TAIWAN MAAMI™
EXQUISITELY CRAFTED BOBA

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OUR TABLE & LEAVES

Issue 02



TRAVEL BY GUEST WRITER

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TAIWAN MAAMI™
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THAMARAI

FOUNDER'S NOTE

"Every culture and faith expresses love, gratitude, and fellowship through food—and authenticity thrives when diverse people share one table."

As the final months of the year unfold across India, the air fills with the unmistakable warmth of community and celebration. From the glowing clay lamps of Karthigai Deepam and Deepavali to Friday Jummah feasts, the langar tables of Gurpurab, and the joyful gatherings of Christmas, this season reminds us that every culture and faith expresses love, gratitude, and fellowship through food.



At Taiwan Maami, our kitchens and dining rooms in T Nagar, Palladium and Anna Nagar are living reflections of this very spirit. Every day, hands from different states, backgrounds, and traditions come together to craft Taiwanese heritage dishes and steep whole-leaf teas—proving that authenticity thrives when diverse people share one table. Whether you are lighting a lamp at home, sharing a meal with family after prayer, or simply pausing over a warm cup of oolong with friends, we are honoured to be part of your season. Thank you for bringing your stories and traditions to our table.

Warm Regards,
順頌 時綏

Theresa Hu Cheng Yun
Founder & Culinary Director
House of Thamarai | Taiwan Maami

Curious about my recipes? Follow

@THERESA_TAIWANMAAMI

ARTICLE

Every tea in the world begins as the exact same leaf. It is only time, air, and touch that decide its soul.





THE ALCHEMY OF OXIDATION

Every true tea—whether delicate green, floral oolong, or bold black—comes from a single plant: Camellia sinensis. What separates them in your cup is not a different species, but oxidation—the natural reaction that occurs when freshly plucked leaves are rolled and exposed to oxygen.

At Taiwan Maami, we honour this transformation across three distinct expressions:

Green Tea (0% Oxidation): Gently steamed or pan-fired shortly after harvest to halt oxidation completely. The leaf stays vibrant green, yielding a crisp, grassy cup with clean botanical sweetness.

High-Mountain Oolong (15%–85% Oxidation): Taiwan's crown jewel. Semi-oxidized and rolled into tight pearls, these leaves unfurl slowly to release layered notes of roasted orchid, honey, and creamy stone fruit.

Black Tea (100% Oxidation): Fully withered and rolled until the leaves turn deep russet. The liquor brews rich amber, offering malty warmth and a bold body that pairs effortlessly with milk.

Whether brewed pure in our T Nagar, Palladium Mall, and Anna Nagar or shaken into our signature Classic Taiwan Milk Tea, every cup celebrates the quiet art of timing.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE: We explore the ritual of temperature and time—how water heat and steeping unlocks the hidden character of whole-leaf tea.



Jules Shih, a Taipei Walker

A Perfect Autumn Day in Taipei: Coffee, Dumplings, Tea, and Skyline Views

When autumn rolls around in Taipei, the heavy summer humidity finally gives way to crisp breezes and comfortable, sunny afternoons. It's easily the best time of year to slow down, explore at your own pace, and soak in the little everyday moments that make the city so special. Here is a relaxed, one-day itinerary that combines local morning routines, incredible food, rich tea traditions, and an unforgettable hike with skyline views.

Morning: A Peaceful Start and Alleyway Coffee

07:30 AM — Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall Plaza: Start your morning with a quiet walk across the spacious white plaza of Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall. Under the gentle autumn sun, you'll see local residents going through their daily morning rituals—practicing slow Tai Chi, doing gentle exercises, or taking brisk morning walks. It's a peaceful, authentic glimpse into the city waking up before the crowds arrive.

09:30 AM — Hidden Alleyway Vintage Cafe Wander off the main avenues into Taipei's quiet residential lanes. The narrow alleys hide cozy, independent coffee shops that feel like little neighborhood sanctuaries. Find a comfortable corner, order a freshly brewed hand-pour coffee, and enjoy a quiet moment surrounded by the warm aroma of roasted beans.

Midday: Iconic Dumplings and Yongkang Street Vibes

11:30 AM — The Original Din Tai Fung (Xinsheng Branch). Head over to Xinyi Road for lunch at the original flagship store of Din Tai Fung. Watching the chefs through the open glass kitchen fold each soup dumpling with incredible speed and precision is half the fun. The paper-thin skin and rich broth inside make every bite worth the wait.

01:30 PM — Tea Tasting and Mango Ice in Yongkang Street Stroll into the leafy, artistic neighborhood of Yongkang Street right nearby. Drop by a traditional tea house—like the historic Wang De Chuan—where you can sit down and sample fragrant Taiwanese high-mountain oolong tea. Follow your tea session with a big bowl of classic mango shaved ice, a fun and delicious treat that brings back sweet nostalgia on a pleasant autumn afternoon.

Late Afternoon to Evening: Sunset Hike and City Lights

04:30 PM — Elephant Mountain Trail (Xiangshan) Take a quick MRT ride on the Red Line to Xiangshan Station. As the late afternoon light softens, head up the stone stairs of Elephant Mountain. The shaded forest path gives you a nice breath of fresh air and leads to scenic viewing platforms, perfectly timed for dusk.

06:00 PM — Taipei 101 Night View Reach the top viewing rocks right as the sun dips below the horizon. Watch the sky turn from soft gold to deep twilight, while the towering Taipei 101 lights up against a glittering sea of city lights below. It's a magical moment that brings your day of exploration to an awesome finish.

Wrapping Up

Taipei in autumn isn't about rushing from one checklist item to another—it's about taking the time to savor local flavors, appreciate the care behind everyday crafts, and enjoy quiet moments of beauty. Whether you're sipping hot oolong tea in a quiet shop, watching the morning Tai Chi practice, or standing atop Xiangshan watching the skyline light up, this single day gives you a real taste of the city's warm and welcoming soul. Put on a comfortable pair of walking shoes, bring your appetite, and let Taipei's easygoing rhythm guide your journey.














AUTUMN IN TAIPEI • ONE-DAY PLAN

Coffee, dumplings, tea and skyline views

A relaxed itinerary for young travellers from Chennai

07:30	**Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall**	Locals doing tai chi on the white plaza, like a caimer Marina Beach morning
09:30	**Hidden alleyway cafe**	Hand-pour coffee in a cosy backstreet spot, great for photos and cheaper than chains
11:30	**Din Tai Fung, Xinyi Road**	Watch dumplings folded through the glass kitchen; vegetarian soup dumplings are on the menu
13:30	**Wang De Chnan tea house, Yongkang St**	High-mountain oolong, a totally different feel from chai, then mango shaved ice next door
15:30	**Elephant Mountain trail**	Short stone-stair climb, red MRT line to Xiangshan, very photogenic for a short effort
18:00	**Taipei 101 at sunset**	Time it for golden hour as the tower lights up over the city, the best shot of the day

✦ Vegetarian and halal picks nearby ✦

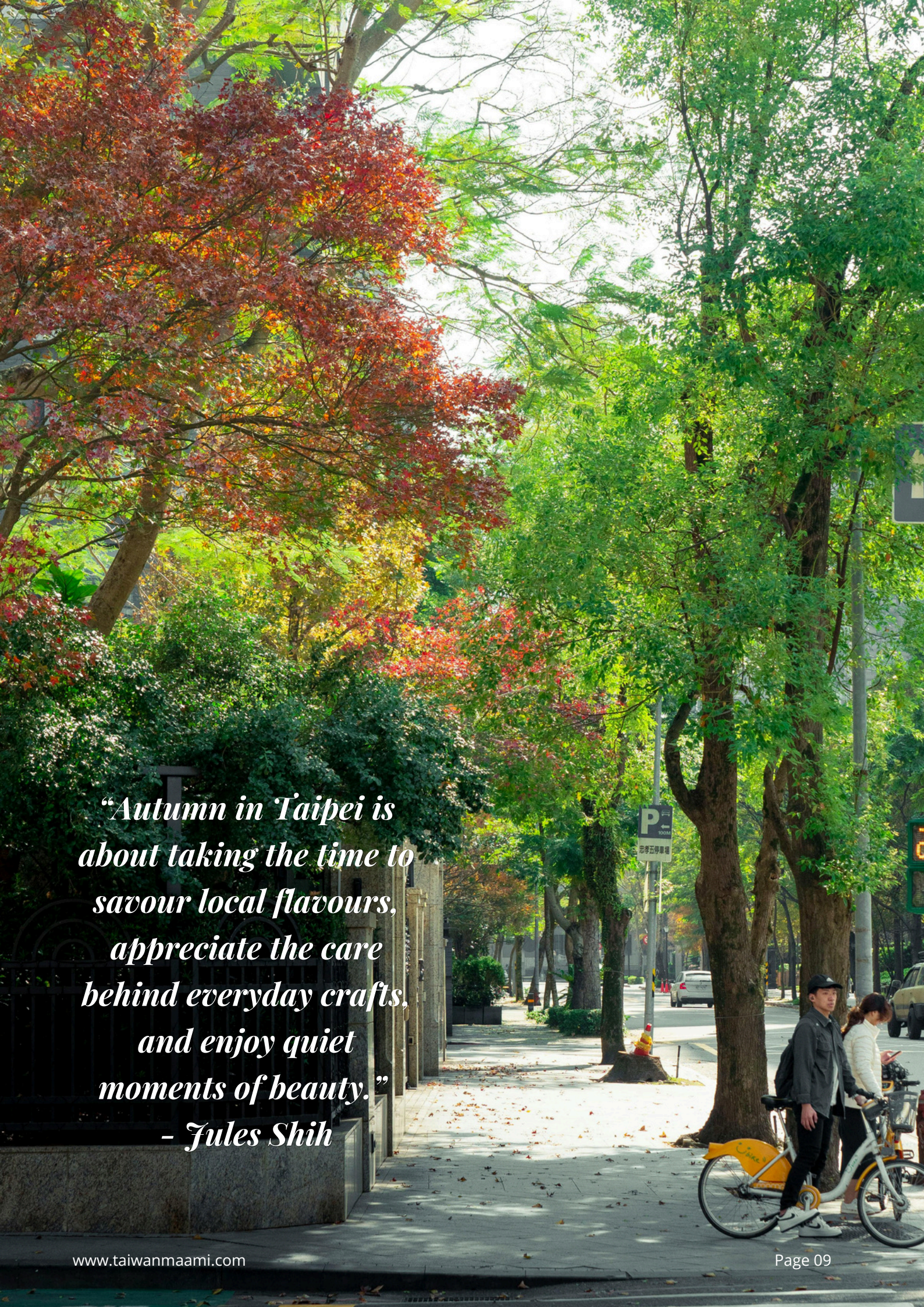
Thoughtful dining spots along the route

Yang Shin Vegetarian (養心茶樓) VEG
Gourmet vegetarian dim sum, Songjiang Nanjing

Khana Khazana Indian Cuisine HALAL
Halal-friendly Indian dining, near Xinyi & Taipei 101

Taipei Grand Mosque area HALAL
Cluster of halal eateries nearby

OUR TABLE & LEAVES • TAIWAN MAAMI



"Autumn in Taipei is about taking the time to savour local flavours, appreciate the care behind everyday crafts, and enjoy quiet moments of beauty."
– Jules Shih

VOICE

"Instagram can show a chef how to make food look similar, but taste cannot be copied simply by looking. True authenticity requires someone from that culture." — Naveen, Taiwan Maami Sous Chef

IN CONVERSATION WITH SOUS CHEF NAVEEN



Editor: Tell us a little about your background—where are you from, and what training did you receive before joining Taiwan Maami?

Chef Naveen: I am from Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu, and completed my culinary training at an university in Vellore. I started my professional career in Bangalore in 2014, training primarily in Continental and Chinese cuisines alongside South and North Indian cooking.

Editor: How did you first discover your love for cooking?

Chef Naveen: As a teenager, I helped a lot in my mum's kitchen. My mother prepared all kinds of South Indian dishes in our home kitchen. That was where I first discovered my passion for cooking.

Editor: What was the hardest thing to learn about Taiwanese food when you first started here?

Chef Naveen: Working with completely unfamiliar spices—and mastering hand-pulled noodles, especially getting the dough and fermentation right. Since I have never been to Taiwan or China, capturing the authentic flavour profile wasn't easy. Our entire culinary team works closely with our Director, Ms. Hu, for her expertise and deep knowledge of how the dishes should truly taste. Social media can show a chef how to make a dish look similar, but taste cannot be copied just by looking. When it comes to true authenticity, you need guidance from someone rooted in that culture.

Editor: Do you notice any similarities between Taiwanese spices and local Indian flavours?

Chef Naveen: From a spice perspective, not a single bit. In Taiwan Maami's kitchen, we build everything from scratch—our 13-spice blend, chili red oil, Mapo and Kung Pao pastes, Mala oil, and marinades are completely different from Indian masalas. The culinary philosophy is also distinct: Taiwanese and Chinese cooking focuses deeply on the natural freshness and richness of raw ingredients, much like French cuisine. For example, we use the freshest wild tiger prawn, and not smaller than the size of 11 to 12 per kilo. A Taiwanese kitchen values order, restraint, and respect—even behind the kitchen doors, using a single chopstick is forbidden. We avoid heavy-handed salt, chili, sauce with excessive fat, or sugar, and when it comes to plating, less is always more.

Editor: Which dish on our menu takes the most patience or skill to get right?

Chef Naveen: Our Biang Biang noodles. Getting the dough consistency right and perfecting the hand-pulling technique take tremendous practice. Balancing the spice level—and infusing our chili red oil without browning or burning it—is also far more delicate than most people imagine.

Editor: If you had to eat only one food every day for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Chef Naveen: For South Indian food, crispy dosa with spicy tomato chutney. For Taiwanese, Shacha noodles.

Editor: Which dish on our menu are you most proud of, and which drink pairs best with it?

Chef Naveen: Rather than a single plated dish, I am proudest of our house-made Curry Block. It brings together more than 30 ingredients, and achieving the exact right texture takes real precision. Our ChickGozilla Curry Rice pairs wonderfully with Honey Lemon Green Tea — both the NE Asian flavours and the vibrant colours complement each other effortlessly.

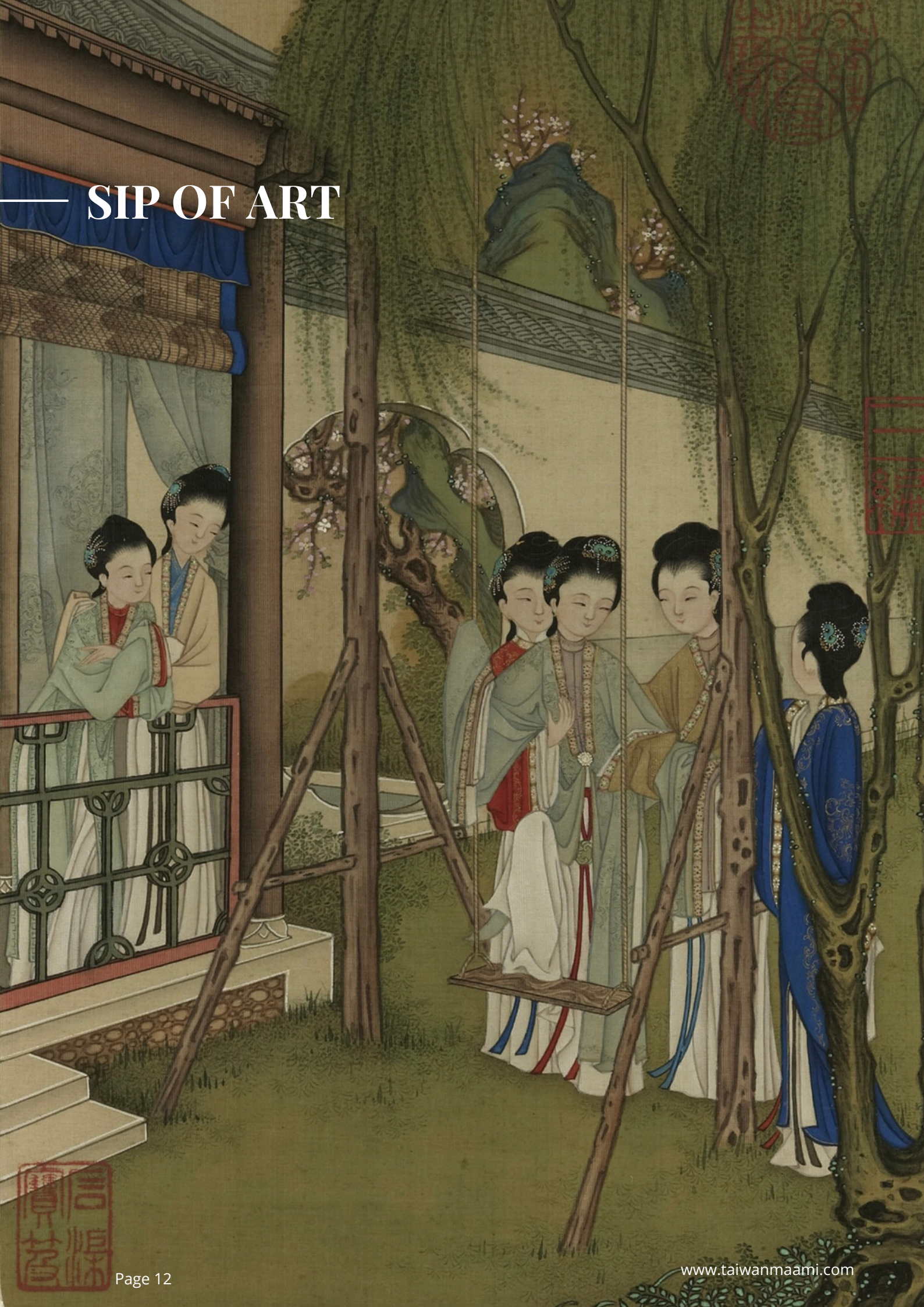
Editor: What is your honest advice to young people who want to become chefs?

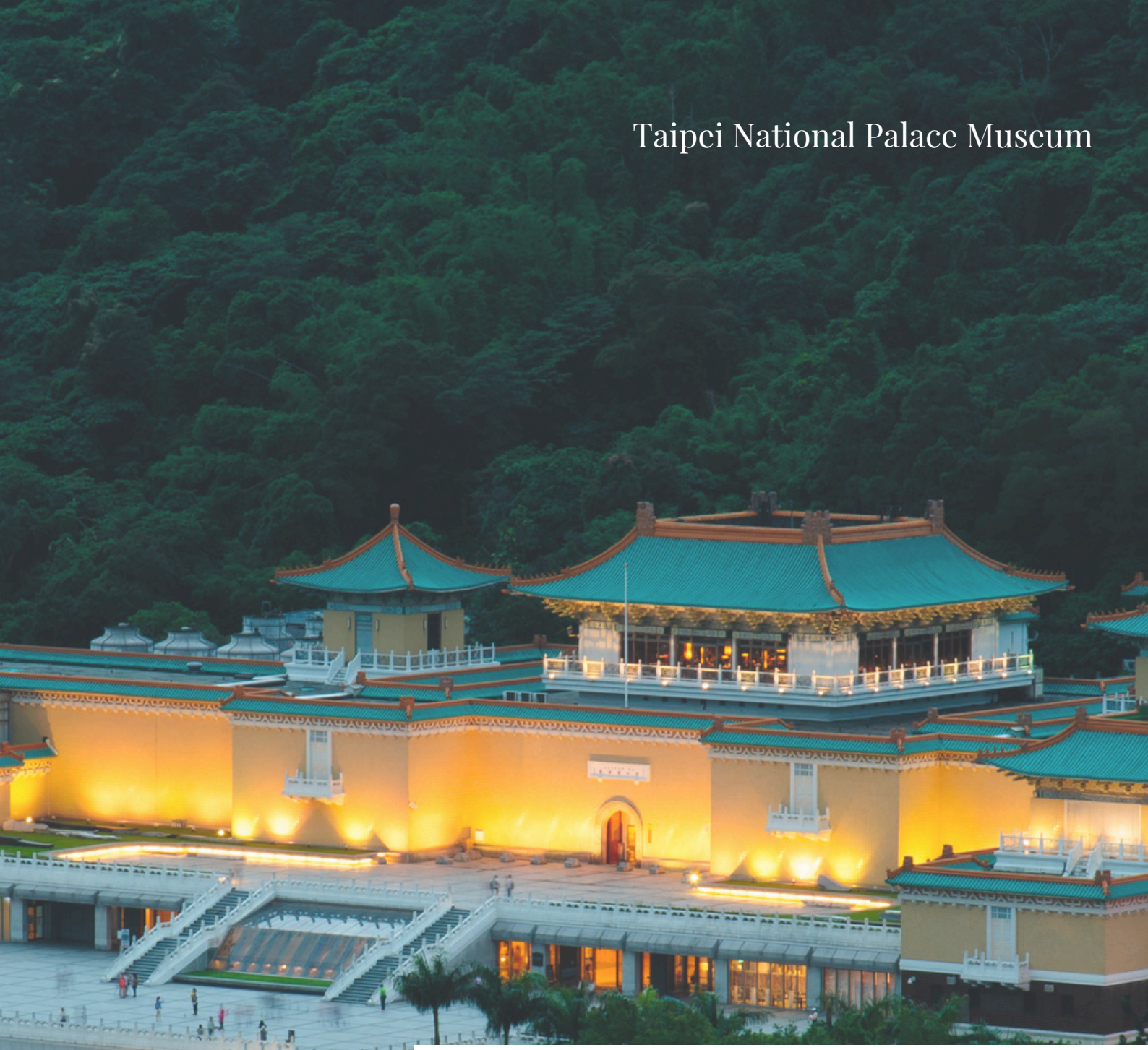
Chef Naveen: Follow your passion, start with fundamental kitchen skills, and stay consistent and hardworking. Don't just collect recipes — without strong basic techniques, no recipe will ever turn out right. Enroll in a solid culinary programme to build a real foundation for your career.

Chef Naveen's Recommendation: ChickGozilla Curry Rice with Honey Lemon Green Tea.



SIP OF ART





Taipei National Palace Museum

A Swing in the Courtyard of Willows

Jiao Bingzhen 焦秉貞 ca. 1700

Qing court painter Jiao Bingzhen captures a serene moment of palace leisure in a lush imperial garden. A graceful lady stands poised on a wooden swing beneath cascading willows. The piece showcases Jiao Bingzhen's signature synthesis of delicate Chinese line work with subtle Western-inspired spatial depth, foreshortening, and architectural geometry. Originally part of Beijing's Forbidden City collection, this silk painting was relocated to Taipei's National Palace Museum in 1948–1949.

Next time, when you visit our Anna Nagar sanctuary, have a Sip of Art along with your choice of tea.



PRISTINE TERROIR

The Ruby & Emerald Mangoes of Tainan

Harvested every summer from May through September (peaking in June and July), Taiwan's mangoes thrive in the sun-drenched hills of Tainan's Yujing District (玉井), prized across Asia for silky, fiberless flesh and intense tropical aroma.

THE MANGO CHAMPIONS

Aiwen Mango
愛文芒果

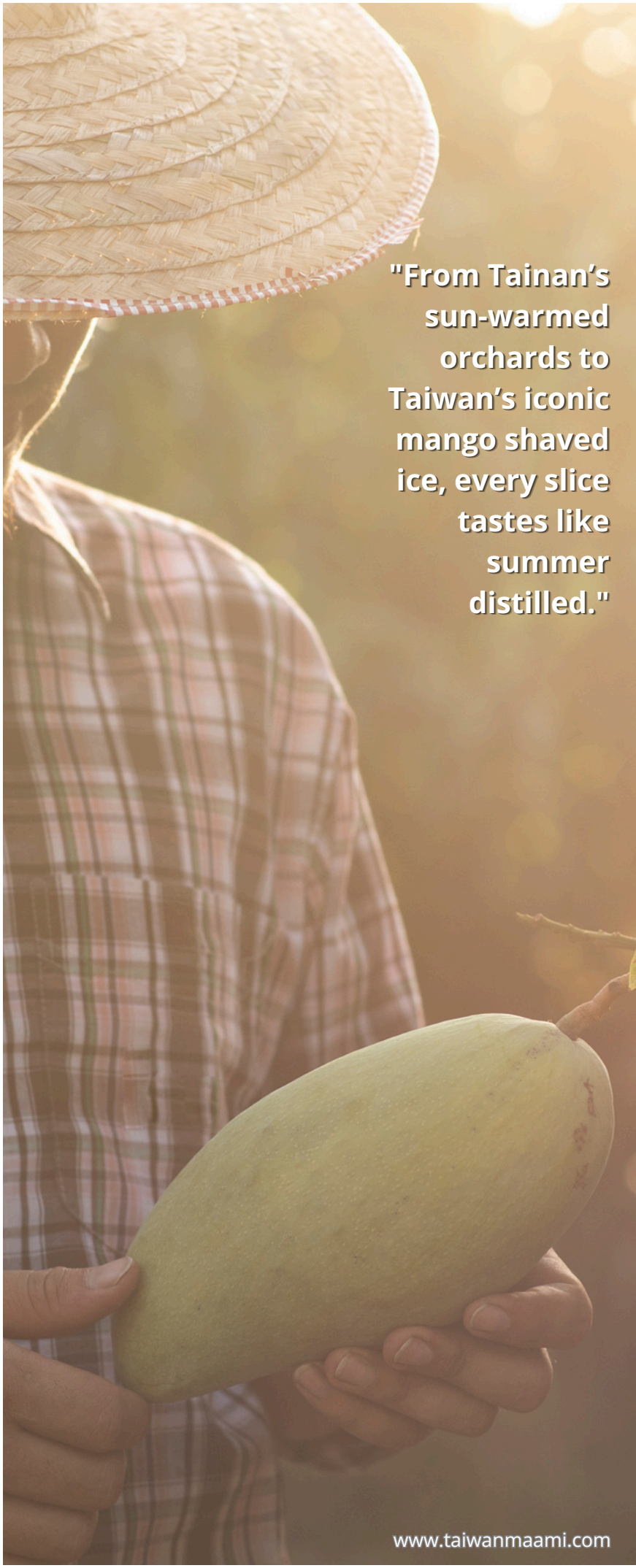
Taiwan's undisputed crown jewel. Individually bagged on the tree to ripen into a glowing ruby-red, it offers melt-in-the-mouth sweetness balanced by bright acidity. In local markets, Irwin mangoes sell for roughly NT$100–180 per kg (₹286–₹516), while export-grade gift boxes in Japan and Europe command up to NT$874–1,000+ (₹2,500–₹2,865+) for a single fruit.

Wuxiang Mango
烏香芒果

Don't let the emerald-green skin fool you—these beloved summer varieties stay green even when dead ripe, hiding golden, honey-sweet flesh inside with fragrant hints of longan and lychee. Local markets price them around NT$100–160 per kg (₹286–₹458).

Jinhuang Mango
金煌芒果

Bred in Kaohsiung, this giant golden-yellow mango weighs over a kilogram with a paper-thin seed and custard-smooth sweetness (NT$80–120 per kg / ₹230–₹344).





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OUR EXTENDED TABLE

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