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Exploring Guangzhou by Public Transport by Lek Boonlert

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Seeing Guangzhou by train is a fairly new experience and the JingGuang is one of the most used railways in the city. The new high-speed train service began to operate within the city in 2009 and around 610 miles can be covered at 194mph making it a fast way to see the sights.

The underground system in Guangzhou is also popular and it was only the fourth city to receive a metro system in the whole country back in 1997. Five lines are covered by the extensive system and it runs for around 157kms with plans in the pipeline to increase its size to 500kms with 15 different lines in place by 2020. Line 1 runs from Guangzhou East Railway Station through to Xilang Station, Line 2 from Sanyuanli Station to Wanshengwei Station, Line 3 from Guangzhou East Railway Station to Panyu Square, Line 4 from Wanshengwei Station to Jinzhou Station and finally Line 5 from Jiaokou Station to Wenchong Station.

Buses in Guangzhou

The bus system is a great and inexpensive way to travel although the language barrier can be a problem. As of 2010, all of the buses in the city run on LPG fuel to save on the damage done to the environment as well as money. There are in excess of 450 different lines running in the city and 44 run throughout the night. Visitors will be pleased to know that 80 per cent of the cityâ€™s buses are equipped with air conditioning and there are four main bus terminals that many Guangzhou hotel staff will be happy to direct visitors to.

Taxis in Guangzhou

Taxis are plentiful in the city and 16,000 of them already use LPG for fuel. They can be found while walking through to streets and hotels will also be able to pre-book one as many hotels have their own private taxi ranks. Although taxis are more expensive than the buses, trips are private rather than shared and are still cheap compared to western prices.

Tips for exploring Guangzhou

When attempting to read street names be prepared for a lot of confusion. The translation from Pinyin to English is not the same so when describing street names in English to basic-English speaking locals; it is very easy to get mixed up. Currently the city is changing many of the street names so that both a Chinese and English version appear on all signs â€“ at least for the major roads.

Always carry a map with you so that even if you plan to spend the whole trip in a taxi, you can point at the different attractions that you want to visit without worrying about the complications o the language barrier. Staff at your hotel Guangzhou will be able to offer advice about which form of transport should be taken to see which attractions.

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