

## **The Hidden Beauty of Kaohsiung(高雄)**

When most people hear "Kaohsiung(高雄)," they think of a huge harbor, modern skyscrapers, and busy streets. But here's a secret: behind all that city life, Kaohsiung(高雄) hides a different world. Did you know that about two-thirds of Kaohsiung(高雄) is covered with mountains, forests, and rivers? It's almost like the city has a "double personality"—a modern city on one side, and a green, magical wilderness on the other.

Let's start with Maolin(茂林) District, the land of butterflies. Every winter, traveling over 300 kilometers from northern Taiwan to reach Maolin(茂林), thousands of purple crow butterflies turn the sky into a moving rainbow of wings. Can you imagine walking into a valley where butterflies drift around you like drifting blossoms? It feels like stepping inside a world of swirling colors. Maolin(茂林) is also home to the native Rukai people, one of Taiwan's indigenous groups. Their stories, traditions, and love for nature add even more wonder to the mountains.

Next, picture Meinong(美濃), a peaceful valley hugged by hills. In Meinong(美濃), the Hakka people create hand-painted oil-paper umbrellas, decorated with flowers, birds, or trees. They're so colorful that you almost don't want to open them in the rain! The Hakka culture is also alive in food. Chewy Hakka noodles, sour pickled veggies, and other special dishes—believe me, they taste even better with the mountain breeze around you.

If you're a water lover, you'll love the spectacular waterfalls hidden among Kaohsiung's mountains. The Maolin(茂林) and Duona(多納) Waterfalls tumble down cliffs like silver ribbons, especially after rain. Hiking to them is an adventure in itself. On the way, you may cross a swaying suspension bridge over a rushing river, or follow a bamboo trail that whispers in the wind. Some paths are easy, some make you sweat, but all of them lead to views that will leave your jaw dropping.

Wildlife here is just as breathtaking. Monkeys leap between

trees, colorful birds flash past, and rare plants hide in the forest. These mountains are like Kaohsiung's treasure chest and beating heart, providing clean air and fresh water for the city below. Without them, the bustling harbor would not shine so brightly.

So the next time you think of Kaohsiung, don't just picture ships, tall buildings, and busy life. Think of butterflies coloring the sky, waterfalls sparkling in the sun, and cultures keeping timeless heritage alive. The mountainous Kaohsiung(高雄) isn't just scenery—it's a secret wonderland, waiting for curious adventurers like you to explore.

So... don't wait for a rain check—let's head for the mountains today!