

# Jílín 吉林



China's largest nature reserve is the main attraction for visitors to Jílín province. At Chángbái Shān, the 'Ever-White Mountains,' you can hike along pine-lined paths up to tundra-like moonscapes; the highlight is Heaven Lake, a volcanic crater lake high among the peaks.

In the province's southeast, Unesco have designated the area around the small city of Jǐ'ān as a World Heritage Site for its relics from the ancient Koguryo kingdom (37 BC to AD 668). This still little-explored region houses pyramids, tombs and other remains from this early civilization, just across the river from present-day North Korea.

Jílín province is home to roughly one million ethnic Koreans, more than 80 percent of whom live in the Korean Autonomous Prefecture in the east of the province. Yánjí, the bilingual capital, makes a convenient base for exploring this region's blend of Korean and Chinese cultures.

Jílín is part of the historic territory of the Manchus, who founded the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). When the Japanese seized Manchuria and shaped it into the puppet state of Manchukuo (1931–45), they established Chángchūn, today's provincial capital, as its headquarters. In Chángchūn, you can visit the elaborately re-created palace that was home to Puyi, the Qing's so-called Last Emperor.

Summer is the best time to tour Jílín, particularly if you're heading for Chángbái Shān; in winter, heavy snows make the reserve virtually inaccessible. For those who do brave the frigid wintry months, Jílín city stages an Ice Lantern Festival, as well as the spectacle of frost-laden trees along its winding riverbank that sparkle in the winter sun.

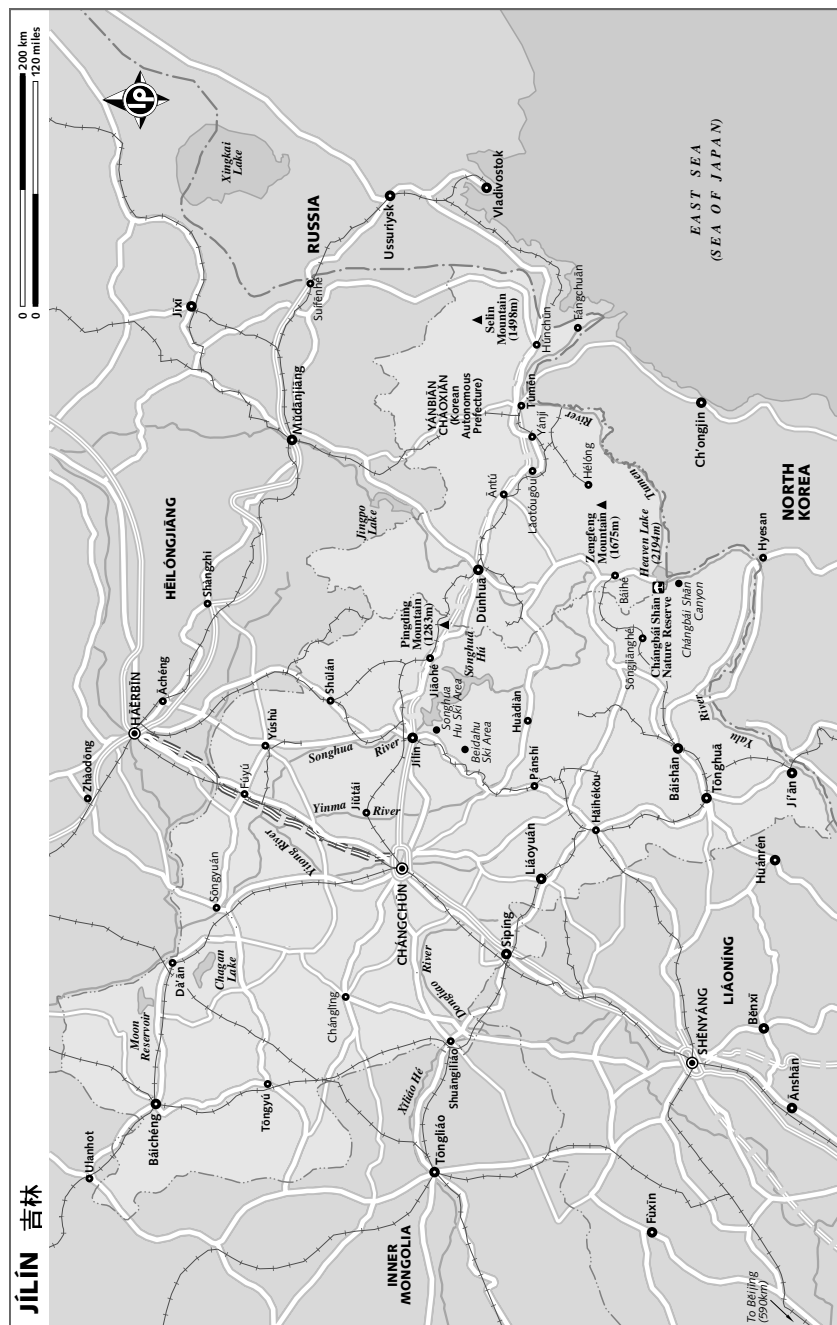
## HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike to **Heaven Lake** (p381), a volcanic crater lake in stunning Chángbái Shān, China's largest nature reserve
- Visit **Chángbái Shān's** (p381) waterfalls, hot springs and dense green forests
- Explore Korean-Chinese culture in Yánjí and the **Korean Autonomous Prefecture** (p384)
- Tour the relics of the ancient Koguryo kingdom in **Jǐ'ān**, on the North Korean border (p385)



■ POPULATION: 27.6 MILLION

■ [www.yunnantourism.net](http://www.yunnantourism.net)



## History

When the Japanese occupied Manchuria in the early 1930s, Jilin's capital, Chángchūn, became the centre of Japan's puppet government. In 1932, the Japanese installed Henry Puyi – who had earlier become the 10th (and last) emperor of the Qing dynasty at the tender age of three – as their 'puppet emperor', the executive nominally in charge of the government of the Manchukuo puppet state. Puyi governed the region from a palace in Chángchūn until 1945. After Japan's defeat in WWII, Puyi attempted to flee to Japan. He got as far as Shěnyáng, where Russian troops captured him. In 1950, he was returned to China, where he spent 10 years in a re-education camp. Puyi died in 1967.

Jilin's border with North Korea has dominated the region's more recent history. Since the mid-1990s, thousands of North Koreans have fled into China to escape extreme food shortages. Many try to pass through China, en route to South Korea or to a supportive third country, while others remain in Jilin province, attempting to blend in with the local population, particularly in the Korean Autonomous Prefecture. The Chinese government has not looked favourably on these migrants, refusing to grant them protected refugee status; those captured by Chinese authorities and returned to North Korea face a grim future.

## Getting There & Around

The main rail and road routes across Jilin province run north-south through Chángchūn, to Shěnyáng in Liáoníng province and Hǎerbīn in Heilóngjiāng province. From Chángchūn, eastbound trains and buses go to the city of Jilin; you can reach Jilin city from Shěnyáng or Hǎerbīn as well.

Travel to the province's eastern regions, particularly to the Chángbái Shān Nature Reserve, is more challenging. A regular train chugs east from Chángchūn and Jilin to Yánjí. From Yánjí, buses wind south through the hills toward the small town of Báihé, the main transport centre for Chángbái Shān's northern entrance. Access to Chángbái Shān's western entrance is from the town of Sōngjiāngghé, on the train line that runs between Báihé, Tōnghuā and Shěnyáng.

You can reach Jí'ān via Tōnghuā to the north, Shěnyáng to the west or Dāndōng to the south. Between Jí'ān and Chángbái Shān, you can make connections in Tōnghuā.

## CHÁNGCHŪN 长春

☎ 0431 / pop 3.04 million

The Japanese capital of Manchukuo between 1933 and 1945, Chángchūn today is an industrial city and a hub of China's booming automobile manufacturing business. Volkswagen has a factory in town, and Toyota has set up a joint venture to build its Prius hybrid cars.

With Soviet assistance, China's first car-manufacturing plant opened here in the 1950s, and that company, now called FAW Group, is China's largest automotive manufacturer. Its stated goal is to 'let every Chinese family own a car' – a scary thought, perhaps, given the traffic that already snarls Chángchūn and other northeast cities.

## Orientation

Chángchūn sprawls from north to south. The long-distance bus station and the train station are in the north of the city.

## Information

**Bank of China** (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 1296 Xinmin Dajie;

☎ 8.30-11.30am & 1-4.30pm) In the Yinmao building, near Nanhu Park (Nánhú Gōngyuán), this branch will change travellers cheques.

**China International Travel Service of Jilin**

**Province** (CITS; Zhōngguó Guóji Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 566 6541; fax 566 6547; 1448 Xinmin Dajie; ☎ 8.30am-5pm) In the lobby of the Changbai Shan Hotel (Chángbái Shān Bīnguǎn), this office sells airline tickets and books Chángbái Shān trips.

**Foreign Language Bookshop** (1660 Tongzhi Jie)

**Internet café** (wǎngbā; btwn Changbai Lu & Hankou Jie; per hr ¥2) In a basement room opposite the train station.

**Internet café** (wǎngbā; 2522 Tongzhi Jie, 2nd fl; per hr ¥2) South of Guilin Lu.

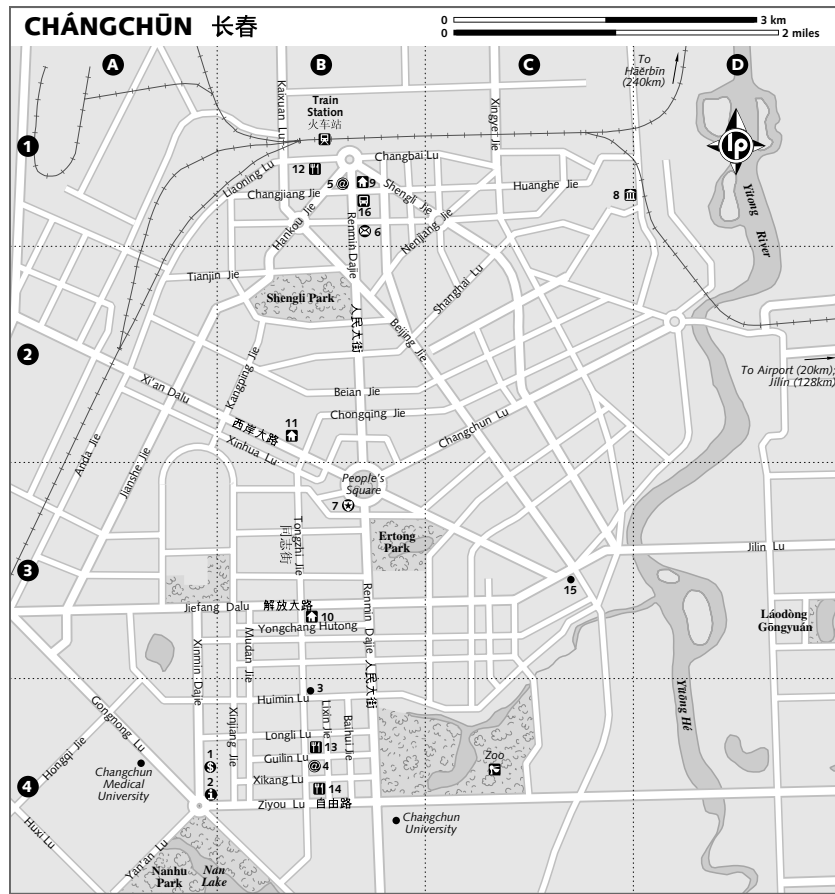
**Post office** (yóujú; Renmin Dajie; ☎ 8.30am-5pm) South of the long-distance bus station.

**Public Security Bureau** (PSB; Gōngānjú; 2627 Renmin Dajie) On the southwestern corner of People's Sq (Rénmín Guǎngchǎng), in a building that dates from the Japanese occupation.

## Sights

### PUPPET EMPEROR'S PALACE & EXHIBITION HALL 伪皇宫

Chángchūn's main attraction, this restored palace (Wěi Huánggōng; 5 Guangfu Lu; admission ¥40; ☎ 8.30am-5pm summer, 8.30am-4.20pm winter, last entry 40 min before closing) is the former residence of Henry Puyi, who was the Qing dynasty's last emperor. His story was the basis for the



Bernardo Bertolucci film of 1987, *The Last Emperor*.

At age three, Puyi became the 10th Qing emperor, though China's 1911 revolution ended his brief reign. Puyi lived in exile until 1932, when the Japanese installed him at this palace as the 'puppet emperor' of Manchukuo.

Puyi's study, bedroom and temple, as well as his wife's quarters, his lover's quarters and his offices, have all been elaborately re-created, right down to his toilet (from where he reportedly approved all government decisions).

From the train station, bus 10 or 18 will drop you within walking distance of the palace.

## Sleeping

**Elan Fashion Inn** (Milán Huàshìshàng Jiudiàn; ☎ 564 4988; cnr Tongzhi Jie & Yongchang Hutong; 同志街与永昌胡同交汇处; d without/with bathroom Y68-128, tr without bathroom Y78; 🚽) This sparkling budget hotel has cheerful rooms with brightly-hued walls and wood-grain floors. From the train station, take bus 62 or 362 and get off on Tongzhi Jie just south of Jiefang Dalu.

**Chūnyì Bīnguǎn** (☎ 209 6888; www.chunyihotel.com; 80 Renmin Dajie; 人民大街80号; s/d/tr Y298/320/368 incl breakfast; 🚽) From the stained glass to the woodwork, this excellent-value midrange hotel has plenty of old-world charm. It was built in 1909 for senior Japanese and Manchurian officials.

**Shangri-La Hotel** (Xiānggélílá Dàjiūdiàn; ☎ 898 1818; www.shangri-la.com; 569 Xi'an Dalu; 西安大路569号;

## INFORMATION

Bank of China 中国银行	1	A4
CITS 中国国际旅行社	2	A4
Foreign Language Bookshop 外文书店	3	B4
Internet Café 网吧	4	B4
Internet Café 网吧	5	B1
Post Office 邮局	6	B1
PSB 公安局外事科	7	B3

## SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Puppet Emperor's Palace & Exhibition Hall 伪皇宫	8	C1
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## SLEEPING

Chūnyì Bīnguǎn 春谊宾馆	9	B1
Elan Fashion Inn 米兰花时尚酒店	10	B3
Shangri-La Hotel 香格里拉大酒店	11	B2

## EATING

Changchun Mall Food Court	12	B1
French Bakery 红磨坊	13	B4
Sòngjī Zhōupù 宋记粥铺	14	B4

## TRANSPORT

CAAC 中国民航	15	C3
Long-Distance Bus Station 长途汽车站	16	B1

d Y1050-1530 plus 15% service charge; ☎ 🚽 📺 📺) Chángchūn's most upscale hotel is an elegant modern tower off Tongzhi Jie, a main shopping street. The cordial staff speaks English, and there's wireless internet access from the marble and gold lobby.

## Eating & Drinking

Inexpensive restaurants serving good *dōngběi* (northeastern) fare are clustered along Guilin Lu and Xikang Lu, between Tongzhi Jie and Renmin Dajie south of People's Sq. In the same area, Longli Lu is lined with bars.

**Sòngjī Zhōupù** (688 Xikang Lu; dishes Y3-12; 🍲 24hr) Head to this inexpensive cafeteria for comfort food *dōngběi* style. Porridge is a speciality, paired with breads and pickled vegetables.

**French Bakery** (Hóng Mò Fāng; ☎ 562 3994; 745 Guilin Lu; coffees Y15, pastries Y5-10, mains Y10-30; 🍲 7.30am-10pm) This long-standing coffee shop satisfies Western-food cravings with croissants, sandwiches and pasta.

For a quick bite near the train station, try the **Changchun Mall Food Court** (162 Liaoning Lu, lower level; dishes Y8-20; 🍲 lunch & dinner) for noodles, stews, dumplings or hotpot.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

**Civil Aviation Administration of China** (CAAC; Zhōngguó Mínháng; ☎ 879 7777; 480 Jiefang Dalu), with offices in the CAAC Hotel, operates daily flights

to most major domestic cities, including Běijīng (Y960, 1½ hours), Shànghǎi (Y1600, 2½ hours), Shēnzhèn (Y2490, five hours) and Dàlián (Y580, one hour).

Asiana Airlines flies daily to Seoul (two hours). China Southern travels to Tokyo on Sundays (two hours and 40 minutes).

## BUS

The **long-distance bus station** (kèyùn zhōngxīn; 226 Renmin Dajie) is two blocks south of the train station.

Destination	Price	Duration	Frequency
Běijīng	Y220	7½hr	5 daily
Dàlián	Y147	8hr	several daily
Hǎerbīn	Y85	3½hr	every 30 min
Jílín	Y20	1½hr	every 10-15 min
Shěnyáng	Y85	3½hr	hourly

## TRAIN

Regular trains run to Hǎerbīn (Y61, three to four hours), Jílín (Y10, two hours), Shěnyáng (Y28, four to five hours), Běijīng (seat/sleeper Y130/232, nine to 10 hours), Dàlián (seat/sleeper Y99/171, eight to 9½ hours) and Shànghǎi (seat/sleeper Y227/422, 22 to 28 hours).

## Getting Around

Chángchūn's airport is 20km east of the city centre, between Chángchūn and Jílín. Airport buses (Y20, 50 minutes) leave from the **CAAC Hotel** (民航宾馆; Mínháng Bīnguǎn; 480 Jiefang Dalu) on the east side of town. A taxi to the airport will cost Y80 to Y100.

Bus 6 follows Renmin Dajie south from the train station. Buses 62 and 362 take a more circuitous route, travelling between the train station and Nanhu Park via the Chongqing Lu and Tongzhi Jie shopping districts.

Taxi fares start at Y5.

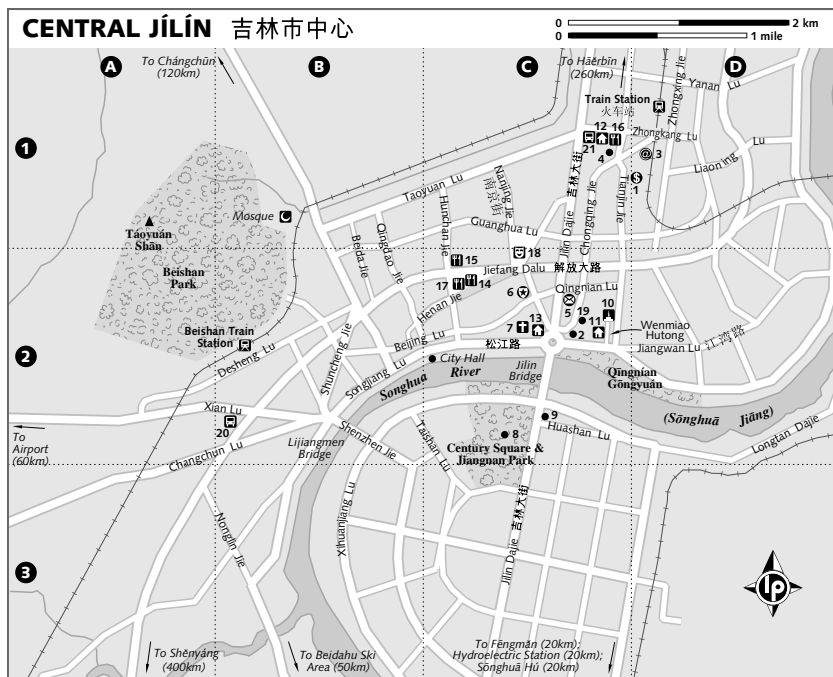
## JILIN 吉林

☎ 0432 / pop 1.9 million

Industrial Jilin is – surprisingly – noted for its winter scenery, but in any season, you can stroll the pleasant riverfront promenade, or escape the urban hubbub in several large parks.

## Information

**Bank of China** (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 72 Tianjin Jie; 🍻 8.30am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat-Sun) This branch has a 24-hour ATM.



**CITS** (Zhōngguó Guójí Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 244 1304; fax 245 9204; 1 Chongqing Jie; ☎ 8.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm Sat & Sun) Organises skiing trips and tours to Chángbái Shān.

**Internet café** (wǎngbā; Nanjing Jie; per hr Y2) Centrally located in an underground arcade (opposite).

**Internet café** (wǎngbā; Chongqing Jie; per hr Y2; ☎ 8am-midnight) To the left as you exit the train station.

**Photo shop** (Zhongxing Jie) Across the park from the train station, next to the International Hotel.

**Post office** (yóujú; Jilin Dajie; ☎ 8am-5pm) Just north of the Jilin Bridge.

**Public Security Bureau** (PSB; Gōngānjú; ☎ 240 9315; cnr Beijing Lu & Nanjing Jie)

## Sights

### ICE-RIMMED TREES 树挂

Jilin is most attractive on January and February mornings when the pine and willow trees along the Songhua River (Sōnghuā Jiāng) are covered in spectacular needle-like frost.

The Hydroelectric Station in Fēngmǎn causes this phenomenon. Water passing from Sōnghuā Hú (Songhua Lake) through the power plant becomes a steamy current that merges with the river and prevents it

from freezing. Vapour rising from the river overnight meets the  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$  air, causing the frosty display.

### WÉN MIÀO 文庙

Temples dedicated to Confucius were built so that the great sage would bestow good luck on hopefuls taking *huikào*, the notoriously difficult imperial examinations. This **temple** (Confucius Temple; Wenmiao Hutong; admission Y15; ☎ 8.30am-4pm) was originally constructed in 1736, although the current structures date to 1907.

The buildings include changing exhibits (with captions in Chinese only) about Confucius and about past and present life in the region.

The temple entrance is behind Jiāngchéng Bīngǔǎn (hotel). Bus 13 runs near here from the train station.

### CATHOLIC CHURCH 天主教堂

This landmark **church** (Tiānzhǔ Jiàotáng; 3 Songjiang Lu; ☎ 6.20am-4.30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-4.30pm Sat & Sun), built in 1917, was completely ransacked during the Cultural Revolution. In 1980 it reopened and now holds regular services.

INFORMATION	
Bank of China 中国银行	1 D1
CITS 中国国际旅行社	3 D1
Internet Café 网吧	(see 18)
Photo Shop	4 C1
Post Office 邮局	5 C2
PSB 公安局外事科	6 C2
Skate Hire Shops	9 C2
Wén Miào 文庙	10 C2
Xinxingyuan Jiāoziguǎn 新兴园饺子馆	17 C2
SLEEPING	
Jiāngchéng Bīngǔǎn 交通宾馆	11 C2
Jiāotōng Bīngǔǎn 江城宾馆	12 C1
Tiānshì Bīngǔǎn 天使宾馆	13 C2
EATING	
Chuānwángfǔ Huōguó Dà Shìjiè 川王府火锅大世界	14 C2
Night Market 夜市街	15 C2
Xiǎo Tǔdòu 小土豆	16 C1
ENTERTAINMENT	
Underground Arcade	18 C2
TRANSPORT	
CAAC 中国民航	19 C2
Lǐjiāng Bùs Stān Shìyàn 靖江客运站 (往长春)	20 B2
Long-Distance Bus Station (to Hāerbīn & Shěnyáng)	
Lǐjiāng Bùs Stān Shìyàn 岔路乡汽车站	21 C1

## CENTURY SQUARE 世纪广场

South of Songhua River is **Century Sq** (Shìjì Guǎngchǎng), a plaza where in summer locals linger over beer in open-air cafés or whirl around on roller skates. Vendors on the square and across Jilin Dajie rent skates (Y5).

The **Century Boat**, the boxy building in the centre of the square, has an **observation deck** (admission Y10; ☎ 8.30am-9.30pm summer, 8.30am-4.30pm winter) on the 12th floor.

Buses 3 and 103 come here from the train station.

## Festivals & Events

Jilin, like Hāerbīn, has an **Ice Lantern Festival** (Bīngdēng Jié), at Jiangnan Park (Jiāngnán Gōngyuán) on the southern side of the Songhua River. It runs for about 10 days in January. Contact CITS for exact dates.

## Sleeping

**Jiāotōng Bīngǔǎn** (Traffic Hotel; ☎ 255 6859; fax 253 8149; 6 Zhongkang Lu; 中康路6号; s/d/tr Y200-240/240-280/280; ☎) A clean, comfortable choice near the train and bus stations, this hotel is nothing fancy, but with discounted prices of Y150 to Y180 it's a good deal.

**Tiānshì Bīngǔǎn** (Angel Hotel; ☎ 248 1848; fax 248 0323; 2 Nanjing Jie; 南京街2号; s/d Y228-258, tr Y248 incl breakfast; ☎) This old-fashioned guest-house situated near the river is worn but comfy. The nicest rooms have peek-a-boo river views. Expect discounts to about Y180. To get here, take bus 3 or 103 from the train station.

**Jiāngchéng Bīngǔǎn** (☎ 216 2777; www.jlcta.com.cn; 4 Jiangwan Lu; 江湾路4号; d Y280-330, tr 300 incl breakfast; ☎) Many rooms face the river at this well-maintained older hotel, around the corner from Tiānshì Bīngǔǎn.

## Eating

In summer there's a lively night market on Hunchan Jie, just north of Jiefang Dalu.

**Xīnxīngyuán Jiāoziguǎn** (☎ 202 4393; 399 Henan Jie; dishes Y5-10; ☎ lunch & dinner) Choose from the *dōngbēi* cold plates on display – perhaps marinated tofu, pickled greens or wood-ear mushrooms – and pair them with first-rate *jiāozi* (dumplings). It's on the Henan Jie pedestrian mall.

**Xiǎo Tǔdòu** (Small Potato; ☎ 131 3441 1505; 6-1 Zhongkang Lu; dishes Y10-15; ☎ lunch & dinner) This branch of Shěnyáng's well-known eatery specialising in hearty potato-and-meat stew and other northeastern dishes is near Jilin's long-distance bus station.

**Chuānwángfǔ Huōguó Dà Shìjiè** (Chuanwangfu Hotpot World; ☎ 204 0055; 98 Jiefang Dalu; hotpots Y15-30; ☎ lunch & dinner) At this multistorey hotpot palace, each tasty order comes with several side dishes – pickled garlic, sweet beans, crispy dried shrimp – that you choose from roving carts.

## Entertainment

Just east of Henan Jie, there's a huge **underground arcade** (cnr Nanjing Jie & Jiefang Dalu; ☎ till 10pm Mon-Fri, till midnight Sat & Sun), with video games, a bowling alley, pool tables, internet access and even a small roller-skating rink. The entrance is on the north side of Jiefang Dalu, opposite the plaza.

## Getting There & Away

### AIR

**CAAC** (Zhōngguó Mínháng; ☎ 245 4260; Chongqing Jie) is half a block from the CITS office, north of the Jilin Bridge. Flights to and from the Jilin area use Chángchūn's airport, about 60km west of Jilin city. Buses to the airport leave the CAAC at 5.30am, 8.30am, noon and 2pm



(Y40, 90 minutes). See p377 for flight schedules and prices.

## BUS

Jílín has two long-distance bus stations. The main depot (near the train station) has several daily departures to Hāerbīn (Y62, five hours) and Shěnyáng (Y96, 4½ hours).

For Chángchūn, buses depart every 15 minutes (Y20, 1½ hours) from Lǐjiāng bus station (Lǐjiāng kèyùnzhan) on Xian Lu, west of the Lǐjiangmen Bridge. Bus 8 from the train station goes to Lǐjiāng depot.

## TRAIN

Jílín's train station is in the northern part of the city. Frequent trains run to Chángchūn (Y10, two hours). There are daily services to Hāerbīn (Y25, five hours), Yánjí (seat/sleeper Y45/106, seven hours), Shěnyáng (Y44, six hours) and Dàlián (seat/sleeper Y97/181, 13 hours). Overnight trains go to Běijīng (seat/sleeper Y143/263, 11 to 12 hours), but if you can't nab a sleeper from Jílín, try going from Chángchūn, where there are more frequent Běijīng-bound trains.

## Getting Around

Buses 3 and 103 run between the train station and Century Sq. Bus 30 runs up Jílín Dajie. Taxi fares start at Y5.

## AROUND JÍLÍN

### Ski Resorts

**Songhua Hu Ski Area** (松花湖滑雪场; Sōnghuā Hú Huáxuě Chǎng; ski season Dec-Feb), 25km southeast of Jílín, attracts beginners and intermediates to its 934m slopes. In milder weather, you can go **boating** (Y40 per hour) or hiking at **Songhua Hú** (admission Y10), the nearby lake. Take bus 9 from Jílín's train station.

**Beidahu Ski Area** (北大湖滑雪场; Běidáhu Huáxuě Chǎng; ☎ 420 2023; www.beidahuski.com; ski season Dec-Feb) has six lifts and six trails, although the area was expanding as it prepared to host the 2007 Asian Winter Games. The only way to reach Běidáhu, 53km south of Jílín, is by taxi (Y80).

## CHÁNGBÁI SHĀN 长白山

☎ 0433 for Báihé and the northern slope

☎ 0439 for Sōngjiānghé and the western slope

China's largest nature reserve, **Chángbái Shān** (Ever White Mountains; admission Y100, transportation fee Y45; ☎ 7am-6pm northern gate, 6am-4pm western gate) covers

210,000 hectares of dense forest on the eastern edge of Jílín province, straddling the China-North Korea border. Chángbái Shān's main attraction is Heaven Lake, a dramatic volcanic crater lake at the top of a mountain peak.

Chángbái Shān is popular not only with Chinese visitors but also with South Koreans; the area is known as Mt Paekdu, or Paekdusan, in Korean. North Korea claims that Kim Jong Il was born here (although he's actually thought to have been born in Khabarovsk, Russia).

At lower elevations, the forests are filled with white birch and Korean pines; above 2000m the landscape turns treeless and windy. Temperatures, too, can plunge from steamy at the reserve entrance to frigid at the summit. No matter how warm it is in the morning, sudden high winds, rain and dramatic drops in temperature are possible by afternoon.

Chángbái Shān has two separate areas: the busy northern slope (*běi pō*) and the less-explored western slope (*xī pō*). Heaven Lake is accessible from both sides of the reserve, but the north and west entrances are separated by 100km by road or rail. The main attraction on the western side is the impressive Chángbái Shān Canyon.

In summer, tour buses bring day-trippers to the northern slope to pose for photos in front of the waterfall, gorge on eggs boiled in the natural hot springs, stampede up to Heaven Lake and rush down again. Since Chángbái Shān is a long haul from anywhere, though, it's worth spending a couple of relaxed days hiking around (just don't hike alone, and bring food and medical supplies if you venture off the beaten tourist trail).

Visiting Chángbái Shān is expensive. Besides the park admission and transportation fees (which pay for shuttle buses inside the park), there are extra charges for the waterfall (including access to the walking path to Heaven Lake) and for a ride in a 4WD vehicle if you prefer not to hike to Heaven Lake. Expect total fees of Y185 to Y225 per day, not including lodging or transport to and from the park.

### Orientation

The nearest town to the park's northern entrance is Ērdào Báihé, generally called Báihé (白河), about 20km north of the reserve. From the northern entrance gate (*běipō shānmén*) to the *dào zhānkǒu*, a parking area where you can board 4WDs for the ride up

to Heaven Lake, it's about 16km. From the *dào zhānkǒu* to the *pǔbù* (waterfall) is about 3km further.

The town closest to the park's western entrance is Sōngjiānghé (松江河), about 40km northwest of the reserve. From the west gate to Chángbái Shān canyon is about 25km.

### Information

**Bank of China** (中国银行; Zhōngguó Yínháng) There are branches on the main street in Báihé and near the main square in Sōngjiānghé, although neither has an ATM.

**Dazheng Travel Agency** (大正旅行社; Dàzhèng Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 0439-617 9175; fax 0439-632 5175) In Sōngjiānghé, arranges transportation and tours to the western slope.

**Internet café** (网吧; wǎngbā; per hr Y2) In Báihé, on the main street, adjacent to the market. On the 3rd floor.

**Internet café** (网吧; wǎngbā; per hr Y2) In Sōngjiānghé, east of the main square.

**Post office** (邮局; yóujú; ☎ 8am-5pm) In Sōngjiānghé, opposite Baitoushan Binguān.

### Sights & Activities

#### NORTHERN SLOPE 北坡

##### Heaven Lake 天池

Heaven Lake (Tiān Chí), a deep-blue volcanic crater lake at an elevation of 2194m, is the highlight of Chángbái Shān. The lake, 13km in circumference, is surrounded by jagged rock outcrops and 16 mountainous peaks; the highest is **White Rock Peak** (Báiyán Fēng), which soars to 2749m. Legend has it that the lake is home to a Loch Ness-style 'monster,' but you can see for yourself...

From the *dào zhānkǒu*, **4WDs** (Y80 per person) take groups of five passengers up to Heaven Lake. To hike to Heaven Lake (about one hour each way), the path starts at the waterfall; it's not a difficult walk, but you do climb more than 900 steps!

#### Beware of the Border

The China-North Korea border cuts across Heaven Lake. Unfortunately, the border isn't clearly marked and detailed maps of the area are not available.

Approximately one-third of the lake, the southeastern corner, is on the North Korean side and off-limits. Do not venture east of White Rock Peak or Lakeside Hot Springs at Chángbái Shān's summit. If you think you are nearing the border or are unsure where it exactly lies, do not proceed further!

### Waterfall & Hot Springs

The road forks at the *dào zhānkǒu*, with one branch climbing steeply to Heaven Lake, and the other leading past several hotels to the **waterfall** (admission Y40) and hot springs. Erdaobai River runs off Heaven Lake, creating this rumbling 68m waterfall that is the source of the Songhua and Tumen Rivers.

On the path to the waterfall, vendors boil eggs in the hot springs, and there's a **bathhouse** where you can soak in the odoriferous waters.

### Underground Forest 地下森林

Between the park entrance and the *dào zhānkǒu*, about 12km from the north gate, this verdant **forest** (Dìxià Sēnlín) is a pretty hiking spot. Following the trail for about 30 minutes leads to a crater filled in with trees.

### WESTERN SLOPE 西坡

#### Chángbái Shān Canyon 大峡谷

Filled with dramatic rock formations, this **canyon** (Chángbái Shān Dàxiágǔ) measures 70km long, 200m wide and more than 100m deep. There's an easy 40-minute walk along a boardwalk that follows the canyon rim through the forest.

### Tours

CITS in Jílín city (p377) runs three-day/two-night trips to Chángbái Shān's northern slope from May to September. Prices start at about Y480, including transportation, lodging and park admission. Other travel agencies in Jílín offer similar packages; ask at any hotel travel desk or at the agencies along Wenmiao Hutong, near the Confucius Temple. Just be aware that a 'three-day' tour from Jílín gives you just one day to explore the reserve – you'll be travelling most of the other two days.

CITS in Yánjí (p383) also organises one-day and multi-day Chángbái Shān tours.

### Sleeping & Eating

At the northern slope, there are several hotels inside the park along the road to the waterfall, but they are quite expensive, particularly in July and August. You can save money by staying in Báihé.

At the western slope, several hotels are being constructed just outside the park gate. Until they're completed, stay in Sōngjiānghé, which has plenty of inexpensive and mid-range lodgings.

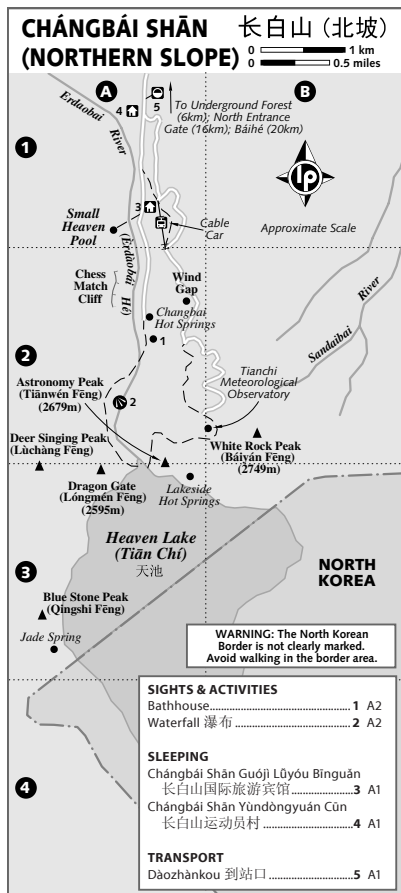
Camping is a possibility, although technically against the rules. Try and find a secluded place and be prepared for changeable weather.

### NORTHERN SLOPE

#### Báihé

Several family-run **guesthouses** (dm Y25-30) surround Báihé's train station. Inexpensive **guesthouses** (d Y60-80) also line the town's main street and adjacent side streets.

**Fēnglín Bīnguǎn** (枫林宾馆; ☎ 575 1986; d/tr Y60-80/90-120) Inside a pink building opposite the Báihé bus depot is this guesthouse with basic clean rooms. Ask for a room on the quieter north side and make sure the hot water is turned on. Reception is on the second floor.



**Xíndá Bīnguǎn** (信达宾馆; ☎ 5720444; s/d Y220/320 incl breakfast; ☎) On Báihé's main drag, at the north end of town, this hotel has pleasant mid-range rooms and a restaurant serving appetising Korean-influenced Chinese fare (dishes from Y8).

**Lánjǐng Huāyuán Dùjiājūdiàn** (蓝景花园度假酒店; ☎ 575 0222; d Y480, tr 580 incl breakfast; ☎) Báihé's most upscale hotel is opposite Xíndá Bīnguǎn. The spiffy modern doubles are comfortable and the triples are enormous.

**Èrdào Shùndá Jiǎozǐ Chéng** (二道顺达饺子城; ☎ 579 7167; dishes Y3-12; ☎) breakfast, lunch & dinner) From early morning till late evening, this family-run eatery is packed with locals. They breakfast on porridge and buns, then return later for handmade dumplings, hearty stews and whatever vegetables are fresh that day. It's two doors east of Fēnglín Bīnguǎn.

One block south of Lánjǐng Huāyuán Dùjiājūdiàn, there's a small market building where you can buy bread, fruit and drinks.

### On the Mountain

**Chángbái Shān Yùndòngyuán Cūn** (Mt Changbai Athletes Village; ☎ 574 6066; fax 574 6055; dm/d Y80/500) This modest place offers some of the least expensive lodging inside the park. It's opposite the *daozhānkǒu*.

**Chángbái Shān Guójī Lǚyóu Bīnguǎn** (Mt Changbai International Tourist Hotel; ☎ 574 6001; fax 574 6002; d Y800-900) CITS often books tour groups into this well-appointed hotel, where some rooms have waterfall views.

### WESTERN SLOPE

In Sōngjiānghé, there are several cheap (and rather dreary) **guesthouses** (dm Y30-40) near the train station. For something nicer, walk about 10 to 15 minutes towards the town centre.

**Báitóushān Bīnguǎn** (白头山宾馆; ☎ 631 3716; fax 632 3398; Zhanqian Jie; 站前街; d Y260; ☎) About 1km south of the train station, this standard mid-range hotel has comfortable doubles. Bargain for rooms under Y150.

**Lìxīn Bīnguǎn** (丽新宾馆; ☎ 633 3619; Zhanqian Jie; 站前街; d & tr Y280; ☎) This brand-new guesthouse has an enthusiastic owner who welcomes guests with cups of tea and helps arrange transport to the reserve. Bargaining should put the cosy rooms under Y150. From Sōngjiānghé station, walk south about 1km; the hotel is on the right.

One block south of Sōngjiānghé's main square is a busy market lane. On the east side

of the main square, you'll find small family-run **restaurants** (dishes from Y8).

### Getting There & Away

The best time to visit Chángbái Shān is from mid-June to early September, when the roads to the nature reserve aren't iced over.

An airport under construction near Sōngjiānghé is expected to open in 2008. In the meantime, there are two routes to Chángbái Shān: from the south via Tōnghuā (通化), or Shěnyáng or Dāndōng in Liáoning province; and from the north via Yánjǐ.

There's one direct train daily from Dāndōng and Shěnyáng to Sōngjiānghé and Báihé. Fares on this line include Báihé to Sōngjiānghé (Y7, two hours), Sōngjiānghé to Shěnyáng (seat/sleeper Y38/86, 11 hours) or Sōngjiānghé to Dāndōng (seat/sleeper Y55/117, 16 hours).

Several daily trains travel between Báihé and Tōnghuā (seat/sleeper Y21/60, six to seven hours), with a stop in Sōngjiānghé. From Tōnghuā, trains leave for Shěnyáng (seat/sleeper Y62/119, six to seven hours), Dàlián (seat/sleeper Y60/117, 13 hours) and Běijīng (seat/sleeper Y132/247, 17 hours).

From Yánjǐ, between June and September a direct bus to Chángbái Shān leaves at 5.30am and returns at 4pm (one way/return Y55/110). Otherwise, buses depart Yánjǐ for Báihé (Y33, four hours) daily at 6.30am, 8am, 10.10am, 12.20pm and 2.30pm; several buses return from Báihé to Yánjǐ between 5.30am and 2pm.

Báihé's train station is north of Měirén Sōng Sēnlín (a forest filled with tall, elegant pine trees), while the rest of town is south of the forest; a taxi from the station into town is Y5. Buses leave from the long-distance bus station off the main street or from in front of the train station.

Sōngjiānghé's train station is at the north end of town, about 2km from the main square. Minicabs take you between the station and the square or nearby hotels for Y2 to Y3.

### Getting Around

#### NORTHERN SLOPE

Minibuses leave for Chángbái Shān's north gate from the Báihé train station and bus depot from 6am to noon, roughly every 40 minutes (Y20 return, 30 minutes). In summer, bus drivers may even find you and arrange to pick you up at your hotel. Unfortunately, buses may not run outside the peak July-

August tourist season, when you may have to hire a taxi (Y120 to Y150 return). If the roads are snow-covered, weigh the risks carefully before you set out.

Both buses and taxis drop you at the north gate, where you change to a park bus. Park buses go to the *daozhānkǒu*, where you can board a 4WD for the final trek to the lake, to the waterfall (where you can hike to the lake) and to the underground forest.

### WESTERN SLOPE

From Sōngjiānghé, the only way to get to the mountain is by taxi or with a tour. Expect to pay around Y50 per person or Y200 per car (return) for transportation from town to the west gate (40 minutes).

From the west gate, park buses take you to the starting point for the hike to Heaven Lake or to the canyon rim boardwalk. It's another 40-minute ride from the gate to either of these destinations.

In summer, a **bus** (☎ 617 6359 or 135 0091 9023) runs from the Báihé train station to the western gate. It generally departs daily at 6am, but call to confirm the schedule and price. The cost of the bus ride is covered in the mandatory 'transportation fee' of Y45 that you have to pay along with the Y100 park admission fee. You have to pay these fees when you enter at either the north gate or the west gate

### YÁNJǐ 延吉

☎ 0433 / pop 399,000

The capital of China's Korean Autonomous Prefecture, Yánjǐ feels different from other Chinese cities. Many people are of Korean descent, signs are bilingual (Chinese/Korean) and food is Korean or Korean-influenced. While Yánjǐ doesn't have many 'sights,' it's an intriguing place to wander around. It's also a transport hub for trips to Chángbái Shān.

### Orientation

Buerhatong River (Bùèrhātōng Hé) bisects the city. The train and bus stations are south of the river. The commercial district, banks and post office are on the north side.

### Information

**Bank of China** (Zhōngguó Yínháng; ☎ 253 6454; cnr Jiefang Lu & Juzi Jie; ☎) 8.30am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Sat) One block from the post office, just off Renmin Lu, this branch has a 24-hour ATM.

**MORE BORDER TALES**

Korean-American author Helie Lee has written an absorbing memoir, *In the Absence of Sun*, about her attempts to help her relatives slip across the border from North Korea into China. Her earlier book *Still Life with Rice* recounts how her grandmother and uncle became separated as they tried to leave North Korea for South Korea in the 1950s – events that set the scene for Lee's efforts to reunite her family in China many years later.

**CITS** (Zhōngguó Guójiā Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 272 3500; 558 Yixie Jie, 6th fl) Arranges tours to Chángbái Shān. Take bus 5 from the station to the corner of Yixie Jie and Gongyuan Lu.  
**Internet café** (wǎngbā; Zhanqian Jie; per hr Y2; ☎ 24hr) Two floors of fast computers, north of the train station.  
**Post & telephone office** (Yóujú dǎlóu; 78 Renmin Lu; ☎ 8am-4.30pm)  
**Public Security Bureau** (PSB; Gōngānjú; 255 Guangming Jie) Located north of the river.

**Sleeping & Eating**

For a cheap bed, try one of the **guesthouses** (dm Y25) on the right as you exit the train station.

**Dōngběiyà Dàjiùdiàn** (Northeast Asia Hotel; 东北亚大酒店; ☎ 280 8111; fax 282 0970; 109 Changbai Lu; 长白路109号; d Y228-368) Next to the long-distance bus station, this cylindrical tower has cramped doubles with temperamental plumbing. From the train station, head north on Zhanqian Jie and turn right onto Changbai Lu; it's about a 15-minute walk.

**Yánbiān Fāyín Bīnguǎn** (延边发银宾馆; ☎ 290 8855; 1656 Guanghua Lu; 光华路1656号; d/tr/ste Y268/298/398 incl breakfast; 🍷) The best mid-range choice near the train station, this sleek hotel has contemporary rooms with high-speed internet connections. The breakfast buffet includes a mix of Chinese and Korean dishes. It's about a 10-minute walk from the station; go north on Zhanqian Jie and turn right on Guanghua Lu.

**Fēngmào Cānyǐn** (丰茂餐饮; ☎ 282 0301; Guanghua Lu; B&Q per person Y15-30; ☎ lunch & dinner) Grill your meat and fish on skewers over tabletop grills at this busy BBQ joint opposite Yánbiān Fāyín Bīnguǎn.

**Getting There & Away**

There are daily flights from Yánjí to Běijīng (Y1130, one hour and 40 minutes) and Shěnyáng (Y740, one hour), and four flights a

week to Dàlián (Y1100, 2½ hours). Both China Southern and Asiana fly to Seoul (Y2500, 2½ hours). The airport is 5km west of the city centre. CITS books airline tickets.

**BUS**

Buses to Chángbái Shān and Báihé leave from the long-distance bus station on Changbai Lu. Buses to Jílín, Chángchūn, Hǎerbīn and Mǔdānjiāng depart from in front of the train station.

**TRAIN**

There are daily trains to Jílín (seat/sleeper Y45/107, seven hours), Chángchūn (seat/sleeper Y51/135, nine hours), Mǔdānjiāng (seat/sleeper Y22/61, seven hours) and Běijīng (seat/sleeper Y168/307, 24 hours).

**Getting Around**

Bus 5 follows a useful route, looping from the train station north on Yixie Jie, east along Renmin Lu to Guangming Jie and back to the train station.

Taxi fares start at Y5.

**AROUND YÁNJI****Korean Autonomous Prefecture****延边朝鲜族自治州**

The Korean Autonomous Prefecture (Yánbiān Cháoxiǎnzú Zìzhìzhōu) has China's greatest concentration of ethnic Koreans. The majority inhabit the border areas northeast of Báihé, up to the capital Yánjí and the border city of Tǔmén (图们).

To explore the region, head east from Yánjí to Tǔmén or even further east to Fángchuān (防川), a sliver of land where China meets North Korea and Russia. To reach Fángchuān, take a bus from Yánjí to Húnchūn (浑春), from where you take another bus to the border town.

**JÍ'ĀN 集安**

☎ 0435/pop 240,000

Across the Yalu River from North Korea, the small city of Jí'ān was once part of the Koguryo (高句丽; Gāogōuli) kingdom, a Korean dynasty that ruled areas of northern China and the Korean peninsula from 37 BC to AD 668. In 2004, Unesco designated the region a World Heritage Site for its extensive Koguryo pyramids, ruins and tombs. Archaeologists have unearthed remains of three cities plus some 40 tombs around Jí'ān and the town of

Huánrén (in Liáoning province); see below). Many tombs are cairns – essentially heaps of stones piled above burial sites, while others are stone pyramids.

**Orientation**

Shengli Lu runs east–west through town, with the long-distance bus station at the west end. The main north–south road is Liming Jie, which ends at the river.

**Information**

**Bank of China** (中国银行; Zhōngguó Yínháng; 658 Shengli Lu; ☎ 8am-5.30pm Mon-Fri summer, 8am-4.30pm Mon-Fri winter) Three blocks east of the bus station.

**Internet bar** (网吧; wǎngbā; Dongsheng Jie; per hr Y2) One block north of Shengli Lu.

**Post office** (邮局; yóujú; 608 Shengli Lu; ☎ 7.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri summer, 8am-4.30pm Mon-Fri winter)

**Public Security Bureau** (公安局; PSB; Gōngānjú; Liming Jie) Between Shengli Lu and the river.

**Yalu River Travel Service** (鸭绿江旅行社; Yālǚjiāng Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 622 2266; 888 Shengli Lu, inside Cuiyuán Bīnguǎn) Sells English-language maps of Jí'ān (Y4) and arranges transportation to local sights.

**Sights**

Most of the **Koguryo sites** (admission Y30 each site; ☎ 8.20am-5.30pm summer, to 4.30pm winter) are outside the city centre.

**GENERAL'S TOMB 将军坟**

One of the largest pyramid-like structures in the region, this 12m-tall **tomb** (Jiāngjūnfén) was built during the fourth century for a Koguryo ruler; a smaller tomb nearby is the

resting place of his wife. The site is set among the hills 4km northeast of town.

**HAOTAIWANG STELE 好太王碑**

Inscribed with 1,775 Chinese characters, the **Haotaiwang Stele** (Hǎotàiwáng Bēi), a 6m-tall stone slab that dates to AD 415, records the accomplishments of Koguryo king Tan De (AD 374-412), known as 'Haotaiwang.' Though the inscriptions are quite faint, a photo exhibit shows a clearer enlarged version; also nearby is Tan De's tomb. The stele is northeast of town, near the General's Tomb.

**JÍ'ĀN MUSEUM 集安博物馆**

This modern but very small **museum** (Jí'ān Bówùguǎn; 249 Yingbin Lu) displays artefacts from the Koguryo era, including pottery, jewellery, weapons and even coffin nails. It's on the north side of town, a five-minute taxi ride (Y5) from the centre.

**Sleeping & Eating**

**Cuiyuán Bīnguǎn** (翠园宾馆; ☎ 622 2123; 888 Shengli Lu; 胜利路888号; dm Y25, d Y220) Two blocks east of the bus station, this run-of-the-mill hotel has basic dorms and tired-looking doubles.

**Lùming Bīnguǎn** (鹿鸣宾馆; ☎ 139 4453 6281; Shengli Lu, between Dongsheng Jie & Liming Jie; 胜利路; d without/with bathroom Y80/160 incl breakfast) With its funky bed frames resembling 1950s Cadillac grills and its exceedingly accommodating staff, this guesthouse with small well-kept rooms is Jí'ān's best inexpensive lodging. It's three blocks east of the bus station on the north side of Shengli Lu.

**THE CITY ON THE MOUNTAINTOP**

High on Wunu Mountain (五女山; Wǔnǚ Shān; Five Ladies' Mountain; admission Y60) outside the town of Huánrén (桓仁) in the far eastern corner of Liáoning province, you can visit remains of the ancient Koguryo civilisation, a Korean dynasty that ruled parts of this region from 37 BC to AD 668. The partially-excavated 'Wunu Mountain City' was the first capital of the Koguryo people in northeast China, in the first century BC.

After a steep 45-minute climb (up stairs) to the mountaintop, you can walk through the ruins of the town – the foundation of a building here, the wall of a house there. The individual remains may not be that thrilling, but it's fascinating to contemplate the vast size of the community here, and the views of the surrounding mountains and valleys are worth the hike up.

Buses travel to Huánrén from Dāndōng (Y40, five hours), Shěnyáng (Y56, five hours), Jí'ān (Y20, four hours) and Tōnghuā (Y19, two hours). Taxis from the Huánrén long-distance bus station to Wunu Mountain are Y50-60 (40 minutes). Allow at least three hours at the mountain for the climb up, the circuit through the city remains and the climb down.

See above to learn more about the Koguryo sites in this region.

**Xīngǎng Shuǐshàng Cāntīng** (新港水上餐厅; New Harbour Floating Restaurant; ☎ 268 5151; Yanjiang Lu, at Liming Jie; dishes ¥10-40; 🍴 lunch & dinner) Right on the river, this place serves local fish, wild greens and tasty tofu soup. Tables face North Korea, but after sunset the Korean side is eerily dark.

For Korean-Chinese barbecue, follow the meat-scented smoke down the alley near the PSB on the west side of Liming Jie to find several cook-your-own **BBQ joints** (dishes ¥8-12).

Other restaurants line the riverfront promenade (Yanjiang Lu), east and west of Liming Jie.

### Getting There & Away

The main routes to Jǐ'ān are via Tōnghuā to the north or from either Shěnyáng or Dāndōng in Liáoníng province. If you're travelling to Chángbái Shān, you can make connections in Tōnghuā.

### BUS

The **long-distance bus station** (Shengli Lu) is west of the town centre. There are buses to Tōnghuā (¥20, two hours, 10 daily), Dāndōng (¥36, six hours, 7.30am), Shěnyáng (¥60, eight hours, 6.20am) and Huánrén (¥20, four hours, 6.30am).

### TRAIN

The **train station** (Yanjiang Lu) is in the northeast part of town. Two slow trains a day travel from Jǐ'ān to Tōnghuā (¥10, 2½ to three hours, 6.26am & 12.22pm).

### Getting Around

You can easily walk around Jǐ'ān's small town centre. However, sights are scattered on the outskirts of the city, and you'll need to hire a taxi. Expect to pay ¥50 to ¥80 for a half-day tour of three to five locations.