

Madou Daitian Temple

麻豆代天府

History of Madou Daitian Temple | 歷史沿革

Madou Daitian Temple is primarily dedicated to the worship of the Wangye, or the Five Royal Lords. It is the largest Wangye Temple in Taiwan and a major center of Wangye worship.

The original temple was said to have been built in the mid-1600s, a period of time when there was a great deal of migration to Taiwan from the Chinese mainland. When the original location was destroyed, the temple was moved to a new location and renamed Bao-an Temple. In 1956, the temple was rebuilt and moved to its current location. This site is said to be a geomantic hotspot or powerful energy source, and thus a prime spot on which to situate a temple.

Architecturally, it is built in the southern style, with three large worship halls, ornate mosaic tile roofs, and baroque embellishments throughout the temple. One highly unique feature is the door gods, who are sculpted in relief on the solid camphorwood doors rather than simply being painted.

The rotunda-shaped Guanyin worship hall was completed in 1990. In shape and size—it is thirty-two meters tall—it is reminiscent of the Temple of Heaven. The outer walls are covered in relief paintings of eighty-four bodhisattvas, and a large effigy of the Guanyin sits in repose in the worship hall, lit by a halo of light that filters down from on high and by the 120-layer blessing lamps on either side. Madou Temple's 120-layer blessing lamps are said to be the tallest in the world.

麻豆代天府因分香宮廟與信徒眾多，因此又稱五府千歲總廟。最初的廟名為保寧宮，建於明永曆16年，後因當地地理遭受破壞，遷至他處並改名為保安宮。1956年，南鯤鯓五王回鑾駐蹕麻豆，因此於現址重建麻豆代天府。麻豆代天府的建築風格十分特殊，有許多精巧的雕刻藝術品，構造包含前、中、後三大殿與觀音寶殿。其門神不像一般廟宇是用顏料繪製的，而是用整塊樟木雕刻出來的。

觀音寶殿採圓形建築設計，高三十二公尺，外壁有八十四尊觀音菩薩救苦救難浮雕，四周陳列光明燈，其中兩座光明燈高達120層，據聞目前為世界最高的光明燈。

Wangye Worship | 王爺信仰

The Wang Ye are among the most important deities in the Taoist pantheon. They are emissaries who tour the world of the living on behalf of the Jade Emperor, granting blessings and bad fortune to the good and the evil. The Five Royal Lords worshipped in Madou Daitian Temple are Lords Li, Chih, Wu, Jhu, and Fan. The leader of the Five Lords, Lord Li, was born during the Tang Dynasty and close friend with the other four lords. Adept with both literature and military affairs, he was promoted to dukedom for his contribution in founding the Tang Dynasty. After his ascension, the Jade Emperor delegated him the job of Daitian Shunshou (hunting tour on behalf of heaven). He went on hunting tour on the Wangye Boat to dispel disease and evil from those who worship him.

五府千歲為道教信仰中非常普遍且重要的神祇。「千歲」即「王爺神」之統稱，是天帝所派巡按人間，鑒察善惡以施降福禍的大神。

五府千歲意為「五位王爺神」，麻豆代天府主祀李、池、吳、朱、范等五府千歲，所以又稱為「五王廟」。大王李府千歲，生於隋唐之際，文武雙全，與池公、吳公、朱公、范公為生死之交。李王因輔佐唐開國有功而加官晉爵，昇化之後，玉皇上帝敕「代天巡狩」，駐守人間，坐擁王船，巡狩四方，趕災禦患，護國佑民。

A Journey through the Taoist Underworld | 十八層地獄

A unique feature of Madou Daitian Temple is the enormous dragon tunnel that visitors can walk through to learn about Taoist Heaven and Hell. Visitors enter the open maw of the enormous dragon, which is several stories high, and traverse its winding, seventy-six meter length where they are treated to animatronic recreations of the delights of Heaven and the terrors of the Eighteen Hells. Parents sometimes bring their children here to impress upon them the importance of living a virtuous life.

In Taoist belief, the dead go to the underworld, or Hell, to be judged and then either enter Heaven, or are punished for their sins and then reborn. Hell is composed of ten great halls or courts, each governed by a different king. These are further divided into eighteen chambers or levels of Hell, in which the wicked are punished in accordance with their crimes in life.

The length of the sentence is dependent on the severity of the crime and the penitence of the sinner. If a punishment 'kills' a sinner, their body is made whole again and the punishment repeats itself over and over until the sentence has been fulfilled and the sinner repents.

麻豆代天府的一大特色為「五彩觀光巨龍」內的天堂地獄水晶宮。道教信仰中，人死後會到陰間受審，德性良善的人會上天堂，生前作惡的人則會下地獄，受刑完畢後輪迴轉生。地獄共分十殿十八層，每層均由不同大王看守。下地獄的鬼魂會根據生前所犯惡行的程度到不同層地獄受罰。

刑期也是按照罪行的嚴重程度，與鬼魂的悔意而定。有些懲罰方式會讓罪人不斷再次受死，直到刑期結束、罪人悔改之時才會終止。十八層地獄的意象雖然可怕，但其意義為勸導世人向善。有不少家長會帶著小孩來參觀麻豆代天府的天堂地獄水晶宮，以教導小孩做人正直的重要性。