

## Return to Taipei

*Tuesday, March 14th*

One Tuesday we took the train back to Taipei to continue our urban explorations!



*Ximen*

New hotel, this one a bit further from the train so we were again hauling our luggage through a crazy montage of sidewalks, store fronts, alleys and, um, what is that?



### *Nail House?*

Before I left San Diego, Sandra had showed me a photo album about “Nail Houses”, I think mainly in China. Shanghai has a much more pronounced redevelopment program, although there were hints of it in Taipei. You see large blocks (often several adjacent blocks) fenced off and most buildings demolished. Sometimes a block in the center or so is still there, with security guards presumably only letting residents through the construction fences. Often



the building being lived in still look like they're in the early stages of demolition. "Nail Houses" are the last house in an area that won't sell, they stick up like a lone nail (waiting to be hammered down). The laws are such that it can be hard to kick some people out of their residence to tear it down and make another giant building. Sometimes hold ups hang on, as all their neighbors are slowly removed. I have no idea if that's what is going on above, but it looks like it.



*"Retrodandy & Co. - For Real Men"*

After we were settled into our hotel, we headed to visit Taipei 101! This famous building is, well, 101 stories tall with a viewing floor near the top.



*Taipei from Taipei 101*

Taipei has about a third of the population of Taiwan contained within its metro area.





*Lined Up*



*I am great at picking locations for selfies!*





*Taipei 101*

We had dinner in a restaurant at the base; Christy had eaten at another of their locations before (I'm forgetting the name). It had a huge line so we got it to go and wandered into the food court to enjoy our meal. Then it was back on to the subway (very easy to use both here and in Shanghai) to visit Ximen area again. Christy was hunting for a stationary store, and it's fun to walk around. It's the picture at the top of this post.

I'll leave you with one of the mosaics in a wall near the hotel; mostly featuring animals playing instruments. Taipei!





*Octopus Hornblower*