



Set on China's east coast, Shandong stretches between the Bohai and Yellow Seas, gazing across the water toward Korea and Japan. This is where Confucius redefined how we think, where Mount Tai towers above ancient rites, where the Yellow River meets the sea, the Grand Canal flows with history, and the Qi Great Wall keeps watch over it all. Together, these five UNESCO World Heritage Sites aren't just relics; they're the rhythm of a place where nature and civilisation have moved in step for millennia.

A LIVING LEGACY
FIVE SITES.
THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF HISTORY.
ONE PROVINCE AT THE HEART OF IT ALL.



- 1 **Mount Tai**
- 2 **Sankong (Temple, Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion)**
- 3 **Yellow River Estuary | Migratory Bird Sanctuaries**

4 **The Grand Canal (Shandong section)**

5 **The Great Wall of Qi**

Shandong Museum

With over 400,000 artefacts on display, Shandong Museum spans everything from prehistoric pottery to Buddhist sculptures. Among its most intriguing pieces is a 4,000-year-old egg-shell pottery cup: ultra-thin, jet black and polished to a mirror-like shine. Clean design and English signage make it especially visitor friendly.
11899 Jingshi Road, Lixia District, Jinan (+86 531 8505 8201). Open Tue-Sun (closed Mon), 9am-5pm. Free on registration.



THE SACRED PILGRIMAGE

For over 2,000 years, emperors, scholars and poets have climbed Mount Tai 泰山 in search of blessings, carving prayers into stone and building temples along the way. But this isn't just a hike, it's a walk through China's imperial past, rich with ancient art and enduring legends.

Recommended Route

Dai Temple → Red Gate → Sutra Rock Valley → Midway Gate to Heaven → Path of 18 Bends → South Gate to Heaven → Bixia Temple → Jade Emperor Peak

A balanced route of coastal views, forest trails and sacred Daoist sites. Perfect for seekers of both scenery and serenity.
Getting there: Hongmen Road, Mount Tai, Tai'an (+86 538 9600 8888). Red Gate entrance open 5am-12pm daily. From 115RMB.

Route Highlights

Dai Temple | Tai'an Museum 岱庙 | 泰安市博物馆
At the foot of Mount Tai, this temple-museum duo once served as a spiritual "base camp" for emperors. Wander cypress-lined courtyards and celestial murals at Dai Temple, a place of ritual, poetry and imperial devotion. Inside, Tai'an Museum adds context with ancient maps, stone steles and artefacts tracing the mountain's sacred status. One site, two ways to step into history.
Getting there: 191 Dongyue Street, Taishan District, Tai'an (+86 538 826 1038). Open daily 8am-5.30pm. Entry from 20RMB.

Tip: Highlights include the Han Dynasty cypress known as the Living Imperial Token and Tiankuang Hall 天况殿, the temple's main sanctuary and one of the Three Great Halls of China.

Path of Eighteen Bends 十八盘

This steep stretch of zigzagging stone steps is the final push to Mount Tai's summit. It's a tough climb, but the mountain views and ancient carvings reward every effort.

South Gate to Heaven 南天门 & Bixia Temple 碧霞祠

Cross the South Gate to Heaven, Mount Tai's gateway to the summit, and visit Bixia Temple (Open 8am-5.15pm daily), which is dedicated to the Goddess of Mount Tai. Inside: ancient calligraphy, relics and a view worth the climb.

Tip: At 1,460m, the South Gate to Heaven is Mount Tai's most iconic photo spot. Come at sunrise or sunset, when the peaks fade into mist and the gate glows like something divine.

Tang Moya 唐摩崖

Carved directly into Mount Tai's granite cliffs, these Tang dynasty inscriptions showcase imperial devotion and poetic artistry. The calligraphy, etched by renowned figures, offers a rare glimpse into ancient China's spiritual and cultural heritage.



Jade Emperor Peak 玉皇顶

Perched at the summit, this Daoist temple honours the Jade Emperor, ruler of the heavens. It was the final ritual stop for emperors ascending Mount Tai to offer prayers to Heaven.

Tip: Don't miss the summit stele Jidingshi 极顶石 marking Mount Tai's highest point (1,545m). It's the ultimate photo op at the peak to mark your ascent.

Skip the Stairs, Keep the Views

Short on time or skipping the stairs? The Midway Gate to Heaven - South Gate to Heaven cable car route 中天门 - 南天门索道 offers a scenic ride up or down the mountain, with sweeping views all the way. Perfect for families or anyone looking to dodge the steepest climbs.
Mount Tai Scenic Area, Taishan District, Tai'an (+86 538 9600 8888). Open 6.30am-5.30pm daily. 100RMB one-way.



IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF CONFUCIUS

Confucius wasn't just a philosopher; he's honoured in China as the Great Sage and First Teacher 至圣先师, a title that speaks to his lasting influence on culture, education and governance across East Asia. Born in Qufu in 551 BCE, his teachings on family, virtue and moral order shaped two millennia of thought. Today, you can explore the places where it all began at San Kong, the three Confucius sites comprising of his grand temple 孔庙, family mansion 孔府 and his family cemetery 孔林.

Recommended Route

The Temple of Confucius → The Kong Family Mansion → The Cemetery of Confucius → Confucius Museum → Nishan Sacred Land

Route Highlights

Temple of Confucius 孔庙

The largest Confucian temple in the world, this site honours a thinker whose ideas shaped East Asian civilisation. At its heart is Dacheng Hall 大成殿, a grand sanctuary with 28 intricately carved columns, built to the same standards as imperial palaces. It's also one of the Three Great Halls of China.
Getting there: Shendao Road, Qufu, Jinan. Open 8.30am-5pm (last entry 4.30pm) daily. 80RMB for single venue; from 140RMB for 3 Confucius sites.

Tip: Don't miss the Forest of Steles 碑林, where 139 stone tablets hold Confucian teachings in carved calligraphy.



Kong Family Mansion 孔府

Home to Confucius' descendants for 77 generations, the Kong Family Mansion is the world's best-preserved noble estate, offering a rare glimpse into the daily life of China's most storied scholarly family.
Getting there: Next to The temple of Confucius. Open 8.30am-5pm (last entry 4.30pm) daily. 60RMB for single venue.

Tip: Tucked behind Shili Hall 诗礼堂, the Lu Wall 鲁壁 is where Confucian classics were said to be hidden during the Qin dynasty's book burnings.

Cemetery of Confucius 孔林

A quiet forest of cypress and stone, this is where Confucius rests — part of the world's oldest and largest family cemetery.
Getting there: Lindao Road, Qufu, Jinan (+86 537 370 9609). Open 8.30am-5.30pm (last entry 5pm) daily. 10RMB for single venue.

Did you know?

Confucius' tomb was kept deliberately simple, a reflection of his teachings on modesty and restraint.

Experience Confucius

Nishan Sacred Land 尼山圣境 reimagines Confucius' birthplace with a 72m statue of the sage at its centre. Don't miss its immersive indoor show Jinsheng Yuzhen 金声玉振, a dazzling blend of music, dance and digital stagecraft. After dark, drones and projections light up the skies above Nishan Hill.
Getting there: Shengjing Avenue, Nishan Town, Qufu, Jinan (+86 400 688 2323). Open 9.30am-8.30pm daily. 135RMB (entry).

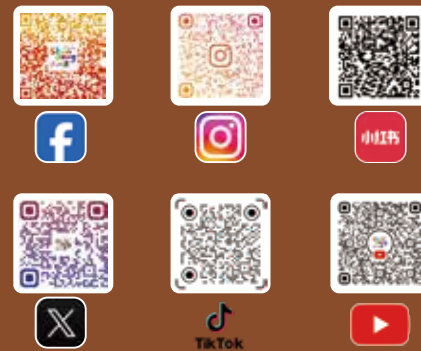
Confucius Museum 孔子博物馆

This museum traces over 2,000 years of Confucian history — from ritual and family heritage to the philosophy that shaped East Asia. Immersive displays spotlight sacred texts, heirlooms and artefacts like a Warring States jade horse and a Ming-era ceremonial robe worn by the Duke Yansheng.
Getting there: 100 Confucius Avenue, Qufu, Jinan (+86 537 445 9065). Open 9am-5pm (last entry 4pm), Tue-Sun (Closed Mon). Free on registration.



KNOW MORE DO MORE

Official Shandong Tourism
Social Media Accounts



Before you go...
All information (including dates, locations, ticket prices and activities) is correct as of 30 April 2025. Please check official websites or social media channels for the latest updates. Details related to venues and attractions are provided by their respective operators; please refer to their official announcements for the most up-to-date information.

ESSENTIAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

GETTING TO SHANDONG

Shandong is served by five major international airports:

Qingdao Jiaodong International Airport (TAO) Best for coastal access.
Jinan Yaoqiang International Airport (TNA) Closest to Shandong Museum, Mount Tai and Qufu.
Yantai Penglai International Airport (YNT) Good to access Dongying and the Yellow River Estuary.
Linyi Qiyang International Airport (LYI) Gateway to southern Shandong.
Weihai Dashiwo International Airport (WEH) Easy access to Weihai's beaches.

High speed rail from Beijing and Shanghai:

From Beijing	From Shanghai
around 1.5 hours to Jinan	around 3 hours to Jinan
around 2 hours to Qingdao	around 4 hours to Qingdao

GETTING AROUND SHANDONG

The high-speed rail network is king. It's faster, cleaner and more scenic than flying. For local hops, Didi (China's Uber) and public bicycles are widely available in major cities.

Shandong's key high-speed rail hubs

Jinan Station/Jinan West Station Easy access to the Shandong Museum and Qi Great Wall.
Qufu East Station The closest station to Sankong.
Tai'an Station Fastest way to reach Mount Tai.
Zaozhuang Station Best for visiting Tai'erzhuang Ancient City and The Grand Canal.

Weather Snapshot

Spring (Mar-May) Mild, breezy, great for hiking.
Summer (Jun-Aug) Hot & humid; pack sunscreen.
Autumn (Sep-Nov) Dry, golden and crisp — Shandong's best season for outdoor travel and festivals.
Winter (Dec-Feb) Cold, with possible snow inland — dress warm for hikes and countryside escapes.

Emergency Numbers

Police 110 | Ambulance 120 | Tourist Complaints 12345

Tipping

Not expected, Round up for great service, but locals rarely tip.

Essential Travel Apps

Super Apps



Alipay and WeChat are China's must-have super apps, combining mobile payments with everyday services like taxi booking, food delivery, bills, and even hotel reservations. Both support Visa, Mastercard and UnionPay international cards, but while WeChat is stronger for messaging and social sharing, Alipay excels in travel and shopping features. Most travellers use both to cover all bases.

Navigation



The two most popular and accurate map apps used by locals to get around by foot or by car.

Travel & Tickets



The go-to English-friendly booking app for flights, trains, hotels, and more within China. The official booking app for China Railway.

THE WILD BEAUTY OF THE WETLANDS

Where the Yellow River flows into the Bohai Sea, this vast wetland is one of China's most important ecological zones. In autumn and winter, the delta bursts into colour as migrating birds sweep over rust-red marshes and blooming reeds swirl like snow. Elevated boardwalks let you explore without disturbing the delicate ecosystem.

Recommended Route

Yellow River Estuary Eco-Tourism Area → Yellow River Cultural Museum → Sun Tzu Cultural Park

Route Highlights

Yellow River Estuary Eco-Tourism Area

黄河口生态旅游区
This area is a critical stop for migratory birds, some of which are endangered, with eco-tourism zones designed to let visitors enjoy nature up close, responsibly.

Getting there: Eco-Tourism Area Entrance, Kenli District, Dongying (+86 400 166 2158). Open 8.30am–5.30pm daily. From 85RMB.

Tip: Bring binoculars — over 300 bird species pass through here, including the Saunders's gull 黑嘴鸥 and Oriental White Stork 东方白鹤. Visit near dawn to see the skies erupt with feathered motion.

Route Highlights

Yellow River Cultural Museum

黄河文化馆
Near where the Yellow River meets the sea, this museum blends environmental education with history and folklore. A great primer before visiting the estuary wetlands.

Getting there: Intersection of Nan Er Road and Dong San Road, Dongying District, Dongying (+86 546 838 2167). Open 9am–5pm (last entry at 4.30pm), Tue-Sun (Closed Mon). Free.

Sun Tzu Cultural Park

孙子文化园
Sun Tzu, author of *The Art of War*, was born here in the State of Qi. This action-packed park brings his legacy to life with battle reenactments, ancient weapons and hands-on zones like the Water Battle Arena. Strategy meets spectacle; great for history buffs and families alike.

Getting there: 1678 Le'an Street, Guangrao County, Dongying, (+86 546 619 7888). Open 9am–5pm (last entry at 4.30pm) daily. 120RMB.

SAILING THROUGH TIME

The Grand Canal 京杭大运河, the world's longest man-made waterway, is a 2,500-year-old corridor of Chinese history. In Shandong, its 643km stretch shaped cities, sparked trade and carried culture. From Zaozhuang to Dezhou, it still winds past old locks, market towns and riverside museums.

Recommended Route

Tai'erzhuang Ancient Town → Weishan Lake →
Archaeological Site Park of Nanwang Junction →
Liaocheng Grand Canal Museum

Route Highlights

Tai'erzhuang Ancient City

Once destroyed during WWII, Tai'erzhuang has been beautifully restored, preserving its stone bridges, Ming-Qing architecture and canal-side charm. By night, the town glows with lantern-lit reflections on the water.

Getting there: 1 Gucheng Avenue, Tai'erzhuang District, Zaozhuang (+86 632 811 6666). Open 24 hours daily. 118RMB.

Bed Down Like An Ancient Trader

Stay in a canal-side inn with wooden beams and lantern-lit balconies or hop on a wooden boat and let boat women serenade you through the old town.

Weishan Lake

微山湖
This vast lake is a watery wonderland where traditional fishing villages thrive. Local fishermen still use cormorants to catch fish, a centuries-old practice rarely seen today.

Getting there: G104 National Road, Weishan County, Jining (+86 537 855 0005). Open daily 8.30am–5pm. From 130RMB.

Tip: Don't leave without trying *floating fish balls*, a local specialty made from finely minced white fish that floats in a light, clear broth.

Archaeological Site Park of Nanwang

Junction

南旺枢纽遗址公园
This ancient hydraulic system revolutionised canal engineering, lifting water uphill with a smart mix of gates and reservoirs — a lasting feat of Chinese ingenuity.

Getting there: Nanwang Town, Wenshang County, Jining (+86 537 715 5508). Open 9am–5pm daily. Free.

Tip: Look for the old stone tablet detailing how 16th-century engineers cracked the code of water diversion.

Liaocheng Grand Canal Museum

中国运河文化博物馆
Set on the canal's edge, this museum charts how The Grand Canal shaped trade, culture and daily life with restored tools, scale models and vivid historical detail.

Getting there: 88 Dongchang Xi Road, Dongchangfu District, Liaocheng (+86 635 606 6123). Open 9am–5pm (last entry 4.30pm), Tue-Sun (closed Mon). Free entry on registration.

CHINA'S OLDEST DEFENCE

Built more than 400 years before the Qin dynasty's famous Great Wall, The Qi Great Wall winds through Shandong's rugged hills and is thought to be the oldest surviving wall of its kind. Today, it offers peaceful hikes and a rare window into early Chinese defence strategy.

Recommended Route

The most dramatic stretch cuts through Dafengshan 大峰山, where weathered ramparts cling to cliffs and mist curls like ancient war smoke. At Jinyang Pass 锦阳关 and Qingshi Pass 青石关, once key strongholds, it's all raw adventure and barely a soul in sight. At its historical glory, the wall's eastern tip once reached the sea at Yujiahe 于家河, the Qi State's ancient coastal gateway.

Getting there: Dafengshan Scenic Area, Changqing District, Jinan (+86 531 8738 3666). Open 8am–5pm (last entry 4pm) daily. 40RMB.

Jinyang Pass: Niangniangmiao to Sanhuashu Village, Laiwu District, Jinan. Free.

Qingshi Pass: Qingshiguan Village, Hezhuang Town, Laiwu District, Jinan. Free.

Qi Culture Museum

齐文化博物馆
This museum dives into the ancient Qi State, the birthplace of China's oldest Great Wall. Bronze artefacts, jade and city models reveal how this early civilisation rose to power.

Getting there: 308 Linzi Avenue, Linzi district, Zibo (+86 533 629 2898). Open 9am–5pm (last entry 4.30pm), Tue-Sun (Closed Mon). Free on registration.

DISCOVER! THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO EXPLORING SHANDONG'S UNESCO HERITAGE SITES

VISITING SHANDONG

