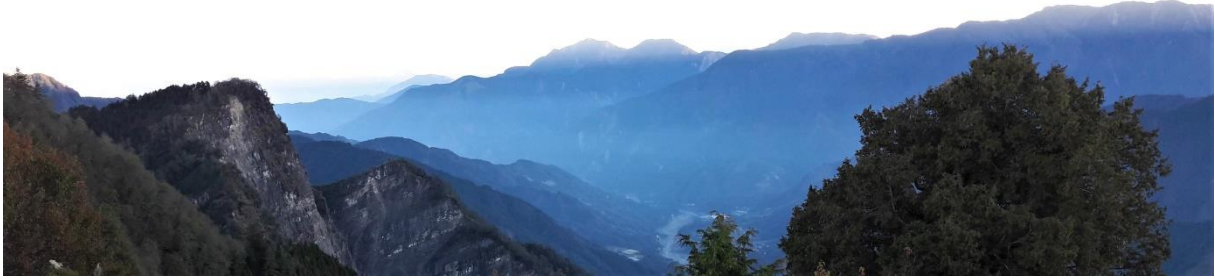


Alishan: National Forest Recreation area with Mount Ali



Alishan might be especially famous for being a great spot during the cherry blossom season. Since I was not able to travel Alishan during that time of the year I cannot tell how great the cherry blossom trees look up there. Nonetheless Alishan is also breathtaking in the rest of the year. Travelling from Taipei possibly the easiest way is taking the High Speed Rail to Chiayi. Arriving in Chiayi you have two options to get the Alishan hiking area. Going by taxi is more convenient and also quicker, while using a public bus is cheaper. I took the taxi on my way up to the mountains and drove back by bus. Personally I have to say that I preferred the taxi ride. The time you save is worth paying 150 to 200 dollars more.

In Alishan I did spend one night in a hotel in the hiking area. I would recommend you to do the same thing, since that is most comfortable way to make it in time to the sunrise train. This train takes you to the top of Mount Ali in the morning, so you can watch the sunrise enjoying an amazing view. When I was there the sunrise train was leaving at 5:30 in the morning. The hotel offered a wakeup-call at 4:30. Looking back I am very glad that I stood up so early. Once you are at the mountain top you forget that you are tired and only focus on the view. If really want to take your time and enjoy the view for quite some time then you have to walk on the way back. This is absolutely no problem if your legs are healthy since it is a very easy path.



A bit more challenging is it to hike to the top of the “Great Tashan” mountain. The Tashan trail is 3700 meters long. Also you move from the level of 2200 meters oversea to the level of 2600 meters oversea. This requires some level of fitness. Do not worry you do not have to be an athlete, but it is helpful if

you have some kind of stamina. The perspective, which awaits you on the mountain top, is definitely rewarding.