

## Maokong – Gondola and hikes

Maokong, a suburb of Taipei, is a beautiful spot for those who seek a little hike near the city. Due to the fact that it is very convenient to reach, Maokong presents itself as a perfect daytrip. Even if you only have a few hours it still makes sense to go. There is a gondola connecting Taipei to Maokong. The gondola starts near the “Taipei Zoo” Metro station, which is the last station of the brown line.

A one way ticket from Taipei Zoo to Maokong costs 120 Taiwan Dollars. I recommend taking a crystal cabin. You will face a way longer queue, but it will be worth the wait. Because the see-through floor in the crystal cabins is offering an amazing view. Unfortunately you have to go straight to the station you paid for and you are not able to interrupt the ride. So if you want to see Zhinan Temple and then continue your journey to Maokong you have to buy two tickets. You are not allowed to leave the gondola at one station and then reenter it later with the same ticket.

Even though that may not sound appealing you still should consider visiting the Zhinan Temple. It is a temple dedicated to the Taoism, which is a fundamental philosophical tradition in China. Inside the temple is impressive and beautiful. It is a great way to experience a part of Taiwan’s rich culture. Unfortunately the outside is restored so you cannot see the whole beauty of the building.

Finally arriving in Maokong you are rewarded by a great view over the city. You also find a variety of places to eat and some tea houses. Which does not surprise since the area is famous for its tea production. When it comes to hikes I personally prefer going to the “Yinhe Cave” waterfall and temple. It is a really mystic spot. Out of nowhere a temple, build in cliff, appears. Walking through the temple you end up just under the waterfall.

There are many road signs along the trails to “Yinhe Cave” but it is helpful to get a map of the area at the gondola station and bring your mobile phone.

