

Jiāngxī 江西



Its reputation carved in granite by the fame of Jingdezhen's imperial kilns, and its status immortalised as the starting point of the mythologised Long March, Jiangxi province is a place where rows of glistening porcelain creations share the spotlight with revolutionary relics.

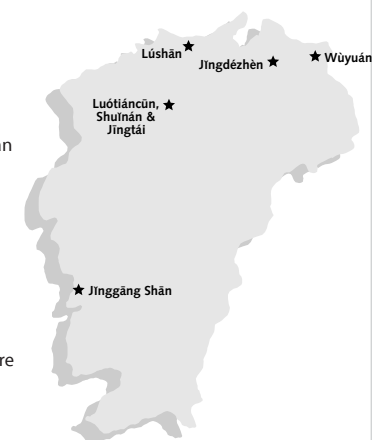
Which is perhaps to overlook Jiangxi's stunning swathes of natural beauty. Suspended from the middle and lower reaches of the Yangzi River, Jiangxi lies in one of China's most crucial watersheds. Home of China's largest freshwater lake – Poyang Lake (Póyáng Hú) – Jiangxi is the source of much of southeast China and Hong Kong's drinking water. More than 2400 rivers and ecologically crucial lakes spiderweb throughout the province, 60% of which is cloaked in forest. Add to this an undulating landscape of mountains and hills, and Jiangxi promises some of rural China's most staggeringly beautiful images.

Lúshān and Jǐnggāngshān are celebrated for their scenic mountain views, although prepare to jostle for them with fellow vacationers. It is instead the jaw-dropping scenery around Wúyuán in northeast Jiangxi, a geographic and cultural extension of gorgeous southern Ānhuī, that truly rewards days and weeks of boggle-eyed exploration. The ancient villages of this region – many cut by sparkling streams and vaulted by charming stone and wood bridges – are some of China's most delightful and picturesque.

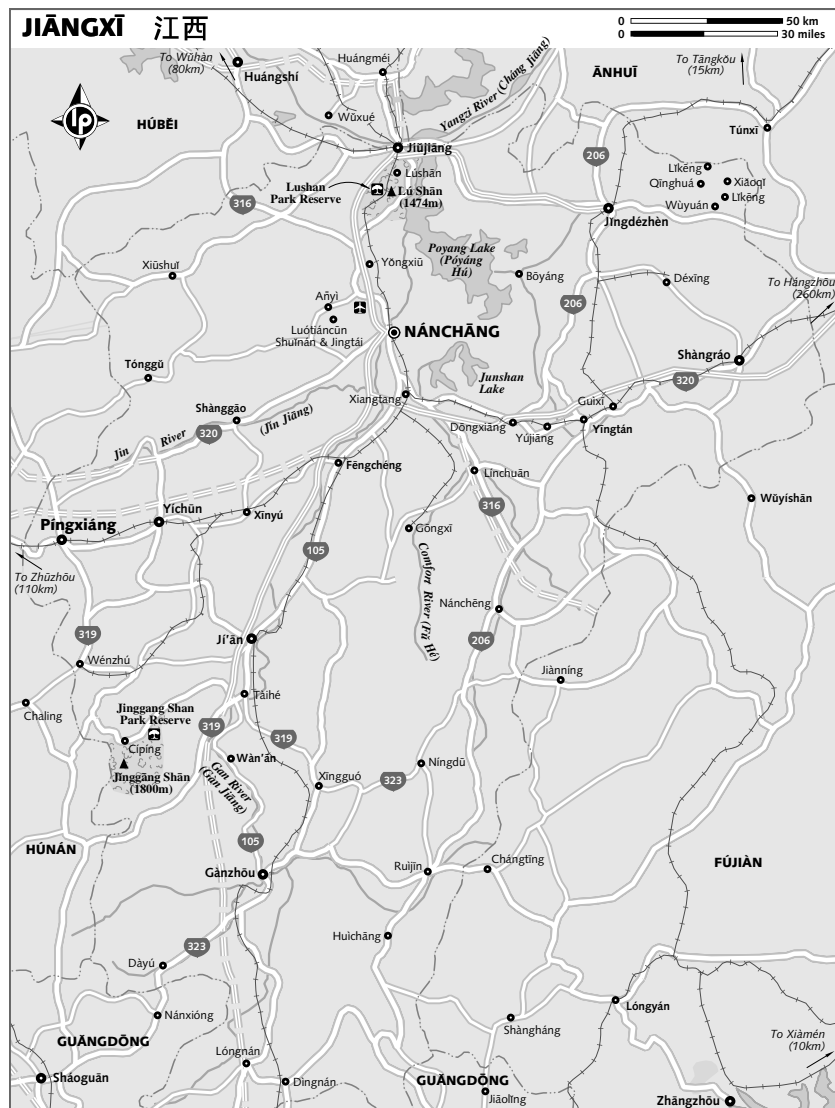
Even Nánchāng, the fast-paced provincial capital, has traditional, historic villages within its orbit – including Luótiāncūn – where you can get the ozone out of your hair and pitch yourself into the pastoral panoramas of old China without too much fuss.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Leave modern China behind and explore the picturesque Huizhōu villages around **Wúyuán** (p494)
- Envelop yourself in the ethereal mists and European charms of **Lúshān** (p497)
- Lose yourself among the traditional alleyways and lanes of **Luótiāncūn, Shuínán & Jingtái** (p491) outside Nánchāng
- Trek lovely **Jǐnggāng Shān** (p499), the 'Cradle of the Chinese Revolution', peppered with more than 100 Red Army historical sites
- Load up with ceramics at **Jingdezhen** (p492), centre of China's porcelain trade



■ POPULATION: 41.6 MILLION



History

The Grand Canal (linking major waterways) was built from the 7th century onwards. It opened up the southeastern regions and made Jiangxi an important point on the trade route from Guangdong. Industries such as silver mining and tea growing later allowed the formation of a wealthy Jiangxi merchant class.

By the 19th century, however, the province's role as a transport route from Guangzhou was reduced by the opening of coastal ports to foreign ships. Among Jiangxi's most illustrious native sons is author Mervyn Peake (architect of the gothic fantasy *Gormenghast*), born in Güling (Lúshān) to British missionary parents in 1911.

Climate

North-central and central Jiangxi lie in the Gan River (贛江; Gàn Jiāng) plain and experience a four-season, subtropical climate. Mountains encircle the plain and locals flock to these to escape the summer heat, which averages around 30°C in July. (Temperatures average 3°C to 9°C north to south in January.) Rainfall averages 120cm to 190cm annually and is usually heaviest in the northeast; half falls between April and June.

Language

Most Jiangxi natives speak one of innumerable local variants of Gàn (贛), a dialect whose name is also used as a shorthand for the province. Cantonese speakers will notice a distinct resemblance to Guǎngdōnghuà (Cantonese), the dialect of Guǎngdōng province, especially in the south of Jiangxi.

Getting There & Around

All major sites are lashed together via an increasing number of efficient expressways. Nánchāng and Jìngdézhèn both have airports. Train connections are adequate for most large towns, from where bus connections radiate into the neighbouring provinces of Guǎngdōng, Húnán, Húběi, Ānhuī, Zhèjiāng and beyond.

NÁNCHĀNG 南昌

☎ 0791 / pop 1.9 million

A bustling, busy and booming town, Nánchāng is branded on Chinese consciousness as a revolutionary torchbearer and applauded in China's history books for its role in consolidating the power of the Communist Party. It may come as little surprise therefore that Western travellers, unless otherwise detained, should jump on the first connection out of town to the bucolic charms of Luótiáncūn, Shuǐnán and Jìngtái outside town, stupendous Wùyüán or the European allure of Lúshān.

Orientation

The city of Nánchāng sprawls along the Gan River (Gàn Jiāng). Zhanqian Lu leads directly west from the train station to the enormous Fushan roundabout, from where Bayi Dadao, the city's most significant north-south artery, radiates northwest.

People's Sq sits at the town's nucleus, from where the pleasant shopping street of Zhongshan Lu heads west.

MAPS

Maps (Y4) are available from the Xinhua Bookshop (Xīnhuá Shūdiàn) on Bayi Dadao across from People's Sq, or from hawkers at the train station.

Information

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; Zhanqian Xilu)

Foreign exchange, ATM (open office hours only).

Jiangxi International Tour & Aviation Corporation (江西省国际旅游航空服务公司; Jiāngxixìhèng Guójí Lǚyóu Hángkōng Fúwù Gōngsī; ☎ 621 5891; 169 Fuzhou Lu)

Nanchang No1 People's Hospital (Shi Diyi Yiyüan; 128 Xiangshan Lu)

Post office (yóujú; cnr Bayi Dadao & Ruzi Lu)

Public Security Bureau (PSB; Gōngānjú; Shengli Lu) About 100m north of Minde Lu.

Xintianyuan Internet Café (Xīntiányuán Wǎngbā; per hr Y2; ☎ 24hr) On an alley east off Erqi Nanlu south of Hong Kong Hotel.

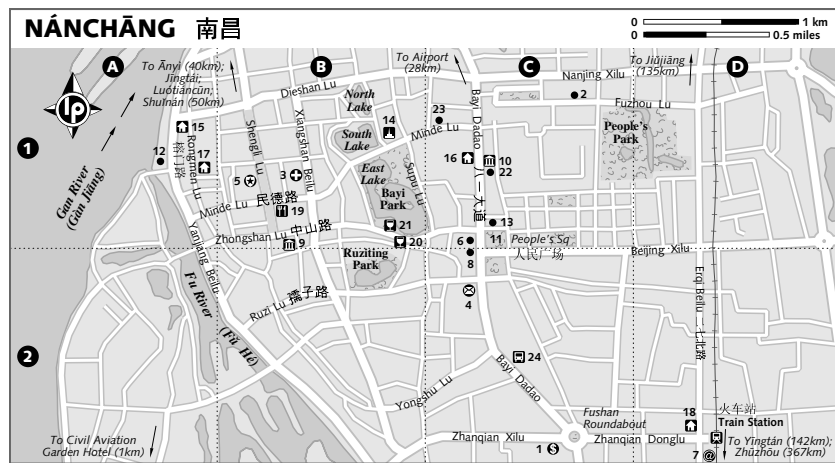
Sights

The city's drawcard prerevolutionary monument is the nine-storey **Téngwáng Gé** (Tengwang Pavilion; 7 Yanjiang Bellu; admission Y50; ☎ 8am-4.50pm), first erected during Tang times. The huge **Youmin Temple** (177 Minde Lu; admission Y2; ☎ 8am-5.30pm) has endured considerable reconstruction, but contains some notable statuary.

Nánchāng's grey slabs of communist heritage include **People's Square** (Rénmín Guǎngchǎng), graced with the soulless **Monument to the Martyrs** (Bāyī Jiniàn Tǎ) and flanked to the west by the Stalinist **Exhibition**

BĀYĪ (1 AUGUST)

On 1 August (*bāyī* in Chinese, now a common street name) 1927, 30,000 troops led by Zhou Enlai and Zhu De seized Nánchāng and held it for several days. The revolt, staged in retribution for a spring massacre of communists by Chiang Kaishek's forces, was largely a fiasco, but the gathering of soldiers marked the beginning of the Chinese communist army. The army retreated south from Nánchāng to Guǎngdōng, but Zhu De led some soldiers and circled back to Jiangxi to join forces with the ragtag army that Mao Zedong had organised in Húnán. From there, the soldiers sought refuge in Jìnggāng Shān (Well-Shaped Ridge Mountains).



INFORMATION		EATING	
Bank of China 中国银行.....	1 C2	Bāwèitáng 八味堂.....	19 B1
Jiangxi International Tour & Aviation Corporation.....	2 C1	Hào xiāng lái 好享来.....	(see 14)
Nanchang No1 People's Hospital 市第一医院.....	3 B1	DRINKING	
Post Office 邮电局.....	4 C2	Babyface	
PSB 公安局.....	5 B1	Bei Bifashi 贝比菲诗.....	20 B1
Xinhua Bookshop 新华书店.....	6 C1	CD Bar.....	21 B1
Xintianyou Internet Café 信天游网吧.....	7 D2	TRANSPORT	
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		Advance Rail Booking Office 铁路售票处.....	22 C1
Exhibition Hall 展览馆.....	8 C2	China Eastern Airlines 东航.....	23 C1
Former Headquarters of the Nanchang Uprising 八一南昌起义纪念馆.....	9 B1	Long-Distance Bus Station 长途汽车站.....	24 C2
Memorial Hall to the Martyrs of the Revolution 革命烈士纪念馆.....	10 C1		
People's Square 人民广场.....	11 C1		
Téngwáng Gé 滕王阁.....	12 A1		
Wal Mart.....	13 C1		
Youmin Temple 佑民寺.....	14 B1		
SLEEPING			
Gloria Plaza Hotel 凯莱大酒店.....	15 A1		
Jiangxi Fandiàn 江西饭店.....	16 C1		
Lóngmén Lǔguǎn 龙门旅馆.....	17 A1		
Xingqiu Hotel 星球宾馆.....	18 D2		

Hall (Zhǎnlǎnguǎn). The **Memorial Hall to the Martyrs of the Revolution** (Gémíng Lièshì Jìniànguǎn; 399 Bayi Dadao; admission Y3; ☎ 8.30am-11.30am & 2-5pm) is north of the square, but most of Nánchāng's citizens seem to much prefer **Wal Mart** to the south.

The **Former Headquarters of the Nanchang Uprising** (Bāyī Nánchāng Qǐyì Jìniànguǎn; 380 Zhongshan Lu; admission Y25; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm) is for rainy days (plentiful in spring) and enthusiasts of the Chinese Communist Party.

Sleeping

The train station area is stuffed with hotels, with prices tending toward the midrange.

Lóngmén Lǔguǎn (Longmen Hotel; ☎ 713 6035; 199 Rongmen Lu; 榕门路199号; d with/without air-con Y78/30; ☎) There's no English sign at this cheapie near the corner of Rongmen Lu and

Zhangjiang Lu, and language skills are Chinese only. The cheapest rooms are without toilet or air-con, but squat loos are thrown into the pricier Y78 rooms, along with TV and air-con.

Jiāngxī Fāndiàn (Jiangxi Hotel; ☎ 885 8888; 356 Bayi Dadao; 八一大道356号; s & d Y120-200, tr Y180; ☎) This reasonable three-star hotel has cosy rooms, a restaurant and a business centre.

Xingqiu Hotel (Xingqiu Binguan; ☎ 612 6555; Erji Beilu; 二七北路; d Y238; ☎) In a blue glass tower opposite the train station, this brand-new hotel has fresh and comfortable doubles, cleanly furnished and equipped with spacious shower rooms (complete with exhibitionist glass walls). Discounts are frequently available. No English sign.

Gloria Plaza Hotel (Kāilái Dàjiùdiàn; ☎ 673 8855, toll free 810 8855; www.gphnanchang.com; 88 Yanjiang

Beilu; 沿江北北路88号; d incl breakfast Y980-1050; ☎) A quality hotel overlooking the river that has comfortable and tastefully furnished rooms. There's a full range of facilities, including a cheongsam shop, indoor pool, Atrium Café, mobile-phone charging point in the foyer, 24-hour ATM and the Hurricane Karaoke Lounge, if you plan on singing up a storm.

Eating & Drinking

Bāwèitáng (☎ 678 0966; 2nd fl, 65 Shengli Lu; noodle dishes Y4-10; ☎ 9am-10pm) On the corner of Minde Lu and pedestrianised Shengli Lu, this spacious and popular noodle bar has steaming tummy-filling bowls of carbohydrate-rich *miàn* (面; noodles) and *fàn* (饭; rice) dishes. Poke the photo menu, pay at the till, sit down and await your *bāwèitáng lǎoyamiàn* (八味堂老鸭面; duck and noodles), *luòhàn shàngsùmiàn* (罗汉上素面; vegetables and noodles) or regulation *bāwèitáng dàpáimiàn* (八味堂大排面; pork and noodles). Don't forget to load up on the crispy *cōngyóu xiāngbǐng* (葱油香饼; onion pastries, Y4 for six).

Hào xiāng lái (Hào yuán lái; ☎ 639 5678; 175 Minde Lu; meals Y25; ☎ 24hr) Handy round-the-clock grills, filling set meals, photo menu and service with a smile. It's by the entrance to Youmin Temple.

Babyface (Bèibí Fēishì; ☎ 621 9333; 3rd fl, Beijing Huailian Bldg, Zhongshan Lu; ☎ 7.30pm-3am) Dizzily loud, this funky installation from the nationwide chain simply hops with euphoric clubbers and the snappily dressed youth of Nánchāng.

CD Bar (☎ 626 7779; 65 Zhongshan Lu; ☎ 7.30pm-late) Across Zhongshan Lu from Babyface; walk in here past squads of security and straight into a throbbing wall of sound overlooking the lake.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Air tickets can be purchased from the ticket office next to the long-distance bus station, from travel agents in the train station area or at **China Eastern Airlines** (☎ 622 1023, 628 2654; 87 Minde Lu).

Chāngběi airport is 28km north of the city, with flights to Běijīng (Y1310, two hours), Guǎngzhōu (Y730, 1½ hours), Hong Kong (Y1490, four times weekly, 1½ hours), Shànghǎi (Y790, one hour) and Xī'ān (Y1010, 1½ hours).

BUS

Regular buses depart from opposite the train station concourse to Jiūjiāng (Y30, hourly, two hours). Other daily departures from here include Guǎngzhōu (Y160), Nánjīng (Y180) and Shànghǎi (Y220, 6pm); buses to Xiàmén (Y230) leave every other day. From Nánchāng's **long-distance bus station** (kèyùn zhōngxīn; Bayi Dadao), regular buses run to Jiūjiāng (Y36, two hours), Lúshān (Y40, 1½ hours), Ànyì (Y17, 1½ hours, regular) and Jīngdézhen (Y72, four hours), with less frequent buses to Wùhàn (Y110) and Héféi (Y135). There are also buses to Jīnggāng Shān (Y65 to Y90, six to nine hours).

TRAIN

Nánchāng lies off the main Guǎngzhōu-Shànghǎi railway line, but many trains make the detour north via the city. Direct trains operate to Fúzhōu (Y100, 10 to 12 hours), Shànghǎi (Y182, 11½ hours) and Wùhàn (Y65, 5 hours). Heading west to Chāngshā in neighbouring Húnán almost always necessitates a stop in Zhūzhōu. Express trains run daily to Jiūjiāng (Y22, 2½ hours) and Jīngdézhen (Y30, four hours), although the freeway makes it far quicker to do the trip by bus. Buy train tickets in advance at the **Advance Rail Ticket Office** (Tiěliú Shòupiaochù; ☎ 160 3009; 393 Bayi Dadao; ☎ 8am-8pm) or at the ticket office next to the long-distance bus station.

Getting Around

Airport buses (Y15, every 30 minutes 6am to 8pm, 40 minutes) leave from the **Civil Aviation Garden Hotel** (Míngháng Huāyuán Jiùdiàn; 587 Hongcheng Lu), south of the town centre. A taxi to the airport costs around Y100.

From the train station, bus 2 goes up Bayi Dadao past the long-distance bus station, and bus 5 heads north along Xiangshan Beilu. Taxis are Y6 at flag fall.

AROUND NÁNCHĀNG

Luótiāncūn, Shuǐnán & Jīngtái

Northwest of town and faced on all sides by imposing ornamental gateways (*ménlóu*), the 1120-year-old village of **Luótiāncūn** (☎ 0791-342 1422; admission incl 5 sights Y21), its uneven stone-flagged alleys etched with centuries of wear, makes an ideal day out and rural escape from the urban greys of Nánchāng. A disorientating labyrinth of tight, higgledy-piggledy lanes,

disused halls and ancient homesteads assembled from dark stone, Luótiáncūn backs onto a picturesque backdrop of fields and hills that maximise its pastoral charms.

Wander the tight maze of lanes, past hand-worked pumps, ancient wells, stone steps, scattering chickens, lazy cows and conical haystacks, poking your head occasionally through doorways to glimpse wooden interiors softly illuminated by overhead light wells (天井; *tiānjǐng*) and catch snatches of Chinese opera warbling from old radios. There are some lovely buildings here: pick your way along Qianjie (前街; Front Street) and pop over to **Dàshìfūdì** (大丈夫第; admission incl in ticket) on Hengjie (横街; Cross Street), an old residence that has marvellous carved wooden panels and is hung with old lanterns called *mǎdēng* (马灯). On the fringes of the village is a fat old camphor tree dating from Tang days; also hunt down the **old well** (古井; *gǔjǐng*), which locals swear is 1000 years old.

From the waterwheel at the foot of Qianjie a flagstone path links Luótiáncūn with its sibling village, **Shuínán** (水南). It's only a 500m walk, through field of rapeseed plants. In Shuínán, follow the signs to the **Shuinan Folk Museum** (水南民俗馆; Shuínán Mínsúguǎn; admission incl in ticket), a further old residence consisting of bedchambers and threadbare exhibits; note how many wooden effigies carved on the interior panels have had their faces smashed off. Toward the edge of the village, the **Guixiù Lóu** (闺秀楼; admission incl in ticket) is another notable building.

A further 500m down the stone path is the large and pleasant community of **Jingtái** (京台), a village with a 1400-year-old history, whose gap-toothed and largely non-*pǔtōnghuà* (Mandarin) speaking denizens are all either surnamed Liu (刘) or Li (李). Again, traipse at will and enjoy the village's hoary barns, stone gateways, musty homesteads, ancestral temple and ancient stage (古戏台; *gǔxìtái*), or wander out into the fields.

Simple peasant family – *nóngjiā* (农家; bed Y15) – accommodation is available in Luótiáncūn, but all three villages can be done as a day trip from Nánchāng.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Take a bus to Anyì (Y17, 1½ hours, regular buses from 8am to 4.30pm) from the Nánchāng long-distance bus station. Across from the Anyì long-distance bus station, buses

leave regularly (when full) for Shíbí (石鼻, Y3, 20 to 30 minutes), from where *sānlúnchē* (three-wheeled motorbikes) muster for trips to Luótiáncūn (Y5, 10 minutes). In the return direction, any *sānlúnchē* can return you to Shíbí for the return bus to Anyì and back to Nánchāng.

JINGDEZHEN 景德镇

☎ 0798 / pop 312,350

Overlooked by tall brick chimneys and disfigured by swathes of squalor and incessant demolition, Jingdezhen is where China's much-coveted porcelain is fired up, although the imperial kilns that manufactured ceramics for the occupants of the Forbidden City were long ago extinguished. With more china here than the rest of China put together, travellers can rapidly feel glazed: Jingdezhen is hardly an oil painting and is strictly for Chinese porcelain buffs.

Orientation

Lying on the Chang River (Chāng Jiāng), Jingdezhen's main arteries are Zhongshan Lu and Zhushan Lu. The stretch of Ma'anshan Lu towards Zhushan Lu is a flourishing pink light district of massage parlours and 'hair-dressers'.

Information

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; Ma'anshan Lu) Towards the train station. Travellers cheques are exchanged at the main branch at 448 Cidu Dadao.

China International Travel Service (CITS; Zhōngguó Guóji Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 851 5888; 1 Zhushan Xilu) Next to the Binjiang Hotel just west of the river; offers a one-day porcelain factory tour (Y160).

Jingcheng Internet Café (Jingchéng Wǎngbā; Tongzhan Lu; per hr Y2; ☎ 24hr)

Post office (yóujú; 151 Zhushan Zhonglu) Has maps of town.

Xinhua Bookshop (Xīnhuà Shūdiàn; 3 Yanjiang Donglu)

Youqing Wangluocheng Internet Café (Ma'anshan Lu; per hr Y2; ☎ 24hr)

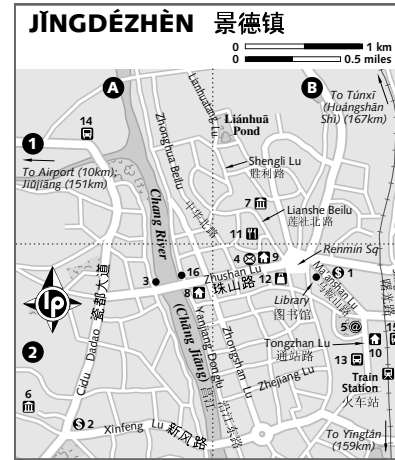
Sights & Activities

The tiny older side streets between Zhongshan Lu and the river can be interesting to wander.

The pleasant and absorbing **Jingdezhen Pottery Culture Exhibition Area** (Jingdezhen Táocí Wénhuà Bóllǎnqū; ☎ 852 1594; admission Y50; ☎ 8am–5pm) is situated over the river in the west, and features exhibition galleries, temples, kilns and workshops where craftsmen demonstrate

traditional Qing and Ming porcelain-making techniques.

A limited collection of bowls, vases and sculptures are displayed at the modest **Museum of Porcelain** (Táocí Guǎn; ☎ 822 9784; 21 Lianshe Beilu; admission Y15; ☎ 8–11am & 2.30–5pm), far outclassed by the Shanghai Museum's (p252) collection.



INFORMATION

Bank of China 中国银行	1	B2
Bank of China 中国银行	2	A2
CITS 中国国际旅行社	3	A2
Jingcheng Internet Café 竟成网吧	(see 10)	
Post Office 邮电局	4	B2
Youqing Wangluocheng Internet Café 有情网络城	5	B2

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Ancient Pottery Factory 古窑瓷厂	(see 6)	
Jingdezhen Pottery Culture Exhibition Area 景德镇陶瓷文化博览区	6	A2
Museum of Porcelain 陶瓷馆	7	B1

SLEEPING

Jingdezhen Hotel 景德镇大酒店	8	A2
Jinsheng Hotel 景生酒店	9	B2
Wenyuan Hotel 文苑大酒店	10	B2

EATING

Little Sparrow 小麻雀酒店	11	B1
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SHOPPING

Porcelain Market 陶瓷市场	12	B2
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TRANSPORT

East Bus Station 汽车站	13	B2
Long-Distance Bus Station 西客站	14	A1
Licun Bus Station (Buses to Wuyuan) 丽村汽车站	15	B2
Xinhua Bookshop 新华书店	16	A2

Sleeping & Eating

Jinsheng Hotel (Jìnshèng Bīnguǎn; ☎ 820 7818; 29 Zhushan Lu; 珠山路29号; s/d Y138/168; ☎) This is a reasonable, central hotel with affordable rooms but indifferent service.

Wenyuan Hotel (Wényuán Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 820 8888; 34 Tongzhan Lu; 通站路34号; s/d Y198/218; ☎) A 150m walk north of the train station, this good two-star choice has well-refurbished rooms with good furnishings, new beds, water cooler, clean shower rooms and regular discounts.

Jingdezhen Hotel (Jingdezhen Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 851 8888; www.jingdezhenhotel.com; 126–128 Zhushan Zhonglu; 珠山中路126–128号; s & d Y680; ☎) Adding a pleasant minty green hue to the grey riverside skyline, the plush four-star Jingdezhen has a vast foyer, acres of marble, lovely computer-equipped rooms, free internet access and neat bathrooms with smallish baths. There's a good Chinese restaurant on the 2nd floor.

Little Sparrow (Xiǎomáquè; ☎ 822 2177; 5 Lianshe Beilu; meals Y20–30; ☎ 9.30am–9pm) Look out for the seafood restaurant with the twisted brick pillars and white marble steps.

Shopping

Porcelain is ubiquitous in Jingdezhen and you will practically be stumbling over piles on pavements and bumping into heaps on street stalls. The huge and centrally located **Jingdezhen Jinchangli Porcelain Market** (Jingdezhen Jīnchānglǐ Táocí Dàshìchāng; ☎ 822 8338; 2 Zhushan Lu) on the corner of Zhuhai Lu and Lianshe Nanlu is a good place to start, but smaller shops and markets can be found all over town.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Luójiǎ airport is 10km northwest of the city. Flights include Shànghǎi (Y500), Shēnzhèn (Y850) and Běijīng (Y1250).

BUS

Buses from the east bus station opposite the train station run to Jiùjiāng (Y35, 1½ hours, regular), Nánchāng (Y45, 3½ hours, three per day), Shànghǎi (Y182, nine hours, once daily), Nánjīng (Y95, seven hours, once daily) and Hángzhōu (Y118, seven hours, once daily).

The main long-distance bus station is across the river in the northwest of town, with buses to Jiùjiāng (Y45, 1½ hours, hourly), Nánchāng (Y70, 3½ hours, every 50 minutes), Túnxī (Y40, four hours), Wùhàn (Y116, five hours, four daily), Shànghǎi (Y180, nine hours, once

CHINA'S CHINA

In 2004, Jingdezhen celebrated its millennium as the country's imperial-decreed ceramics capital, though kilns have been firing up here since the Eastern Han dynasty. During the Jingde period of the Song dynasty, Emperor Zhen Zong decreed that only porcelain from the erstwhile Changnanzhen could grace dynastic tables, a prestigious accolade that lasted through to the Qing dynasty.

Jingdezhen was chosen for its riverine location – facilitating transport to north China – and for its plethora of folk artisans; but its trump card was its proximity to Gaoling village's durable (but oddly textured) eponymous clay. The name Gaoling has entered the international lexicon as Kaolin (more commonly known as China Clay).

Jingdezhen is home to nine of the 26 Masters of Art and Craft of China, the supreme national honour; the city has the nation's only college of ceramics. Then again, modern mass production may be compromising quality so purchasing good items depends on which factory made the porcelain and how much you want to spend. Growing illegal use of the 'Jingdezhen' trademark at overseas fairs and import shops has made finding real-deal wares somewhat dicey.

daily), Hángzhōu (Y110, seven hours, twice daily), Zhūhǎi (Y230) and other cities.

Buses to Wuyuan (Y19, two hours, first bus 6.30am) and Qinghua (Y19, two hours, 8.10am and 1.30pm) leave from the Licun bus station (Licun zhàn) on Shuguang Lu.

TRAIN

Train connections include Nánchāng (hard seat Y38, 5½ hours), Běijīng (Y360, 24 hours), Shànghǎi (Y117, 17 hours) and Nánjīng (Y86, seven hours) via Túnxī, the gateway to legendary Huáng Shān (Y13, four hours).

Getting Around

A taxi to the airport should cost Y30; no bus runs there. Taxi flagfall starts at Y5.

WUYUÁN 婺源

☎ 0793

The countryside around Wuyuan in the splendid northeast of Jiangxi province is home to some of China's most immaculate views. Parcelled away in this fertile and hilly pocket on the fringes of stunning southern Anhui and western Zhejiang is a scattered cluster of picturesque Huizhou (see boxed text, p443) villages where old China remains preserved in enticing panoramas of ancient bridges, glittering rivers, stone-flagged alleyways and the slow, meandering pace of traditional rural life.

Despite lending its name to the entire area, Wuyuan itself – also called Ziyangzhen (紫阳镇) – is a far-from-graceful town where the old quarter is perplexingly being felled in mighty sweeps. The **museum** (bówùguǎn; Ruxueshan

Lu; admission Y20; ☎ 8.30am-noon & 2.30-5pm) on the top of a hill above Xingjiang Lu (星江路) in the old area of town is decent a look but most travellers will need no excuses before immersing themselves in the region's tantalising bucolic charms way out beyond the shabby suburbs.

Orientation

Sitting on either bank on a bend in the Xingjiang River (星江河; Xingjiang Hé), most of the town's hotels, shops and restaurants are located in the centre and north of town. The main north-south drag is Wengong Lu (文公路), along which cluster hotels and travel agencies, both of which can also be found along the east-west-running Tianyou Lu (天佑路). The north bus station is situated on Wengong Beilu; the west bus station is located in the south on Chengnan Lu (城南路).

Information

Post office (yóujú; cnr Tianyou Donglu & Lianxi Lu)

People's Hospital (Rénmín Yiyuàn; Wengong Nanlu)

Public Security Bureau (PSB; Gōngānjú; 2 Huancheng Beilu; ☎ 8-11.30am & 2.30-5.30pm)

Qitian Internet Cafe (启天网吧; Qìtiān Wǎngbā; Wengong Nanlu; per hr Y2; ☎ 7am-midnight) Up the stairs on the 2nd floor through the large gateway opposite the Agricultural Development Bank of China.

Sleeping & Eating

It is preferable to stay overnight in one of the villages around town if you want a charming location, but Wuyuan has a larger range of accommodation, with loads of hotels along Wengong Lu.

Xiǎoféiyáng Bīnguǎn (小肥羊宾馆; Xiaofei yang Hotel; ☎ 748 7899; 68 Wengong Nanlu; 文公南路68号; tw Y60; ☎) Rooms at this hotel above the restaurant of the same name are clean and come with TV and shower. The restaurant below is recommended for its hearty hotpots.

Tianma Hotel (天马大酒店; Tiānmǎ Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 736 7666; Wengong Beilu; 文公北路; d Y358; ☎) Handily located across from the north bus station, this smart four-star hotel has decent rooms that are regularly discounted to Y286.

Getting There & Away

From Jingdezhen, buses to Wuyuan (Y19, two hours, regular, first bus 6.30am) and Qinghua (Y19, two hours, 8.10am and 1.30pm) leave from the Licun bus station (Licun zhàn) on Shuguang Lu. From Túnxī in Ànhuī, buses to Wuyuan (Y30, three hours, twice daily) depart from the long-distance bus station.

From Wuyuan **north bus station** (běizhàn; ☎ 734 8585; Wengong Beilu) there are buses to Jingdezhen (Y19, two hours, every hour from 6am to 4.20pm), Túnxī (Y30, three hours, twice daily), Jiǔjiāng (Y69, 3½ hours), Hángzhōu (Y97, six hours, 9.30am), Shànghǎi (Y165, eight hours, 5pm), Wēnzhōu (Y124, six hours, 10am) and other destinations. From Wuyuan west bus station, buses run to similar destinations.

AROUND WUYUÁN

The area first appeared on the Chinese tourist radar a few years ago, but village life has only fitfully begun to respond to this new economy. For now, washerwomen scrub wads of wet clothing along village riverbanks, plump chickens scamper about, the interiors of ancient halls and traditional homes openly invite inquisitive glances while peasant families offer cheap beds to wayfarers. The languid local tempo has resisted the slippery slide to wholesale repackaging, but that could all change as domestic tourists pour in.

Spring is a delightful time to visit, the fields carpeted in yellow *yóucàihuā* (rapeseed), the trees in flower and the summer crush yet to descend.

In addition to the villages listed here, there are other hamlets worth exploring, including Jiāng Wǎn (江湾) and Wǎngkǒu (汪口).

Qinghua 清华

Easily reached by bus (Y5, 30 minutes, regular departures when full) or motorbike (Y20

from Wuyuan north bus station, the principle asset of retiring Qinghua is its 800-year-old Southern Song-dynasty **Caihong Bridge** (彩虹桥; Cǎihóng Qiáo; admission Y20) with its gorgeous riverine views, but also wander along the old street **Qinghua Laojie** (清华老街), a dilapidated portrait of time-worn stone architecture with carved wood shop fronts, lintels, decorative architraving and old folk stripping bamboo. A memento from early communist days survives along the old street in the bleak form of the old cinema, still emblazoned with full-form, pre-Mao Chinese characters that simply declare 'Qinghua Cinema'.

Wander at will down the small alleys that poke from the main drag and seek out revitalising shots of the local firewater, Qinghua Wújiǔ (清华婺酒). For both dinner and sleeping, try the attractively positioned **restaurant** (s/d Y120) next to the waterwheel on the far side of the Caihong Bridge or check into one of the simple *nóngjiā* (农家; literally 'farm households') dotted about Qinghua, such as the **Lǎojiē Kèzhàn** (老街客栈; ☎ 0793-724 2359; 355 Qinghua Laojie; 清华老街355号; d Y20), where basic rooms await. Buses also depart from Wuyuan north bus station to the mountain vistas of Dàzhāng Shān (大鄣山; Y45, one hour), not far from Qinghua.

Likeng 理坑

Two villages named Likeng lie within reach of Wuyuan, and this riverside hamlet of around 300 homesteads is popularly called *Dà Likeng* ('Big Likeng'; admission Y20), as opposed to *Xiǎo Likeng* (Small Likeng) – a different (and more picturesque) settlement northeast of Wuyuan; see p496.

Typical of the local vernacular, many of Likeng's white-painted old houses enclose splendid interior courtyards illuminated from above by light wells (天井; *tiānjǐng*): rectangular openings in the roof that admit both sun and rain. The effect is to bathe interiors in pools of natural light, while rainwater soaks between the stone slabs below to drain away. The cool interiors often rise to two tiers and feature galleries, supported by wooden pillars and brackets, all in their original state.

Wander Likeng's narrow alleyways pinched between towering walls and seek out some of its more impressive structures, such as the **Dàfūdi** (大夫第) – now converted into an antiques shop – and the lovely **Sīmǎdi** (司马第). Sit down on a stone bench alongside the

river or cross one of the bridges to the far side and climb the stone-flagged path up the hill into the tea bushes above the village.

As in Qinghua, several local households have opened their doors to travellers, with simple beds available from around Y20 per night.

Perhaps the most splendid aspect of visiting Likeng is traversing the hilly countryside from Qinghua, a beautiful landscape of fields and valleys cut by shimmering blue rivers and streams of totally unadulterated, pure water. A bus links Qinghua and Likeng (around 45 minutes), while motorbikes can shuttle you along the rough road between the two for Y50. Alternatively, take a bus from Wuyuan to Tuochuan (沱川; Y15) and then a motorbike taxi.

Xiàoqǐ 晓起

☎ 0793

With a gorgeous riverside perch and enticing village architecture, Xiàoqǐ (admission Y20), around 36km from Wuyuan, dates back to 787. There are actually two villages sharing the name Xiàoqǐ: upper Xiàoqǐ (上晓起) and lower Xiàoqǐ (下晓起), several kilometres apart. Both are lovely and accommodation is plentiful; try the **Lǎowū Fāndiàn** (老屋饭店; ☎ 729 7402; r with fan Y20), with very simple rooms (shared toilet and shower) upstairs in a marvellous old Qing dynasty building by the river, or the adjacent and similarly styled **Jìxutáng Hotel** (继序堂饭店; Jìxutáng Fāndiàn; ☎ 729 7014; r with fan Y15), equipped with a downstairs restaurant. The doorways of both buildings are decorated with richly detailed carved architraving. Buses to Xikou from Wuyuan (Y7, 45 minutes, twice daily) pass through Xiàoqǐ; a motorbike from Wuyuan to Xiàoqǐ will cost around Y50 (Y80 return).

Likēng 李坑

☎ 0793

A delightfully picturesque village, Likēng (admission Y30; also known locally as *Xiǎo Likēng*, or 'Small Likēng') enjoys a stupendous riverside setting, hung with lanterns, threaded by tight alleys and tightly banded together by quaint bridges. Come night-time, Likēng is ever more serene, its riverside lanes glowing softly under red lanterns and old-fashioned-style street lamps, while locals navigate darker quarters by torchlight.

Likēng's highly photogenic focal point hinges on the confluence of its two streams,

traversed by the bump of the 300-year-old **Tongji Bridge** (通济桥; Tōngjǐ Qiáo) and signposted by the **Shenming Pavilion** (申明亭; Shēnmíng Tīng), one of the village's signature sights, its wooden benches polished smooth with age.

Take a lazy boat from the huge old camphor tree near the entrance of the village to Tongji Bridge for Y10. To walk around town, follow the clear signs. Among the *báicài* (Chinese cabbage) draped from bamboo poles and chunks of cured meats hanging out in the air from crumbling, mildewed buildings, notable structures include the **Copper Mansion** (铜录坊; Tónglù Fāng), erected during Qing times by a copper merchant, the rebuilt **old stage** (古戏台; Gǔxìtái), where Chinese opera and performances are still held during festivals, and spirit walls erected on the riverbank to shield residents from the sound of cascading water.

Cross one of the bridges just beyond the old stage and take the stone-flagged path up the hill, past an old camphor tree, past terraced fields, through bamboo and firs and down to the river and the **Li Zhicheng Residence** (李知诚故居), the residence of a military scholar from the Southern Song. Walk in any direction and you will hit the countryside.

Accommodation is easy to find; try the simple **Qinglong Kèzhàn** (青龙客栈; ☎ 726 3053; 25 Wuzheng Jie; 坞正街25号; d with fan no toilet Y40, with air-con & toilet Y100; ☎), on the far side of Tongji Bridge opposite the old stage, or the clean rooms (with TV and shower) at the **Guangming Cháolou** (光明茶楼; ☎ 726 2039; d with air-con Y40; ☎), overlooking the river up from the Shenming Pavilion. For snacks, look out for *qīngmíngguō* (sweet and salty green dumplings sold by wayside vendors; Y3 for 10). Several notable buildings have been transformed into antiques shops.

Getting Around

Transport throughout the region can be frustrating, as villages are spaced apart and are not always linked by reliable bus connections. Buses depart Wuyuan's north bus station (běizhàn) for many of the villages and sights, including Qinghua, Likēng and Dàzhāng Shān, but getting between individual destinations can be trying. Motorbikes (摩的; *módi*) can be hired from Wuyuan for the day (with driver) for around Y130, which should be able to take you to four or five villages (but expect to treat the driver to lunch). Otherwise, sample one-way fares for individual trips by

motorbike taxis from Wuyuan are: Qinghua (Y20), Xiàoqǐ (Y50) and Likēng (李坑; Xiǎo Likēng; Y15). From Xiàoqǐ to Likēng (李坑; Xiǎo Likēng), expect to pay around Y20. Taxis can be hired in Wuyuan, but prices are high (albeit negotiable).

LÚSHĀN 庐山

☎ 0792

With an entrance fee (Y135) almost as steep as its verdant slopes, Lúshān's mountain views and European villa architecture have provided inspiration for legions of visitors while serving as the picturesque backdrop to momentous events from the turgid saga of Chinese communist history. In summer, travellers flock to Lúshān to flee the roaring lowland furnace of the Yangzi River basin while in winter months the peaks lie shrouded in thick banks of preternaturally lovely mists that can chill to the bone.

History

Late-19th-century Westerners established Lúshān, or Kuling as English-speakers called it, as a refreshing summer retreat. Gǔlǐng vil-

lage was shaped after an English countryside village and its hotchpotch of stone cottages and villas remains today.

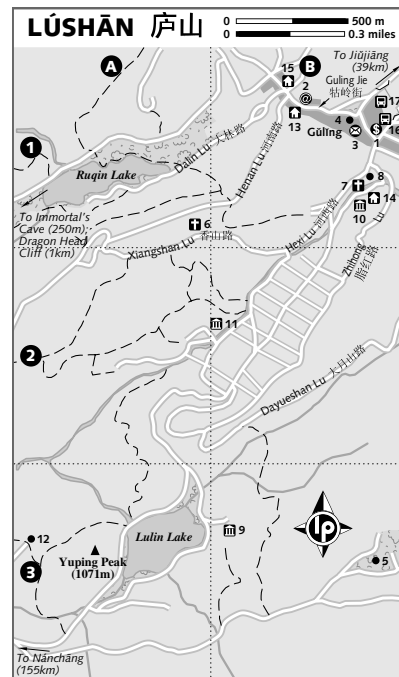
In 1959 the Central Committee of the Communist Party held a fateful meeting in Lúshān, which led to Peng Dehuai's dismissal, almost sent Mao into a political wilderness and sowed the seeds for the vicissitudinous rise and fall of Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping.

In 1970, a meeting of the Politburo in Lúshān – exactly what happened is shrouded in as much mist as the mountains – set the stage for a clash between Lin Biao and Mao. Whatever happened, Lin was dead by the following year.

Orientation & Information

The arrival point is the village of Gǔlǐng, perched 1167m high at the range's northern end and equipped with shops and restaurants, a post office, bank, internet cafés and long-distance bus stations. From Jiǔjiāng, 39km away, return day tours cost from Y180 (including entrance ticket, transportation and guide) and give you about five hours in Lúshān.

Detailed maps showing roads and walking tracks are available from the **Xinhua Bookstore** (Xinhua Shūdiàn; 11 Guling Jie), not far from the **Public Security Bureau** (PSB; Gōngānjú; ☎ 828 2452; 20 Guling Jie). You can change money at the **Bank of China** (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 13 Hemian Jie). An **Internet Café** (Wǎngbā; Guling Jie; per hr Y3; ☎ 8am-midnight) can



INFORMATION

Bank of China 中国银行	1	B1
Internet Café 网吧	2	B1
Post Office 邮局	3	B1
PSB 公安局	(see 13)	
Xinhua Bookstore 新华书店	4	B1

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Botanical Gardens 植物园	5	B3
Catholic Church 天主教堂	6	A1
Church 基督教堂	7	B1
Cinema 电影院	8	B1
Lushan Museum 博物馆	9	B3
Meilu Villa 美庐别墅	10	B1
Site of the Lushan Conference 庐山会议旧址	11	B2
Three Ancient Trees 三宝树	12	A3

SLEEPING

Guling Zhengfu Hotel 牯岭镇政府宾馆	13	B1
Lushan Villa Hotel 庐山别墅村	14	B1
Lushan Yuntian Villa 庐山云天别墅	15	B1

TRANSPORT

Bus Station	16	B1
Buses to Jiǔjiāng 汽车站售票出	17	B1

be found obliquely opposite the PSB at the bottom of the steps, and a post office can be found in the same area.

Sights & Activities

In addition to Lúshān's tourist attractions, explore the mountain roads and paths on your own.

Once Mao's former residence, the **Lushan Museum** (Lúshān Bówùguǎn; ☎ 828 2341; 1 Lulin Lu; admission free; ☎ 8am-5.30pm) is littered with paraphernalia detailing the Lúshān communist connection.

Built by Chiang Kaishek in the 1930s, **Meilu Villa** (Mèilǚ Biéshù; 180 Hedong Lu; admission Y15; ☎ 8am-6pm) is a short walk downhill from Güling and consequently crowded with sightseers.

Also called the People's Hall, the **Site of the Lushan Conference** (Lúshān Huìyì Jiùzhì; 504 Hexi Lu; admission Y10; ☎ 8am-5pm) was the venue for the Chinese Communist Party's historic confabs.

At Lúshān's northwestern rim, the land falls away abruptly to spectacular views across Jiāngxī's densely settled plains. A long walking track south around these precipitous slopes passes the **Immortal's Cave** (仙人洞; Xiānrén Dòng) and continues to **Dragon Head Cliff** (龙首崖; Lóngshǒu Yá), a natural rock platform tilted above an eye-popping vertical drop.

The sombre **Three Ancient Trees** (Sānbǎoshù), not far by foot from Lulin Lake (Lúlin Hú), are indeed venerably old: the ginkgo and two cedar trees were planted five centuries ago by Buddhist monks.

The **Botanical Gardens** (Zhīwù Yuán; ☎ 707 9828; admission Y10; ☎ 7.30am-5.30pm) are mainly devoted to subalpine tropical plants that thrive in the cooler highland climate. In the open gardens are spreads of rhododendrons, camellias and conifers.

Among Lúshān's old places of worship, the active **Church** (23 Hexi Lu) is a small, Protestant-looking stone building. The **Catholic Church** (12 Xiangshan Lu) is a frugally adorned and well-tended edifice assembled from roughly hewn blocks of stone.

Those with Chinese reading skills can note the largely obliterated political slogans from more tumultuous days above the door of the **building** at 3 Henan Lu, near the corner with Guling Jie. The characters are largely illegible, but the words 'Chairman Mao' are visible.

If so inclined, sit in on screenings of the Chinese classic *Love in Lushan* at the **cinema** (19 Hexi Lu).

Sleeping & Eating

In summer, particularly the stratospherically priced and supercharged weekends and holiday periods, budget travellers should forget about sleeping in Lúshān; do a day trip from the town of Jiūjiāng instead. Prices here are average in high season; double everything during holidays.

Guling Zhengfu Hotel (Gúlingzhèn Zhèngfǔ Bīnguǎn; ☎ 829 6282; 100 Lushan Zhengjie; 庐山正街100号; d Y120) Up the steps above the PSB, this place has OK rooms with shower and good views that can be secured for around Y80 during the low season.

Lushan Yuntian Villa (Lúshān Yúntiān Biéshù; ☎ 829 3555; Guling Jie; 牯岭正街; d Y580-680; ☎) A move away from Lúshān's typically musty and worn lodging options, this place offers old villa atmosphere with roomy, fresh accommodation and a crisp finish. Angle for discounts.

Lushan Villa Hotel (Lúshān Biéshù Cūn; ☎ 828 2927; fax 828 2927; 182 Zhihong Lu; 脂红路182号; ste Y880-2000) This place has cottages scattered throughout a lovely old pine forest, with discounts of up to 20% available.

Xunyang Hotel (Xúnyáng Bīnguǎn; ☎ 0792-812 3888; 292 Xunyang Lu; d Y268; ☎) This very good choice in Jiūjiāng has recently renovated rooms, restored to a high standard, some with computer, glass sinks, plastic wood flooring, clean showers, comfy beds and modern furnishings. During slack periods, rates drop to Y120.

Small, cheapish restaurants abound in Güling, but prices rise as you stray from the village and into the hills.

Getting There & Around

Many travellers arrive in Lúshān from either Nánchāng or Jiūjiāng. Regular buses leave for Nánchāng (Y40, 1½ hours, approximately every 40 minutes, first/last bus 7am/5.30pm) from the **bus station** (☎ 828 1983) just north of the Xiadu Hotel on Hexi Lu. Buses also depart from here for Wūhàn (Y75, 8am). Buses to Jiūjiāng (Y8, one hour, first/last bus 7.50am/3.30pm) depart regularly from the small ticket office on Guling Jie. In summer, it may be a good idea to book your return seat upon arrival, particularly for day-trippers.

From Jiūjiāng, buses leave regularly from 8am from Lúshān from the long-distance bus station (chángtú qìchē zhàn) on Xunyang Lu, which is also connected to Nánchāng (Y36, two hours, every 25 minutes), Jìngdézhen (Y35, two hours, every hour), Wùyuan (Y65,

three hours, 9.45am), Shànghǎi (Y199, 10 hours), Nánjīng (Y130, six hours, frequent) and Wūhàn (Y71, 3½ hours). See p491 for details on buses to Lúshān.

Lúshān's myriad footpaths make explorations on foot outstanding, although consider hiring a taxi to visit sights and walking back. Lúshān has copious cable cars and tramways (Y50 to Y60 return).

JINGGANG SHAN 井冈山

☎ 0796

With its tree-lined streets and misty mountain ranges, Jìnggāng Shān (admission Y100, sights extra), near the Húnán–Jiāngxī border, is fêted and mythologised by dewy-eyed party cadres China-wide: in 1927, Mao led 900 men here to be joined by Zhu De's battered forces. It was from these hills that Mao launched the legendary Long March to Shaanxi, guaranteeing Jìnggāng Shān's conversion from mountain range to revolutionary cradle, communist monument and overrun tourist Mecca. June to October are the optimal travel months.

Orientation & Information

The main township, Cípíng (茨坪; also called Jìnggāng Shān), is nestled around a small lake in the mountains, 820m above the sea.

Your hotel can possibly help you hire a van for about Y100 to tour major sites, but be careful of overcharging.

Emergency phone numbers, including those of the **PSB** (Gōngānjū; ☎ 655 2360) and **medical help** (☎ 655 2595), are listed on roadside signs. The **Bank of China** (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 6 Nanshan Lu), on the lake's southeastern end, has a 24-hour ATM.

Sights & Activities

Jìnggāng Shān's natural highland forest is unrivalled, particularly its square-stemmed bamboo and some 26 kinds of alpine azaleas that bloom from late April. Adventurous trekkers can venture into the surrounding mountains for **self-guided walks** on dirt trails.

At **Five Dragon Pools** (Wǔlóng Tán; ☎ 655 6937; admission Y30; ☎ 6am-6pm), about 7km northwest of town, five cascading waterfalls and gorgeous views reward a long but sweatless

trek (with English signs). The total hike can take six hours (three hours each way). Cheat with a cable car (Y50 single).

Magnificent views unfurl from the watching post, **Huángyángjiè** (黄洋界; admission Y7; ☎ 7am-6pm), sitting to the west at more than 1300m above sea level.

Standing 1438m above sea level, **Five Fingers Peak** (五指峰; Wǔzhǐ Fēng; admission Y20; ☎ 7am-6pm) is to the south and is immortalised on the back of the old Y100 banknote.

The **Revolutionary Museum** (革命博物馆; Géming Bówùguǎn; ☎ 655 2248; 12 Hongjun Nanlu; admission Y8; ☎ 8am-5.30pm) devotes itself to the Kuomintang and Communists' struggle for control of the Húnán–Jiāngxī area in the late 1920s.

The **Former Revolutionary Quarters** (革命旧居群; Géming Jiùzhǐqún; Tongmu Linglu; admission Y5; ☎ 8am-6pm) is a reconstruction of the mud-brick building that served as a Communist command centre between 1927 and 1928, and where Mao lived temporarily.

Sleeping

Most hotels in Jìnggāng Shān unwaveringly cater to the midrange market. Prices coast during weekdays before rocketing on peak weekends.

Túshūguǎn Zhaodàisù (图书馆招待所; ☎ 655 2276; 22 Hongjun Beilu; 红军北路; s & tw from Y80) Modest rooms with bathrooms are decent and cheap. It's a 10-minute walk from the bus station, just past the lake. Look for a white sign with red lettering.

Jìnggāngshān Bīnguǎn (井冈山宾馆; ☎ 655 2272; fax 655 2551; 10 Hongjun Beilu; tw Y320-680; ☎) Stay where all PRC chairmen have lain their heads, among a mind-boggling variety of rooms and villas. There's no English sign.

Getting There & Away

Direct buses run from Nánchāng to Jìnggāng Shān (Y65 to Y90, five hours, three buses daily). Occasional buses also run to Chángshā (Y76, nine hours).

The Jìnggāng Shān train station is in Tàihé, a minibus ride away (Y25, three hours). An alternative is to take a train to Jǐ'ān train station and then a bus (Y25, three hours) to Cípíng.

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