

City slickers look for free air conditioned spaces

找免錢冷氣吹 都會人大竄逃

As temperatures in Taipei set record highs, many city slickers are spending the long summer days looking for free air conditioned spaces. Apart from libraries, fast food joints and supermarket food courts, coffee shops and other public spaces where you can spend time at leisure have become popular places to avoid the summer heat. The warmer it is outside, the more people visit these places.

Foreign caretakers can be seen pushing their elderly charges into the entrances of the underground shopping malls connected to many Taipei MRT stations and in the city's eastern district or around the underground squares. Around lunch break at noon, benches in these shopping malls are **crammed** with people **whiling away** their time reading newspapers or magazines.

When a well-known bookstore on Songgao Rd in Xinyi Business District opens at 10 in the morning, crowds of people carrying small backpacks and with earphones in their ears wait to get in. The seating areas quickly fill up, so many book lovers simply sit down on the floor.

"If you're not out by 10am, your room will soon become a **sauna!**" says A-kou who rents a room without air conditioning. A-kou normally leaves early for work, but on her days off she must find somewhere to escape the blistering sun. If she doesn't surf the Internet, she reads. She will bring a worn-out old bag with a long-sleeved shirt. She's not afraid that someone will steal it, so she uses it to mark her seat and she wears it to sleep if there's a danger of the air conditioning causing a cold. "Many libraries have DVDs and movies that you can watch for free, and the seats are not just hard benches, so you can sit there until the afternoon without getting tired."

Mrs. Chen from Xindian City also says that it is not very **economical** to sit alone back home with the air conditioner on all day, so she and her sister often meet at a department store to do some window shopping. When they're tired of that, they go to the food court, so they don't spend much money.

(LIBERTY TIMES, TRANSLATED BY PERRY SVENSSON)



大台北氣溫迭創新高，不少都會人的漫長夏天，成了四處找免費冷氣吹的逃竄記，除了圖書館、速食店、大賣場美食街，咖啡廳，可以悠閒久坐的公共場所也都成為避暑勝地，外頭太陽愈大，這些地點的人潮就愈多。

以捷運台北地下街及東區地下街為例，每天從上午九點過後，幾個入口及連接中庭的廣場，都有外傭推著家中長者聚集，中間走道的板凳，中午休息時間更是座無虛席，有些民眾拿著報紙、雜誌，一坐就是大半天。

信義區松高路著名的連鎖書店，上午十點營業時間才開始，就有不少人背著包包、帶著隨身MP3耳機，準備魚貫入場，座椅區很快就沒位子，不少愛書民眾，索性席地而坐。

「十點之前不出門，房間很快就會像蒸籠！」租屋處沒有冷氣的上班族阿叩說，平時上班會很早出門，假日卻要找地方躲太陽，如果不上網純看書，她會帶一個破包包，放一件長袖衣服，可以佔位子，不怕人偷，又可以防止冷氣太冷，還可以小睡一下不怕感冒，「很多圖書館分館，不但有免費DVD、電影可以看，椅子也不是硬板凳，坐到下午也不會累。」

家住新店的陳太太也說，平時一個人宅在家開冷氣不划算，她經常和姊妹淘約在百貨公司，逛累了就到美食街坐，消費也不多。

(自由時報記者劉樂)

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **cram** /kræm/ v.

把...擠滿 (ba3..ji2 man3)

例: Dozens of passengers crammed into the carriage.
(大批乘客把車廂擠得滿滿的。)

2. **while away** /hwaɪl/ v. phr.

消磨時間 (xiao1 mo2 shi2 jian1)

例: I like nothing better than to while away the hours reading a good novel.
(我最喜歡讀一本好看的小說來消磨時光。)

3. **sauna** /'saʊnə/ n.

蒸氣浴 (zheng1 qi4 yu4)

例: Is there any chance you could turn up the air conditioning? It's like a sauna in here.
(可以請你把冷氣打開嗎？這裡熱得像在做蒸氣浴一樣。)

4. **economical** /,i:kə'namɪkl/ adj.

經濟的 (jing1 ji4 de5)

例: It's not very economical to travel everywhere by taxi.
(到哪都搭計程車太花錢了。)



Top: On hot summer days, many people go to the bookstore and sit down to read as if the bookstore were a library, as in this picture taken in Taipei County on July 31.

PHOTO: LIU JUNG, LIBERTY TIMES

Above: Children play in the water fountain behind Taipei 101 in Taipei on Aug. 2.

PHOTO: LO PEI-DER, LIBERTY TIMES

最上圖：這張七月三十一日攝於台北縣的照片中，炎炎夏日，不少民眾把書店當成圖書館，坐在裡面看書。

照片：自由時報記者劉樂

上圖：八月二日，一群小朋友在台北一〇一大樓後方的噴泉區戲水。

照片：自由時報記者羅沛德