

AROUNDNANJING



XUANWU LAKE

Xuanwu Lake is located in Xuanwu district in the central-northeast part of Nanjing, near the Nanjing railway station and Ji Ming Temple. Five islands in the lake are connected by arched bridges. Its main entrance is the Xuanwu Gate.

The lake has a history of more than 1,500 years and its name has changed several times. The city finally settled on the name Xuanwu because of a folk tale that claims a black dragon lives in it.

The lake was used by many dynasties to train naval troops. Because many military demonstrations have been held there, the lake is also known by the nickname "Military Rehearsal Lake".

At the end of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the lake was turned into a scenic location. Today, the lake is a popular destination because of its clear waters and colorful mountains.

Xuanwu Lake Park, once an imperial garden, is open to public. Within the scenic park are pagodas, pavilions, tea houses and restaurants. Entertainment options include boating, a zoo and an outdoor theater. Key attractions include the Nuo'na Tower, Lama Temple, Cenotaph of Guo Pu and the Rose Garden. Tourists can ride on boats and ferries on the lake. A visitor could easily stroll through Xuanwu Lake Park for up to five hours.



THE RAIN FLOWER TERRACE

The Rain Flower Terrace, one of the most iconic spots in Nanjing, is located to the south of the city and occupies an area of 153.7 hectares. It is rich in historical monuments as well as natural scenery.

The site got its name during the Southern Dynasties (420-589) because of an old and wise monk named Yunguang, who preached the doctrines of Buddhism at the park. According to legend, the monk's eloquent storytelling moved the heavens so

dramatically that the gods rained down flowers like a shower on the area, hence the name "Rain Flower Terrace". The scenic location is significant in modern Chinese history because it was used as an execution site of revolutionary martyrs. It has since been converted into a memorial area.

Today, there are solemn as well as magnificent memorial relics that dot the site. Tourists can also find numerous species of plants proliferating the area throughout the year.



QIXIA MOUNTAIN

Qixia Mountain is located in northeastern Nanjing. In the Southern Dynasties (420-589), a Qixia cottage was found by travelers on the mountain, thus giving the mountain its name. Qixia Mountain has several peaks, including Sanmao Peak, with a height of 286 meters; Dragon Mountain, which is located to the northeast; and Tiger Mountain, at the northwest.

Qixia Mountain has many scenic and historical sites. Its *Dongfeitian* grottoes, which were discovered in 2000, have made it a well-known tourist attraction.

Located to the west of Qixia Mountain, Qixia Tem-

ple is an ancient temple that was built in 489. It is regarded as the precursor of Buddhism's "three theories" and one of the "four sections" of Buddhism.

It was originally built during the Southern Dynasties, and was called Gongde Temple during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). During the reign of Emperor Xianfeng in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the temple was destroyed in a massive fire. It was then reconstructed during the reign of Emperor Guangxu. The main attractions of the temple are the magnificent gate, Tianwang Hall, Pilu Hall, Shecui Pavilion and Cangjing Pavilion.

PURPLE MOUNTAIN

Purple Mountain, or *Zijin Shan*, is located to the east of Nanjing. It is 447.1 meters high, with the lowest point at 30 meters. Its peaks are often found enveloped in mysterious purple and golden clouds at dawn and dusk, hence its name. It is known as the "lung of Nanjing", and for good reason: The massive, forested park area boasts fresh and cool air.

More than 200 heritage and scenic tourist sites are located in or around the mountain, including three national historical sites, nine provincial historical sites and 33 prefectural historical sites. Located in or close to the hillside are about a dozen national research institutes and universities.

The well-known Purple Mountain Observatory, also known as

Zijinshan Astronomical Observatory, is one of the most well-known institutes.

PMO has astronomical instruments dating back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The modern observatory began operating in 1934, which marked the beginning of modern astronomical research

in China, and is still involved in scientific research today. For most, a visit to the observatory will complement a hike or ride up or down Purple Mountain. Once you have arrived, it only takes about 30 to 45 minutes to observe the instruments and enjoy the view from the observatory.

