



Peregrine Travel Group

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Gulangyu—A Piano Island

The roar of the waves breaks on the rocks. Impressive melodies surround and linger on this island made famous because of its piano-laden past. As a place of residence for Westerners during Xiamen's colonial past, Gulangyu is famous for its architecture and for being home to China's largest Piano Museum.

Covering a total area of 1.78 square kilometers, Gulangyu Island is located off the coast of Xiamen City in [Fujian Province](#). The Chinese name also has musical roots, as gu lang means "drum waves," so-called because of the sound generated by the ocean waves hitting the reefs. Yu means "islet."

Gulangyu Island is known as the **Piano Island** because people here love the piano. As early as 1913, students in schools run by foreigners started learning the piano. The enthusiasm for music later spread to more ordinary people on the island. Gulangyu has the most pianos per-capita in the world, averaging one in every five homes. Many accomplished musicians, such as Yin Chengzong and Xu Feiping are natives of Gulangyu Island. China's first female conductor, Zhou Shuan is also from Gulangyu. No wonder the isle is also known as the "Cradle of Musicians" and "Island of Music."

No tourist can afford to miss one attraction located on the island--the nation's largest Piano Museum. Divided into two exhibition halls, the museum guides visitors through a vivid history of the instrument with displays and illustrations. All different types of pianos such as miniature pianos, automatic pianos, accordion pianos and round-shaped pianos, are on display. The museum houses approximately 200 pianos, collected from all corners of the globe by a piano enthusiast and Gulangyu native resident, Hu Youyi.



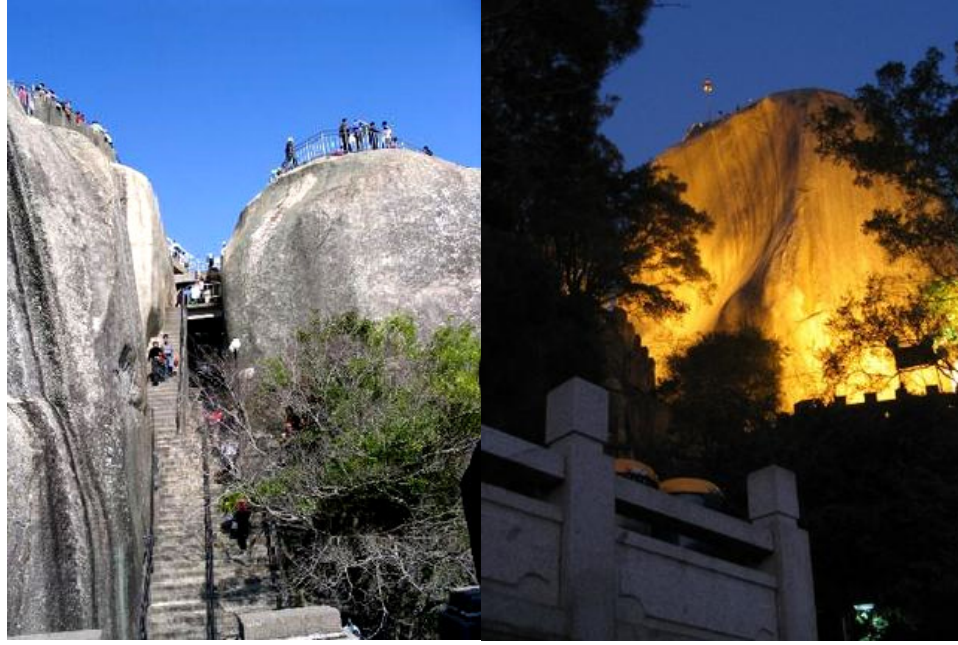
Piano Museum

With a long and multicultural past, Gulangyu also nicknamed "**Museum of International Architecture**," is a special testimony of various styles of Chinese and Western architectures. From the baroque building to the Gothic cathedral, from the Shanghai-style alley to the Fujian-style courtyard, Gulangyu is filled with different architectural styles. That's why it is often described as a showcase island of architecture, attracting architecture students from across the nation and the world every year to find their source of inspiration.



different architectural styles

Sunlight Rock in the southern part of the island is the isle's highest point with an altitude of 90 meters. The rock offers a magnificent view over the island blending man-made constructions with nature's art. Ascending to the top of the rock, you can get a bird's-eye view of the whole Xiamen City. Sunlight Rock is also known for its rich plant life - hundreds of blossoming flowers adorn the hillsides.

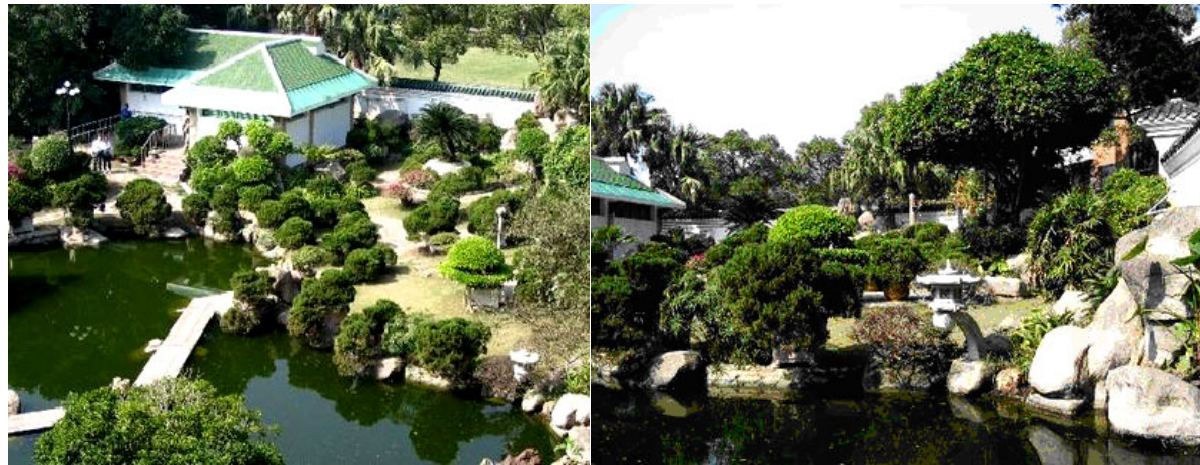


Sunlight Rock

Also known as “**Garden on the Sea**,” Gulangyu spent 120 million USD relocating enterprises off the island to preserve this botanical paradise. Some of the major parks include:

Shuzhuang Garden, Gulangyu Aviary, Bright Moon Garden, Yanping Park, Subtropical Botanical Garden, and many historic private villas with delightful Private Gardens. **Shuzhuang Garden**, Gulangyu's largest garden where the Piano Museum is located, was built in the 1930s as a private villa, but later became a garden park open to the public in 1955. The park is divided into the Garden Hiding the Sea and the Garden of Making-Up Hills. Feng Shui principals are used to incorporate man-made structures to work with nature, and maintain a correct balance of yin and yang energy. It was designed with three specific gardening requirements. Hence, man-made items add to what nature has already created in lieu of creating something completely out of place for its surroundings.

- 1.The art of hiding is accomplished by the fact that the ocean is hidden from view until you are nearly at the edge.
- 2.The art of combining movements is the positioning of the maze artwork into a slope containing rocks.
- 3.The art of borrowing from one's surroundings uses the natural slope toward the sea to build bridges.



Shuzhuang Garden

Located five minutes by boat from Xiamen, Gulangyu is really a Shangri-la-like tourist attraction. No road vehicles or bikes are allowed here (though you may see the cute little red fire truck). For people living in the hustle and bustle of today's metropolis, citizens on this island seem to live in a paradise with a relaxing, healthy and placid lifestyle.

Gulangyu International Piano Art Festival

Unveiled on May 10, 2002, the Gulangyu International Piano Art Festival is held biennially in Gulangyu of Xiamen City, Fujian Province in South China. The festival is co-sponsored by Musicians Association of China and Gulangyu regional government.

The 10-day festival was the biggest music festival with various activities, including the opening and awarding ceremony of Golden Bell Award, the national juvenile piano contest, the music concert of world-class masters and the training class instructed by the masters, musician academic forum and music salon, music concerts of native musicians of Gulangyu, China piano exposition and show of world-famous pianos, etc. Many renowned pianists, experts and scholars attend the festival.

Gulangyu, reputed as the Island of Music, became an island of carnival. Gulangyu International Piano Art Festival makes great contribution to promoting exchanges in world music circle and piano art. The latest piano festival was held in July 2008 with the next one scheduled to be held in 2010.

Reserve early with Peregrine Travel Group for your Gulangyu Island

Musical and Arts Tour, Architectural Tour, and Garden Tour

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Email us at: peregrinetravelgroup@earthlink.net

Peregrine Travel's Upcoming Groups:

California Milk Advisory Board China Trip

November 8-18, 2008

Chinese New Year Hong Kong January 2009

7-Day Tour, 10-Day & 15 Day Tours (incl. China)

Lt. Governor John Garamendi California Delegation China Trip

February 13-28, 2009

Testimonials:

The tour was amazing and I would recommend it to all. Can't wait to come again – the tour was made even better by the friendliness of Mike (tour guide) who made it wonderful.

J. J.

River cruise was very nice. Lunch on the boat was better than expected. Our tour guide, John, went out of his way to make sure we were happy & taken care of. Went to see a show and enjoyed it very much!

J. H.