

Shāndōng 山东



In today's China of dolled-up attractions and hyped-up travel fads, the decidedly northern province of Shāndōng – its name means 'East of the Mountains' – manages to maintain an alluring authenticity, despite being one of the nation's most visited regions.

Shāndōng's glittering CV makes for an impressive roll call. Native son Confucius, philosopher/social theorist *extraordinaire*, lived here as did that iconic champion of Confucian thought, Mencius. Wang Xizhi, China's most famous calligrapher, and Zhuge Liang, the supreme military strategist of the Three Kingdoms period, hail from these parts, and film icon Gong Li, who set new benchmarks for Chinese beauty, grew up in Jí'nán.

The Yellow River (Huáng Hé), the massive and muddy waterway that enjoys an almost mythical status among Chinese, reaches the sea in Shāndōng after its serpentine journey from the Tibet-Qinghǎi plateau. Tàì Shān, the holiest of China's five sacred peaks, is by far China's most climbed mountain. Qīngdǎo is a breath of fresh air on the Shāndōng peninsula, with its remarkable German heritage intact and a slot secured for the sailing events of the 2008 Olympics. Its eastern seaboard location also guarantees that Shāndōng is one of China's wealthiest provinces.

Yet neither fame nor fortune has gone to its head. Shāndōng folk are celebrated China-wide for their honesty and forthrightness. No-nonsense Shāndōng food is to the point: wholesome, salty and devoid of fancy trimmings. The peculiarities of the local Putonghua are not enough to confound most speakers of Mandarin, and for those anxious to eke out the province's bucolic side, the earthy textures of the ancient village of Zhūjiāyù are ideal.

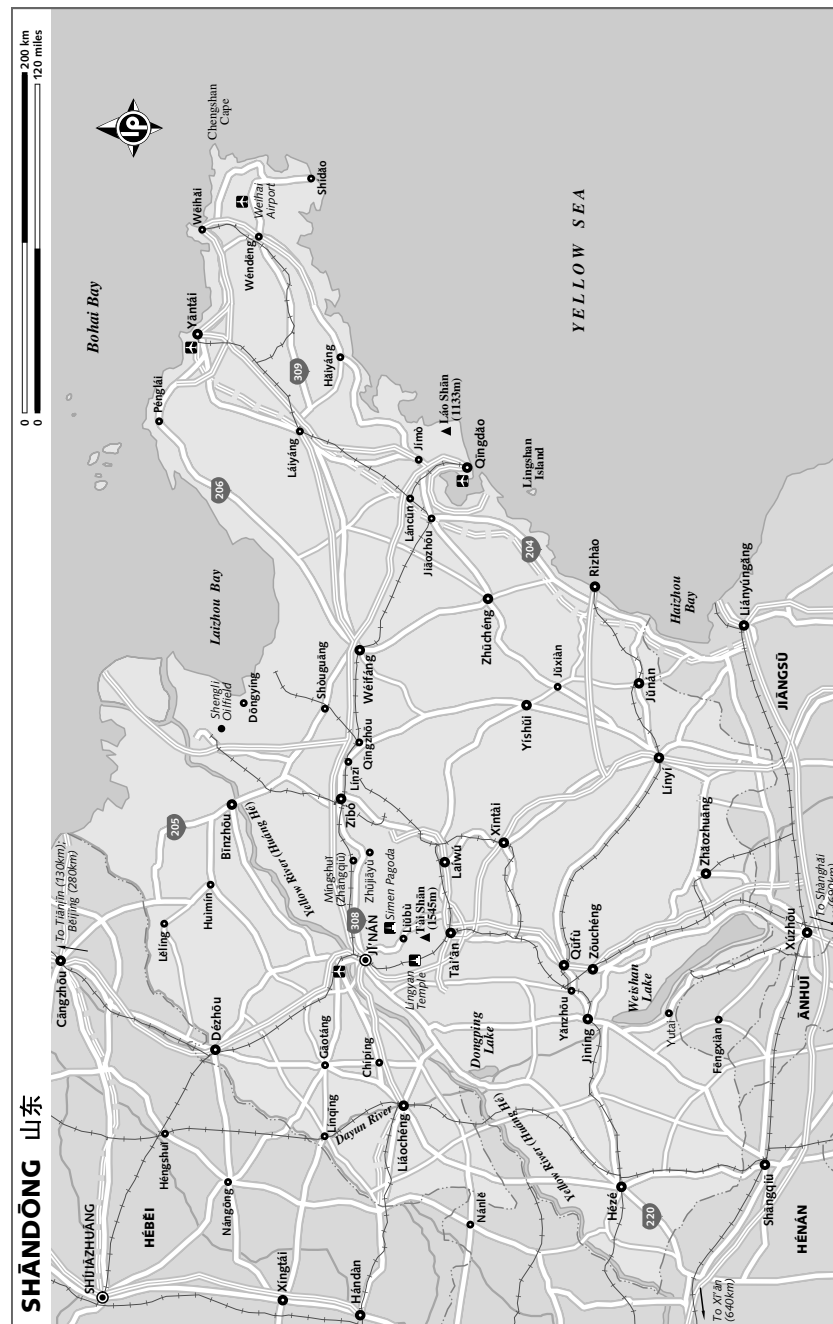
HIGHLIGHTS

- Tackle high-altitude **Tàì Shān** (p214), China's most famous Taoist peak
- Explore the ancient walled town of **Qūfú** (p218), the centre of the Confucian universe
- Sink a glass or two of Tsingtao beer in seaside **Qīngdǎo** (p224)
- Meander round the Ming dynasty village of **Zhūjiāyù** (p210), outside Jí'nán
- Weave your way around **Yantai Hill Park** (p232) in Yāntái for flavours of yesteryear Europe



■ POPULATION: 93.4 MILLION

■ www.china-sd.net/eng/



History

From the earliest record of civilisation in the province (furnished by the black pottery remains of the Lóngshān culture), Shāndōng has had a tumultuous history. It was victim to the capricious temperament of the oft-flooding Yellow River, which caused mass death, starvation and a shattered economy. In 1899 the Yellow River (also aptly named 'China's Sorrow') flooded the entire Shāndōng plain; a sad irony in view of the two scorching droughts that had swept the area that same year and the year before. The flood followed a long period of economic depression, a sudden influx of demobilised troops in 1895 after China's humiliating defeat by Japan in Korea, and droves of refugees from the south moving north to escape famines, floods and drought.

To top it all off, the Europeans arrived; Qīngdǎo fell into the clutches of the Germans, and the British obtained a lease for Wēihǎi. Their activities included the building of railroads and some feverish missionary work (for a historic Jesuit map of the province from 1655, go to www.library.csuhayward.edu/atlas/xantung.htm), which the Chinese believed angered the gods and spirits. All of this created the perfect breeding ground for rebellion, and in the closing years of the 19th century the Boxers arose out of Shāndōng, armed with magical spells and broadswords.

Today Jǐ'nán, the provincial capital, plays second fiddle to Qīngdǎo's tune, a refrain picked up on by the other prospering coastal cities of Yántái and Wēihǎi. Shēnglǐ Oilfield, inland, is China's second-largest producer of oil.

Climate

Summers (May to August) are hot and winters (November to March) are cold, with an average annual temperature of 11°C to 14°C. The coastal cities of Qīngdǎo, Yántái and Wēihǎi are cooler in summer and warmer in winter than the towns and cities of the interior.

Getting There & Away

Airports exist at Jǐ'nán, Qīngdǎo, Yántái and Wēihǎi, with international flights to cities in Japan and South Korea from Qīngdǎo and flights to South Korea from Yántái. Ferries run from both Yántái and Wēihǎi to Dǎlián and Incheon in South Korea. There are also boats to Dǎlián and South Korea from both Yántái and Wēihǎi. Shāndōng is also linked

to neighbouring and more distant provinces by both bus and rail.

Getting Around

The provincial rail hub is Jǐ'nán, with rail connections to all major towns and cities in Shāndōng. Bus connections cover the entire province (see the Getting There & Away sections under each destination for detailed information).

Jǐ'NÁN 济南

☎ 0531 / pop 1.96 million

The prosperous provincial capital Jǐ'nán is a modern Chinese city that largely serves travellers as a transit point to other destinations around Shāndōng.

Downplayed in Jǐ'nán's tourist pitch are the Chinese celebrities who have come from Jǐ'nán. Film idol Gong Li grew up here. Bian Que, founder of traditional Chinese medicine, Zou Yan, founder of the Yin and Yang five element school, as well as Zhou Yongnian, founder of Chinese public libraries, all herald from these parts. A number of nationally and internationally recognised writers also hail from Jǐ'nán.

Its German heritage is not as unmistakable as Qīngdǎo's, but the area south of the train station is well worth a wander for the pleasant ordering of its streets, lined here and there with European-style architecture. The rest of the city is being resculpted by road-widening schemes and construction, although determined efforts have also been made to prettify the city with plants and grass. Appealingly decked out with flowers and ornamental trees, the commercial street of Quancheng Lu exudes a vibrancy and energy that keeps shoppers on the go, restored by shots of bubble tea from regularly spaced kiosks.

History

The area has been inhabited for at least 4000 years, and some of the earliest reminders of this are the eggshell-thin pieces of black pottery unearthed in Lóngshān, 30km east of Jǐ'nán. These provide the first link in an unbroken chain of tradition and artistic endeavour that culminated in the beautifully crafted ceramics of later dynasties.

Modern development in Jǐ'nán stems from 1899, when construction of the Jǐ'nán-Qīngdǎo railway line began. When completed in 1904, the line gave the city a major commu-

nications role. The Germans had a concession near the train station after Jǐ'nán was opened to foreign trade in 1906, and crumbling residences from the era survive. The fine, huge German building on Jing Yilu across the way from the Shandong Hotel is the Jǐ'nán railway department; it's made of the same stone, and in the same style, as much of the architecture in Qīngdǎo.

Orientation

Jǐ'nán is a sprawling city, making navigation arduous for first timers. The main train station is in the west of town, south of which lies a grid of roads where some history and charm survive. The east-west roads in this grid are called Jing Yilu (Longitude One Rd), Jing Erlu (Longitude Two Rd) and so on, while the north-south roads are named Weiyi Lu (Latitude One Rd), Wei Erlu (Latitude Two Rd) and so forth. The major landmark in the east of town is Daming Lake (Dà míng hú), south of which can be found the major shopping zone of Quancheng Lu and Quancheng Sq.

Information

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 22 Luoyuan Dajie; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri) Foreign exchange and ATMs that take international cards.

Fast Lane Internet Café (Kuàichēdào Wǎngbǎ; 24 Xiaowei Liulu; per hr Y2; ☎ 7am-midnight)

Internet Café (Wǎngbǎ; per hr Y2.50; ☎ 24hr) Beneath Tianlong Hotel opposite train station.

Post office (yóujú; 162 Jing Erlu, cnr Wei Erlu; ☎ 8am-6.30pm) A red-brick building with pillars, capped with a turret.

Public Security Bureau (PSB; Gōngānjū; ☎ 8691 5454, visa enquiries ext 2459; 145 Jing Sanlu, cnr Wei Erlu; ☎ 8am-noon & 2-5.45pm Mon-Fri)

Shandong Travel Service (Shāndōng Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 8260 0660/9; fax 8260 0226; 86 Jing Shilu; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm) South on Lishan Lu.

Shēnglǐ Hospital (Shēnglǐ Yīyuàn; ☎ 8793 8911; 324 Jing Wulu)

Shengwang Internet Café (Shēngwàng Wǎngbǎ; 301 Jing Erlu; per hr Y1; ☎ 24hr)

Xinhua Bookstore (Xīnhuá Shūdiàn; Luoyuan Dajie; ☎ 9am-9pm) Opposite the Sofitel Silver Plaza Hotel.

Sights

The city's much-vaunted springs are over-promoted in the tourist blurb, being of limited interest, although strolling around their adjacent parks can be a pleasant escape from

Jǐ'nán's foot-numbing distances. Tucked away down some steps just west of **Five Dragon Pool Park** (admission Y5) survives a small **Guandi Temple** (Guāndī Miào; admission free) where the red-faced God of War (p410) strokes his beard and glares out over a row of candles in the main shrine. The magnificent **Hong Lou Church** (洪樓教堂; Hónglóu Jiàotáng), northeast of the centre, is a well-preserved relic from the days of the German concession.

MOSQUE 清真寺

Fronted by a spirit wall and an impressive gate tower and laid out with pines, greenery and several stelae commemorating its periodic restoration, this lovely Chinese-style **mosque** (Qīngzhēn Sì; 47 Yongchang Jie; admission free) dates from the late 13th century. The long rooftops of the mosque are clearly visible running along Luoyuan Dajie. Walk in and look around, be quiet and respectful at all times, and dress modestly (no shorts or skirts); the 50m-long prayer hall is inaccessible to non-Muslims. The entrance is to the right of the main gate. The mosque is located on the left-hand side of Yongchang Jie, a street leading into the Hui (Muslim Chinese) quadrant of Jǐ'nán, where you can find stalls and restaurants cooking up Muslim food (see p208).

THOUSAND BUDDHA MOUNTAIN & JINAN MUSEUM 千佛山、济南博物馆

Adding some Buddhist mystery to Jǐ'nán are the statues in this **park** (Qiānfó Shān; 18 Jingshi Yilu; admission Y15; ☎ 6am-7pm) to the southeast of the city centre. A cable car (one way Y15, return Y25) runs up the mountain. Buses 2 and K51 go to the park from the train station. **Shan Museum** (Jǐ'nán Bówúguǎn; admission Y3; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm Tue-Sun) is a short walk west of the Thousand Buddha Mountain entrance on Jingshi Yilu, with galleries devoted to painting, calligraphy and ceramics, sadly headless statues of Buddhist figures from the Tang dynasty and a delightful miniature boat carved from a walnut shell. There are no English captions.

Sleeping

Shandong Hotel (Shāndōng Bīnguǎn; ☎ 8605 5286/7881; 92 Jing Yilu; 经一路92号; s Y130, d Y160-180, tr Y240; ☎) On the corner of Jing Yilu and Wei Sanlu, this old-timer is well-used to dealing with budget travellers, and the acceptable although slightly ravaged rooms with large shower rooms still make it one of the cheapest and



most convenient in town. Modest discounts are available.

Jinan Railway Hotel (Jǐ'nán Tiědào Dàjiūdiàn; ☎ 8601 2118; fax 8601 2188; s/d/tr/stc Y300/368/468/800; 🚗) Next to the main train station, this three-star hotel has polite staff, a heavily inlaid revolving door and an impressive lobby hung with a huge and glistening chandelier. Rooms are a bit more faded and bathrooms may need an overhaul, but discounts can chop 50% off room prices (you may get a single for Y140) and there's a useful 24-hour restaurant next door.

Jinan (Tsinan) Hotel (Jǐ'nán Fāndiàn; ☎ 8793 8981; fax 8793 2906; 240 Jing Sanlu; 经三路240号; d Bldg No 1/2/3 80/160/220, Mao Zedong Presidential stc Y1880; 🚗) The setting here, within a small wooded garden, is a blessing for those suffering from a concrete overdose, although rooms at this two-star hotel were undergoing refurbishment at the time of writing. Reception is in Building No 4, and there is a north and south gate.

Sofitel Silver Plaza Jinan (Sūfēitè Yǐnzú Dàfāndiàn; ☎ 8606 8888; www.accorhotels.com/asia; 66 Luoyuan Dajie; 涿源大街66号; d Y1245; 🚗) A colossal five-star tower in the heart of the commercial district, the Sofitel's standard rooms – spacious

with light-wood furniture and quite ornate bathrooms – are perhaps in need of refurbishment, but the rest of the hotel retains an overall crispness. Facilities include a small deli (selling fresh bread), a swimming pool, and European, Japanese and Chinese restaurants. The hotel has an ATM that takes international cards. Ask for discounts or promotional rates.

Crowne Plaza Jinan (Jǐ'nán Guīhé Huángguān Jiàrtiūdiàn; ☎ 8602 9999; www.crowneplaza.com; 3 Tiandian Jie; 天地坛街3号; d 1250; 🚗) The very elegant Crowne Plaza runs from a stylish lobby with Art Deco touches (including illuminated pillars) to excellent rooms. Facilities include a deli off the lobby selling cakes and bread, an elegant indoor swimming pool, a bowling alley, a basement car park and fine international restaurants.

Eating

The area around the main train station is good for cheap eats. The alley off Jing Wulu, between Wei Erlu and Wei Sanlu, is a good place to go. Marked by a *pailou* (decorative arch), Furong Jie north of Quancheng Lu welcomes

INFORMATION		Five Dragon Pool Park		EATING 🍴	
Bank of China 中国银行	1 D2	五龙潭公园	12 C2	Quanjudu Roast Duck Restaurant 全聚德烤鸭店	21 D2
Fast Lane Internet Café 快车道网吧	2 B2	关帝庙	13 C2	Yuèdū Jiūlóu 粤都酒楼	22 B3
Internet Café 网吧	3 B2	Jinan Museum 济南博物馆	14 D3	TRANSPORT	
Post Office 邮局	4 B2	济南贵和皇冠假日酒店	16 D2	Air Ticket Office 航空售票	23 B2
PSB 公安局外事科	5 B2	Jinan (Tsinan) Hotel 济南饭店	17 B2	Bus Station 汽车站	24 B2
Shandong Travel Service 山东旅行社	6 D3	Jinan Railway Hotel 济南铁道大酒店	18 B2	China Eastern Airlines 东方航空公司	25 B2
Shengli Hospital 省立医院	7 B2	Shandong Hotel 山东宾馆	19 B2	Jinan International Airport Ticket Office 济南国际机场售票处	26 C2
Shengwang Internet Café 盛旺网吧	8 B2	Sofitel Silver Plaza Hotel 索菲特银座大饭店	20 D2	Long-Distance Bus Station 长途汽车站	27 B1
Xinhua Bookstore 新华书店	9 D2	SLEEPING 🛏		Shandong China Railway International Travel Service 山东中铁国际	28 B2
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		Crowne Plaza Jinan 皇冠假日酒店	16 D2	Yuquan Simpson Hotel 玉泉森信大酒店	29 D2
Baotu Spring Park 趵突泉	10 C2	Jinan (Tsinan) Hotel 济南饭店	17 B2		
Black Tiger Spring 黑虎泉	11 D2	Jinan Railway Hotel 济南铁道大酒店	18 B2		

with a cavalcade of aromas, from Sichuan cuisine to *zhōu* (粥; porridge), lamb kebabs, noodles, *tiěbǎn* (铁板; hot plate), squid on a stick and oodles of other snacks.

If you are looking for grilled meats (烧烤; *shāokǎo*), lamb kebabs and vendors of *wuxiang* peanuts (五香花生米; *wuxiang huāshēngmǐ*), then go no further than Yinhuachi Jie (饮虎池街) in the Muslim Hui minority district (回民小区; Huímín Xiǎoqū) that heads north from Luoyuan Dajie east of the mosque (p207). Lit up in a blaze of neon at night, here you can take your choice from any of the roadside restaurants and kebab vendors filling the air with the aromas of roast lamb.

Yuèdū Jiūlóu (☎ 8708 8567; 588 Jing Qilu; meals Y30) Trendily fitted out with stylish furniture and dishes (prepared but uncooked) helpfully arranged on chilled shelves, this popular restaurant has been serving up Cantonese fare to loyal Jǐ'nán patrons for years. Peruse the enormous selection or take a look at the huge choice of seafood in fish tanks.

Quanjudu Roast Duck Restaurant (Quánjùdé Kǎoyāodiàn; ☎ 8642 8888; 61 Heihuquan Beilu; half/whole duck Y28/56) This is a large and spacious branch of the famous Beijing roast duck restaurant (p149). There are Shāndōng, Běijīng and Sīchuān dishes, including *jiācháng shāo dòufu* (family-style cooked tofu, Y12) and *tiěbǎn yángtuǐ* (lamb leg hot plate, Y30), but most people come for the duck. The *zhá mógu* (fried mushrooms, Y15) are tasty, but a bit dry. Wash it all down with a bottle of Maotai (Y580), Wuliangye (Y580) or a small bottle of Erguotou (Y6). You can get here on bus 83 from the main train station.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Jǐ'nán is connected to most major cities, with daily flights to Běijīng (Y640, one hour), Dàlián (Y910, one hour), Guǎngzhōu (Y1550, 2½ hours), Hǎěrbīn (Y1130, 1¼ hours), Kǔnmíng (Y1710, two hours), Shànghǎi (Y760, one hour), Xī'ān (Y870) and Yǎntái (Y210, 45 minutes).

The **Jinan International Airport Ticket Office** (☎ 8611 4750) is at 66 Luoyuan Dajie. A **China Eastern Airlines** (☎ 693 4715/6, 24hr ticketing 693 4715/6; 165-2 (Chezhan Jie) office is located just south of the main train station; an **air ticket office** (hángkōng shòupào; ☎ 8834 2525, 24hr ticketing 8834 2525) is also located directly opposite the train station.

BUS

Jǐ'nán has at least three bus stations. The two most useful for travellers are the long-distance bus station (*chángtú qìchē zhàn*) in the north of town and the bus station opposite the main train station.

The **bus station** (☎ 8691 0789) opposite the main train station is efficient, with regular minibuses to Tàì'ān (Y15, 1½ hours, every 30 minutes) and Qǐfū (Y30, 2½ hours, every 30 minutes) until 7.30pm. Other destinations include Běijīng (Y106, nine hours, eight daily), Shànghǎi (Y216, 20 hours, 4.30pm and 7pm) and Tiānjīn (Y85, five daily), and regular departures head to Yǎntái (Y110, five hours, every hour) and Qīngdǎo (Y95, 4½ hours, every hour) until 6.30pm.

The **long-distance bus station** (Jǐ'nán Chángtú Qìchē Zhōngzhàn; ☎ 8691 0789) on Jiluo Lu has frequent buses to plentiful destinations including

Běijīng (Y106, 6½ hours, every 50 minutes), Qīngdǎo (Y50, 3½ hours, every 30 minutes), Yāntái (Y110, 4½ hours, every hour) and Wēihǎi (Y139, six hours, every hour).

TRAIN

There are two train stations in Jǐ'nán: most trains use the main train station (*Jǐ'nán huòchē zhàn*), but a handful arrive and depart from the east train station (*huòchē dōngzhàn*).

Jǐ'nán is a major link in the east-China rail system. From here there are direct trains to Běijīng (hard seat Y90, four to seven hours), Shànghǎi (Y136, nine to 14 hours) and Qīngdǎo (Y49, four hours). A night train runs to Zhèngzhōu (Y83, nine hours) and to Xī'ān (Y149, 17 hours).

Tickets are available from the train station and (for a service fee) from the **Shandong China Railway International Travel Service** (Shāndōng Zhōngguó Guólù; ☎ 8242 8315; 16 Chezhan Jie; ☎ 8am-5.30pm), near the train station, or at your hotel.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Jǐ'nán's **Yaoqiang airport** (☎ 8208 6666) is 40km from the city and can be reached in around 40 minutes. Buses (Y20) run to the airport from the Yuquan Simpson Hotel (Yùquán Sēnxīn Dàjiūdiàn) on Luoyuan Dajie every hour between 6am and 6pm. A taxi will cost around Y100.

BUS & TAXI

Bus 33 connects the long-distance bus station with the main train station. Bus K51 runs from the main train station through the city centre and then south past Baotu Spring Park and on to Thousand Buddha Mountain. Taxis start at Y7 for the first 3km, then Y1.2 per kilometre thereafter.

AROUND Jǐ'nán

Zhūjiāyù 朱家峪

☎ 0531

With its coffee-coloured soil and unspoiled bucolic panoramas, the charming stone **village** (admission Y15) of Zhūjiāyù, 45km east of Jǐ'nán, provides a fascinating foray into one of Shāndōng's oldest intact hamlets. Local claims that a settlement has been here since Shang times (1700–1100 BC) may be a case of 'blowing the cow' (*chuīniú*) – the Chinese for 'bragging' – but even though most

of Zhūjiāyù's buildings date from the more recent Ming and Qing dynasties, walking its narrow streets is a journey way back in time.

Shielded by hills on three sides, Zhūjiāyù can be fully explored in a morning or afternoon. Pay at the main gate in the restored **wall** enclosing the northern flank of the village that divides the old part of Zhūjiāyù from its uninteresting modern section, and walk along the Ming dynasty **double track old road** (双轨古道; *shuāngguǐ gǔdào*), which leads to the **Wenchang Pavilion** (文昌阁; Wénchāng Gé), an arched gate topped by a single-roofed hall dating from the Qing dynasty. On your left is the **Shanyin Primary School** (山阴小学; Shānyīn Xiǎoxué), a delightful series of courtyards and halls, several of which now contain exhibitions detailing local agricultural tools and techniques. Unexpectedly, a huge portrait of **Chairman Mao** rears up ahead, painted on a screen and dating from 1966. The colours are slightly faded, but the image is surprisingly vivid.

The rest of the village largely consists of ancestral temples, including the **Zhu Family Ancestral Hall** (朱氏家祠; Zhūshì Jiācí), packed mudbrick homesteads (many of which are deserted and collapsing), small shrines and a delightful crop of arched **stone bridges** (*shíqiáo*). Note the occasional carved wood lintels over doorways and hunt down the **Lijiao Bridge** (立交桥; Lìjiāo Qiáo), a brace of ancient arched bridges dating from 1671. Zhūjiāyù becomes almost Mediterranean in feel when you reach the end of the village and dry-stone walls rise in layers up the hills. Climb past a statue of Guanyin to the **Kuixing Pavilion** (魁星楼; Kuíxīng Lóu; Y2) crowning the hill above the village for lovely views of the surrounding countryside.

If you want to spend the night in the peace and tranquillity of the village, check into the **Gucun Inn** (古村酒家; Gǔcūn Jiǔjiā; ☎ 8380 8135; d with shower Y60), a lovely old building with a courtyard and a spirit wall decorated with a peacock, 80m from the Lijiao Bridge. For eats, there are a few restaurants in the old village and occasional streetside chefs fry up live scorpions for peckish visitors.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

To reach Zhūjiāyù from Jǐ'nán, take a bus (Y12, 1½ hours, every 15 minutes, 6am to 7.30pm) to Míngshuǐ (明水; also called Zhāngqiū, 章丘) from the south station of the **long-distance bus station** (Jǐ'nán Chángtú Qìchē Zōngzhàn) on Jiluo Lu. From Míngshuǐ long-distance bus station

take a bus (Y3, 35 minutes, every hour, 7am to 6pm) to Zhūjiāyù; if there are not enough travellers going to Zhūjiāyù, you may be dropped off at the bottom of the road, where it's a further 2km to the village. Heading back to Míngshuǐ, buses leave from Zhūjiāyù on the hour (Y3, 35 minutes). Regular minibuses (Y12, 1½ hours, every 15 minutes from 5am to 6pm) return to Jǐ'nán from the Míngshuǐ long-distance bus station.

Simen Pagoda 四门塔

Near the village of Liǔbù (柳埠), 33km south-east of Jǐ'nán, are some of the oldest Buddhist structures in Shāndōng. Shentong Monastery holds **Simen Pagoda** (Simén Tǎ; Four Gate Pagoda; admission Y20; ☎ 8am-6pm), which dates back to the 6th century and is possibly the oldest stone pagoda in China. The surrounding hills are old burial grounds for the monks of the monastery.

Standing close to the Shentong Monastery and surrounded by stupas, **Longhu Pagoda** (龙虎塔; Lónghǔ Tǎ; Pagoda of the Dragon and the Tiger) dates to the Tang dynasty. Higher up is Thousand Buddha Cliff (千佛崖; Qiānfó Yá), with carved grottoes containing Buddhas.

To reach Simen Pagoda from Jǐ'nán, take bus 67 (Y3, 1½ hours) to the Simén Tǎ stop. The Shandong Travel Service (p207) can arrange tours.

TÀI'ĀN 泰安

☎ 0538 / pop 787,375

Gateway town to the mountain of Tàì Shān looming above, Tàì'ān is much wealthier and more with-it than retiring Qífù to the south. Tàì'ān has several sights of interest and as you will need the better part of a day for the mountain, spending the night here is advised.

Orientation

The most appealing part of town lies in the vicinity of the Dai Temple, Hongmen Lu, and the east-west running Dongyue Dajie and Shengping Jie. This area also contains a range of hotels, internet cafés and restaurants. The train and long-distance bus stations are in the less attractive west part of town. Maps are widely available from street vendors.

Information

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 48 Dongyue Dajie; ☎ 8.30am-5pm) Has a 24-hour ATM accepting Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus, JCB and Amex.

Big World Internet (Dàshìjiè Wǎngbā; Hongmen Lu; per hr Y1.50-2; ☎ 8am-midnight)

Central Hospital (Zhōngxīn Yīyuàn; ☎ 822 4161; 29 Longtan Lu)

China International Travel Service (CITS; Zhōngguó Guójí Lǔxíngshè; ☎ 820 7797; www.taishan-cits.com; ground fl, Puzhao Hotel, off Puzhao Si Lu)

Kunyu Internet Café (Kūnyù Wǎngbā; 18 Hongmen Lu; per hr Y1.50; ☎ 24hr)

Post Office (yóujú; 9 Dongyue Dajie; ☎ 8am-7pm summer, to 6pm winter)

Public Security Bureau (PSB; Gōngānjú; ☎ 827 5264; cnr Dongyue Dajie & Qingnian Lu; ☎ 8.30am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri) The visa office is in the eastern side of this huge, modern building.

Shuyu Pingmin Pharmacy (Shùyù Píngmín Dàyàofáng; Dongyue Dajie) It has 24-hour service.

Tàì'ān Tourism Information Centre (Tàì'ānshì Lǚyóu Zìxún Zhōngxīn; ☎ 24hr) In front of the train station.

Wanjing Internet Café (Wǎnjīng Wǎngbā; 180 Daizong Dajie; per hr Y1.50; ☎ 7am-midnight)

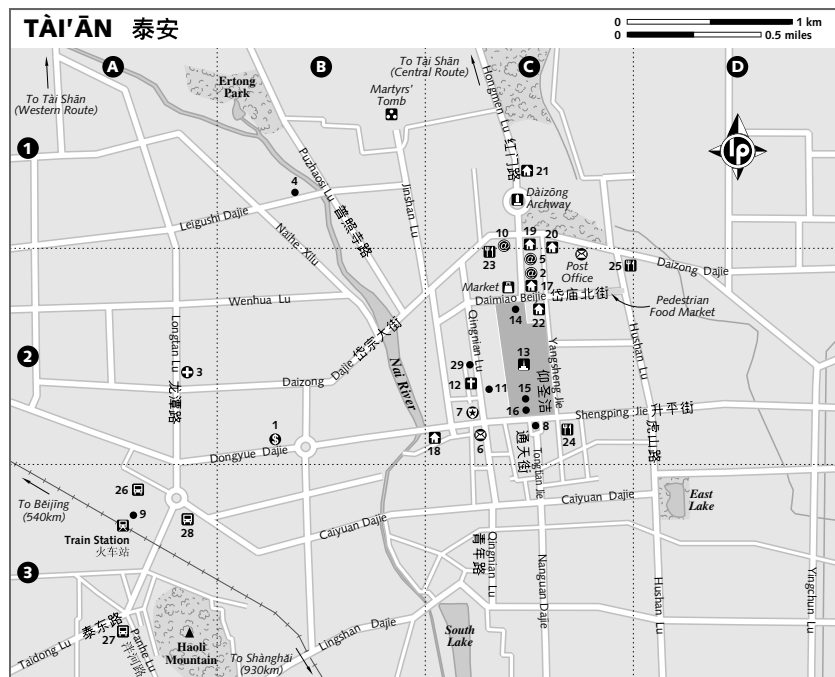
Xinhua Bookshop (Xīnhuá Shūdiàn; 80-82 Qingnian Lu; ☎ 8.30am-7.30pm summer, to 6pm winter)

Sights

DAI TEMPLE 岱庙

With its eternal-looking trees and commanding location at the hub of Tàì'ān, this magnificent **temple complex** (Dài Miào; ☎ 822 3491; Daibeng Lu; admission Y20; ☎ 7.40am-6.50pm, last tickets 6.30pm) was a traditional pilgrimage stop on the route to the mountain and the site of sacrifices to the god of Tàì Shān. It also forms a delightful portrait of Chinese temple architecture, with birds squawking among the hoary cypresses and ancient stelaes looking silently on. Most visitors enter by the north gate at the south end of Hongmen Lu, although entering the complex via the southern gate allows you to follow the traditional passage through the temple.

Just within the north gate two attractive gardens are arranged with potted ornamental trees on either side. The main hall is the colossal twin yellow-eaved, nine-bay wide **Hall of Heavenly Blessing** (天貺殿; Tiānkǎng Diàn), which dates to AD 1009. The dark interior is decorated with a marvellous, flaking, 62m-long Song dynasty fresco depicting Emperor Zhenzong as the god of Tàì Shān. Among the cast of characters are elephants, camels and lions, but the gloomy interior makes it hard to discern much. Also in the hall is a statue of the God of Tàì Shān, seated in front of a tablet that reads 'Dōngyuè Tàishān zhī Shén' ('God



of the Eastern Peak Tàì Shān'). Photography is not allowed inside.

South of the hall are several stelae supported on the backs of fossilized-looking *bixi* (mythical tortoiselike dragons). Look out for the scripture pillar, its etched words long lost to the Shāndōng winds and inquisitive hands.

In the Han Bai courtyard stand cypresses supposedly planted by the Han emperor Wudi. Near the entrance to the courtyard is a vast *bixi* with five-inch fangs.

Try to come in spring, when the trees are in bloom. To the south of the south gate (正阳门; Zhèngyáng Mén) is the splendid Dàimiao Fāng, an ornamental arch (*páifāng*) decorated with four pairs of heavily weathered lions, and dragon and phoenix motifs. Also south of the temple, the **Yaocan Pavilion** (遥参亭; Yáocān Tíng; admission Y1) contains a hall dedicated to effigies of the Old Mother of Taishan (Taishan Laomu), Bixia and a deity (Songzi Niangniang) entreated by women who want children. Further south still, a final memorial arch stands flanked by two iron lions alongside busy Dongyue Dajie.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH 基督教堂

This German-built, possibly early-20th-century church (2 Dengyun Jie) lies tucked away in the heart of Tàì'ān. Largely hidden behind a wall just west off Qingnian Lu (on a small side street called Dengyun Jie, literally 'Climb the Clouds Street'; 登云街), this sweet little House of the Lord has Gothic arches, stone walls, a small belfry and regular services. The white building at the front is possibly the old church house. Other German relics include the towering old train station building – a solid stone-built structure immediately east of Tàishān train station – emblazoned with the characters 'Tàì'ān Zhàn' (Taian Station).

Sleeping

Jixiang Hotel (Jíxiāng Lǚguǎn; ☎ 677 9943; Daimiao Beijing; 岱庙北街; s & d Y40) In the block on the corner of Daimiao Beijing and Hongmen Lu opposite the north gate of Dai Temple, this simple budget hotel is tucked away in the corner of the ground floor courtyard. All 20 basic rooms come with fan (no air-con) and TV, with common loo and shower. No English sign and limited English spoken.

INFORMATION	SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	Taishan Hotel 泰山宾馆.....21 C1
Bank of China 中国银行.....1 B2	基督教教堂.....12 C2	Yuzuo Hotel 御座宾馆.....22 C2
Big World Internet 大世界网吧.....2 C2	Dai Temple 岱庙.....13 C2	EATING
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PSB 公安局.....7 C2	Jixiang Hotel 吉祥旅馆.....17 C2	Bus 3 (to Tàì Shān) 三路汽车往泰山.....26 A3
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Taishan Grand Hotel (Tàishān Dàjiūdiàn; ☎ 822 7211; fax 822 6162; 210 Daizong Dajie; 岱宗大街210号; d Y280-460, ste Y680; ☎) One of Tàì'ān's old hotels, this hotel has a good location with views of Tàì Shān or the Dai Temple and the rooms – worn but comfy enough – enjoy good discounts.

Yuzuo Hotel (Yúzuò Bīnguǎn; ☎ 826 9999; fax 822 3179; 3 Daimiao Beijing; 岱庙北街3号; d Y280-480, tr Y360, ste Y460-680; ☎) Pleasantly positioned next to the Dai Temple and attractively trimmed with lights at night, this peaceful hotel is manned by polite staff and ranges among low-rise, two-storey blocks. Pricier 'A' double rooms are smarter than the older-looking 'B' rooms. There's a small pharmacy, supermarket, restaurant (cooking up Taoist dishes) and slow-moving dance hall.

Roman Holiday (Luómǎ Jiārì Shāngwù Jiūdiàn; cnr Hongmen Lu & Daizong Dajie; 近红门路, 岱宗大街; s & d Y298) Crisp and neat rooms come with see-through showers, glass sinks and all mod-cons in this modern, packaged business-esque four-storey hotel with an odd name. It's formulaic and there's no character, but it's a notch above much of the local competition in the midrange market.

Taishan Hotel (Tàishān Bīnguǎn; ☎ 822 5678; fax 822 1432; 26 Hongmen Lu; 红门路26号; d incl breakfast Y300-420; ☎) At the foot of Tàì Shān on Hongmen Lu, the tour-group oriented three-star Taishan Hotel has two kinds of doubles: the large, clean 'A' rooms and the darker, older and cheaper 'B' rooms. The five-storey hotel is well staffed, with a shop and ticketing service. The breakfast is buffet style.

Overseas Chinese Hotel (Huáqiáo Dàshà; ☎ 822 0001; fax 822 8171; 15 Dongyue Dajie; 东岳大街15号; d Y400-600, ste Y1000-1980; ☎) Beyond the huge golden

effigy of Milefo (the laughing Buddha) in the lobby and the deserted 'English Inspiration City Club' bar, this four-star hotel has zero charm, but the rooms are fine. Some doubles have computers, while at the other end of the scale, 30% discount brings the cheapest doubles down to around Y280.

Eating

À Dōng de Shuǐjiāo (☎ 827 3644; 178 Daizong Dajie; meals Y25-35) This handily located, clean dumpling restaurant fills you up with *jiāozǐ* (饺子; stuffed dumplings), including *yáng ròu* (羊肉; lamb, Y16 per *jīn* – half a *jīn* is enough for one), *sūn sǎn xiàn* (素三鲜; vegetable, Y10 per *jīn*) and *xiānggǔ ròu* (香菇肉; Chinese mushroom and meat, Y14 per *jīn*). Other staples include soups and *hóngshāo qiézi* (红烧茄子; braised aubergine, Y8), sweet and laced with garlic. A sister branch (À Dōng Jiāochàngài) is around the corner at 25 Hongmen Lu.

Shuzhuang Hotpot Restaurant (Shùzhwāng Huòguóchéng; cnr Daizong Dajie & Hushan Lu; meals Y40) If you're a group then order lashings of beer and sweat it out around the hotpot fishing out strips of *yáng ròu* (羊肉; New Zealand lamb, Y12), *yúwán* (鱼丸; fish balls, Y10), *xiān xiānggǔ* (鲜香菇; mushrooms, Y8), *xiān dòufu* (鲜豆腐; fresh tofu, Y4), *tú dòu piàn* (土豆片; potato slices, Y4) and *bái cài* (白菜; Chinese cabbage, Y4) from the boiling broth. Singletons don't despair: individual pots are also provided, heated over an alcohol flame.

Dào xiāng yuán (48 Shengping Jie) This brightly lit bakery runs to several branches in town, with a great choice of fresh, chunky chilled sandwiches (Y3.50 to Y5; tuna, chicken, bacon, ham), tarts, fresh bread, cream puffs (Y2) and cakes.

Getting There & Away

AIR

The nearest large airport is at Jī'nán. Tickets can be purchased from the **ticket office** (hángkōng dīngpiàochù; ☎ 827 0855; 111 Qingnian Lu; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Sat).

BUS

There are four long-distance bus stations in Tàishān. Handy buses leave from outside Tàishān train station (Y16, every 30 minutes, 6.30am to 6pm). From the **long-distance bus station** (chángtú qìchēzhàn; ☎ 210 8606; Panhe Lu), south of the train station, are buses to Jī'nán (Y20, 1½ hours, every 30 minutes, 6.10am to 6.40pm), Kāifēng (Y63, one daily), Qūfū (Y16, one hour, every 20 minutes), Qīngdǎo (Y95, three to four hours, 6am, 8am and 2.30pm), Yántái (Y114, four hours, 7am), Wēihǎi (Y129, several per day) and Běijīng (Y129, four hours, 8.30am and 2.30pm). From the **Tai Shan Bus Station** (Tài Shān Qìchēzhàn; Caiyuan Dajie), there are regular buses to Jī'nán (Y11.5 to Y16, 1½ hours, every 30 minutes, 6am to 6pm).

TRAIN

Exiting Tàishān station, the first thing you see is a huge white bust of Lei Feng, an iconic soldier of the Mao era. Trains run to Běijīng (hard seat Y79, six hours, five daily), Jī'nán (hard seat Y7, one hour, nine daily), Yánzhōu (for Qūfū; hard seat Y15), Shànghǎi (Y102, 10 daily) and Qīngdǎo (Y80, five hours).

Getting Around

There are three main bus routes. Bus 3 (Y1) runs from the Tàishān central route trailhead to the western route trailhead at Tianwai Village (Tiānwài Cūn) via the train station. Buses 1 and 2 also end up near the train station.

Taxis can be found outside the train station; they start at Y5 (then Y1.50 per kilometre thereafter).

TÀI SHĀN 泰山

☎ 0538

Southern Chinese claim 'myriad mountains, rivers and geniuses' while Shāndōng citizens smugly contest they have 'one mountain, one river and one saint', implying they have the last word on each: Tàishān, the Yellow River and Confucius. Tàishān is the most revered of China's five sacred Taoist peaks, with imperial sacrifices to heaven and

earth offered from its summit. Only five of China's emperors ever climbed Tàishān, although Emperor Qianlong of the Qing dynasty scaled it 11 times. From its heights Confucius uttered the dictum 'The world is small'; Mao lumbered up and declared 'The East is Red'. You, too, can climb up and say 'I'm knackered'.

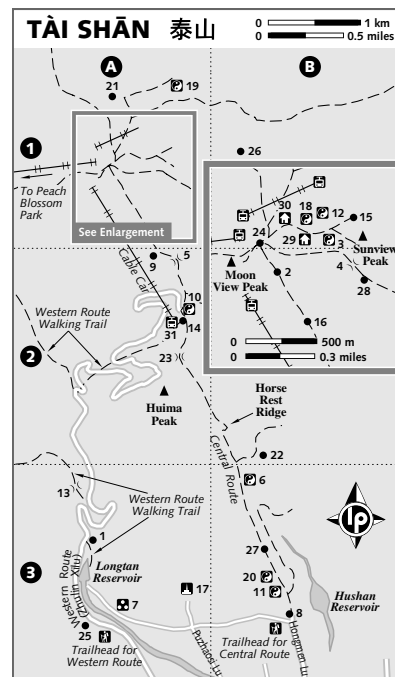
Tài Shān is a unique experience; its supernatural allure (see the boxed text, p217) attracts the Chinese in droves. Bixia, the Princess of the Azure Clouds, a Taoist deity whose presence permeates the temples dotted along the route, is a powerful cult figure for the rural women of Shāndōng and beyond. Tribes of wiry grandmothers – it's said that if you climb Tàishān you'll live to 100 – trot up the steps with surprising ease, their target the cluster of temples at the summit where they burn money and incense, praying for their progeny. Sun worshippers muster wide-eyed on the peak, straining for the first flickers of dawn. In ancient Chinese tradition, it was believed that the sun began its westward journey from Tàishān.

Tài Shān is 1545m above sea level, with a climbing distance of 7.5km from base to summit on the central route. The elevation change from Midway Gate to Heaven (Zhōngtiān Mén), halfway up the mountain, to the summit is approximately 600m. The mountain is not a major climb, but with 6660 steps to the summit, it can be gruelling. One wonders how many backs were broken in the building of the temples and stone stairs on Tàishān – a massive undertaking accomplished without any mechanical aids.

Climate

Bear in mind that weather conditions on the mountain vary considerably compared with Tàishān (p211). Clouds and mist frequently envelop the mountain, particularly in summer. The best times to visit are in spring and autumn when the humidity is low, although old-timers suggest that the clearest weather is from early October onwards. In winter the weather is often fine, but very cold. The tourist season peaks from May to October.

Due to weather changes, you're advised to carry warm clothing with you, no matter what the season. The summit can be very cold, windy and wet; army overcoats are available there for hire and you can buy waterproof coats from one of the vendors.



Climbing Tàishān

The town of Tàishān lies at the foot of Tàishān and is the gateway to the mountain. Low-season tickets are Y80 (1 December to 31 January), high-season tickets are Y100 (1 February to 30 November); student and senior tickets are half price. Voluntary insurance is available for Y2. Avoid coinciding your climb with the public-holiday periods held in the first weeks of May and October, otherwise you will share the mountain with what the Chinese call 'rén shān rén hǎi' – literally a 'mountain of people and a sea of persons'.

ON FOOT

It's possible to spend the night at Midway Gate to Heaven (halfway up the mountain) or on the summit. Allow two hours for climbing between each of these points, and a total of eight hours for the round trip (although you can get down to the ticket office from the Midway Gate to Heaven in an hour, at speed). Allowing several more hours would make the climb less strenuous and give you more time to look around.

If you want to see the sunrise, dump your gear at the train station or at a guesthouse

INFORMATION

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Ticket Office 售票处	(see 27)

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Black Dragon Pool 黑龙潭	(see 13)
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North Prayer Rock 拱北石	15 B1
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in Tàishān and time your ascent so that you'll reach the summit before sundown. Stay overnight at one of the summit guesthouses and get up early the next morning for the famed sunrise. It's possible to scale the mountain at night and some Chinese do this, timing it so that they arrive before sunrise. The way is lit by lamps, but it is advisable to take a torch, as well as warm clothes, food and water.

There are two main paths up the mountain: the central route and the western route, converging midway at Midway Gate to Heaven. Most people slog up the central route (once the imperial route and littered with cultural

relics) and head down (usually by bus) along the western route. Other trails run through orchards and woods.

BY MINIBUS & CABLE CAR

From the roundabout at Tianwai Village (天外村; Tiānwài Cūn), at the foot of the western route, minibuses (one way Y20) depart every 20 minutes (when full) to Midway Gate to Heaven, halfway up Tàì Shān. The minibuses operate 4am to 8pm during high season, less regularly during low season. Bus 3 runs to Tianwai Village from Tàì'ān's train station. Frequent buses come down the mountain; however, you may have to wait several buses for a seat.

It's about a five-minute walk from Midway Gate to Heaven to the **cable car** (kǒngzhōng suǒdào; adult/child Y45/20; ☎ 7am-6pm 16 Apr-15 Oct, 8am-5.30pm 16 Oct-15 Apr). The journey takes around 10 to 15 minutes to travel to **Moon View Peak** (Yùeguān Fēng), near the South Gate to Heaven (Nántiān Mén). Be warned, high season and weekend queues may force you to wait up to two hours for a ride.

The same applies when you want to descend from the summit; fortunately, there is another **cable car** (suǒdào; adult/child Y45/20; ☎ 7.30am-5.30pm 16 Apr-15 Oct, 8am-5pm 16 Oct-15 Apr) that only carries six passengers and is as regular as clockwork. It takes you from north of South Gate to Heaven down to **Peach Blossom Park** (桃花源; Taóhūa Yuán), a scenic area behind Tàì Shān that is also worth exploring. From here you can take a minibus to Tàì'ān (Y20, 40 minutes). You can reverse this process by first taking a minibus from Tàì'ān train station to Peach Blossom Park and then ascending by cable car.

CENTRAL ROUTE

On this route you'll see a bewildering catalogue of bridges, trees, rivers, gullies, towers, inscriptions, caves, pavilions and temples. Tàì Shān functions as an outdoor museum of calligraphic art, with the prize items being the **Rock Valley Scripture** (Jīng Shíyù) along the first section of the walk and the **North Prayer Rock** (Gǒngběi Shí), which commemorates an imperial sacrifice, at the summit. Lost on most foreigners are the literary allusions, word games and analogies spelt out by the calligraphy decorating the journey.

Purists commence their ascents of Tàì Shān after a south-north perambulation through the Dai Temple (p211), in imitation of imperial custom. From the Dai Temple, Hongmen

Lu stretches north. At the end of the paved part of Hongmen Lu is the **Guandi Temple** (Guāndi Miào; admission free), containing a large statue of Guandi, the Taoist God of War. Nearby is the **First Gate of Heaven** (Yítīān Mén) and the traditional commencement of the climb proper. Beyond is a stone archway overgrown with wisteria and inscribed with Chinese characters meaning 'the place where Confucius began to climb'.

Further along is **Red Gate Palace** (Hóngmén Gōng; admission Y5), with its wine-coloured walls. This is the first of a series of temples dedicated to Bixia. Further again is a large gate called **Wànxiān Lóu**, where you find the ticket office. Further along is **Doumu Hall** (Dǒumǔ Gōng), first constructed in 1542 and given the more magical name of 'Dragon Spring Nunnery'. On the way up look out for small piles of stones and rocks superstitiously arranged alongside the path. Elsewhere invocations are inscribed on ribbons that festoon the pines and cypresses.

Continuing through the tunnel of cypresses known as Cypress Cave is **Huima Peak** (Húimǎ Líng), where Emperor Zhenzong had to dismount and continue by sedan chair because his horse refused to go further.

MIDWAY GATE TO HEAVEN 中天门

The second celestial gate is where you can rest your legs, allow your pulse to slow and perhaps peruse the small and smoky **God of Wealth Temple** (财神庙; Cáishén Miào). Further ahead is **Five Pine Pavilion** (Wǔsōng Tíng), where, in 219 BC, Emperor Qin Shi Huang was overtaken by a violent storm and was sheltered by the pine trees. He promoted them to the fifth rank of minister.

Ahead is the arduous **Path of Eighteen Bends** (十八盘) that eventually leads to the summit; climbing it is performed in slow motion by all and sundry as legs turn to lead. You'll pass **Opposing Pines Pavilion** (Dùisōng Tíng) and the **Welcoming Pine** (Yīngkè Sōng) – every mountain worth its salt in China has one – with a branch extended as if to shake hands. Beyond is the **Archway to Immortality** (Shēngxiān Fāng). It was believed that those passing through the archway would become celestial beings. From here to the summit, emperors were carried in sedan chairs.

SOUTH GATE TO HEAVEN 南天门

The final stretch takes you to South Gate to Heaven, the third celestial gate. Walk along

TÀÌ SHĀN

Tàì Shān's place in the hearts and minds of the Chinese people is deeply rooted in their most ancient creation myth – the story of Pan Gu. In the beginning when all was chaos, and heaven and earth were swirling together, Pan Gu was born and promptly set about separating the ground and the sky. With each passing day he grew taller, the sky grew higher and the earth grew thicker, until, after 18,000 years, the two were fully separated and Pan Gu died of exhaustion. As his body disintegrated, his eyes became the sun and the moon, his blood transformed into rivers, his sweat fell as rain, and his head and limbs became the five sacred Taoist mountains of China, Tàì Shān among them.

Maybe because it sprang from Pan Gu's head, or perhaps because of its location in the dominant east (which signifies birth and spring), Tàì Shān is the most revered of the five holy Taoist peaks. The throngs of modern visitors are but recipients of a tradition of pilgrimage and worship that stretches back to earliest historical times.

For nearly 3000 years emperors have paid homage, a few reaching the summit, all contributing to the rich legacy of temples, trees, pavilions and calligraphy. Originally made for sacrifices, these visits soon acquired a political significance: it was thought heaven would never allow an unworthy ruler to ascend, so a successful climb denoted divine approval.

Emperors aside, China's three most prominent schools of thought also hold Tàì Shān dear. A second legend has it there once lived a she-fox on Tàì Shān, who, by living a strict Taoist existence, transformed into a goddess named Bixia (Princess of the Azure Clouds). There she remained happily until the arrival of Sakyamuni, the founder of Buddhism, who fell in love with the place and asked her to leave. Bixia refused and Sakyamuni was forced to flee when he tried unsuccessfully to trick her into leaving. Today Bixia is venerated as the protector of peasant women and as the bringer of dawn. A Taoist monk named Lang established the first temples on the mountain in 351 BC, and the most influential remain those dedicated to Bixia.

Thus Tàì Shān has become a repository of Chinese culture, spanning dynasties and religions, and prompting the modern Chinese writer Guo Moruo to describe the mountain as 'a partial miniature of Chinese culture'. Indeed, it is probably best to bear this analogy in mind when you visit, as modern China is definitely leaving its mark. Even by the Qing dynasty there were several hundred thousand visitors each year, and during the week-long May Day holiday in 2006, a staggering 190,000 people crowded onto the mountain.

Tian Jie to **Azure Clouds Temple** (Bìxiá Cí; admission Y5), with its sublime perch in the clouds, where elders offer money and food to the deities of Bixia, Yanguang Nainai and Taishan Songzi Niangniang (the latter helping women bear children). The iron tiling on the temple buildings is intended to prevent damage by strong winds, and *chīwǎn* (ornaments meant to protect against fire) decorate the bronze eaves.

Climbing higher, you will pass the Taoist **Qingdi Palace** (青帝宫; Qīngdì Gōng), before the fog- and cloud-swathed **Jade Emperor Temple** (Yùhuáng Dīng) comes into view, perched on the highest point (1545m) of the Tàì Shān plateau. Within is an effigy of the Jade Emperor, an attendant statue of Taishan Laojun and some frescoes.

In front of the temple is the one piece of calligraphy that you really can appreciate – the **Wordless Monument** (Wúzi Bēi). One story goes that it was set up by Emperor Wu 2100 years

ago – he wasn't satisfied with what his scribes came up with, so he left it to the viewer's imagination. Others attribute the monument to Qin Shi Huang (p37). In the courtyard stands a rock inscribed with the elevation of the mountain. Pilgrims toss coins into two urns at the exact peak (Tàishān Jíding) below a tablet upon which is written the ancient Taoist character for Tàì Shān. Near the Shenqi Hotel (p218) stands a **Confucius Temple** (Wén Miào), where statues of Confucius (Kongzi), Mencius (Mengzi), Zengzi and other Confucian luminaries are venerated.

The main sunrise vantage point is the **North Prayer Rock** (Gǒngběi Shí; see opposite); if you're lucky, visibility extends to over 200km, as far as the coast. The sunset slides over the Yellow River side. At the rear of the mountain is the **Rear Rocky Recess** (Hòu Shíwù), one of the better-known spots for viewing pine trees, where some ruins can be found tangled in the

foliage. It's a good place to ramble and lose the crowds for a while.

WESTERN ROUTE

The most popular way to descend the mountain is by bus via the western route. The footpath and road intercept at a number of points, and are often one and the same. Given the amount of traffic, you might prefer to hop on a bus rather than inhale its exhaust. If you do hike down, the trail is not always clearly marked. (Note that buses will not stop for you once they have left Midway Gate to Heaven.)

Either by bus or foot, the western route treats you to considerable variation in scenery, with orchards, pools and flowering plants. The major attraction along this route is **Black Dragon Pool** (Hēilóng Tán), which is just below **Longevity Bridge** (Chángshòu Qiáo) and is fed by a small waterfall. Swimming in the waters are rare carp, which are occasionally cooked and served to visitors. Mythical tales swarm about the pool, said to be the site of underground carp palaces and of magic herbs that turn people into beasts.

An enjoyable conclusion to your descent is a visit to **Puzhao Temple** (Pūzhào Sì; Pervading Light Temple; admission ¥5; ☎ 8am-5.30pm). One of the few strictly Buddhist shrines in the area, this simple temple dates to the Southern and Northern dynasties (AD 420-589). An arrangement of ancient pine trees and small halls rising in levels up the hillside, the temple provides a quiet and restful end to the hike.

Sleeping & Eating

Accommodation prices here don't apply to holiday periods, such as the first week of May and October, when room prices can triple. At other times, ask for discounts.

Xianju Hotel (Xiānjū Fàndiàn; ☎ 823 9984; fax 822 6877; 2 Tian Jie; 天街2号; s/d/tt/q ¥420/560/660/980) Situated just before the *pailou* marking Tian Jie beyond the South Gate to Heaven, this two-star hotel has a decent selection of rooms.

Shenqi Hotel (Shénqì Bīnguǎn; ☎ 822 3866; fax 821 5399; s ¥580, d ¥680-780, ste ¥6800-8800; ☎) The only three-star hotel on the summit, this reasonably smart hotel has a restaurant (serving Taoist banquets) and a bar, and is accessed up some steep steps. Rooms are reasonably clean, but nothing special (sun watchers are roused well before sunrise).

There is no food shortage on Tàì Shān; the central route is dotted with teahouses, stalls,

vendors and restaurants. Your pockets are likely to feel emptier than your stomach, but keep in mind that all supplies are carried up by foot and that the prices rise as you do.

QŪFŪ 曲阜

☎ 0537 / population 88,000

Of monumental significance to the Chinese is the walled town of Qūfù, birthplace of Confucius, with its traditional harmonies of carved stone, timber and imperial architecture. Inscribed everywhere in Qūfù is Confucius' upbeat dictum: '有朋自远方来不亦乐乎' ('Is it not a joy to have friends come from afar?') Taking the sage's wisdom at face value, name-chop hawkers, pedicab drivers and map-sellers joyfully press their goods and services on out-of-towners and fending it all off can be draining.

Orientation

The old walled core of Qūfù is small and easy to get around, a charming grid of streets built around the Confucius Temple and Confucius Mansions at its heart, with the Confucius Forest north of town. Gulou Jie bisects the town from north to south, and the bus station is in the south of town.

Information

BOOKSHOPS

Xinhua Bookstore (Xīnhuá Shūdiàn; Gulou Nanjie; ☎ 8am-6.30pm summer, to 5.30pm winter) Opposite southeast corner of Drum Tower.

INTERNET ACCESS 网吧

Xiuxian Hotel Internet Café (Xiūxián Bīnguǎn Wǎngbā; 2nd fl, 20 Gulou Nanjie; per hr ¥2; ☎ 8am-midnight)

Zhixin Internet Café (Zhìxīn Wǎngbā; per hr ¥3; ☎ 8am-midnight) It's located in an alley east off Shendao Lu. Head north up Shendao Lu and take first turn-off on left.

MEDICAL SERVICES

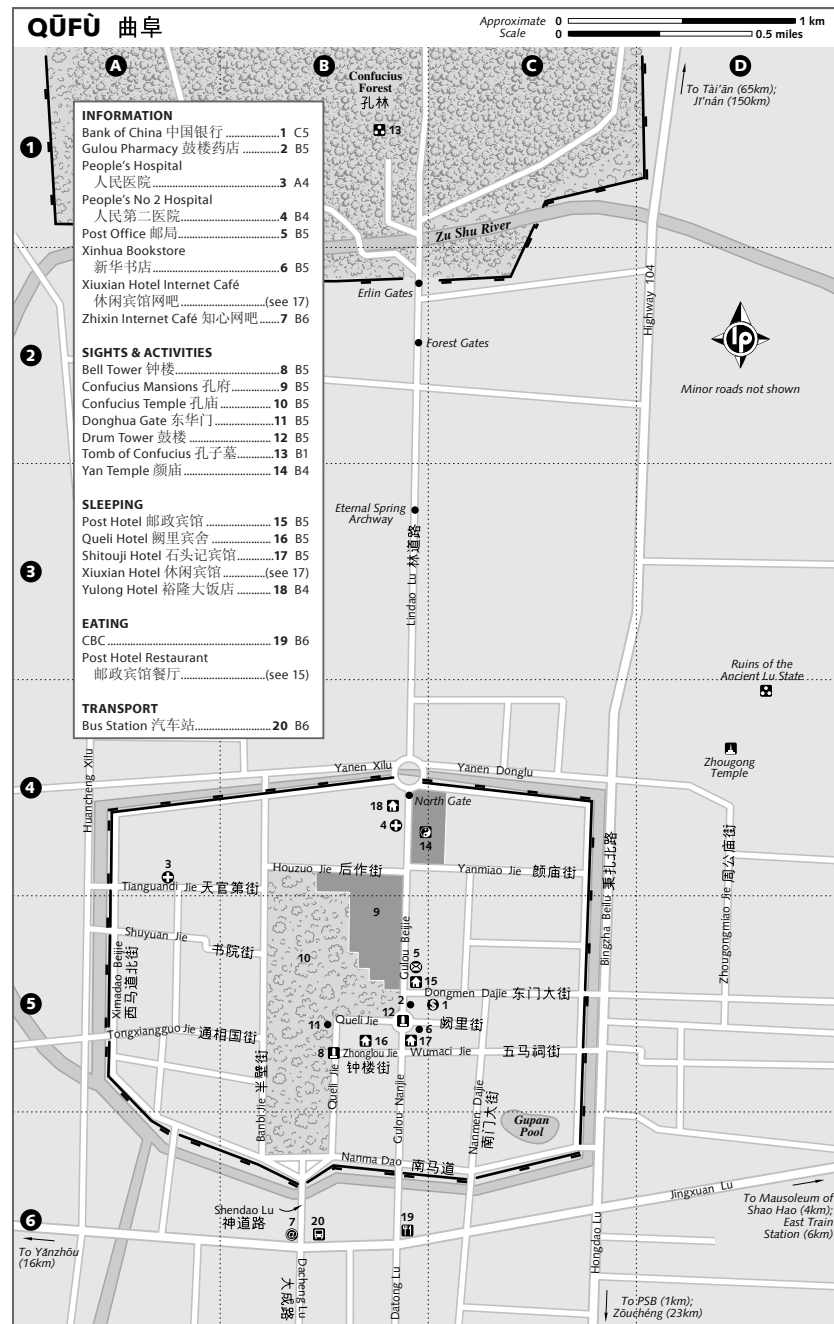
Gulou Pharmacy (Gúlóu Yàodiàn; 12 Gulou Beijie; ☎ 7.30am-8pm)

People's Hospital (Rénmín Yīyuàn; ☎ 441 2440; Tianguandi Jie)

People's No 2 Hospital (Rénmín Dìèr Yīyuàn; 7 Gulou Beijie)

MONEY

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 96 Dongmen Dajie; ☎ 8am-6pm) Foreign exchange, but no ATM for foreign cards.



POST

Post office (yóujú; 8-1 Gulou Beijie; ☎ 7.30am-6.30pm summer, 8am-6pm winter) North of the Drum Tower.

PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU

PSB (公安局; Gōngānjú; ☎ 441 1403; 1 Wuyuntan Lu; ☎ 8am-noon & 2.30-6pm Mon-Fri)

TOURIST INFORMATION & TRAVEL AGENCIES

China International Travel Service (CITS; Zhōngguó Guójī Lǚxíngshì; ☎ 449 1492; 36 Hongdao Lu) Inconveniently located way down in the south of town.

Sights

Collectively, the principle sights – the Confucius Temple, the Confucius Mansions and the Confucius Forest – are known locally as the ‘Sān Kǒng’ (‘Three Confuciuses’). Through tickets to all three sights are available (Y105). Stick to the main sights listed below, as other diversions such as the Huaxia Cultural City (Huáxià Wénhuà Chéng; Y32) on Daquan Lu are not worth the expense.

CONFUCIUS TEMPLE 孔庙

The **temple** (Kǒng Miào; ☎ 449 5235; admission Y52; ☎ 8am-5.30pm) started out as a simple memorial hall and mushroomed into a complex one-fifth the size of the Qūfū town centre. English-speaking guides (Y150) are available from the ticket office to the east of the temple entrance.

The main entrance in the south leads to a series of triple-door gates. The first few courtyards are airy, cypress-covered and full of green grass. Magnificent gnarled, twisting pines rise up from the temple grounds along with over 1000 stelae, inscribed from Han to Qing times – the largest such collection in China. Several broken stelae (victims of the sage’s episodic unpopularity perhaps) in the temple grounds are patched up with brackets and cement.

About halfway along the north–south axis rises the triple-eaved **Great Pavilion of the Constellation of Scholars** (奎文阁; Kuíwén Gé), an imposing Jin dynasty wooden structure containing prints recording Confucius’ exploits in the Analects. Beyond lie a series of colossal, twin-eaved stele pavilions, followed by **Dacheng Gate** (大成门; Dàchéng Mén), north of which is the **Apricot Platform** (杏坛; Xìng Tán) from where Confucius taught his students.

The core of the Confucian complex is the huge yellow-eaved **Dacheng Hall** (大成殿; Dàchéng Diàn), which, in its present form,

dates from 1724; it towers 31m on a white marble terrace. The Kong family imported glazed yellow tiling for the halls in the Confucius Temple, and special stones were brought in from Xishān. The craftspeople carved the 10 dragon-coiled columns so expertly that they had to be covered with red silk when Emperor Qianlong visited lest he felt that the Forbidden City’s Hall of Supreme Harmony paled in comparison. The superb stone they’re carved from is called ‘fish roe stone’; the smoother pillars at the rear are also carved with dragons.

Inside is a huge statue of Confucius residing on a throne, encapsulated in a red and gold burnished cabinet. Above the sage are the characters for ‘wànshì shìbiào’, meaning ‘model teacher for all ages’. The next hall, the **Chamber Hall** (寝殿; Qǐn Diàn), was built for Confucius’ wife and now provides a home for roosting birds.

At the extreme northern end of the temple is **Shengji Hall** (圣迹殿; Shèngjī Diàn), a memorial hall containing a series of stones engraved with scenes from the life of Confucius and tales about him. They are copies of an older set that dates back to 1592.

Several other halls and side temples are at the rear, including the **Holy Kitchen** (神庖), where animals were prepared for sacrifice, and the **Family Temple**. East of Dacheng Hall, **Chongsheng Hall** (崇圣祠; Chóngshèng Cí) is similarly adorned with fabulous carved pillars. South of the hall is the **Lu Wall** (鲁壁), where the ninth descendant of Confucius hid the sacred texts during the book-burning campaign of Emperor Qin Shi Huang. The books were discovered again during the Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 220), and led to a lengthy scholastic dispute between those who followed a reconstructed version of the last books and those who supported the teachings in the rediscovered ones. You can also hunt down **Confucius’ Well**. Dotted around are ancient scholar trees (some with roots somewhere in the Tang dynasty) and a ginkgo from the Song. You can exit from the east gate, **Donghua Gate** (东华门; Dōnghuá Mén), if you wish, south of which is the **Bell Tower** (钟楼; Zhōnglóu), spanning the width of Queli Jie.

CONFUCIUS MANSIONS 孔府

Adjacent to the Confucius Temple are the **Confucius Mansions** (Kǒng Fǔ; ☎ 441 2235; admission Y32; ☎ 8am-5pm), originally dating from the 16th century. A maze of 450 halls, rooms,

CONFUCIANISM

Qūfū is the birth and death place of the sage Confucius (551–479 BC), whose impact was not felt during his own lifetime. He lived in abject poverty and hardly put pen to paper, but his teachings were recorded by dedicated followers in *The Analects of Confucius*. His descendants, the Kong (孔) family, fared considerably better.

As the original Confucian temple at Qūfū (dating from 478 BC) was enlarged, remodelled, added to, taken away from and rebuilt, the majority of the present buildings date from the Ming dynasty. In 1513 armed bands sacked the temple and the Kong residence, resulting in walls being erected around the town from 1522 to 1567 to fortify it. These walls were recently removed, but vestiges of Ming town planning, such as the extant Drum and Bell Towers (Gǔlóu and Zhōnglóu), remain.

Less a religion than a code that defined hierarchical relationships, Confucianism has had a profound impact on Chinese culture. It teaches that son must respect father, wife must respect husband, commoner must respect official, official must respect ruler and so on. The essence of its teachings are obedience, respect, selflessness and working for the common good.

You would think that this code would have fitted nicely into the new order of communism, yet it was swept aside because of its connections with the past. Confucius was seen as a kind of misguided feudal educator, and clan ties and ancestor worship were viewed as a threat. In 1948 Confucius’ direct heir, the first-born son of the 77th generation of the Kong family, fled to Taiwan, breaking a 2500-year tradition of Kong residence in Qūfū.

While the current popularity of the great sage is undeniable, it is debatable as to what extent his teachings are taking fresh root in China. The majority of devotees around Qūfū are middle-aged or elderly, suggesting that the comeback of Confucianism is more likely a re-emergence of beliefs never effectively squashed by the communists. Chinese scholars are making careful statements reaffirming the significance of Confucius’ historical role and suggesting that the ‘progressive’ aspects of his work were even cited in the writings of Mao Zedong. Confucius, too, it seems, can be rehabilitated.

buildings and side passages, getting around requires a compass. Not everything comes with English captions.

The Confucius Mansions were the most sumptuous aristocratic lodgings in China, indicative of the Kong family’s former great power. From the Han to the Qing dynasties, the descendants of Confucius were ennobled and granted privileges by the emperors. They lived like kings themselves, with 180-course meals, servants and consorts. Confucius even picked up some posthumous honours.

Qūfū grew around the Confucius Mansions and was an autonomous estate administered by the Kongs, who had powers of taxation and execution. Emperors could drop in to visit; the Ceremonial Gate near the south entrance was opened only for this event. Because of this royal protection, huge quantities of furniture, ceramics, artefacts and customary and personal effects survived, and some may be viewed. The Kong family archives are a rich legacy and also survived.

The Confucius Mansions are built on an ‘interrupted’ north-to-south axis. Grouped by the south gate are the former administrative

offices (taxes, edicts, rites, registration and examination halls).

The **Ceremonial Gate** (重光门; Chóngguāng Mén) leads to the **Great Hall** (大堂; Dà Táng), two further halls and then the **Neizhai Gate** (内宅门; Nèizhái Mén), a gate that seals off the residential quarters (used for weddings, banquets and private functions). The large ‘shòu’ character (壽, meaning ‘longevity’) within the single-eaved **Upper Front Chamber** (前上房; Qián Shàng Fáng) north of Neizhai Gate was a gift from Qing empress Cixi. The **Front Chamber** (前堂楼; Qián Táng Lóu) was where the duke lived and is interestingly laid out on two floors – rare for a hall this size.

East of the Neizhai Gate is the **Tower of Refuge** (避难楼; Bìnnán Lóu), where the Kong clan could gather if the peasants turned nasty. It has an iron-lined ceiling on the ground floor, a staircase that could be yanked up into the interior, a trap and provisions for a lengthy retreat. Grouped to the west of the main axis are former recreational facilities (studies, guestrooms, libraries and small temples). To the east is the odd kitchen, ancestral temple and the family branch apartments.

One of the best features of the mansions is the garden at the rear, where greenery, foliage, flowers, blossoming trees (in spring), bamboo and a sense of space waits. Take a seat in one of the old pavilions and relax.

CONFUCIUS FOREST 孔林

North of town on Lindao Lu is the serene **Confucius Forest** (Kǒng Lín; admission Y40; ☎ 7.30am-6pm), the largest artificial park and best preserved cemetery in China.

The pine and cypress forest of over 100,000 trees (it is said that each of Confucius' students planted a tree from his birthplace) covers 200 hectares and is bounded by a wall 10km long. Confucius and his descendants have been buried here over the past 2000 years, and are still being buried here today. Flanking the approach to the **Tomb of Confucius** (Kǒngzǐ Mù) are pairs of stone panthers, griffins and larger-than-life guardians. The Confucian barrow is a simple grass mound enclosed by a low wall and faced with a Ming dynasty stele. The sage's sons are buried nearby and scattered through the forest are dozens of temples and pavilions. Small minibuses offer tours (Y10).

To reach the forest takes about 30 minutes by foot, 15 minutes by taxi or you can attempt to catch the infrequent bus 1.

YAN TEMPLE 颜庙

This tranquil and little-visited **temple** (Yán Miào; Yanmiao Jie; admission Y10; ☎ 8am-5pm) north-east of the Confucius Mansions opens to a large grassy courtyard with some vast stele pavilions sheltering dirty stelae and antediluvian *bixi*. The main hall, **Fusheng Hall** (复圣殿; Fùshèng Diàn), is 17.5m high, with a hip and gable roof, and a magnificent ceiling decorated with the motif of a dragon head. Outside the hall are four magnificently carved pillars with coiling dragon designs and a further set of 18 octagonal pillars engraved with gorgeous dragon and floral patterns.

MAUSOLEUM OF SHAO HAO 少昊陵

One of the five legendary emperors of Chinese antiquity, Shao Hao's pyramidal Song dynasty **tomb** (Shào Hào Líng; admission Y20; ☎ 8am-5pm), 4km northeast of Qūfū, is constructed from huge stone blocks, 25m wide at the base and 6m high, topped with a small temple. Today the temple is deserted, but the atmosphere is serene.

Bus 2 from the bus station will drop you 350m south of the tomb, or take a taxi (Y10) or pedicab (Y10).

Festivals & Events

Following tradition, there are two fairs a year in Qūfū – spring and autumn – when the place comes alive with craftspeople, healers, acrobats, peddlers and peasants. It also hosts a big party on 28 September to mark Confucius' birthday.

Sleeping

Accommodation is at its priciest during the high season (1 May to 8 May and 24 September to 8 October), but outside these times push for discounts.

BUDGET

Xiuxian Hotel (Xiūxián Bīnguǎn; ☎ 441 7128; 20 Gulou Nanjie; 鼓楼南街20号; 6-/3-bed dm Y20/60, s/d Y120/120, tr without toilet Y60-80; ☎) This small place is cheap and simple with a useful internet café (p218), six- and three-person dorms and good low-season discounts on double and single rooms. Note some rooms are without windows. The owners can arrange ticketing and a bus to Yānzhōu (Y30 per person). The hotel has no English sign, but it's near the Drum Tower on the east side of Gulou Nanjie.

Shitouji Hotel (Shítou Jī Bīnguǎn; ☎ day/night 319 1806/319 1808; 16 Gulou Nanjie; 鼓楼南街16号; d Y40-60, tr Y30-80; ☎) Just round the corner from the Xiuxian Hotel, here there's a range of budget accommodation from cheap and clean triples with plastic wood flooring, common toilet, air-con and TV to good doubles with air-con, TV and (squat) loo/shower.

MIDRANGE

Post Hotel (Yóuzhèng Bīnguǎn; ☎ 448 0874; 8 Gulou Beijie; 鼓楼北街8号; economy room Y160, s/d/tr Y280/260/360; ☎) This well-placed hotel east of the Confucius Mansions has grotty economy rooms (no windows or air-con); other rooms are an improvement although they can be a bit grubby.

Yulong Hotel (Yùlóng Dàfāndiàn; ☎ 441 3469; fax 441 3209; 1 Gulou Dajie; 鼓楼大街1号; high season s/d Y260/380; ☎) This pleasant hotel with a traditional roof is attractively positioned just within the wall in the north of town. Rooms are comfortable and discounts are commonly available.

Queli Hotel (Quèlǐ Bīnshè; ☎ 441 2022; 15 Zhonglou Jie; 钟楼街15号; s/d Y298/398; ☎) Perhaps the

best deal in town with a splendid location, the Queli looks very much the part as *the* tourist hotel. The traditional styling is attractive, built of grey brick with tiles, water features and regulation photos of Chinese dignitaries visting at the entrance.

Eating

Wumaci Jie, east of Gulou Nanjie, turns into a huge night market in the evenings. A string of cheap restaurants can be found on the north side of Jingxuan Lu, opposite the Confucius Mansions Hotel in the south of town. Look out for sellers of *jiānbǐng guōzi* (煎饼裹子; Y2), a steaming crepe-like parcel of egg, vegetables and chilli sauce. The local variant of KFC is **CB** (China Best Chicken; cnr Gulou Nanjie & Jingxuan Lu), adjacent to a useful branch of Liánhuá, a well-stocked supermarket.

Post Hotel Restaurant (8 Gulou Beijie) Equipped with an English menu, this clean restaurant has pricey tourist items, such as Kong Family Beancurd (Y28), but go instead for the better-value *mápo dòufu* (麻婆豆腐; Y8) or *jiǎozi* (饺子) available in *zhūròu* (猪肉; pork, Y14 per *jīn*) and *yángròu* (羊肉; lamb, Y16 per *jīn*).

Shopping

Being a major tourist town, Qūfū is overrun with street-side vendors hawking pocket copies of the *Analects* (Lúnyǔ), Confucius biscuits, name chops (done in three minutes), effigies, ornaments, walking sticks, bows, amulets, pipes, fans, swords, and every type of souvenir associated with the great philosopher/sage. You can even get your name in Chinese carved on a grain of rice (Y15). Queli Jie is full with souvenir stalls.

Getting There & Away BUS

From the **bus station** (☎ 448 1554) in the south of town, buses connect with Tà'ān (Y14, one hour, every 30 minutes), Jǐ'nán (Y35, two hours, every 20 minutes), Yānzhōu (Y4, 30 minutes, every 15 minutes), Zōuchéng (Zōuxiàn; Y6, 35 minutes, every six minutes), Qīngdǎo (Y110, five hours, 8.30am and 4.30pm) and Xǐ'ān (Y150, 10 hours, 2pm). Left luggage is available at the station (Y4).

TRAIN

When a railway project for Qūfū was first tabled, the Kong family petitioned for a change

of routes, claiming that the trains would disturb Confucius' tomb. They won and the nearest tracks were routed to Yānzhōu, 16km west of Qūfū. Eventually another **train station** (☎ 442 1571) was constructed about 6km east of Qūfū, but only slow trains stop there, so it is more convenient to go to **Yānzhōu train station** (☎ 341 5239), on the line from Běijīng to Shànghǎi. Destinations include Běijīng (Y45 to Y81, five daily), Nánjīng (Y36, two daily), Jǐ'nán (Y12 to Y22, two hours, frequent), Qīngdǎo (Y38, 10 daily), Shànghǎi (Y53 to Y94) and Tiānjīn (Y36 to Y64). A taxi from Yānzhōu train station to Qūfū costs around Y40.

Getting Around

Minibuses to Yānzhōu train station (Y3.5, every 15 minutes, 5.30am to 5.30pm) leave from the bus station in the south of town. In the return direction, minibuses connect Yānzhōu bus station (walk straight ahead as you exit the train station, cross the parking lot and turn right; the bus station is after 50m on the left) with Qūfū (Y3.5, every 15 minutes, 5.30am to 5.30pm).

There are only two bus lines and service is not frequent. Probably most useful for travellers is bus 1, which travels along Gulou Beijie and Lindao Lu, connecting the bus station with the Confucian Forest. Bus 2 travels from east to west along Jingxuan Lu.

Pesky pedicabs (Y2 to Y3 to most sights within Qūfū) infest the streets, chasing all and sundry. Decorated tourist horse carts can take you on 30-minute tours (Y20 to the Confucius Forest from Queli Jie).

ZŌUCHÉNG 邹城

☎ 0537 / pop 191,654

Zōuchéng (also called Zōuxiàn, 邹县) is the home town of Mencius (372–289 BC), regarded as the first great Confucian philosopher. Far more relaxed than Qūfū, the town is less a carnival of easily excitable hawkers and bleating pedicab drivers.

A marvellous complex of heritage architecture, the **Mencius Temple** (孟庙; Mèng Miào; Miaoqian Lu; joint ticket with Mencius Mansions Y40; ☎ 8am-6pm) originally dates to the Song dynasty, but has been repeatedly damaged. A colossal complex ossified with age, overgrown with weeds and liberally scratched with the names of visitors, the temple badly needs a shot of restoration.

An otherworldly mood reigns: *bixi* glare out from ancient pavilions, gnarled, ancient cypresses soar aloft from the desiccated soil, birds squawk from the branches overhead while rows of stelae commemorate forgotten events. The **Hall of the Second Sage** (亚圣殿; Yàshèng Diàn) dates from 1121, a huge twin-roofed hall with external octagonal pillars. Ceremonial spots include the small Pool for Burning Funeral Orations, now scattered with cigarette butts, while a collection of headless statues at the rear testifies to China's often anti-Confucian mood swings.

The layout and buildings of the **Mencius Mansions** (孟府; Mèng Fǔ; Miaoqian Lu) alongside is far less ceremonial, with corridors, living quarters and a small garden of rose bushes adding a more human dimension. The Mansions are also home to the Center of Confucian Studies at Shandong University.

Zōuchéng is 23km south of Qūfū, and can easily be visited as a day trip from Qūfū. Buses run from Qūfū bus station (Y6, every six minutes, 35 minutes), dropping you off at the roundabout on Yishan Beilu (崂山北路) in Zōuchéng, from where you can take a motorised pedicab (Y10) or taxi (Y10) to the Mencius Temple and Mencius Mansions in the south of town. A taxi from Qūfū to Zōuchéng will cost around Y50 to Y60.

QINGDAO 青岛

☎ 0532 / pop 1.6 million

A breath of crisp sea air for anyone emerging from China's polluted urban interior, Qingdao is hardly old-school China – parts of town resemble Bavaria – but its effortless blend of German architecture and modern city planning puts Chinese white-tile towns to shame. Its German legacy more or less intact, Qingdao takes pride in its unique appearance: the Chinese call the town 'China's Switzerland'. The beaches may be overhyped, the local Putonghua carries a thick accent, and a metro system wouldn't go amiss, but the dilapidated charms of the hilly old town are captivating and the port city is hosting the sailing events of the 2008 Olympics, prompting a further investment gale into the prosperous town. Wander at will round cobbled, higgledy-piggledy alleys, poke around stone-clad Teutonic vestiges, quaff the famous local brew (Tsingtao) and ditch the diet: Qingdao has some of the best kebabs and seafood in north China.

History

Before catching the acquisitive eye of Kaiser Wilhelm II, Qingdao was an innocuous fishing village, although its excellent strategic location had not been lost on the Ming, who built a battery here. German forces wrested the port town from the Chinese in 1898 after the murder of two German missionaries, and Qingdao was ceded to Germany for 99 years. Under German rule the famous Tsingtao Brewery opened in 1903, electric lighting was installed, missions and a university were established, the railway to Jīnán was built, the Protestant church was handing out hymnals by 1908, a garrison of 2000 men was deployed, and a naval base established.

In 1914 the Japanese moved into town after the successful joint Anglo-Japanese naval bombardment of the port. Japan's position in Qingdao was strengthened by the Treaty of Versailles, and they held the city until 1922 when it was ceded back to the Kuomintang. The Japanese returned in 1938, after the start of the Sino-Japanese war, and occupied the town until defeated in 1945.

These days, Qingdao is the fourth-largest port in China and the second-largest city in the province of Shāndōng. Booming industry and an entrepreneurial spirit have successfully carried the city into the 21st century, making it a clean, modern and thriving town.

Orientation

Backing onto mountainous terrain to the northeast and hedged in between Jiaozhou Bay, Laoshan Bay and the Yellow Sea, Qingdao is divided into two distinct entities. The ragged old town (老城区; lǎochéng qū) in the east lays claim to Qingdao's antique charms, architectural streetscapes and the historic train station, while trendy bars and restaurants drag the white-collar in-crowd to the eastern business district, where Qingdao's best hotels tower over supermarkets and well-heeled shoppers.

Information

BOOKSHOPS

Xinhua Bookstore (Xīnhuá Shūdiàn; 10 Henan Lu) On the corner of Guangxi Lu and Henan Lu.

INTERNET ACCESS 网吧

Book City (Shū Chéng; 67 Xianggang Zhonglu) At the junction of Xianggang Zhonglu and Yan'erdao Lu.

How Do Internet Café (Hǎodú Wǎngbā; 2 Dagu Lu; per hr Y2; ☎ 6am-9pm)

MEDICAL SERVICES

People's Hospital (Rénmín Yīyuàn; ☎ 8285 2154; 17 Dexian Lu)

MONEY

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 66 & 68 Zhongshan Lu; ☎ 8am-5pm) On the corner of Zhongshan Lu and Feicheng Lu, housed in a building built in 1934, it offers foreign-currency exchange and the external ATM accepts foreign cards.

Bank of China (Yuyuan Dasha, 75 Xianggang Xilu)

External 24-hour ATM with international access.

Jusco (☎ 8.30am-10pm) On the ground floor of Jusco shopping centre. ATM accepts MasterCard, Visa, Cirrus, Amex and JCB.

Shangri-La Hotel (Xiānggélǐlǎ Dàjiǔdiàn; 9 Xianggang Zhonglu) ATM accepts MasterCard, Visa, Cirrus, JCB and Amex.

POST

Post office (yóujú; 51 Zhongshan Lu; ☎ 8.30am-6pm) Opposite the large Parkson building.

PUBLIC SECURITY BUREAU

PSB (Gōngānjú; ☎ 8579 2555, ext 2860; 272 Ningxia Lu; ☎ 9-11.30am & 1.30-4.30pm Mon-Fri) Inconveniently located in the east of town. Bus 301 goes from the train station and stops outside the terracotta-coloured building (stop 14). Another small branch of the PSB is at 1 Qufu Lu.

TOURIST INFORMATION

China International Travel Service (CITS; Zhōngguó Guóji Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 8389 2065/1713; Yuyuan Dasha, 73 Xianggang Xilu; ☎ 8am-5pm) Just west of Bank of China.

Qingdao Tourism Information & Service Station (Qīngdǎo Shì Lǚyóu Xìxún Fúwùzhàn) Small kiosks dotted around town, including at Zhan Bridge. Useful for maps (Y6), if little else.

Sights

Beyond Qingdao's fast-paced beaches and hilly parks, most sights are pleasantly squeezed into the old town, where no excuse is needed to saunter around, losing yourself down side streets and gawping at the astonishing local architectural vernacular. The Qingdao Municipal Government has put up plaques identifying notable historic buildings and sites.

Completed in 1934, the twin-spired **St Michael's Catholic Church** (Tiānzhǔ Jiàotáng; ☎ 8591 1400; 15 Zhejiang Lu; admission Y6; ☎ 8am-5pm Mon-Sat, noon-5pm Sun), up a steep hill off Zhongshan Lu, is an imposing edifice with a cross on each spire. The church was badly damaged during the Cultural Revolution and the crosses were torn off. God-fearing locals rescued them,

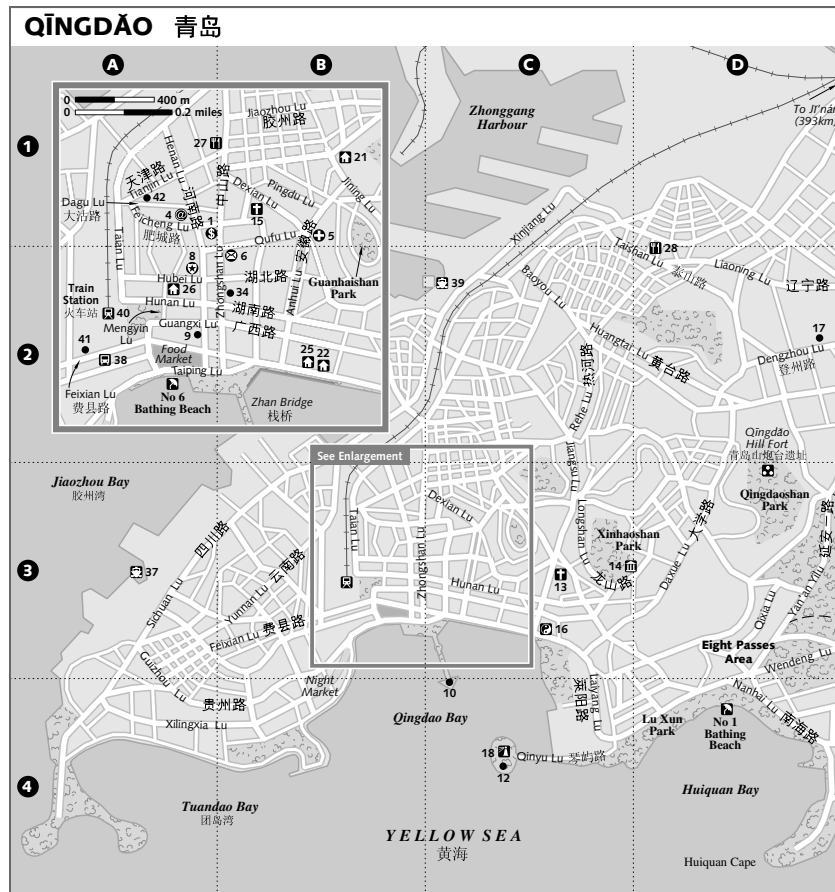
however, and buried them in the hills. The interior is splendid, with white walls, gold piping, replaced sections of stained glass all around and a marvellously painted apse. The baptismal font and statues have captions in English and Chinese, and there is a large portrait of St Teresa of Lisieux, although it's astonishing that you have to pay to enter a church. Vendors muster outside selling crucifixes and souvenirs and a daily **fish market**, featuring colourful exotica from the depths, sets up on Feicheng Lu, which leads up to the church from Zhongshan Lu. Put aside time to roam the area round here – a lattice of ancient hilly streets where old folk sit on wooden stools in decrepit doorways, playing chess and shooting the breeze. North of the church a slogan from the Cultural Revolution has survived above the doorway of 19 Pingdu Lu; it is very clear and no-one has bothered to paint over it. It says (in Chinese) 'Long live Chairman Mao'.

Zhongshan Lu itself has numerous **dried fish shops** worth browsing around (eg at 39 Zhongshan Lu).

Located on Jiangsu Lu, a street notable for its German architecture, the **Protestant Church** (Jīdū Jiàotáng; 15 Jiangsu Lu; admission Y3; ☎ 8.30am-5pm, weekend services) was designed by Curt Rothkegel and built in 1908. The interior is simple and Lutheran in its sparseness, apart from some delightful carvings on the pillar cornices. You can climb up to inspect the mechanism of the clock (Bockenem 1909) and views out over the bay. It is also well worth wandering along nearby Daxue Lu for a marvellous scenic view of old German Qingdao.

To the east of Xinhaoshan Park remains one of Qingdao's most interesting pieces of German architecture, **Qingdao Ying Bīngguān** (Qīngdǎo Yīng Hotel; admission Y15; ☎ 8.30am-5pm), the former German governor's residence and a replica of a German palace (now a museum). Built in 1903, it is said to have cost 2,450,000 taels of silver. When Kaiser Wilhelm II got the bill, he immediately recalled the extravagant governor and sacked him. In 1957 Chairman Mao stayed here with his wife and kids on holiday.

The restored **Tianhou Temple** (Tiānhòu Gōng; 19 Taiping Lu; admission Y8; ☎ 8am-6pm) is a small temple dedicated to Tianhou (Heaven Queen), Goddess of the Sea and protector of sailors, also known as Mazu and Niangniang. The main hall contains a colourful statue of Tianhou, flanked by two figures and a pair of fearsome guardians. Other halls include the Dragon



King Hall (龙王殿; Lóngwáng Diàn; where in front of the Dragon King lies a splayed pig and a shrine to the God of Wealth).

The castle-like villa of **Huāshì Lóu** (Huashi Bldg; 18 Huanghai Lu; admission ¥5; ☎ 7.30am-7pm) was originally the home of a Russian aristocrat, and later the German governor's retreat for fishing and hunting. The Chinese call it the 'Chiang Kaishek Building' as the generalissimo secretly stayed here in 1947.

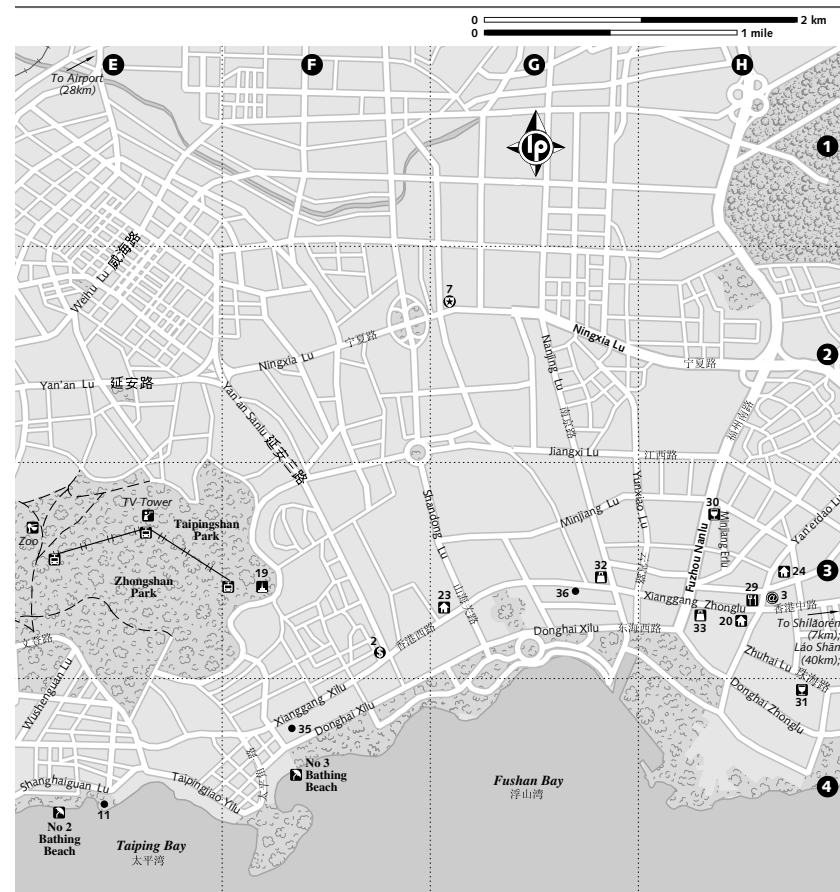
Poking like a lollipop into Qingdao Bay south of No 6 Bathing Beach and dominated by its white German-built lighthouse, the **Little Qingdao** (Xiǎo Qīngdǎo; ☎ 8286 3944; 8 Qinyu Lu; admission ¥15; ☎ 7.30am-6.30pm) peninsula is excellent for throwing off the crowds battling it out on the beaches. Despite the name –

'Little Green Island' – it's actually a peninsula, lashed to the shore by a slender sandbar (called Qinyu Lu). Set your alarm to catch early morning vistas of the hazy bay and the town coming to life from the promontory's leafy park.

Established in 1903 by the beer-loving Germans, the **Tsingtao Brewery** (Qīngdǎo Pījiǔchǎng; ☎ 8383 3437; 56 Dengzhou Lu; admission ¥30; ☎ 9am-4.30pm) makes the finest brew in China with the mineral waters of nearby Láo Shān. Phone ahead to book a tour to examine the brewery, its fixtures and props.

BEACHES

Qīngdǎo is famed for its six beaches, which are pleasant enough, but don't go expecting



Bondi Beach. Chinese beach culture is low-key and quite tentative, although the main swimming season (June to September) sees hordes of sun seekers fighting for towel space. Shark nets, lifeguards, lifeboat patrols and medical stations are at hand.

It comes as little surprise that Qīngdǎo's best beach is draped along the shore way off in the east of town, far from the shrieking rubber-ring/buckets-and-spade crowd. South of the dramatic mountain bulk of Fushan, **Shílǎorén** (石老人; Donghai Donglu; admission free; ☎ all day) is a gorgeous 2.5km-long strip of clean sand and seawater-smoothed seashells, occasionally engulfed in banks of mist pouring in from offshore. Early morning runs here are divine – and yours may be the only

set of footprints on the sand. To get here, take bus 317 from Taipingjiao (Y2) or hop in a taxi.

Close to the train station is the **No 6 Bathing Beach**, neighbouring **Zhàn Qiáo** (Zhan Bridge), a pier that reaches out into the bay and is tipped with the eight-sided **Huilan Pavilion** (Huǐlán Gé).

The sand of **No 1 Bathing Beach** is coarse-grained, engulfed in seaweed, and bordered by concrete beach huts and bizarre statues of dolphins. The nearby **Eight Passes Area** (八大关; Bādàguān) is well known for its sanatoriums and exclusive guesthouses. The spas are scattered in lush wooded zones off the coast, and each street is lined with a different tree or flower, including maple, myrtle, peach,

INFORMATION		Tsingtao Brewery		DRINKING ☑	
Bank of China 中国银行	1 A1	青岛啤酒厂	17 D2	Corner Jazz Club	
Bank of China 中国银行	2 F3	Xiǎo Qīng Dǎo Lighthouse		街角爵士吧	30 H3
Book City 书城	3 H3	小青岛灯塔	18 C4	Lennon Bar 列侬餐吧	31 H4
CITS 中国国际旅行社	(see 2)	Zhanshan Temple 湛山寺	19 F3		
How Do Internet Café					
好读网吧	4 A1	SLEEPING ☑			
Jusco 佳世客	(see 33)	Crowne Plaza		Carrefour 家乐福	32 G3
People's Hospital 人民医院	5 B1	青岛颐中皇冠假日酒店	20 H3	Jusco 佳世客	33 H3
Post Office 邮局	6 B2	Kaiyue Hostelling International			
PSB 公安局	7 G2	凯悦国际青年旅馆	21 B1	SHOPPING ☑	
PSB 公安局	8 A2	Oceanwide Elite Hotel		Carrefour 家乐福	32 G3
Shangri-La Hotel		泛海名人酒店	22 B2	Jusco 佳世客	33 H3
香格里拉大酒店	(see 23)	Shangri-La Hotel		TRANSPORT	
Xinhua Bookstore 新华书店	9 A2	香格里拉大酒店	23 G3	CAAC 中国民航	34 B2
		Youth Hostel		China Southern	
		背包客青年旅馆	24 H3	中国南方航空公司	35 F4
		Zhanqiao Hotel 栈桥宾馆	25 B2	Dragonair 港龙航空	36 G3
		Zhanying Hotel 栈盈宾馆	26 A2	Korean Air 大韩航空	(see 35)
				Local Ferry 青岛轮渡站	37 A3
		EATING ☑		Long-Distance Bus Station	
		Ajisen Ramen 味千拉面	(see 32)	长途汽车站	38 A2
		Chūnhélóu 春和楼饭店	27 A1	Passenger Ferry Terminal	
		Meida'er Barbecue Restaurant		青岛港客运站	39 C2
		美达尔烤肉店	28 D2	Railway Hotel	40 A2
		Xiao Wangfu Roast Duck		Shandong Airlines	
		Restaurant 小王府烤鸭店	29 H3	山东航空公司	(see 40)
				Train Ticket Office	
				青岛火车站便捷售票处	41 A2
				Train Ticket Office	
				青岛火车站航空售票处	42 A1

snow pine or crab apple. This is a lovely area in which to stroll.

Heading out of Eight Passes Area, Nos 2 and 3 Bathing Beaches are just east, and the villas lining the headlands are quite exquisite. **No 2 Bathing Beach** is cleaner, quieter and more sheltered than No 1 Bathing Beach.

About 30 minutes by boat from Qingdao and a further 30 minutes by bus is the beach of **Huáng Dǎo** (黄岛; Yellow Island), which is quieter and cleaner than Qingdao's beaches. The ferry (Y15) leaves from the Qingdao local ferry terminal (Qingdao *lúndùzhàn*), to the west of the train station. The first departure is at 6.30am, with the final boat returning at 9pm. Once you reach the island, take bus 1 to its terminus (Y2.50).

PARKS

The charm of small **Guanhaishan Park** (Guānhǎishān Gōngyuán) lies in finding it: the route winds up a small hill through restful lanes; the park is at the top. Although small, the park was used as a golf course by the Germans.

Down the hill and to the east is **Xinhaoshan Park** (信号山公园; Xīnhàoshān Gōngyuán; admission Y15), the summit of which is capped by the caruncular towers known as the *móu lóu* (mushroom buildings).

Zhongshan Park (中山公园; Zhōngshān Gōngyuán; admission Y3) covers a vast 80 hectares, and in springtime is a heavily wooded profusion of flowering shrubs and plants. Buses 25 and 26 travel to the park.

The mountainous area northeast of Zhongshan Park is called **Taipingshan Park** (太平山公园; Tàipíngshān Gōngyuán), an area of walking paths, pavilions and the best spot in town for hiking. In the centre of the park is the TV Tower (Diànshì Tǎ), which has an express lift up to fabulous views of the city (Y30). You can reach the tower via cable car (Y20). Also within the park is Qingdao's largest temple, **Zhanshan Temple** (Zhànshān Sì; admission Y5; ☎ 8.30am-4.30pm). The temple has a number of dramatic sandalwood Buddhas covered in gold foil.

Festivals & Events

The summer months see Qingdao overrun with tourists, particularly in the second and third weeks of July, when the **annual trade fair** and **ocean festival** is held. Another festival to look out for is the **beer festival** in August/September. Gardeners may be interested to note that Qingdao's **radish festival** is in February, the **cherry festival** in May and the **grape festival** in September (Qingdao is a major producer of wine).

Sleeping BUDGET

All prices quoted are for the high season; bargain during the low season.

Kaiyue Hostelling International (Kǎiyuè Guójí Qīngnián Lǚguǎn; ☎ 8284 5450; 31 Jining Lu; 济宁路31号; dm from Y35, d Y180) Handily located a short walk from the train station on a road off Zhongshan Lu in the old town.

Youth Hostel (Bēibāokè Qīngnián Lǚguǎn; ☎ 8592 2506; 17 Yan'erdào Lu; 燕尔岛路17号; dm from Y48, d Y130) Located near Jusco and Carrefour and within walking distance of the Minjiang Lu bar street in the commercial east of town. Go through the gate, don't go up the steps; under 26s get Y8 off.

Zhanying Hotel (Zhànyíng Bīnguǎn; ☎ 8296 1980; 11 Mengyin Lu; 蒙阴路11号; d Y80; ☎) Conveniently located a few minutes' walk from the train station just south of a marvellous old German building (now a PSB office) and at the heart of the old town, this small hotel has simple, good-value rooms that enjoy frequent discounting during the nonsummer slack period. Phoning ahead is advised; push for low season discounts.

MIDRANGE

Railway Hotel (Tiědào Dàshà; ☎ 8606 7888; fax 8286 0497; 2 Tai'an Lu; 泰安路2号; d/q/ste Y280/480/680; ☎) Located at the train station, the perfectly reasonable high-rise Railway Hotel is well located in the old part of town, with clean rooms, polite service and an external elevator. Discounts are not uncommon, even during summer months – and doubles can be netted for around Y160.

Zhanqiao Hotel (Zhànqiáo Bīnguǎn; ☎ 8288 8666; fax 8287 0936; 31 Taiping Lu; 太平路31号; non-seaview d Y298-498, seaview d Y698; ☎) A downtown fixture a few minutes' walk west of Qingdao's Tianhou Temple, this seaboard hotel is rather somnolent with slow-moving staff. The hotel hides its cheaper doubles round the side and back, but the pricier rooms facing Qingdao's surf are what staying here is all about. In former times it was the Prince Heinrich Hotel; Sun Yatsen stayed here in 1912 and is commemorated by a bust outside.

TOP END

Oceanwide Elite Hotel (Fānhǎi Mínggrén Jiǔdiàn; ☎ 8288 6699; fax 8289 1388; 29 Taiping Lu; 太平路29号; non-seaview d Y960, seaview d Y1160, ste Y2360; ☎) This five-floor, low-rise, four-star hotel benefits

from a superb location overlooking Qingdao Bay (as long as you opt for the pricier seaview rooms) in the old part of town.

Crowne Plaza (Qīngdǎo Yízhōng Huángguān Jiàri Jiǔdiàn; ☎ 8571 8888; www.sixcontinentshotels.com; 76 Xianggang Zhonglu; 香港中路76号; d/ste Y1162/2324; ☎) A glittering 38-floor tower rising above Qingdao's crackling commercial district, you won't be bumping into much old-town charm here, but business travellers can content themselves instead with the warm honey-coloured hues of the splendid foyer, the fully equipped rooms, the indoor pool, a choice of five restaurants and professional standards of service. Free, well-produced English maps of Qingdao are provided at the concierge desk.

Shangri-La Hotel (Xiānggēllǐ Dàjiǔdiàn; ☎ 8388 3838; www.shangri-la.com; 9 Xianggang Zhonglu; 香港中路9号; s/d US\$175/195, 15% service charge; ☎) In Qingdao's commercial district in the east of town, the excellent Shangri-La delivers all the high-quality business hallmarks of the chain, with plush rooms and attentive service.

Eating

Qingdao is a cauldron of good food. The waterfront area is brimming with restaurants, from No 6 Bathing Beach almost all the way to No 1 Bathing Beach. For more upmarket and varied dining options, head to the commercial district in the east of town, and especially the bars and restaurants along Yunxiao Lu and Minjiang Lu. The lively street Zhongyuan Meishi Jie is packed with seafood restaurants; the entrance is off Xianggang Zhonglu, east of Carrefour.

Chūnhélóu (Chūnhélóu Fàndiàn; ☎ 8282 4346; 146 Zhongshan Lu; meals from Y20; ☎ 6am-10pm) Dating back to 1891, this unremarkable-looking restaurant remains very popular. Downstairs is a busy help-yourself-to-as-much-as-you-can-eat type diner, with a smarter option upstairs.

Meida'er Barbecue Restaurant (Měidǎ'èr Shāokǎodiàn; ☎ 8382 0368; Taishan Lu; lamb kebab Y1.50, meals Y30; ☎ 10am-2am) Sooner or later, Qingdao's legendary kebabs will require your undivided attention, and where better to start than on Taishan Lu – the local Barbecue Street. Allow this trusty chain restaurant to thrust a thirst-quenching beer into one hand and scrummy lamb (羊肉串; yángròu chuàn), pork (猪肉串; zhūròu chuàn) or seafood kebabs into the other.

Ajisen Ramen (Wēiqiān Lāmìàn; ☎ 8580 6375; 1st fl, Carrefour, 21 Xianggang Zhonglu; meals Y30; ☎ 8.30am-11pm)

A chain that has the nation hopping must be doing something right. Ajisen Ramen's noodles – steaming blasts of chilli-infused flavour ferried to the table by black-attired staff – truly hit the spot. Flesh the meal out further with fried dumplings (Y8), potato balls (Y6) or deep-fried shrimp (Y14). Pay as you order.

Xiao Wangfu Roast Duck Restaurant (Xiǎo Wángfū Kǎoyādiàn; ☎ 8575 0208; 20 Yan'er Dao; whole roast duck Y68; ☎ 9am–10pm) Excellently located just north of the Crowne Plaza, this small and homely corner eatery is easily spotted for its traditional portico, red lanterns and white tablecloths drying outside. The duck is recommended and there's a range of pre-prepared chilled dishes just inside the door that makes ordering a breeze – just point, take your seat with a bottle of Tsingtao stout (Y20) and wait.

Drinking

Qīngdǎo's bars concentrate within the commercial and business district in the east of town. Check www.myredstar.com for current listings. You can buy Tsingtao beer by the bag from numerous shops, but pouring it requires skill.

Corner Jazz Club (Jiǎojiāo Juéshì Bā; ☎ 8575 8560; 153 Minjiang Lu) Its candlelit tables and mezzanine attracting a youngish expat and local crowd, this spacious and atmospheric bar gets Qīngdǎo fingers snapping to motley live sounds every Tuesday (8.30pm to 10.30pm). Staff speak excellent English and manage a well-stocked bar, while the paraphernalia extends to table football and darts.

Lennon Bar (Liènnóng Cǎnbā; ☎ 8589 3899; 20 Zhuhai Lu) Vast two-floor temple to Beatles culture with a loyal following, a good atmosphere and a lived-in feel. There's also table football, a pool table and live music (on Thursday).

Babyface Qingdao (☎ 8596 9898; 71 Xianggang Zhonglu) The coolest and most stylish club in town, with top-flight DJs, extremely loud music and a cross-section of Qīngdǎo's best-dressed pretty young things.

Shopping

In the old town, Zhongshan Lu is dotted with bargain shops, chain stores, clothing retailers, outlets selling dried fish produce and distressed-looking, empty towers (offices worth their salt have all moved east). A sprawl of straw hats, clothes, shoes, bags and jewellery, Liaocheng Road Market is the

spot for bargain local produce. In the superstore category, **Jusco** (Jiǎshìkē; ☎ 9am–11pm), near the southeast corner of Fuzhou Nanlu and Xianggang Zhonglu, and **Carrefour** (Jiǎlèfú; ☎ 8.30am–10pm), on the northwest corner of Nanjing Lu and Xianggang Zhonglu, see the with shoppers in the commercial eastern district.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There are flights to most large cities in China, including daily services to Běijīng (Y700) and Shànghǎi (Y760) and five flights a week to Hong Kong (Y2400). International flights include daily flights to Seoul, along with flights to Osaka and Fukuoka in Japan. Direct flights to Frankfurt are planned. For flight information call **Liuting International Airport** (☎ 8471 5139).

Tickets can be purchased at the following: **CAAC** (Zhōngguó Mínháng) Zhongshan Lu (☎ 8289 5577; 29 Zhongshan Lu); Xianggang Lu (☎ 24hr ticketing 8577 5555; 30 Xianggang Lu)

China Southern (Zhōngguó Náfāng Hángkōng Gōngsī; ☎ 8389 6148; Haitian Hotel, 48 Xianggang Xilu)

Dragonair (Gānglóng Hángkōng; ☎ 8577 6110; Hotel Equatorial, 28 Xianggang Zhonglu; ☎ 9am–5pm Mon–Sat)

Korean Air (Dàhán Hángkōng; ☎ 8387 0088; Haitian Hotel, 48 Xianggang Xilu)

Shandong Airlines (Shāndōng Hángkōng; ☎ 8288 9160, 286 5870; train station ticket office) It also sells Yántái to Dàlián boat tickets.

BOAT

Ferries to other Chinese ports no longer depart from Qīngdǎo. International boats depart from the **passenger ferry terminal** (Qīngdǎogǎng Keyùnzhan; ☎ 8282 5001; 6 Xinjiang Lu) for both Incheon (from Y750, 16 hours, Monday, Wednesday and Friday) and Gunsun (Y700, 19 hours, Monday, Wednesday and Saturday) in South Korea and Shimonoseki (Y1200, 36 hours, Monday, Thursday and Saturday) in Japan. To reach Dàlián by boat, you will have to go from Yántái (opposite) or Wēihǎi (p235), but tickets can be purchased from the Shandong Airlines ticket office.

BUS

Both buses and minibuses depart from the area next to the massive Hualian Building, south of the train station. The **ticket offices** (☎ 8267 6842) are in the small pastel-coloured huts in the bus station.

There are buses departing for Wēihǎi (Y42.50, every 20 minutes, 6am to 6pm), Yántái (Y31, every 15 minutes, 6.30am to 5.30pm) and Jǐ'nán (Y50, every 50 minutes, 8.50am to 4pm). There are also daily buses to Běijīng (Y219, 13 hours, 7.30pm), Hángzhōu (Y221, 20 hours, 3.50pm), Héféi (Y128, 9am and 3.30pm) and Shànghǎi (Y201, 18 hours, 10.30am and afternoon departures).

TRAIN

All trains from Qīngdǎo go through Jǐ'nán, except the direct Qīngdǎo to Yántái and Wēihǎi trains. There are two trains a day to Yántái (hard seat Y22, four hours), several to Wēihǎi (Y12, four to six hours) and regular services to Jǐ'nán (Y55, four to six hours). There are two express trains daily to Běijīng (Y215, 10 hours), and trains to Shànghǎi (Y290, 15 hours, 1.58pm), Tà'ān (hard seat Y34, five hours) and Zhèngzhōu (Y120, 3.05pm).

Apart from at the marvellous ticket office at the train station – German-built with a clock tower, red tiles and practically a sight in itself – train (and air) tickets can be bought for a service charge at several places around town, including a useful **ticket office** (Qīngdǎo Huòchēzhàn Biānjié Shòupǎochū; Feixian Lu; ☎ 24hr) on the north side of Feixian Lu, just round the corner from the train station.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Qīngdǎo's sparkling **Liuting International Airport** (☎ 8471 5139) is 30km north of the city. Taxi drivers should ask between Y90 and Y100 to drive into town. Buses leave every 30 minutes from the CAAC office between 6am and 6pm (Y10).

BUS

Most transport needs can be catered for by the bus 6 route, which starts at the northern end of Zhongshan Lu, runs along it to within a few blocks of the train station and then goes east to the area above No 3 Bathing Beach. Bus 26 from the train station runs along the coast and past Zhongshan Park before heading north at the end of No 3 Bathing Beach. Minibuses also follow these routes (Y2).

TAXI

Flag fall is Y7 for the first 3km and then Y1.50 per kilometre thereafter.

LÁO SHĀN 崂山

This **mountain** (admission Y50), 40km east of Qīngdǎo, is a famous Taoist retreat, with temples, waterfalls and secluded walking trails. Covering some 400 sq km, this is where Láo Shān mineral water starts its life. The mountain is associated with Taoist legend and myth, with the central attraction being the Song dynasty **Great Purity Palace** (太清宫; Tàiqīng Gōng; admission Y10). The first Song emperor established the palace as a place to perform Taoist rites to save the souls of the dead. From the Great Purity Palace, there are paths leading to the summit of Láo Shān.

The cable car up the first half of the mountain costs Y30 (Y50 return) and a ride up the second half costs Y20. From Qīngdǎo, bus 304 runs to Láo Shān (Y6.50, one to two hours). Buses can be picked up at the Zhàn Qiáo stop by No 6 Bathing Beach from around 6.30am; get off at the entrance to the first cable car up Láo Shān. Returning, the last bus leaves Láo Shān at 5pm.

Four buses to Láo Shān (Y25 return) ply the streets of Qīngdǎo from 6am onwards, but visit at least four other 'sights' on the way to the mountain.

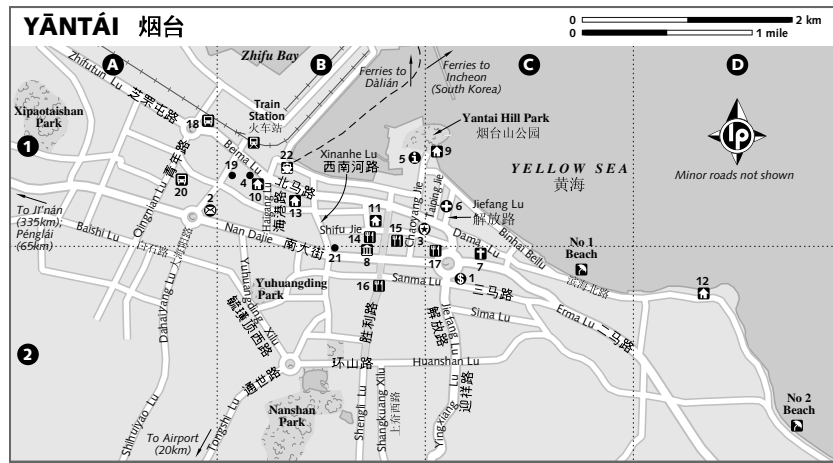
YĀNTÁI 烟台

☎ 0535 / pop 652,000

A prosperous ice-free port on the northern coast of the Shāndōng peninsula, Yántái sees a steady stream of visitors from Qīngdǎo, some destined by ferry to Dàlián (p363), others scampering west along the coastline to the pavilion at Pénglái. Good for a day or two, the town makes for a relaxed sojourn, with a sprinkling of foreign concession architecture, popular beaches, a growing bar scene and a tempting panoply of pleasant restaurants.

History

Starting life as a defence outpost and fishing village, Yántái's name literally means 'Smoke Terrace'; wolf-dung fires were lit on the headland during the Ming dynasty to warn fishing fleets of approaching pirates. Its anonymity abruptly ended in the late 19th century when the Qing government, reeling from defeat in the Opium War, handed Yántái to the British who established a treaty port here, calling it Chefoo (Zhifu). Several nations, Japan and the USA among them, had trading establishments here and the town became something of a resort area.



Orientation

The train and bus stations are in the west of town near the harbour, where budget hotels tend to congregate. The beaches are in the east of town, while most of the sights, treaty port buildings and restaurants are in the central districts.

Information

Several internet cafés can be found inside Times Sq (Shidài Guǎngchǎng), west of the International Seaman's Club.

Bank of China (Zhōngguó Yínháng; 166 Jiefang Lu) ATM accepts Visa, MasterCard, JCB and Amex.

Chunhehang Pharmacy (Chūnhéhéng Yàotáng; Beima Lu) Next to the International Seaman's Club.

Post office (yóujú; Diànxìn Dàlóu; cnr Nan Dajie & Dahaiyang Lu)

Public Security Bureau (PSB; Gōngānjú; ☎ 653 5621; 78 Shifu Jie; ☎ 8am-5.30pm Mon-Sat) On the corner of Chaoyang Jie. The office for foreigners is on the 6th floor.

Yantai Tourist Information & Service Center (Yāntáishì Lǚyóu Fúwù Zhōngxīn; ☎ 663 3222; 32 Hai'an Lu) Next to Yantai Hill Park gate, at north end of Chaoyang Jie.

Yantaishan Hospital (Yāntáishān Yīyuàn; ☎ 622 4411; 91 Jiefang Lu)

Sights

YANTAI HILL PARK 烟台山公园

This absorbing park (Yāntáishān Gōngyuán; admission Y20; ☎ 6.30am-7.30pm summer, 7am-5.30pm winter) is a veritable museum of well-preserved Western treaty port architecture. Containing a model ship exhibition, the **Former American Consulate**

Building retains some original interior features. Nearby, the former **Yantai Union Church** dates from 1875, although it was later rebuilt. The **Former British Consulate** building houses a China Fossils Exhibition and the **British Consulate Annexe** looks out onto an attractive English garden. In the north of the park, the **Former Danish Consulate** is a crenellated structure dating from 1890, decorated on the outside with 'brutalism granite', or so the blurb says. Wander in and walk around and up the staircase, perusing the period furniture, the laid-out kitchen and dining room. At the top of the hill is the Ming dynasty **Dragon King Temple**, which once found service as a military headquarters for French troops in 1860 and is now home once again to a statue of the Dragon King himself. The wolf-dung fires were burned from the **smoke terrace** above, dating from the reign of Hongwu; climb up for views (binoculars Y2) out to sea and the island of Zhifu (Chefoo). In the west of the park, the 1930s-built **Japanese Consulate** is a typically austere brick lump, equipped with a 'torture inquisition room'.

YANTAI MUSEUM 烟台博物馆

The **Yantai Museum** (Yāntái Bówùguǎn; 257 Nan Dajie; admission Y10; ☎ 9am-noon & 1-4.30pm) is located within a fabulous guildhall built by merchants and sailors of Fújiàn as a place of worship to Tianhou (Heaven Queen), Goddess of the Sea and protector of sailors.

The main hall of the museum is known as the **Hall of Heavenly Goddess**, designed and

INFORMATION		SLEEPING	
Bank of China 中国银行.....1	C2	Golden Gulf Hotel 金海湾酒店.....9	C1
Chunhehang Pharmacy		International Seaman's Super 8	
春鹤恒药堂.....(see 10)		Hotel 海员速八宾馆.....10	B1
Post Office 电信大楼.....2	A1	Shandong Pacific Hotel	
PSB 公安局.....3	B1	山东太平洋大酒店.....11	B1
Times Square 时代广场.....4	B1	Yantai Marina Hotel	
Yantai Tourist Information & Service		烟台假日酒店.....12	D2
Center 烟台市旅游服务中心.....5	B1	Yinpeng Hotel 银鹏宾馆.....13	B1
Yantaishan Hospital			
烟台山医院.....6	C1	EATING	
		Catholic Church 天主教堂.....7	C2
		Cháotiānjiāo 朝天椒.....14	B1
		Háojiāxiāng 豪佳香.....15	B1
		Night Market.....16	B2
		Sculpting in Time 雕刻时光.....17	C2
		TRANSPORT	
		Beima Lu Bus Station	
		北马路汽车站.....18	A1
		CAAC 中国民航.....19	B1
		Long-Distance Bus Station	
		长途汽车站.....20	A1
		Shandong Airlines	
		山东航空公司.....21	B2
		Yantai Passenger Ferry Terminal	
		烟台港客运站.....22	B1

finished in Guǎngzhōu, and then shipped to Yāntái for assembly. Beyond the hall, at the centre of the courtyard, is the museum's most spectacular sight: a brightly and intricately decorated gate. Supported by 14 pillars, the portal is a collage of hundreds of carved and painted figures, flowers, beasts, phoenixes and animals. The carvings depict battle scenes and folk stories, including *The Eight Immortals Crossing the Sea*.

At the southern end of the museum is a theatrical stage that was first made in Fújiàn and then shipped to Yāntái. Apparently Tianhou wasn't particularly fond of that stage, as it was lost at sea during transportation and had to be reconstructed in Yāntái. The stage continues to be used for performances to celebrate Tianhou's birthday (see Mazu's Birthday, p945) and anniversary of deification.

OTHER SIGHTS

Of Yāntái's two beaches, **No 1 Beach** (Diyī Hāishuǐ Yùchǎng), a long stretch of soft sand along a calm bay area is superior to **No 2 Beach** (Dìèr Hāishuǐ Yùchǎng), which is less crowded, but more polluted. Both beaches can be reached by bus 17.

On Dama Lu, west of No 1 Beach, is a small, active **Catholic Church** (天主教堂; Tiānzhǔ Jiàotáng) built during treaty port days. The church has a wooden ceiling, pictures of the Stations of the Cross and a gallery.

Sleeping BUDGET

International Seaman's Super 8 Hotel (Hǎiyuán Sùbā Bīnguǎn; ☎ 669 0909; fax 669 0606; 68 Beima Lu; 北马路68号; s/d/ste Y168/198/380; ☎) Across from the train station, the able-bodied Seaman has been fed a shot of rum by the Super 8 group, emerging with newly renovated rooms and

new management, although doubles facing the station can be noisy.

Yinpeng Hotel (Yīnpéng Bīnguǎn; ☎ 626 0655; fax 626 0755; 59 Beima Lu; 北马路59号; s/tr Y180/260, d/Y196-220; ☎) This two-star hotel next to a UBC Coffee outlet is small but well kept, with clean rooms with tiled floors. There's no lift, so rooms get cheaper the higher you climb; low-season discounts can be easy to obtain.

MIDRANGE

Shandong Pacific Hotel (Shāndōng Tàipíngyáng Dàjiùdiàn; ☎ 658 8866; fax 621 5204; 74 Shifu Jie; 市府街74号; s & t Y660-880; ☎) This central four-star hotel (white tile high-rise with an iridescent stainless-steel lobby portico) is an above average choice. Rooms have water coolers, extra large TV sets and particularly clean bathrooms. Rooms to the north have sea views, and there's a choice of Japanese, Korean and Western dining options. Facilities include a swimming pool, bowling and billiards.

Golden Gulf Hotel (Jīnhǎiwān Jiùdiàn; ☎ 663 6999; fax 663 2699; 34 Hai'an Lu; 海安路34号; d/Y60-960; ☎) Located near Yantai Hill Park, this six-floor hotel is a clean place offering homy rooms equipped with water cooler, internet access and fridge. The hotel's Golden Gulf Grill serves steaks and meat grills.

TOP END

Yantai Marina Hotel (Yāntái Jiàn Jiùdiàn; ☎ 666 9999; marinaht@public.ytptt.sd.cn; 128 Binhai Beilu; 滨海北路128号; non-seaview d/ste Y780/1380, seaview d/ste Y880/1980; ☎) Rooms at this 25-floor Chinese-style hotel are clean, spacious and recently restored, with excellent views from the seaview rooms. A revolving restaurant is on the 25th floor and there's a 2.8 tonne stone ball and a statue of Milefo in the lobby. Take a trip in the external glass elevator for fantastic views over the bay.

Eating

In the summer months a night market sets up along Shengli Lu, good for cheap kebabs and beer.

For spicy food, bundle along to Taohua Jie, a street stuffed with Sichuan restaurants directly north of Yantai Museum.

Cháotiānjiào (☎ 623 0966; 71 Taohua Jie; meals Y25) This small eatery on Taohua Jie (there are two branches, one on either side of the road) has no English menu, but be sure to try the excellent and filling *suāncài yú* (酸菜鱼; fish and pickled cabbage soup, small Y15, big Y20). The *huíguōròu* (回锅肉; twice cooked pork, Y8) is scrumptious, and the *málàjī* (麻辣鸡; spicy chicken, small Y10, big Y15) hot and tasty.

Háojiāxiāng (☎ 662 7588; 51 Shifu Jie; set meals Y25) This lively and popular restaurant serves excellent steaks, ribs and grills. Sit down in the soft sofa seats and try the tasty *hēijiāo zhūpái* (黑椒猪排; black pepper pork chops, Y30).

Sculpting in Time (Diāokè Shíguāng; ☎ 622 1979; 17-18 Shifu Jie; meals Y30; ☎ 10.30am-midnight) This little bar-restaurant has character, with alcoves and small side rooms with saloon-style swing doors and walls hung with photos of film stars and luminaries. On the menu are pizza and steaks, and there's live music nightly. Tsingtao beer will set you back Y10.

Drinking

The section of Chaoyang Jie north of Beima Lu has a good selection of bars and clubs.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Book tickets at the **CAAC office** (Zhōngguó Mínháng; ☎ 624 5596; 6 Dahaiyang Lu; ☎ 8am-6pm) or at **Shandong Airlines** (Shāndōng Hángkōng; ☎ 658 4143; 236 Nan Dajie; ☎ 8am-6pm).

There are flights to Hong Kong (Y1600, three hours, twice weekly), daily flights to Běijīng (Y770, one hour, four daily) and Shànghǎi (Y900, 1½ hours, three daily), twice-weekly flights to Guǎngzhōu (Y1930, three hours), daily flights to Seoul (Y1465) and twice-weekly flights to Osaka (Y1980).

BOAT

You can purchase tickets for express boats to Dàlián (Y220, 3½ hours, 8.30am, 10am and 1pm) at the **Yantai passenger ferry terminal** (Yántáigǎng Kèyùn Zhàn; ☎ 674 1774; 155 Beima Lu) or from the numerous ticket offices east of the

train station; tickets can only be purchased on the day of travel. There are also numerous slow boats departing daily for Dàlián (seat/bed Y80/90, 2nd class Y220, seven hours) from 9am. Boats to Incheon (from Y960, roughly 16 hours, 5.30pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday) in South Korea also leave from the Yantai terminal.

BUS

Buses depart from outside the train station for Běijīng (sleeper Y150, 15 hours, several daily), Jǐ'nán (Y66, six hours, every 40 minutes), Wēihǎi (Y20, one hour) and other destinations. From the **long-distance bus station** (chángtú qìchēzhàn; Qingnian Lu) there are buses to numerous destinations, including Jǐ'nán (Y98, every 50 minutes), Pénglái (Y15, 1½ hours, every 30 minutes), Qīngdǎo (Y60, every 25 minutes) and Wēihǎi (Y17, every 30 minutes). Sleeper buses also run to destinations further afield, including Shànghǎi (Y193, 16 hours, 7.15am) and Tiānjīn (Y113, 15 hours, twice daily).

Minibuses to Pénglái (Y15, 1½ hours, 5.30am to 6pm) depart every 15 to 20 minutes from the **Beima Lu bus station** (cnr Beima Lu & Qingnian Lu).

TRAIN

Yántái **train station** (☎ 9510 5175) has trains to Běijīng (Y249, 15 hours, daily), Jǐ'nán (Y38, eight hours, several per day), Qīngdǎo (Y22, four hours, several per day), Shànghǎi (Y190, 20 hours, twice daily) and Xī'ān (Y210, 15 hours, twice daily).

Getting Around

Yantai Airport (☎ 624 1330) is approximately 20km south of town. Airport buses (Y10, 30 minutes) depart from the CAAC office around two hours before flights; a taxi will cost around Y40 to Y50.

Bus 3 does a loop of town, running past the train station, south down Xinanhe Lu and west on Yuhuangding Xilu. Bus 17 runs between the two beaches. Taxi flag fall is Y5, and Y1.30 per kilometre thereafter.

PÉNGLÁI 蓬莱

☎ 0535

About 65km northwest of Yántái, the 1000-year-old **Penglai Pavilion** (蓬萊閣; Pénglái Gé; ☎ 564 8106; admission Y70; ☎ 7am-6.30pm summer, 8am-5pm winter) is closely entwined in Chinese mythology with the legend of the Eight Immortals

Crossing the Sea. Perched on a cliff top overlooking the waves, the pavilion harbours a fascinating array of temples and looks out onto wonderful views of fishing boat flotillas.

Besides the pavilion, Pénglái draws crowds for its optical illusion that locals claim appears every few decades. On 17 June 1988 a mirage appeared that lasted for over five hours, revealing two islands with roads, trees, buildings, people, bridges and vehicles.

Pénglái is easily visited as a day trip from Yántái. See opposite for bus details. The last return bus to Yántái leaves Pénglái at 6pm.

WĒIHǎI 威海

☎ 0631 / pop 136,000

About 60km east of Yántái, the booming port city of Wēihǎi was the site of China's most humiliating naval defeat, when the entire Qing navy (armed with advanced European warships) was annihilated by a smaller Japanese fleet in 1895.

The British hung onto a concession here until 1930, though little remains to remind you of its colonial heritage.

Today visitors are drawn to Wēihǎi for its golden coastline, Liugong Island and to catch passenger ferries to South Korea.

Information

Bank of China (中国银行; Zhōngguó Yínháng; 38 Xinwei Lu; ☎ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri summer, to 5pm winter) Currency exchange.

China Post (邮局; Yóujú; 40 Xinwei Lu)

CITS (中国国际旅行社; Zhōngguó Guójí Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 581 8616; 3rd fl, 96 Guzhai Dong Lu)

China Travel Service (CTS; 中国旅行社; Zhōngguó Lǚxíngshè; ☎ 520 3477; 46 Haibin Lu)

Public Security Bureau (PSB; 公安局; Gōngānjú; ☎ 521 3620; 111 Chongqing Jie)

Xinhua Bookstore (新华书店; Xīnhuá Shūdiàn; 1 Heping Lu) On the corner with Dongcheng Lu.

Sights

DINGYUAN WARSHIP 定远战舰

Anchored in Weihai Bay off Haibin Park is this lifesize replica of the German-built **Dingyuan** (☎ 520 7806; admission Y50; ☎ 7am-6pm), a Qing dynasty warship dispatched to the bottom of the sea by Japanese torpedo boats during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95). Board the highly detailed US\$6 million warship, an exact facsimile of the original *Dingyuan* (Ting Yuen), and examine it at close quarters along with its exhibits commemorating the clash

between Japan and China that annihilated the Qing fleet.

LIUGONG ISLAND 刘公岛

Liugong Island (Liúgōng Dǎo) lies 2km off the coast in the Wēihǎi Gulf. The island was established as a stronghold during the Ming dynasty to guard against Japanese pirates. Later the Qing government made Liugong Island their naval base, and after their crushing defeat at the hands of the Japanese the island was occupied by Japanese troops for three years.

In 1898 the British wrested control of the area and governed it for 32 years. During this time they built schools, churches and even teahouses, transforming the island into a summer resort for the British Navy. In 1948 Chiang Kaishek and his troops arrived, shortly followed by the communists.

Today the island's main attraction is the well-kept and airy **Museum of the 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War** (中国甲午战争博物馆; Zhōngguó Jiǎwǔ Zhànzhēng Bówùguǎn; admission Y30; ☎ 7am-5.30pm). The museum is to the west as you exit the ferry terminal, housed in the old offices of the North Sea Fleet commanders. Displays include the anchor of the *Zhenyuan*, a cruiser seized by the Japanese, dioramas of the naval engagement, and shells and fragments of the warship *Jiyuan* (built in Germany), including a high-pressure water desalination tank. A Royal Navy torpedo is also displayed and two Krupp cannons.

The island also provides some ideal hiking trails into the hills in the north.

Ferries run every 10 minutes to Liugong Island (Y40 return, 20 minutes, price includes a boat trip around the island) between 7am and 5pm from the **Liugongdao Ferry Terminal** (48 Haibin Lu), south of the passenger ferry terminal. The last ferry returning to Wēihǎi leaves at 6pm. There is no accommodation on the island. Buggies whizz around the island for Y10.

INTERNATIONAL BEACH 国际海水浴场

Wēihǎi's International Beach (Guójí Hǎishuǐ Yùchǎng) draws large crowds for its long stretch of golden sand, comparably clean waters and large swimming area.

Sleeping

Hailin Hotel (海林宾馆; Hǎilín Bīnguǎn; ☎ 522 4931; fax 528 2632; 146 Tongyi Lu; 统一路146号; d/tr/ste Y160/210/480) This simple, unfussy and pleasantly

designed two-star hotel, near the corner with Heping Lu, offers good value. Standard rooms come with water cooler, large shower room, TV, phone and clean furniture.

Sunshine Hotel (阳光大厦; Yángguāng Dàshà; ☎ 520 8999; 88 Tongyi Lu; 统一路88号; d/stg Y680/980) Rooms here are pleasant, with wood flooring, matching twin beds and new showers. Suites are particularly spacious and clean, with inset lights, funky shower rooms and a dose of style. Push for discounts outside of the May and October holiday periods.

Eating

Lichao Restaurant (李朝牛汤; Lǐcháo Niútāng; ☎ 523 6796; north Bldg, 73 Haigang Lu; meals Y25; ☎ 8.30am-noon & 1-5pm) Get into the Korean feel at this lively barbecue grill (*shāokǎo*) restaurant and order up a platter of lamb (*yángrou*) plus six vegetable dishes (including *kimchi*, *dòufu*, carrot, radish, fish and lettuce; Y25). Grill your lamb slices, dip them in *lǎjiāo* (chilli), wrap in lettuce and eat. Round it all off with some soothing and sweet *zǎochá* (jube tea). Also on the menu are other meats, including beef and pork.

Kāixīn Cǎomào (开心草帽; ☎ 521 7978; 88-8 Tongyi Lu) This is a small café-bakery next to Sunshine Hotel, where you can snack up on egg tarts and sink a glass of milk.

Getting There & Around

AIR

Wēihǎi's airport is 80km away. Flights to cities include Běijīng (Y530, one hour), Guǎngzhōu (Y1460, three hours) and Shànghǎi (Y610, 1½ hours). A taxi from the airport to town will cost around Y80.

BOAT

Ferries sail to Incheon (1st/2nd class Y950/810, 15 hours), in South Korea, at 7pm on Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. Tickets are generally only available on the day of travel from the ticket office on Haibin Lu to the south of the passenger ferry terminal (*wēihǎi gǎng kèyùnzhàn*).

Boats to Dàlián leave daily at 9.30am and 9pm (2nd class Y280, eight hours). Tickets should be bought from the International building adjacent to the passenger ferry terminal.

BUS

From the **long-distance bus station** (☎ 522 4591) at the southern end of Dongcheng Lu there are comfortable air-con Volvo buses departing hourly to Yāntái (Y21, one hour, 6am to 5.40pm) and Qīngdǎo (Y68, four hours, 6.30am to 5.30pm). There are also five buses to Jǐ'nán (Y139, eight hours), and a bus to Shànghǎi (Y169, 16 hours) and Běijīng (Y142, 13 hours).

Smaller Iveco buses also run hourly to Yāntái (Y17.50), Qīngdǎo (Y42.50) and Jǐ'nán (Y79.50). There is also a direct bus to Pénglái at 8am (Y24, two hours).

TRAIN

Located in the south of town, the train station has poor connections. There are trains to Běijīng (Y205, once daily), Tiānjīn (Y183, once daily) and Jǐ'nán (Y102, twice daily). Buy tickets at the train station or at the **ticket office** (☎ 520 8000; 120-1 Tongyi Lu), near the Sunshine Hotel (it also sells air tickets).