

Province with plenty to offer

Zhejiang has a cornucopia of tourist locations, **Yang Yijun** details some of them.

Zhejiang province has more to offer than just the tourist cities of Hangzhou, Ningbo and Wenzhou. With many scenic spots, there is a lot to discover in the province, which lies just to the south of Shanghai. After a tour of the Expo 2010 Shanghai, be sure to check out some of these places for an authentic and less touristy experience.

1. Fenghua

Located in eastern Zhejiang province, Fenghua is most famous for the Xuedou Mountain Scenic Area. The scenic areas include Xikou town, Xuedou Mountain and Tingxia Lake. Xikou town is the hometown of Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese military and political leader who led the Kuomintang for five decades. Chiang's residences, which are all traditional Chinese-style houses, including Fenggao House, where he was born, are well maintained.

2. Tiantai

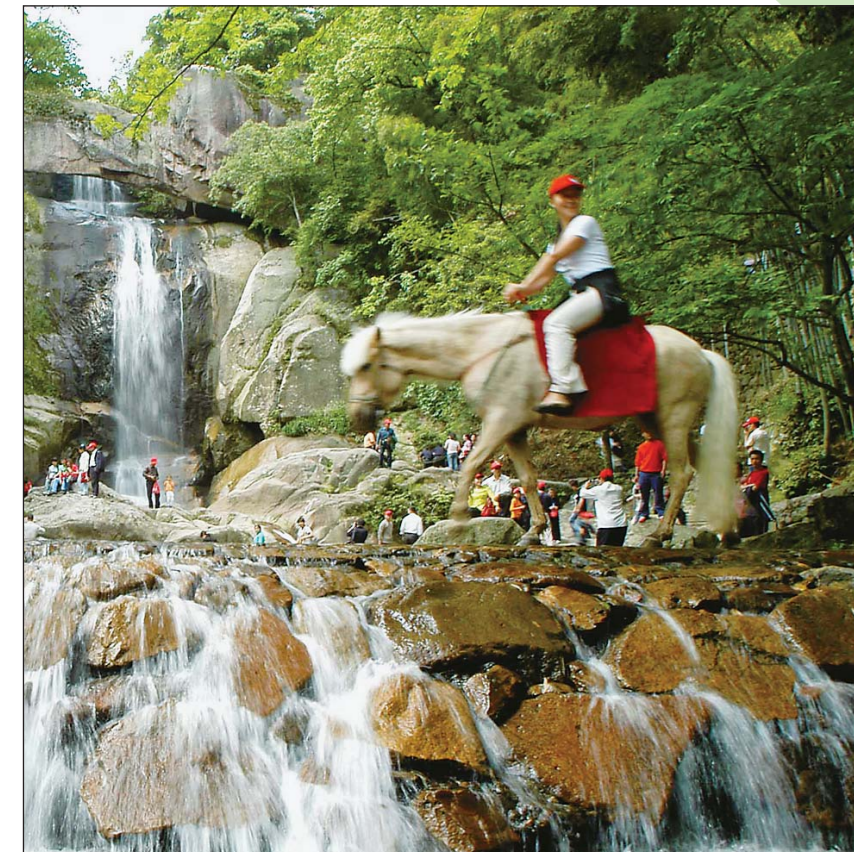
Tiantai county, in eastern Zhejiang province, is named after Tiantai Mountain, one of the Zhejiang's most famous mountains. The mountain is known for its steep slopes and cliffs. Its highest peak, Huading, is 1,098 meters above sea level.

As the birthplace of the Tiantai school, one of the most important schools of Buddhism in China, Korea, Vietnam and Japan, Tiantai Mountain has one of the best-maintained temples in China, Guoqing Temple, which was built in AD 605 during the Sui Dynasty.

3. Jiangshan

Jiangshan city is in southwestern Zhejiang province, at the juncture of Zhejiang, Fujian and Jiangxi provinces. The city's famous Jianglang Mountain gets its name from the legend of three brothers surnamed Jiang who climbed to the peak of the mountain and became the three huge rocks located there. The three rocks, as high as 369 meters, sit aside on the top of the mountain, creating a marvelous spectacle.

Yet another impressive and beautiful part of the mountain is Yixiantian, where rays of sunlight shine between the gaps of rocks. The width between two of the huge rocks is less than 4 meters, so only a tiny light beam passes through the gap. The scene is especially magnificent under bright sunlight.



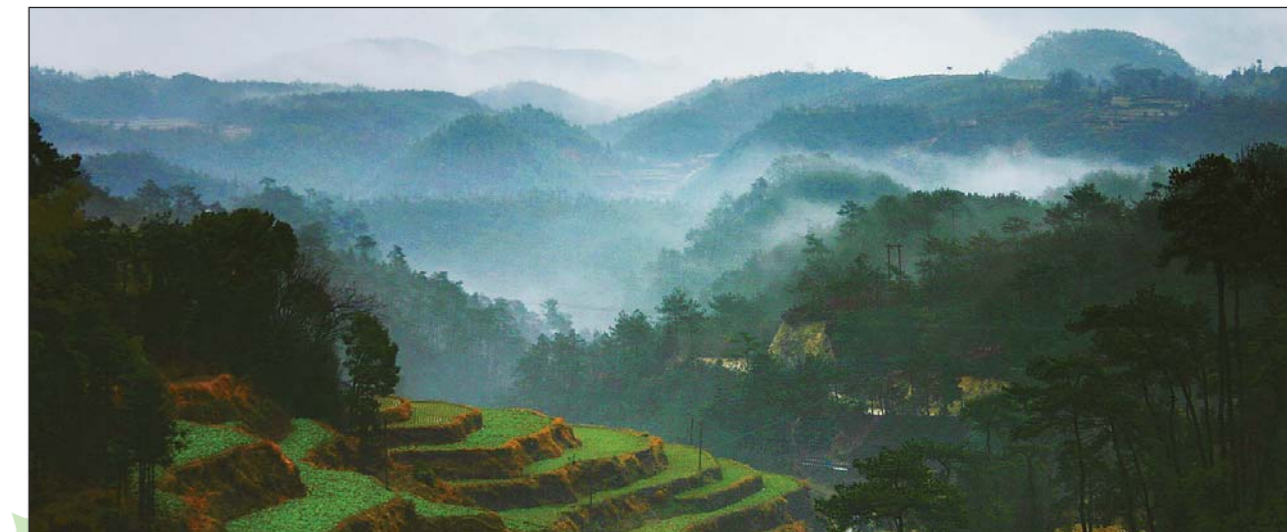
A visitor riding on a horse in front of a waterfall on Mount Tiantai.



Map of Zhejiang province



A large bronze Guanyin statue on Mount Putuo.



Tiantai Mountain shrouded by mist.

4. Suichang

Suichang county, in the southwestern of the province, is where Tang Xianzu, known as the Shakespeare of the Orient, wrote his masterpiece, *The Peony Pavilion*, about 500 years ago during the Ming Dynasty. The county is as beautiful as the play. In Shimuyan Scenic Area, you'll find a danxia landform, a unique type of petrographic geomorphology formed from red sandstone and characterized by steep cliffs.

5. Xinchang

The Big Buddha of Xinchang in Xinchang's Great Buddha Temple has made this town in eastern Zhejiang famous. The Buddha, which is more than 1,600 years old, is one of the most impressive remaining monuments to Chinese Buddhism in the country. It took craftsmen 30 years to carve the Buddha out of a massive rock. The statue base is 2.4 meters high, and the main body is 13.2 meters high. The Thousand Buddha Temple, 300 meters northwest of the Big Buddha, is also worth exploring. The temple houses more than 1,000 Buddha statues, including 130 statues that have been there since the temple's inception.

6. Ninghai

The Qiangjiao Archipelago in Ninghai, a coastal county in eastern Zhejiang province, offers an relaxing beach vacation a lot closer to home than tropical destinations like Phuket. Twelve islands are scattered in an area of 20 square kilometers. While boating, the sea and sky seem to merge into one, and the islands look like a pearl necklace embedded in the sea. After rain, rainbows emerge and mirages are often seen on the sea. Don't forget to try the local seafood, especially oysters and crabs.

7. Chun'an

Chun'an county, in western Zhejiang province, is home to famous Qiandao Lake. The lake is dotted with 1,078 islands and a few thousand smaller islets. More than 90 percent of the lake's surroundings are covered in forests. The lake is also noted for its splendid scenery and crystal-clear water. The water is so clean that a major mineral water processing plant is located there. Its more popular attractions include Bird Island, Snake Island and Monkey Island.

8. Anji

Anji county in northwestern Zhejiang Province has close ties with bamboo. Anji's bamboo forests were featured in the highly acclaimed film, *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. Visitors can dig bamboo shoots in the Big Bamboo Sea, travel through the forests or learn about different types of bamboo at the Bamboo Museum Garden.

The county is not all about bamboo. The White Tea Valley in the Nine Dragon Gorge is a good place to try the country's best white tea.

9. Putuo

Putuo is a district of Zhoushan, which is located in the northeast of the province. The district is named after Mount Putuo, which is one of four sites in the country considered sacred by Buddhists. But Mount Putuo is the only Buddhist mountain on an island. Putuo is home to many temples and monasteries that attract monks and nuns from all over the country and abroad, who come to live and practice their religion.



Qiandao Lake in Chun'an county is famous for its splendid scenery and crystal-clear water.