

Chungcheongnam-do

충청남도



Gongju and Buyeo in Chungcheongnam-do, commonly shortened to Chungnam, (www.chungnam.net), were once capitals of the ancient Baekje kingdom. The treasures found in King Muryeong's tomb make him Korea's Tutankhamen, and a rich heritage of ancient Baekje relics can be found in other tombs, fortresses and museums. The province could host a capital again, as the government is planning to relocate ministries to a new administrative city northwest of Daejeon to ease congestion in Seoul. The province's attractive west-coast beaches have become a popular summer playground for city folk cooped up in their high-rise apartments, and Daecheon beach hosts a merry mud festival in late July that is popular with foreigners.

Much of the region is still rural, with rice fields interspersed with vegetable plots and small orchards in the wide valleys between the forested hillsides. Unfortunately the national trend of growing crops under polythene mars the views.

Another feature is the quirky churches of all shapes and sizes that can be found in virtually every village as well as in every town and city neighbourhood. Haemi fortress encircles a prison where early Catholic converts were tortured and killed, as their beliefs undermined the strict Confucian apartheid-like hierarchy of aristocrats, peasants and slaves. Geumsan, south of Daejeon, is the Mecca for ginseng lovers with countless shops and stalls selling the medicinal root in every conceivable form.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Marvel at the 1500-year-old treasures from **King Muryeong's tomb** (p313) in Gongju
- Tour around the fortress, royal pond garden and tomb sites of Baekje's last capital, **Buyeo** (p316)
- Relax on **Daecheon beach** (p319) with its sandy beach, seafood eateries and mud therapies
- Relive the epic struggle against Japanese colonial rule at the **Independence Hall of Korea** (p322)
- Enjoy ginseng in all its healthy manifestations in Ginseng Town, **Geumsan** (p311)
- Offer a prayer for the early Catholic converts imprisoned and executed in **Haemi fortress** (p322)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 041 ■ POPULATION: 1.9 MILLION ■ AREA: 8586 SQ KM

History

The province was the site of two Baekje kingdom capitals during the Three Kingdoms Period (57 BC–AD 668), Ungjin and Sabi. Ungjin (now called Gongju) became the second capital of the Baekje kingdom in AD 475 when the first capital at Hanseong (Seoul) was captured by Goguryeo troops. The astonishing tomb of King Muryeong, discovered near Gongju in 1971, with its treasure trove of nearly 3000 items, all over a thousand years old, reveal the outstanding craftsmanship and highly developed culture of the period.

In AD 538 the capital was forced to move south again, this time to Sabi (Buyeo), but it didn't last long before it was overwhelmed

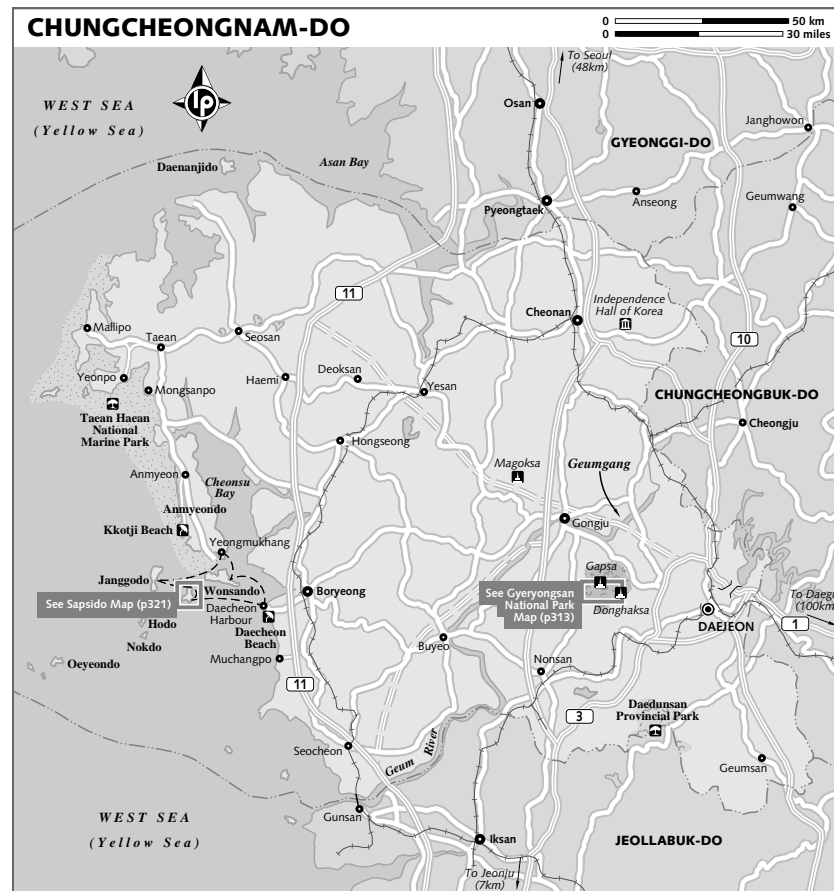
in AD 660 by the joint army of Shilla and China, and the Baekje kingdom disappeared forever.

National & Provincial Parks

On land, hike around temples and hermitages and up to the rocky peaks of Gyeryongsan National Park (p312). At sea, catch ferries around the islands, beaches and sunsets of the magnificent Taean Haean National Marine Park (p321).

Getting There & Around

Daejeon is less than an hour from Seoul on the new KTX train, but except for Boryeong and Cheonan other destinations are only served by buses.



most accessible is Bomunsan (457m) on the south side of the city. You can look around tiny Wongaksa and do a spot of bird watching on your way up past the observation deck, with panoramic views of the city, to Bomun Sanseong, a small fortress that encircles the summit.

To get there, catch bus 724 (W1300, 20 minutes, every 20 minutes) from outside the express bus terminal or Daejeon train station. The bus drops you near the tree-lined access road.

Tours

City tours (₩ 253,596; tours W6000/10,000; 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) depart from the small ticket office on Jung-angno outside Dongbang Mart. The tours follow two different routes but both include the main sights.

Sleeping

Hundreds of comfortable, reasonably priced new motels cluster around the express and Dongdaejon intercity bus terminals.

Jinju Park (진주파크; ₩ 624,476; Yongjeon Gosok 1-gil; r W20,000; a) For the budget-minded, this *yeogwan* (motel with small, well-equipped en suite) is near the bus terminals. The rooms are rather shabby, but are better than you would guess from the outside.

Coupleria Motel (₩ 637,960; 21 Yongtam 3-gil; r W30,000; a i) A clean and comfortable motel where rooms are modern, spacious and have large TVs and natural wood decor, with both a bath and a shower. A room with a computer is W5000 extra.

Limousine Motel (₩ 621,1004; Yongtam 3-gil; r W40,000; a i) Opposite Coupleria, Limousine is new and flashy. Bathrooms come with large glass showers and a bath, and electronic gear includes computers and DVD players.

Yousung Hotel (유성호텔; ₩ 820,0100; www.yousunghotel.com; Yuseong; d, tw & ondul from W190,000; a i s) Way out west, the comfortable rooms here have computers and are furnished with an occasional touch of flair. No one goes hungry, as buffet spreads are available at every meal. Hotel guests receive a 50% discount on the excellent spa (p309), but the swimming pool costs W7000.

Eating

Yeongsuni (meals W4000-9000; C) A popular and famous sit-on-the-floor restaurant that specialises in budget cook-it-yourself *shabu kalguksu* (샤브칼국수): a first course of rather spicy mushroom vegetable soup with thin strips of

meat and thick noodles is followed by rice, egg and garnish added to the remains of the soup. The seafood option is great too, as is the squid *pajeon* (green-onion pancake). Near the bus terminals, Yeongsuni is child-friendly and has an indoor play area.

Tesco Home Plus Food Court (meals W4000-10,000; 10am-9pm; C) Above the supermarket is this fun food court with huge fusion food platters of curry rice, pasta and burger meat that can feed three people.

Pungnyeon Samgyetang (meals W8000; 9am-10.30pm) Drop into this large, unpretentious restaurant for its *samgyetang* (삼계탕; ginseng chicken) with lettuce and cucumber side dishes. It's within easy walking distance of the bus terminals and the manager is helpful.

Shopping

Shops in the underground shopping arcade that runs under Jung-angno from Daejeon train station sell mainly clothing and souvenirs. On the left is the sprawling Jung-angno market, which stocks everything from live eels to US\$5 'Louis Vuitton' bags. Further along, every evening a tsunami of young people swirl around the pedestrianised shopping district near the Milano 21 (Jung-angno; 11am-11pm) fashion store.

Getting There & Away

AIR

The nearest airport is Cheongju, 60km north of Daejeon in Chungcheongbuk-do, which is linked to Daejeon by bus (W3200, 45 minutes, five daily).

BUS

Daejeon has three bus terminals: the Seodaejon (west) intercity bus terminal, the Dongdaejon (east) intercity bus terminal and express bus terminal, which are side by side near the motels.

Buses depart the express bus terminal for the following destinations:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Busan	12,700	3¼hr	hourly
Daegu	7400	2hr	every 30min
Gwangju	8,200	3hr	every 30min
Seoul	7000	2hr	every 10min

From Dongdaejon intercity bus terminal, destinations include:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Cheongju	3000	50min	every 15min
Geumsan	3000	1hr	every 20min
Gongju	3100	1hr	every 45min
Jeonju	4500	1½hr	every 30min
Taeon	13,300	3½hr	every 30min

Departures from the Seodaejon intercity bus terminal include:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Boryeong	8600	3hr	every 15min
Buyeo	5000	1¼hr	every 20min
Daedunsan	2500	40min	6 daily
Gongju	3100	1hr	every 20min

TRAIN

Daejeon train station, in the centre of the city, serves the main line between Seoul and Busan, and all trains en route to either city stop there. Seodaejon station, in the west of the city, serves the lines to Mokpo and Yeosu.

Superfast KTX trains (W19,500, 55 minutes, every 30 minutes), *Saemaul* trains (express, W13,900, 1¼ hours, hourly) and *Mugunghwa* trains (semi-express, W9300, two hours, every 40 minutes) run from Seoul station to Daejeon.

Getting Around

BUS

Bus 841 (W900, 20 minutes, every 15 minutes) links Seodaejon bus terminal to Daejeon train station and the Dongdaejon and express bus terminals. The useful bus 102 (W1300, every 15 minutes) links Dongdaejon bus terminal to the Science Museum, Yuseong Hot Springs and Gyeryongsan National Park.

KTX

Korea joined the elite club of countries with super fast trains in April 2004, following the successful development of its own sleek 300km/h KTX trains (<http://ktx.korail.go.kr>). Though based on the French TGV system, most of the 46 trains have been built in Korea. The sleek trains have over 900 seats and have already turned Daejeon into a suburb of Seoul, as it now takes less than an hour to travel between the two cities. It's faster to reach Seoul Station from Daejeon by KTX than from Olympic Park by subway.

The project is mega expensive but the peninsula will shrink further when the special KTX track is extended all the way down to Busan in the southeast and to Mokpo in the southwest. Carbon-dioxide emissions will also be reduced as trains are a greener transport system than cars and aircraft.

SUBWAY

Daejeon's new subway line (per trip W900) has 13 stations open, with another 10 to go, including one in Yuseong, the hot spring spa zone.

GEUMSAN 금산

pop 65,000

This market town (www.geumsan.chungnam.kr) is where 80% of the nation's *insam* (ginseng) is marketed. Leave the Geumsan bus terminal and turn left, walk for 10 minutes and turn right across a bridge along Bihoro/Yakchoro.

On the left is *Matkkalbokjip* (맛갈복집; meals W10,000-15,000; 11am-10pm), where two ladies serve up local ginseng specialities such as *insam twigim* (인삼튀김; ginseng tempura).

Walk on a few minutes more across a bridge and on the left is Geumsan Insam & Herb Market (금산인삼약령시장). The hundreds of shops and stalls display large glass jars containing weirdly shaped ginseng roots. Pomegranate liquor, mulberry candy, and sweet potato and prickly pear tea are also on sale.

The first shop on the corner is *Buheunggeon-jaedomaeayeopsa* (부흥건재도매약업사; 9am-6pm), which sells *insam* tea, deer antler velvet and *bureomcha*, a sweet tea made of nuts and beans.

Left of the shop is Geumsan Wellbeing Sauna (금산웰빙볼가마사우나; ₩ 754,0020; W5000; 1 24hr), which has a ginseng bath, a hot and ice-cold sauna, sleeping rooms, a PC *bang* (internet room), a *noraebang* (karaoke room), a *noraebang* (karaoke room), an exercise area and massages (W10,000).

Along the next road on the left, Insam Yachcho-gil is a stall on the right that serves *insam twigim* and bowls of *insam makgeolli*.

WONDER ROOT

Ginseng is a Korean health product that's in demand throughout the world. It's grown under black netting (to simulate its natural habitat under shady trees), and the root takes years to grow to its optimum size. Roots with unusual shapes can be worth a fortune, as is ginseng that has grown wild. The more mature red ginseng is always more expensive than the white. The plant has attractive red berries but they seem to have no use – only the root has commercial value. Numerous health benefits are claimed for ginseng, and it turns up in products as diverse as *soju*, rice wine, tea, candy, biscuits, coffee, noodles, body lotions and shampoo.

The market is larger on the second, seventh, 12th, 17th, 22nd and 27th days of every month.

Geumsan can be reached along a scenic route by bus from Daejeon (W3000, one hour, every 20 minutes) and from Muju (W2300, 35 minutes, hourly) in Jeollabuk-do. Buses also run to Daedunsan Provincial Park (W1600, 20 minutes, hourly).

GYERYONGSAN NATIONAL PARK

계룡산국립공원

The eastern entrance to Gyeryongsan National Park (☎ 825 3003; adult/youth/child W3200/1200/600; 11am-7pm) is 18km from Daejeon. The park contains two famous temples surrounded by forested hills, which give way to rocky cliffs towards the peaks. It's a small but pretty park – the name translates as Rooster Dragon Mountain because locals thought the mountain resembled a dragon with a rooster's head. Donghaksa (a nunnery) is 1km from the park entrance, and from there you can hike up to another temple, Gyemyeongjeongsa, and then on to Sambulbong and Gwaneumbong before returning to Donghaksa via Eunseon Pokpo (Eunseon Waterfall).

Gapsa, a temple at the park's western end, is best visited from Gongju and is a 20-minute walk from the bus stop. Look out for birds and butterflies on the way. The temple has a superb bell, crafted in 1584. Yongmun Pokpo, a 20-minute hike beyond the temple, is a small waterfall but sits in a very scenic location.

One recommended option from Gongju is to take a bus to Donghaksa at the eastern end of the park, hike to Gapsa (4.7km, four hours), and then take another bus back to Gongju.

Sleeping & Eating

The eastern park entrance (Donghaksa) has a line of duck restaurants. At the western park entrance (Gapsa) is the usual tourist village.

Gyeryong Youth Hostel (☎ 856 4666; Donghaksa; dm/f W10,900/40,000; a) Clean and pleasant en suite rooms, but guests sleep on a thin *yo* (mattress on the floor). Grab a bunch of *yo* for a more comfortable sleep.

Gyeryong Geurintel (☎ 825 8211; Donghaksa; r W40,000) Probably the best motel in Donghaksa tourist village, with rooms that have fancy furnishings, light decor and a glass, hi-tech shower. Fluorescent wallpaper brightens up the corridors.

Matjarang Tongnamujip (Gapsa; meals W5000-15,000) This is located at the far end of the restaurant area – look for a shady courtyard with a double watermill wheel. Try *dotori bindaetteok* (도토리 빈대떡; acorn pancake) and mountain vegetables, or *pyogobeoseot deopbap* (표고버섯 덮밥; mushrooms on rice with a banquet of side dishes).

Mushroom (Donghaksa; meals W6000-17,000) In this mushroom-shaped restaurant, dine on mushroom *ssambap* (버섯쌈밥; assorted ingredients with rice and leaves), *hanbang oribaeksuk* (한방 오리백숙; duck in medicinal soup), which serves two, or just sip Korean tea amid eclectic furnishings that include a rhino head and a knight on horseback.

The camping ground has only basic facilities but the low prices (W3000 to W5000) attract plenty of nature lovers in July and August.

Getting There & Away

Bus 102 (W1300, one hour, every 15 minutes) from outside Daejeon express bus terminal goes to the eastern end of the park.

From the Gongju local bus terminal, take a local bus (W950, 30 minutes, every 30 minutes) to Gapsa at the western park entrance, or to Donghaksa (W950, 30 minutes, six daily) at the eastern end.

GONGJU 공주

pop 140,000

Gongju became the second capital of the Baekje kingdom in AD 475 when the first



capital at Hanseong (Seoul) was captured by Goguryeo troops. Less than 70 years later, in 538, the capital was forced to move south again, this time to Sabi (Buyeo). The city is most famous for King Muryeong's tomb and its treasure trove of 2900 ancient artefacts.

Information

KB Bank (Ungjinno) A global ATM and foreign exchange.

Post office South of the market.

Tourist information centre (☎ 856 7700; 11am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb) At the entrance to Gongsanseong, the Baekje fortress.

Tourist information centre & craftshop (☎ 840 2548; 11am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb) At the entrance to King Muryeong's tomb site.

Sights

GONGJU NATIONAL MUSEUM

공주국립박물관

This new museum (☎ 850 6300; adult/youth/child W2000/1000/500; 11am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb, closed Mon) exhibits the treasures discovered in King Muryeong's amazing tomb. Videos with English subtitles show how the tomb was made, and paint a vivid picture of Baekje culture. Exquisite golden earrings, Chinese porcelain, silver bowls and a unique necklace of burnt wood and gold are on display. Upstairs unique Baekje jar coffins are displayed.

On the right of the museum are Joseon-era provincial government buildings, while on the left are private tombs (visitors must keep to the paths).

INFORMATION

Ticket Office 매표소 1 A1
Ticket Office 매표소 2 C2

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Eunseon Pokpo 은선폭포 4 B2
Gapsa gapsa 5 A1
Gyemyeongjeongsa 계명정사 6 C1
Yongmun Pokpo 용문폭포 7 A1

SLEEPING

Camping Ground 아영장 8 A1
Camping Ground 아영장 9 D2
Gyeryong Youth Hostel 계룡유스호스텔 10 A1
Gyeryonggeurintel 계룡그린텔 11 D2

EATING

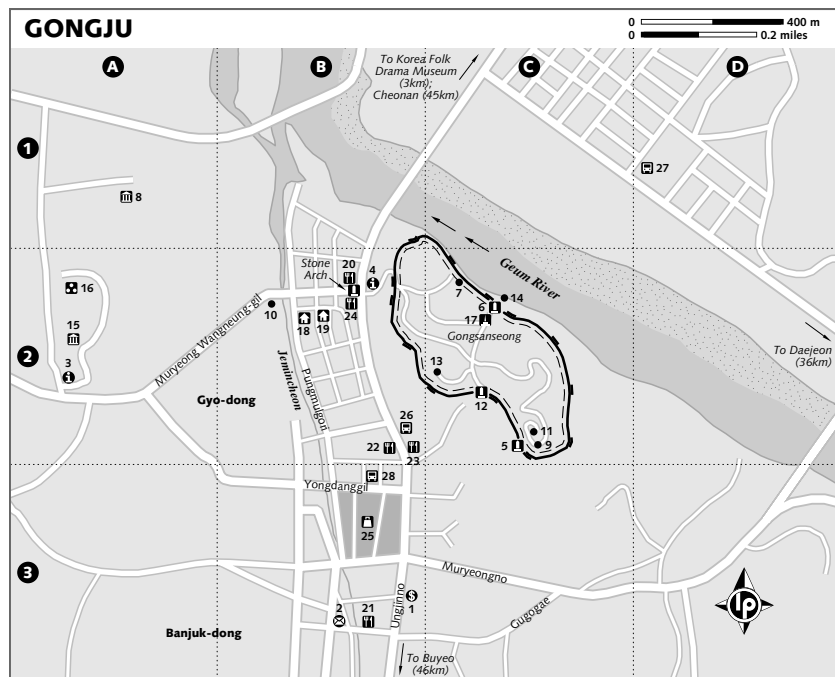
Duck Restaurants 오리식당가 12 C2
Matjarang Tongnamujip 맛자랑통나무집 13 A1
Mushroom 머쉬룸 14 D2

TRANSPORT

Bus Stop 버스정류장 15 A1
Bus Stop 버스정류장 16 D2

The museum is a 15-minute walk from the royal tombs, or a W2500 taxi ride from the fortress entrance.

TOMB OF KING MURYEONG 무령왕릉
Seven Baekje tombs (☎ 856 0331; adult/youth/child W1500/1000/700; 11am-6pm), including King Muryeong's, are clustered on a hillside near Seongsan-ri. The burial chambers have all been sealed to protect them, so you cannot look inside. However the Exhibition Hall contains actual-size replicas of the tombs that you can go



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Tourist Information Centre	4 B2	Ssangsujeong 쌍수정	13 C2
관광안내소	4 B2	Step Well 연지	14 C2
Tomb of King Muryeong	5 A2	Tomb of King Muryeong	15 A2
Exhibition Hall	5 A2	무령왕릉무형관	15 A2
Tomb of King Muryeong	6 A2	Tomb of King Muryeong	16 A2
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광봉주	9 C2	Bus Stop to Seoul & Daejeon	26 B2
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into. Sit down in King Muryeong's brick tomb, with its cleverly designed arched roof, and experience the special atmosphere of its lotus-flower pattern, symbols of Buddhist heaven. Another tomb has dragon, tiger, tortoise-snake animal and phoenix designs inside.

Bus 25 (₩950, 10 minutes, every 15 minutes) runs from the local bus terminal to the tombs, or catch a taxi (₩2000). Otherwise it's

a 15-minute walk from the fortress entrance to the tombs.

GONGSANSEONG 공산성

This hilltop fortress (adult/youth/child ₩1200/800/600; 11.30am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb), floodlit at night, is crammed with Baekje and Joseon relics. The 2.6km wall that encircles the 110m summit of Gongsan was made of earth during

the Baekje kingdom. The stone facing was added in the 17th century.

Ssangsujeong is a pavilion built where King Injo rested during his 10-day stay in the fortress to which he had fled to escape an insurrection. Nearby is an impressive stone-lined Baekje pond. An unusual step well is in front of the temple, Yeong-eunsa, which housed warrior monks who fought valiantly against the Japanese in the 1590s. Korean monks were pacifist except when their country was attacked. Gongbongnu, Imnyugak and Gwangbongju are all pavilions.

At the main entrance gate, a 10-minute Changing of the Baekje Guard takes place hourly between 2pm and 8pm on Saturday and Sunday in April, May, June, September and October. You can dress up as a Baekje warrior and try your hand at archery (₩1000).

HWANGSAEBAWI 황새바위순교성지

Walk up to this serene hilltop park (₩856,3923; Muryeong Wangneung-gil; admission free; 11.30am-5pm), which has a poignant monument and solemn memorial chapel. Three hundred Catholics from all social classes were executed on this spot, mostly in the 1860s, but now their spirits lie in peace, surrounded by birdsong.

Tours

A free day-long bus tour (₩856,7700) of all the sights of Gongju runs every Sunday from April to October, and departs from the fortress car park at 10am, returning at 6pm.

Festivals

Gongju's golden age is re-enacted and celebrated from 9 October to 12 October every odd-numbered year with a Baekje-themed festival of 100 events that includes a huge parade, dancing, music, games, sports and fireworks. The festival is held in nearby Buyeo in even-numbered years.

Every October a three-day folk drama festival takes place at the Korea Folk Drama Museum (공주민속극박물관; ₩855,4933; adult ₩2000; 11.30am-5pm Tue-Sun). International folk music, dance and drama continue all day from 10am. Take a taxi (₩4000) to get there.

Sleeping

Minarijang (₩853,1130; Bldg 7, Minari 2-gil; r ₩25,000; a i) One of a dozen budget yeogwan clustered opposite the fortress, this is clean, well-priced and has a smiling hostess. The big plus

is a computer in all the rooms, although bathrooms contain bowls rather than basins.

Ganseojang (₩853,8323; Pungmul Geori; r ₩25,000; a i) In a quiet spot overlooking a stream, with flowers at the entrance and a homely feel, this yeogwan has a friendly owner who keeps the rooms spotless. A room with a computer costs ₩5000 extra.

Eating & Drinking

The Gongju area is famous for chestnuts and strawberries.

Han's Deli (meals ₩3000-5500; 11.30am-11pm) This is a bright and breezy eatery with music and a very youthful vibe that provides well-priced Italian/Korean meals and ₩1000 coffee in a fast-food ambience.

Yeonmun (meals ₩5000-8000) A brand new, all-white restaurant that serves two unusual and tasty dishes – ocha bibimbap (오채 비빔밥), which has no red-pepper sauce and is eaten wrapped in dried seaweed, and bammukbap (밤묵밥), thick strips of chestnut jelly in a soup with seaweed and a few pieces of kimchi. Both come with side dishes and tea.

Gomanaru (Ungjinno; meals ₩5000-15,000) Amid rustic decor, this charming and long-established restaurant opposite the fortress specialises in ssambap (쌈밥; side dishes) and dolsothap (돌솥밥; stonepot rice with beans) served with excellent side dishes, tea and a bulgogi (불고기; slices of barbecue beef in a lettuce wrap) option. Try their delicious homebrew gudeuraeteukju (구드래특주).

Japanese Restaurant (Ungjinno; meals ₩6000-20,000; 11.30am-10pm) Eat in your own snug little Zen-style room in this cute fusion restaurant, and tuck into decent-sized and delicious samchigu-i (삼치구이; grilled fish) accompanied by 10 unusual side dishes including boiled peanuts, squid salad, pajeon, tiny snails and even beondegi (silkworm larvae).

There's a Pizza Hut (Ungjinno; meals ₩6000-28,000; 11.30am-10pm) if you're pining for pizza or pasta.

Shopping

Join the locals who still prefer to buy everything they need in the character-filled Sanseong market.

Getting There & Away

The intercity and express bus terminals are together north of the river, although most buses from Daejeon will drop passengers off

in the city centre. Departures from the terminals include the following:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Boryeong	5400	1¾hr	every 30min
Buyeo	3100	45min	every 30min
Cheonan	3900	1hr	every 20min
Daejeon	3100	1hr	every 20min
Seoul	6300	2½hr	every 15min

Getting Around

Head to the local bus terminal to get around town or else just jump into an inexpensive taxi.

AROUND GONGJU

Magoksa (마곡사; adult/youth/child W2000/1500/1000; ㄱ 6am-6.30pm) is a remote and historical temple that nestles beside a river, 25km northwest of Gongju. It has largely escaped the mania for renovation and repainting, so some buildings retain an ancient look and atmosphere.

Cross the 'mind-washing bridge' to the main hall, **Daegwangbojeon**, which was last rebuilt in 1813 and has an intricately carved and decorated ceiling supported by immense beams and pillars. Behind the shrine is an unusual two-storey prayer hall, **Daeungbojeon**, constructed in 1651. Another delight is **Yeongsanjeon**, which contains hundreds of pint-sized, white-painted devotees, each of them slightly different.

Three circular hiking trails branch off from behind Magoksa. The longest trail (5km, 2½ hours) includes two peaks, **Nabalbong** (417m) and **Hwarinbong** (423m). The other trails are 2.5km and 4km long and should take 1½ hours and two hours respectively. The trails connect up with small hermitages scattered around the forested hillsides.

The usual tourist village includes food stalls offering roast pig, roast squid *sundae* (sausage) and roast chestnuts. Worth exploring is the totem-pole park, where hundreds of carved totem poles surround hobbit-style restaurants. Some pole carvings are traditional while others, like the soccer world cup and political sections, are more modern. Fertility symbols include giant penises and a fish with legs.

Chueogui Samhak (추억의삼학; meals W5000-20,000), housed in a mushroom-shaped castle, offers *sanchoe bibimbap* (산채비빔밥; rice, egg, meat and mountain vegetables with a

spoonful of hot sauce), *dotorimuk bindatteok* (도토리 빈대떡; mung bean pancake and acorn jelly) and banquet meals, as well as *hanbang oribaeksuk* (한방 오리백숙; duck in medicinal soup). The burnt rice 'bowls' are a crispy rice snack called *nurungji* (누룽지). Gongju *Albam Insamsul* is rice wine flavoured with chestnut, ginseng and pine needles.

Bus 7 (W950, 50 minutes, every 40 minutes) runs from Gongju's local bus terminal to Magoksa, but the less-frequent bus 18 (W950, one hour) takes a more scenic route. The temple is a 20-minute walk from the bus stop in the tourist village.

BUYEO 부여

pop 95,000

Buyeo was the site of the Baekje kingdom's last capital, Sabi. The capital was moved there from Gongju in AD 538, and six kings ruled as the dynasty flourished until it was destroyed by the combined forces of Shilla and the Tang (of China) in AD 660. Today Buyeo is a quiet backwater surrounded by wooded hills and rice fields, with friendly and tradition-minded inhabitants. Baekje relics include a fortress, burial mounds just out of town, a reconstructed pond garden and a five-storey stone pagoda. Many other treasures are inside Buyeo National Museum. The Jung-ang Covered Market is a great place to barter and bargain for food, clothes, souvenirs and just about anything else.

Information

Hana Bank (nr Wangungno & Sabiro) Foreign exchange.

Post office (Sabiro)

Tourist information centre (☎ 830 2523; www

.buyeo.go.kr) Tourist information kiosks are outside Buyeo National Museum and inside Jeongnimsaji.

Sights

BUYEO NATIONAL MUSEUM

부여국립박물관

This museum (☎ 833 8562; adult/youth/child W1000/500/free; ㄱ 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb, closed Mon) houses one of the best collections of Baekje artefacts. A wonderful 114kg incense burner with its unbelievably intricate and well-preserved metalwork and superb design is the outstanding item, but there is lots more to admire. Government records were kept on wooden strips, and other metalwork such as a small Buddhist halo are superb. Unusual items include a seven-pronged dagger, ornate tiles and a man's chamber pot shaped like a tiger.

GENERAL GYEBAEK'S LAST STAND

General Gyebaek won many battles, but in AD 660 when he learnt of the size of the advancing Shilla and Chinese armies, he knew it was the end. Not wanting his family to face the suffering and disgrace of becoming slaves, he killed his wife and children.

After this extreme act he marched out with his small army of 5000 men to confront an enemy whose troops outnumbered his by ten to one. The general and his brave soldiers repulsed four enemy attacks on the Plains of Hwansanbeol, but the fifth attack resulted in the death of General Gyebaek and all his soldiers. Their defeat meant the end of the Baekje kingdom, and 3000 court ladies are said to have thrown themselves off Busosan cliff rather than surrender.

A statue of the general on horseback is in central Buyeo, and by Gungnamji pond is a stirring memorial to his final battle. The general and his men represent the unflinching martial spirit of the ancient kingdom of Baekje.

BUSOSAN 부소산

This park (adult/youth/child W2000/1100/1000; ㄱ 7am-7pm Mar-Oct, 8am-5pm Nov-Feb) covers the forested hill of Busosan (106m), the fortress of the Baekje kings, and contains the remains of 2.4km of ancient earth walls. It also served as the palace garden, and makes for a lovely area to walk for an hour or so among its temple, pavilions and shrines, which reflect Baekje culture. Chipmunks, squirrels and birds have turned it into a nature reserve.

A soldier's thatched pit-house has been reconstructed, and Samchunsa shrine is dedicated to General Gyebaek (above) and two Baekje ministers whose invasion warnings to the last Baekje monarch, King Uija (r 641-660), were ignored.

A wide river, Baengmagang, protected the northern side of the fortress, and the cliff above it was where 3000 Baekje court ladies threw themselves off a large rock into the river. The rock was later named *Nakhwa-am*, 'falling flowers rock', in honour of those who chose death rather than dishonour. At the bottom of the cliff is a tiny temple, **Goansa**. Behind it is a spring that provided the favourite drinking water of Baekje kings, and nearby is a plant that only grows near the spring. Slaves had to pick a leaf and put it in the water to show that the water came from this spring.

From Goansa, ferries (one way adult/child W2700/1500) run to Gudurae sculpture park. The boats run daily from sunrise to sunset and the 1½km trip only takes 10 minutes. From Gudurae park it's a 15-minute walk to the town centre past Buyeo's best restaurants.

JEONGNIMSAJI 정림사지

This small temple site (☎ 830 2532; adult/youth/child W1000/600/400; ㄱ 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb)

contains a five-storey Baekje stone pagoda that fits together like Lego and is one of the few that survived the sacking of the town. In the pavilion is a Goryeo dynasty Buddha so worn and weathered by age as to be hardly recognisable.

GUNGNAMJI POND & PAVILION 궁남지

A 15-minute walk past Jeongnimsaji is a reconstructed royal pleasure garden for the court ladies. A nature-viewing pavilion overlooks lily-filled ponds that are surrounded by willow trees, flowers and rice fields. Ducks, egrets and herons have moved in. On the left is an imposing memorial to the last battle of General Gyebaek and his 5000 soldiers.

BAEKJE ROYAL TOMBS 백제왕릉

These seven royal tombs (adult/youth/child W1000/600/400; ㄱ 8am-6pm Mar-Oct, 8am-5pm Nov-Feb), dating from 538 to 660, are on a hillside 3km from Buyeo along the road to Nonsan. It's not possible to enter them, but an exhibition hall has small-scale models of the tombs that have been excavated. One tomb has murals painted on the walls, but they are not very distinct.

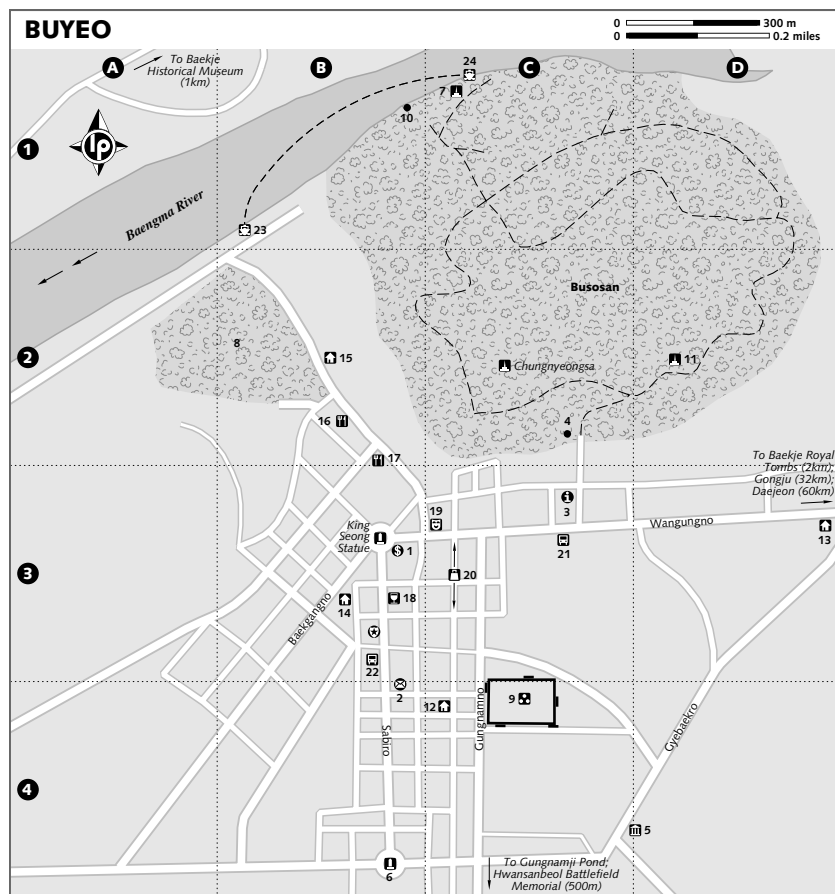
The earth bank on the left is the remains of the city's outer defences, which once stretched for 8km and were wide enough to ride a horse along. Pheasants and chickens now wander where once Baekje soldiers marched.

To get there from the bus station or along Wangungno, hop on one of the local buses (W900, five minutes, every 30 minutes) to Nonsan (논산), or take a taxi (W4000).

BAEKJE HISTORICAL MUSEUM

백제역사재현단지

This brand new museum (☎ 830 3400; adult/youth/child W1500/1200/800; ㄱ 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-



Feb) focuses on Baekje culture. It's a W5000 taxi ride over the river from the town centre.

Sleeping

Samjeong Buyeo Youth Hostel (% 835 3791; dm/f members W11,000/31,200, nonmembers W16,000/43,000; a s) The dorm rooms have two double bunks, en suite facilities and a less institutional feel than most other hostels. Family rooms are of motel standard and have twin beds and dark furniture.

Arirang Motel (% 832 5656; r W30,000; a i) Rooms in this central motel are smallish but stylish with an ultramodern shower and mood lighting in the bathroom. Rooms with a computer are the same price as those without.

Myeongseong Motel (% 833 8855; r W30,000; a) Rooms like No 315 are light and bright, while No 313 is the best *ondol* room in this very central but quiet motel with touches of class that include some fine artwork and photographs on the walls.

Myeongjin Motel (% 835 0371; r W30,000-40,000; a i) This stylish modern motel has a sauna (W3500) in the basement. The more expensive rooms are the best in town with a computer, armchairs and enough space to swing a cat.

Eating, Drinking & Entertainment

The road down to the river ferry is the best street for restaurants.

Mobeom Eumsikjeom (meals W5000-12,000; h 11am-11pm) Order the W7000 *joseon wanggalbi*

INFORMATION

Hana Bank 하나은행 1 B3
Post Office 우체국 2 B4
Tourist Information Centre
관광안내소 3 C3

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Busosan Ticket Office
부소산매표소 4 C2
Buyeo National Museum 부여국립박물관 5 D4
General Gyebaek Statue
계백장군동상 6 B4
Goransa 고란사 7 C1
Gudurae Sculpture Park
구두래공원 8 B2

Jeongnimsaji 정림사지 9 C4
Nakhwa-am 낙화암 10 B1
Samchungsa 삼충사 11 D2

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Arirang Motel 아리랑모텔 12 C4
Myeongjin Motel 명진모텔 13 D3
Myeongseong Motel 명성모텔 14 B3
Samjung Buyeo Youth Hostel
삼정부여유스호텔 15 B2

EATING

Gudurae Dolssambap
구두래돌쌈밥 16 B2
Mobeom Eumsikjeom
모범음식점 17 B2

DRINKING

Bubble Castle 버블캐슬 18 B3

ENTERTAINMENT

WOW Music Club 와우노래방 ... 19 C3

SHOPPING

Jung-ang Covered Market
중앙시장 20 C3

TRANSPORT

Baekje Royal Tombs Bus Stop
백제릉류장 21 C3
Buyeo Bus Terminal
부여버스터미널 22 B3
Ferry 선착장 23 B1
Ferry 선착장 24 C1

(조선 왕갈비; royal *galbi*) in this popular and atmospheric *hanok* barbecue restaurant for some real meat and assorted side dishes washed down with *soju* (the local brew).

Gudurae Dolssambap (meals W5000-15,000; h 9am-9pm) Always packed with locals, this is the place to come for Buyeo's best countryside-style cooking that includes *dolssambap* (돌쌈밥), *bibimbap* (비빔밥) and hotplate *bulgogi* (불고기) with an army of side dishes.

Bubble Castle (Sabiro; beer W2200; h 4pm-2am) A convivial Western-style bar on the main street with a menu of fusion food that makes for a relaxing place to unwind after a hard day's sightseeing.

WOW Music Club (% 838 1818; Wangungno; per hr W12,000; h 24hr) Sing your heart out in bungy-jumper Mr Kim's *noraebang*.

Getting There & Away

Many intercity buses depart from the Buyeo bus terminal:

Destination	Price (W)	Duration	Frequency
Boryeong	3700	1hr	hourly
Daejeon	5100	1hr	every 20min
Gongju	3100	45min	every 30min
Seoul	11,200	2¼hr	every 20min

BORYEONG 보령

pop 122,000

Boryeong is the gateway to Daecheon beach (10km away) and Daecheon harbour (a further 2km), from where ferries sail to a dozen rural islands. All the frequent buses that connect Boryeong bus terminal and train station with Daecheon beach continue on to the harbour.

The tourist information centre (% 932 2023; www.boryeong.chungnam.kr; h 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb) is located inside Daecheon train station (despite the name it's in Boryeong, not Daecheon beach).

Getting There & Away

BUS

Departures from Boryeong include the:

Destination	Price (W)	Duration	Frequency
Buyeo	3700	1hr	hourly
Daejeon	8600	2½hr	hourly
Jeonju	7600	2½hr	3 daily
Seoul	8700	2½hr	every 30min

TRAIN

Saemaul (W15,700, 2½ hours, three a day) and **Mugunghwa** (W10,600, three hours, 13 a day) trains run between Daecheon station and Yongsan in Seoul.

DAECHEON BEACH 대천해수욕장

This is the best beach on the west coast; it's almost golden-coloured sand is kept cleaner than most. Although 3.5km long and up to 100m wide, the beach can still be crowded on summer weekends. The sea is shallow and calm, and in the evening everyone gathers on the beach to watch the sunset and let off fireworks.

Architecturally, Daecheon beach is the Las Vegas of Korea with amusement parks and row upon row of fancifully designed and named motels, some of which have luridly coloured plastic palm trees outside that light up at night. It's purely a tourist town with *noraebang*, bars, nightclubs, billiard halls,

cafés and countless raw fish and seafood restaurants, but no banks.

Daecheon harbour, 2km away, is packed with fishing boats and is the ferry terminal for visiting the relaxing offshore islands, where the only residents are fisher folk. For less commercialised beaches, take a ferry to Sapsido or on to Anmyeondo.

The **tourist information centre** (☎ 931 4022; 11am-8pm) is in the Mud House (see below).

Activities

Water-skiing, canoeing, windsurfing, horse-and-carriage rides along the beach and speed-boat, banana-boat and jet-ski rides are all available in July and August.

Located on the beachfront just to the left of the access road, **Mud House** (보령 머드하우스; ☎ 931 4022; 11am-8pm) is a super new facility that offers a sauna, mud bath and aroma spa for a bargain W3000 for foreigners. Extras like massages and mud packs cost more. The local mud is full of health-giving minerals, and mud soaps and mud shampoos are on sale.

Sleeping

Daecheon beach has hundreds of large, modern motels with elevators and almost luxurious rooms. Prices start at W30,000 but usually increase on Friday and Saturday and in July and August.

Motel Coconuts (모텔코코넛스; ☎ 934 6595; r W30,000; a) This offers bland but neat and modern rooms, some with sea views, but the price doubles on Friday and Saturday.

Motel If (모텔이프; ☎ 931 5353; r W30,000-50,000; a) Next to Motel Coconuts, on the left of the access road, this stylish motel has cosy rooms with black-rafter ceilings and bare brick walls that are hidden away inside the modern exte-

rior. Rooms like No 503 have great sea views and cost W40,000.

Eating

Seafood and raw fish restaurants stretch along the beachfront, many with aquariums of fish, eels, crabs and shellfish outside. A pile of *jogae modeumgui* (조개 모듬구이; mixed shellfish) is barbecued at your table for W30,000 (enough for three people). Raw fish like *ureok* (우럭) and *gwang-eo* (광어) is expensive, while octopus or eel are other options.

For fast food there's Lotteria or convenience stores.

Yeonggwang Sikdang (영광식당; Haesuyokjang 4-ro; meals W6000-30,000; 11am-10pm) Try the *saegui* (새우구이): 28 large prawns for W30,000 cooked on salt on a hotplate at the fourth building from the access road on the left.

Donguhoessenta (둥우회센타; meals W30,000; 11am-24hr) On the beachfront, just to the right of the access road, is this typical restaurant where meals are meant for sharing: raw fish, eel, octopus or the more expensive but delicious *kkotge jjim* (꽃게찜; steamed blue crab).

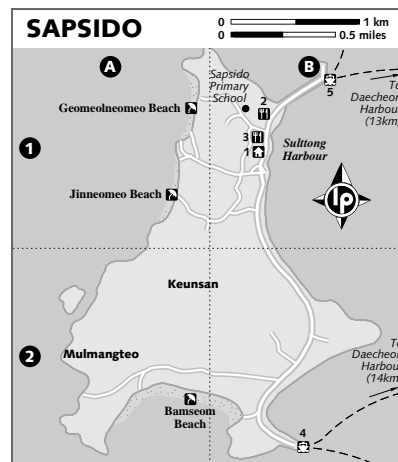
Getting There & Away

Buses (standard/deluxe W930/1300, every 30 minutes) run from Boryeong terminal and Daecheon (Boryeong) train station to Daecheon beach (대전 해수욕장) and on to Daecheon harbour (대전항). Get off at the first stop in Daecheon beach for the Mud House and the main access road to the beach.

SAPSIDO 삽시도

This small relaxing island, 13km from Daecheon harbour, has few cars and three relatively unspoilt sandy beaches. It attracts so many visitors that it's become Minbak Island, with nearly every one of the several hundred households offering accommodation and meals. *Minbak* (private homes with rooms for rent) are sprinkled around the island but are concentrated around the two ferry jetties. Residents don't usually lock their houses or cars.

From Sulttung harbour walk for 15 minutes past the primary school to reach *Geomeoneomeo beach*, with its fine stretch of sand between two rocky headlands, backed by sand dunes and fir trees. The only blots on the landscape are a few huts and the garbage that



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Eommason 엄마손	2 B1
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Sulttung Ferry Jetty 솔뚝선착장	5 B1

the tide brings in. Except at high tide, you can walk left and clamber over the rocks to smaller *Jinneomeo beach*, which takes another 15 minutes. You might see terns, oyster catchers and cormorants. The walk back to Sulttung harbour takes another 15 minutes, past fishermen repairing their nets and squid (rather than washing) hanging out to dry. *Bamseom beach* is the largest and least developed.

Accommodation in *minbak* rooms or huts is more expensive than on the mainland, especially in summer. Almost up to motel standard, *Haedotneun* (☎ 935 1617; Sulttung Harbour; r W40,000), a red-brick *minbak*, has rooms with kitchen facilities. For dinner, order chicken or a fish meal or the excellent *doenjang jjigae* (된장찌개; locally caught crab and tofu).

You can dine alfresco and informally at *Eommason* (meals W1500-10,000; 11am-9pm) on the harbour side, sitting on plastic stools at oil-drub tables. The menu covers *ramyeon* (라면; instant noodles), *kalguksu* (칼국수; thick noodles), shellfish soup and *pajeon* (파전).

For a snack or drink, pop into the store located in the owner's converted front room.

Getting There & Around

Ferries (☎ 1544 1114; adult/child W9200/4600) run from Daecheon harbour to Sapsido at 7.30am, 12.50pm and 4pm. They take an hour but can take longer if the ferry visits other islands first. At low tide the ferry goes to Bamseom jetty in the south, but at high tide it goes to Sulttung jetty in the north. The island has no buses, but someone might give you a lift or else it's a 40-minute walk from one end of the island to the other.

A ferry returns to Daecheon harbour at 5.30pm (check which jetty it leaves from!). Or you can catch the 8.10am ferry the next day to Yeongmukhang on the tip of Anmyeondo (below). Other ferries from Daecheon harbour run to Manmyeondo, Oeyeondo, Hojado and Wonsando (all adult W4200, child W2100) if you want to explore where few – if any – foreigners have ever ventured.

Buses for Daecheon beach all continue to the harbour.

TAEAN HAEAN NATIONAL MARINE PARK 태안해안국립공원

This beautiful marine park (☎ 672 9737; adult/youth/child W2000/1500/700; 11am-sunset) was established in 1978 and covers 329 sq km of land and sea. It includes 33 sandy beaches such as *Kkotji*, *Mallipo*, *Yeonpo* and *Mongsanpo* and about 130 islands and islets.

Anmyeondo 안면도

pop 13,000
The largest island (87 sq km) in the park has numerous beaches dotting its western coast. Ferries run from Daecheon harbour (W7000) and Sapsido (W7200), taking around 45 minutes to *Yeongmukhang* (영목항). Once you disembark, you turn right and then fork left for the two-minute uphill walk to the bus stop. The rugged bus (W1500, one hour, hourly) goes on safari down narrow, sometimes gravel backcountry roads that wind between rice paddies and vegetable allotments to the island's main town, *Anmyeon* (안면). From here the best option is to take the bus (W950, 30 minutes, hourly) to *Kkotji beach* (꽃지해수욕장), which runs down the west coast past a line of sandy beaches. This attractive seaside area is being rapidly developed, creating a festive atmosphere in July and August.

From Anmyeon, buses run over the bridge to Taean (태안; W2100, 40 minutes, hourly) or further afield to Daejeon, Cheonan and Seoul.

MUD GLORIOUS MUD

The holiday atmosphere on Daecheon beach reaches a surreal climax during the week-long **Boryeong Mud Festival** (www.mudfestival.or.kr/english) held at the end of July. Foreigners flock to the mudsummer mudness, where you can tune into your inner child and enjoy mud *ssireum* (wrestling), a mud bath, a mud slide, mud football – and watch a mud parade and a Mr Mud and Ms Mud contest.

Taeon 태안

pop 25,500

Taeon is the gateway to the northern maritime park beaches. Buses from Taeon include:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Anmyeon	2100	40min	hourly
Cheonan	9200	3hr	every 20min
Daejeon	13,300	4hr	every 30min
Haemi	2400	50min	every 20min
Seoul	9600	2½hr	every 20min

Mallipo Beach 만리포

Gorgeous, golden Mallipo beach has a rocky headland on one side and a cute fishing harbour on the other. Eighteen kilometres from Taeon, it's far less developed than Daechon, but seafood restaurants, *minbak* and motels are beginning to sprout.

Just 2.5km up the road is the privately owned **Cheollipo Arboretum** (천리포수목원; % 672 9310; guided tour ₩10,000; ㄱ 9am-4.30pm Sat & Sun), founded by an American who loved Korea and trees equally. With 10,000 labelled trees and plants, tours take over an hour.

Local buses (₩1400, 30 minutes, hourly) run from platform 11 at Taeon bus terminal. Buses also connect Mallipo directly with Seoul (₩8600, three hours, four daily) and Daejeon (₩14,700, 4½ hours, two daily).

HAEMI 해미

pop 9600

This imposing **fortress** (% 660 2114; admission free; ㄱ 6am-9pm), a five-minute walk from where buses drop passengers in the main street, was built in 1418 and served as a military headquarters until 1895. The walls are 1.8km long, 5m high and made with large stone blocks at the base and smaller ones at the top. Originally built to strengthen defences against marauding Japanese pirates, Joseon-era government offices and a guesthouse have been rebuilt inside. Steps lead up to a colourful hilltop pavilion, where silk-clad aristocrats used to compose nature poetry with a philosophical twist while listening to birdsong and admiring the view of distant misty mountains.

The fortress is a reminder of the dreadful persecution of early Christians by the Confucian Joseon kings – hundreds were executed here during the 1860s. The small prison has been rebuilt, complete with whipping frames, and outside is a gallows tree from whose

branches the converts were tied by the hair to be tortured or killed.

Buses (₩2400, 50 minutes, every 20 minutes) run from Haemi to Taeon. Other buses run via Hongseong and Gongju to Daejeon (₩10,900, 3½ hours, every 30 minutes).

CHEONAN 천안

pop 403,000

Cheonan is the gateway to a top museum, the Independence Hall of Korea, 14km east of the city.

Independence Hall of Korea**독립기념관**

This major **museum** (% 560 0114; www.independence.or.kr; adult/youth/child ₩2000/1100/700; ㄱ 9.30am-6pm Tue-Sun Mar-Oct, 9.30am-5pm Tue-Sun Nov-Feb) shines a light on Korea's plucky but doomed fight for independence against Japanese colonialism from the 1870s to 1945. Built on a grand scale with expansive plazas, 50m-high monuments, fountains and 800 Korean flags, it enjoys a parklike setting.

The seven exhibition halls contain some English-language descriptions and use historical photos, scale models, waxworks and relics to give a very detailed account of the pro-independence groups. They kept the spirit of a Korean identity flickering even during the darkest days of colonial oppression. But don't expect anything much on the numerous Korean collaborators or on the American and allied contribution to Korean independence.

Getting There & Away

Take subway Line 1 to Cheonan (₩2300, 2½ hours, every 15 minutes) from Seoul (or Suwon). Turn left at the ticket barrier and left again to East Square. Straight ahead is the **tourist information centre** (% 521 2038). Turn right for the bus stop, where city buses (₩900, 20 minutes, every 10 minutes), such as buses 413 and 490, run to the museum. They stop on the main road, a 15-minute walk from the exhibition halls. A taxi costs ₩15,000.

Cheonan intercity bus terminal is in the basement of Galleria department store, 150m from the express bus terminal, and is a ₩2500 taxi ride north of Cheonan train station. Bus destinations include Seoul (₩4200, one hour, every 20 minutes); Daejeon (₩3600, one hour, every 15 minutes); and Gongju (₩3900, one hour, every 20 minutes).

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