

Gyeongsangbuk-do

경상북도



Gyeongsangbuk-do's natural beauty is seconded only by its profusion of spectacular temples, Confucian schools, ancient pagodas, rock-carved Buddhas, teashops and tombs. Gyeongju, once the capital of the Shilla dynasty (57 BC–AD 935), is often called 'the museum without walls' for its historical treasures, many of which are outdoors. The oddly symmetrical 'hills' in the centre of town are serene, peaceful pyramids – stately reminders of the dead they still honour. Thankfully, this beautiful city was spared the ravages of bombings in the Korean War; even today it retains a 19th-century feel.

Come here and find treasures in all directions. Andong, in the north, offers mouthwatering mackerel, a fascinating folk village, strong *soju* (locally brewed vodka) and many temples as well, including the oldest wooden building in South Korea. To the south, check out Daegu's medicinal herb market or peek at the anachronistic 'pink light district' that still operates despite new laws banning prostitution.

While technically in Gyeongsangbuk-do's southern sister (Gyeongsangnam-do), Haeinsa is a must-see temple-library most easily accessed via Daegu: check out the 1000-year-old wooden tablets, preserved in a building so ahead of its time that modern science hasn't improved it.

In the 'Sea of Korea', as Koreans call it, is the rugged, mist-kissed island of Ulleungdo, where fishing villages dry squid in quantities that boggle the mind. Even further east lies Dokdo (aka Takeshima), a fishing ground still disputed today.

HIGHLIGHTS

- See and smell the fascinating **medicinal herb market** (p192) in Daegu
- Marvel at the 80,000-plus wooden tablets of the Buddhist sutras at the temple **Haeinsa** (p195)
- Slip back into the Shilla era in **Gyeongju** (p197)
- Experience the Confucian academies **Oksan Seowon** (p208) and **Dosan Seowon** (p220)
- Watch squid dry on the rugged, gorgeous island of **Ulleungdo** (p212), 135km offshore
- See centuries-old papermaking and masks at the villages of **Hahoe** (p220) and **Andong** (p220)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 054

■ POPULATION: 5.1 MILLION

■ AREA: 20,023 SQ KM

History

This beautiful province holds many of South Korea's oldest treasures. Whether you plan on meandering through Gyeongju's 'open-air museum' or want to create your own elixir of eternal life in Daegu's Herbal Medicine Market, you will find that the area's historical events are more tangible here, less a part of the distant past and more a part of the present. At the centre of South Korea, this area was once the capital of the Shilla empire (57BC–935AD), and as such was a central part of Korean government and trade. During this almost 1000-year-long empire, the Shilla rulers created alliances with China to defeat Japanese threats, as well as to repel other Korean invaders. During this time Confucian

laws were widely adopted and informed all aspects of Korean life including who, where, and when a person could marry. In many ways these traditions are still held by modern Koreans, who often follow Confucian rules (as well as their parents' wishes) in deciding how to marry.

National Parks

Gyeongsangbuk-do's national parks are not as famous as those of its neighbour, Gangwon-do, but they provide wonderful hiking and photograph opportunities and are surprisingly close (thanks to KTX high-speed trains) to Seoul. Weekend trips to Gyeongju National Park, Palgongsan Provincial Park or Juwangsang National Park will bring you face

to face with stunning scenery and temples, and will be less peopled (even in the peak seasons) than some of the parks closer to Seoul.

The remote island of Ulleungdo, although not a park proper, might just as well be one: its jagged cliffs plunge down into steel-blue waters, populated only by seabirds. The small villages subsist on squid and other marine crops, and you will not be disappointed to be so far away from Seoul.

Getting There & Around

The area is serviced by Daegu's International Airport, by KTX and express trains, and by buses (the latter are cheap, quick and usually direct, often arriving faster than a train or flight). Some of the more remote areas are best accessed by car or (in the case of Ulleungdo) by ferry.

DAEGU 대구

☎ 053 / pop 2.45 million

Daegu's fascinating traditional-medicine market is its biggest tourist draw. Come here to see strange roots the size of human thighs, jars of honey-coloured liquids, baskets of flowers, dried leaves and medicinal herbs. Even if it's pouring rain the avenues smell fragrantly of these ancient cures, which many Koreans still swear by today (though Viagra is gaining a foothold in the 'stamina-producing' arena).

A simple, two-line subway system makes getting around easy, and the country's third-largest city has great restaurants, good nightlife and neon that puts parts of Seoul to shame.

Daegu makes a great hub for day trips: be sure to check out Haeinsa (p195) and Jikjisa (p196), both of which offer temple stays for those wishing to get a closer look. Note that Daegu, while surrounded by Gyeongsangbuk-do, is its own administrative district and has its own telephone area code.

Orientation

At 885 sq km Daegu covers a larger area than Seoul. Its subway was the site of a horrific fire (caused when a passenger set himself and others ablaze in 2003), but things are back to normal now – a second line opened up in 2005. Most of the city's attractions are within easy walking distance of the subway or train. The airport is a 30-minute drive from the city, to the northeast.

Information

Daegu has a **tourist office** (☎ 053 1330, 939 0080; 11 9am–5pm) at all major transit points and destinations including the airport, outside Dongdaegu station, inside Seomun Market, at Duryu Park (all Map pp190–1) and in the central shopping district and by the Herbal Medicine Market (Map p193). All have comprehensive local maps in English, reams of pamphlets, and at some (including the one at Dongdaegu station), free internet terminals.

Kyobo Books (Map p193; ☎ 425 3501; 2nd floor, Kyobo Bldg; 11 9.30am–5pm) is a good place for English-language books. It's near Jungangno subway station.

Sights & Activities

MARKETS & SHOPPING STREETS

Daegu is a shopper's dream. In addition to good prices on all kinds of 'normal' and brand-name goods (clothes, shoes, bags etc) at the various department stores, Daegu has numerous speciality markets that make for a fascinating stroll even if you're not going to part with any won.

Start at the **Seomun Market** (Map pp190–1; 11 9am–6pm Mar–Oct, 9am–5pm Nov–Feb), a hulking, multistorey complex with over 4000 shops in six sections. Bustling yet orderly, it's been one of Korea's big-three markets since 1669, even if the current buildings have little of that historic character. The market is closed on the second and fourth Sunday of each month.

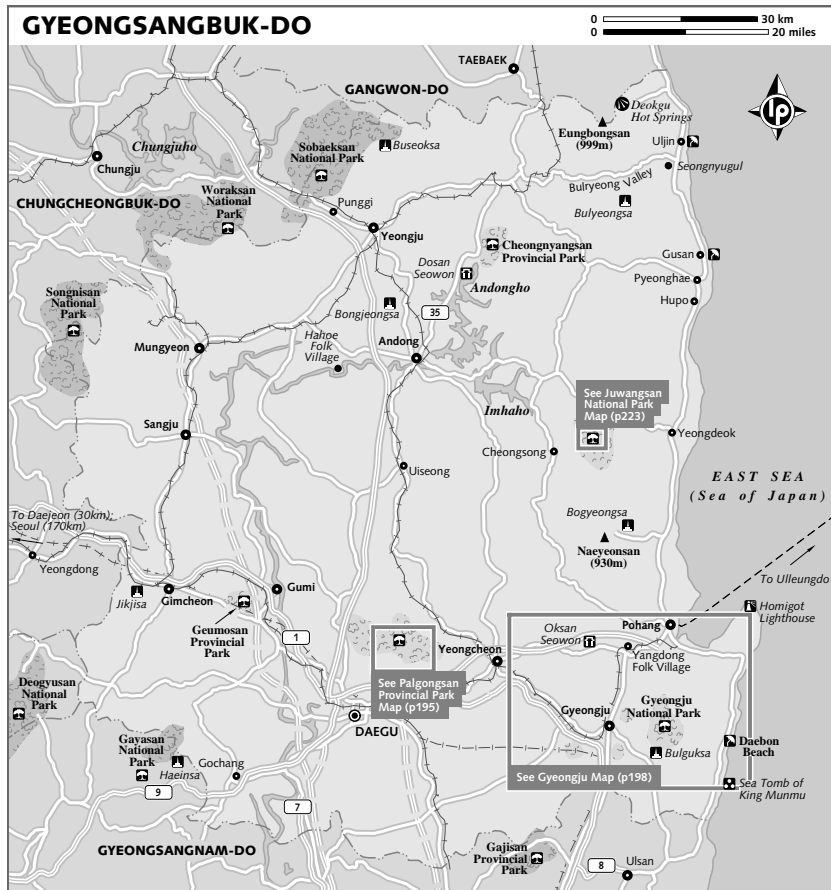
Yasigolmok (야시골목; Map p193) is the heart of Daegu's shopping district, with clothing and fashion outlets, bustling day and night.

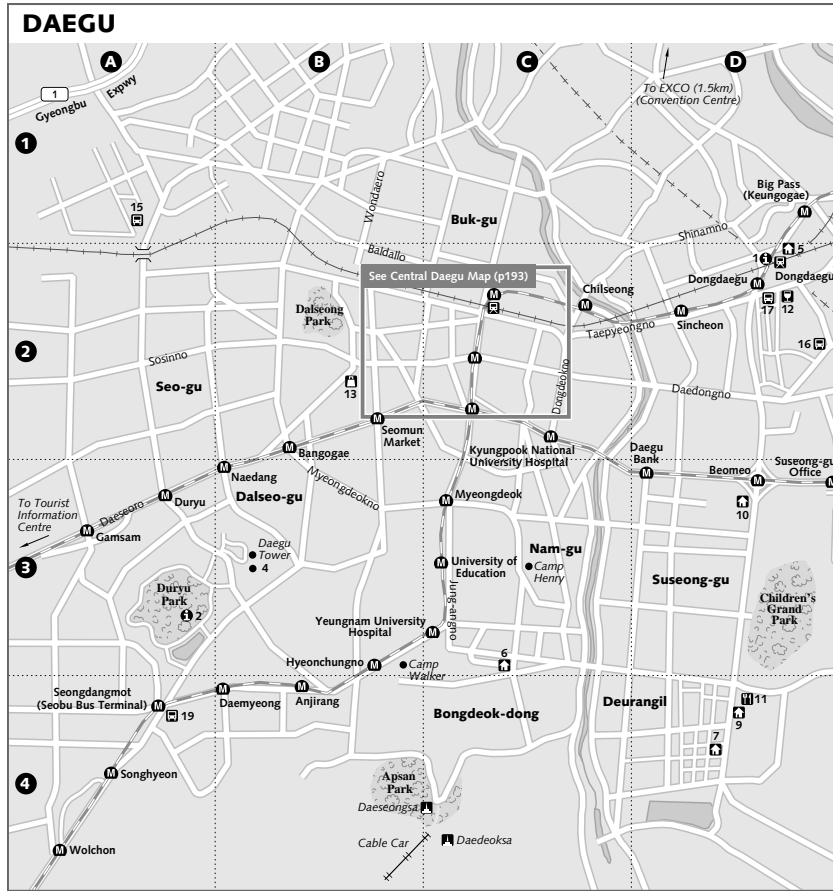
While anti-prostitution laws were recently tightened and the sex trade is supposed to be gone, Jagalmadang (Map pp190–1) is one of Korea's 'big-three' red-light districts; the other two are in Busan and Seoul. Apparently the streets of Jagalmadang were once paved with small stones so that any girls trying to escape (or customers trying to get some action for free) would be heard. Although the lights are mostly pink, not red, it's a curious scene and can be interesting for foreigners, even women. Don't expect gratis nudity though – the women read or slurp noodles.

DAEGU NATIONAL MUSEUM

국립 대구 박물관

This national museum (Map pp190–1; ☎ 768 6051; <http://daegu.museum.go.kr/>; adult/child W1000/500;





h 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb, closed Mon) is home to a fine collection of pottery, Buddhist icons and various dioramas showing the local history. The English-language signage is reasonably good. The museum is well served by bus lines: from central Daegu take bus 242 or 427 to Daegu National Museum, or from Dongdaegu station take bus 814 or 514.

WOOBANG TOWER LAND 우방 타워랜드
Visitors with kids will want to head to this amusement park (Map pp190-1; % 620 0100; www.woobangland.co.kr/english; adult/youth/child W8500/6300/5300), in the huge Duryu Park west of the city centre. Opening hours vary – check the website before visiting.

BULLO-DONG TUMULI PARK
불로동 고분 공원
North of town, not far from Daegu airport, Bullo-Dong Tumuli Park (% 940 1224; admission free; h 9am-6pm) covers some 330,000 sq metres. The grassy hillocks rising like bumps across the valley are *tumuli* (burial mounds, similar to those in Gyeongju). Dating from the 2nd to the 6th century AD, the *tumuli* are for both nobles and commoners – the higher the location on the hill: the higher the status of the person.

Tours
The city tourist information centre (% 627 8900; www.daegutour.or.jp; h 9am-6pm, 9am-7pm Jul & Aug) offers a series of seven tours that are free for foreigners

(not including admission, meals etc). Tour programmes change weekly.

Sleeping
BUDGET
Rojan Motel (Map pp190-1; % 766 0336; r W18,000) By far the best deal in Gyeongsangbuk-do, this spotless motel offers clean, crisp sheets and free coffee and candy – even energy drinks in the fridge. No English is spoken, but foreigners are welcome. Payment by credit card ups the price to W20,000.

Amoreu Motel (Map pp190-1; % 955 8155; r W30,000; a i) Décor is dark here but it's not love-motel tacky: the rooms are clean and all have TVs, combs and free coffee. Turn right out of Dongdaegu station and cross over the pedes-

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trian bridge, then go right (down the steps to the street). It's straight ahead on the left, with a pink sign.

MIDRANGE
Hotel Ariana (Map pp190-1; % 765 7776; www.ariana.co.kr; d/tw from W88,000/98,000; a i) A great deal on new crisp, characterless rooms, near the Deurangil restaurant district. Some English is spoken by the staff. Ice cream-lovers will drool when they see the Haagen-Dazs freezer in the lobby.

Garden Hotel (Map pp190-1; % 471 9911; www.gardenhotel.co.kr; d W95,800; a) Near the US military camps and used to catering to English-speaking guests. Cosy, up-to-date rooms have minibars and hair dryers.

DAEGU'S HERBAL MEDICINE MARKET 한약 시장

This market (Map p193), west of the central shopping district, has a history as vast as its scope. It dates from 1658, making it Korea's oldest and still one of its largest. Begin at the **Yangnyeong Exhibition Hall** (% 257 4729; admission free; h 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm Sat, holidays & Mon-Fri Nov-Feb) for an introduction to *insam* (ginseng), reindeer horns and the people who popularised them – there's usually someone who speaks English at the tourist booth outside who'll show you around. Then head out to the street to stock up on everything from lizards' tails to magic mushrooms (the latter with a prescription, of course); you might also catch a glimpse of someone receiving acupuncture. On the days ending with 1 or 6 (except the 31st), *yangnyeong sijang* (a wholesale market) takes place downstairs in the exhibition hall.

TOP END

Hotel Inter-Burgo (Map pp190-1; % 952 0088; www.hotel.inter-burgo.com; rW193,600-257,000; a) Snazzy, with Spanish touches that give it more character than some top-end clones. The hotel boasts a parklike setting, contemporary lines, river views, pool, sauna and even a putting green.

Taegu Grand Hotel (Map pp190-1; % 742 0001; www.taegu-grand.co.kr; d/tw from W260,000/270,000; a i) A kilometre or two south of Dongdaegu station, newly renovated, with live music Monday to Saturday. Amenities include a business centre, health club and saunas (both male and female). Suites have computers.

Eating

Around the Yasigolmok district (Map p193) are literally hundreds of cafés, bars and night-clubs.

Gimbapjang (Map p193; % 425 0343; dishes W2000-4000; h 10am-2am) Nearly across the street from Kaejung, with *naengmyeon* (buckwheat noodles in an icy broth) and *mandu* (dumplings) on the menu at rock-bottom prices. Folk music is incongruously festive in this well-lit greasy spoon.

Into (Map p193; % 421 3965; dishes W4000-12000; h noon-9pm) The Into is a European café that serves fine pastas and tasty salads. There are just four tables, but it has a nice variety of French and Italian items on the changing menu.

Kaejung (Map p193; % 424 7051; dishes W5000-8000; h 10am-10pm) A popular and respected place specialising in chewy and very tasty *naengmyeon*, and soft tofu. An English menu is available. Jazz tunes croon, and a faux chia-pet hamster add flair.

Gangsan Myeonok (Map p193; % 426 6878; dishes W5000-9000; h 10am-10pm) One of Daegu's oldest establishments, this eatery is well regarded

for *naengmyeon*, *bulgogi* (barbecued beef) and *galbi* (beef ribs). Plastic food makes for user-friendly ordering.

Geumgok Samgyetang (Map p193; % 424 4449; meals W8000; h 10am-10pm) A famous favourite, in easy walking distance from the markets downtown. Order one of the three menu items: ginseng-infused chicken, barbecue chicken, or a half order of the latter (W4000).

Seokryujip (Map pp190-1; % 764 6100; meals from W8000; h 11am-10pm) For an only-in-Korea adventure, come here for dog and goat meat, both of which are fabled to have 'stamina-producing' powers in men. It's behind the petrol station.

Dijon (Map p193; % 422 2426; mains W20,000-30,000; h 11.30am-10.30pm, last order 9.30pm) Next door, Into's sister restaurant is surely the only place in Daegu with riesling on the wine list. Come here for French and Mediterranean dishes such as seared duck breast or roast pork with apple-cider sauce. Candle light and wood smoke add a romantic ambience, the bread is served warm, and a rose graces every table.

Drinking

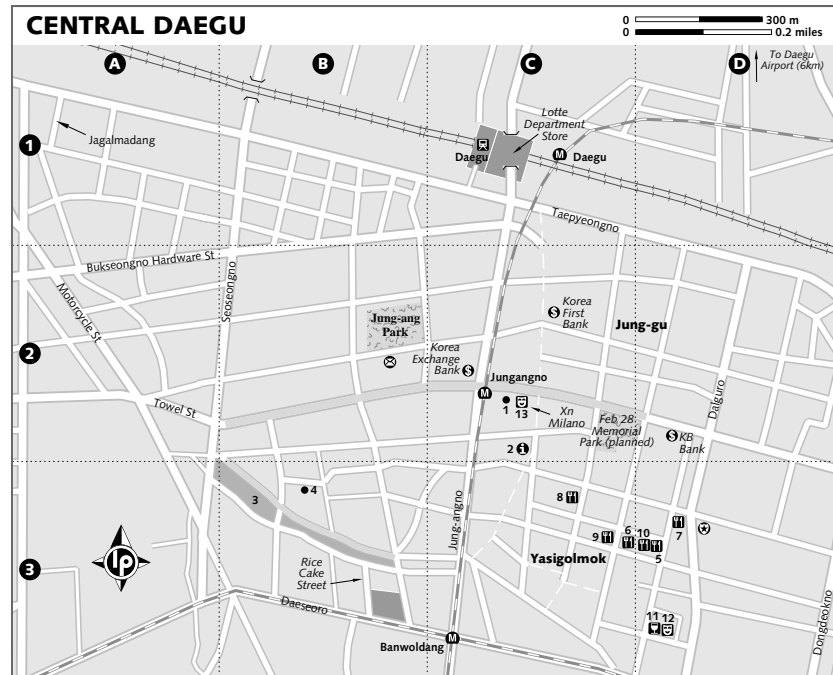
Being Korea's third-largest city, Daegu has a gay district with many bars near the express bus terminal (Map pp190-1).

The central shopping district is teeming with *hof* (local pubs), karaoke bars and cafés.

Bus (Map pp190-1; % 427 3312; side dishes W10,000, beers W3500-5000; h 5pm-noon, yes, noon) Unmistakable, this bus-turned-pub is on a side street right near G2. It's a popular hang out.

Ariana Bräu (% 762 0900; h 5pm-2am; dishes W9000-35,000) This place has food and then turns into a pub after 8pm, with live music six nights a week.

Tombo (% 745 5425; drinks W3000-10,000) Foreign visitors might start at this tiny shot bar for a



mix of 20- to 40-somethings, both local and foreign.

Entertainment

There is a huge Xn Milano complex that houses the Hanil Gukjang cinema (Map p193), where there are often English-language movies.

G2 (Map p193; % 246 1623; www.clubg2.co.kr; admission incl 1 drink W5000-10,000; h 7pm-5am) Come here to bump around in trance-inducing, black-lit darkness. The funk and hip-hop is ear-splitting – just the way most of the crowd wants it. Come after 11pm or you'll have the place to yourself. Soldiers are asked to leave by 12.30am.

Getting There & Away

AIR
Asiana and Korean Air connect Daegu with Seoul and Jeju. International destinations include Shanghai and Bangkok.

BUS

There are five bus terminals (Map pp190-1): an express bus terminal (% 743 3701), by Dongdaegu train station), plus Dongbu, Seobu,

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Nambu and Bukbu (east, west, south and north) intercity terminals. This list is not meant to be comprehensive, and note that buses to some destinations leave from multiple terminals, so it's best to inquire which

is most convenient. Some are connected by Daegu's subway system.

From the express bus terminal:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Andong	5000	1½hr	every 20min
Busan	5400	1¾hr	every 30min
Daejeon	7400	2hr	every 30min
Dong Seoul	13,700	3¾hr	every 30min
Gwangju	10800	3¾hr	every 30min
Gyeongju	3300	50min	every 20min
Jinju	7200	2¼hr	hourly
Seoul	13,600	3¾hr	every 10min

From Dongbu intercity bus terminal (% 756 0017):

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Gyeongju	3300	1hr	every 25min
Pohang	6000	1½hr	every 45min

From Seobu intercity bus terminal (% 656-2825):

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Busan	8400	2hr	8 daily
Haeinsa	4000	1½hr	every 20min

From Bukbu intercity bus terminal (% 357 1851):

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Andong (nonstop /express)	6800	1½/2¼hr	every 20/30min
Chuncheon	16,600	5½hr	5 daily

TRAIN

Dongdaegu station (Map pp190–1), on the eastern side of the city, is the main station for long-distance trains. It's also next door to the express bus station.

You'll find that there are good connections to Busan and Seoul. *Mugunghwa* (limited express) trains run every 30 minutes to Seoul (W15,800 to W19,800, 3½ to four hours) and Busan (W6200 to W7300, 1½ hours). KTX service has frequent trains to Daejeon and occasional ones all the way to Dongdaegu. Check www.korail.go.kr for exact schedules and fares.

Getting Around TO/FROM AIRPORT

Daegu's airport is northeast of the city, about 2km from the express bus terminal. Bus 401 (W900) winds a circuitous route to the airport and can take 45 minutes. A taxi from the airport to the centre will cost around W3500 and takes about 20 minutes.

BUS

Local bus fares are W900 or W1300, depending on the route. To get to Deurangil from Central Daegu or Dongdaegu station, take bus 401.

SUBWAY

Two lines crisscross through the city centre. Stops include Dongdaegu station and Jungangno (city centre). Tickets cost W900.

AROUND DAEGU Palgongsan Provincial Park

팔공산 도립공원

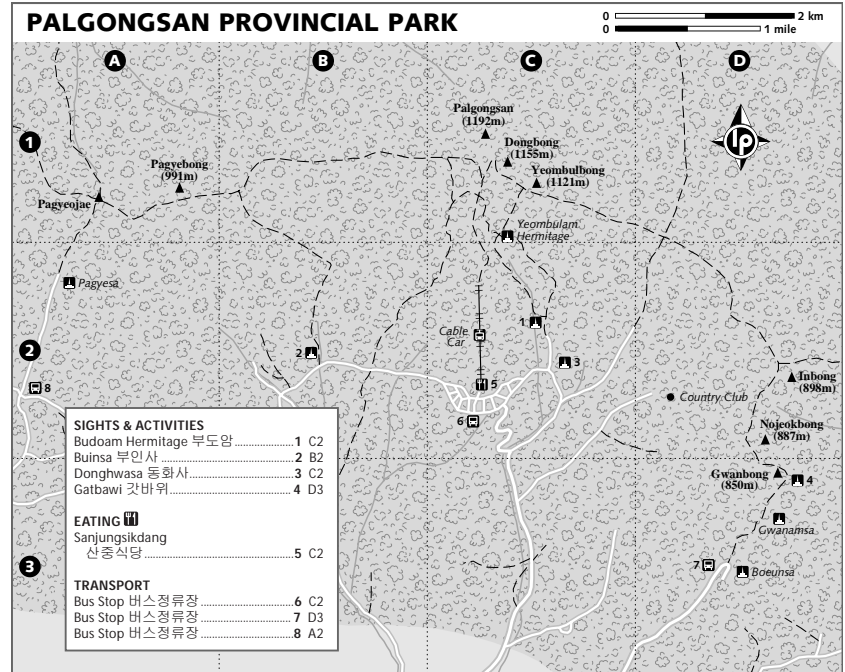
Just 20km north of Daegu, this park is sprawling, mountainous and well visited. Its highest peak, Palgongsan ('mountain of the eight meritorious officers'; 1192m) received its name around the end of the Shilla period after eight generals saved Wang-Geon, the founding king of the Goryeo kingdom.

The park's most popular destination is **Donghwasa** (% 982 0101; admission W2500; 11 9am-6pm), the province's leading temple, with a history stretching back to 493.

Gatbawi (% 983 8586; www.seonbonsa.com; admission free) is a medicinal Buddha and national treasure, some 850m above sea level and said to date back to 638. This Buddha is famed for the flat stone 'hat' hovering over its head, 15cm thick. Incense wafts and the mountain mist makes it quite a spiritual experience. It takes about 45 minutes to walk up the (numerous!) stone steps to Gatbawi from the tourist village.

The **Palgongsan Skyline Cable Car** (% 982 8801; return W5500; 11 9.45am-sunset) is the quickest way to ascend Palgongsan. The 1.2km-long ride drops you at the observatory (820m), which affords a panoramic view of Daegu. There's a tourist village at the base of the cable car that has many restaurants – Sanjungsikdang (meals W5500 to W18,000) is known for mushroom cuisine including tasty mushroom *pajeon* (pancakes).

Bus 401 (W900) runs between Dongdaegu station and the tourist village below Gatbawi.



Bus 급행 (Geuphaeng; W1300) connects Donghwasa and the bus stop near Dongdaegu station, running at least once every 12 minutes and taking 50 minutes to complete the journey.

Haeinsa 해인사

This Unesco World Heritage temple (% 055-931 1001; admission W3500; 11 8am-11am, noon-5pm Wed-Mon) should be on every visitor's not-to-be-missed list.

Haeinsa holds 81,340 woodblock scriptures, making it one of the largest Buddhist libraries of its kind. Known as the Tripitaka Koreana (see p196), the blocks are housed in four enormous buildings at the temple's upper reaches, complete with simple but effective ventilation to prevent deterioration. Also housed here are an additional 2835 blocks from the Goryeo period containing more Buddhist scriptures, literary works and an illustration of Avatamsaka Sutra. Although the buildings are normally locked, the blocks are easily visible through slatted windows.

As well as being one of Korea's most significant temples, Haeinsa is also one of the

most beautiful. Part of its beauty lies in the natural setting of mixed deciduous and coniferous forest. It's a romantic's paradise in wet weather, when wisps of cloud drift through the forest. At prayer times (3.30am, 10am and 6.30pm), the place can feel otherworldly (try listening with your eyes closed), and on our visit we were able to create our own print from an actual woodblock in the exhibition hall.

The main hall, Daegwangjeon, was burnt down during the Japanese invasion of 1592 and again (accidentally) in 1817, though miraculously the Tripitaka escaped destruction. It escaped a third time when a South Korean pilot working for the Allied forces refused to allow them to bomb it.

A **Haeinsa museum** (% 055-934 3150; admission W2000; 11 10am-6pm Mar-Oct, 10am-5pm Nov-Feb, closed Tue), built in 2002, showcases some of the temple's treasures and has a reverie on Haeinsa in contemporary art upstairs. It is a short walk from the main road, and the temple is a further 15-minute walk. At the time of research the museum was closed for remodelling.

TRIPITAKA KOREANA

The **Tripitaka Koreana**, also known as the Goryeo Buddhist canon, is one of the world's most significant complete Buddhist sacred texts. Tripitaka literally means 'three baskets', representing the three divisions of Buddhism: the Sutra (scriptures), Vinaya (laws) and the Abhidharma (treatises).

The Tripitaka Koreana has been preserved on more than 80,000 beautifully carved woodblocks, which took 16 years to complete. From carefully selecting appropriate birch wood, then soaking it in brine and boiling it in salt before drying it, to locating and constructing a sophisticated repository, the techniques involved were so complex and the artwork so intricate that they remain an inspiration today. The woodblocks are housed and preserved in the 15th-century hall, **Janggyong Pango**, a masterpiece of ingenuity in its own right: its techniques include charcoal beneath the clay floor and different-sized windows to minimise variations in humidity. Despite the ravages of Japanese invasion and fires that destroyed the rest of the temple complex, the repository remained standing with the woodblocks preserved intact.

During the 1970s, President Pak Chung-hee ordered the construction of a modern storage facility for the woodblocks. The facility was equipped with advanced ventilation, temperature and humidity control. However, after some test woodblocks began to grow mildew the whole scheme was scrapped. Today the four storage halls and woodblocks are inscribed on the Unesco World Heritage List to ensure their continued preservation. In a bold attempt to ensure accessibility to more people, Haeinsa's monks have completely transcribed the complete works onto a single CD-ROM and translated the classical Chinese text into modern-day Korean – the 20-plus-volume set costs a mere ₩3,000,000.

Excellent additional info is at www.cha.go.kr/english/world_heritage/haeinsa.jsp.

Hikers will want to challenge **Gayasan** (1430m), the main peak in the national park and a pretty one, though the 1100m up from Haeinsa are known to be tough. With luck you might spot an otter on a riverbank.

SLEEPING & EATING

Haeinsa is a popular day trip from Daegu, but there are options to spend the night. Probably the most interesting is Haeinsa itself, which participates in the Temple Stay Korea (p384). Don't expect luxury – men and women sleep in separate *ondol* (underfloor heating) dorms, but it's a worthwhile option to experience the 3.30am service.

Gobau (고바우; ☎ 931 7311; r ₩30,000; meals ₩9000) A beautiful place to stay, with kind owners and interesting Korean poetry on the walls. Rooms are simple and floor heated, with yellow linoleum and a fat tube of toothpaste by the sink. Try the restaurant (7am to midnight) where *sanchae jongsik* (rice with many assorted side dishes) is the main dish. Try for a table in the back room, where windows look out over a stream and trees.

Haeinsa Hotel (해인관광호텔; ☎ 055-933 2000; www.haeinsahotel.co.kr; d/tw ₩78,650/84,700; a i) Comfort at the top of the hill, with fountains and a polished lobby, coffee shop and restaur-

ant. English is spoken. The hotel offers a 20% weekday discount.

Jeonju (전주; ☎ 931 2323; www.jjbb.com; dishes ₩5000-10,000; 7am-9pm) On the 2nd floor of the bus terminal, this clean, cheap shop serves good *bibimbap* (vegetables, meat and rice), pancakes and veggies, with the peaceful sound of the river in the background.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

While actually in Gyeongsangnam-do, Haeinsa is most easily accessed by bus (₩4000, 1½ hours, every 30 minutes) from Daegu's Seobu terminal. The subway connects Seobu terminal to Dongdaegu station, making it (if you are unbelievably crazy and enjoy getting up at the crack of dawn) a possible day trip from Seoul. Most people will want to plan an overnight in Daegu.

Jikjisa 직지사

One of Korea's largest and most famous temples, **Jikjisa** (Map p188; ☎ 436 6175; admission adult/youth/child ₩2500/1500/1000; 7am-6.30pm Mar-Oct, 7am-5.30pm Nov-Feb) is one of the most picturesque – with quiet forests, a river and ancient stone monuments covered with lush, green moss. The delicate paintings on the temples have a refinement and grace that is very ap-

pealing, as are the giant timbers that support the structures, and the faded, cracked wood.

Situated in the foothills of Hwang-aksan, amid ancient pines and hardwoods (many trees are labelled), it was first constructed during the reign of the 19th Shilla king, Nulji (AD 417–58). Priest Jajang, who had spent many years studying in China and brought back to Korea the first complete set of the Tripitaka Buddhist scriptures, rebuilt it in AD 645. Further reconstruction was done in the 10th century but the temple was completely destroyed during the Japanese invasion of 1592 and reconstructed in 1602.

SIGHTS

Of the 40 original buildings, about 20 still exist, the oldest dating from the 1602 reconstruction. Highlights include the **Daeungjong**, with stunning Buddhist triad paintings on silk (1774) that are national treasures, and the rotating collection in the temple's **Buddhist art museum** (☎ 436 6009; admission ₩1000; 10am-5pm Mar-Oct, 10am-4.30pm Nov & Dec, closed Mon). The museum is closed in January and February.

Jikjisa's most famous monk was called **Samyeong** (aka Son-gun or Yujeong), a militant monk who spent many years in Geumgansan (the Diamond Mountains in North Korea). He organised troops to fight against the Japanese in 1592 and later became the chief Korean delegate to the Japanese court when a peace treaty was negotiated in 1604. Following the completion of the treaty, Samyeong returned to Korea with over 3000 released prisoners of war.

SLEEPING & EATING

Many visitors day trip to Jikjisa, and the temple participates in **Temple Stay Korea** (☎ Jikjisa 436 2773; www.templestaykorea.net; per night ₩30,000); programmes are arranged on a one-on-one basis. Otherwise, there's a well-established tourist village by the bus stop with a range of *minbak* (private homes with rooms for rent), *yeogwan* (budget motels) and restaurants.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Jikjisa is reached via Gimcheon (pop 152,000), about 20 minutes by bus. Local buses 11, 111, and 112 (₩1300) depart every 10 minutes from Gimcheon's intercity bus terminal (☎ 432 7600), just to the right of the train station parking lot. The temple complex is a pleasant 15-minute walk from the bus stop.

Gimcheon can be reached by train on the line connecting Daegu (50 minutes) and Seoul. If you're using KTX from Seoul, transfer at Daejeon and take a local line to Gimcheon.

By bus:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Distance
Andong	10,200	2hr	125km
Daegu	4600	1¼hr	88km
Daejeon	5400	1¼hr	88km
Gochang*	5700	1¼hr	65km

*For Haeinsa & Gayasan National Park

GYEONGJU 경주

pop 266,000

Known as 'the museum without walls', Gyeongju holds more tombs, temples, rock carvings, pagodas, Buddhist statuary and the ruins of palaces, pleasure gardens and castles than any other place in South Korea. *Tumuli* (grass-covered burial mounds) are only the most conspicuous and accessible of the sights.

In 57 BC, around when Julius Caesar was subduing Gaul, Gyeongju became the capital of the Shilla dynasty, and it remained so for nearly 1000 years. In the 7th century AD, under King Munmu, Shilla conquered the neighbouring kingdoms of Goguryeo and Baekje, and Gyeongju became capital of the whole peninsula. The city's population eventually peaked at around one million, but as empires do, Shilla eventually fell victim to division from within and invasion from without.

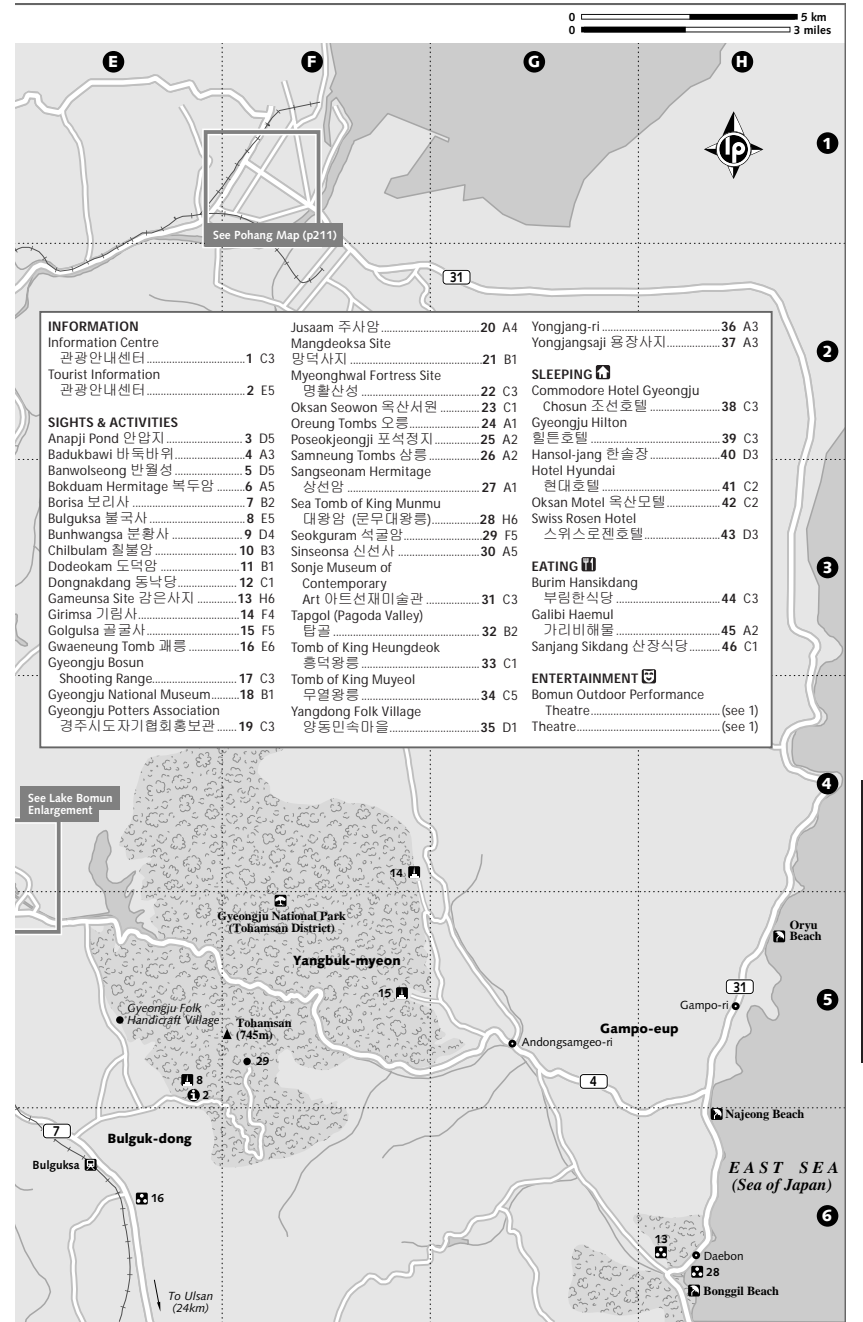
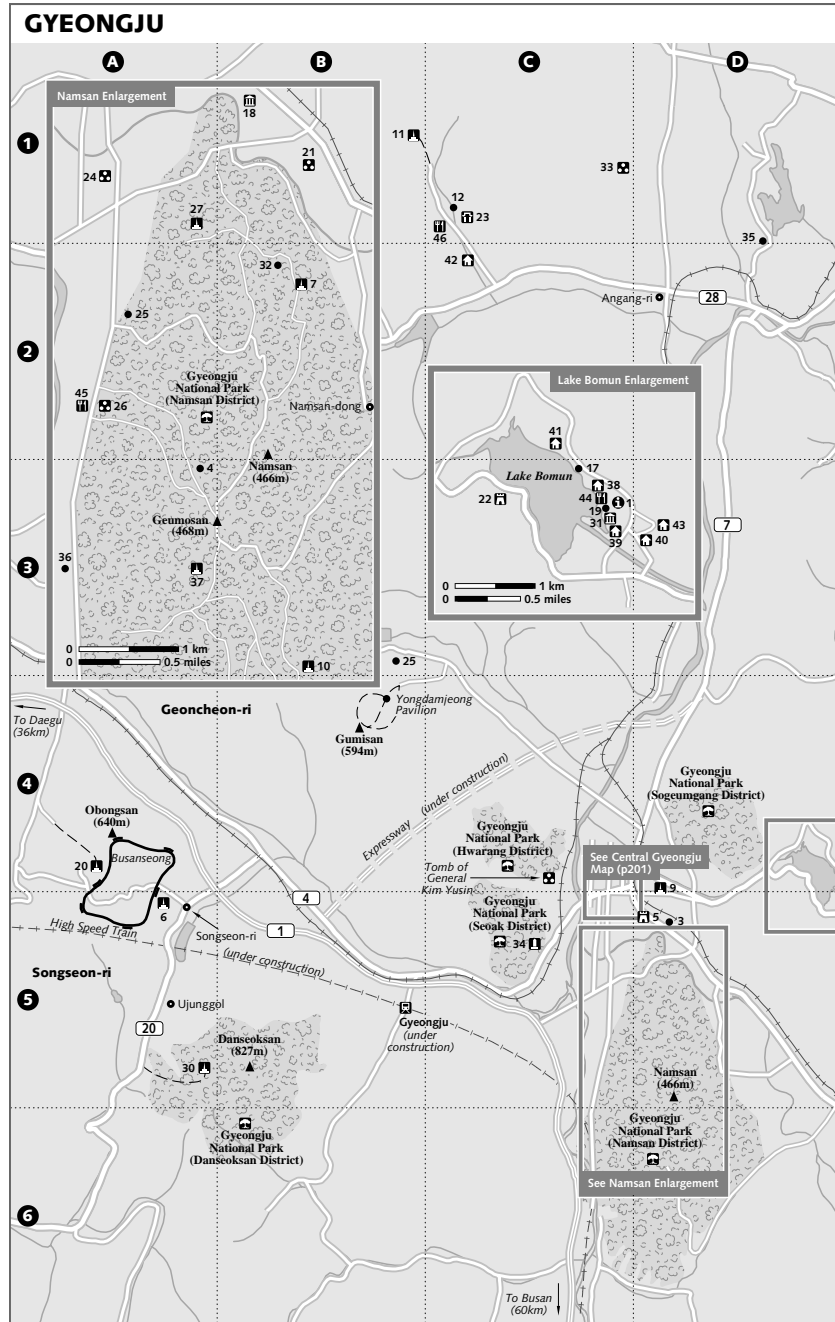
The city began a cultural revival in the early 20th century – with much preservation and restoration work thanks to the dictator Park Chung-hee in the 1970s – which continues today.

One can not truly know Gyeongju's charms without visiting its outlying districts. Gyeongju covers a vast 1323 sq km, and you should allow several days to take it all in.

Orientation & Information

Central Gyeongju is compact, encompassing the bus and train terminals (under 20 minutes' walk apart) and, between them, sights, lodgings and dining.

About 5km east of the centre is Bomunho, a lakeside resort with a golf course, luxury hotels and posh restaurants. A 16km drive southeast brings you to Bulguksa, one of Korea's most



GYEONGSANGBUK-DO

GYEONGSANGBUK-DO

famous temples. From here it's a quick ride to Seokguram, a mountain grotto with a historic Buddha.

There are **tourist-information kiosks** (₩ 772 3842) outside the express bus terminal and train station (Map p201) and in the car park near Bulguksa (Map pp198-9), all with English-speaking staff and a comprehensive English-language map with everything from sights to bike trails.

For the legends, the detailed history and current archaeological debate surrounding the Shilla remains, read *Korea's Golden Age* by Edward B Adams. This is a beautifully illustrated guide to the Shilla sites, written by a man who was born in Korea and who has spent most of his life there. The book can be difficult to buy in Gyeongju, so pick up a copy at one of the large bookshops in Seoul.

Sights

CENTRAL GYEONGJU

Tumuli Park

In the heart of town, the huge walled **Tumuli Park** (Map p201; ₩ 746 6020; admission W1500; 9am-9pm) has 23 tombs of Shilla monarchs and family members. From the outside, they look like grassy hillocks – much more subtle than the Egyptian pyramids, but they served the same purpose; many of the *tumuli* have yielded fabulous treasures, on display at the Gyeongju National Museum. On colder days, the park closes at sunset.

One of the tombs, **Cheonmachong** (Heavenly Horse Tomb), is open to visitors. A cross-section display shows its construction. The tomb is 13m high and 47m in diameter and was built around the end of the 5th century AD. Facsimiles of the golden crown, bracelets, jade ornaments, weapons and pottery found here are displayed in glass cases around the inside of the tomb; other finds include ancient eggs.

Noseo-dong Tombs

Across the street and closer to the main shopping area is the **Noseo-dong** district (Map p201), where there are other Shilla tombs for which there is no entry fee. **Seobongchong** and **Geumgwanchong** are adjacent tombs built between the 4th and 5th centuries AD. They were excavated between 1921 and 1946, the finds including two gold crowns. Across the road is **Bonghwadae**, the largest extant Shilla tomb at 22m high and with a circumference of 250m; adjoining is **Geumnyeongchong**. Houses covered

much of this area until 1984, when they were removed; more are due for demolition.

Respect these places – do not climb or picnic on them.

Wolseong Park

This park, southeast of Tumuli Park, houses the Far East's oldest astrological observatory, **Cheomseongdae** (Map p201; ₩ 772 5134; admission W300; 8am-6pm Apr-Oct, 9am-6pm Nov-Mar), constructed between 632 and 646. Its apparently simple design conceals amazing sophistication: the 12 stones of its base symbolise the months of the year. From top to bottom there are 30 layers – one for each day of the month – and a total of 366 stones was used in its construction, corresponding to the days of the year (OK, so time was calculated a little differently back then). Numerous other technical details relate, for example, to the tower's position in relation to certain stars.

A few minutes' walk south from Cheomseongdae is the site of **Banwolseong** (Castle of the Crescent Moon; Map pp198-9; admission free), once a fabled fortress. Now it's attractive parkland, with some walls and ruins. The only intact building is **Seokbinggo** or 'Stone Ice House' (early 18th century, restored 1973), which was once used as a food store.

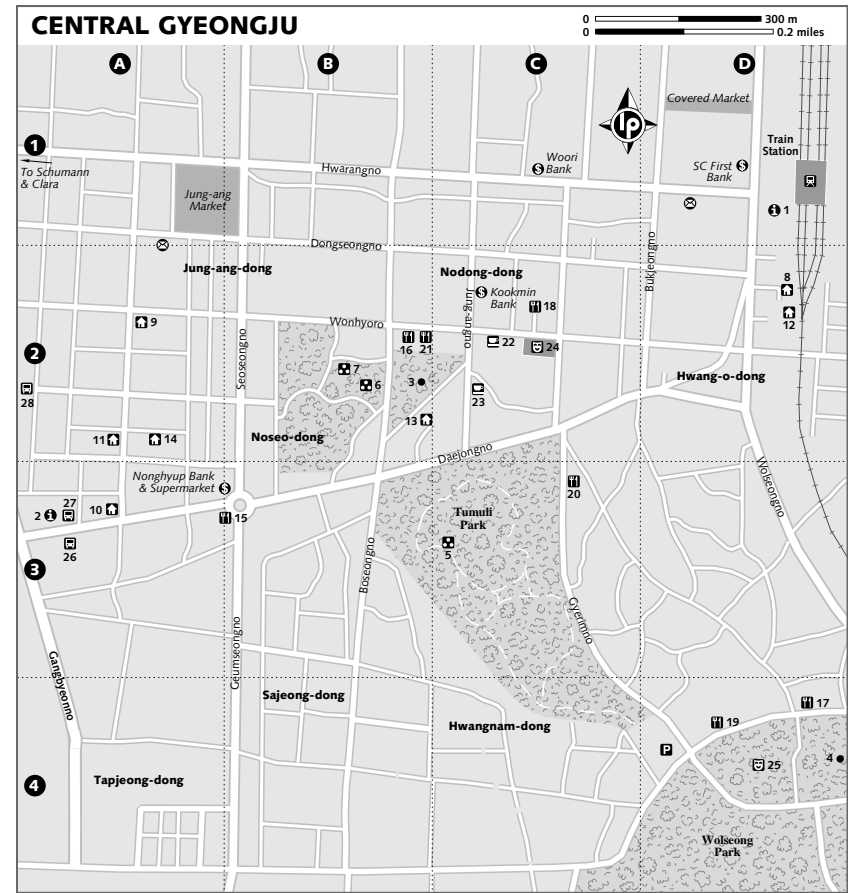
Anapji Pond

Across Wolseongno, the main road, on the left-hand side is **Anapji Pond** (Map pp198-9; ₩ 772 4041; admission W1000; 8am-sunset Sep-May, 7.30am-7pm Jun-Aug), constructed by King Munmu in 674 as a pleasure garden to commemorate the unification of the Korean peninsula under Shilla. The buildings here burned in 935 and many relics ended up in the pond itself, to be rediscovered only when it was drained for repair in 1975. Thousands of well-preserved relics were found including wooden objects, a die used in drinking games, scissors and a royal barge – you can see them in the Gyeongju National Museum (see below).

Nowadays the buildings are still gone, but the pond has been refilled and is a popular spot for couples to take prewedding photos. In season (June to early August), lotus blossoms seem to fill the horizon. Bring the camera.

Gyeongju National Museum

Continuing along Wolseongno, you come to the **Gyeongju National Museum** (Map pp198-9; ₩ 740 7518; <http://gyeongju.museum.go.kr>; admission adult/



INFORMATION

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TRANSPORT	Bus Stop for Bulguksa 불국사행 버스.....26 A3	Express Bus Terminal 고속버스 터미널.....27 A3
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child W1000/500; ㄱ 9am-6pm Tue-Sun, 6-9pm Sat (May-Oct), the best history museum in Korea. In addition to the main hall, you'll find an entire building devoted to the findings at Anapji Pond and a new art hall focusing on Buddhist works. Admission is free on the 4th Saturday of each month.

Outside the main hall, in its own pavilion, hangs the Emille Bell, one of the largest and most beautifully resonant bells ever made in Asia. It's said that its ringing can be heard over a 3km radius when struck only lightly with the fist. Unfortunately, you aren't allowed to test this claim.

An English-language audio guide to the museum is available for W3000. They also offer English-speaking guides.

Bunhwangsa 분황사

Completing this circuit is this large pagoda (Map pp198-9; ٪ 742 9922; admission W1000; ㄱ sunrise-sunset), built in the mid-7th century during Queen Seondeok's reign, making it the oldest datable pagoda in Korea. It's a rare example of one made from brick.

Experts estimate that the pagoda originally had nine storeys, but only three are left today. The magnificently carved Buddhist guardians and stone lions are a main feature; it is unique in that each entrance is guarded by two guardians. Bunhwangsa is in an intimate courtyard.

To get there follow the willow-lined road across from the National Museum until you reach the first intersection. Turn right at the intersection and then take the first lane on the right. The walk will take about 20 to 25 minutes.

EASTERN GYEONGJU

Bomunho Resort 보문 단지

Bomun is a newer district (Map pp198-9) around an artificial lake some 5km east of central Gyeongju. Tradition seekers will find the tandem bikes, paddleboats, conference centres and such less appealing, but it is home to Gyeongju's top-end lodgings as well as some midrange options. The lake and extensive parklands are great for strolling or bike riding, though the area doesn't have the character of the town centre.

The Sonje Museum of Contemporary Art (Map pp198-9; ٪ 745 7075; www.artsonje.com; admission W3000; ㄱ 10am-6pm, closed Mon), just in front of the Hilton Hotel, holds three cavernous

exhibition spaces with a diverse range of seasonal exhibitions, plus a permanent collection containing paintings, sculpture and mixed media.

Traditional dancing and musical performances are held on a regular basis throughout the year at Bomun Outdoor Performance Theatre, located below the information centre by the lake.

The Gyeongju Potters Association (Map pp198-9; ٪ 748 8071; ㄱ 10am-6pm, often closed) has a small centre with local potters' wares and hands-on demonstrations.

If history and hiking are wearing thin, the Gyeongju Bosun Shooting Range (Map pp198-9; ٪ 741 7007; www.kjshooting.com; ㄱ 10am-10pm; 10 bullets W20,000) is something completely different. Choose a (yes, real) pistol from the plastic 'menu', put on the goggles and earphones and take 10 shots at a paper target. Say 'James Bond' and you'll get a Walther PPK.

Bulguksa 불국사

On a series of stone terraces about 16km southeast of Gyeongju, set among gnarled pines and iris gardens that would make Van Gogh swoon, this temple (Map pp198-9; ٪ 746 9913; admission adult/youth/child W4000/3000/2000; ㄱ 6.30am-6pm Apr-Oct, 7am-5pm Nov-Mar) is the crowning glory of Shilla temple architecture and is on the Unesco World Cultural Heritage List. The excellence of its carpentry, the incredible skill of its painters (particularly the interior woodwork and the eaves of the roofs) and the subtlety of its landscapes all contribute to its magnificence.

The approach to the temple leads you to two national treasure 'bridges' (now closed for preservation), actually stairways to the main hall. One of these bridges has 33 steps, representing the 33 stages to enlightenment. Two more national treasures are the pagodas that stand in the courtyard of the first set of buildings and that somehow survived Japanese vandalism. The first, Dabotap, is of plain design and typical Shilla artistry, while the other, Seokgatap, is much more ornate and typical of the neighbouring Baekje kingdom. The pagodas are so revered that replicas appear on the grounds of the Gyeongju National Museum.

You can reach Bulguksa from central Gyeongju via buses 10 or 11 (W1300). There's a tourist information booth (٪ 746 4747) in the car park, near the bus stop.

Seokguram Grotto 석굴암

In the mountains above Bulguksa is the famous grotto of Seokguram (Map pp198-9; ٪ 746 9933; admission adult/child/youth W4000/2000/3000; ㄱ 6.30am-6pm Apr-Oct, 7am-5.30pm Nov-Mar), also on the Unesco World Cultural Heritage List. Chipmunks dance in the thick woods leading up to the rotunda, where sits an image of the Sakyamuni Buddha surrounded by over three dozen guardians and lesser deities, all considered masterpieces. This Buddha's position looking out over the East Sea (visible in clear weather) has long made him regarded as a protector of his country. He also bears striking resemblance to similar figures found in China and India, especially those at Badami, north of Mysore.

Seokguram was quite a feat of engineering when it was constructed in the mid-8th century. Huge blocks of granite were quarried far to the north at a time when the only access to the Seokguram site (740m above sea level) was a narrow mountain path. Seokguram can be a magical place, especially when it is raining and the mists cloak the mountaintops.

Buses run hourly between the car parks for Bulguksa and Seokguram (W1300, 15 minutes). From the Seokguram car park, it is a 400m walk along a shaded gravel track and up the stairs to the grotto. Alternatively, there is a hiking trail between Seokguram ticket office and Bulguksa (about 3.2km).

Girimsa 기림사

Once you've descended through the pass in the eastern district of Gyeongju National Park, you will reach the turnoff to Girimsa (Map pp198-9; ٪ 744 2922; admission W2500; ㄱ 8am-6pm), one of the largest complexes in the vicinity of the Shilla capital. Its size (14 buildings in all) compares with that of Bulguksa, yet it receives a fraction of the visitors because of its location. While you'll see all the usual temple elements (gates, heavenly kings, musical instruments, Buddhas in various forms), the relative peace and quiet may help you feel somehow closer to them here than elsewhere.

From Gyeongju intercity bus terminal, take a bus towards Gampo-ri or Yangbuk-myeon (bus 100 or 150) and ask the driver to drop you off at Andongsamgeo-ri, where the turnoff to the temple goes off to the left. From there you will either have to walk, hitch or take a taxi the 4.5km to the temple (along a paved road).

Golgulsa 골굴사

This temple (Golgulam; Map pp198-9; ٪ 744 1689; www.sunmudo.com; admission free) with a kick features a cliffside Buddha carved out of solid rock in the 6th century, part of an interesting cave hermitage. Visitors come here to study *sunmudo*, a Korean martial art which has taekwondo characteristics and involves principles of the Buddhist eight-fold path and four noble truths. Demonstrations (1½ hours) occur at 8.30am and 7pm daily at Sunmudo University on the temple grounds. The cost is W15,000 to join morning or evening training sessions and two-day, one-night training sessions are available (US\$50 including meals). Reservations are needed for all training; English translation may be arranged.

To reach Golgulsa, take the bus to the same stop as for Girimsa. From the bus stop it's a 15-minute walk, or someone may be able to pick you up if you ring the temple.

Gameunsa Site 감은사지

About 1km before the coast, along the main road to Gyeongju, stand the remains of this large Shilla-era temple (Map pp198-9; admission free; ㄱ 24hr). A diagram by the entrance shows the one-time layout, but for now all that remain are two three-storey pagodas – among the largest in Korea – and foundation stones. The pagodas are prototypes of those constructed following the unification of Shilla. A huge bell, some four times larger than the Emille Bell in the Gyeongju National Museum, once hung in Gameunsa but was stolen during the 1592 invasion by the Japanese, who tried to take it back to their homeland. They didn't get far and the bell was lost in the sea nearby. A team from Gyeongju National Museum searched for the bell several years ago but was unsuccessful. There are reportedly plans to try again.

Sea Tomb of King Munmu

대왕암 (문무대왕릉)

A group of small, rocky islets 200m off the coast is the setting for the famous tomb (Map pp198-9) of the Shilla king Munmu (r 661-81), who unified the peninsula in 668. It is billed as the world's only underwater tomb.

Munmu had made it known that on his death he wished to be cremated and his ashes buried at sea close to Gameunsa. The idea was that his spirit would become a dragon and protect the eastern shores of the Shilla kingdom from Japanese pirates. His wishes

were carried out by his son, Sinmun, who became the next Shilla king.

The rock visible in the pool at the centre of the islets is presumed to cover Munmu's ashes, though no investigations have been carried out and some experts dismiss it as a flight of fantasy. Don't plan on researching it yourself, however; the islets are off-limits, and even if visits were permitted, strong tides can make them dangerous to reach.

The tomb sits off **Bonggil Beach**. Both it and **Daebon Beach** (a cove to the north) are popular with Koreans, especially during the summer holiday period, but there's nothing special about this stretch of coastline. There are plenty of *minbak* (private homes with rooms for rent) and seafood restaurants located in the area.

From Gyeongju take bus 150 toward Yangnam (W2700, one hour, every 15 minutes) and get off at Bonggil.

SOUTHERN GYEONGJU (NAMSAN)

This mountain, south of the city centre, is one of the region's most rewarding areas to explore, a place where you can easily combine the athletic with the spiritual. It's beautiful, and strewn with relics, active temples, monasteries and sites for impromptu religious observance. Among the relics found (so far) are 122 temple sites, 64 stone pagodas, 57 stone Buddhas, and many royal tombs, rock-cut figures, pavilions and the remains of fortresses, temples and palaces.

You can choose from hundreds of paths, many of which run alongside streams that tumble down the mountain. The paths and tracks are well trodden, though at times you will need to head off the main trails to scout for relics that are not immediately visible, since only a few of them are signposted. See opposite for some day-hike suggestions.

You can also check with tourist offices at Gyeongju or Bomun for additional maps and information about trail conditions.

Buses 11, 500, 501, 503, 505, 506, 507 and 591 all pass by Namsan.

Orung Tombs 오릉

South from the city over the first bridge, these **tombs** (Map pp198-9; ☎ 772 6903; admission W300; 11 8am-6pm) are five of the region's most ancient. The 2000-year-old tomb of the kingdom's founder, King Hyeokgeose, can be found here.

Poseokjeonggi 포석정지

Quite a walk down the road is this former **banquet garden** (Map pp198-9; ☎ 745 8484; admission W500; 11 9am-6pm Mar-Nov, 9am-5pm Dec-Feb) in a glade of shade trees. The site is known for one symbol of Shilla elegance: a thin, shallow, abalone-shaped granite waterway, several metres in diameter, through which a stream once flowed. It's now dry.

Samneung 삼릉

This **pine grove** (Map pp198-9; admission free; 11 24hr) has the *tumuli* of three Shilla kings, mostly thought to be one of the earliest (Adalla, r 154-84) and two of the last (r 912-27). Another tomb, located away from the others, is said to contain King Gyeongae, who was killed when robbers raided Poseokjeonggi during an elaborate banquet, setting the stage for the dynasty's collapse.

Samneung is also a good place to start your hike up Namsan; see opposite.

WESTERN GYEONGJU

Tomb of King Muyeol

The main tomb of the Muyeol group is that of **King Muyeol** (Map pp198-9; ☎ 772 4531; admission W500; 11 9am-6pm summer, 9am-5pm winter). In the mid-7th century he paved the way for the unification of Korea by conquering the rival Baekje kingdom; the peninsula was fully unified by his son, King Munmu. An interesting monument to his exploits (and national treasure) sits near the entrance to the tomb compound: a tortoise carrying a capstone finely carved with intertwined dragons, symbolising his power.

Tours

Public tour buses (☎ 743 6001; 7hr tours excl lunch & admissions W10,000) access all the sights and depart from the intercity bus terminal (Map p201) at 8.30am and 10am.

Sleeping

Lodgings are everywhere, so do-it-yourselfers can find something whether you arrive by train or bus. Most restaurants are between the two terminals. Higher-end lodgings and restaurants are at Bomunho, with some less expensive options just east from the lake.

Other motels are sprinkled around the western area of Central Gyeongju and offer a similar price and similar quality to those listed.

BUDGET

Arirang-jang Yeoinsuk (Map p201; ☎ 772 2460; r W15,000) Shabby but inexpensive, it has tiny, odd-shaped *ondol* rooms and is also close to the train station, right behind the bakery.

Hanjin Hostel (Hanjin-jang Yeogwan; Map p201; ☎ 771 4097; http://hanjinkorea.wo.to; dm/s/d W15,000/20,000/30,000; j) You'll either love it here or it will freak you out. The rooms are dingy, but the walls are covered with beautiful paintings by the owner's daughter. The kitchen, courtyard and roof deck are great places to commune with other travellers. The yoga-practising owner speaks English and Japanese and hands out free maps.

Nakwonjang Yeoinsuk (Map p201; ☎ 742 4977; r W20,000) Clean, simple, fan-cooled *ondol*-style rooms steps away from the train station. Some (W12,000) have no bathroom, just a hose with which to splash yourself.

Sarangchae (Map p201; ☎ 773 4868; www.kjstay.com/eng.htm; s/d & tw incl breakfast from W25,000/30,000; j) This place has lots of character and a hostel-type atmosphere. It's in a traditional Korean house offering rooms with *ondol* or beds. It's well decorated, has a courtyard, kitchen, internet, laundry machines and friendly owners. It is centrally located, right across from the *tumuli* park. Bookings ahead are essential.

NAMSAN DAY HIKING ROUTES

Central Namsan

There are numerous trails through Namsan; the most convenient starting at Samneung (Map pp198-9). Whichever route you take, be sure to include detours – necessary to hunt for relics off track. There's virtually no English signage, but with some *Han-geul* (Korean phonetic alphabet) skill you should do fine. If the weather's clear, you can be assured of fine views and reasonable trails.

Three-hour course Head up from Samneung, breaking to take in several relief carvings and statues along the way, to the hermitage **Sangseonam** (상선암), where you'll find lovely views across the valley and maybe a monk chanting. Continue up past the rock formation **Badukbawi** (바둑바위) and along the ridge to **Sangsabawi** (상사바위), then walk back the way you came.

Five-hour course Instead of doubling back from Sangsabawi, continue on to the summit of **Geumosan** (금오산, 468m) to **Yongjongsaji** (용장사지, Yongjang temple site), where you can view the seated Buddha image carved in stone and the three-storey stone pagoda. Descend to **Yongjang-ri** (용장리, Yongjang village), from where you can catch a bus back to central Gyeongju.

Eight-hour course Follow the route as far as Yongjongsaji, but instead of heading down towards Yongjang-ri head across the ridge to **Chilbulam** (칠불암, hermitage of seven Buddhas), Namsan's largest relic with images carved in natural rocks and stone pillars. From here it's mostly downhill towards the road and about another 1km to **Namsan-dong** (남산리, Namsan village) on the eastern side of the park, from where it's an easy bus ride back to town.

Northeastern Namsan

Take local bus 11 from Gyeongju and get off as soon as the bus crosses the river, about 2.5km past the National Museum. Off the main road is a fork – take the left branch and you can wind your way to **Borisa** (보리사), a beautifully reconstructed nunnery set amid old-growth trees and ancient images. It is possible to head over the hill behind Borisa to **Tapgol** (탈골, Pagoda Valley), but it's a rough climb. It's easier to backtrack down to the fork and take the other branch. Follow the river for several hundred metres until you come to a small village. Turn left here and head up the road through Tapgol and you'll reach the secluded hermitage **Okryongam** (옥룡암). In the upper corner are ponderous boulders covered with Korea's greatest collection of **relief carvings**.

Returning to the bridge and looking towards the main road, you will see two **stone pillars** standing in a thicket of trees amid rice paddies. These pillars are all that remain standing of **Mangdeoksa**, a huge Shilla-era temple complex. From there it's an easy trip back towards the National Museum, about 20 minutes. Depending on your route, this itinerary might take you a half-day.

Taeyang-jang Yeogwan (Map p201; % 773 6889; r Sun-Fri/Sat W25,000/30,000; a) Right near the Hanjin, this spotlessly clean motel has a small rock garden in the lobby and a very friendly owner. Thick velour curtains give the otherwise plain rooms a Victorian feel.

MIDRANGE

Two nice choices are in Bomunho. There are other options near the bus terminals.

Hansol-jang (Map pp198-9; % 748 3800; fax 748 3799; r from W40,000; a) Rooms here, both *ondol* and bed, each have a tiny balcony. Free video rentals are also available.

Bellus Hotel (Map p201; % 741 3335; www.bellushotel.com; d/tw W40,000; a i) This has modern décor in both *ondol* and Western rooms (*ondol* rooms have nicer decoration), all with bathtubs. There's internet access in the lobby and even a microbrewery downstairs (open from 5pm to 2am).

Swiss Rosen Hotel (Map pp198-9; % 748 4848; www.swissrosen.co.kr; r from W48,000; a) Across from Hansol-jang, the Swiss Rosen is a nice deal even if the rooms are not enormous. Add W20,000 and get breakfast, coffee, beer and even barbecue. From September to May rates are 20% less.

Gyeongju Park Tourist Hotel (Map p201; % 777 7744; www.gjpark.com; d/tw W78,000/92,000; a i) One of the few places in Korea to offer no-smoking options, this friendly place was renovated in 2006. Some rooms on the 2nd floor are above a nightclub, but these have in-room internet terminals to compensate. There's a 30% discount in the off-peak season.

TOP END

Gyeongju's top lodgings sit along the lake at Bomunho.

Commodore Hotel Gyeongju Chosun (Map pp198-9; % 745 7701; www.chosunhotel.com; r from W205,700; a i) This hotel was renovated in 2002 and is already getting Korean celebs as guests. There's nice woodwork in the rooms, Gyeongju green and terracotta-coloured motifs downstairs, and one of the city's favourite spas.

Hotel Hyundai (Map pp198-9; % 748 2233; www.hyundaihotel.com; r from W242,000; a i s) Marble everywhere, gardens by the lake, balconies and internet connections in each room, plus fitness club. Disabled travellers will appreciate the care given to accessibility.

Gyeongju Hilton (Map pp198-9; % 745 7788, toll free 00798-651 1818; www.hilton.com; r from W254,100;

a s) A real Miró hangs in the lobby of this Gyeongju chain. It has a sauna, squash courts, gym and a World Cup floor where the German and Danish teams stayed. The Hilton owns the nearby museum, so a night's stay includes free admission should you care to see more art than is in the lobby.

Eating

Gyeongju's greatest concentration and diversity of choices is in the city centre. Southeast of Tumuli Park is a street full of *ssambap* restaurants (*ssambap* is lots of tasty side dishes, which you wrap up in lettuce and other leaves).

Galibi Haemul (Map pp198-9; meals W3000-10,000) Across from the car park at Samneung, serving seafood *pajeon* and *haemul galgaksu*, wondrous homemade noodles with seafood – the noodles are greenish because they contain seaweed.

Burim Hansikdang (Map pp198-9; % 748 8098; Bomunho; meals W6000-12,000; 11 7am-midnight) Where mushrooms are the speciality, often with either beef or octopus, boiled tableside in a scrumptious broth.

Pyeongyang (Map p201; % 772 2448; meals W6000-18,000; 11 9.30am-10pm) Don't be put off by the sign out front reading 'tourist restaurant'; plenty of locals love it too for *bulgogi*, *naengmyeon* and other Korean faves.

Kisoya (Map p201; % 746 6020; meals W6500-23,000) Next door to Terrace (see below) with a similar setting and decent menu of Japanese standards with Korean touches. Veggie options are available. As with Terrace, the *tumulus* adds excitement to the meal.

Kuro Ssambap (Map p201; % 749 0600; www.webtown.org/kuro; per person W8000; 11 10am-9pm) Ecclectic collection of birds, rocks, figurines, pottery and other folk arts make this a unique place to dine. Orders include 28 refillable side dishes.

Terrace (Map p201; % 773 8084; meals W8300-27,000; 11 10.30am-midnight) Clean and contemporary, offering Korean and Western food. Outdoor seating next to a *tumulus*, which is dramatically lit at night (more pleasant than it sounds).

For dessert, try Gyeongju *bang* (baked barley pancakes with red-bean paste sandwiched inside). **Danseokmyeongga** (Map p201; % 741 7520; 11 8am-11pm) claims to have originated the trend. The owner speaks Korean and Japanese, but almost no English.

Drinking

There are numerous clubs, bars, pubs, and live houses in the streets near Rio and Dongguk University. At some the custom is to purchase *anju* (snacks, often W10,000 to W20,000) and chat in Korean with the female waitstaff. You may find yourself ignored if you go in with a few friends expecting to sit somewhere and chat by yourselves over beers. Bars change names frequently, but chances are the university students walking around speak enough English to recommend a place or two.

Mahayeon (Map p201; % 745 0072) Tucked on a side street (across from the peach-coloured church) on the 2nd floor, Mahayeon offers traditional teas and *dongdongju* (rice wine) served in traditional style, with floor seating, dark wood tables and delicate paper screens. If you drank tea in Insadong, come here to experience the real thing.

Buzz (Map p201; % 742 7642; www.buzzcoffee.co.kr; coffee W3000; 11 10am-10pm) If you can't wait until 11am to get your coffee fix at Schumann & Clara, try Buzz, a sparsely decorated store with espresso drinks, coffee and shaved ice.

Schumann & Clara (% 749 9449; coffee W3500-10,000; 11 11am-8pm) Jamaican Blue Mountain-lovers can get their fix at this classy café, along with classical music and understated contemporary décor. It's northwest of the centre, on the student-populated street east of the bridge that heads to Dongguk University, diagonally across from the 7-Eleven and right next to Baskin-Robbins. Coffees here are prepared by hand, the way they should be; the only downside is that coffee addicts will be shaking from DTs by the time the place opens at 11am.

Rio (% 745 2325; admission free, beers W4000-7000, cocktails W7000-10,000; 11 7pm-4am) An intimate, mellow, yellowlit retro place with fun photos of jazz greats...and Sting. Owned by a guy who teaches at the university, this place is likely to feature local student talent, which sometimes isn't that talented but is still fun. The menu features classics like domestic and imported 'Bear' and cocktails such as the 'Orange Blossom'. Be sure to ask for something strong if you want to taste any alcohol.

Entertainment

There are outdoor traditional dance and music performances every Saturday during April, May, September and October (3pm to 5pm) on the stage (Map p201) in Wolseong Park. More regular traditional per-

formances are held at Bomunho (Map p201) between April and November. In April and November, these performances are held at 2.30pm and during summer in the evenings at 8.30pm. Check with KTO (% 1330) for more details (p393).

For more contemporary fare, there's a cluster of cinemas (Map p201) in central Gyeongju.

Getting There & Away

AIR

There is no airport at Gyeongju itself, but the airports at Busan (Gimhae) and Ulsan are readily accessible. Ulsan's airport is closer, but Gimhae has more flights. For information on airport transport, see below.

BUS

Gyeongju's express bus terminal (Map p201; % 741 4000) and intercity bus terminal (p201; % 743 5599) are adjacent to one other. Buses from the express bus terminal:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration
Busan	4000	1hr
Daegu	3300	1hr
Daejeon	10,600	3hr
Seoul	16,300	4½hr

Buses from the intercity bus terminal:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration
Busan	3500	1hr
Daegu	3300	1hr
Gangneung	23,100	6hr
Ulsan	13,100	4hr
Ulsan	3800	1hr

TRAIN

Gyeongju-Seoul *Mugunghwa* services run twice daily (W17,900 to W22,700) from the train station (Map p201 % 743 4114). Several *Saemaul* (luxury express) from Seoul (W33,700 to W38,800) make the trip as well. There are more services on weekends and holidays. Trains also connect Busan and Gyeongju, but buses are more frequent. Coin lockers (W1000) are available in the train-station lobby.

Getting Around

TO/FROM THE AIRPORT

Several direct buses link Gyeongju with both the Ulsan airport (W4500, four daily) and

Busan's Gimhae airport (W9000, 12 daily). Buses leave from Gyeongju's main terminal.

BICYCLE

Hiring a bicycle for a day or two is a great way of reaching the sites in the close vicinity of Gyeongju. There are some bike trails around Namsan (but it's rather hilly) and Bomunho. Most of the roads are quite safe.

There are bicycle-rental shops everywhere, and the rates are standard: a mountain bike costs about W5000 hourly or W10,000 to W12,000 daily.

BUS

Many local buses (regular/deluxe W900/1300) terminate just outside the intercity bus terminal, alongside the river. For shorter routes (eg to Bulguksa), buses can be picked up along Sosongno and Daejeongno.

Buses 10 (which runs clockwise) and 11 (counterclockwise) run a circuit of most of the major sights including Bulguksa, Namsan and Bomunho, as well as the bus terminals and Gyeongju train station (every 15 minutes). Bus 150 departs from the train station to the eastern sights, via the Bomunho Expo arena (every 30 minutes). Bus 100 makes a similar initial route and then veers north after Eoilri.

TAXI

If your time is limited and you want to cover a lot of ground in a short time, taxis are often available for day hire outside the train and bus stations. Rates are negotiable but hover around W70,000/100,000 for five/seven hours. Do not expect the driver to speak much English.

AROUND GYEONGJU

Many tourists do this area as a day trip out of Gyeongju – and wish they'd budgeted time to stay overnight. It's hard to improve on the outstanding examples of traditional Korean architecture in sublime settings.

Yangdong Folk Village

양동 민속 마을

This beautiful and peaceful hillside Joseon-dynasty village (Map pp198–9) is full of superb mansions and traditional wooden houses. It's been designated as a preservation area.

The village was established in the 15th and 16th centuries and consists of around 150 houses typical of the *yangban* class – a largely

hereditary class based on scholarship and official position. Yangdong was the birthplace of Son-so (1433–84), a scholar-official who was one of the key figures in quashing the revolt against King Sejo in 1467. His grandson, the great Confucian scholar Yi Eon-jeok (pseudonym Hoejae; 1491–1553), was born in the same house. Much of the area around Oksan Seowon (below) is devoted to him.

Highlights among the larger buildings include the Yi Hui-tae (1733; with its many outbuildings), Simsujeong (1560; the village's largest structure) and Hyangdam (1543; known for tight-knit spaces) houses. Most of the houses here are still lived in, so you need to observe the usual courtesies when looking around; some of the larger mansions stand empty and are open to the public. There are descriptive plaques with English explanations outside some of the more important structures. If buildings are locked, you may be able to ask for a key nearby. The people who live here tend to be very friendly. There are no entry fees to any of the buildings. You should plan on spending several hours here.

Uhyangdasil (dishes W4000–13,000), just behind the church, is a friendly café in a traditional building, serving tea, wine, snacks and small meals. There are also some simple restaurants and shops for snacks and drinks.

From Gyeongju, buses 200, 201, 202, 203 and 206 (all 200 buses go toward Angang-ri) will get you to within 1.5km of Yangdong. From the bus stop, follow the train line and then go under it. There's only one road into the village, about a 30min walk.

It's easy to catch buses back to Gyeongju or continue on to Angang-ri and from there to Oksan Seowon.

Oksan Seowon & Around

옥산 서원

A *seowon* is a Confucian academy, and Oksan Seowon (Map pp198–9) was one of the most important. It was established in 1572 in honour of Yi Eon-jeok (1491–1553) by another famous Confucian scholar, Toegy (see p220). Oksan Seowon was enlarged in 1772 and was one of the few *seowon* to escape destruction in the 1860s. However, an early-20th-century fire destroyed some of the buildings here; today only 14 structures remain.

During the summer holiday period, the banks of the stream are popular camping spots, and swimming is possible in the rock

pools below the waterfall. It's also a great place for a picnic.

SIGHTS

Dongnakdang 독락당

A 10-minute walk beyond Oksan Seowon, along the road up the valley, will bring you to **Dongnakdang** (Map pp198–9; admission free; ㄱ by appointment), a beautiful collection of well-preserved buildings, constructed in 1515 and expanded in 1532 as the residence of Yi Eon-jeok after he left government service. The walled compound is partly occupied by descendants of Master Yi himself.

Due to past vandalism, the family requests visitors to book appointments in advance (ask at tourist offices). They will open up the inner rooms and answer any questions (in Korean). Even if you don't speak Korean, a visit feels like a private tour of a special place.

Dodeokam 도덕암

About 1.75km beyond Dongnakdang, up in the forested mountains near the end of the valley, is this tiny, intimate hermitage (Map pp198–9; % 762 9314; admission free). It's a rustic place perched on a rock outcrop from which two springs emerge. The views, both above and below, are magnificent.

Dodeokam is a steep walk up from the road, meaning that it's about as far as you can get from the madding crowd. Barely any Koreans even know about it. To get here, take the main road through the valley past Dongnakdang and Jeonghyesa. Follow the stream for another 600m and you'll see a rusty sign on the left. Turn left and follow the zigzag path up the mountain. It's about 900m from here to the temple.

SLEEPING & EATING

Home stays and basic info on this area can be arranged by phoning % 017-533 2196, where a lady sets up accommodations for families or groups.

Oksan Motel (Map pp198–9; % 762 9500; d W30,000; a) Near the sights, the late-1990s Oksan has *ondol* or bedrooms with shower and an attractive setting.

Sanjang Sikdang (Map pp198–9; % 762 3716; chicken/duck stew for 2–4 people W25,000/35,000) specialises in free-range duck and chicken. *Tojongdak baeksuk* and *orihanbang baeksuk* are chicken and duck stews served with rice porridge. Note: stews will take up to 40 to 50 minutes

to prepare, so you can take it easy (there's outdoor seating if the weather's nice) or have a Korean speaker phone before you arrive. It's not far from Dongnakdang.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Bus 203 (W900 to W1300, every 30 to 40 minutes) to Angangri connects Gyeongju train station and Oksan Seowon.

Tomb of King Heungdeok 흥덕무덤

The farthest of the royal tombs (Map pp198–9) from central Gyeongju, this was also one of the last ones constructed during the Shilla dynasty. It's one of the most complete and has a pretty setting among the trees.

The tomb is 4km north of Angangri, about halfway between Oksan Seowon and Yangdong Folk Village.

Songseon-ri 송선리

Close to the summit of the thickly forested mountain Obongsan (640m), **Bokduam hermitage** (Map pp198–9) features a huge rock face out of which 19 niches have been carved. The three central niches hold a figure of the historical Buddha flanked by two *bodhisattva* (Munsu and Bohyeon); the remainder house the 16 *arhat* monks who have attained Nirvana. The carving is recent and although there's an unoccupied house up here, the actual hermitage was burned down in 1988 after an electrical fault started a blaze. There is also a recently erected statue of Gwanseeum, the Goddess of Mercy, just beyond the rock face. Just below the hermitage is a stunning viewpoint from the top of a couple of massive boulders. It's a great place for a picnic lunch.

The trail is well maintained and easy to follow, but bring water as there are no springs along the way. The walk up will take around an hour. From the bus stop in Songseon-ri, follow the creek up along the narrow road about 500m to a small temple (Seongamsa). The trail starts just to the left of this temple and is well marked with *Han-geul*.

A further 3.8km up the road from the bus stop for Bokduam and Jusaam, remote Sinseonsa temple near the top of Danseoksan (827m) was used as a base by General Kim Yu-shin in the 7th century. It has seen a bit of renovation work since then. About 50m to the right as you face the temple are some ancient rock carvings in a small grotto – it's believed to be one of the oldest cave temples in Korea. It's about a

1½- to two-hour circuit walk from the bus stop. There's a little village along the way, about 2.5km from the bus stop.

En route to Sinseonsa, Danseok Sanjang sells drinks and light meals.

Bus 350 (W1300, every 40 minutes) from Gyeongju passes Songseon-ri for Bokduam and Jusaam. If you're continuing on to Sinseonsa, tell the driver that's where you'd like to get off.

POHANG 포항

pop 488,000

Pohang is a good springboard to Ulleungdo or the even more remote Dokdo, but isn't particularly scenic in itself. The largest city on Korea's east coast and an important industrial centre, Pohang is dominated by Posco (Pohang Iron & Steel Company), the world's second-largest steel maker. The city centre is quite lively, however, and Bukbu Beach on the north side of town is popular with both visitors and locals. The two central intersections, Ogeori and Yukgeori, ('five-road' and 'six-road' junctions) brim with cafés, clothing stores, *hofs*, restaurants and game parlours. Another lodging, dining and entertainment strip faces lively Bukbu Beach.

Orientation & Information

Bukbu beach, adjacent to the ferry terminal, is 1.7km long, making it one of the longest sandy beaches on Korea's east coast. **Information booths** (☎ 245 6761; 9am-6pm Mon-Sat) are by the bus and ferry terminals, which are about 3km apart. Buses 105 and 200 go to Bukbu Beach from the intercity bus terminal.

Sights

BOGYEONGSA 보경사

This temple (☎ 262 1117; admission W2000; 7am-7pm), 30km north of Pohang, is a gateway to a beautiful valley boasting 12 splendid waterfalls, gorges spanned by bridges, hermitages, stupas and the temple itself. There are a number of good hikes including ascending Naeyeonsan (930m). The summit itself is called Hyangnobong and the return trip from Bogyeongsa is about 20km (around six hours).

The temple is 15 minutes' walk from where the buses from Pohang terminate, and there's a tourist village with a collection of souvenir shops, restaurants, *minbak* and *yeogwan*.

The trail to the gorge and waterfalls branches off from the tourist village and is well main-

tained. It's about 1.5km to the first waterfall, 5m-high Ssangsaeng pokpo. The sixth waterfall, Gwaneum pokpo, is an impressive 72m and has two columns of water with a cave behind it. The seventh waterfall is called Yeonsan pokpo and is a respectable 30m high.

As you head farther up the trails, the going gets difficult and the ascent of Hyangnobong should only be attempted if the day is young.

Buses run between Pohang's intercity bus terminal and the temple (W2350, 25 minutes, hourly).

HOMIGOT 호미곶

This district, on a natural cape that protects Pohang's harbour, is a popular spot at sunrise, especially 1 January. The **lighthouse museum** (☎ 284 4657; admission W700; 10am-5.30pm Tue-Sun) has a large collection of memorabilia relating to lighthouses in Korea and overseas.

Catch bus 200 or 200-1 from the bus terminal. Hop off at Guryongpo, the final stop (W1300, every 12 minutes), then catch a bus going to Daebo (W900, 20 minutes, every 40 minutes).

Sleeping

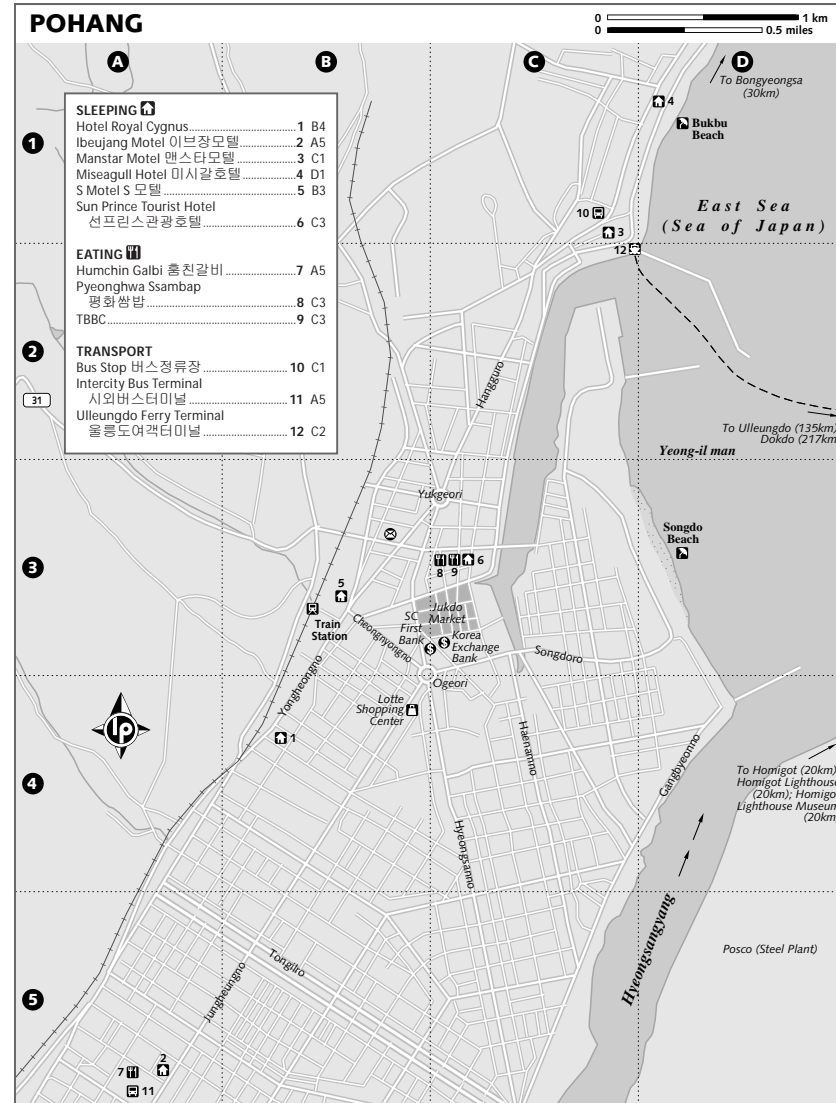
There are about two dozen *yeogwan* around the intercity bus terminal with rooms from W25,000. Note that rates in all categories may go up in peak times. The nightlife district in the town centre has similar options. For better scenery and more choice, head up to Bukbu Beach.

Ibeu-ang Motel (☎ 283 2253; d from W25,000) Fancy mirrors seem tragically out of place in these otherwise stark, linoleum-floored rooms. The red lamp is the only hint that this is a love motel.

Manstar Motel (☎ /fax 244 0225; www.manstarmotel.com; Bukbu Beach; r W30,000) Down a street off the main drag, the Manstar has nice rooms, seashell-design baths and the kind owner speaks English.

S Motel (☎ 247 0073; d from W30,000; a i) The yellow linoleum is off-putting and the rooms are smallish (but not stuffy) and have PCs and TVs. It's in a great location, making it a good deal for the price. Fridges include the usual gratis energy drinks.

Miseagull Hotel (☎ 242 8400; fax 248 1818; Bukbu Beach; d/tw from W50,000/70,000) Looking out over Bukbu Beach, so some rooms have sea views, but unless you're just going to the beach it's a bit far from the centre.



Sun Prince Hotel (☎ 242 2800; fax 242 6006; d from W60,000; a) Newly remodelled, with a shiny marble lobby and both *ondol* and Western rooms available, the Sun Prince is a nice option for those not wanting a love motel. Red-tile floors, sculpted bathtubs and flowered quilts are just a few of the nice touches. The downsides: there's no internet (just LAN

outlets) and a (possibly noisy) nightclub downstairs.

Hotel Royal Cygnus (☎ 275 2000; fax 283 4075; d from W120,000) A snazzy place that is popular with conference groups. The hotel is within walking distance of the train station, and has a business centre and natural hot-spring baths.

Eating

For fresh seafood head for Bukbu Beach, where there's a string of restaurants with your meal waiting in tanks. Look for the telltale *hoe* (호) for 'raw seafood', usually in a circle on the front of the building.

Pyeonghwa Ssambap (☎ 247 3779; meals ₩6000; 11am-10pm) Head here for scrumptious *ssambap* (side dishes which you can wrap in lettuce leaves; ₩6000). No English menu, so order *dolsot ssambap* and you'll get a stone pot with rice included.

TBBC (☎ takeout 080 208 9292; chicken/duck meals ₩10,000/12,000; 11am-lunch & dinner) It stands for 'Traditional Best Barbecue Chicken,' but also serves turkey and duck plus lots of beer. A picture menu is available and there are several locations around town. The telephone number is for delivery only.

Humchin Galbi (☎ 272 5592; meals ₩5000-20,000; 11am-midnight) Diner-style pork place tucked away behind the bus station. Meals come with lots of sides.

Getting There & Away

AIR

Asiana and Korean Air both have Seoul-Pohang services. Asiana also operates a flight between Pohang and Jeju. For more information call the airport (☎ 284 0111).

BOAT

See p217 for details of ferries travelling to Ulleungdo.

BUS

Departing from Pohang terminal (☎ 272 3194):

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Andong	9900	2hr	7 daily
Busan	6600	1½hr	every 10min
Daegu	6000	2hr	30 daily
Seoul	20,000	4½hr	every 40min

TRAIN

There are a few trains from Pohang station (☎ 275 2394) including to Seoul (*Saemaul*: ₩35,800, five hours, two daily at 7.25am and 5.25pm).

Getting Around

Local buses cost ₩900/1300 (regular/deluxe). Bus 200 runs between the airport and the intercity bus terminal.

ULLEUNGDO 울릉도

pop 8300

Come to Ulleungdo to get away from it all in the true sense – not the way the spa-resort brochures mean. The scenery is spectacular, offering vistas of spun-cotton clouds lazily over volcanic cliffsides, seabirds and fishing boats, quiet harbours dotted with piles of nets or buoys, and jagged coastline that could easily be from the set of *Lord of the Rings*. It's that beautiful. And that's it.

Thankfully, there are no amusement parks or huge resorts; the most touristy that this place gets is a lone cable car that gives great birds-eye glimpses. Beyond that, there's not much to do except watch squid dry.

An extinct volcano some 135km east of the Korean peninsula, Ulleungdo today is mainly a fishing town that sees enough tourism to warrant a sprinkle of hotels and restaurants, but there's none of the neon clutter that characterises so many other tourist areas. At night the brightest lights are the lamps on the squid boats and the lighthouses. In the rainy season the green hues are even more vivid, saturating the hills like an overtone colour photograph. In autumn, the hills are a patchwork of reds, greens and yellows from the turning leaves.

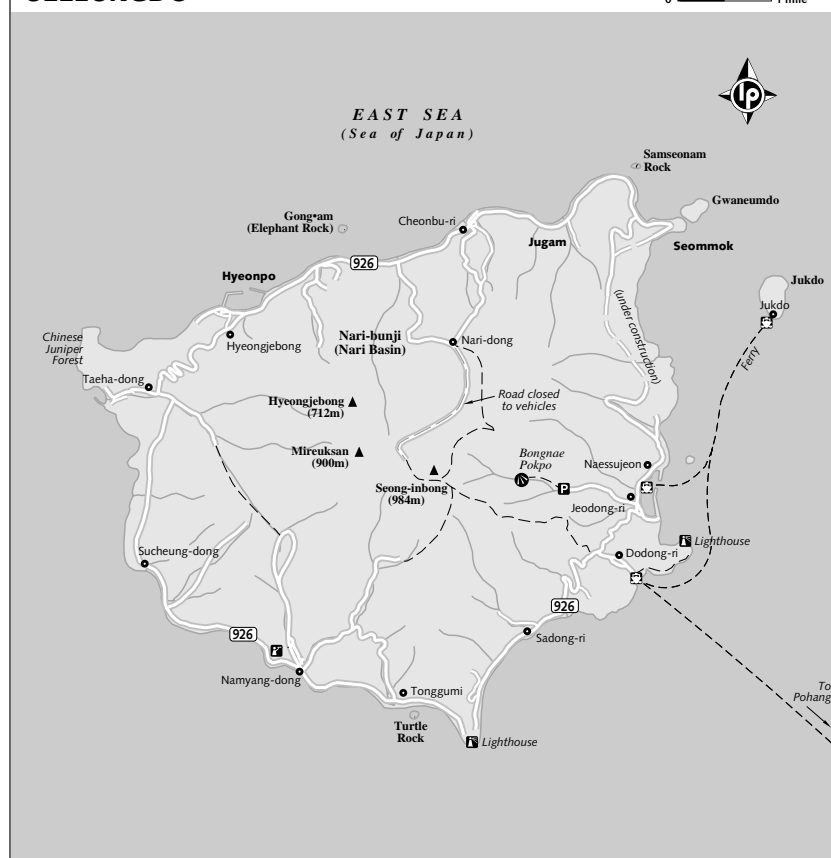
This small volcanic island was captured from pirates after an order from King Yeji, the 22nd king of the Shilla dynasty, in order to secure the east coast of the peninsula. From then until 1884 the island remained essentially a military outpost, but from that year on migration to the island for settlement was sanctioned by the government.

Thanks to the rugged topography and isolation, the island is only sparsely inhabited and farms are tiny. Most of the people live in villages along the coast and make their living harvesting fish and summer tourists. Other industries include the production of taffy made from pumpkin and woodcarvings made from native Chinese juniper – all offered for sale at the island's many tourist shops. Everywhere you look there are racks of drying squid, seaweed and octopus.

Orientation & Information

Most visitors arrive from the mainland to the port of Dodong-ri, on the island's south-eastern side. A new port in nearby Sadong-ri has been underway for years, but typhoons keep hammering the island and the current opening date will be sometime in 2007. Pre-

ULLEUNGDO



sumably, once open it will radically alter the island's tourist flow. On the coast north of Dodong-ri is the busy village of Jeodong-ri, which retains a traditional fishing-village feel. The other main point of interest to tourists is Nari-bunji, a basin in the north of the island.

There's no English spoken at the information booth (Map p214; ☎ 790 6454; 11am-6pm, 9am-11pm mid-Jul-mid-Aug) by the Dodong-ri ferry terminal; however, there are bilingual maps as well as bus schedules in Korean. The friendly owner of the Cafe Myconos (p216) just up the road speaks English and is a great source of local information. Detailed maps of the island can be bought from tourist shops. You can change money at Nonghyeop Bank in Dodong-ri.

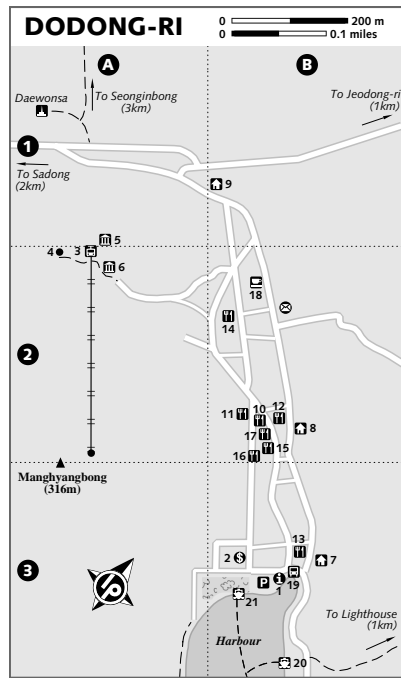
Sights

DODONG-RI 도동리

Dodong-ri is the island's administrative centre and largest town. Like a pirate outpost, its narrow harbour is almost hidden away in a narrow valley between two forested mountains, making it visible only when approached directly. It's also the island's main tourist hub, meaning the greatest selection of lodging and dining, but the number of tourists can be a little overwhelming. By the ferry terminal, a staircase leads around the base of the cliffs to a lighthouse (allow one hour to walk).

Mineral Spring Park 약수 공원

The highlight of this park, a 350m climb above Dodong-ri, is the cable car (Map p214;

**INFORMATION**

Information Booth 관광안내소	1 B3
Nonghyup Bank 농협은행	2 B3

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Cable Car	3 A2
Dodong Mineral Springs 도동약수터	4 A2
Dokdo Museum 도돌박물관	5 A1
Ulleungdo Historical Museum 울릉 향토사료관	6 A2

SLEEPING

Hani-jang Yeogwan 한일장여관	7 B3
Khan Motel 칸 모텔	8 B2
Pension Skyhill 스카이힐	9 B1
Sanchang-jang Yeogwan 신창장여관	(see 15)

EATING

99 Sikdang 99식당	10 B2
Cafe Myconos	11 B2
Haeun Sikdang 해운식당	12 B2
Hannam Chain Supermarket 한남제인수퍼	13 B3
Jeil Jegwa 제일자과	14 B2
Sanchang-hoe Sikdang 산창회식당	15 B2
Sutbul Garden 숯불가든	16 B2
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Cafe Myconos	(see 11)
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TRANSPORT

Bus Stop 버스정류장	19 B3
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fishing nets, and seagulls. The boats with the lamps strung around like oversize holiday lights are for catching squid. If you prefer a quieter alternative to Dodong-ri, try staying here instead – but we mean quiet (except when the boats return with the day's catch).

A steep 1.5km walk from Jeodong-ri is the car park to **Bongnae pokpo** (Map p213; % 790 6422; admission W1200; 11am–7pm Apr–Oct, 8am–5pm Nov–Mar). Source of the island's drinking water, it's quite spectacular during the summer. From the car park, a path (20 minutes) takes you to the lookout. Hourly buses serve the car park from Dodong-ri via Jeodong-ri (W1500, mid-spring to mid-autumn).

Namyang-dong 남양

The road from Dodong-ri follows a stunning path along spectacular coastal cliffs (Map p213), passing rock formations and ocean cliffs covered with Chinese juniper. The journey can be made by public bus or taxi.

Sunset Point Pavilion (Ilmoljeon Mangdae) is a steep 15-minute walk above the town, com-

manding great views of the ocean and, yes, of the sunset. Follow the western creek out of town and cross the bridge after the school. A small trail continues up to the pavilion.

Nari-bunji 나리 분지

Nari Basin (Map p213) is on the northern slope of Seong-inbong (984m), the island's highest peak and the summit of a dormant volcano. Nari is the only place on the island that's reasonably flat, so there are several farms here and a couple of reconstructed traditional thatched-roof houses. It's a popular place to start or conclude a hiking expedition (right).

Minbak, camping and restaurants are available. At the restaurants by the campground, you might try *hanjeongsik* (Korean banquet; W6000) or *sanchae deodeokjeon* (mountain vegetable pancake; W7000) and wash it down with some local *dondongju* (rice wine; W6000).

Activities**BOAT TRIPS**

A round-island tour (W15,000) is a great way to admire Ulleungdo's dramatic landscape. Tours depart from Dodong-ri ferry terminal (Map p214) and last around two hours. They run up to four per day, depending on demand, with more tours possible during summer. In nonpeak seasons they may be cancelled.

Other sightseeing boats serve the island of Jukdo (Map p213), a nature preserve 4km from Ulleungdo. Boats (W10,000, up to four daily) offer excellent views of Ulleungdo as well as Jukdo's own cliffs. Visitors are welcome to take

WAITING FOR DOKDO

In 1905, during the Japanese occupation, Japan annexed Dokdo – fishing grounds marked by two small, rocky islands – and renamed it Takeshima. Korea protested, but as a colony did not have much say. Following WWII, US general Douglas MacArthur designated the island part of Korea, and US forces erected a monument there to Korean fishermen accidentally killed nearby by American ordnance. However, Japan destroyed the monument in 1952, prompting Korea to send a defence unit and Japan to put the island under surveillance. It remains disputed territory because of its fishing rights, and fuels Korean ire at the Japanese.

a picnic to eat on the island. It takes about 1½ hours including walk or picnic time.

On Saturday in summer, boats offer trips around Dokdo, with a reservation and sufficient demand (W37,500; three or 5½ hours return). The three-hour boats are speedier, but you can't go outside; the 5½-hour boats are slower and have open decks for sightseeing. If time permits, the latter are more enjoyable.

During the annual squid festival (three days in mid-August), you may be able to board boats and even ride a vessel out to sea. The rest of the year it's interesting to watch them in the evening when they head out to sea with their lanterns glaring.

CAR TRIPS

Another popular way to see the island is by taxi. Fees are negotiable, but you can expect to spend about W80,000 per day. Try asking at the Cafe Myconos (p216) first – the owner's husband owns a taxi, but if he is unavailable, she may be able to recommend another. It takes about one hour from Nari-bunji to Dodong-ri.

HIKING

Various pathways lead to the summit of Seong-inbong, but the two main routes run from Dodong-ri (about five hours return) or Nari-bunji (four to five hours return).

From Dodong-ri, take the main road towards the temple Daewonsa. Just before you reach the temple, there is a fork in the trail and a sign (in Korean) pointing the way to Seong-inbong (a steep 4.1km).

From Nari-dong, enter the forest, adhering to the right-hand path, and you'll arrive at signboarded fields of chrysanthemum and thyme. Farther on you'll pass some traditional homes. Finally, at the entrance to the virgin forest area and picnic ground, the steep ascent of Seong-inbong takes you (one hour) through a forest of Korean beech, Korean hemlock and Korean lime.

Just below the peak, as you descend to Dodong-ri, is a trail off to the right, down to Namyang-dong (1½ hours).

Sleeping

Ulleungdo has loads of choices (starting at around W25,000), although luxury travellers will be disappointed – even shocked. Love motels will be the fanciest; nothing here (yet) is five-star. Room rates rise steeply in peak

% 791 7160; return W6500; 11am approx ½hr before sunrise-when last visitor leaves) across a steep valley to Manghyangbong (316m). The ride up affords stunning views of the sea and a bird's-eye view of Dodong-ri, and at the top you'll find a restaurant and karaoke lounge. Visit either early or late in the day to avoid crowds. From the observation deck, on a clear day you can view Dokdo, some 92km away.

The park's namesake *yaksu gwangjang* (mineral-water spring) is near the top. The water has a distinctive flavour (think diet citrus soda-meets-quartz) and some claim drinking it has all sorts of medicinal benefits, though there are always risks with drinking untreated water. Nearby, you'll also find a rack cliff (artificial rock-climbing wall).

Also in the park are two museums (Map p214; % 790 6421; admission free; 11am–6pm), the elaborate Dokdo Museum and Ulleungdo's simple historical museum; the exhibits are in Korean.

JEODONG-RI 저동리

Jeodong-ri (Map p213) retains a fishing-village character, with picturesque seawalls,

season (from W50,000 to W60,000 in July, August and holidays), so book ahead.

Camping is available on the beach at Namyang-dong, Naessujeon and Sadong-ri. Toilets and showers are available at the latter two during summer. Camping (free) and *minbak* are also available at Nari-dong.

DODONG-RI

Hanil-jang Yeogwan (Map p214; ☎ 791 5515; d W30,000) Nicer than some surrounding options; *ondol* rooms are fairly large and come with a fat tube of toothpaste, but the price doubles in high season (July and August). It's very close to the port, right across from the supermarket.

Sanchang-jang Yeogwan (Map p214; ☎ 791 0552; d W30,000) Orchids brighten up an otherwise grim stairway, but this aging *yeogwan* has good, clean *ondol* rooms (with faded photos of the island's attractions) and is conveniently in the centre of town. If no-one is at the reception desk, inquire in the restaurant (open 7am to 7pm) below.

Pension Skyhill (Map p214; ☎ 791 1040; d/ondol W60,000/50,000; a) This newish place (opened 2003) near the top of town has a shared kitchen, rooftop barbecue facilities, VCRs and videos to borrow.

Khan Motel (Map p214; ☎ 791 8500; www.motelkhan.com; d W70,000; a) Tourists are welcome at this clean love motel, with both *ondol* and Western-style rooms. Shiny tile floors, large televisions, embroidered sheets and a nightclub (open 5pm to 1am) are all pluses. Prices are up to W30,000 cheaper from September to June.

JEODONG-RI

Many lodgings in town offer free pick-up from Dodong ferry terminal with advance notice.

Kaiser Motel (☎ 791 8900; basic/deluxe W30,000/40,000) Basic rooms are stuffy but clean. It's a good non-*yeogwan* option for those wanting Western style.

Nakwon-jang Yeogwan (☎ 791 0580; r from W30,000; a) Basic, no-nonsense rooms, some without windows, with a choice of *ondol* or Western style. It's very central and close to the bus stop.

Jeil Minbak (☎ 791 5170; ondol W50,000; a) All *ondol* rooms, one with a kitchenette (same price). Yellow linoleum is off-putting, but the rooms air out well and the owner is extremely kind. Don't confuse with the Jeil Motel nearby. Some rooms have port views. Rooms are W30,000 from September to June.

Jeil Motel (☎ 791 2637; r from W30,000, VIP W50,000; j) Lions greet you at the top of the stairs. Smallish rooms have faux-wood floors and not much of a view, but they are spotless. VIP rooms are enormous, with couches, computers, internet, sculptures and snazz. Don't confuse with the much simpler Jeil Minbak.

Eating & Drinking

Outdoor seafood stalls are so ubiquitous in Ulleungdo that you have to be careful not to trip over a squid; October is peak season.

There are also a few scattered *mandu/naengmyeon/gimbap* shops where you can eat for as little as W2000, and some casual outdoor restaurants by the harbour allow you to watch the boats unload squid for the women to clean and sell. Nari-dong has restaurants too.

DODONG-RI

Cafe Myconos (Map p214; ☎ 791 0532; http://blog.naver.com/ingridpark; coffee W2000-3000, sandwiches W3000; h 10am-10pm) Tiny, cute, turquoise-and-white café with an English-speaking owner and certainly the best coffee on the island. It's a great place to unwind as you wait for the ferry or to find out local information after you arrive.

Sutbul Garden (Map p214; meals W5000-13,000) is known for organic beef from 'medicinal cows' raised on medicinal herbs.

99 Sikdang (Map p214; ☎ 791 2287; dishes W5000-20,000) Potted plants outside the doorway mark the door of this friendly place that's received press throughout Korea for its *ojing-eo bulgogi* (squid grilled at table with vegetables and hot pepper sauce; W8000). *Taggaebibap* (shellfish with rice; W13,000) is also a favourite, and adventurous eaters can try *buk-eo* (blowfish; from W20,000).

Ulleung Raw Fish Town (Map p214; meals W6000-10,000) Serves mainly seafood stews, or raw fish for sharing (raw-fish prices vary).

Haeun Sikdang (해운식당; Map p214; ☎ 791 0002; h 6.30-9pm; entrees W6000-15,000) Across the street from the 99, offering similar fare that's just as delicious. There's clean table seating and the usual Ulleungdo sea-related fare: shellfish with rice, grilled squid, squid *bulgogi* (W10,000) and so on.

Sanchang-hoe Sikdang (Map p214) Downstairs from Sanchang-jang Yeogwan, specialising in *honghapbap* (mussel rice) and *mulhoe* (sliced raw fish), both W10,000.

Tema (Map p214; ☎ 791 3122) Across from the Ulleung Hotel, this is a pleasant café to relax or

enjoy a drink; it's on the 2nd level above Soul clothing shop. It means 'my glass is empty' (implication: please refill it). Otherwise, there's loads of karaoke during the summer months.

Koreaned-out? Jeil Jegwa is a comfy bakery with a table for you to enjoy your treats. Self-caterers will find numerous tiny groceries and the larger Hannam Chain Supermarket just up from the ferry terminal.

JEODONG-RI

Gyeongju Sigyuk Sikdang (☎ 791 3034; h 9am-10pm; dishes W6000-15,000) Serves tasty *yaksut bulgogi* (medicinal herb-marinated beef; W15,000), but you have to order a minimum of three serves. The mixed-vegetable dishes and *sanchae bibimbap* (*bibimbap* made with mountain vegetables) are just as tasty.

Byeoljang Sigyuk Sikdang (☎ 791 0028; h 9am-9pm; dishes W6000-15,000) Diagonally across the street, this has a similar menu and has recently redone the interior, with attractive bamboo and paper screens. Seating is on the floor.

Getting There & Away

You should carry your passport – you'll need the number in order to board the ferry and you may need it to register your arrival on Ulleungdo.

FERRY

You can get to Ulleungdo by ferry (☎ 242 5111; www.daea.com) from Pohang (standard/1st class W51,100/56,200, three hours, one to three daily) or Donghae (W54,500, three hours, one daily at 10am), but ferries are subject to cancellation in poor weather. The departure timetable varies month to month. Other ferries from Hupo and Sokcho may only run during July and August.

It is best to reserve all your tickets to and from the island, especially during summer. Otherwise you can buy your ticket at the boat terminal first thing in the morning, but you may go on a waiting list. Advance bookings and news about cancelled ferries can be obtained in Seoul (☎ 02-514 6766), Ulleungdo (☎ 791 0801) and Pohang (☎ 242 5111). Ring KTO (☎ 1330) for more details. Some travel agents make reservations and sell tickets.

Getting Around

BUS

Buses run between Dodong-ri and Jeodong-ri every 30 minutes (W900, 10 minutes). Eleven

daily buses go from Dodong-ri via Namyang-dong (25 minutes) to Cheonbu (50 minutes), where you can transfer to Nari-bunji (10 minutes, eight daily). For an up-to-date timetable, ask at the tourist information booth.

TAXI

Taxis, usually 4WD, regularly ply between Dodong-ri and Jeodong-ri – wave them down if a seat is empty (per person W2400). All day trips can be arranged as well for about W80,000 to W100,000. Try asking at the Cafe Myconos (p213) first.

ANDONG 안동

pop 169,000

The whole area surrounding Andong, roughly in the middle of Gyeongsangbuk-do, is peaceful, rural and notable for having preserved much of its traditional character.

Famous for its mackerel, its strong *soju* and its wooden masks, Andong makes a good base for exploring the numerous sights outside the city.

Orientation & Information

Some sights are a considerable distance away and getting to them requires a series of bus rides, often with inconvenient schedules. Ask at the tourist information booth for help planning your trip.

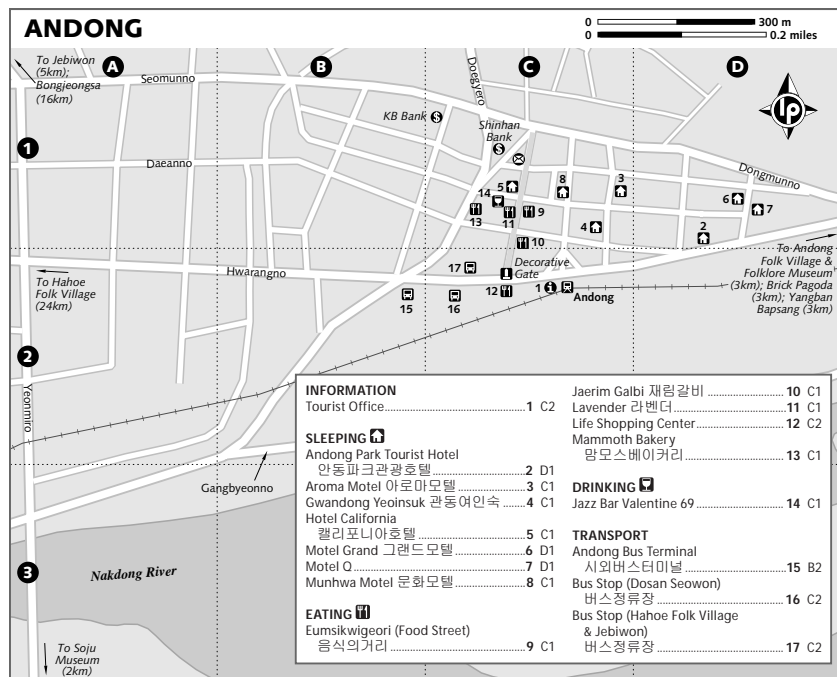
Hiring a taxi (W120,000) for the day is an air-conditioned luxury that's well worth it if you're enduring summers heat.

The tourist office (☎ 852 6800; www.andong.go.kr; h 9am-6pm) is to the left as you exit the train station. It is brand-spanking new, with English, Chinese and Japanese information and snazzy computerised displays.

Sights & Activities

ANDONG FOLK VILLAGE & FOLKLORE MUSEUM

안동 민속 마을, 박물관
On a hillside 40 minutes' walk from the centre of town, Andong Folk Village serves as a repository for homes moved to prevent them from being submerged by the construction of Andong Dam in 1976. Relocated and partially reconstructed traditional-style buildings range from simple, thatched peasant farmhouses to the more elaborate mansions of government officials and the like, with their multiple courtyards. The village looks so authentic that the TV network KBS has used it as sets for historical dramas.



Just next door to the folk village is **Andong Folklore Museum** (Andong Minsok Bangmulgwan; ☎ 821 0649; admission W1000; 11am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb). It offers clear and fascinating displays of Korea's folk traditions from birth through to death.

The village is about 3km east of Andong, close to the dam wall on the opposite side of the river from the road alongside the train track. To get there catch bus 3 (every 35 minutes) and hop off at *minsokchon* (folk village). A taxi will cost around W2500.

If you're walking (about 40 minutes) or have your own transport, stop off at the seven-storey Shilla-period brick **pagoda**, the largest and oldest brick pagoda in Korea. It looks oddly like someone went wild with oversized Lego and is well worth a quick peek.

SOJU MUSEUM 소주 박물관

Mmmm, alcohol...mmm. This museum (☎ 858 4541; www.andongsoju.net; 11am-5pm closed Sun; admission free) has decent English explanations and displays of interesting seasonal traditional meals, plus other oddities such as 'The Birthday Table of Queen Elizabeth Herself' when

she visited Andong in 1999, and a 'bamboo wife' (no, not something sexual), a kind of pillow meant to allow for more airflow during oppressively humid summer nights. The heady *soju* of Andong may or may not be to your taste, but its significance has been preserved with its designation as a provincial intangible cultural property. With 45% alcohol content you will need to keep the lid on tight to avoid evaporation.

On the grounds of the Andong Soju Brewery, the museum houses a couple of displays that detail the distilling process, the drinking ceremony and a history of *soju* labels. A (thimble-sized) taste of the liquor is given at the end of your visit.

The museum is in the south of Andong, across the Nakdonggang, and best reached by taxi (W3000) or by buses 34 or 36 (W900).

JEBIWON 재비원

No, it's not a Star Wars character, though this huge rock-carved **Amitaba Buddha** (Icheon-dong Seokbulsang; admission free; 11am-24hr) does bear a faint resemblance to Jabba the Hutt. The body and robes of this Buddha are carved on a boulder

over 12m high, on top of which are the head and hair – carved out of two separate pieces of rock. Interestingly, the head was actually added at a later date.

Catch bus 54 (every 30 minutes) and ask the driver to drop you off at Jebiwon. Local buses to Yeongju can also drop you at Jebiwon.

BONGJEONGSA 불정사

This Shilla-period temple (☎ 853 4181; admission W1500; 11am-7pm Jun-Aug, 8am-sunset Sep-May), 16km northwest of Andong, has a rushing stream, small waterfall, lush moss and (in season) shrill cicadas. The ornately decorated **Geungnakjeon** (Paradise Hall) is seen as the oldest wooden structure in Korea. Repair work on the Daeyeongjeon (main sanctuary) has revealed a Goryeo-era mural.

From bus 51 (W900, seven daily), it's a 500m walk to the temple.

Festivals & Events

Andong Mask Dance Festival (held at the end of September to early October) is a great time to visit Andong. It brings together a colourful array of national and international mask dance troupes. It is usually held in tandem with Andong's folk festival, showcasing many traditional performances of music and dance. Check with KTO (☎ 1330) for details.

Sleeping

There are plenty of inexpensive *yeoinsuk* (family-run hotels with small rooms and shared bathroom) around the bus terminal, though they're not pretty.

Gwandong Yeoinsuk (☎ 859 2487; dW10,000) Your best deal on a tight budget, set around a courtyard on a quiet side street east of the train station. A wood shop is on the corner. It also serves simple soups from 8am to 9pm.

Motel Q (☎ 857 6878; r W25,000; a i) White walls, pink cushions and leafy trim seems a bit campy, but it's a good deal for the price. All rooms have desktop PCs and real bathtubs.

Motel Grand (☎ 859 0014; r Sun-Thu W25,000, Fri & Sat W30,000; a) Opposite Motel Q, it has red 'mood' lighting, dark faux-wood floors and bamboo patterns.

Munhwa Motel (☎ 857 7001; d W30,000; a i) Features a fancy lobby devoid of all furniture, and dark hallways, some lit with black lights. Rooms are very clean, with 'MoonHwa' embroidered on the sheets, and there are large TVs and 'mood' lights. Some rooms have

closets the size of wine cellars. A coffee shop (open 8.30am to 7pm) is on the 1st floor.

Aroma Motel (☎ 856 6644; d from W35,000; a i) Unfortunate name, but the large rooms have TVs, coffee, wood-grain linoleum, and the lobby has large photos of area attractions. *Ondol* rooms are nicer, but rooms with beds are available.

Hotel California (☎ 854 0622; d from W40,000; a i) Neat, sweet and central, though cheaper places are just as nice. It's a love motel with tasteful, contemporary style that won't jar sensibilities.

Andong Park Tourist Hotel (☎ 859 1500; www.andonghotel.com; d/tw W60,000/65,000) Andong's establishment choice, though unless you need a business centre or the sparkling, marbled lobby, there's not much reason to pay twice as much for essentially the same thing as the love hotels offer. Rooms are so-so clean, comfortable, and charmless, the way a business hotel should be.

Eating & Drinking

You could eat each meal in Andong on *Eumsikwigeori*, the restaurant row in the town centre, marked by the decorative gate off the main street.

Mammoth Bakery (☎ 857 6000; coffee W3000, breads W1000-4000; 11am-11pm) Clean, well lit and friendly, with good lattes and fresh breads, this bakery has been around for more than 30 years.

Jaerim Galbi (☎ 857 6352; meals W4000-17,000) Four items on the menu; the spicy chicken makes a hot day seem cool.

Lavender (☎ 855 8550; set meals W5000-16,000; 11am-11pm Tue-Sun) White and airy, this is a very civilised pasta and salad place – pastas come with garlic bread, salad and coffee. The wines are reasonably priced, and you're welcome to bring your own bottle for a W15,000 fee.

Yangban Bapsang (☎ 855 9900; www.yangban.net; meals W6000-15,000; 11.30am-9pm) Mackerel served golden, skin crispy, flesh tender – melts on the tongue the way mackerel was meant to. There's floor seating and the wax fish hanging from the rafters look real. From the bus station, turn right and walk about 4km until you come to a bridge and a dam; it's on your left.

The streets around *Eumsikwigeori* are packed with bakeries, fast food, convenience stores and *hofs*. Try **Jazz Bar Valentine 69**

(% 843 0069; 11 7pm-4am) for friendly service and plush chairs, though the 'jazz' is more easy listening. For self-caterers, Life Shopping Center is conveniently located between the bus terminal and the train station.

Getting There & Away

BUS

The bus terminal (% 857 8296) serves both express and regular buses.

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Busan	13,500	3¼hr	7 daily
Cheongsong*	4700	1hr	4 daily
Daegu	7300	2¼hr	frequently
Daejeon	16,600	2hr	4 daily
Pohang	9900	2hr	7 daily
Seoul	15,100	5¼hr	frequently

*for Juwangsang National Park

TRAIN

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Dongdaegu (transfer for Busan)	6900	2hr	3 daily
Gyeongju	7400	2hr	4 daily
Daegu	7100	2hr	1 daily
Seoul	14,300	5½hr	6 daily
Seoul	21,200	4hr	2 daily

Getting Around

The tourist office hands out a helpful local bus timetable with English explanations. The town is small enough to get around on foot, and the local buses serve all the sights.

HAAHOE FOLK VILLAGE

하회 민속 마을

This village (Hahoe Minsok Maeul; % 854 3669; admission W2000; 11 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-sunset Nov-Feb) is 24km west of Andong and centuries back in time. A river carves a 'C' around the village enclosing mud-daubed houses, tiled walls overrun with squash vines, magpies and vistas that seem right out of the history books. While other Korean folk villages can be tourist productions, this one has residents maintaining old ways, and the government helps with preservation and restoration. There is a tourist information booth at the entrance to the village, and a lotus pond that (in season) is filled with beautiful blooms. Remember to respect people's privacy if you step beyond the entrance gates.

Two kilometres back in the direction of Andong, Hahoe Mask Museum (% 853 2288; www.maskmuseum.com; admission W1500; 11 9.30am-6pm) houses a remarkable collection of traditional Korean masks, plus masks from across Asia and countries as diverse as Nigeria, Italy and Mexico. The English signage here is excellent.

If you're lucky, you can catch one of two daily buses to Hahoe that follow a very bumpy dirt road to stop at Byeongsan Seowon (% 853 2172; admission free; 11 9am-6pm Apr-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Mar), a riverside former Confucian academy dating from 1572 and renamed in honour of Ryu Seong-ryong. This spot, boasting some original buildings (with impressively bowed support posts), is way off the tourist map except during summer – then the river bank is busy with young people picnicking and enjoying the relaxing atmosphere.

There are a couple of places to buy snacks by the river, and Hahoe has a number of *minbak* (W20,000 to W25,000, usually quite spartan).

Bus 46 (regular/deluxe W900/1300, 50 minutes, eight daily) runs out to Hahoe from Andong. Two buses daily stop by Byeongsan Seowon and stay about 20 minutes to allow you to look around.

ANDONG HANJI 안동한지

Minutes away from the folk village, this fascinating paper museum (% 858 7007; www.andonghanji.com; shop 11 9am-6pm daily, factory to 6pm Mon-Sat) offers the chance to see modern paper made in the traditional way. Mulberry bark is stripped, soaked, bleached and mashed to make pulp, which is then screened out into giant blocks – the sheets of paper are removed one by one and dried by hand on a large metal 'iron'. Samples of the paper, plus fascinating exhibits of its uses, are in the museum. There are even evening gowns made from it, worn yearly in a fashion show in Seoul.

Take bus 46 (regular/deluxe W900/1300, 50 minutes, eight daily), which leaves from Andong.

DOSAN SEOWON 도산 서원

If the sloping setting and attractive buildings of Dosan Seowon (% 856 1073; adult/youth/child W1500/700/600; 11 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb) give you a feeling of *déjà vu*, open your wallet – you'll find an image of this revered Confucian academy on the back of the W1000 note.

ANDONG'S MASKED BALL

In late September/early October, masks and their admirers come from all over the world to join in a host of mask-related festivities. In Hahoe village, masked dancers perform traditional dances in the pine forests to the delight of crowds. Andong City has numerous mask-related shows, and a mask-making contest pits artisan against artisan in a delightful 'mask off' to see who can make the best mask. Firework displays are another popular attraction.

Every weekend at 3pm from May to October (as well as Sunday at 3pm in March, April and November), **Byeolsingut Talnori** performances take place in a small stadium near Hahoe's car park. These shows are a must-see; plus, they're free, although donations are demanded by hard-working *halmeoni* (grandmas). If you can't make it to a performance, you can view many masks at the Hahoe Mask Museum.

According to legend, the Hahoe mask tradition came about when the residents of Hahoe got frustrated with their hoity-toity noble clan. One clever craftsman carved a likeness of one of the most obsequious, much to the delight of his peers. Byeolsingut Talnori is a traditional dance style created by the common folk for the common folk to satirise the establishment. Characters wear masks representing social classes including corrupt monks and the rich, some with bulging eyes and crooked mouths. The conflicts among them are portrayed in amusing combinations of popular entertainment and shamanism. Accompanying the dance are the sounds of *nong-ak*, a traditional farmers' musical percussion quartet. For more information, visit www.maskdance.com or call Andong's tourist info booth (p217).

Some 28km to the north of Andong, Dosan Seowon was founded in 1574 in honour of Yi Hwang (aka Toegye 1501–70, see p208), Korea's foremost Confucian scholar – he's on the front of the W1000 banknote. For centuries during the mid-Joseon dynasty, this was the most prestigious school for those who aspired to high office, and qualifying examinations for the civil service took place here. It's a beautiful spot, with mountains on one side and farm fields below. On the grounds, small lotus ponds harbour hundreds of frogs, which glisten on their lily leaves like jewels.

Toegye was also a prolific writer, publishing dozens of volumes summarising and explaining the Chinese classics. Some of his most famous expressions: 'When you are alone, behave decently' and 'In practising virtue one should perform it with perseverance, suppressing one's desires'. The buildings are beautifully preserved (and are often used by Korean film makers) and an exhibition hall gives clues about Toegye's life and work.

Continuing along the main road, you'll find the **Ocheon-ri Traditional Houses** (Ocheon-ri Yujeokji; admission free; 11 9am-6pm), rescued from destruction before the building of the Andong dam. These buildings (12th to 18th centuries) housed the local Kim clan, which included scholars and government officials. The hillside setting is relaxing, relatively unvisited and excellent for picnicking.

Bus 67 (W900, 40 minutes) runs along the main road, dropping you off about 2km from the *seowon*; four buses daily continue the last 2km.

CHEONGNYANGSAN PROVINCIAL PARK 청량산 도립공원

Beyond Dosan Seowon, this park (% 679 6321; admission W800; 11 8.30am-6pm) boasts some spectacular views and tracks wandering along cliff precipices. In addition to the mountain Cheongnyangsan, the summit of which is Changinbong (870m), there are 11 scenic peaks, eight caves and a waterfall, Gwancheon pokpo. A spider web of tracks radiates out from Cheongnyangsa, most are well signposted and marked. The largest temple in the park is Cheongnyangsa and there are a number of small hermitages. Built in AD 663, the temple is quite scenic, sitting in a steep valley below the cliffs. Ansimdang, at the base of the temple, is a pleasant teahouse. By the time you read this, a folk museum should have opened near the bus stop.

It takes about five hours to complete a round trip of the peaks, returning to the bus stops, or about 90 minutes to the temple and back again.

Sanseong Sikdang (% 672 1133; r W20,000) is a restaurant and *minbak*. Try washing down your meal with some of the local *dongdongju* (W5000). There is also a small store near the restaurant.

It's a 1.5km walk from the bus stop to the restaurant and first trail. Bus 67 (W1300; one hour, six daily) continues past Dosan Seowon to the park; note that not all buses stop here.

BUSEOKSA 부석사

This temple of the floating stone (☎ 633 3258; admission W1200; 11 6am-8pm Apr-Sep, 6am-6pm Oct-Mar) is small, serene and way-out-of-the-way, about 60km north of Andong, but well worth trekking to, as it has sublime views over a misty valley and a peacefulness that even the non-spiritual will feel. It was established in 676 by the monk Uisang after he had returned from China, bringing with him the teachings of Hwaem Buddhism. Though burnt to the ground in the early 14th century by invaders, it was reconstructed in 1358 and escaped destruction during the late-16th-century Japanese invasions.

This stroke of good fortune has resulted in the preservation of the beautiful main hall, Muryangsujeon, making it one of the oldest wooden structures in Korea. It also has what are considered to be Korea's oldest Buddhist wall paintings, as well as a unique, gilded-clay, sitting Buddha. The small exhibition room houses some of Korea's oldest paintings of Indra, Brahmadeva and four Deva kings.

Below the entrance there is a small tourist village with restaurants and *minbak*.

Transport to Buseoksa is from Yeongju or Punggi. (city bus/deluxe W950/3600, one hour, hourly). From the bus stop it's a steep but pretty climb up a graded hill, through cornfields and peach groves.

JUWANGSAN NATIONAL PARK

주왕산 국립공원

Far to the east of Andong and reaching almost to the coast, this 106 sq km park (admission W2600; 11 sunrise-1hr before sunset) is dominated by impressive limestone pinnacles that seem to appear from nowhere. Beautiful gorges, waterfalls and cliff-face walks also feature strongly, and with any luck you'll glimpse an otter or protected Eurasian flying squirrel, among the 900-plus species of varied wildlife here.

Orientation & Information

The main gateway to the park is the town of Cheongsong, about 15km away. There is a national park information centre (☎ 873 0014; 2nd fl bus terminal) with English-language

park maps (W1000). Be sure to check here for local trail conditions.

Sights & Activities

Most visitors to the park are content to see the waterfalls and caves, but for a more rigorous experience try hiking up from Daejeonsa temple to Juwangsan (720m; once known as Seokbyeongsan or 'Stone Screen Mountain'; 1¼ hours), along the ridge to Kaldeungogae (732m, 15 minutes) and then down to Hurimaegi (50 minutes), before following the valley back to Daejeonsa (1¼ hours).

On the way back down take the side trip to Juwang Cave; the track first passes Juwang-am Hermitage, from where a steel walkway takes you through a narrow gorge to the modest cave.

Also within the park is Naewonmaeul, a tiny village where craftspeople do woodworking.

Sleeping & Eating

There is a *minbak* village (*minbakchon*) opposite the Juwangsan bus terminal and a camping ground (☎ 873 0014; sites W3000) on the other side of the stream.

Bangalo Minbak/Restaurant (☎ 874 5200; r W40,000) This place has a log-cabin exterior with central courtyard, and rooms have *ondol* or beds; some have a space for you to bring your own camping stove. It's just outside the parking lot on the way back to town. From May to September the rates are around W10,000 cheaper.

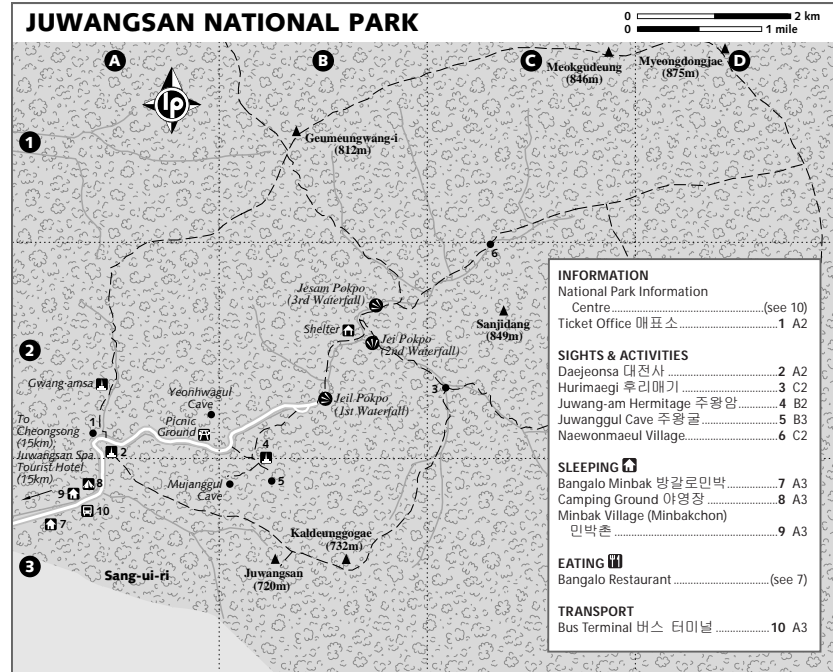
Juwangsan Spa Tourist Hotel (☎ 872 6801; Cheongsong; d W80,000; a) This is the region's most upmarket hotel and lives up to its name with hot-spring baths. Doubles are W55,000 from May to September.

Dubu (tofu) lovers will appreciate the several restaurants making their own tofu in the busy tourist village between the bus terminal and the park entrance.

Getting There & Away

Virtually all buses to Juwangsan stop in Cheongsong (W1300, 20 minutes, every 30 minutes).

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration
Andong	7300	1hr
Busan	17,800	3¼hr
Dongdaegu	14,200	3hr
Dongseoul	22,700	5hr



ULJIN 울진

pop 51,000

There's not much to see in this sea-coast town – its claim to fame is as the home of four of Korea's nuclear power plants. However, some regional attractions are worth a look.

The bus terminal is in the south of town with the main shopping area at least 1km away, across a bridge. If you need to cash up, the Nonghyeup Bank in the shopping district handles foreign exchange.

A stay near the bus terminal is convenient for quick getaways, but the atmosphere is typical bus-terminal grim.

The shopping district, a quick taxi ride away (W1600), is a nicer setting at similar prices. Rates all over town can climb steeply in summer. **Daerim-jang** (☎ 783 2131; d W25,000; a), just north of the bus terminal, is a decent, basic *yeogwan*. **Yongkkum-jang** (☎ 783 8844; d W30,000; a), at the northern end of town, is slightly better kept (rooms have bathtubs) and near restaurants, shopping and bakeries.

You can catch intercity express buses from Uljin to the following:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration
Busan	16,400	4hr
Daegu	15,700	4hr
Seoul	23,600	5hr
Gangneung	9100	2½hr
Gyeongju	11,700	2½hr
Pohang	9500	2hr

AROUND ULJIN

Seongnyugul 석류굴

To spot the Buddha, the Virgin Mary, a Roman palace and a wild boar all in one place, head for this 470m-long cave (☎ 782 4006; admission W2200; 11 8am-6pm Apr-Oct, 8am-5pm Nov-Mar). Impressive stalactites, stalagmites and rock formations are said to resemble images of these icons and dozens more, alongside a number of large caverns and pools. It was Korea's first cave to be developed for tourism. Although there are walkways and bridges inside, larger visitors (height and/or girth) may find some passages a tight squeeze – hard hats are provided.

Spooky legend has it that human bones have turned up here over the years, said to date from

the 1592 Japanese invasion, when locals holed up inside only to be sealed in.

The easiest way to get there is by taxi (W5500) from Uljin. Otherwise five buses a day depart from Uljin.

Bulyeongsa 불영사

It's a pretty forest- and river-lined road through the Bulyeong Valley, but you may wonder, is it worth the 15km drive? Emphatically yes.

At the end of the canyon, and another 15 minutes' walk from the car park, **Bulyeongsa** (admission W2000; 7 6.30am-6.30pm) is an idyllic spot. The temple is a centre for ascetic practice for some 50 Buddhist nuns, set around a pond and ringed by mountains. It is said that one of the boulders topping one mountainside is a natural representation of the Buddha and, in the right light, the boulder casts its image onto the pond; hence 'Bulyeongsa' means 'Temple of the Buddha's Shadow'. The atmosphere is as harmonious as the name suggests, with well-maintained buildings, groomed grounds, pagodas and Buddhist paintings.

Buses connect Uljin with the temple (W2100, 35 minutes, hourly) but the best way

to get around is independently: either riding a bike (note that there is a rather long uphill part through the valley) or driving a car.

Deokgu Hot Springs 덕구 온천

The chief attraction here is the water at **Deokgu Hot Springs Hotel** (☎ 782 0677; fax 785 5169; r from W121,000, spa admission W6000; a s), said to cure digestive and skin ailments. Separate men's and women's baths are large and attractive, while the hotel's new, outdoor Spa World is mixed bathing (requiring a swimsuit).

Deokgu has some good walks further up the valley. One walk takes you 4km to **Yongso pokpo**, the original hot springs (no bathing facilities). A much more strenuous hike (about five hours) takes in the mountain **Eungbongsan** (999m) returning via **Minssimyo** (five hours).

There are a couple of other *yeogwan* below the Hot Springs Hotel, which charge around W30,000 a night but don't have mineral springs on tap.

Buses connect Uljin and the hot springs (W2350, one hour, hourly).