms with upscale amenities. Affable, organised management can help you with air and train tickets.

TOP END

Hot Spring Hotel (Wēnquán Dàfāndiàn; ☎ 8785 1818; fax 8783 5150; 218 Wusi Lu; 五四路218号; d Y1136-1587, ste Y2047-2622) This large hotel has luxurious rooms with excellent facilities, including piped-in hot springs, an on-site bowling alley and several restaurants. It's so nice you may not want to leave.

Eating

Because of its proximity to the Min River and the ocean, Fúzhōu is deservedly famous for both freshwater fish and seafood. The city's most famous dish is the imaginatively named 'Buddha Leaps the Wall' (佛跳墙; Fó Tiào Qiáng), a concoction of 30 different kinds of vegetables, meats and seafood, including abalone, sea slugs, dried scallops, pigeon eggs and mushrooms, stewed for hours in an aged liquor. The story goes that the dish is so delicious, Buddha would leap a wall to get to it.

Juchunyuán Restaurant (Jūchūnyuán Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 8753 3604; 2 Dong Jie; Fó Tiào Qiáng Y200; ☎ 11.30am-9pm) The most famous restaurant in town is located in the Juchunyuán Hotel (see above) and has built a reputation on Fúzhōu's one-of-a-kind dish.

For cheap noodles and dumplings in a lively nocturnal environment, locals head south to



Taijiang Lu – a boisterous, pedestrianised food street (*cài bù xíngjiē*) lined with Ming-dynasty-style wooden buildings and lanterns. Take bus 51 from Wusi Lu to get there.

Shopping

Fúzhōu is famous for its lacquerware, bamboo furniture, and stone and cork carvings. The

city is also famous for its ‘clay people’ (*ní rén*), which are small clay figurines painted in bright colours.

A good place to look for souvenir items is in the **Huadu Department Store** (Huádù Shāngshà; 49 Wuyi Zhonglu), where you’ll find paper parasols, jade combs and other popular Fúzhōu mementos.

INFORMATION		SLEEPING		SHOPPING	
Bank of China 中国银行	1 B2	Fuzhou Hotel 福州大酒店	13 B3	Huadu Department Store	19 C4
Bank of China 中国银行	2 B3	Hot Spring Hotel 温泉大饭店	14 B2	华都商厦	
CTS 中国旅行社	3 B2	Jin Ye Hotel 金叶大酒店	15 C1		
Fujian Provincial Hospital		Juchunyuan Hotel		TRANSPORT	
省第二人民医院	4 B3	聚春园大酒店	16 B3	Airport Bus, Apollo Hotel	
Post & Telephone Office		Yushan Hotel 于山宾馆	17 B3	阿波罗大酒店	20 C4
邮电大楼	5 B3			CAAC	
PSB 公安局	6 B1			民航售票处	21 C4
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES				Lida Building (Train Ticket Booking Office)	
Black Pagoda 乌塔	7 B3			利达大厦	22 B3
Fujian Provincial Museum		EATING		North Long-Distance Bus Station 长途汽车北站	
省博物馆	8 A2	Juchunyuan Restaurant	(see 16)	Station 福州汽车北站	23 C1
Jade Hill Scenic Area 于山风景区	9 B3	Pedestrian Food Street 菜步行街	18 C5	South Long-Distance Bus Station 福州汽车南站	24 C4

Getting There & Away

AIR

The **Civil Aviation Administration of China** (CAAC; Zhōngguó Mínháng; ☎ 8334 5988; Wuyi Zhonglu) has daily flights to major destinations such as Běijīng (Y1550, 2½ hours), Guǎngzhōu (Y830, one hour), Shànghǎi (Y780, 70 minutes), Hong Kong (Y1810, 80 minutes) and Wǔyí Shān (Y490, 30 minutes). Airport buses leave from the **Apollo Hotel** (Àbōluó Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 8305 5555; 132 Wuyi Zhonglu) every 25 minutes beginning at 5.50am. The last bus is at 7.15pm. Tickets are Y20 and the 50km trip takes about an hour.

BUS

There are two long-distance bus stations in town: one in the north near the train station, and one at the southern end of town, down from the CAAC office on the corner of Guohuo Xilu and Wuyi Zhonglu. Most services are available from both bus stations.

There are economy bus services departing for Guǎngzhōu (Y180 to Y258, nine hours), Shànghǎi (Y280, 18 hours), Wēnzhōu (Y125 to Y190, 4½ hours), Quǎnzhōu (Y52 to Y60, two hours) and Xiàmén (Y68 to Y80, three hours). Deluxe buses to Guǎngzhōu (Y258 to Y280, eight hours) and Shēnzhèn (Y260, eight hours) depart from the south bus station. Luxury buses travel to Xiàmén (Y80 to Y99, 2½ hours) from the north bus station. Night buses leave the north bus station for Wǔyí Shān (Y86 to 90, eight hours).

TRAIN

The train line from Fúzhōu heads northwest and joins the main Shànghǎi–Guǎngzhōu line at the Yǐngtán junction in Jiāngxī. There are also trains from Fúzhōu to Wǔyí Shān (Y47 to Y72, 5½ hours). There are no trains to Xiàmén.

There are direct trains from Fúzhōu to Běijīng (Y443, 34 hours) and Shànghǎi (Y242, 18½ hours). It’s fairly easy to buy tickets at the train station, from a spot about 100m to the left of the main train station building, when you are facing it. Many hotels will book train tickets for a service fee, and there’s also a train ticket booking office in the entrance of the **Lida building** (Lìdà Dàshà; ☎ 8am–5pm), opposite the post office.

Getting Around

Fúzhōu is a sprawling city, which makes it difficult to get around by foot. Taxi flag fall is Y10. There’s a good bus network, and bus maps are available at the train station or from hotels. Bus 51 travels from the train station along Wusi Lu, and bus 1 goes to West Lake Park from Baiyi Lu.

TAIMU MOUNTAIN 太姥山

About 2½ hours from Fúzhōu, Taimu Mountain (Tǎimù Shān) is lesser known than Wǔyí Shān but equally beautiful. Embraced by the views of the sea on three sides, with its jagged limestone peaks perpetually wrapped in mist, the mountain is a magnificent place for hiking. The highest peak in Taimu is only 917m, but with great views of the distant ocean. There’s virtually no English spoken and few Western tourists, so unless you arrange a tour from Fúzhōu you’re really on your own.

Sights & Activities

Scattered across **Taimu Mountain** (admission Y60; ☎ 8am–4.30pm) are a number of karst caves, temples that date back to the Tang dynasty, and hoodoos, those curiously shaped rocks that figure so large in the Chinese imagination. Just about every rock on the mountain has been named, from the straightforward (‘husband

and wife') to the just plain bizarre ('mouse eating a pig's liver'). Unless you have a guide, they'll probably look like, well, rocks.

There are 36 temples on Taimu, the most notable of them **Guoxing Temple** (国兴寺; Guóxīng Sì), which dates back to the Tang dynasty and still has 360 of its original pillars, an ancient well and a stone pagoda. Another temple on the tourist route is the **One Tile Temple** (一片瓦寺; Yīpiānwǎ Sì), which gets its name from a large stone that protrudes from above and shelters the temple. Come around lunchtime and you'll be served some wonderful vegetarian food. If you have a chance, also try some of the excellent tea, a speciality of the area. Another popular destination is the **Thread of Sky** (一线天; Yìxiàntiān), a narrow crevice over 60m long and 37m high, which tourists squeeze themselves through to the laughs and screams of their companions. For those looking to escape the tourist sites, it's easy to take off on your own, following some of the more unused mountain paths. Travelers have recommended bringing a flashlight (torch); it gets dark early on the mountain and rain gear for the fickle weather.

Sleeping & Eating

The most scenic area to stay is on the mountain itself. The **Yùhú Bīnguǎn** (玉湖宾馆; ☎ 0593 726 1531; fax 726 3625; dY400) is near Yuhu Lake and has clean, reasonable accommodation. Rooms are on the frumpy side, but you're not really here for the hotel décor, are you? The hotel restaurant serves good Chinese food and there are several small restaurants near the park entrance that will keep you fed and happy.

Getting There & Away

You'll want to make your ascent from the small town of Qinyú (芹屿), which sits at the base of the mountain. Buses run from Qinyú to the mountain entrance for Y7. Qinyú is 297km by bus from Fúzhōu (Y80, 2½ hours) and 167km from Wēnzhōu (Y35, 1½ hours) in Zhèjiāng province. The bus ride from Fúzhōu takes you along some terrifying mountain roads, with pin-tight curves and steep drops. Close your eyes and hang on tight.

XIÀMÉN 厦门

☎ 0592 / pop 592,372

Xiàmén, also known to the West as Amoy, ranks as the most attractive city in Fújiàn. Many of its old colonial buildings have been

carefully restored and its clean, well-kept streets and lively waterfront district give it a captivating old-world charm rarely seen in Chinese cities.

A visit to Xiàmén isn't complete without a stay on the tiny island of Gǔlàng Yǔ (see p348), once the old colonial home of the Europeans and Japanese. Its breezy seaside gardens and delightful architecture are one of the highlights of visiting Fújiàn.

Xiàmén is unbearably hot and humid in the summer and slightly cooler in the winter. Spring and autumn are when temperatures are at their best, though fickle weather means rain any time of year.

History

Xiàmén was founded around the mid-14th century in the early years of the Ming dynasty. Ming rulers built the city walls and established Xiàmén as a major seaport and commercial centre.

In the 17th century it became a place of refuge for the Ming rulers fleeing the Manchu invaders. Xiàmén and nearby Jīnmén were bases for the Ming armies who, under the command of the pirate-general Koxinga, had as their battle-cry, 'resist the Qing and restore the Ming'.

The Portuguese arrived in the 16th century, followed by the British in the 17th century, and later by the French and the Dutch, all of whom attempted rather unsuccessfully to establish Xiàmén as a trade port.

The port was closed to foreigners in the 1750s and it was not until the Opium War that the tide turned. In August 1841 a British naval force of 38 ships carrying artillery and soldiers sailed into Xiàmén harbour, forcing the port to open. Xiàmén then became one of the first treaty ports.

Japanese and Western powers followed soon after, establishing consulates and making the island of Gǔlàng Yǔ a foreign enclave. Xiàmén turned Japanese in 1938 and remained that way until 1945.

Orientation

The town of Xiàmén is on the island of the same name. It's connected to the mainland by a 5km-long causeway bearing a train line, road and footpath. The interesting part of Xiàmén is near the western (waterfront) district, directly opposite the small island of Gǔlàng Yǔ. This is the old area of town,

known for its colonial architecture, parks and winding streets.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS 网吧

There are internet cafés scattered around the harbour area. The lanes surrounding Datong Lu are a good place to look. Most cafés charge Y4 per hour.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Amoy Magic (www.amoymagic.com) One of the most comprehensive websites on Xiàmén.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Life Line Medical Clinic (Mífú Zhěnsuǒ; ☎ 532 3168; 123 Xidi Villa Hubin Beili; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Fri, 8am-noon Sat) A clinic for expats, with English-speaking doctors. Telephone operated 24 hours.

MONEY

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 10 Zhongshan Lu) Near the Lujiang Hotel by the waterfront. Has an ATM.
Hong Kong Bank (HSBC; Huiféng Yínháng; 189 Xiahe Lu) Also changes money and has an ATM.

POST & TELEPHONE

Post and telephone office (Yóudiànjú; cnr Xinhua Lu & Zhongshan Lu)

PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU

PSB (Gōngānjú; ☎ 226 2203) Opposite the main post and telephone office. The visa section is located in the northeast part of the building, near the entrance on Gongyuan Xilu.

TOURIST INFORMATION & TRAVEL AGENCIES

China International Travel Services (CITS; Zhōngguó Guóji Lǚxíngshè; 335 Hexiong Xilu) There are several offices around town. This branch near Yundang Lake is recommended.

Complaints Hotline (☎ 800 8582, ext 36) For complaints about overpricing, theft, bad taxi drivers etc.

Sights & Activities

NANPUTUO TEMPLE 南普陀寺
On the southern outskirts of Xiàmén city, this modern-looking Buddhist temple (Nánpútúo Sì; ☎ 208 6490; Siming Nanlu; admission Y3; ☎ 8am-5pm) was originally built more than 1000 years ago during the Tang dynasty, and has been destroyed and rebuilt several times over the course of its long history. The most current incarnation dates to the early 20th century. It's

an active temple and very busy, with chanting monks and worshippers lighting incense and praying.

Entering the temple through **Heavenly King Hall** (Tiānwáng Diàn) you are met by the tub-bellied Milefo (Laughing Buddha), flanked by four heavenly kings. The classical Chinese inscription reads: 'When entering, regard Buddha and afterwards pay your respects to the four kings of heaven'.

Behind Milefo is Wei Tuo, protector of Buddhist monasteries, who safeguards Buddhist doctrine and relics. He holds a stick that points to the ground, indicating that the temple is rich and can provide visiting monks with board and lodging (if the stick is held horizontally it means the temple is poor and is a polite way of saying 'find somewhere else to stay').

In front of the courtyard is the **Great Heroic Treasure Hall** (Dà Xióngbǎo Diàn), a two-storey building containing three Buddhas that represent Buddha in his past, present and future lives.

The **Great Compassion Hall** (Dàbēi Diàn) contains four statues of Guanyin (the Goddess of Mercy). Worshippers cast divining sticks at the feet of the statues to seek heavenly guidance.

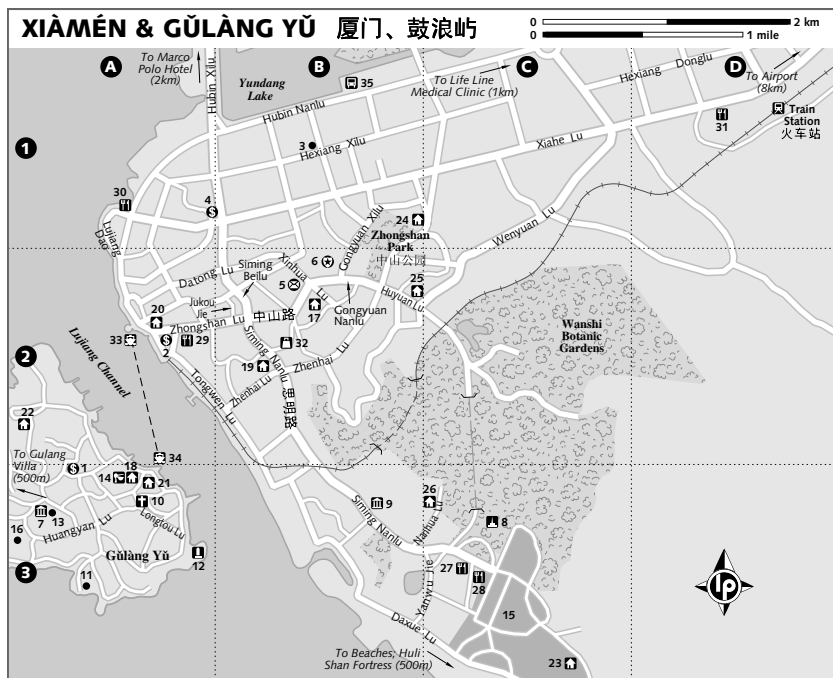
The temple has an excellent vegetarian restaurant in a shaded courtyard where you can dine in the company of resident monks.

Take bus 1 from the train station or bus 21 from Zhongshan Lu to reach the temple.

XIAMEN UNIVERSITY 厦门大学

Next to Nanputuo Temple, **Xiamen University** (Xiàmén Dàxué) was established with overseas Chinese funds. Its well-maintained grounds feature an attractive lake and are good for a pleasant, shady stroll. The campus entrance is next to the stop for bus 1. You can walk south to Daxue Lu from the main entrance, where you'll see a nice long stretch of sandy beach.

Not too far from the university is the **Huli Shan Fortress** (Húli Shān Pàotái; admission Y25), a gigantic German gun artillery which was built in 1893 and used to deter foreign imperialists from entering the city. You can rent binoculars here to peer out over the water to Taiwanese-occupied Jīnmén Island, formerly known as Quemoy, claimed by both mainland China and Taiwan. From a small pier next to the fortress you can hire a boat to take you on a one-hour ride around Jīnmén for Y96.



Also close to the university is the **Overseas Chinese Museum** (Huáqióng Bówùguǎn; 73 Siming Nanlu; admission ¥10; ☎ 9am-4.30pm), which has excellent photos and paintings of the history and various activities of Chinese communities abroad.

Tours

CITS (p345) can arrange tours around Xiàmén and Gùlàng Yǔ. Most hotels can also help with tours.

Festivals & Events

The **Xiàmén International Marathon** is held in spring, and draws local and international participants. Runners race around the coastal ring road that circles the island. It's a popular event – in 2006, 20,933 participants from 39 countries participated.

Dragon Boat races are held in Xiàmén every June and are quite a sight.

Sleeping

For ambience, Gùlàng Yǔ beats Xiàmén hands down as a more memorable and relaxing place to stay. In Xiàmén, hotels are clustered around

the harbour and in the far-eastern section of town near the train station.

Lodging becomes expensive and hard to find around the first week of September, when a large investment fair takes place in the city.

BUDGET

Xiàmén International Youth Hostel (Xiàmén Guoji Qingnian Lushe; ☎ 208 2345; fax 219 9876; 41 Nanhua Lu; 南华路41号; dm ¥50, d ¥120-150; ☎) At last a youth hostel comes to Xiàmén! With spick-and-span rooms and smiling staff, this place wins the prize for best budget accommodation in town. It offers internet access, bike rental, kitchen and a ticket-booking office.

Overseas Student Dormitory (Càiqingjié Lóu; ☎ 208 4528; fax 208 6774; Xiàmén University; s/d ¥150/180) For plain, spotless rooms check out this modest guesthouse at Xiàmén University. It's a great place to meet students and find out what's happening around town. To reach the dormitory walk uphill for about 100m from the university's south gate, then take a left and look out for a purple 10-storey building.

Singapore Hotel (Xinjiaopō Jiùdiàn; ☎ 202 6668; fax 202 5950; 113-121 Xian Lu; 西安路121号; s/d ¥463) This

INFORMATION

Amex	(see 19)
Bank of China 中国银行	1 A3
Bank of China 中国银行	2 A2
CITS 中国国际旅行社	3 B1
HSBC 汇丰银行	4 A1
Post & Telephone Office	
邮电大楼	5 B2
PSB 公安局外事科	6 B2

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Koxinga Memorial Hall	
郑成功纪念馆	7 A3
Nanputuo Temple 南普陀寺	8 C3
Overseas Chinese Museum	
华侨博物馆	9 B3
Roman Catholic Church	
天主教堂	10 A3
Shuzhuang Garden 菽庄花园	11 A3
Statue of Koxinga 郑成功塑像	12 A3
Sunlight Rock Park	
日光岩公园	13 A3
Sunlight Rock 日光岩	(see 13)

Xiàmén Underwater World

厦门海底世界	14 A3
Xiàmén University	
厦门大学	15 C3
Yingxiang Hill 英雄山	16 A3

SLEEPING

Gem Hotel 金后酒店	17 B2
Gulang Yu International Youth	
Hostel 鼓浪屿国际青年旅馆	18 A3

HOLIDAY INN

假日皇冠海景大酒店	19 B2
Lujiang Hotel 鹭江宾馆	20 A2
Luzhou Hotel 绿洲酒店	21 A3
Night Lily Hotel	
厦门夜百合宾馆	22 A2
Overseas Student Dormitory	
蔡清楼	23 C3
Singapore Hotel	
新加坡	24 B1
Xiàmén Hotel 厦门宾馆	25 B2
Xiàmén International Youth	
Hostel 厦门国际青年旅舍	26 C3

EATING

Dàfāng Sùcǎiguǎn	27 C3
Góngde Sùcǎiguǎn	28 C3
Huang Zehe Peanut Soup Shop	
黄则和花生唐店	29 A2
Lujiang Hotel Restaurant	(see 20)
Sundance Kid	30 A1
World Trade Centre	
世界贸易中心	31 D1

SHOPPING

Night Market 夜市	32 B2
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TRANSPORT

Ferry Terminal (to Gùlàng Yǔ)	
轮渡码头(往鼓浪屿)	33 A2
Ferry Terminal (to Xiàmén)	
轮渡码头(往厦门)	34 A2
Long-Distance Bus Station	
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Silk Air	(see 19)

two-star hotel looks dilapidated on the outside but inside the rooms are adequate enough, though don't expect any mints on your pillow. Check the room out before committing. Rates can be bargained down if you're *really* persistent.

MIDRANGE

Most accommodation in Xiàmén is midrange, shading top end. Many hotels in this range are equipped with broadband internet for an extra ¥30 a day if you have your own computer.

Gem Hotel (Jinhòu Jiùdiàn; ☎ 399 6666; fax 399 6789; 444 Zhongshan Lu; 中山路444号; s/d ¥400, tatami-style ¥680) This hotel has a wildly decorated Las Vegas-style lobby with murals of frolicking cupids and fairies. Thank goodness the rooms are more understated. Make sure you don't get a room above the karaoke hall or it could be a long, agonising night.

Lujiang Hotel (Lùjiāng Bīnguǎn; ☎ 202 2922; fax 202 4644; 54 Lujiang Dao; 鹭江道54号; s ¥451, d ¥400-770, tw ¥468) This 1940s-era hotel has one of the best spots in town opposite the Gùlàng Yǔ ferry terminal. Rooms are pretty good, though aging and rather cramped. The rooms with ocean views feel more spacious. The rooftop restaurant is excellent (see p348).

Xiàmén Hotel (Xiàmén Bīnguǎn; ☎ 202 2265; fax 202 1765; 16 Huyuan Lu; 虎园路16号; d ¥1120-1380) At the high-end of midrange, this well-managed place has spiffy rooms, a glitzy lobby and a great location between two city parks. You might have to fight for a room as it's often booked far in advance by business travellers.

TOP END

There's a wide range of top-end accommodation in Xiàmén, but much of it is badly located in the eastern part of town. Most places offer 50% discounts. Add a 15% service charge to all prices.

Holiday Inn (Jiàn Huángguān Hǎijīng Dǎjiùdiàn; ☎ 202 3333; fax 203 6666; 128 Zhenhai Lu; 镇海路128号; d US\$160-820) The Holiday Inn is in a prime location near the harbour and is one of the more popular spots in town. Rooms are comfortable, if unimaginative (no dancing cupids here), and service is top-notch.

Marco Polo Hotel (Mǎgē Bōluō Dōngfāng Dǎjiùdiàn; ☎ 509 1888; www.marcolohotels.com/xiamen; 8 Jianye Lu; 建业路8号; r US\$160-225, ste US\$295-980) Another one of the big box hotels, this four-star place pulls out all the stops to pamper travellers. Besides elegantly furnished rooms with large bathrooms, there's a nice-sized pool, a bar and several Chinese and Japanese restaurants.

Eating

Being a port city, Xiàmén is known for its fresh fish and seafood, especially oysters and shrimp. You'll find good places to eat around Zhongshan Lu near the harbour. Jukou Jie, near the intersection of Siming Beilu and Zhongshan Lu, has a bunch of Sichuan and Taiwanese restaurants.

Huang Zehe Peanut Soup Shop (Huángzéhé Huāshēng Tāngdiàn; 20 Zhongshan Lu; snacks ¥1-6; ☎ 24hr) This busy restaurant by the harbour is popular for its local snacks, including peanut soup (花生汤; huāshēng tāng), a regional speciality.

Luijiang Hotel Restaurant (☎ 202 2922; 54 Luijiang Dao; meals from ¥30; ☎ 7am-10pm) Overlooking the sea, this rooftop restaurant is one of the nicest places to eat in Xiàmén. Dine al fresco under the stars or inside. In addition to an extensive menu (in English) with Fújiàn specialties, there's also an excellent Cantonese buffet. Reservations for dinner are recommended, especially on the weekends.

World Trade Centre (Shìjiè Màoyì Zhōngxīn; Xiahe Lu) Next to the train station, there is an excellent open-air food court on the 5th floor, with a variety of small fast-food restaurants to choose from.

Near the university, good, cheap, attractive restaurants line Siming Nanlu and Yanwu Jie. Two decent vegetarian restaurants are **Dàfāng Sùcàiguǎn** (412-4 Siming Nanlu; meals ¥8; ☎ 11am-late) and **Gōngdé Sùcàiguǎn** (418-10 Siming Nanlu; meals ¥8; ☎ 10am-9pm). Try the monks' vegetables (罗汉斋; *luòhàn zhāi*). Nanputuo Temple (see p345) has an excellent vegetarian restaurant with set meals for ¥30 to ¥80.

Xiàmén also has an assortment of restaurants serving Western-style dishes. One of the more popular places is **Sundance Kid** (252 Luijiang Lu; mains from ¥15; ☎ 10am-late), which dishes up an eclectic assortment of dishes, including pizzas, seafood and roasted mutton with vegetables. There's also free internet and live entertainment on the weekends.

Shopping

Xiàmén has lots of hidden curio and food shops tucked away off the busy streets. There's a crowded night market (*yè shìchǎng*) on Ding'an Lu, between Zhongshan Lu and Zhenhai Lu.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Xiamen Airlines is the main airline under the CAAC banner in this part of China. There are innumerable ticket offices around town, many of which are in the larger hotels, such as the Holiday Inn.

CAAC has flights to Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Manila, Penang and Singapore. **Silk Air** (☎ 205 3280) flies to Singapore and has an office in the Holiday Inn. **All Nippon Airways** (☎ 573 2888) flies to Osaka, and has ticket agents at the Holiday Inn and Luijiang Hotel. **Dragonair** (☎ 202 5433) is in the Marco Polo Hotel.

Xiàmén airport has flights to all major domestic destinations around China, including

Wūyí Shān (Y590) four times a week. Airport departure tax is ¥90.

BUS

Deluxe and economy buses leave from the long-distance bus station and the ferry terminal. Destinations include Fúzhōu (Y68 to Y99, 2½ to three hours), Wūyí Shān (Y124 to Y202, nine hours), Quánzhōu (Y27 to Y37, 1½ hours) and Shàntóu (Y100, five hours). There are also express buses to Guǎngzhōu (Y200 to Y300, 12 hours), Shēnzhèn (Y180, nine hours), Hong Kong (Y300 to Y350, 10 hours) and Shànghǎi (Y330 to Y413). Buses also make trips inland to Lóngyán (Y50, three hours) and Yǒngdìng (Y45, five hours).

TRAIN

From Xiàmén there are direct trains to destinations including Hángzhōu (Y231, 26 hours), Shànghǎi (Y281, 27 hours), Běijīng (Y443, 34 hours) and Wūyí Shān (Y149, 13 hours). Book tickets at the train station or through **CITS** (335 Hexiong Xilu), which will make bookings for a ¥35 service fee.

Getting Around

Xiàmén airport is 15km from the waterfront district, about 8km from the eastern district. From the waterfront, taxis cost around ¥35. Bus 28 travels from the airport to the ferry terminal via the train station.

Frequent minibuses run between the train station and ferry terminal (Y1). Buses to Xiàmén University go from the train station (bus 1) and from the ferry terminal (bus 2). Taxis start at ¥7.

GǔLÀNG Yǔ 鼓浪屿

A 10-minute boat trip from Xiàmén, Gǔlàng Yǔ is a relaxing retreat of meandering lanes and shaded backstreets, set in an architectural twilight of colonial villas and crumbling remains. It's well worth spending a few days exploring the place.

The foreign community was well established on Gǔlàng Yǔ by the 1880s, with a daily English newspaper, churches, hospitals, post and telegraph offices, libraries, hotels and consulates. In 1903 the island was officially designated an International Foreign Settlement, and a municipal council with a police force of Sikhs was established to govern it. Today, memories of the settlement linger in the charming colonial buildings that blanket

the island and the sound of classical piano wafting from shuttered windows. Many of China's most celebrated musicians have come from Gǔlàng Yǔ.

The best way to enjoy the island is to wander along the streets, peeking into courtyards and down alleys to catch a glimpse of colonial mansions seasoned by local life. Most sights and hotels are just a short walk from the ferry terminal.

Sights

The most interesting attractions on the island are the old colonial residences and consulates, tucked away in the maze of streets leading away from the pier, particularly along Longtou Lu and the back lanes of Huayan Lu. The first site you'll see after stepping off the boat from Xiamen is a tentacle waving statue of an octopus, which marks the entrance to **Xiamen Underwater World** (Xiàmén Hǎidì Shìjiè; 2 Longtou Lu; admission ¥70; ☎ 8am-6pm). Kids (adults too) will enjoy the exhibits of penguins, seals, dolphins and exotic fish. As aquariums go, it's reasonably well maintained, though the tanks are cramped. The immense shark tank is viewed via a tubular passageway.

Southeast of the pier you'll pass the former British consulate, with its whitewashed walls and flower gardens, and the well-preserved **Roman Catholic Church** (Tiānzhǔjiào Táng). If you continue walking south you'll eventually hit **Haoyue Garden** (HàoYuè Yuán), a rocky outcrop containing an imposing statue of Koxinga in full military dress looking out over the water to Taiwan.

The most prominent attraction on the island is **Sunlight Rock** (Rìguāng Yán), the island's highest point at 93m. On a clear day you can see the island of Jinmén. At the foot of Sunlight Rock is a large colonial building known as the **Koxinga Memorial Hall** (Zhèngchénggōng Jìniànguǎn; ☎ 8-11am & 2-5pm). The hall has an exhibition partly dedicated to the Dutch in Taiwan, and partly to Koxinga's throwing them out. On exhibit are some tattered remains of Koxinga's clothing and his jade belt. Both sights are located in **Sunlight Rock Park** (Rìguāng Yán Gōngyuán; admission ¥60; ☎ 8am-7pm).

Yingxióng Hill (Yíngxióng Shān) is near the memorial hall and has an open-air aviary (admission ¥15) on the top with chattering egrets and parrots.

The waterfront **Shuzhuang Garden** (Shūzhūàng Huāyuán; admission ¥30) on the southern end of

the island is a lovely place to linger for a few hours. It has a small bonsai (*péncai*) garden and some delicate-looking pavilions. The garden was built by a Taiwanese businessman who moved here with his family during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95).

Sleeping & Eating

Gulang Yu International Youth Hostel (Gǔlàng Yǔ Guójiè Qīngnián Lǚguǎn; ☎ 106 6066; 18 Luijiao Lu; 鹿礁路18号; 6-bed dm ¥45, tw with shared bathroom ¥56) This new hostel, in a lovely old brick villa, is bursting with character. Rooms are large, with beamed ceilings and tiled floors, and there's a relaxing garden courtyard. Hot water can be hit or miss (there's only one shower with hot water) and during winter the place is very damp and chilly.

Luzhou Hotel (Lǚzhōu Jiǔdiàn; ☎ 206 5390; fax 206 5843; 1 Longtou Lu; 龙头路1号; s/d ¥306) This very modest hotel has few amenities but is conveniently located near the ferry pier in case you're hauling a heavy bag. The more spacious rooms have ocean views with wooden floors.

Gulang Villa (Gǔlàng Yǔ Bièsù; ☎ 206 3280; fax 206 0165; 14 Gusheng Lu; 鼓声路14号; s/d ¥428/628) Located on a private beach on the western side of the island, the Gulang is an ideal place to stay if you want an escape from the crowds. The hotel is surrounded by trees and small walking paths, making it a delightful retreat. The in-house restaurant serves very good Fujianese cuisine.

Night Lily Hotel (Xiàmén Bǎihé Bīnguǎn; ☎ 206 0920; 11 Bishan Lu; 笔山路11号; http://nitelily.todayinchina.com; d/tr incl breakfast ¥450/500) This secluded 1930s-style bed and breakfast, with its pastel-coloured walls and eclectic mix of Chinese and European antiques, is an unexpected treasure. The large, airy balcony faces the sea, a perfect place for taking some tea in the sun. There are only five rooms so you'll need to book ahead.

Gǔlàng Yǔ is a great place for fish and seafood, especially at the restaurants in the centre of town. You'll find a collection of small eateries in the streets around the ferry terminal, and off Longtou Lu there are many small restaurants and stalls.

Getting There & Away

Ferries to Gǔlàng Yǔ leave from the ferry terminal just west of Xiàmén's Luijiang Hotel. Outbound, it's a free ride on the bottom deck and Y1 for the upper deck. Xiàmén bound it's ¥3 on the bottom and Y4 upstairs.

A ROUNDABOUT TOUR OF HAKKA TŪLÓU

Fújiàn's *tūlóu* (earth buildings) are scattered throughout almost 50 counties in the most remote parts of the province. The most accessible (and set up for tourists) are in the town of **Húkēng** (糊坑; admission Y40), where your ticket grants you admission to four *tūlóu* and a small cultural museum. By far the best-known *tūlóu* is **Zhèchéng Lóu** (振城楼), a grandiose structure built in 1912, with two concentric circles and a total of 222 rooms. In the centre of the *tūlóu* is a large ancestral hall for special ceremonies and greeting guests. Near Zhèchéng Lóu, you'll also see the much older **Kuíjù Lóu** (奎聚楼), which dates back to 1834. It looks less like a traditional *tūlóu* than its neighbours because of its square (as opposed to round) sides. Also worth visiting is the late-19th-century and (comparatively) pea-sized **Rúshèng Lóu** (如升楼), the smallest of the roundhouses with only one ring and 16 rooms. Your ticket also gets you into the five-storey **Fúyù Lóu** (副裕楼), which boasts some wonderfully carved beams and pillars.

For those of you looking to see some less touristy *tūlóu*, consider hiring a taxi to take you around the countryside on a *tūlóu* tour. You'll find taxi drivers in Húkēng and Yǒngdìng who will offer their services for around Y300 a day. Here's a rundown of some lesser-known *tūlóu* to get you started:

Chéngqǐ Lóu (承启楼) Built in 1709, this granddaddy of *tūlóu* has more than 400 rooms and once had over 1000 inhabitants. It's in the village of Gāoběi (高北村), about 20km north of Húkēng.

Yíjīng Lóu (遗经楼) This massive, crumbling structure, with 281 rooms, two schools and 51 halls, is in the village of Gāobō (高陂村) and was built in 1851.

Huánjí Lóu (环极楼) Peacefully located in the village of Nánxī (南溪村), this spectacular *tūlóu* dates back to 1693 and is surrounded by rural farmlands and a bubbling creek.

YǒNGDÌNG 永定

☎ 0597 / pop 40,160

Yǒngdìng is a rural area of rolling farmlands and hills in southwestern Fújiàn. Heartland of the Hakka people, it's renowned for its remarkable *tūlóu* (earth buildings), large, circular edifices resembling fortresses that are scattered throughout the surrounding countryside. Today there are 20,000 of these buildings still in existence, many still inhabited and open to visitors.

The Hakka have inhabited Yǒngdìng and its neighbouring villages for hundreds of years. During the Jin dynasty (AD 265–314) the Hakka peoples of northwest China began a gradual migration south to escape persecution and famine. They eventually settled in Jiāngxī, Fújiàn and Guǎngdōng, where they began to build *tūlóu* to protect themselves from bandits and wild animals.

These early structures were large enough to house entire clans. The buildings were communal, with interior buildings enclosed by enormous peripheral ones that could hold hundreds of people. Nestled in the mud walls were bedrooms, wells, cooking areas and storehouses, circling a central courtyard. The walls were made of rammed earth and glutinous rice, reinforced with strips of bamboo and wood chips.

Sleeping & Eating

If you've come all this way, why not stay in a *tūlóu*? Residents will approach you first, eagerly offering their homes as lodging. Make sure to look over the room before you agree to a price. Don't expect accommodation to be anything but basic – you'll get a bed, a thermostat of hot water and not much else. You'll also be offered a simple meal cooked over an open fire that may or may not be included in the room price. It's a good idea to bring a flashlight (torch) and bug repellent.

Getting There & Away

To get to Húkēng, first catch a bus from Xiàmén to Lóngyán (Y55, four hours) and then switch to a minibus (Y17, two hours). There are two fast trains daily from Xiàmén to Yǒngdìng (Y30, three hours) that leave at 8.30am and 1.30pm. Yǒngdìng is accessed by bus from Guǎngdōng, Xiàmén (Y45, five hours) or Lóngyán (Y15, one hour). Buses run between Húkēng and Yǒngdìng for about Y10.

QUÁNZHŌU 泉州

☎ 0595 / pop 184,812

Quánzhōu was once a great trading port and an important stop on the maritime silk route. Back in the 13th century, Marco Polo

informed his readers that '...it is one of the two ports in the world with the biggest flow of merchandise'. The city reached its zenith as an international port during the Song and Yuan dynasties, drawing merchants from all over the world to its shores. By the Qing, however, it was starting to decline and droves of residents began fleeing to southeast Asia to escape the constant political turmoil.

Today, Quánzhōu is much smaller than Fúzhōu and Xiàmén, and has a small-town feel. Evidence of its Muslim population can still be detected among the city's residents and buildings. It still has a few products of note, including the creamy-white *déhuà* (or 'blanc-de-Chine' as it is known in the West) porcelain figures, and locally crafted puppets.

Orientation

Because Quánzhōu is so small, most of its sights can be reached on foot. The centre of town lies between Zhongshan Nanlu, Zhongshan Zhonglu and Wenling Nanlu. This is where you'll find most of the tourist sights, the bank and the post office. The oldest part of town is to the west, where there are many narrow alleys and lanes to explore that still retain their traditional charm. The Pu River lies to the southwest of the city.

Information

You'll find internet cafés near the PSB on Dong Jie and in the small lanes behind Guandi Temple. Most places charge Y2 to Y3 an hour.

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; Jiuyi Jie; ☎ 9am–5pm) This branch also exchanges travellers cheques.

Fuzhou University (www.fzu.edu.cn/fujian/equanz.html) This website has some interesting background on Quánzhōu and other places in Fújiàn.

Post and telephone office (Yóudìnjiù; Dong Jie)

Public Security Bureau (PSB; Góngānjū; ☎ 2218 0323; Dong Jie)

Quanzhou Xiehe Hospital (Quánzhōu Xiéhé Yīyuàn; Tian'an Nanlu) Located in the southern part of town.

Sights

Kaiyuan Temple (Kāiyuán Sì; 176 Xi Jie; admission Y10; ☎ 6am–6pm) is in the northwest of the city and one of the oldest temples in Quánzhōu, dating back to AD 686. Surrounded by trees, it can be distinguished by its pair of two five-storey pagodas. The stone pagodas date from the 13th century and have withstood numerous disasters, the last catastrophe being the Red

Guards who stormed the temple grounds in the 1960s. Inside the pagodas you can see inscriptions from Buddhist folklore. There are good views of Quánzhōu from the top.

Within the grounds of Kaiyuan Temple, behind the eastern pagoda, is a **museum** containing the enormous hull of a Song-dynasty seagoing junk, which was excavated near Quánzhōu in 1974. A ride to the temple by minivan taxi from the long-distance bus station will cost Y6, or take bus 2 from Wenling Nanlu.

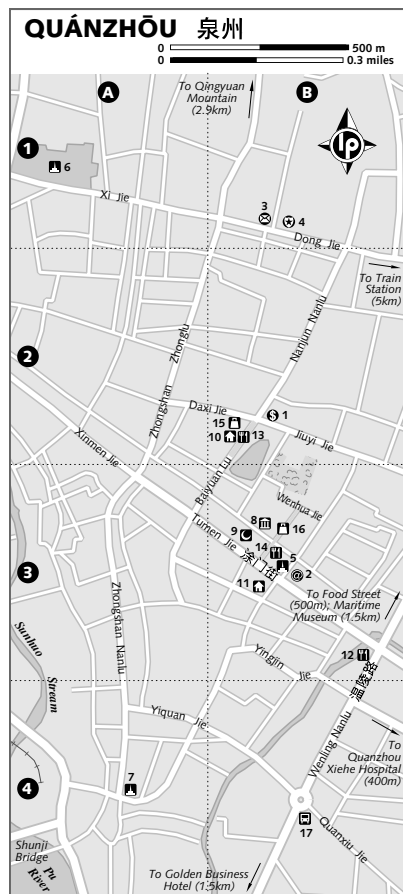
The **Qingjing Mosque** (Qīngjīng Sì; 113 Tumen Jie; admission Y2; ☎ 8am–6pm) is one of China's only surviving mosques from the Song dynasty. It was built by Arabs in 1009 and restored in 1309. It looks truly Islamic, without Chinese architectural influence, and is made entirely of stone. Only a few sections of the original building survive, including the walls and columns of the prayer hall.

Behind the mosque is a whimsical **Puppet Museum** (Mù'ǒu Bówùguǎn; 24 Tongzheng Xiang; admission free; ☎ 9am–6pm), with display after display of puppet heads, intricate 30-string marionettes and comical hand puppets. Captions (in English and Chinese) give the history of this unique art form.

Quánzhōu is studded with small temples and can make for an interesting ramble. Another temple worth visiting is **Guandi Temple** (Guāndi Miào; Tumen Jie), located close to the mosque. Dedicated to Guān Yǔ, Three Kingdoms hero and God of War, the temple attracts a steady stream of visitors who come to light incense and pray. Inside the temple are statues of the god and panels along the walls that detail his life. For more on Guān Yǔ, see the boxed text on p410.

The **Mazu Temple** (Tiānhòu Gōng; admission Y5), on the southeastern end of Zhongshan Nanlu, is dedicated to Mazu, Goddess of the Sea, who watches over fishermen. Around the third month of the Lunar New Year (23 March), the temple is packed with worshippers celebrating Mazu's birthday.

The **Maritime Museum** (Quánzhōu Hǎiwài Jiāotōngshǐ Bówùguǎn; Donghu Lu; admission Y10; ☎ 8.30am–5.30pm Tue–Sun) on the northeast side of town explains Quánzhōu's trading history and the development of Chinese shipbuilding. There are wonderfully detailed models of Chinese ships, from junks to pleasure boats, and an intriguing collection of stone carvings, with inscriptions in ancient Syriac.



Sleeping

Golden Business Hotel (Jinbǎo Shàngwù Jiǔdiàn; ☎ 2253 0066; fax 2253 8999; Baozhou Zhonglu, Middle Section; 宝洲中路; s & d Y258-399) This hotel is far away from the centre of town but has some of the nicest rooms in Quánzhōu, fitted with pseudo-Qing-style furniture and modern bathrooms. Some rooms have computers.

Overseas Chinese Hotel (Huáqiáo Dàshà; ☎ 2228 2192; fax 2228 4612; Baiyuan Lu; 百源路; tw Y300, s & d Y536-576) This long-standing hotel attempts to stay current, with ongoing renovation to keep its rooms fresh. There's a 'nonsmoking floor', a 'business floor' and even a 'fashionable female' floor to choose from.

Quanzhou Hotel (Quánzhōu Jiǔdiàn; ☎ 2228 9958; fax 2218 2128; 22 Zhuangfu Xiang; 庄府巷22号; s & d

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Guandi Temple 关帝庙	5 B3
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Overseas Chinese Hotel 华侨大厦	10 B2
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Qingqi Shen 请其神	14 B3
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Jinxiu Zhuang 锦绣庄	15 B2
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Y515-915) This hotel considers itself one of the most upscale hotels in the city, with a choice of rooms in varying condition. Beds are hard as concrete, though decorations are nicely done.

Eating

Quánzhōu doesn't have a great restaurant scene, so staying here certainly won't be one of your culinary highlights in China. You can find the usual noodle and rice dishes served in the back lanes around Kaiyuan Temple and also along the food street close to Wenling Nanlu.

Overseas Chinese Hotel Restaurant (Huáqiáo Dàshà; Baiyuan Lu; meals Y15; ☎ 7am-late) The restaurant in this hotel offers reasonably priced Chinese dishes as well as traditional Fújiàn specialties, such as steamed oysters and pounded pork.

Anjikewang (Wenling Nanlu; meals Y30; ☎ 11am-9pm) Come to Anjikewang for traditional Hakka dishes, such as deep-fried chicken and stewed pork.

Qingqi Shen (teas Y8-70; ☎ 8am-late) This lovely teahouse with old-time ambience is in a courtyard setting right behind Guandi Temple. You can sit outside with a cup of tea while enjoying a performance of local opera.

Shopping

Jinxiu Zhuang (101-C Daxi Jie) This is a small shop selling locally made puppets and puppet heads, as well as embroidery and other handicrafts. It's a fun place to browse and the delightful marionettes make great souvenirs.

Another place to find Fújiàn crafts and curios is at the night market (*yè shìchǎng*) near Qingjing Mosque. It generally gets going around 5pm and lasts until 2am.

Getting There & Around

The long-distance bus station (*kèyùn xīn zhàn*) is in the southern corner of town on the intersection of Wenling Nanlu and Quanxiu Jie, and serves destinations as far away as Shànghǎi and Guǎngzhōu. Deluxe buses go to Xiàmén (Y19 to Y32, two hours) and Fúzhōu (Y34 to Y41, 3½ hours). Some buses to Fúzhōu leave from the Overseas Chinese Hotel rather than at the bus station. You can buy tickets at the hotel ticket office.

The railway station is in the northeast of town. For Wǔyí Shān (Y149 hard sleeper, 11½ hours) there is an early-morning train that leaves Quánzhōu at 6.30am and gets into Wǔyí Shān at 5pm. There are no overnight trains to Wǔyí Shān.

Quánzhōu's most useful bus is bus 2 (Y1), which goes from the bus station to Kaiyuan Temple. Buses 19 and 23 run to the railway station to the centre of town. Taxi flagfall is Y6.

AROUND QUÁNZHŌU

Chóngwǔ 崇武

About 50km east of Quánzhōu is the ancient 'stone city' of Chóngwǔ, with one of the best-preserved city walls in China. The granite walls date back to 1387 and stretch over 2.5km long and average 7m in height. Scattered around the walls are 1304 battle-ments and four gates into the city.

The town wall was built by the Ming government as a front-line defence against marauding Japanese pirates, and it has survived the last 600 years remarkably well. Koxinga also took refuge here in his battle against Qing forces. Stone is the traditional building material of this region and the surrounding area is full of stone-carving workshops.

To see the still intact city walls head up Xinhua Jie from the bus station. Along the coast, the **Ancient City Stone Park** (Gǔchéng Fēngjīngqū;

☎ 2768 3297; admission Y25; ☎ 7am-5pm) consists of over 500 new and ancient statues haphazardly scattered along the cliffs and beach; some of them are eroding attractively into the ocean.

Frequent minibuses depart Quánzhōu's long-distance bus station (Y9, 1½ hours), taking you on a long zigzagging ride through the countryside before finally ending up in Chóngwǔ.

WǔYÍ SHĀN 武夷山

☎ 0599 / pop 22,710

Wǔyí Shān, in the far northwest corner of Fújiàn, has some of the most spectacular, unspoiled scenery in the province. With its plentiful rivers, waterfalls, mountains and protected forests, it's a terrific place for those looking to do some hiking or exploring. It's a popular place for Chinese tourists but if you come midweek or in the off-season (November, March and April) you might have the area to yourself. One word of caution: Wǔyí Shān resort has a notorious reputation for ripping off tourists, so stay alert.

The scenic area lies on the west bank of Chongyang Stream (Chóngyáng Xī), and some accommodation is located along its shore. Most of the hotels are concentrated in the resort district (*dù jià qū*) on the east side of the river. The main settlement is Wǔyí Shān city, about 10km to the northeast, with the train station and airport roughly halfway between.

Information

Maps of the Wǔyí Shān area are available in bookshops and hotels in the resort district. There are some grubby internet cafés in the back alleys south of Wangfeng Lu (望峰路), charging Y2 to Y4 an hour.

Bank of China (中国银行; Zhōngguó Yínháng; Wujiu Lu; ☎ 9am-5pm) Located in Wǔyí Shān city, this branch will change travellers cheques and has an ATM.

CITS (中国国际旅行社; Zhōngguó Guójī Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 525 0380; 35 Guanjiang Lu; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Sat) The staff are very helpful, and can arrange train tickets and tours to surrounding ancient cities.

Sights & Activities

The main entrance to Wuyi Shan Scenic Area is at **Wǔyí Gōng** (武夷宫; ☎ 525 2702; admission Y64; ☎ 6am-8pm), about 200m south of the Wuyi Mountain Villa (see p354), near the confluence of the Chóngyáng and Nine Twists Rivers.

Trails within the scenic area connect all the major sites. A couple of nice walks are the 530m **Great King Peak** (大王峰; Dàwáng Fēng), accessed through the main entrance, and the 410m **Heavenly Tour Peak** (天游峰; Tiānyóu Fēng), where an entrance is reached by road up the Nine Twists River. It's a moderate two-hour walk to Great King Peak among bamboo groves and steep-cut rock walls. At the top you'll see some good views of the resort area and the rivers. The trail can be slippery and wet, so bring suitable shoes.

The walk to Heavenly Tour Peak is more scenic, with better views of the river and mountain peaks. The path is also better maintained and less slippery, but it's also the most popular with tour groups so come midweek if you want some peace. At the top, there's a collection of teahouses to refresh yourself as well as pristine views of the river valley.

At the northern end of the scenic area, the **Water Curtain Cave** (水帘洞; Shuǐlián Dòng; admission Y22) is a cleft in the rock about one-third of the way up a 100m cliff face. In winter and autumn, water plunges over the top of the cliff creating a curtain of spray.

One of the highlights for visitors is floating down the Nine Twists River (九曲溪; Jiǔqū Xī) on **bamboo rafts** (zhúpái; Y100; ☎ 7am-5pm) fitted with rattan chairs. Departing from Xing Cūn (星村), a short bus ride west of the resort area, the trip down the river takes over an hour. The boat ride takes you through some magnificent gorge scenery, with sheer rock cliffs and lush green vegetation.

One of the mysteries of Wǔyí Shān is the cavities carved out of the rock faces at great heights that once held boat-shaped coffins. Scientists have dated some of these artefacts back 4000 years. If you're taking a raft down the river, it's possible to see some remnants of these coffins on the west cliff face of the fourth meander or 'twist', also known as **Small Storing Place Peak** (小藏山峰; Xiǎozàngshān Fēng).

Sleeping

Most of the accommodation in Wǔyí Shān is midrange in price and room rates rise and fall according to demand and season. Hotels are mostly concentrated on the east side of the river, though there are a few hotels on the quieter, west side. Discounts are often available midweek.

International Trade Hotel (国贸大酒店; Guómào Dàjiùdiàn; ☎ 525 2521; fax 525 2521; Wangfeng Lu; 望峰路; d Y240-580) On the eastern side of the resort area, this well-managed hotel gives good discounts midweek for its serviceable, though uninspired, guestrooms.

Wuyishan Tea Hotel (武夷茶苑大酒店; Wǔyí Cháyuàn Dàjiùdiàn; ☎ 525 6777; d Y480-780) This hotel won't win any accolades for design but it's a good pick for its recently renovated rooms, friendly staff and central location. Try to stay on the upper floors to avoid the ear-splitting wails of karaoke at night.

Bǎodǎo Dàjiùdiàn (宝岛大酒店; ☎ 523 4567; fax 525 5555; Wangfeng Lu; 望峰路; s/d Y880/780) Situated next to the Bank of China, this centrally located hotel has a curiously furnished lobby decorated with chunky tree-trunk furniture. Rooms are respectable and good-sized with clean bathrooms. It's a popular place for the tour groups so you may need to book ahead.

Wuyi Mountain Villa (武夷山庄; Wǔyí Shānzhūāng; ☎ 525 1888; fax 525 2567; d Y888-988, ste Y1388-2888) This is the most upmarket hotel in Wǔyí Shān and its secluded location on the west side of the river at the foot of Great King Peak makes it (almost) worth the price. Buildings are chalet-style and surrounded by peaceful gardens, a swimming pool and a waterfall. Standoffish service is the only drawback to staying here.

Eating

Frogs, mushrooms and bamboo shoots are the specialities of Wǔyí Shān's cuisine. One of the best places to try these items is at the **Bamboo Palace Restaurant** (大堂竹楼; Dàtáng Zhúlóu; meals Y20-40; ☎ 11am-2pm & 5pm-9pm), where you can eat on a patio overlooking the river. The food is excellent and the service good. It's a good idea to bring mosquito repellent, unless you want to be dessert.

Getting There & Away

Wǔyí Shān has air links to Běijīng (Y1350, two hours), Shànghǎi (Y660, one hour), Fúzhōu (Y490, 35 minutes), Xiàmén (Y590, 50 minutes), Guǎngzhōu (Y890, 1½ hours) and Hong Kong (Y1300, two hours).

Frequent buses go to Xiàmén (Y159), Fúzhōu (Y90) and Shàowǔ (Y15, 1½ hours). The other long-distance bus station is in the northwest part of Wǔyí Shān city. Daily buses go south to Fúzhōu (Y86, eight hours), northeast to Wēnzhōu (Y138, 12 hours) and

Nánpíng (Y37, three hours), and north to Shàngráo (Y26, two hours) in Jiāngxī.

Direct trains go to Wǔyí Shān from Quánzhōu (Y149, 11 hours) and Xiàmén (Y149, 14 hours).

Getting Around

The most useful bus is bus 6 which runs between the airport, resort area and train station. Minivans or a public bus (Y2) shuttle between Wǔyí Shān city and the resort dis-

trict, and there are minibuses between Wǔyí Shān city and Xīngcūn. The resort area is small enough to walk everywhere, so ignore those pesky trishaw drivers who insist everything is 'too far'.

Expect to pay about Y10 for a motorised trishaw from the resort district to most of the scenic area entrances. A ride from the train station or airport to the resort district will cost Y10 to Y20. Make sure to haggle or you could get scammed.

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