

Chaozhou Trip 17-19 Jan 2020

About Chaozhou

Chaozhou(in Mandarin)

Chiuchow(in Cantonese)

Teochow(in Chaozhou dialect)

Lying in the northeast of Guangdong province adjacent to Fujian, the Chaoshan region has a very unique culture that is very different from the remaining Guangdong. Commonly called as Chaozhou(潮州), it actually refers to the greater region including mainly historical counties(縣/市) like Chaozhou(潮洲, the ancient city centre), Puning(普寧), Chaoyang(潮陽), Jieyang(揭陽), Chenghai(澄海) & Shantou(汕頭, the modern city centre) where people call among themselves “gar ge lang” (Chaozhou dialect means “自己人”). Because Chaozhou had long been the centre of this greater region so Chaozhouese(潮州人) became the common term to name the people originate from here.



You may have heard of its well known cuisine like brine goose(goose in spiced soy sauce), cold crab, beef/fish/squid balls, oyster cake, shrimp sausage roll, fried calms, beef hot-pot, gongfu tea...etc. In fact, the Chaozhou food you can find in these original places are far more delicious and interesting than you can find elsewhere. Besides food, there are of course historical/heritage sites interesting to see, particularly for those who knows Chinese history.

Chaozhou Ancient City (visit on 17 Jan)

It was an administrative, political and economic centre established as early as in the Tang Dynasty. There are many heritage/cultural sites to see.

1) 韓文公祠

- 韓文公 is 韓愈(A.D. 768-824), one of the great writers(唐宋八大家之一) in Chinese history. He was a high-ranking official in the Tang Dynasty. Once after confronting a decision of the emperor's and made him angry, he was exiled to Chaozhou which was very undeveloped at that time. In his 8 months in Chaozhou, he improved much the quality of education, settled the flooding and crocodile problems of the river in this region and since then has been respected very much by Chaozhouese till today. This memorial temple was built to pay tribute to him and hence the river was named 韓江.

2) Guangji Bridge 廣濟橋/湘子橋

韓湘子 was the grand nephew(姪孫) of 韓愈. After the spread of some folk tales he became a legendary figure who is one of the 八仙. 廣濟橋/湘子橋 was named after a folk tale telling how 韓湘子 and a monk called 廣濟 competed with each other's magic to construct the bridge from each side. Finally the bridge couldn't be completed leaving a gap in between where boats were linked up to fill the gap.

3) Kaiyuen Temple 開元寺

This temple was firstly built in the Tang Dynasty when Buddhism flourished in China. It is typical Tang temple architecture. The decorations on the roof are very much of Minnan(閩南) style.

4) Paifang Street 牌坊街

These door-like monuments were built mainly throughout the Ming and Qing dynasties to glorify any achievements recognized by the emperor or imperial court of the people there. You can find all 狀元, 榜眼, 探花 who won the 1st - 3rd places respectively in the country's public exams, as well as some other achievements acclaimed by the court.

5) Big houses/architectures once belonged to those high-ranking officials/dignitaries are well preserved. They can be as old as dating back to the Song dynasty, like 許駙馬府. Others like 檯星門, 儒林第, 大夫第, 外翰第, 資政第 ... are worth visiting.

- 6) 廣濟門城樓/City wall firstly built in the Song dynasty
- 7) Pagodas/Light House nearby dated back to the Song dynasty
- 8) Jao Tsung-I(饒宗頤) Museum. He originated from Chaozhou
- 9) Li Kar Shing was born at the north entrance area of the ancient city

Lunch : 私房菜(Traditional Chaozhou)

Dinner : Beef Hot Pot

Night : Ancient City Light Show(9 - 9:15pm)

Accommodation : Qing Dynasty Old House

Phoenix Mountain (visit on 18 Jan)

1) Tea Plantation/Tea Culture

- Tea tasting/drinking is a traditional art of life practiced by Chaozhounese where a unique tea culture in this region has long been established. Tea plantation has been widely done on the high level of Phoenix Mountain and here the most outstanding variety planted is called 鳳凰單松, one of the 39 national varieties recognized by the government.

2) Sky Lake

- Beautiful. Need to walk up steps for about 30 mins to reach it.

3) Shantou

- It is the modern city centre of the Chaoshan region and was granted the status as a Special Economic Rgion in the 80's by the central government. But due to some reasons its development was suppressed by central government.
- Old city district/汕頭小公園 is an area being under renovation by the government now. Most of the architecture were built in the 20's.
- Canon Park, 石礮 scenery area
- Chenghai - 陳慈黻故居, hotspring area
- A place to explore for yummy Chaozhou food.

(Items in orange colour will be skipped for visit)

Booked a car(7-people) with driver to pick us up at 10am to drive to Phoenix Mountain and then to Shantou.

Breakfast : noodle/congee near hotel

Lunch : 農家菜?

Dinner : Chaozhou restaurant or 大排檔

Late Night Meal? : 夜粥

Accommodation : Hotel in Shantou

Nan'ao Island(19 Jan 2020)

- Beautiful beach and for leisure walk
- Ride on the long sea-crossing bridge to get there.
- I haven't been there. Let's explore together.

Breakfast : hotel included/outside hotel

Lunch : Seafood on island

Back to Shantou market : if you want to buy beef/fish/squid balls, dumplings, brine goose & Chaozhou produces

Have a nice trip 😊