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Latest news from The Taiwan Tourism Bureau

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1. China's Forbidden City lends Qing Dynasty relics to Taiwan

Beijing's Forbidden City is lending 37 Qing Dynasty relics to Taiwan for a joint exhibition to be held in October 2009. There will also be two pieces on loan from the Shanghai Museum, as well as one from a private collection to complement Taiwan's own collection. The exhibition will run for three months at Taipei's National Palace Museum. This is the first cultural exchange between the two countries in 60 years.

The exhibition will focus on the life of Emperor Yongzheng, who lived between 1722 and 1735. The ruler was part of the Qing Dynasty that ran from 1616 to 1911. The exhibition will include portraits of Emperor Yongzheng and his concubines. There will be a total of 237 artefacts on display at the exhibition, which has already attracted international attention.

The National Palace Museum is home to 650,000 treasures and is regularly voted as one of the best museums in the world. Many of the museum's Chinese antiques were originally from China's Forbidden City and were moved to Taiwan when the Kuomintang lost the civil war to the communists in 1949.

'Harmony and Integrity: Emperor Yongzheng and His Times' will open on 8th October 2009 and run until 10th January 2010.

www.npm.gov.tw/en

2. Vote for Yushan as one of the Seven New Wonders of Nature

Fans of Taiwan's awe-inspiring mountain ranges, can vote for Mt Yushan as one of the Seven New Wonders of Nature. The mountain, which stands at

3,952 metres, is one of 28 finalists, which have been chosen for the award. The 28 finalists have been whittled down from a shortlist of 77 natural wonders chosen by a panel of experts. The overall winners of the Seven New Wonders of Nature will be announced in 2011.

Mt Yushan, also known as Jade Mountain, is the highest peak in North East Asia. It is part of Yushan National Park, a central mountain range in Taiwan. The national park is a haven for trekkers, as well as wildlife lovers, who visit for its diverse wildlife.

The online awards have been set up by The New7Wonders Foundation, which undertakes to promote conservation and heritage throughout the world. The foundation hit the headlines on 7th July 2007, when it announced the New Seven Wonders of the World, which included the likes of Chichen Itza in Mexico and the Taj Mahal in India. Over 100 million votes were cast from over 220 participating countries.

The Seven New Wonders of Nature campaign started in 2007, immediately after the announcement of the New Seven Wonders of the World. Other finalists for 2011 awards include world-famous wonders, such as Uluru in Australia and Mount Kilimanjaro, as well as lesser-known attractions like the Mud Volcanoes of Azerbaijan.

www.new7wonders.com

3. Taipei Arts Festival, 12th August – 6th September 2009

The 11th annual Taipei Arts Festival will this year showcase cutting-edge international performances, including dance, music and theatre. This year's line up includes plays from Poland, France and Spain, as well as Taiwan's internationally critically acclaimed modern dance group, Cloud Gate.

One of the performances will pay homage to the 21st Deaflympics, which is being held in Taipei between 5th and 15th September and which coincides with the end of the Arts Festival. The play of K. Lear, which is an adaptation of Shakespeare's King Lear, will be depicted on stage in both sign and spoken language. What's more, it stars a deaf actress in the role of Cordelia, who will replace words with powerful visual expressions.

The capital city also plays host to the Taipei Fringe Festival, which runs from 29th August to 13th September 2009. The festival provides the platform for 80 art groups and 246 performances. There will also be 17 dance shows from a variety of different disciplines as diverse as belly dancing, street dancing and ballet. In addition to this, there will a wide variety of musical performances, including classical, chamber music, rock and jazz.

www.taipeifestival.org

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For more information on Taiwan, please see www.taiwan.net.tw or telephone 020 7928 1600.

For media information and image or if you're interested in visiting Taiwan on an individual or group press trip, please contact Susie Tempest or Sarah Habicht at the Saltmarsh Partnership on 020 7928 1600 or email susie@saltmarshpr.co.uk / sarah@saltmarshpr.co.uk.