

2011

北美洲華僑旅館業青年交流訪問團特刊



北美洲台灣旅館公會  
聯合總會

Taiwan Hotel & Motel  
Association of North America

THMANA Youth Group  
Taiwan Discovery Journey

2011 Special Edition





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## President's Message



By Herman Lin

*I would first like to personally thank our THMANA members for another successful year! With the support of our Board of Directors, we have decided to publish a special edition magazine to celebrate the success of our Taiwan Young Adult Tour in March of this year.*

*This trip would not have been possible without the support of IHG, THMANA members, and of course our second generation participants. I often like to share one of my lifelong business ideologies: "If you're going to do something, you better do it the right way!" This Young Adult trip was no exception. I did not want to spare any expenses in the planning and execution of our tour. My idea was to have our association experience the top tier of Taiwanese tourism. That is why I made the effort to design our trip to stay and tour at Five Star hotels such as The Regent Taipei and the Palais de Chine.*

*Additionally, we treated our association to the best local Taiwanese restaurants. Because we were allotted a very generous budget I wanted to spend it wisely on the dining experience. Ultimately, there is a desire to teach the young adults about Taiwanese culture and heritage. To me, and to most Taiwanese, tasting gourmet cuisine is the best way to go about doing that. This is their parents' motherland- I wanted to really show our young adults that their parents love Taiwan as much as the United States.*

*I kept a couple goals in mind when planning the tour to really make this trip purposeful and successful. The intent of this trip can not only be to visit Taiwan's new hospitality concepts in the areas of service and design, but it must also afford an opportunity for our second generation to network and socialize. But how do we go about planning a trip that is purposeful, educational, and social?*

*The first obstacle was to separate young adults from their parents. This was the purpose of spending a little bit extra funds to have two buses: one for the adults, and one for the youth. We also intentionally paired young adults as roommates and had separate tables for all meals. I wanted to make sure that the second generation was comfortable to socialize freely. After just six days together, these Young Adults became very good friends. From what I am told, they are still continuing their friendship back in the United States.*

*The next goal was to make the trip educational. We accomplished this by touring a variety of hotels. In addition to the Five Star hotels in Taipei, we also explored the practicality and efficiency of Four Star business-oriented hotels, the lavish designs of the Mulan Motel in Taichung, and unwound at the spas of the Lulu Resort and the Fleur de Chine- part of Taiwan's famous Sun Moon Lake. Conversely, I wanted our group to also experience a Two Star hotel as a contrast in Kaoshiung.*

*To make our trip purposeful, we took our tour to visit three different government departments. We went to the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC) in Taipei, we also went to meet with Dr. Christina Liu-Minister of the Council for Economic Planning and Development (CEPD) in Taipei, and to meet Mayor Hu of Taichung. This third goal was to teach our second generation how important it is to maintain a good relationship with the Taiwanese government.*

*THMANA understands the importance of nurturing our community of young adults. As we continue to strengthen our Taiwanese Hotel community, we will continue to reach out to our second generation. Education and networking are the two most important aspects that each young adult must learn. I can confidently say that we have succeeded this year. I am convinced we will continue to learn every year.*

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June, 2011 Issue

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**Photographer:** Wilson Wang

**Printer:** Vpa Graphics

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## Editor's Note

By Stephen Hsu



In celebration of 6th annual convention for The Taiwan Hotel Motel Association of North America, I am happy to present this 1st edition of our publication in color and in English. This publication was specialized to share memoirs each of these individuals from this youth group, and show how thankful each of them were for making this possible for them. By setting foot on various places in Taiwan, we were able to make this our 3rd annual trip. These trips not only become better each year, but also become more memorable for everyone to enjoy.

Our third trip to Taiwan was a huge success by far. Having about 42 individuals joining us, it seems more and more individuals were becoming more involved in our organization. We visited the Holiday Inn Express located in Taoyuan & Thichung, Holiday Inn in ShenKen, the Crown Plaza Hotel in Kaoshoung, and also some independent hotels as well. All of them were very beautiful properties and each of them gave us a very unique experience. We had a warm welcoming and excellent guest service which we had always admired. By sharing our ideas of how we did things in the American Culture versus how things were done in the Taiwan Culture, each individual was able to compare, learn, and hopefully follow. Every one of us was able to gain useful amount of knowledge based on these experiences.

In summary based on all the trips that we've had, I can proudly say we have grown and learned so much from one another. Even each of these young individuals was able to learn a lot about their country, culture, and our organization. By coming together, we not only were able to have lots of fun, but were also able to help our group experience and gain future investment possibilities as well. On behalf of our organization, I would like to specially thank InterContinental Hotel Group & Oversea Compatriot Affairs Commission Taipei for their sponsorship. Without their love and support, none of this would have been possible for these young individuals. Lastly we would like to thank all the members, who took time out of their precious schedules to go on this trip. We started off the trip as just members of the group but after we've all become friends and family. You have all made this trip more memorable and I really thank all of you. I also encourage all other members to read this magazine and share the memories that we had on this trip. Maybe next time, we can all share the moment and gain new memories.

## A Message from Dr. Christina Y. Liu



**Christina Y. Liu**

Minister, Council for Economic Planning and Development (CEPD), Taiwan, R.O.C.

Chairperson, Investment in Taiwan Planning and Promotion Committee, Taiwan, R.O.C.

*In 2010, Taiwan experienced an astounding annual GDP growth rate of 10.82%, its highest since 1986. This remarkable growth was marked by another significant achievement – whereas Taiwan's growth was historically export-led in the ten years leading up to the 2008 financial crisis, since early 2010 its growth has been mainly domestic-led, with private investments increasing by 33% in 2010 alone. This shift evidences that, in coming years, Taiwan's economic growth will be driven by two forces: domestic consumption and investments, as well as exports. Seeking to bolster and support such growth, the Taiwanese government has made efforts to expedite deregulation, eliminate investment hurdles, and promote the development of its emerging industries and key services.*

*Taiwan's private sector has long possessed superior "soft" forces rooted in the characteristics that define its people: innovation, agility, flexibility, friendliness, and diligence. The advantages of Taiwan's legal system, culture, workforce, medical care, technology, marketing and management have added, and will continue to add, to its economic vitality and transformational energy. In particular, Taiwan's prowess in the ICT industry is well grounded, its industrial supply chain comprehensive, and its business operations endowed with a wealth of experience in diversification and globalization.*

*Now is the time to leverage Taiwan's strengths into even stronger economic growth prospects, and the current state of Taiwan-China relations – which have been greatly strengthened over the last two years – provide a meaningful platform for reaching this goal. As an example, Taiwan will see more visitors from mainland China this year than all other economies, the result of Taiwan's opening to mainland Chinese visitors as well as the July 2008 initiation of nonstop cross-strait flights (which now number 370 per week). Furthermore, with the recent signing of the cross-strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (EFCA), Taiwan is embarking upon an unprecedented chapter of peaceful and mutually beneficial cross-strait relations and business opportunities.*

*We look forward with great anticipation as Taiwan's miraculous growth story continues to unfold in the coming years.*

Sincerely,

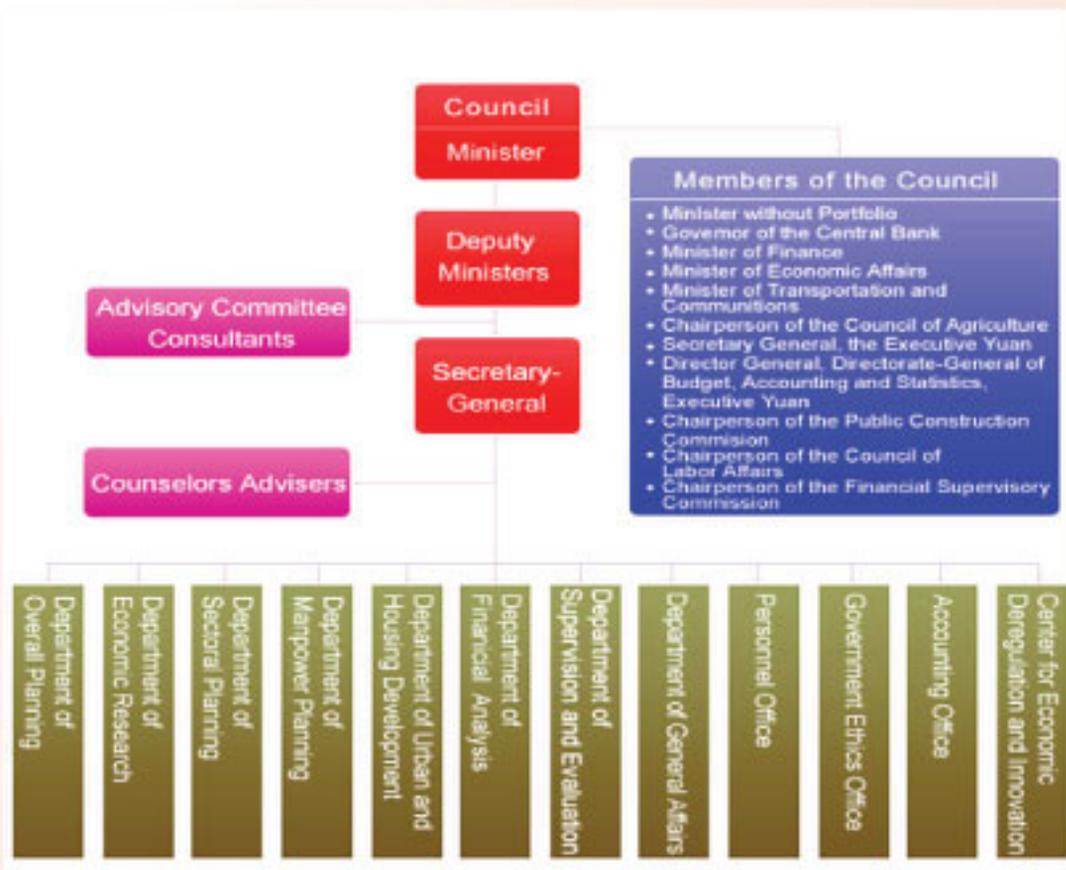
Dr. Christina Y. Liu

## “Tourism / Globalization of Taiwanese Cuisine”

From the Council for Economic Planning and Development (CEPD), Taiwan, Republic of China

The global financial turmoil that erupted in the second half of 2008 had an impact on the economies of countries all over the world and affected tourism markets everywhere. The inbound arrivals of nearby Asian countries such as Japan, Thailand, Singapore, and mainland China all suffered significant downturns. Only Taiwan, thanks to efforts by the Tourism Bureau, other government agencies and the tourism industry, experienced an arrivals increase of 14.3% to 4.4 million in 2009. The ratio of visitors coming to Taiwan for tourism broke the 50% mark and the average length of stay increased to 7.3% nights. This makes it clear that Taiwan has tremendous potential for the further development of tourism. Adding to the opportunities of direct flights across the Taiwan Strait, the Government lists tourism as one of the six key emerging industries, and promotes “Project Vanguard for Excellence in Tourism” with the aim of developing international tourism, enhancing the quality of domestic tourism, and increasing foreign exchange earnings.

In order to develop tourism in Taiwan, the Tourism Bureau not only continuously integrates resources from all aspects, creates a friendly environment, brings out Taiwan’s original tourism advantages, but also focuses on the enhancement and construction of the tourism industry in terms of quantity and quality. For this reason, the Tourism Bureau coordinates with the relevant government policies, and provides several incentive measures for investing in the tourism industry, including tax deductions on investments, subsidies for facilities upgrading, preferential loans, and incentives for quality improvement in order to create a good investing environment, increase the appeal of more private investment and construction, and consolidate Taiwan’s tourism competitiveness. It is expected that the industry and the Tourism Bureau are both turning Taiwan into a major tourist destination in Asia, and creating more business opportunities.



*The following are incentives currently being offered by the Taiwanese government to stimulate the Tourism Industry:*

**A. Tax Deductions for Construction of Major Tourism and Travel Facilities** Investors constructing major tourism and travel facilities in national parks, national scenic areas and special scenic areas may qualify for a five-year business tax exemption; business tax deductions; import duty exemption or payment in installments; exemption or reduction of land, property, or deed taxes; and deduction of the value of IPO shares-issued from the business tax -- all under the "Statute for Promoting Private Participation in Public Construction."

**B. Medium and Long-term Preferential Loans.** Investors may apply for medium and long-term preferential loans under the Council for Economic Planning and Development's "Operational Guidelines for the Utilization of Long-Term Funding."

**C. Interest Subsidy Measures for the Extension of Preferential Loans for Upgrading of the Tourism Industry.** Tourism industry projects which buy or construct machines, facilities, land, places of business, facility upgrading, and informational capital may apply for preferential loans and interest subsidies. The maximum amount for loans is NTS300 million for tourist hotels, general hotels and tourist amusement parks, and NTS60 million for travel agencies. The interest subsidy is 1.5% of the annual rate, and maximum term of loans is 15 years. This application is under "Directions for Preferential Loans for Tourism Industry Upgrading" and the application deadline extends to December 31, 2011.



Minister Liu, Y. Christina

**D. Investment Tax Credits for Tourist Industry Participation in Government-sanctioned International Tourism Publicity and Promotion Undertakings.** A tourism enterprise that spends a total of more than NTS100,000 on government-sanctioned participation in international travel organizations and travel exhibitions during a single tax year may take a tax credit of 20% against its owed profit-seeking-enterprise income tax for the year. This measure is under "Regulations Governing Investment Tax Credits for Tourist Industry Participation in Government-sanctioned International Tourism Publicity and Promotion Undertakings."

**E. Subsidy Measure for the Acquisition of Professional Certification by Tourism Enterprises.** Subsidies are offered to encourage tourism enterprises to acquire ISO certification, HACCP certification, hotel environmental protection labels, green building labels, and 5S or fire-prevention labels. The subsidies cover the entire cost of verification-related fees and 50% of actual spending on hardware improvement or inspection related to participation in the certification process. The maximum subsidy per enterprise is NTS5 million. This application is under "Tourism Bureau Subsidy Directions for the Acquisition of Certification by Tourism Enterprises", with applications accepted through September 30, 2012.

**F. Subsidy Measures for the Industry to Provide Certain Foreign Language Services.** Tourism enterprises or corporations, tourist hotels, general hotels and tourist amusement parks in public or private scenic spots which set up specific language services in Japanese and Korean may apply for subsidies. The subsidy covers 50% of the service budget in the applying proposal. The maximum amount of the subsidy per enterprise in every two years is NTS300,000. This measure is within the "Implementation Directions of Taiwan Tourism Bureau's Program to Offer Financial Assistance to the Industry to Provide Certain Foreign Language Services."

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3/ 13/ 2011

Tour: Holiday Inn Express Taoyuan, Holiday Inn Shen-Ken,  
Shen-Ken Old Market Street



3/ 13/ 2011

Tour: Holiday Inn Express Taoyuan, Holiday Inn Shen-Ken,  
Shen-Ken Old Market Street



Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North America

3/ 14/ 2011

Tour: Council for Economic Planning & Development, Executive Yuan,  
Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC) Visit, InterContinental Hotels Group  
Palais de Chine & An-Ping Chang Speech,



2011 THMANA Youth Group Taiwan Discovery Journey

3/ 14/ 2011

Tour: Council for Economic Planning & Development, Executive Yuan,  
Oversea Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC) Visit, InterContinental Hotels Group  
Palais de Chine & An-Ping Chang Speech,



**3/ 15/ 2011**

Tour: Chung Hua University, Holiday Inn Taichung  
Thaichung City Hall



3/ 15/ 2011

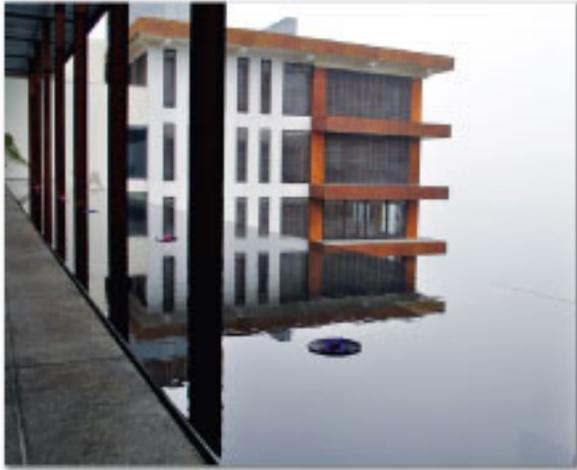
Tour: Chung Hua University, Holiday Inn Taichung  
Thaichung City Hall



3/ 16/ 2011

Tour: Lalu Resort Sun-Moon Lake, Fleur de Chin Hotel

Speech: Lai, Chien-Yi - The Discovery of The Lake Hotel @ Sun-Moon Lake



3/ 16/ 2011

Tour: Lalu Resort Sun-Moon Lake, Fleur de Chin Hotel

Speech: Lai, Chien-Yi - The Discovery of The Lake Hotel @ Sun-Moon Lake



3/ 17/ 2011

Tour: National Kaoshong University, Crowne Plaza Hotel Kaoshong,  
Kaoshong Love River, Tainan Development History



3/ 17/ 2011

Tour: National Kaoshong University, Crowne Plaza Hotel Kaoshong,  
Kaoshong Love River, Tainan Development History



## A Trip to Remember

By Alice Hsu

This has been both an educational and memorable trip for me. When my father asked to go on this trip, I was hesitant about going. After looking at the proposed itinerary, the itinerary got my attention. I thought it was a very nice balance of learning about hospitality industry in Taiwan and sightseeing.



The hotels we stayed represented different varieties of hotels that seem to target different populations. I was particularly impressed with our stay at the Hotel Sun Moon Lake. The hotel has the whole package – well conditioned building, beautiful scenery, numerous art work displays, hi-tech environment control system, variety of activities/programs offered at the hotel, and personalized service. Every staff that I have encountered always greets you with a great smile. When they don't have an answer to a question, they are not embarrassed to tell you "I don't know but I will find out for you." They then followed up with you promptly. I can see the staff has been trained well and they really perform their jobs with pride. I can see myself going back to stay at the hotel again.



I was also surprised by the Mulan Motel. I was impressed by how the motel makes the effort to keep the stay discreet and the motel room was luxurious. That was educational for me since that's one part of population that our hotel doesn't have. That's a totally different way of operating the business.

I also enjoyed visiting hospitality and culinary schools. Although I have a degree in MBA, I was never formally educated and trained through hospitality or culinary schools. It was great to learn that the curriculum composed of both the didactic and practical part of education. It was impressive that the students have actual customers to practice their skills at school. The practical part of education prepares the students to work in the real world.



Lastly, I enjoyed networking and getting to know other fellow travelers. I have met some great friends that I am looking forwards to getting to know them better as years to come.



## THMANA Taiwan Trip



By Ben Teng

The jet plane touches down with a screech and just half an hour later, I'm walking into the airport terminal and waiting for the bus to arrive. A familiar essence greets me and I recognize the feeling of previous vacation trips here. However, unlike the past, I've come back for both a similar yet completely different reason. My body buzzes with excitement as I think of the experiences, friends, connections, and knowledge I'd gain on this short one week trip. Possibly, some of that buzz came from getting an extra week off while my buddies back home were trapped in school. But by the end of the trip, I would realize that the buzz of excitement was an accurate premonition of the trip to come and far more than from a mere week off of school.



I'm Benjamin Teng from Santa Barbara, California, still at High school, and sixteen, noticeably the youngest member on the trip. I probably had and still have the least experience with hospitality, working as only front desk and tourist, but this lack is the reason I had to go on the trip. I still don't know whether the path through hospitality is the path for me, but the trip taught me far broader concepts, useful as general truths and helpful throughout life and any career.

The first day was the sight-seeing day. The day for mingling and the day for the first dip into the culture of Taiwan. We toured the first hotel, saw the Chiang Kai-Shek sculpture garden, quickly visited the flower gardens, lunched at an old Market, and dined at a Dumpling House. Along the way, I became first acquainted with Jimmy the professional photographer, Shanda the Philosopher, Kathy the Chief Pharmacist, Chien the Engineer, and too many others to name. I became first acquainted in the vibrancy of the banquets. And I became first acquainted with the fast pace of the trip. All these experiences became recurring themes throughout the rest of the trip.



The second day was different altogether. The rapid pace remained, but we transitioned to business. We began by touring the Palais de Chine. The towering hotel, difficult to imagine amongst the bustling urban city, was quiet, dark, serene, and elegant. The consistent usage of lighting gave a unique ambience parallel to nothing I had seen. The ancient artifacts, the distinctive European flavor, and other unconventional pieces of art taught every viewer the eloquence of the past. The hotel was a symbol of two cultures and two eras that had come to clash and unite to become more than the sum of its parts. When Anping, the owner and visionary, spoke,



I was shocked at his dispersed background. He came from a physics education with an interest in art and history and combined all that he had learned to create his highly inspiring Palais. Social studies classes no longer seemed to me unimportant and inapplicable, but became the vehicle for improving businesses. The melding of comfort and culture, of lighting and art, and of technology and history was a great example of what could be done.

Soon after, we headed to the Oversea Compatriot Affairs Commissions (OCAC) office with heads still spinning from the great spectacle. At the office, we were given a very welcoming talk. He described Taiwan as a land of great opportunity and from the busy city outside, I was inclined to believe him. Later when that meeting had ended, I was still thinking of the lessons they imparted. Soon the days would blend together and the lessons would blend as well. The lessons on opportunity, on design, and on hospitality would blend and strengthen. Friendships would build on shared experiences and connection would build on shared friendships.



Even before I could overcome my jetlag, I was singing away at the Karaoke on the final day. With twenty close friends in the karaoke room, the rapport we had gained together was ear-burstingly obvious and came to show through songs like "Yesterday" and "A Whole New World". In those moments when the entire room was shouting "I can show you the world", I reflected on the distance we had traveled on a short five day trip. We went from tentative questions on each others' vocations to shared laughter, jokes, and teasing. Like Teddy had said early on in the trip, the goal was to grow connections and we had all done that successfully; I along with them. By talking with this group of recent college graduates, I grew a more definite view of my own college-bound future as well.

With the end of the trip encroaching so quickly, I sang all the louder and felt all the more reluctant to leave behind my friends and experiences. However upon returning, I know I haven't grown apart from leaving Taiwan, but grown closer through reflection on my memories and correspondence with my new friends.





## Gateway to the Future

By Celine Teng

My experience with hotels was more than enough for me to know I wanted nothing to do with it. When the opportunity came to me to attend the Youth Training Group for the Taiwanese Hotel/Motel Association of North America, I hadn't wanted to take it. However, my parents had convinced me to take the opportunity to learn more about what they were passionate about. I have yet to regret my decision in going. My father, my uncle, my cousin and I were heading back to Taiwan, the land of our culture.

Nostalgic feelings came when I exited the terminal of the Taipei airport, half my culture resided here. I had never stayed in a hotel in Taiwan and details were lost among the years spent away. My family arrived together, led by my uncle. The few that came on that day gathered together to be picked up by the bus. Greetings were made as we picked the rest of the Taiwanese Association at their various locations. We immediately set out on our tour.



The first hotel was the Holiday Inn Express in Taoyuan, which we assembled in to exchange business cards with the people we were to share our experience

on the tour. The hotel had provided a meeting room as well as amenities to hear the Association's presidents speak about our planned schedule as well as give their appreciation of our sponsors. After the speeches, in groups of about five, we toured the room facilities at which were enticing for the budgeted travelers. There were basic necessities; a bathroom equipped with a shower, a single desk, and beds. There was neutral décor, bright lighting and was compacted into a smaller area. The rooms also boasted of a view of the local park. Following the outing, we separated into the youth group, which consisted of the second generation of which I was in and the mature group, comprised of the first generation hotel owners. We then checked into the Grand Formosa Hotel to head out to sightsee.

After checking into the hotel, we headed towards the Du-His Floral Farm. Taiwan's weather is unlike North America, due to the proximity to the equator, as such it was quite humid. While the first generation was accustomed to the weather, the youth group lazed in the shade to socialize and bond. Roommates were assigned and my partner was a woman named Lucy. Just as well, our Chinese Zodiacs were both monkeys. Next we had lunch, and then we toured again at a Holiday Inn in Shen-Ken. Our outing led us to the Shen-Ken replica street. This street was reminiscent of decades past. I couldn't help but notice how clean the street was kept, despite it being such a busy tourist area. The street was filled with local people and tourists, all going about their ways. One of the things that caught my eye the most, was the temple. The temple was magnificent, colors abounding, and painstakingly intricate carved figures lining the way.

Our next stop was the Palais de Chine. The place was impressive, artistic pride had clearly been taken in the room décor. We attended An-Ping Chun's speech, located in the Palais de Chine's meeting room. I recall his passionate speech about his attention towards detail all towards satisfying the client's needs. The amount of detail put into the hotel was fascinating to gaze at. There were old books, sculptures, paintings and tapestry to add to the atmosphere. In the hallways leading to the rooms, the ceiling was made up of gold colored metal, draped down and away in five different areas to hold similarity to flowers blooming. It was akin to a piece of flat cloth that was pulled up from the center. The hotel's architecture was meticulously detailed from ceiling to walls to floors.

Our tour had led us through the Holiday Inn Express in Taoyuan, the Grand Formosa Hotel, the Palais de Chine, the Holiday Inn Express in Taichung, the Mulan Motel in Taichung, the Hotel One in Taichung, Lalu Hotel, the Fleur de Chine Hotel, the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Kaoshang and Kaoshong Metropolitan Hotel. Each hotel had bought a different style and idea of what clients wanted. The Holiday Inn Express in Taichung was targeted towards economical clients and accordingly their interior made use of every object; the door could swing out to be used to close the shower and the toilet or the bath and the toilet. Targeted towards lovers, the Mulan Motel was colorful and lavish and private. There were kings beds suspended upon water and walls that doubled as doors. Another hotel, the Palais de Chine had the flair of a European castle. The interior was darkly lit, the walls held sculptures and tapestry. There was a mixture of ancient Western and Eastern influences that held international familiarity. The respective hotels had a different piece of the Taiwan culture for individual personages. .



I thought I had experienced everything there was to experience in hotels; I saw the bad and I saw the good. It was business and I held no interest in continuing my parent's work. However, by attending the tour, I learned that there was much more depth into planning, creating and developing livable and enjoyable accommodations. The details put into making a hotel not only functional but satisfying, were largely things I had never thought were needed. The meticulous strategy put into the food, interior, and service was spectacular. Language barriers were acknowledged and adapted. There was diverse food for diverse clients. Interiors were economical for basic hotels and luxurious and culturally impacting for lavish hotels. Everything found in a hotel had the same intent: to reach and surpass the customers' needs.

## Memoirs of an ABC



By Chien Chu

I love to travel. Most of my time is spent running the family restaurant so whenever I can get away I jump on a plane and don't look back. Before I had any idea of the Youth trip I had booked a short vacation to Thailand and China. The only problem was how to tell my parents that I'm leaving again after taking September off traveling Europe and Egypt. I had to wait for the right time to break the news. One day my father approached me and asked if I would be interested in going to Taiwan with the THMNA. This was it. The time had come to let him know about my latest adventure. I explained to him that I would go if the trip would have educational value in the hospitality industry and if it didn't interfere with my trip to Thailand. It was obvious that he really wanted me to attend so Thailand was secondary on his mind. Next thing I know I was booking another flight to Asia.

March madness had a whole new meaning to me. Year end corporate taxes were due. I had to testify in a product liability suit, in Seattle, where I was the representative for a company I no longer worked for. My trip to Taiwan was extended to 11 days so I could spend some time with my family in Taiwan. I had five days between trips to take care of more matters at the restaurant. Then it was off to Thailand and China for ten days. Needless to say I lived out of my suitcase for most of that month. I put on my game face and charged through knowing at the finish line there was a beach chair on Phi Phi Island waiting to caress my rear end.

With the trial behind me and taxes pretty much done it was time for my first leg to Taiwan. I stayed up all night packing my bags and surfing the net. This was a routine I had for overseas travel. It allows me to adjust to the new time zone right when I land. I didn't really know what to expect out of this trip. I was only hoping for more insight into the hospitality industry.

But first it was off to Chayi to visit my grandmother for possibly the last time.

After two strokes Grandma was a mere shadow of the great lady she once was. Unable to move, talk or even eat she had tubes to feed her and more tubes to catch her waste. There was a live in nurse that would bend her limbs and massage her muscles so that her body would not atrophy. She is the last grandparent that I have and she was the last chance for me to get to know at least one of my grandparents. I never learned the language so I never knew any of my grandparents. Too much time had passed and too many opportunities were lost. This part of my life is lost forever. No matter how many times I told her how much I loved her she could not hear or understand a word. It pained me to sit next to her and see her in this condition. As I held her hand I could tell that it was only a matter of time before she took her last breath. It was too much for me to handle. I limited my time with her so I won't break down in tears. She had given me so much and I didn't even bother to learn I love you in Taiwanese. Now it's too late and I will regret that every day of my life. This set the tone for what I thought would be for the rest of the trip.

It was time to make my way back to Taipei to join the Youth group. Needless to say I was not looking forward to long bus rides and hopping from hotel to hotel. I arrived at the Regent unsure if I was at the right place. There were some familiar faces in the lobby so I made my way to the group and started my one week journey. This is when I first meet Eric and Tim. I introduced myself and proceeded to ask them if they had ever been on one of these trips. They both responded no and were as uninformed as I. Looking around I noticed typical Asian behavior. The few youth that was there had gathered in groups by gender. It was what I expected and dreaded. I was going to be on a bus full of anti social nerdy Asians. With my somber mood I was content with that. We then made our way to Tao Yuan Holiday Inn where we meet up with the rest of the group. This is where I remember meeting Teddy, Mike and Shanda. Teddy had way too much energy and seemed like he was on speed. Looking around I notice a big white guy that just didn't belong. Was this guy really stuck with our group? Then out of the corner of my eye I notice another "white" person. She looked like she might be a mix but where was her white parent?

I thought I was going to have a hard time communicating. Now this group started to intrigue me. We made our way through an uneventful tour of the hotel. I've stayed in many hotels and this one was nothing special. It was just a simple room to sleep in. I attempted to learn as much as possible but not being in the business I was a little lost. There were terms being used that did not have a clue about and comparisons that left me scratching my head. Did I really just sign up for a week of this? After the tour we made our way to the bus for our next tour.

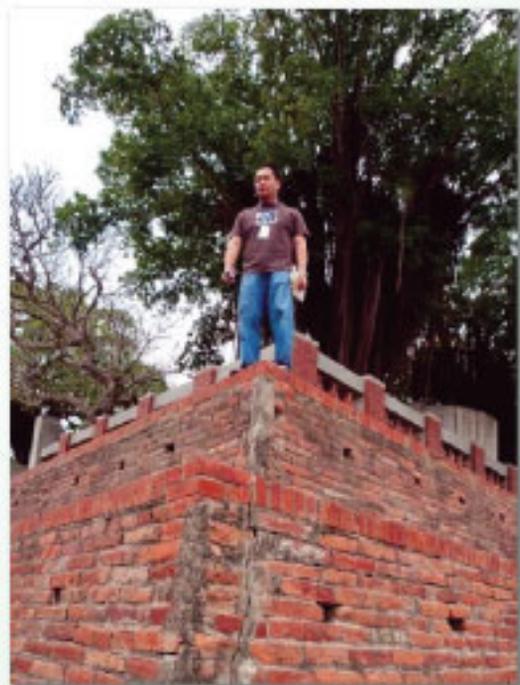
I jumped onto the bus and picked a seat up front. It was across from Wilson, one of the only people I knew before the trip, and it had a table where I could set my netbook. Up front was space to put my bag and it kept me isolated from the rest of the group. I was still not in the mood to mingle and meet new friends. Yes wifey you were right. How could I enjoy myself after seeing Grandma in her current state.



We were off to our next stop which was a garden of some sort. What the hell did this have to do with anything? It was beautiful but what were we supposed to learn from this? The little devil on my shoulder got the best of me and I was off on a mission to find some booze. I spotted a snack bar and quickly ran up the stairs and made my way to the cooler. On my way to the stand I ran into George. We talked for a little bit and I offered him a beer. He kindly declined and made his way to the restroom. I think he was trying to avoid me and any possible disapproval I would get from the adult group. It was of no concern to me. I had seen most of these adults a little tipsy at my restaurant. It was their turn to see me in action. It's Taiwan after all. If you have done business in Taiwan or China you would know that most of it is handled in the local KTV with several



bottles of Scotch. Two beers just simply quenched my thirst and a buzz didn't even ensue. A couple of the youth noticed and humorously commented and I think Minnie was the only adult to also joke about it. My mark had been made. I wasn't out to offend or disrespect anyone but I also wasn't going to be the typical quiet subservient Asian child. The trip so far had been a disappointment but I was still open minded. Maybe this was their ice breaker for the trip. It was only a few hours into day one so it was too early to pass judgment on the group.



Next on the agenda was lunch. After some confusion we finally made it to the restaurant. We all entered the restaurant and proceeded to spread out at five tables. This was the first in many forced interaction situations. This was also the first time I meet Ben. Ben was the youngest in the group and at lunch our table was pressuring him to drink for his first time. Maybe these kids weren't that bad after all. The beers started to flow and my wall started to crumble. The social bug in me peaked out and I started to enjoy myself. Most people spent their time eating rather than talking but you could see different personalities emerging from each and every table. Before I knew it we were off to another hotel. To be honest with you I don't even remember it. My buzz from lunch had worn off and I was off doing my own thing.

It was time to check into our hotel and find out who we were rooming with for the rest of the trip. Enter Jimmy. We had talked briefly before but I guess we were about to be roomies and I had no choice but to interact with him. He seemed like a nice guy and pretty normal so I wasn't too worried. Even though the weather was nice Jimmy always looked like he was really cold and had a pointing problem. We talked a little as we settled into our room and discovered we were both from Orange, CA. Wilson had put great thought in how to pair up the youth.

Earlier that day I had met Eric's dad Roy. He asked me who I was and I had a hard time explaining. Good thing Minnie was nearby and explained my connection with the group. Roy immediately smiled and said "your grandfather and my father were good friends." What a small world. He then looked at me and asked me to watch over his son. I laughed and nodded my head. It was the typical over protective worried Asian parent. Eric seemed like a good kid so what harm would it do to hang out with him and grab a few drinks. So far he seemed like the only person willing to hit the afterhour's party scene in Taiwan. How hard could it be to keep up with a 24 year old? Hell I party in Amsterdam and attend Oktoberfest ever year. This kid could pick up some pointers from me. Little did I know but Eric only required one to two hours of sleep a night.

Next up was dinner at a dumpling restaurant. It sounded great to me and I was ready for some good grub. We all scampered onto the bus and made our way to the SOGO. When we arrived there was a wait so Eric and I ventured off in search for sushi. I didn't want to spoil my dinner so I passed but Eric found a nice mix of sashimi. While he ate I made my way to the liquor section. With Grandma still on my mind I decided on a nice bottle of scotch. This should help me drown my sorrows. Our tables were ready and we again split up into smaller groups and made our way into the restaurant. It was another forced interaction situation and I was told not to open my bottle. Everything had been planned so that we spent as much time together as possible. Even "Free Time" had suggestions which helped narrow down options and funnel people into groups. Dinner was somewhat quiet due to lack of alcohol. There was some talk among the youth about going out but most people seemed unenthusiastic or indecisive.

After dinner we went back to the hotel to rest up before a night on the town. There was some interest to go to a lounge so a time was set and a decent number of people showed up in the lobby to head out. This is when I lost some faith in the group. Four of us ended up going out while most ended up staying at the hotel. It was Wilson, Eric, Teddy and I and we were ready to meet up with some of our local friends and throw back some drinks. We ended up the Marquee and proceeded to order bottles of Jack. This is where my memory gets a little fuzzy. Let's just say we had a good time because I really can't remember the details. I just remember waking up to a knock at the door and thinking it was housekeeping letting themselves in. In actuality it was Teddy and he had my key. There was a note left for Jimmy to make sure to wake me up on time. Wow. I barely knew these guys and they were taking care of me like a long time friend. It was a little cold that night but I don't blame you Jimmy. Day one had passed and it wasn't all that bad. I was able to meet up with an old friend and I started developing new friendships. Maybe this group wasn't the nerdy anti social group I was expecting.

Day two started off a little painful thanks to Eric and half a bottle of scotch. I skipped breakfast and tried to make myself presentable. It was day one of formal wear. Everyone was dressed to impress and we looked

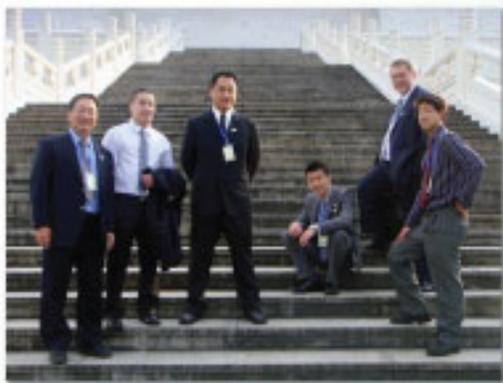
like a Japanese tour group. All we needed was Wilson with a red flag to follow around. Our first stop was Palais de Chine. What an amazing hotel. I have never been to a hotel with so much character. The presidential suite left me breathless. The "innkeeper" gave us the tour and every room had a story and every decoration seemed to be handpicked by him. The visual and mental stimuli was overwhelming especially in my current state. I was starting to regret drinking but it did take my mind off Grandma. The tour ended in a meeting room where the "innkeeper" gave a little speech and took questions. Uncle Herman also gave a little speech about how impressed he was with the hotel and threw in something about the youth group.



With the tour over we were off to our first government meeting. We arrived at the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC) building and were greeted at the door. After making our way to the meeting room I soon realized I should be on my best behavior. We watched a video and were served lunch. Eric and I were both hurting from the night before and after lunch we were given a long break. It was nap time so we caught a cab back to the hotel for a 30 minute refresher. After our break we took a cab back for the next part of the OCAC meeting. It was time for best behavior again. Speeches were given by the commission, Mike and Wilson. During the speeches mobile phones were ringing off the hook and some people actually took calls. I have always seen this as one of the rudest things a person can do. No one took action or requested the person to turn off her phone. My friend's father had written a newspaper article about how this was a huge problem in Taiwan but I never gave it much thought until now. It's sad that some very good speeches were given but the one thing that I just can't

forget is that phone. Again the speeches addressed the importance of the youth returning to Taiwan. It wasn't until now that I truly saw the meaning and potential of this trip. This was a theme that would continue throughout the five days.

Dinner was now upon us and everyone was getting more and more comfortable with everyone. It surprised me that the association allowed us to order beers but it all made sense this night. Let the drinking begin! Dinner was no longer the stuffy awkward banquet dinner. It had truly become the beginning of the bonding of the youth group. Someone had suggested that we play a drinking game and we proceeded to drink faster than the server could bring the beers. This is when I learned more about Celine, Kathy, Alice and some of the others. Again things got a little fuzzy here but the true point of the trip had taken its course. Friendships were forming and the youth was relaxed and having fun with each other. Some of us drank more than others and some just drank too much. The night was still young and there was talk of round two at Marquee.



After taking care of some matters at the hotel most of the youth group made our way to Marquee. Almost everyone was there and the group was coming alive. However, my buzz was gone and I was reminded of how my trip started. I tried taking a few shots and even spun on a pole. Nothing was working. Something had triggered thoughts of Grandma and I needed to find a way out of the lounge. I didn't want to break up a good thing so I was able to go back to the hotel with a couple of others that were ready to go. Most of the group stayed and from what I understand had a great time. The trip was no longer a trip with the association but a trip with friends. With a little time and beer the parents had seen the first fruits of their labor.



Having turned in early the previous night the new day started off with a 5k run and my first breakfast of the trip. I arrived late so I was seated alone but I was seated across from Eric's cougar. What a way to start off the day. Faces now had names. Names now had personalities and some of these personalities weren't half bad. It was a new day and I was looking forward to the adventures the day would bring. I would not be disappointed.

Our first tour of the day was Chung Hua University College of Tourism. The tour was filled with college girls, wifi hunting and impromptu speeches. The university itself was a treat to explore. We were given a tour of their kitchens, hotel rooms and even a mock airplane haul. The campus was filled with teaching aids and the students seemed eager to learn as much as possible. You could almost see the energy in the air as students ran around bringing use drinks and snacks. Many of the youth spoke of the great service at every level in Taiwan and how we lacked this back in the states. I couldn't agree more. After the tour we had an uneventful lunch. It was nothing special and there was no beer. It was probably better since some of the youth were nursing hangovers. This was followed by yet another hotel tour that did not impress. Again, not being in the hotel industry I had little to gain from visiting Holiday Inns. I have stayed in many and again it's just a clean and inexpensive place to sleep.

Hotel One in Taichung was now to become our home for the night. It was an impressive building with a mixture of hotel and office spaces. Service like every other hotel was top notch and they even made business cards for each and every guest. I thought this was a very nice personal touch. It was the little things that made this hotel nice. The towels were some of the softest I have ever experienced at a hotel and the staff didn't even ask my name when I requested another key for my room. I was tempted to request a key for Teddy's room and wake him up with a nice bag of tea.

## 2011 THMANA Youth Group Taiwan Discovery Journey

Shortly after settling in we met with the mayor of Taichung. This guy was just comical. There was some concern that we would not be able to meet the mayor due to the night club fire scandal but he made time and wasn't going to step down anytime soon. He greeted the youth with a request that while in his city we do not play with matches. I wanted to burst out in laughter but a chuckle was more appropriate. We listened to more speeches with more emphasis on the youth group. At this point it was very clear that the trip was mainly for the youth and that the parents wanted nothing more than to give us a chance to become friends. In my youth I would have resisted and purposely avoided friendships but being one of the older "youths" I was able to appreciate what was so carefully planned by the parents.



The next part of the trip was unexpected and new to me. The Mulan Motel was a "love" motel rented out hourly. You could even get a VIP frequent user card. They were lavish rooms with amenities you would only see in penthouse suites. This gave a whole new meaning to no-tell motels. I remember one of the adults asking why there were so many pieces of furniture throughout the rooms. My answer wasn't exactly PG so I kept it to myself. Now this was not your ordinary room and I was able to appreciate it for what it was. We were given gift bags and the youth joked about what was hidden inside. To our disappointment there was nothing fun.

It's was now dinner time and most of us were ready to get our drink on. On this night the association opted for red wine instead of beer. Again our table drank faster than the serves could uncork the bottles. Speeches were given all through the night and it seemed

to disrupt the social mingling. It seemed as if every five minutes we were clapping to a speech that we had either already previously heard or could not even understand. Speeches towards the end were pointless as almost everyone was asked to stand up and give one. Many of us escaped to the restroom only to discover a rather strange party in the next hall. It reminded me of a Japanese game show with people in full costume and girls running around in bunny outfits. What could have been a great dinner ended up being a balancing act of listening to speeches and trying to socialize at your table. The afterhour's fun suffered tremendously from this. We gathered just a handful of people out to explore the famous night markets of Taiwan. Although we were all stuffed from dinner we could not pass up on the opportunity to try the delicious foods the night market had to offer. After snacking we played a few carnival type games and most of the group was ready to call it a night. Eric however had other ideas. Here we go again. We jumped into two different cabs with one going back to the hotel and the other one going to a local Yankee bar. There were three of us and we ended playing darts for drinks. Not such a good idea. More beers and shots on top of an already full stomach just made things painful. When the other two were distracted I ended up dumping some of the shots into the stack of napkins. Sorry Eric but I had to. The place was pretty empty with one other American sitting at the bar. I struck a conversation with him and found out he was a mercenary on vacation visiting his family. What a strange world. He ended up going with us to the next bar which ended up rather uneventful. It was late and city was rather quiet on a Tuesday night. The responsible side of me encouraged the group to go back and get at least a couple of hours of sleep. This night had ended and the next morning was going to be a painful one.

Needless to say none of us made breakfast the next morning. We were looking forward to the long drive to Sun Moon Lake. It was nap time. After a much needed nap we were at Sun Moon Lake. I had visited this place five years earlier and it was as beautiful as I had remembered. We took a short boat ride to an island where I found a hiking trail. While everyone else was attempting the local Macarena I jetted off down a canopied trail that ended at a beetle nut farm. Now I'm not one to believe in ghost but on my way back I saw a shadow move throw the bushes but it made no sound.

Freaked out I increased my pace to a light jog. When I got back to the group I jumped onto the boat and couldn't wait to get out of there. Hopefully this was just a result from lack of sleep.

Lalu Resort was next on the agenda. I had been here before and really enjoyed sitting by the koi pond with a nice cold one. Earlier in the trip I had overheard Ben speaking of engineering and not knowing what field he wanted to be in. Having been a mechanical engineer for six years I decided to grab the kid to feed the koi. While the rest of the group was taking a restroom break I made it a point to bond with Ben and help guide him in his quest to become an engineer. We talked for a few and he really reminded of me when I was his age. His love for math, science and things that go boom really hit close to home. I suggested that he major in mechanical engineering and hopefully he finds the same joy and fulfillment that I once did and still do.

The tour of Lulu Resort was very similar to the one I took five years ago. This one also included a viewing of their luxury suites. It was as amazing as the first time I took the tour. I was hoping to stay here but that was not in the plans. After our tour we had lunch with a brief speech from the GM. Lunch included a sweet liquor drink that was perfect for the girls. It reminded me of Boone's Strawberry Hill or Smirnoff Ice. The taste was different but that's not the point. With time to kill we went to a local street market where some of the youth purchased some of the local sweet liquor. I however found the local 7-11 and picked up another bottle of scotch. This ended up being ideal since Sun Moon Lake had little to no night life.



Dinner was at Fleur de Chine Hotel where we were staying. We had a tour and a short dinner. Dinner included what I like to call Chinese whiskey. This stuff is just nasty. I think the adults did this since the next night was supposed to be the big farewell party. Moderation has never been my strong point. We were all in a hurry to get out of dinner and continue the party elsewhere. Fleur de Chine had a beautiful lounge on the upper floor but as most resorts go it was pretty pricey. The decision was made to move the party to my room. It was in the middle of several youth rooms so noise was less of a concern. Beers starting popping open and the bottle of scotch was being put to good use. I felt like I was back in the dorms again. We had connected as a group and there was even talk of future activities once we get back to the states. It's funny what a little booze and time can do. Once the booze was gone I passed out and some continued the party by the elevator. Day four was done and I was starting to realize that the trip was coming to an end.

The final day was here and I wanted to get a good start. I went down to the gym and did a 5k run followed by my second breakfast of the trip. Thanks to Uncle Herman we were allowed to stay a little longer and enjoy some of the hotel amenities. The schedule had been altered and everyone was grateful. Thanks Uncle Herman!!! Much of the morning and afternoon was a little depressing. This was it. The end of a trip, that started off a complete bore but ended up a trip of a lifetime, was here. We toured our final hotel and checked into our last room for the trip. Dinner was another banquet type menu with lots and lots of beer. If this was the end I was going to go out with a bang. A group of us walked around and toasted all the tables. We were honestly grateful for the opportunity that our parents had given us. The farewell party was almost upon us but first was the trip down the Kaohsiung Love River. Most of us just wanted to go party but the adults had other things planned. In an attempt to keep our buzz going I stopped off at the local snack shack and picked up a 24 pack of Taiwan Beer. We tried to sneak it onto the boat but it was pretty obvious what we had. A few of the crew members glared at us but they never said no. Beers were being passed around and even some of the adults partook in the festivities.

After the love river we made our way to our final party destination. The farewell party just happened to land on St. Patty's day and we were about to enjoy KTV the Irish way. A couple of us on the trip started the festivities with a shotgun lesson. Some did well and others failed. With a little more practice we were short on beers. I made my way to the front desk and ordered up some Jameson and more beers. Round two was a little fuzzy as well. I remember an award ceremony and lots of bad singing. Some glasses were broken and the floor was a hazard from all the spilt beer. In a drunken stupor, with the assistance of Wilson, I caught a cab back to the hotel. All partied out I crashed in bed hoping for a good nights rest. Fail! Later that night my room was invaded and I was dragged out to the mahjong room. As I walked into the room I noticed people passed out on the ground and couches. It reminded me of a triage center but this one was for drunks. Although the parents might not agree this was the best night. It was a free for all. All our guards were down and we were one big family. It was a dysfunctional family but still a family. We were even to the point of calling each other sister, brother, husband and wife. The trip could have not gone better.



The next morning we jumped onto the bus and started the depressing job of dropping everyone off at different destinations. We had already lost a few people that morning and after lunch we lost a few more. The tempo had changed. This was it. The end of the line was here with only the possibility to rejoin state side. With such close proximity to some of the group I made it a priority to reach out and keep in touch. With the help of Facebook we exchanged our information and hoped for the best.

Our parents try to do what is best for us. Sometimes they don't succeed or understand but they mean well. I can't recall how many times my father tried to set me up with his friend's kids. He would ask me to just hang out with them and maybe you could be friends. I would simply laugh and say I have better things to do. More friends are the last thing I need. My free time is limited and my friends are lucky to see me once a month. This experience has changed everything. I grew up in Orange, CA where I was an Asian kid lost among Caucasians. Some might say I grew up white. I did not expect to make a single friend nor was I even interested in it. My thought was that none of these kids could even relate with me let alone befriend me. I was so wrong. Now that I'm back home some of these friendships are growing while others are fading but I will continue to go out of my way to make it work.

This trip was about our parents and the hard work they put into building their empires. Their network of friends and business partners are all getting ready to retire. The kids are left to continue their legends. They put us together because once they retire we will have to deal with each other. Why not start these friendships early. I did not want to go on this trip but I'm glad I did. Our parents are friends and partners for a reason. They have things in common and among those are our values and beliefs. These are the same values and beliefs that they have passed onto us. We have more in common then you can imagine. I write this in hopes that it might inspire someone whom is given this opportunity to take this trip and thinks it's a waste of time. You owe it to your parents and yourself to do this. You're most likely highly educated with no student loans. You probably drive a German or luxury Japanese car. The down payment on your home was probably fronted by your parents. The least you can do is go on this trip and be open minded.

I love to travel. I have visited the pyramids of Giza. I have gone scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef. I have jumped out of a plane over the north shore of Oahu. I out drank and befriended Nazi skinheads at Oktoberfest. I have been to six of the seven continents and this trip by far has been the best and most memorable. Do yourself a favor and take a week out of your boring life and experience what this trip has to offer.

## A Lasting Impression



By David Liu

March 10, 2011. I lay seamlessly on my bed pondering over thoughts as to why my father, Ben, one of the director for the Taiwanese Hotel Motel Association, would encouraged me to participate in the Youth Generational trip to Taiwan. With thoughts roaming over my head, I said to myself, "My families are from Taiwan, and I have gone back countless times. But, why does my dad want me to attend this trip with people I have not met before?" Without too much thought, I noticed I was soundly asleep.

March 11, 2011. I began to pack and prepare for my weekly trip to Taiwan. Looking through the trip agenda Wilson Wang, who I later met at the airport in Taiwan, had prepared for all participants made me cringed. Business Attires and Business Cards are a must throughout the majority of the trip. First thought that goes in my head: "I hope I will not miss out a good spring break with my friends."



March 12, 2011. First thought during departure at LAX: "This better be a good spring break." 3/12/11, 11:45 pm: Plane departs to Taiwan.



The next day, as the plane arrived in a familiar territory of Taoyuan, Taiwan, I was to a certain extent curious concerning who I would meet and hoping that this trip would be an exhilarating one. Onto our first destination of the trip, the Holiday Inn Express at Taipei, we met up with the rest of the participants of this trip. From looking at all the unfamiliar members sitting in the lobby, to be honest, I was very anxious. As the days progressed, that anxious feelings I experienced during the first day gradually subsided as I have become more and more comfortable into meeting them.



All of these members of the 2nd generation youth trip have instilled an impression that I will never forget. From hanging out, staying up late at night regardless of waking up early the next morning, to drinking, we all bonded as if we were long childhood friends. For that one week we spent together, I have learned the values of networking and ever lasting friendship.





This trip had enabled me to gain knowledge about the hospitality industry in the East, the culture of Taiwan, and the upcoming trends in the hospitality industry. I was glad to forgo my spring break trip with my friends to attend to this eventful trip knowing that these groups of people are people who I will be working and connecting with throughout my career. At the end of this trip as I reflected back on that night as I lay seamlessly on my bed, I was glad my dad had brought me out to this trip.



I would strongly encourage our group to expand and network further by recruiting future and potential members who has the affinity to join this group. THMANA, with its diverse members of hotelier and other hospitality business alike, provides an invaluable group of network that would forever greatly influence the culture of the THMANA. To all future members or prospects who need a dose of confidence or to be reminded about what make this association a chance not to be missed, join the THMANA. THMANA remains the de rigueur.

## Taiwan Memoir



By Eric Wu

This THMANA trip has opened my eyes to many things. I was introduced to a lot of new people throughout this trip who I now call friends. I really did not know what to expect from this trip because I was sort of forced to come. To be honest, I did not think I would enjoy this trip at all because I thought I was going to be with a bunch of boring adults and kids that I have never met in my life. Fortunately, I was very wrong and very happy that my dad brought me on this trip.

Before the tour actually started, my dad and I decided to go to Taipei a day earlier so that we could enjoy the city apart from the tour. We stayed at the intriguing Grand Formosa Hotel Taipei. This hotel was probably one of the nicest hotels I have ever stayed at. When you first walk in, you see a huge lobby, and once you walk past the elevators, you will see a beautiful spiral staircase that will lead you down to the vast selection of restaurants. This is also the hotel we stayed at for our first night of the tour. The second day we visited the magnificent Legend of Palais de Chine—Merger of Unique Contemporary Vision of European and Taipei Culture. This hotel has got to be the most expensive, modern and classiest hotel I have ever toured in my life. I have stayed at other hotels that are more expensive than the Palais de Chine, but the way this hotel was designed and decorated made it look very extravagant and luxurious. Some other hotels we visited were the Mulan Motel in Taichung, Holiday Inn Express in Taichung, Hotel One Taichung, Sun Moon Lake, and Fleur de Chine Hotel Sun Moon Lake. All these hotels had a different kind of atmosphere to it. As for the

Mulan Motel, it was the only motel we visited in Taiwan. This motel has a very unique atmosphere to it. Each room has a different ambience feeling. Some rooms had hot tubs in it. I have never been to a motel with a hot tub in the middle of the living room. It has got to be the most luxurious motel I will ever visit.

Throughout the trip, we also attended a couple of meetings and seminars with very important people such as the mayor of Taichung and other significant people. These meetings were quite difficult for me to understand most of the time because the speakers were speaking Chinese very properly as my Chinese is not that good. But nonetheless, it was a great experience. We also toured two highly respectable colleges that emphasized on Hotel Restaurant Management. Their students seem very open minded and educated with the hospitality aspect of making customers satisfied and happy. They were always smiling while giving us a tour of the college as well as serving us refreshments.

This trip was not just about business though. At the end of each night, all the kids would hang out somewhere whether it is in someone's hotel room, the night market, or nearest bar. The nighttime I would say would be the highlight of my trip. The reason being is because that is when all the kids got to know each other and bonded. Alcohol certainly did help with the ice breaking in the beginning of the trip. I realized that this trip has brought many of us closer to each other. It seems weird because most of us just met each other about a month ago, and now it seems like we've known each other for a long time now.



I am looking forward to many more trips to come as I hope I will be invited again. I am thankful for all the wonderful tours we took and I would also like to thank the Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American along with the IHG for organizing and sponsoring this trip as it seems like a lot of hard work was put into it. I have had a really fun and educated experience from this trip and would recommend any first timers to broaden their horizons and give it a try next year. Thanks again for everything!

## Second Generation Taiwan Trip

By George Wu



**H**ospitality. It describes an industry many of us are in. Hospitality is a word many of us know and understand, but it is hard to show and describe. However, after going to Taiwan and experiencing the "Taiwanese" brand of hospitality I can say I have experienced what hospitality should be.

## 2011 THMANA Youth Group Taiwan Discovery Journey

The focus of the trip was to go to Taiwan to learn about the hospitality industry there. So what did I learn? The hotel industry in Taiwan is fiercely competitive. Many of the hotels have the same amenities, so hoteliers stressed the importance of a good experience for their guests, whether it is a stay at the five-star Grand Formosa or a Holiday Inn Express. In many cases the staff is what makes the difference in determining the guest's experience.



From my brief time there, I noticed that the staff at every hotel we've visited were incredibly hospitable. They were energetic, they were always smiling, and most importantly they seemed to want to be there. I learned later on that many of the staff members were trained professionals from specialized, hospitality schools. In these schools the professors stress the importance of professionalism. The students were taught to take pride in what they do, and to strive to be great at the service they provide (This is such a great message that is seemingly forgotten here in the United States). The result of this education impacts the Taiwan hospitality industry in two ways. First, this education gives the Taiwan hospitality industry the ability to hire well-trained individuals to staff their hotels. Secondly, these well-trained individuals are able to carry out excellent service to guests and to showcase the hospitality of the Taiwanese people to travelers.



This trip was not all about going to visit hotels. We had plenty of fun as well. The Taiwan experience is one that all travelers to Asia should experience. This small island nation has many things to offer. The hodgepodge of Aboriginal, Dutch, Japanese, and Chinese influences created a unique blend of culture that is hard to find anywhere else on the planet. Sightseeing in Taiwan ranges from adventuring in a metropolis like Taipei to taking a boat ride into the majestic Sun Moon Lake, the variety is astoundingly wonderful. The Taiwanese food culture is one that travelers must indulge themselves in, whether it is getting a snack in one of the many bustling night markets or at a traditional restaurant, the variety is plentiful. Throughout the five-day trip from Taipei to Tainan, our group did all of the things I mentioned above and more.



## Taiwan Memoir



By Jenny Chang

As I sit reflecting back on my trip to Taiwan I cannot help but feel how fortunate I am to have been selected for such an opportunity. I was not only able to travel to such an amazing place but also experience the most luxurious accommodations Taiwan has to offer. Best of all I travelled with the best group of people I could have ever asked for. As I'm writing this I can't help but just laugh at all the great times and memories that were created. The entire trip from the top five star hotels to the food to the logistics of the travel was carefully planned with such impeccable attention to detail making the trip absolutely flawless. I not only learned a lot about the Taiwanese hotel business as a whole but also and more importantly learned about myself as a second generation Taiwanese.



It's almost surreal how luxurious our accommodations were. From mini amusement park style water slides to bathrooms larger than my entire condo, it was without a doubt an experience of a lifetime. We were able to learn, experience and stay firsthand at Taiwan's top business hotels, leisure hotels, and resorts. The biggest difference for me between hotels in the US and Taiwan was how accommodating and friendly the staff in Taiwan are. The attitude and dispositions of the hotel owners and staff genuinely welcomed you as if you were an old friend coming to visit their home.



Mealtime was by no means different. Every meal was an event. To the Taiwanese, mealtime was bonding time. Food and alcohol was just the vehicle or glue that bonded the people together. I cannot believe how good everything tasted. Every meal was Taiwanese fine dining at its best. I felt as if I was dining at the wedding of some famous Taiwanese person everyday. We had everything from lobster to sharks fin soup to the traditional famous pork belly dishes. The presentation of 8-12 dishes was served every lunch and dinner. We feasted like kings and queens.





I'd like to thank a couple of people who personally took the time out to make this trip everything it was. Uncle Herman and Stephen for putting this together this trip, Wilson for always going above and beyond from translating to personal guided tours, Anita for running around doing everything behind the scenes, and Teddy for being the entertainment, our youth representative speaker, and extra efforts to ensuring everyone had a good time. Most importantly I'd like to thank THMANA for sponsoring the trip and giving the second generation an opportunity to visit such a beautiful country and to learn our heritage. We do not plan to end the trip in Taiwan. We intend to continue building our relationships and having group meetings. We have planned 3 trips since Taiwan and its now only April. We plan on meeting in Vegas, Los Angeles, and maybe Houston so we can continue to build upon the friendships. It was overall an amazing trip and I cannot wait until next year.

## Better Than I Remember: A Week in Taiwan

By Jimmy Cheng

I learned a lot from the speakers during the trip. We met everyone from top government officials to hotel owners. One of my favorite speakers was Mr. An-Ping Chang who is the creator, designer and owner of Fleur De Chine Hotel and Palais De Chine. He was such an interesting person. He talked about how the world was his playground. He took his love of history and built his hotels as an outlet to express himself. Passion was the foundation of his projects and it was apparent. He was a collector of all things and his hotels were a way for him to display his art and his gift to share with his patrons. Although we were only able to visit two of the many hotels created by Mr. Chang we were able to see that there was something not only very special and unique about the properties, it was also undeniably luxurious.

Overall the trip was a huge success. I learned so much and most importantly I made friends in which we will eternally have a special Taiwan trip bond that will last a lifetime.

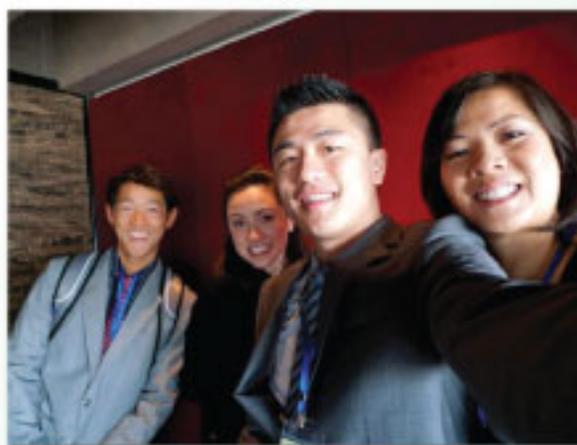


Having not been back to Taiwan for 27 years, I had no idea what to expect by spending a week there. I have few memories of Taiwan, but what I do remember was the delicious food at the night markets. My expectations for the trip were that I would tour famous landmarks, visit luxurious hotels, eat authentic Taiwanese food, gain insight on the hospitality industry and meet new friends. Not only were those expectations met, they were exceeded in every way possible.

Over the course of the trip, my peers and I had the privilege of sitting in on several presentations, speeches and meetings. They were all memorable in their own ways, but two of them in particular still resonates in my head. The first one was a presentation by Nelson Chang, designer of the fabulous PALAIS de CHINE in Taipei. Although the hotel is extremely fancy in its design and class, it was refreshing that Mr. Chang humbly carries the title of innkeeper in an age where people are labeled a "director" or "president" too casually. After touring the hotel and being awestruck by its beauty, we sat down to listen to Mr. Chang speak. He spoke articulately and told us about the inspirations behind his design choices. He also explained a bit about his background; that he was and still is in the IT industry here in the United States. Having an IT background myself, this showed me that even without much experience in the hotel industry you could still create something as grand as the PALAIS de CHINE. The other event that I remember fondly is the meeting with the mayor of Taichung. He had a friendly demeanor about him, yet a confidence that commanded attention and respect. He has a great sense of humor, drawing genuine laughter from his words. It was when he spoke about improving Taichung that I saw the passion he had for his job. It was inspiring to see a politician so invested in his vision of making the city something to be proud of. It triggered a sense of pride in being Taiwanese that may have been inside me but was dormant all these years.

On the trip, we toured several major cities in Taiwan. Amongst the packed itinerary, we visited amazing hotels and resorts, a beautiful floral park, a scenic lake and ate at great restaurants. We also traversed through night markets where the scent of stinky tofu took me back 27 years to my childhood. I eat a lot of Taiwanese

food here in California, but it really can't compare to the authenticity of the delicious meals we had in Taiwan. We certainly did not see and do everything Taiwan has to offer, but what we did experience was enough to show me why my family and friends love to visit often.



On the last day of the trip, we visited Tainan which happened to be where I was born. I moved to the US when I was just 6 years old, so I don't remember much from my time there. I had been excited about finally going back, but it didn't hit me until we were walking around the Tainan Confucian Temple. It's a feeling I'm not familiar with, but one that made me feel very sentimental and like I was home. That same night, I spent it with my uncle and his family, where my grandma also lives. She doesn't travel much because of her health, so we both carried the biggest smile when we saw each other. I had an intimate dinner with my uncle's family and afterwards my uncle drove me all over Kaohsiung to give me a personal tour. At one point when we were at the top of the mountain overseeing a gorgeous view of the city, I remember thinking to myself that this was as beautiful a place as any I could find back at home. Not only did I feel reconnected with my roots, I also felt that the city was only going to improve as I saw development of high rises and a beautiful two-mile-square park.



Of all the things I've gained on the trip, there is one that will probably be more tangible than the rest. I formed strong relationships with the people I met. The fact that we rode the bus together every day, toured every location together, ate every meal together, and even spent our free personal time together really gave us a chance to get to know each other in an environment where we didn't feel pressured to socialize but rather did it at our own free will. We've kept in touch since the trip and have planned several events in the near future. What I learned implicitly through this trip is that not only is networking an important aspect of success in the hospitality industry, but we are afforded this opportunity by our parents to bond with the next generation and that is something I won't take for granted.



## Taiwan Memoir



By John Lu

When I think of Taiwan, I think of 3 things; stinky tofu, the delicious fruit (len-bu), and shaved ice. Having visited Taiwan 3 months prior, I had already gotten my yearly dose of stinky tofu so I had no desire to attend THMANAYOP's (now that's a mouthful) 3rd annual

youth overseas program. In fact, it was “strongly advised” by Uncle Herman and my father to attend and so begrudgingly, I did. In retrospect, I have no regrets attending this trip and actually left with a new perspective of Taiwan; one that offered new insights to all my previous trips to Taiwan.



What made this trip particularly interesting was the economic and social dynamic behind Taiwan’s tourism landscape. With China and Taiwan opening direct flights into the country as well as imminent plans to open tourism to individual Chinese travelers, the need for tourism and hospitality is at the forefront. As a group, we were lucky enough to experience this first hand with excellent hotel tours, meetings with government officials, and the observation of two vocational schools geared towards hospitality.



I was particularly impressed with the efforts put forth by THMANA and our Taiwanese counterparts to make this trip as educational and as seamless as possible. I think in many of our minds, this trip was pretty much a free meal ticket. Therefore, the concerted efforts by both parties to make this an actual learning experience was very refreshing. I want to thank both organizers for sparing no expense with accommodations, food, sight-seeing and an overall great experience.



Not only will I take stinky tofu and shaved ice with me from this trip, but a new understanding of Taiwan’s tourism and hospitality. Beyond that, the relationships and friends that I have made during this trip are more than what I could have ever expected. While Taiwan (to me at least) will always be about family, food and heritage, this experience has shown me another facet of Taiwan, something I would have never seen had I not taken this trip.



## Memorable Experiences of Taiwan

By Kathy Chang



It has been 25 years since I had been back to Taiwan. I was both nervous and excited about seeing my extended family again and the six (6) days tour with the Taiwan Hotel/Motel Association of North America (THMANA). I received the itinerary ahead of time and perused it, but still had no idea what was to come. Little did I know those six (6) days were to be filled with splendid tours of hotels and Taiwan's treasured landmarks, some unforgettable people, great traditional Taiwanese foods and great laughs with new friends. The experience was one of the kind and memorable beyond my expectations.

It all started on Day One (1) at Holiday Inn Express Tao Yuan. Throughout the 6 days, we had the pleasure of visiting some of the most unique hotels in Taiwan. It was apparent that although Holiday Inn is part of the IHG group throughout the world, the properties in Taiwan were conceptually designed differently from the States. It was very educational to see how there is a broad spectrum of individuality (culture rather) within a company. In addition to touring several Holiday Inns, we also visited some unique establishments such as Palais de Chine, Mulan Motel and Lalu Hotel. Words cannot describe the French influence in the decorative details of Palais de Chine, the romantic spa like decoration of Mulan Motel or the sense of serenity at Lalu Hotel. In addition to touring great hotels/motels, we had the pleasure of staying at some of the most luxurious hotels in Taiwan (i.e. The Regent Hotel Taipei, Hotel One Taichung and Fleur de Chine Hotel Sun Moon Lake).

I also really enjoyed meeting with the government officials at Overseas Compatriots Affairs Commission (OCAC) and the Mayor of Taichung. It really warms my heart to see how our group was received with open arms, enthusiasm and eagerness. As part of the second generation, I felt important and that I was viewed as part of the future, rather than an extension of our parents.



Another unique difference between Taiwan and the States is hospitality. I was thoroughly impressed by the level of customer service and hospitality provided by the people. Where ever you go, you are immediately greeted and welcomed by an associate. You are never left alone more than 5 minutes before someone asks if they can help you. It all starts at the specialty hospitality schools in Taiwan. We were also fortunate enough to tour such a university, Hsinchu Chung Hwa University College of Tourism and National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality & Tourism. The universities stress the importance of high level and quality of service provided to guests of hotels, restaurants, etc. We witnessed the philosophy of hospitality throughout our stay in Taiwan. One of the most memorable hospitality moments is when we were leaving Fleur de Chine Hotel Sun Moon Lake. Like all other places we toured, the host, with fellow colleagues, will wave to the group as the bus pulls away. They stood in a line and all waved in unison. What was even more impressive with the group at Fleur de Chine Hotel was that they not only waved goodbye in unison, but as the two buses made the turn around the hotel driveway, they turned and continued waving until we were out of sight. Hospitality at its best!



Let's not forget about the fun sightseeing that we also enjoyed. Our first non-official tour was Du - His Floral Farm & Agriculture Center. The landscaping was breathtaking and it definitely set the tone for the rest of the trip and what other magnificent places we were to visit. The changing of the guards was a great experience and I was glad that I was able to catch it on video. Other memorable landmarks we toured and forever will stay with me are Sun Moon Lake and the boat ride and tour of the Love River in Kaohsiung.



Lastly, the gourmet food we enjoyed was like no other, from restaurants to night markets. Enjoying a meal together has always been an age old way of bonding and getting to know each other – this was no exception. In fact, the food we all enjoyed together, the time we spent together and all the laughs and jokes we told is exemplary of how strangers came together, connected and made long lasting friendships. There was never a time when I was hungry, and certainly never a dull moment in the 6 days we spent touring Taiwan. Even after a big meal, we somehow found the strength and time to make our way down to the Fong - Jia University Night Market and eat some more.



In summary, the THMANA Youth Group tour was a great success and would not have been possible without the many hours of hard work that was put into organizing this by THMANA. It provided great educational value and a glimpse of my rich heritage. Many thanks to everyone who helped put this itinerary together; as I was given the opportunity to reconnect with my heritage and connect with some new great friends. The culture, food, sights and experiences are all intertwined by the people. Thanks again!



## 2nd Generation Young Adult Trip



By Kevin Chen

This is my second time participating in the 2nd generation young adult hotelier trip to Taiwan and the experience was, again, overwhelmingly positive in all aspects.

We started off the trip in Tao Yuan where we visited the Holiday Inn Express, one of the many IHG properties that have been converted from originally local hotels. Right off the bat we could differentiate the focus on service quality between Asian hotels and those here in America. Every staff member we encountered displayed excellent guest service skills and what we would call 'above and beyond' here in America is their everyday practice. Even though these properties were once locally owned hotels, we could now see a very clear definition of IHG standards as well. The combination of a well known international brand which embraces local customs is a great combination that will sure bring much future successes.



We also visited many other famous hotels such as Fleur De Chine hotel by the beautiful Sun Moon Lake in Taichung; Mulan boutique hotel which offers many 'themed' villas that are absolutely spectacular; Palais De Chine Hotel which incorporate many historical French and European artworks in its design. The contrast between these unique hotels versus an international brand such as IHG enables us to get a deep understanding on the flexibility between the consistency in standards a franchise can offer and the availability in freedom on design and operation the boutique hotel can provide. How we can achieve a perfect marriage between the two concepts is truly a work of art.



Another highlight of the trip is simply all the gourmet food we got to enjoy. Everyday we started the day with great breakfast at the hotels, then every meal was customized for us to include all the best local special delicacies. I honestly didn't remember a moment where I felt hungry because I was eating all the time. Taiwanese are known for their hospitality, and we certainly felt it when we visited our sister hotel associations both in Taipei and Kaoshung. Everyone was so kind and nice that just made you feel right at home.





This trip is certainly not just all work and no fun. We toured Sun Moon Lake by boat and walked many historical night markets by foot. Every destination we went was designed to give the 2nd generations a better understanding of our Taiwanese root and heritage. For many of us who weren't born in Taiwan, this was a perfect opportunity to eat, drink and live like the locals, at least for a week. For those of us who spent our childhood here, it was an opportunity to reflect and reminisce our younger days and catch up with relatives. We also made great friends during this trip that I know will last a life time. I'd like to extend my deepest appreciation to THMANA and IHG, without their support this trip wouldn't have been possible. Thanks!



## Taiwan Memoir

By Kevin Liu

First of all, I would like to thank Uncle Ben Liu for giving me this great opportunity to participate in this trip and meet a great bunch of individuals in the same field. I would also like to thank President Uncle Herman Lin along with the sponsor – IHG Group for putting together an amazing tour of Taiwan Hospitality and last but not the least, our multi-talented Wilson for all the hard work he put into in this trip. The trip wouldn't be this exciting and memorable without all of you guys!



Many of us have not been back for years or have never been back before. This might have disconnected the place – Taiwan, where we all originated. The main purpose of this trip as we all know is our parents (first generations) want us (second generations) to see the place where they grew up and most importantly to experience Taiwanese culture. As I entered each of the properties we visited, a sense of warmth was experienced from each of the hoteliers. On the other hand, during our stay, the hoteliers tend to make our stay a memorable one by creating a story behind each of our stay. Surely, it was a “Home away from Home” experience. This shows how passionate the hoteliers are. In fact, by bringing this work ethic and spirit back to where I work, I'm sure this could be a comparative advantage for me – being different than the other hoteliers.

The country never sleeps. I wouldn't say I'm a complete stranger to Taiwan though I have not been back in 6 years. This time back, I would say Taiwan “wowed” me. In such a short period of time, I could not believe Taiwan has change this much. With the recent openings of Le Meridian, W Hotel, and Hotel de Chine in Taipei, this illustrates that tourism industry in Taiwan is booming and welcomes the outside world to discover its culture. Besides, according to Chung-Hwa University's president Mr. Su, Taiwan is recently promoting Eco-Tourism – bicycle tourism. This shows that the government is stimulating innovation through sustainability, bringing benefits to people today without damaging resources or prospects for future generation. Such eco-friendly concept was seen when we visited the Lalu Hotel and Fleur de Chine Hotel where both were designed with simplicity in preserving the natural surrounding. Furthermore, the high-speed rail connects the north and the south, allowing easier access around the country thus uniting people together. Taiwan has changed a lot this time around and has surely touched my heart! I will always be proud to be a Taiwanese.



This trip back has brought back the memories of Taiwan and more importantly showed me where I belong. Indeed, I hope we all could follow our parent's footsteps and shine outside of our home country. Thank you all once again.



## Taiwan Hotel Trip 2011

By Lucy Liu



It is always a privilege to be able to attend the Taiwan Trip and this time around it's no exception! I have been looking forward to the trip ever since Uncle Herman brought it up at the Taiwanese Hotel Motel Association Annual dinner in Houston in July of 2010. The Taiwan Hotel trip has always been a great experience to learn about industry trends, meeting new friends and connecting with old ones. Many who have attended in the past said that third time is the charm, and for me, this is very true. This year, the Taiwan Hotel trip coincided with the 100th year of Taiwan's birthday and I was lucky enough to get to see many celebratory events. We were also honor to have 2 executive from Intercontinental Hotel Group joining us, Mr. Mike Higgins and Mr. Raymond Wan to share their knowledge of the industry insight.





I have been fortunate to attend the Taiwan Hotel trip for more than once, and it is great to see that while the rest of the world is seeing some recession in the economy, Taiwan's hotel industry is thriving instead. Hotel rooms are hard to come by with the Taipei International Floral Exposition in addition to the tourists from mainland China even with the daily tourist limit of 3000 per day. There is still a wealth of tourism for the booming hospitality industry for Taiwan. I am so excited to witness a continuing growing hotel industry in Taiwan.

Of the many memories that I have, I especially enjoy the trip to Palais de Chine and listening to Mr. Nelson Chang talk about how he came about developing the theme behind Palais de Chine incorporating his passion for history and antiques into his hotels. The story of how he created the hotel brand is very touching and it is amazing how his hotel chain becomes a fixture of the Taipei hotel scene. Another memorable event was meeting Taichung's Mayor - Mr. Hu. Mayor Hu is very approachable and down to earth and I might take up his offer soon to visit and possibly invest in Taichung.



The Taiwan Hotel trip has definitely increased the wealth of knowledge and I cannot wait to apply many of the new strategies that I learned from this trip. We visited many IHG hotels throughout the Taiwan trip, it is interesting to see how each hotel in Taiwan using small changes to infuse local culture to create a different feel of the same hotel brand while still maintain the IHG core brand philosophy.



I am very thankful to all the sponsors and directors for their generosity and for sharing their knowledge. Also want to give a special thanks to Uncle Herman for organizing such a wonderful trip for the second generation. I have learned many valuable lessons that I will cherish with me and implement into my career. Knowledge is power and that I will always strive for greatness and never stop dreaming and imaging all the possibility. The Taiwan trip has always been my refueling station for my passion for the hospitality industry and I can't wait to put the lessons that I have learned into practice.



## Thoughts on Hotel / Motel Association Trip

By Scott Lin



I thought this year's trip was great. We got a chance to see many different hotels in Taiwan. We were able to see hotels that catered to the business traveler and also resort style hotels. We even got a chance to tour a Love Motel, which was to say the least very interesting!

When we stayed at the different hotels in each city, it was an excellent way for us to experience firsthand the customer service that Asia is known for.

Most importantly, the trip was beneficial for us second generation people to get to know each other, to network, and to share ideas and common experiences. I would like to thank the Taiwanese Hotel Motel Association of North America for planning the trip and giving us an opportunity to go to Taiwan. I would also like to thank the Association and Mr. Herman Lin, for providing an opportunity for all of us in the second generation to meet and network.



## "Taiwan Tour - a Memoir"

By Teddy Lin



In March of 2011, the Taiwanese Hotel Motel Association of North America (THMANA) sponsored its third Taiwan Youth Group Tour. This program served as a networking and business development trip, with a focus on introducing second generation Taiwanese Americans to the Hospitality industry in Taiwan. Our group consisted of both first and second generation Taiwanese hoteliers, proven industry leaders, and two InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) executives representing North America and Greater Asia



I often believe myself to be an optimist, but as an aspiring businessman and entrepreneur, I understand the importance of being logical and realistic. As such, I approached this trip optimistically as a great opportunity to network. However, to think that in six days I would make meaningful friendships or that I would somehow be inspired by newly met acquaintances-- I did not think that would be a realistic expectation. To my unexpected delight, and contrary to my business intuition, I met some tremendously interesting and inspiring people that will undoubtedly become lifelong friends.



As I recount the vivid memories from my time in Taiwan, I can honestly say that this year's 2011 Taiwan Youth Group Tour with THMANA was the trip of a lifetime. It can be very difficult to comprehend just how much we were able to accomplish over the course of six days. But we did it. And we did it in style. In fact, I will boldly state that I have never witnessed a better dressed group of young professionals!



THMANA had a very prestigious tour scheduled—numerous site tours, industry lectures, and business meetings across Taiwan. At the hotels, we were greeted warmly by general managers and hotel executives. These Taiwanese hoteliers hosted us on VIP tours of their four and five star hotel properties. I was very impressed by the high level of service, cutting edge design, and the attention to detail that I observed.



The hospitality universities at Chungwa and Kaoshung were equally impressive. I found it particularly fascinating how the universities have taken the hospitality business and transformed techniques and ideologies into a working art and science. Touring these campuses reminded me of how I am currently undergoing a similar learning experience. In fact, our association's members share the same mission as these universities: To teach and mentor the next generation of hoteliers. As the second generation of Taiwanese hoteliers in America, we are learning business skills and concepts directly from our parents and our community of experienced hotel owners.



In a strange way, it has been hard for me to grasp just how significant this trip was—not only for me, but for the entire Taiwanese community. Our tour group represents the success of Taiwanese immigrants and businessmen in the United States over the span of several decades. While the second generation is almost entirely American born or American raised, we are all uniquely Taiwanese and continue to represent the legacy that our parents and relatives have worked so hard to build.

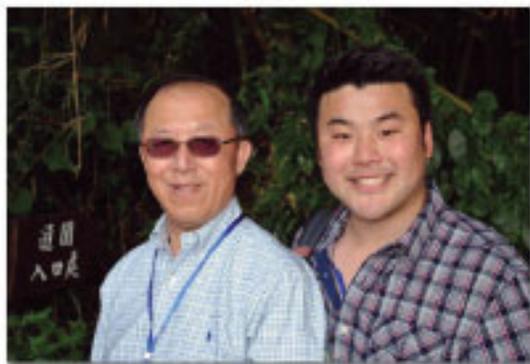


## 2011 THMANA Youth Group Taiwan Discovery Journey

I remember becoming acutely aware of our importance as we met with government officials at the Overseas Compatriot Affairs Commission (OCAC) in Taipei. Not only did we have the attention of government appointed officials, but we were also the focus of local media. Throughout the tour, we were formally received by several government agencies, including the Mayor of Taichung, where our association was the subject of economic development in Taiwan.



And the food. Oh, the food! We wined and we dined at the best restaurants that Taiwan had to offer. For most of us, we consider the delicacies that we enjoyed as our generation's soul food—a pleasant reminder that Taiwan will always be a home away from home. The greatest aspect of Taiwanese food is that it bridges all generational and cultural gaps. There was always an air of excitement in discovering new culinary delights and, as a group, parents and children eagerly anticipated course offerings. My dining experiences on the Taiwan tour always resulted in a lesson on culture and history. Whether it was the topic of family history or discovering the origins of timeless traditions, meals were always the perfect setting to share stories and learn from each other. The food is definitely an aspect of the trip that I will never forget!



For me, though, the highlight of the trip went beyond our exciting itinerary. The most important aspect of the trip was the sense of community and camaraderie I experienced within our association. This, to me, was the most influential lesson that I learned on the trip. I will think back fondly on all the storytelling, the faux matchmaking, and the countless toasts at dinner that I shared with the THMANA. I am smiling right now as I write this. I know that I will always relish these memories with first and second generation members alike. I finally understand the importance and the strength of a community.

I am indebted to the association and its esteemed board members for investing so much time, effort, and money to help me learn such valuable life lessons. THMANA has done a truly remarkable job of creating a quality community of hoteliers and its continued effort to involve the second generation is commendable. The concept of the youth tour, from its inception to this year's tour, really demonstrates the foresight of THMANA. Bringing together our second generation only serves to strengthen the bond of the community and secures the future success of the association.



## Taiwan Memoir



By Tim Liao

I am not one for flowery language, so I'll cut to the chase with this article. This was my first trip with THMANA. That, added to the fact that I didn't know this association existed until a couple months ago, meant I had no idea what to expect.

I've actually lived in Taiwan for my last five pre-university years, attending an American school. Although I thought I knew this country well, this trip has opened my eyes to different facets of life there that I otherwise would have never known.



The trip was filled with many meetings with government officials. Through observing, I learned the courtesies and mannerisms required to participate in such meetings. There seemed to be a lot of red tape and unnecessary speeches and gestures. However, I realized this is all necessary to get business done.

It wasn't all work and no play either. I appreciated the touristy activities too. They were a good time to not only see the sights in Taiwan but to also get to know the others on the trip. Not all the young people on the trip were from the hospitality industry. But we all shared the same love of Taiwan and the same interest in seeing Taiwan grow in the international community. I even re-met a long-lost elementary school friend!



In short, though the trip was tiring and jam-packed full of traveling and activities, it was an amazing trip that I will never forget.



The dinners were altogether a different story that still shared the same goal of the meetings – getting things done and maintaining guan-xi (social networking). They were a lot more relaxed than the meetings of course, and I saw that everybody is human; everybody wants to have a good time and see each other have a good time.

## THMANA Taiwan Youth Group 2011



By Vivian Chen

After a long flight from Los Angeles, I finally arrived in Taipei, Taiwan. It was my second time back to Taiwan in about 16 years since I've moved to the United States. The last time I was in Taiwan was in 2005, after high school graduation. The minute I stepped off the plane in Taiwan, the same thought always came to mind: the humidity. It's going to be a sweaty week.



I arrived two days before the official group start date and stayed with Anita at The Regent Hotel in Taipei. It was a good short period of time for relaxation before the tight schedules and eclectic group of people come pouring in. I got to see my cousin, visit some family friends, and pay a brief visit to my grandmother's place.



My initial impression of the trip was the lack of organization and sloppy coordination in following the itinerary time. On the first official day of the tour, the buses did not leave Taipei for Taoyuan until about 30 minutes behind the scheduled time because some people were late to meet at the lobby. It was an extra 30 minutes that could have been spent touring a hotel or hearing a speech. Fortunately, I am very glad that this improved tremendously throughout the rest of the trip. I'd like to note that different cultures approach the concept of punctuality differently. While time is money in the U.S. and I learned my lesson the very hard way half-assing on an assignment and then showing up tardy to class at Cornell, I learned that in some cultures it is considered rude to arrive to events on time (i.e. weddings in Taiwan). I learned that in terms of punctuality, Taiwanese people are almost always a little late (even Taiwanese-Americans), and I've learned to accept that. Here are two interesting anecdotes on the cultural differences in business practices: (1) The biggest clash of culture is when the Brazilians meet the Germans for a negotiation deal. (2) The last time trains were on time in Italy was when the Germans ran the country.

Punctuality aside, I was very impressed by the rich itinerary and the high quality of lodging accommodations during this trip. As I have learned that it was the first trip for many of us in the youth group, the coordinators really went out of their way to show us the country of Taiwan they so dearly love. For example, on the first night, we were all treated to dinner at the famous Din-Tai-Fong, whose juicy steamed dumplings made us all crave for more.



One will never go hungry in Taiwan. There is food available around the clock and 7-Elevens in almost every street corner. Staying at The Regent Taipei was an amazing experience which I will not forget. It is beneficial especially to those of us in the hotel business. I admire their services, amenities, and accommodations. Another interesting fact I learned about this hotel is that its location greatly generates revenues for the property outside of hotel rooms. Its amenities became a hotspot for locals to meet and have a drink. The lobby, the restaurants, the lounges, and the spas made guests and locals repeat customers. There was something for everyone. Coming from a business and real estate background, I admire this hotel's strategic location and how it took advantage of the structure to develop facilities that generate extra operating revenue. It was perhaps my most favorable hotel to stay during the trip.



My personal favorite activities of the trip were: touring Palais de Chine in Taipei, touring Holiday Inn Express Taichung, touring Mulan Motel in Taichung, visiting Sun Moon Lake & Boat Ride, and touring Fleur de Chine. Since I was involved in the renovation project of one of my hotel properties, being able to see the design concept and structure of each of these mentioned properties allowed me to compare and contrast the difference between hotel development approaches and hotel operating approaches in branded and non-branded hotels in Taiwan and in the United States. I noticed that Taiwan has become a very service-oriented economy, especially in the urban areas and in hotels & popular tourist destinations. Their service culture is adopted from the Japanese, whose customer service practices and product/packaging designs are the top in Asia, and highly reputable globally. This courteous attention to customers is a practice from which we could learn here in the U.S., where we tend to focus more on efficiency and cost-effective approaches to problem-solving and customer relations.

Before the trip, I initially set up a blog to specifically document each day's activities. I would write about the day each night after I get back to the hotel room, so that the day's experiences and memories would be documented and not fade away with time.

However, due to the vast amount of good time I've had and the numerous friendly and interesting new friends I've met throughout the trip, I was not able to keep up with the nightly blogging. That was how much fun I've had in Taiwan! (I was able to make one post on the first night. If you are interested in reading about my first day, please visit <http://thmasctaiwantour.blogspot.com>)



By the last day, we were all tired and happy. Everyone came back with new friends. Also, everyone had the chance to become more familiar with their family roots. We experienced the warm hospitality of the Taiwanese people and got in touch with the land from where our families come. I hope that the people of Taiwan will not lose their friendliness and warmth as the country becomes more internationalized. These are traits that differentiate the Taiwanese people from the rest of Asia, and for that I am proud when I say that I am Taiwanese. I want to thank the Taiwan Hotel Motel Association of North America (THMANA) for a wonderful experience. It has been a grateful opportunity for the second generation to meet each other and form new connections. Who knows? Some of us have been inspired to make grand plans to improve and expand our hotel businesses in the United States and across the Pacific. We are at the position of being part of the best of both worlds. We have the obligation of taking the advantage of the chances given to us and move to a higher level. Many ideas are brewing... Thank you all for an incredible journey.



## Taiwan Memoir

By Shanda L. Gorden

Upon landing at the Tao Yuan International airport I had no idea what to expect. From what I was told, I knew it would be an educational expedition. I frankly had no intention of making friends as I was not sure if I would be accepted by the youth in the group or if the potential “friendships” made would extend beyond the duration of the trip. I was, however, looking forward to expanding my knowledge and trying out all of the delectable snacks that I had heard so much about. What I gained from this trip truly exceeded my expectations. I toured and was educated on some amazing properties, met endearing individuals and learn a few things about myself that I might not have otherwise had it not been for this trip. Each day was uniquely memorable.



We began this trip with a tour at the Holiday Inn Express in Tao Yuan. The rooms were cozy and welcoming. I found the bathrooms interesting as the bathroom door doubled as a bathroom door and a shower door. Later that day I was able to experience some well anticipated snacking. We ate at Din Tai Fong, which was conveniently surrounded by multiple Taiwan-based small boutique style shops which sold a variety of cookies, chocolates and more. What a great way to end the day. By this point, everyone was getting to know each other and there a developing sense of family among the group or at least to me there was. Later that evening I went with Alice and Uncle Stephen to visit Alice’s grandmother and family. I enjoyed this.

Day two of aventura Taiwan we toured one of the most remarkable hotels that I have ever visited. We toured the Palais de Chine. Taiwan is known for many fascinating stories and folklore so it was interesting to learn that despite the portrayal of rich history at the Palais de Chine, it was in fact nothing more than a product of one wildly imaginative man—An-Ping Chang. He created a story, a history for each property. The Palais de Chine was unique to say the least. Dinner that evening was at Plum Restaurant. This was the same evening that the members of our table “fisted” Jimmy. This dinner also marked the moment on the trip where the bonding that was subtly taking place between the youth was outward and obvious. Even on a small outing after dinner to the Marquee, we continued to take care of one another in interesting and unmentionable ways.



The second most memorable property of the trip was one that we visited on day three. Lucky for us, John felt like extending some of the hospitality he had experienced at the hotels from the first two days by seeing some guests off at the Mulan Motel in Tai Chung. This motel had beautifully themed rooms and for reasonably priced hourly rates it seemed like a great honeymoon location or even a romantic getaway. Later in the evening we decided to finally make our way to the night market. Even on a full stomach, it was difficult to pass up the opportunity to try the snacks and tasty treats that Taiwan is famous for. Among these was one item that I had previously made quite an effort to avoid due to the rancid smell. I am sure you all know what I am referring to—stinky tofu. The smell of “the best” stinky tofu resembles, at least to me, the smell of the worst public squatting toilets in China and that smell is repulsive. Since I was being open to new experiences and ideas, I could no longer avoid at least sampling the dreaded stinky tofu. I was pleasantly surprised to

discover that stinky tofu did not taste of fecal matter, but was rather tasty. The after taste, unfortunately, was like the smell and I was thankful I had packed plenty of minty-fresh gum.



Day four the weather was gloomy and we were headed to Sun Moon Lake. I had heard of the famed location and was elated that we would be able to visit it. Sadly, upon arrival at Sun Moon Lake the weather had not changed and we were unable to experience the Lake's beauty in its entirety. In the evening we toured and checked into Fleur de Chine. Fleur de Chine similar to the Palais de Chine in regards the ideology behind it. The theme was entirely different. I wanted to add that I am grateful that we were able to stay later than previously anticipated—Thank you Uncle Herman for allowing us a few extra hours of sleep.



The last hotel we would tour was on day five of our Taiwan tour. This was the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Kao Shong. That night a boat ride on the Kao Shong Love River and a KTV farewell party had been planned. The KTV farewell party was planned by the first generation for the youth which I thought was an incredibly thoughtful gesture. The theme songs for that evening bounced between a Jay Chou song that I cannot remember the name for and Disney's A Whole New World. It had definitely been like a whole new world in Taiwan and as cheesy as it sounds I do feel forever changed because of this trip.

I would not have changed one thing about this trip, with the exception of the fact that the scheduled itinerary was almost pointless because we were almost always running late. I appreciate the flexibility and that most everyone was lax and comfortable with how everything turned out despite not following a rigorous schedule. I am thankful I was given this opportunity and did not pass it up. I hope that the friendships gained on the trip continue on for years to come so that we can continue to grow and learn from each other in life, and business.



## Root Finding Trip

### Journey Designed For the Youth Group to Visit Taiwan



By Mei-fen Chen

After a thoughtful arrangement and a thorough planning of Herman Lin, the 6th Chairman of Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American, and Chris Chiu, the Founding Chairman of Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American, we, members of Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American, finally launched our trip successfully for the 3rd Youth Group to visit our mother land from March 13 to March 18.

The Youth Group arrived at Taiwan on March 13 and everybody enjoyed the comfortable Taipei weather; with light wind blowing under the warm sunshine. The marvelous weather made Taipei spring scenery charming and fascinating. The 42 group members took 2 luxury tour buses, provided by Long-Mao Tour Company, met at Tao-Yuan Holiday Inn Express to start our journey.

Our first touring destination was "Presidents Chiang Residence & Da-His Floral Farmer & Agriculture Center" and "Ta Shee Blooming Oasis". The vista of the thick green forest, the quiet trail and unlimited green prairie, flooded with fresh air, delivered picturesque view to us and it made everyone relaxed and cheerful. While we wandered along Ta Shee ancient streets, the old-fashion flavors and its splendid art designs led us back to the history and it also made the sceneries impressive and memorable.

After visiting the grand architecture of Shen-Ken Holiday Inn and Shen-Ken old market streets in the afternoon, we checked in at Grand Formosa Hotel Taipei, situated at Chun-Shan Bei Road, Taipei. The dinner was served at Ting Tai Fong Restaurant, located at downstairs of Tien-Mu Sogo department store. Ting

Tai Fong is well known for its business oriented management and delicious food, including small steamed bun, steamed dumpling and many other delicious dishes. We were very happy to enjoy various tasteful and splendid foods there. After the meal, group members were free to tour the night food courts or the stores around 101 empire building. The 101 building is the landmark symbol of Taipei, which penetrates thousands feet high into the sky. Taipei streets, avenues, buildings and water spots are visible when people stand on top of 101 empire building; and the overwhelming beauty of Taipei night sceneries are especially gorgeous beyond the words. All kinds brand name products, featured with innovative designs and creative fashions, vividly display the economic strength, quality life and the expansion power of Taiwan.



In the early morning of March 14, we visited the Juen-Pin Grand Hotel, located at the street across the rear part of the train station. It was our honor and pleasure to have Mr. Nelson A. Chang, Chairman of Hotel Directors, to host us throughout the entire tour. Chairman Chang used to stay in U.S.; therefore, he developed a solid western cultures background there. The delicate decoration and grand appearance enhances the beauty of Hotel and make it attractive. The impressive flavors of Juen-Pin Grand Hotel derive from the proficient knowledge on mingled arts and epicurean taste skills of Chairman Chang that he earned from Oriental and Western worlds. Charming classic music and the elegant exotic fine arts displayed in the dining area make delicious French Meals especially tasty and enjoyable. Juen-Pin Grand Hotel is indeed the best place to have the body relaxed and the mind refreshed.

Group members then visited Overseas Compatriots Affairs Commission (OCAC) at 10:30 AM. Mr. Chung-Rong Hsu, the Deputy Minister, and Ching Kao, Director of the 2nd Department, of OCAC cordially hosted us; and they stimulated the Youth Group spiritually before entertained us with old fashion Railroad lunch box, which reminded us of the jovial memories we experienced with the old fashion lunch box.

After lunch, a forum was held in OCAC conference room to share work experiences and conduct business communication. The seminar were presided by Mr. Mike Higgins, the representative of International Holiday Inn Group (IHG), Raymond Wan and Mr. Alfred Y. S. Hsu, Taiwan Hotel Owner (he now serves as the Chairman of Taipei Hotel & Motel Association, and he will serve as the Chairman of National Hotel Association in the near future).

After the meeting, we immediately drove to Council For Economic Planning and Development of Executive Branch to visit Chairman I-Zu Liu for advices regarding our future development. Chairman Liu persistently encouraged compatriot group members to invest at Taiwan in the next 10 years, the golden period for hotel investment at Taiwan. Our group members have lots of interests in these topics.

At the twilight time, we visited the elegant Mu-Lan Hotel located at Da-Zhi, Taipei. Surrounding and bracing by a forest, Mu-Lan Hotel is characterized with various layers of trees and appealing plants. Every room is filled with sunshine, green plants and stream of water works. Staying in the Hotel, whenever customers sit down, lie down, walk along the trail or simply relax in the Spa, they are always accompanied by pot plants and sun beams, penetrating through leaves; meanwhile, the reflected sunlight entertain people with different shades of shadows and pictures.

In the evening, our Group invited many distinguished guests and friends for dinner at Mei-Ze Restaurant; including Director Ching Kao, Branch Manager Wei-Teh Lin of OCAC, Chairman I-Zu Liu of the Council For Economic Planning and Development of Executive Branch, Mr. Alfred Y. S. Hsu, the Chairman of Taipei Hotel & Motel Association, the newly elected female Chairman and members of Taipei Hotel & Motel Association. Many other Taipei hotel owners also

joined our dinner party; every host and guest happily enjoyed the wonderful meals and we all had a great time together.

On March 15, we left Taipei in the morning to visit the Tourism Department at College of Tourism at Hsin-Chu. The president of the Tourism College is the former Minister of The Tourism Bureau and he is dedicated to educate the younger generation for our country. Many professional tourist guide and numerous strong touring teams had been graduated from here since 2007. The campus is beautified by flourishing flowers and beautiful trees and well organized buildings. Here, we talked to many students and learned a quite bit touring information and tourism status about Taiwan touring industry. We were deeply impressed by students' assiduous attitude and their disciplined manners, displayed via their cordial entertainment and the business plan we shared together. We were deeply touched when the students lined up and politely waved their farewell to us with neat uniforms on.

We then proceeded to Taichung City to visit the city government office at 5:00 PM. Mayor Jason C. Hu (Chih-chiang Hu) entertained us cordially; the mayor of Fong-Yun City and the chief of Wu-Zu county (the close neighbors of Taichung City) were also invited to participate our business meeting; emphasizing on taking the extraordinary investment advantages of the location around metropolitan Taichung area and benefiting from its pleasant weather. In the evening, the Global Female Club for Business Women (GFCBW) treated us the dinner at Taichung Grand Japanese Restaurant. We then checked in at Hotel One after meal. It was fortunate for us to meet Mr. Stanley Yen (嚴長壽先生), the Godfather of Taiwan Hotel, at the entrance of the hotel. Unfortunately, Mr. Yen was too busy to share with us personally about his unique and wonderful career history.

In the early morning on March 16, our group left Taichung to start our exciting journey to Sun-Moon Lake. As soon as we arrived at Sun-Moon Lake at noontime, we rent boats to tour the Lake. The weather was excellent, the sky was covered with scattered light clouds with mild wind; and the touring boats generated small ripples as we surfing along the lake. It is impressive to find out that the ruins, caused by 921 earth quake, were cleaned up and all the buildings and temples were rebuilt back to its original configurations.

The LaLu Hotel (涵碧樓) already recovered its beauty and the scenery around it is still unique and attractive as before. We were lucky to have the manager of the LaLu Hotel guided us throughout the hotel and briefed us the special features of the sceneries around LaLu Hotel.

The lunch was served at LaLu Hotel Restaurant, where we had beautiful panorama views of the Sun-Moon Lake; the sceneries include the afar mountain, scattered forests, water streams, and the flowing light surfing along the lake. The picturesque paradise is the dream resort palace for young people to take vacation; it also can be the best candidate for marriage and honey moon. That's why Chairman Stephen Hsu, Chairman Herman Lin and Director John Chang are eager to advise their children, Alice, Kathy, Scott and Ted, who were travelling with them, to consider planning their marriages at Sun-Moon Lake.

After meal, we toured around the lake via buses. Around the lake, the tall straight pine trees and various exotic flowers are visible everywhere along the winding trails and splendid landscapes; the addition of the sound of hometown enhanced our care and love for our sweet homeland.

In the evening, we checked in at Fleur de Chine Hotel, which is the only hotel that provides Natural SPA in Sun-Moon Lake area. After meal, all the members fully enjoyed the sophisticated spa and its entertaining facilities. The soaking spa bath before going to bed assuaged our exhausted bodies, caused by the busy journey; and the soothing spa treatment also refreshed our weary mind. The smell of the light sulfur, acquired from the spa, left us an unforgettable good memory.

In the early morning of March 17, we wandered along the lake with light mist clouded the sky and spread across the field, depicting a charming portray. Along the walking trails, the blooming flowers released pleasing fragrance and the early birds chirped its praise for a promising day; it was fantastic and delightful to enjoy the tranquil and serenity in this paradise. After cleanup, we had a healthy breakfast serving with organic vegetables and fresh fruits.

We then left Sun-Moon Lake for National Kao-Shong University of Hospitality and Tourism; and it was about

2:00 PM when we arrived there. National Kao-Shong University of Hospitality and Tourism is one of the best touring colleges in Taiwan and it makes significant contribution to educate professionals for the promotion and progress of Taiwan touring industry.

Recently, the growth of Taiwan Hotel & Motel Industry has been aided by brand name hotels, including Holiday Inn, Marriott, Best Western and Hilton Hotels. However, the participation of family owned motels adds distinct flavors to entertain tourists. These family based motels are characterized with family oriented fashion, design, management and funding; they emphasize on the unique features of graceful living environment or specialize on extraordinary meal styles.

Our afternoon mission was touring around I-Ta Crown Plaza for its spectacular design and its grand architectures, which possess similar configurations as we learned from Las Vegas. After making comparison, it is impressive to find out that the magnificent and luxurious I-Ta Crown Plaza outperforms the quality design and scale levels of its corresponding Las Vegas models.

We toured on Kaohsiung I-River in the evening. The charming sceneries and enchanting atmosphere reminded Chairman Herman Lin of his romantic love story with his wife years ago. Tonight is our last night to stay at Taiwan, everyone is trying to recover the beautiful memories that we owned before at Taiwan. For the young and first time Taiwan visitors, they especially appreciate the great opportunity to travel along their motherland and they treasure everything that they learned and enjoyed at Taiwan.

On March 18, before going back to US, group members were busy packing their rich belongings, acquired at Taiwan. We had an unexpected and distinguished visitor, Ambassador Kenneth K. M. Liao (廖港民大使), while we were taking breakfast. Ambassador Kenneth K. M Liao formerly stationed at Houston and New York City, and he now is in charge of Southern Bureau of Consular Affairs of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We deeply appreciate the friendship and care that Ambassador Liao brought to us; even though he was too busy to stay longer with us.



In the morning we visited 'Chihkan Tower' (赤崁樓), which is also known as "Red-topped Tower" in Southern Taiwan; during our trip we had the chance to taste the wonderful flavor of Dan Dan Noodles at Tainan. On our touring buses, we enjoyed members' jovial songs, including the singing of Yian-Guan Hon (Teresa Li-Chun Teng's song: under banyan tree) and the song of Lin-Lin Chang and Lydia (when you will be back?). The laughter accompanied us throughout our trip to our final destination.

We arrived at the hometown of Chris Chiu, Founding Chairman of our Association, at dusk. Mr. Chiu, his wife and their relatives treated us with an abundant and authentic Taiwanese feast before we return US; the meals included field raised chicken and many other delicious dishes. After dinner, the tourists split in two buses, one goes to the airport and the other bus drives back to Taipei.

The 6-day/5-night journey to Taiwan quietly reached to its end. We fully understand that besides the souvenirs we've packed many responsibility and mission into our luggage. The subtle feeling when we touched our homeland, the familiar sound uttered from the hometown and the agitated nostalgia vibrating deeply in our hearts are the big causes that always connect our minds to the beautiful island, where we were born, raised and nourished.

### Postscript:

*Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American has been established for 6 years in North America and the Association is dedicated to educate the youngsters and pass our mission to the next generation. This Root Finding Trip is the 3rd journey that the senior group members escort the younger generation to Taiwan for their homeland heritage education.*

*To pass the hotel heritage and assets to the young generation, it demands not only the possession of professional knowledge, the accumulation of financial resources and the acquisition of related facilities; it also requires the love for the homeland and the recognition of its culture. Root Finding, root nourishing and root expansion is the right way to survive. It is a long road for us to pursue our goal and achieve our target. However, the younger generation that we are fostering is featured with talents that we need to expedite our success. It is feasible to utilize the inherent advantages of the youth, including their languages skills, professional practices, business disciplines; and the accumulated assets of the seniors, such as the traditional ethics, morality and integrity, to foster the unique management model and principles for Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American.*

*It is imperial to have the younger generation visit Taiwan frequently to breathe homeland air and touch the land there. That is our dedicated endeavor to accomplish our mutual goals.*

*We have been constantly assisted and supported by our government via OCAC; additionally, this year we also have strong financial input support from IHG. These extraordinary achievements derived from the significant contributions and services from Herman Lin, Chairman of Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American; Chris Chiu, the Association Founding Chairman; the former Chairman of Taiwan Hotel & Motel Association of North American, Stephen Hsu, Nicolas Teng, Wilson Wang, Jerry Wong and secretary Anita Ko. It can't be over emphasized that their dedicated hard work and thoughtful planning make many activities and our trip possible.*

*From the bottom of our hearts, all of the group members would like to candidly acknowledge the significant contributions that our leaders accomplished; and sincerely express our gratitude and thanks to them.*

## The Journey to the Root

Centennial . . . .

a mark in history,

a timeline worthy to be cherished,

a celebration for Taiwan and its compatriots abroad.



By Wilson Wang

2011 celebrates the fall of terrorism leader, the rise of world economy, the recovery of hospitality industry, the increase of environmental preservation, and, the most important, the rising focus on our younger generation.

On March 13, 2011, a group of 42 hoteliers returned Taiwan to visit their root and rediscover the arts of service industry. This discovery team, known as the Youth Group, was led by Herman Lin, President of Taiwan Hotel/Motel Association of North America, and with the help from InterContinental Hotels Group. The trip was designed to have the second generation of Taiwanese-American hoteliers rediscover the passion in the service industry once found by their parents, and this trip turned out to be the most rewarding and innovative travel experience we had ever encountered.

Our first hotel stop was at the Holiday Inn Express Taoyuan. It is centrally located in Taoyuan City, only minutes from the Taoyuan International Airport, Hsin-Chu Technology Parks, Nangong Convention Center, and Taipei. Through Taiwan High Speed Rail, Taipei can be reached in short 25 minutes ride. The hotel was placed in service since 2008, and this young property has already won business from everywhere for its quality of services and amenities.

Second hotel we visited in Taiwan was the Holiday Inn Taipei Nangong Convention Center. This hotel is located near the Nangong Convention Center and was converted from an office building. The General Manager explained to us that the biggest challenge at the beginning was how to preserve the structure and convert it with a hotel structure profile; however, at the end, they've abandoned the ideas and demolished all

interior walls. They also believe in the philosophy "if you going to do it, do it right," and this slogan proved to be a successful strategic maneuver. Currently the hotel is a well known business and social gathering place for people around the area; in addition, it hosted numerous business functions in its well amenitized ballrooms.

The third hotel we visited took place the next morning, the Palais de Chine at Taipei. The Palais de Chine, the name stands for "Paris in China", signifies the enriched European culture like a mirage placed within the concrete desert. This artistically innovated palace was filled with French elegance and culturally enriched architectural design. The theme of the hotel clearly demonstrated the French royal and historical flares, yet it found its fine balance with modern Chinese theme built within its guest quarters. Furthermore, it blended the most advanced modern technology with electronic butler service, created a "home away from home" experience to all its patients. Mr. Chang, owner of the hotel, personally led the tour of his master piece and introduced us his hospitality empire — the L'Hotel de Chine Group. At the end of the tour, everyone was fascinated by the intricate details in design and services to the guests.

The fourth hotel we visited was the Holiday Inn Express Taichung. Similar to the Holiday Inn Express Taoyuan, it also designed to facilitate the needs of business travelers. The Holiday Inn Express Taichung adopted the modern designs throughout the guestrooms and corridors. One unique feature of this hotel is that it was converted from a parking structure. Furthermore, it also has a retail section in the building with well known retail shops occupied the spaces. The building's interior center courtyard is the perfect location for its food and beverage services to hotel guests as well as shoppers. Unlike most hotels we experienced, Holiday Inn Express Taichung was a definite shocker to us.



The fifth hotel we visited was the Mulan Motor Hotel Taichung. Often been called by the nickname “Love Hotels”, Mulan Motor Hotel is one of the leaders in Taiwan with multiple locations. Each villa was an eye-opener for the youth group members, exploring every corner and amenity from private swimming pools to oversized tubs, and the artistic furniture that blended within each theme room, whether it was the safari or jungle themes, Mediterranean or Southeast Asian styles. Everything was a big surprise to the members and the discussions focused on how this business model could implement in the U.S. Mulan, the eye-popping jewel, sparked the intent of this trip — rediscover the hospitality industry.

The sixth hotel we visited was the Lalu Hotel at Sun Moon Lake. This historical resort was once the vacation spot for ex-President Chiang. The hotel still preserved many historical pieces memorialized the legend whom was once the leader of our nation. Situated at lakefront, this resort was once neglected. The current owner, Mr. Cheng-Yi Lai, revitalized this resort and is now one of the most well known hotels in Taiwan. Together with the natural beauty of the Sun Moon Lake, Lalu Hotel truly earned its world recognition as one of the leading hotels in Taiwan.

The seventh hotel we toured was the Fleur de Chine at Sun Moon Lake. We have toured the sister hotel Palais de Chine and both properties had a striking similarity — both hotels are extremely detailed in design and sanatorium in guest services. From the natural earth-tone color theme to the open views Sun Moon Lake scenery, from variety of cultural cuisines to family activity rooms, and from lakeside hiking to rock climbing, everyone was impressed by the tiniest detail in operations. The hotel was in such a fine detail in catering its guests and brought natural hot springs to each and every guestroom. To the vacation goers, this was the best feature anyone can ask for of a hotel, not to mention the courteous hoteliers working 24/7.

The last hotel we visited was the Crowne Plaza Kaohsiung. This magnificent hotel is adjacent to the E-Da World Shopping Mall and Water Park. The hotel itself has an artistic pool that presents water dance show similar to the one at Bellagio Las Vegas. The hotel was opened in April 2010 and already received numerous recognitions for its presence in Kaohsiung region. Hotel has 656 guestrooms, seven restaurants, a theater-style conference center, a rooftop garden with dome ceiling, and a huge ballroom in European theme décor. With its adjacent water park and outlet shopping mall, this grand scale of this hotel earned the property an iconic figure in the new southern Taiwan region.

During this visit to Taiwan, we have also visited two hospitality emphasis universities — Hsinchu Chung-Hwa University’s College of Tourism and National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism. Both education institutions offered variety of hospitality industry related majors. A special note worthy to mention is the Hsinchu Chung-Hwa University’s College of Tourism. Founded in 2007, the University retained Mr. Chen-Tien Su as the Dean for the College of Tourism. Previously the Minister of Tourism Branch of Department of Transportation, Dean Su assumed the leadership position and brought new blood into Taiwan hospitality industry. Our youth members visited the school and chatted with students over learning the industry and future prospects. The exchanges were beneficial to both sides as they learned more of the guest services with different cultural influences.

The journey began with history’s mark as Centennial for Republic of China, and our youth group is still walking on the path in the hospitality journey that carried from their parents. As we returned to the States at the end of the trip on March 18th, the bond of these new bloods continues to grow. On Memorial Day weekend, a group of fourteen brave ones assembled a reunion gathering at the world famous Las Vegas. It was a fun-filled weekend and memorable moments carved in the hearts of the attendees. The future lies within the young! The vow of this new found friendship will continue as they grow to support each other, making the Taiwanese-American hoteliers bigger and stronger in the future. Rise up and shine our Youth Group Members!

## Letter from the Editor

It comes with great pleasure and a great honor to be given the assignment of publication editor for THMANA's Special Edition Youth Tour Magazine. 2011 marked the 100 year anniversary of Taiwan. With this historic achievement in mind, the purpose of our trip innately had more significance than years passed. More so, the tourism industry in Taiwan has also reached a pivotal point in its history. With the recent opening of cross-strait travel, Taiwan has become a top destination for mainland Chinese tourists. Today, Taiwan allows 3,000 tour-led Chinese tourists across its border daily. With a seven day average length of stay, that totals to a potential 7.6 million Chinese visitors travelling to Taiwan every year. The Taiwanese government hopes to capitalize on this growth by incentivizing tourism investments and promoting their "7+1 Program" to combine Chinese tourism with medical check-ups.

Enter the Taiwanese Hotel Motel Association of North America. Taiwan, and Greater Asia on a whole, arguably leads the way in hospitality service, technology, and design. However, Taiwan's tourism development and growth can only expand as quickly as its private investments and industry leadership. Our association currently holds the answer to both those dilemmas. Our community currently comprises a wealth of proven hospitality leaders and an entire second generation of Taiwanese American hoteliers. It is no wonder why the Taiwanese government openly welcomed and hosted our Youth Tour.



By Teddy Lin

Foreign investment aside, Taiwan's Hospitality Industry continues to thrive based on the aforementioned tourism climate. As our group toured the Hospitality-specific Universities at Chungwa and Kaoshiung it was evident that Taiwan takes tourism very seriously. Coming from an American perspective, Taiwanese hotels offer amenities that far exceed our guest's expectations. As hoteliers, touring hotels abroad becomes a part of our continued education. New concepts, new ideas, and new technologies are all prevalent in these cutting-edge Taiwanese hotels. But as practical businessmen and businesswomen, we must discern between novel ideas and those that do not offer a full return on their investment. Regardless, we take mental notes and anticipate seeing some of these new ideas and concepts reach the United States in 3-5 years.

In Taiwan, Food and Beverage is an integral aspect of Taiwanese culture and, correspondingly, the hospitality industry. Hotel brands considered by American standards to be "limited service" or "economy" hotels offer full Food and Beverage outlets onsite. With that in mind, it was equally important for our hotel tour to concentrate on exploring local Taiwanese cuisine. As you will read from the memoirs of my colleagues, no one will be issuing any complaints!

As I have been compiling essays and memoirs from this year's participants, I am overcome with joy from all the great insight and fun memories that we have all shared. As a reader, I hope that you too will be able to feel the excitement and purpose that we shared as a group. And hopefully, our memories will help to inspire future association trips and continued support from our members and community.



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