

SIDE TRIPS FROM BUSAN

Updated by
Chris Tharp



 Sights
★★★★☆

 Restaurants
★★★★☆

 Hotels
★★★★☆

 Shopping
★★★★☆

 Nightlife
★★★★☆

WELCOME TO SIDE TRIPS FROM BUSAN

TOP REASONS TO GO

★ **Historic Gyeongju:**

This UNESCO World Heritage Site is home to royal tombs, ornate pavilions, mountainside temples, and more.

★ **Bijindo Island:** Just a 30-minute ferry ride from the town town of Tongyeong, this sleepy getaway is famed for its white sand beach and aquamarine waters.

★ **Downtown Daegu:** While Seoul and Busan tend to hog the spotlight, Daegu is truly a city that never sleeps, with a bustling core that punches well above its weight when it comes to festive nightlife.

★ **Oedo:** This isle off Geoje is home to one of Korea's most impressive botanical gardens.

★ **Tongdosa Temple:** Nestled at the base of the Yeongnam Alps, this is more than a temple; it's one of the country's most expansive and important centers of Buddhist tradition and thought.

While the city of Busan acts as the main gravitational pull, South Korea's southeastern region is also home to many other places that are well worth checking out. Each of these destinations are within two hours of Busan by train, bus, or car.

1 Daegu. South Korea's fourth-largest metropolis is a hopping, modern hub that's both a center of serious commerce and raucous fun.

2 Gyeongju. This is the country's cultural capital, home to scores of national treasures.

3 Tongyeong. Known for its seafood, this enchanting town on the country's south coast is also the gateway to the islands that make up the Hallyeohaesang National Park.

4 Geoje Island. With pebble beaches, stony ridges, sleepy villages, and sweeping marine vistas, Geoje is a favorite day trip for Busanites.

5 Yeongnam Alps. An offshoot of the Taebaek Range, this cluster of mountains is a hiker's paradise where you'll also find top-notch tourist attractions.



While the city of Busan is the obvious star of the show, Korea's southeastern region is full of other gems worthy of exploration. This corner of the country has it all: rocky ridges, hidden coves, sleepy islands, and deep valleys, as well as historic towns home to cultural treasures that stand as a testament to the peninsula's 5,000-year history. Add the urban center of Daegu—a thriving, modern metropolis with enough verve to give any of its rivals a run for their money—and you've got a panoply of attractions that will surely exert their pull upon you.

Spread out across two provinces, this region is home to the country's greatest concentration of people outside of Seoul. The cities of Busan, Ulsan, and Daegu account for some 8 million people, and when you add in smaller population centers, the figure shoots up well north of that. As a result, when it comes to the neon splendor of modern, urban Korea, the southeastern region offers up almost as much round-the-clock excitement as you'll find in the capital.

That said, it's also a place where you can seek out solitude if you put in the effort. The clusters of islands jutting up from the waters of the south coast can feel surprisingly remote. Just one short ferry ride and you'll find yourself on a

lonesome, rocky shore, or in a harborside fishing village with just the salty breeze and drying kelp. The area is also home to some of the country's most rugged mountains. Though you'd never confuse them with the snowcapped crags of their European namesake, the Yeongnam Alps contain some of South Korea's highest peaks that act a kind of paradise for anyone keen to lace up a pair of boots and hit the trail. The valleys surrounding these ridges are also wonderful refuges unto themselves, with icy, fast-flowing streams, quaint villages, and temples galore.

When it comes to such relics of the past, the area surrounding Busan is in a league of its own. From the sprawling

center of Buddhist culture of Tongdosa to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Gyeongju, the region just oozes history, giving visitors a deep and real sense of appreciation for just how long Korean culture has steeped in time, resulting in the rich, multi-layered tapestry it is today.

Planning

Getting Here and Around

BUS

South Korea has an extensive and efficient intercity bus network. Daegu, Gyeongju, and Tongdosa are all regularly served by buses from Busan's Central Terminal in Nopo-dong. Tongyeong and Geoje Island can be best reached via buses from the Seobu Terminal in Sasang.

CAR

Busan has many rental car agencies, though they all require an International Driver's Permit along with your locally issued license.

TAXI

Taxis can be found in both big cities and small towns and are relatively cheap. Any rides within the city will be charged to the meter, though rides between towns are always for a set rate. Just make sure to agree on the amount ahead of time.

TRAIN

South Korea has a world class train system, though more out-of-the-way destinations aren't always easily reached by rail. Both Daegu and Gyeongju are quick trips from Busan Station via the KTX, ITX, or slower Mugunhwa train. However, the Yeongnam Alps area, Geoje Island, and Tongyeong are best reached by bus or private car.

AIR

Many travelers start their journey by flying into Gimhae International Airport (PUS), which is about 11 km (6.8 mile) away from Busan. After a few days in the city, many drive or take the train to explore nearby towns for the day.

Hotels

Your best bet for style and luxury hotels are in Daegu and Gyeongju, where you will find some of the big brands along with smaller business and boutique choices. There are loads of motels throughout the region, as well, which offer a high level of comfort for value. Not all of these take reservations, however, and the staff usually speaks little to no English. Another great choice for local lodgings are Korean-style "pensions." These holiday getaways are usually found near the beach or mountains, and feature cozy, comfortable rooms (usually with a balcony), as well as access to an outdoor barbecue and picnic area. They can be quite romantic, though sometimes they host large, noisy groups who may grill meat and knock back soju late into the night, turning the place into a party zone. The other option is what's called a *minbak*. These bare-bones homestays usually don't come with a bed, but rather a sleeping pad on a floor that's heated in the winter. *Minbak* are often equipped with a kitchen and, like pensions, are usually found at the beach or up in the mountains. They're a good option for groups of people, but you'll definitely be sacrificing comfort for value.

Restaurants

When it comes to eating out, South Korea offers a seemingly infinite number of choices. This is a country with restaurants everywhere, especially in the cities. It's rare to look down a single street and not see at least one eatery.



Gopchang (grilled pig or cow intestines) is a popular dish in Daegu.

The region around Busan is no exception. Daegu, a big city, is packed with restaurants of all kinds, though being an inland settlement, the focus is more on beef, pork, and chicken dishes. Gyeongju's history means you'll find more traditional choices there, including *han jeongshik*, a Korean court food that features up to 40 individual side dishes. And given their seaside location, the restaurants of Geoje Island and Tongyeong tend to serve fresh seafood.

The one thing to keep in mind, especially as you get out of the city, is that a lot of Korea restaurants aren't set up to serve just one person. That means that dining solo can, at times, be challenging. Barbecue and seafood places usually require a minimum order or only serve dishes in portions meant for groups of diners.

Hotel prices in the reviews are the lowest cost of a standard double room in high season. Restaurant prices in the reviews are the average cost of a main course at dinner, or if dinner is not served, at lunch.

What It Costs in Won

\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
RESTAURANTS			
under ₩12,500	₩12,500–₩20,000	₩20,001–₩30,000	over ₩30,000
HOTELS			
under ₩100,000	₩100,000–₩190,000	₩190,001–₩316,000	over ₩316,000

Daegu

88 km (54.6 miles) from Busan.

Daegu is South Korea's fourth largest city, as well as the cultural and economic hub of North Gyeongsang Province. It's often called the "Apple City" after its famed plump apples, but it's also known for its textiles and electronics.

The city sits in a basin surrounded by mountains, which means it's subjected to some of the most extreme temperatures in the country. The winters are icy and the summers scorching, conditions

which have surely helped cement the people's reputation for toughness. The sprawling valley where the city lies hasn't always been an easy place to live, yet now it's home to one of the country's most thriving centers of commerce.

While Daegu is often overlooked on itineraries, it's worth a visit, especially for anyone keen to check out a city largely untouched by foreign tourism. Here you'll find Korea in its purest form, with buzzing markets, tasty local food, and a crackling downtown core packed with bars and eateries that keep pumping well into the wee hours of the morning.

Daegu may not win any awards for trendiness, but this is a city that knows how to have a good time. It's a percolating, unpretentious town that works hard during the day and lets off steam when the sun goes down, sometimes until the next sun comes up. The nearby mountains also provide great opportunities for more high-altitude exploration, with oodles of hiking trails, temples, and deep forests where it's possible to lose yourself among the soothing pines.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

The best way to get to Daegu from Busan is via the high-speed KTX train from Busan Station to Dongdaegu Transportation Hub, which takes just around 40 minutes. You can also jump on board the slower ITX or Mugunhwa trains if you have a bit more time and want to save a few won.

Buses leave for Daegu from Busan's Central Bus Terminal in Nopo-dong every 15 minutes. The ride takes just a little over an hour and arrives at Dongdaegu Transportation Hub.

Daegu does have an airport, Daegu International Airport (TAE), but unless you're starting your South Korea journey in Daegu, it's unlikely you'll need to fly there. Trains and buses are usually the preferred mode of transportation.

Once you're in Daegu, it's easy to take public transportation to get around town. The efficient Daegu subway has three lines that can take you to most of the major sights as well as to the train station, at the stop Dongdaegu.

Dongdaegu Transportation Hub. ☎ 550

Dongdaegu-ro, Dong-gu ☎ 1666-3700.

Daegu International Airport. ☎ 221 *Gonghang-ro, Dong-gu* ☎ 1661-2626 🌐 www.airport.co.kr/daegueng/index.do 🚏 *Ayang-gyo Station then Express 1 bus.*

TOURS

Daegu City Tour

BUS TOURS | This hop-on, hop-off bus tour runs a circuit course of the whole city, stopping at all the main sights including Seomun Market, E-world, and the Daegu National Museum. There are also shorter, themed tours, such as the Mt. Biseulsan and Nakdong River Course. ☎ *Starting point in front of Dongdaegu Train Station* 🌐 daegucitytour.kr/eng 💰 ₩10,000 🕒 *Closed Mon.*

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Dongdaegu Station Tourist

Information Center. ☎ *Dongdaegu Station, 550 Dongdaegu-ro* ☎ 53-939-0080.

Downtown Tourist Information Center. ☎ 382 *Jungang-daero.*

Sights

Anjirang Gopchang Street

STREET | While perhaps not to everyone's taste, *gopchang* (grilled pig or cow intestines) is a Daegu specialty, and this street is packed with more than 50 restaurants dedicated to the delicacy. On weekends the street is flooded with locals eating and, most importantly, imbibing, as *gopchangis* seen more as an *anju* (a side dish for drinking) than a main course. Even if intestines aren't your thing, the festive atmosphere is worth the visit alone, and all the restaurants also serve up more conventional cuts of meat. ☎ 63 *Daemyeong-ro, 36-gil, Daemyeong-dong* 🚏 *Anjirang Station (exit 3).*

A

B

C

D

E

Daegu

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

DAEGU

Gukchaebosang-ro

Daegu-bi-daero

Daegu-bi-daero

KEY

- 1 Exploring Sights
 1 Restaurants
 1 Hotels



0 2 mi
 0 2 km

Sights

- 1 Anjirang Gopchang Street..... B5
 2 Apsan Cable Car..... C5
 3 Bullo-dong Ancient Tombs Park.... D2
 4 Daegu Arboretum..... A6



- 5 Daegu National Museum D4
 6 Daegu Stadium..... E5
 7 E-World and 83 Tower B4

Restaurants

- 1 Bongsan Jjimgalbi..... C4
 2 Daedong Myeonok B4
 3 Taesan Mandu..... C4



Hotels

- 1 Daegu Marriott Hotel... D3
 2 Toyoko Inn..... C4



Apsan Cable Car

VIEWPOINT | This sky tram delivers visitors to the observatory perched atop Apsan mountain, offering panoramic views of downtown Daegu and beyond. The vistas are especially impressive at night, when the city below erupts into a twinkling tapestry of lights. ☎ 454 Apsansunhwan-ro, Bongdeok-dong ☎ 053/656-2994 🌐 apsan-cablecar.co.kr 🚗 ₩10,500 🚶 Hyeonchungro Station (exit 2).

Bulldong Ancient Tombs Park

TOMB | Situated on the edge of town, this spacious, tranquil park is home to more than 200 burial mounds. You'll feel transported far from the hubbub of the city as you walk amongst these ancient graves, which are particularly striking come sunrise or sunset. In spring the park comes alive with wildflowers that bloom in profusion. ☎ 335 Bulldong ➕ Take a taxi from Ayangkyo Station (exit 3) 🚶 Ayangkyo Station (exit 3).

Daegu Arboretum

GARDEN | This former landfill is home to more than 400 varieties of trees, along with flowers, giant cacti, and medicinal herbs spread over 21 gardens. In early November the arboretum hosts the Chrysanthemum Festival, which draws visitors from all around the country. ☎ 342 Hwaam-ro, Jincheon-dong ☎ 053/610-4100 🚶 Daegugok Station (exit 3).

Daegu National Museum

HISTORY MUSEUM | Focusing on regional history, this museum hosts a nice collection of pottery, textiles, clothing, armor, Buddhist statues, old books and scrolls, and a few very impressive royal crowns. A number of exhibits are currently closed to the public, but if you're interested in artifacts from the local culture, it's worth an hour or so of your time. It's just a 5-minute taxi ride from Hwanggeum Station. ☎ 321 Cheongho-ro, Hwanggeum-dong ☎ 053/768-6051 🌐 daegu.museum.go.kr 🚗 Free ☺ Closed Mon. 🚶 Hwanggeum Station (exit 1).

Daegu Stadium

SPORTS VENUE | If you're a die-hard soccer fan, it may be worth the hour-long bus ride to this stadium outside of the city—the venue was originally built for the 2002 FIFA World Cup. It now houses the Daegu Sports Museum, which displays all kinds of memorabilia from the stadium's top sporting events. It is also where the K League sometimes plays professional soccer, though baseball is the real game to check out here. The stadium also hosts concerts and events such as the Daegu Marathon. ☎ 180 Universiad-ro, Suseong-gu 🌐 tour.daegu.go.kr ☺ Closed Mon.

E-World and 83 Tower

AMUSEMENT PARK/CARNIVAL | **FAMILY** | Woobang 83 Tower looms over E-World, an amusement park that features a slew of rides such as the Top Spin, the Viking, and the Megaswing 360, as well as two rollercoasters. The observation deck at the top of the 83 Tower offers great city views. ☎ 200 Duryugongwon-ro, Duryu-dong ☎ 053/620-0001 🌐 eworld.kr/tower 🚗 ₩23,000 ☞ Admission includes park entrance, free performances, and zoo entrance. The 83 Tower observation deck fee is an additional ₩10,000. 🚶 Naedang Station (exit 2).



Restaurants

Bongsan Jjimgalbi

\$\$\$ | **KOREAN** | Just a short walk from City Hall, Dongin-dong Jjimgalbi Alley is packed with restaurants perfecting the art of braised beef short ribs, a Daegu specialty. Bongsan Jjimgalbi is considered to be one of the best of the bunch, delivering a knockout punch with bowls full of spicy goodness. **Known for:** nice side dishes; English-speaking owner; chili and garlic braised short ribs. 📞 Average main: ₩20,000 ☎ 332-3 Dongin 1-ga, Dongin-dong ☎ 053-425-4203 🚶 Chilseong Market (exit 1).

Daedong Myeonok

\$ | KOREAN | This local institution is known for its Pyeongyang-style *mool naengmyeon* (cold buckwheat noodles), topped off with slices of thin pork. Once occupying a tiny house in the alley, the restaurant has now moved into a much larger brand-new *hanok* on the main road, and is the perfect antidote to the blazing heat of Daegu summertime. **Known for:** hanok-style building; cold buckwheat noodles; traditional recipe. **\$** Average main: ₩9,000 **☎** 5-9 Gukchaebosang-ro 102-gil, Gyesan-dong **☎** 053/255-4450 **📍** Seomun Market (Exit 1).

Taesan Mandu

\$ | KOREAN | Serving many styles dumplings since 1972, this celebrated local joint sets the standard in town. Their house specialty is meat-filled *gun mandu* (fried dumplings), oil-crisped so thoroughly that the set of ten arrives at your table fused together. **Known for:** quick service; value; fried dumplings. **\$** Average main: ₩6,000 **☎** 2109-32 Dalgubeol-daero, Deoksan-dong **☎** 053/424-0449 **🕒** Closed Tues. **📍** Banweoldan Station (exit 12).

Hotels

Daegu Marriott Hotel

\$\$\$\$ | HOTEL | Delivering all the excellence you'd expect from this global brand, the Daegu Marriott can also boast location: it's just a two-minute walk from Dongdaegu Station and within easy striking distance of restaurants, shopping centers, and other downtown sight.

Pros: terrific city views; very friendly staff; spacious, bright rooms. **Cons:** more expensive than other options; not a lot of variety at breakfast; slightly impersonal atmosphere. **\$** Rooms from: ₩320,000 **☎** 6 Dongbu-ro 26-gil **☎** 053/327-7000 **🌐** www.marriott.com/en-us/hotels/taemc-daegu-marriott-hotel/overview/ **➡** 190 rooms **🕒** No Meals **📍** Dongdaegu Station (exit 2).

Toyoko Inn

\$\$ | HOTEL | This Japanese chain is always a sure bet for value and convenience, and its Daegu branch doesn't disappoint. **Pros:** minimart downstairs; free Wi-Fi; great location. **Cons:** children not allowed; early check-out (10 am); slightly small rooms. **\$** Rooms from: ₩120,000 **☎** 15 Dongseong-ro 1-gil, Deoksan-dong **☎** 053/428-1045 **🌐** www.toyoko-inn.com/eng/index.html **➡** 200 rooms **🕒** Free Breakfast **📍** Banwoldang Station (exit 13).

Nightlife

Barbarella

BARS | Though it doesn't look like much from the outside, entering this "avant-garde rock bar" is like stepping into another, psychedelic world. Bathed in blue light, the cozy, slightly odd pub manages to strike that perfect balance between cool and inviting, with a nice cocktail list to boot. The owner is an ex-college professor who walked away from the ivory tower in order to open a bar and play his favorite tunes, so like any good little boozier, it's a true labor of love. **☎** 24 Jungang-daero 77-gil, Gyesan-dong **☎** 053/292-5924 **📍** Junggandaero Station (exit 1).

Communes

PUBS | This basement pub has been Daegu's main expat watering hole since 1995. Owner Hyunshik can usually be found behind the bar holding court, pouring beer, or spinning LPs from his huge collection of vinyl. On Wednesday Communes is home to a popular open mic, and the place is well-known for its laid-back, friendly vibes. **☎** Dongseong-ro 5-gil, Samdeok-dong **☎** 070/4191-1992 **🕒** Closed Tues. **📍** Junggandaero Station (exit 2).

EtOH's Drafthouse

PUBS | Specializing in Korean-produced craft beers on tap, this popular downtown pub is a stellar place to grab a brew as well as some of the best pizzas in

town. They also have great selection of bottled imports and mix a mean cocktail as well. A nice outdoor balcony seating area opens when the weather heats up, which in Daegu means about half of the year. ☎ 12-3 Dongseong-ro 3-gil, Samdeok-dong ☎ 053/211-9385 🌐 www.facebook.com/Etohskorea/ 📍 Jungangro Station (exit 2).

Shopping

Seomun Market

MARKET | Korea's traditional markets offer some of the best experiences in the country, and Seomun doesn't disappoint. With more than 4,000 stalls and shops, this gargantuan complex is a perfect place to pick up a souvenir, snap some photos, or just soak up the sights, smells, and sounds. It's also a great opportunity to eat *napjak mandu*, Daegu's signature flat, noodle-filled fried dumplings. ☎ 45 Keunjang-ro 26-gil ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline 📍 Seomun Market Station (exit 3).

Shinsegae Daegu

DEPARTMENT STORE | Connected to Dongdaegu Transportation hub, Shinsegae is more than just a department store. Its nine floors pack in everything from high-end designer clothes and K-beauty cosmetics to a food market and even a cinema and theme park. Take an hour (or a day!) to peruse its many treasures and you'll find it's an attraction in itself. ☎ 149 Dongbu-ro, Dong-gu ☎ 1588-1234 🌐 en.shinsegae.cn/index.do.

Gyeongju

76.4 km (47.5 miles) from Busan.

Situated on a broad plain near South Korea's southeastern coast in North Gyeongsang province, this former capital of the Kingdom of Silla (57 BC–AD 935) is also referred to as "the museum without walls" due its treasure trove of historical

artifacts and cultural sights. As it result, it has grown into one of South Korea's premier tourist destinations, with all of the resources and infrastructure that comes with that.

Just half an hour by train from the frenetic hustle of Busan, Gyeongju makes the perfect day trip. The city's scenic, historic core has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and can largely be explored on foot, though there are also enough nice hotels, restaurants, and other attractions to keep you there overnight.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

The quickest and easiest way to get to Gyeongju is via the high speed KTX train from Busan Station, which takes less than 30 minutes and costs around ₩25,000. It arrives to the new Singyeongju Station, which is located just outside the city. From here, you can take a 30-minute bus ride into town. If coming from Seoul, the trip to Gyeongju takes just under two hours. There are also regular buses from Busan's Central Bus Terminal in Nopo-dong, as well as the smaller Haeundae Terminal.

Once in Gyeongju, it's fairly easy to get around via public transportation. The city doesn't have a metro system, but the local buses are reliable, and there are also taxis, tour buses, and bicycle rentals if you're staying in the center. Those who are venturing farther out or stringing together a few towns on a regional trip may wish to rent a car.

CONTACTS Singyeongju Station. ☎ 80 Singyeongjuyeonk-ro, Gyeongju ☎ 1330 Korean Travel Helpline 🌐 www.korail.com.

TOURS

Gyeongju City Tour

BUS TOURS | The "Golden Line" Gyeongju City Tour is a great way to check out the town from the back of a bus. Tours are available in English and leave from Cheomseongdae, taking about 50 minutes. Sights include Bulguksa Temple and



Donggung Palace, overlooking the serene Wolji Pond, is especially beautiful at night.

the East Palace Garden. ☎ 839-1 Inwang-dong, Gyeongju-si ☎ 054-743-6001
🌐 www.gyeongju.go.kr/tour/eng/index.do
💰 ₩1,300.

VISITOR INFORMATION

CONTACTS Gyeongju Tourist Information

Center. ☎ 80, Singyeongjuyeok-ro, Gyeongju ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline.



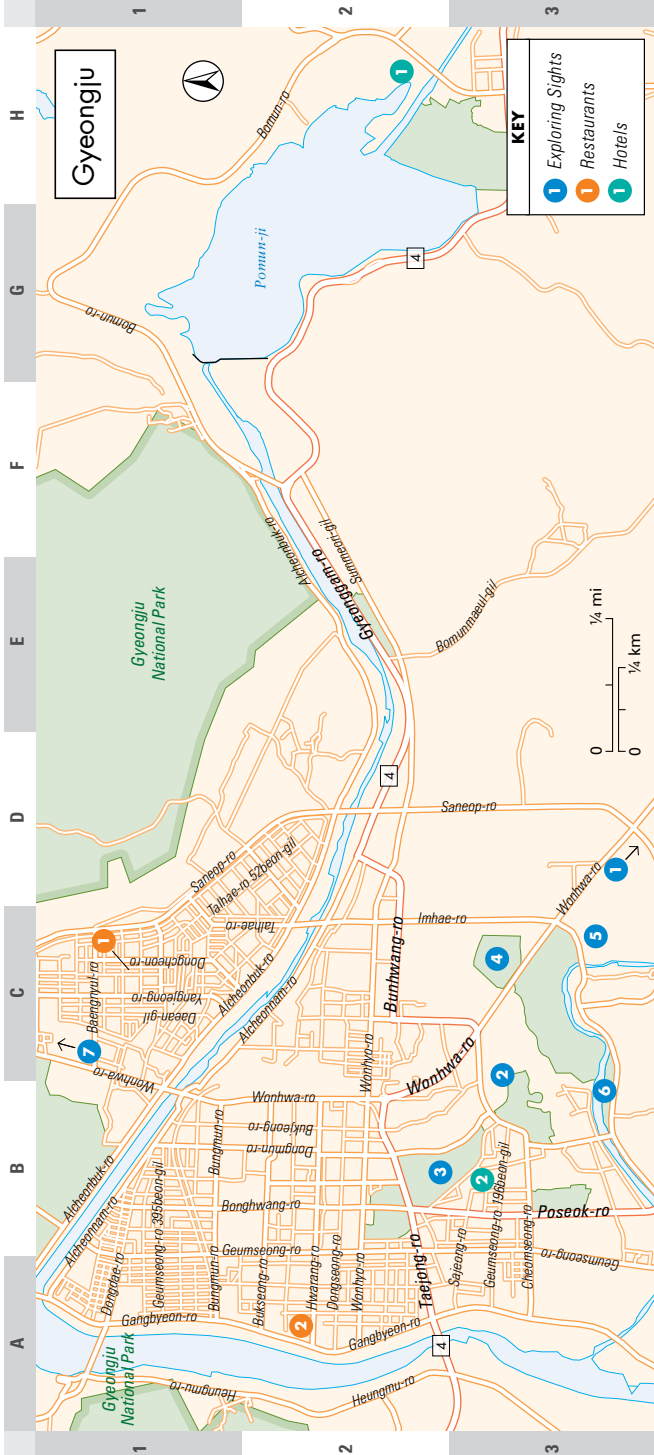
Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto

TEMPLE | Situated on the slopes of Toham mountain, Bulguksa is one of South Korea's greatest temples, classified not only as a UNESCO World Heritage Site but also the nation's Historic and Scenic Site No. 1. The complex is a precious piece of national heritage with its pagodas, traditional wooden buildings, and stone terraces, and as a head temple of the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, it's also a functioning place of worship and meditation, as well as one of the hosts of the country's temple stay program. Located in the larger Bulguksa complex,

the Seokguram Grotto is also part of the UNESCO World Heritage list. This hermitage overlooking the East Sea features some of the finest examples of Buddhist sculptures in the world. The detail of artistry—plus the grotto's sweeping ocean views—will imbue you with tranquility while also taking your breath away. ☎ 385 Bulguk-ro, Hwangyong-dong ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Hotline 🌐 bulguksa.or.kr, templestay.com 💰 ₩6,000.

Cheomseongdae

OBSERVATORY | Though perhaps a bit underwhelming at first, this 9-m-high (30 feet) stone tower takes on more weight when you consider its historical context. Constructed in the 7th century, it's Asia's oldest surviving astronomical observatory, making it one of Korea's great scientific contributions to the world. It's worth a visit just to see the obvious pride the town takes in this marvel. Notice the numerical symbolism: the tower's 362 granite blocks are said to represent each day of the lunar year. ☎ 839-1 Inwang-dong, Gyeongju ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline.



- Sights**
- 1 Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto.....D3
 - 2 Cheomseongdae.....C3
 - 3 Daereungwon Tomb Complex.....B2
 - 4 Donggung Palace and Wolji Pond.....C3
- Restaurants**
- 1 Bokcheong Sutbul Galbi.....C1
 - 2 Hongsi Hanjeongshik.....A2
- Hotels**
- 1 Hilton Gyeongju.....H2
 - 2 Soi Hanok Stay.....B3

Daereungwon Tomb Complex

TOMB | This expansive, tranquil park is home to scores of royal burial mounds, including the famed Cheonmachong Tomb. Excavated in 1973, this resting place of an unknown Silla king features a wooden coffin in the center. More than 11,500 artifacts were discovered in the tomb, making this one of Gyeongju's greatest treasures. Cheonmachong's name, which means roughly "sky horse tomb" refers to a painting of a white horse found during the site's excavation. ☎ 9 Gyerim-ro, Hwangnam-dong, Gyeongju ☎ 54/750-8650 🌐 gyeongju.go.kr/tour/eng/index.do 🚗 ₩3,000.

Donggung Palace and Wolji Pond

HISTORIC SIGHT | Built by order of King Munmu of Silla in 674 AD, Donggung is more of a large pavilion than a palace, overlooking the serene waters of Wolji Pond. It's a lovely place to take a relaxing stroll, and really comes alive at night when the site is lit up in dramatic fashion. ☎ 102 Wonhwa-ro, Inwang-dong, Gyeongju ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Hotline 🌐 gyeongju.go.kr 🚗 ₩3,000.

★ Gyeongju National Museum

HISTORY MUSEUM | One of the most prominent museums in the country, Gyeongju National Museum is dedicated to the art, history, and treasures of the Silla Kingdom (57 BC–AD 935), with weapons, armor, clothing, pottery, statues, royal crowns, and more on display. An hour or so browsing its exhibits will give you a deeper appreciation of the civilization that once called Gyeongju its capital. If you really want to understand the Silla period, this should be your first stop in town. ☎ 186 Iljeong-ro, Inwang-dong, Gyeongju ☎ 054/740-7500 🌐 gyeongju.museum.go.kr/eng/ 🆓 Free 🗓 Closed New Year's Day (1/1), Seollal, and Chuseok.

Woljeonggyo Bridge

BRIDGE | This ornate covered bridge dates back to the Silla period but was destroyed long ago during the Joseon dynasty and only recently rebuilt. Like

other Gyeongju sights, it's lit up beautifully at night casting reflections on the river, making it a great place to stroll. ☎ 48 Gyo-dong, Gyeongju ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Hotline 🌐 gyeongju.go.kr/tour 🆓 Free.

Yangdong Folk Village

TOWN | Dating back to the Joseon Dynasty period (16th century), this village is home to more than 160 traditional homes. You'll feel like you've stepped back in time as you wander among its placid lanes. Nestled between the Hyeongsang River and the rise of Seolchang mountain, Yangdong radiates history in the midst of an idyllic natural setting. Despite its movie-set quaintness, this is a real, lived-in village, where the people are known for their generosity and kindness. ■ **TIP→ Yangdong is located 50 minutes outside of Gyeongju by bus, accessible from Gyeongju Intercity Bus Terminal on buses 200 to 208, 212, and 217.** ☎ 93 Yangdongmaeul-gil ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Hotline 🌐 cha.go.kr 🚗 ₩4,000 📺 Gyeongju Intercity Bus Terminal.



Restaurants

Bokcheong Sutbul Galbi

\$ | **KOREAN BARBECUE** | Specializing in quality cuts of marbled beef grilled over red hot coals, this friendly, family-owned restaurant has an attentive staff that goes out of their way to make sure your slices are barbecued to perfection. If you're feeling adventurous they also serve *yook hoe*, a raw beef dish that is Korea's version of steak tartare. **Known for:** friendly service; quality beef at a good price; *yook hoe*. ☎ Average main: ₩12,000 ☎ 17-9 Yangjeong-ro, 240 beon-gil, Dongcheon-dong, Gyeongju ☎ 054/773-4858.

★ Hongsi Hanjeongshik

\$\$\$ | **KOREAN** | The local favorite serves full-course traditional Korean fare, with entrees like *bulgogi* (marinated beef), *jeon* (savory pancake), *dwaenjang jigae* (bean paste stew), and fried fish, all

accompanied by myriad side dishes. Not only is the food terrific, but the service is top notch, and the old *hanok* house the restaurant calls home adds to the charm.

Known for: healthy fare; traditional setting; locally made rice wine and tea. **☎** *Average main:* ₩15,000 **☎** 418-4 Seong-geon-dong, Gyeongju **☎** 054/742-8668.

Hotels

Hilton Gyeongju

\$\$\$ | **HOTEL** | Located on the shore of Lake Bomun, the Hilton is Gyeongju's premier hotel and the perfect place to base a visit, with elegant rooms bathed in white, as well as an indoor and outdoor pool (complete with private cabanas).

Pros: lakeside view; Japanese garden; great dining and drink options. **Cons:** a bit far from central Gyeongju; impersonal feel at times; pool access costs extra. **☎** *Rooms from:* ₩218,000 **☎** 484-7 Bomun-ro, Bodeok-dong, Gyeongju **☎** 054/745-7788 **🌐** hilton.com/en/hotels/kyohitw-hilton-gyeongju **🛏** 330 rooms **🍽** No Meals.

Soi Hanok Stay

\$\$\$\$ | **HOUSE** | One of a number of Gyeongju properties that allows guests the chance to stay in traditional *hanok*-style accommodations, this charming spot will have you feeling like you've been transported to the Silla era without having to surrender an ounce of modern comfort.

Pros: magical atmosphere; great breakfast; central location. **Cons:** can be hard to book on weekends; lack of big hotel amenities; slightly hard to find. **☎** *Rooms from:* ₩350,000 **☎** 22-6 Cheomseong-ro 81 beon-gil, Hwangnam-dong, Gyeongju **☎** 010/3178-4888 **🛏** 4 suites **🍽** Free Breakfast.

Tongyeong

69 km (43 miles) from Busan.

Just under two hours from Busan via bus or car, Tongyeong is surely one of the region's great gems. This laid-back seaside town is the gateway to the gorgeous, rugged islands of the Hallyeohaesang National Park, most of which are accessible by Tongyeong's Passenger Ferry Terminal. The lovely Bijindo Island, with its striking white-sand beach and stunning blue water, is a memorable place to hike, camp, and relax with your toes in the sand.

Given Tongyeong's location, it's no surprise that the small city is also a great place to eat seafood, with buzzing markets full of the freshest fish and other assorted sealife, along with loads of down-home restaurants serving dishes that draw from the ocean's rich bounty.

Add the local history of Admiral Yi Sun-shin's famous Geobukseon ("turtle ships" used by the Royal Korean Navy), and this popular weekend destination for the Busan crowd becomes a perfect spot to escape the pressure cooker of the big city. In fact, Tongyeong's charms are so unassuming and deep that you may find yourself staying longer than anticipated.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

There are no direct trains to Tongyeong, so taking a bus is your best option. Buses from Busan's Seobu Terminal in Sasang regularly depart for Tongyeong and arrive at Tongyeong Bus Terminal in about 1.5 hours. (If you're traveling from Seoul, the journey takes about 4.5 hours by bus from the Express Bus Terminal.) Tongyeong's bus station lies on the edge of town. A taxi from there to the city center and waterfront takes around 15 minutes and costs around ₩8,000.



Hiking is a popular activity on Bijindo Island, known for its white sand surrounded by mountains.

If you're flying in or starting your journey here, the nearest airport is Sacheon Airport in Jinju and from there you can drive or catch a bus, which takes under two hours.

Once you are in the city, it's best to walk (most of the main sights are within a manageable distance) and take taxis, though there is a local bus system that works well if you can master it.

If you're headed to any of the area's many islands, you will need to take a ferry from the Tongyeong Passenger Ferry Terminal. One of the most popular stops is Bijindo Island; a 40-minute ferry will bring you to the island for ₩14,000 round-trip. Some tour boats do leave from the Tongyeong Cruise Ship Terminal in Donam-dong, which is a separate location.

CONTACTS Tongyeong Bus Terminal. ☎ 24 Jungnim 4-ro, Gwangdo-myeon, Tongyeong ☎ 10-8289-9945. **Tongyeong Passenger Ferry Terminal.** ☎ 316 Seoho-dong, Tongyeong ☎ 55-642-0116 🌐 www.tongyeong.go.kr.

VISITOR INFORMATION

There is a tourist information kiosk next to the Tongyeong Bus Terminal with maps and other literature. They do not speak English, however.

CONTACTS Tongyeong Tourist Information Center. ☎ Tongyeong Bus Terminal, 24 Jukrim 4-ro, Gwangdo-myeon, Tongyeong ☎ 055-650-0581 🌐 www.tongyeong.go.kr.



★ Bijindo Island

ISLAND | The waters off of Tongyeong are home to scores of beautiful, sleepy islands, most of which are part of the Hallyeohaesang National Park. The crown jewel, arguably, is Bijindo, which is actually two tree-covered mountains connected by a white sand spit, which in turn makes up one of the most idyllic beaches in the country. Most Koreans come to Bijindo to hike, while others arrive for the fishing and beach action. The island has plenty of basic accommodations available in the form of pensions and *mibaks*, the bare-bones, sleep-on-the-floor rooms found throughout the beaches and mountains of Korea. There are also some very simple restaurants, though many people choose to bring their own food. Boats leave three times a day (6:50 am, 10:50 am, 2:30 pm) from Tongyeong's Passenger Terminal. The trip takes about 40 minutes. ☎ *Bijin-ri, Hansan-myeon, Tongyeong* ➕ *Take the ferry from the Tongyeong Passenger Ferry Terminal.* 🚢 ₩16,800 ferry fee, round trip.

Dongpirang Mural Village

PUBLIC ART | With terrific views of the town and sea beyond, this hillside village features narrow alleys, vivid murals, and scores of quaint cafes perfect for taking a load off and soaking up the placid surroundings. The walk up to the village is steep, so make sure to wear your comfy shoes. ☎ *6-18 Dongpirang 1-gil, Dongho-dong, Tongyeong-si, Gyeong-sangnam-do* ☎ 055/650-7418.

Geobukseon Turtle Ships

HISTORY MUSEUM | Originally located in Tongyeong's main Gangguan Harbor, these four replicas of Admiral Yi Sun-shin's famous *Geobukseon* "Turtle Ships" have been moved to a marina on the edge of town. They're still worth the short taxi ride for anyone interested in Korean history, as these boats were instrumental in destroying the Japanese

fleet during the Imjin War of the late 1500s, events made famous by the Korean film *Roaring Currents*. One of the boats has been transformed into a small, floating museum, and though most of the information placards are in Korean, it's interesting to go onto the ship to get a sense of what it was like for sailors hundreds of years ago. ☎ *642-4 Don-am-dong, Tongyeong-si* ☎ 055/650-3956 🚢 ₩3,000.

Hallyeohaesang National Park

NATIONAL PARK | Covering an area of more than 545.63 square km (210.67 square miles), this marine park has a rugged coastline, sandy beaches, sleepy islands, and lots of open water. The sanctuary is also home to myriad sea life including finless porpoises, otters, and the endangered Northern Pacific right whale. The real stars of the show are its scores of islands, including Saryangdo, Somaemuldo, and Bijindo, all of which are easy day trips via ferry from Tongyeong. ☎ *Jangse-ungpo-dong, Geoje-si* ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline 🌐 hallyeo.knps.or.kr.

Jungang Market

MARKET | While not just limited to seafood, it's certainly the star of the show at this lively market, where people come from all around to stock up on fresh fish, clams, scallops, octopus, crabs, shrimp, squid, and other more acquired-tastes such as sea cucumber, marine spoon worm, and sea pineapple. Like any traditional Korean market, it's also packed with great restaurants offering up dishes running the gamut from raw fish and oysters to grilled cuttlefish and anchovies. ☎ *4-16 Jungangsijang 1-gil, Buksin-dong, Tongyeong* ☎ 055/649-5225.

Tongyeong Cable Car to Mireuksan

MOUNTAIN | Rising like a guardian over Tongyeong, Mireuksan mountain is accessed by the longest cable car in Korea (1,975 meters/1.22 miles). This Swiss-designed gondola not only provides jaw-dropping views of the surrounding mountains, islands, and ocean,

Tongyeong

Mujeon-daero
Mujeon 4-gil
Mujeon 2-gil
Wonmun-ro

TONGYEONG

Yi Sun Sin
Park

Nammangsan
Sculpture Park
(DPIRANG)

Tongyeong
Harbor

1021

Danma 1-gil

Danma 2-gil

Danma 3-gil

Donam-ro

Balgae-ro

Cable Car

1021

KEY

- 1 Exploring Sights
- 1 Restaurants
- 1 Quick Bites
- 1 Hotels

0 2,000 ft
0 400 m

1 4

Sights

- 1 Bijindo Island..... D7
- 2 Dongpirang Mural Village..... C3
- 3 Geobukseon Turtle Ships..... D6
- 4 Hallyeohaesang National Park..... D7

- 5 Jungang Market..... C3
- 6 Tongyeong Cable Car to Mireuksan..... C6
- 7 Yi Sun Sin Park..... E3

Restaurants

- 1 Haenyeo Hamuldachi..... B4
- 2 Simgane Seafood Jjamppong..... B4
- 3 Songhak Hoe Jib..... C3

Quick Bites

- 1 Meonge House Ggulbbang..... C3

Hotels

- 1 Hotel Pico..... B4



Jjambbong (noodles in spicy red broth) is a must-try dish in Tongyeong.

but also affords passengers enough time to meditate on the raw beauty of this particular corner of the country. ☎ 205 Bal-gae-ro, Tongyeong, Gyeongsangnam-do ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline 🌐 cablecar. ttdc.kr 🚗 ₩14,000 (round trip).

Yi Sun Sin Park

HISTORIC SIGHT | Dedicated to the legendary admiral who helped save the nation from a Japanese invasion, this lovely sea-side park delivers natural splendor along with a big dose of history. Yi Sun Sin is probably Korea's greatest hero, and the 17.3 meter-high (56.74 feet) statue of the great man gazes out across the water to his base at Hansando Island, where, four centuries years ago, he put his tactical genius to work. ☎ 205, Mendehaean-gil, Tongyeong-si, Gyeongsangnam-do ☎ 055/642-4737.

Restaurants

Haenyeo Hamuldachi

\$\$\$\$ | **SEAFOOD** | Named for the famed Korean women divers known as *haenyeo*, this raucous restaurant delivers set-course meals of seafood including side dishes of small octopus, shrimp, scallops, sea snails, flatfish, and more, accompanied with buckets containing bottles of beer and soju on ice. People come here to drink as much as eat, so if you really want to soak up the local atmosphere, this is your spot. **Known for:** festive atmosphere; fresh seafood; beer and soju buckets. 📍 Average main: ₩40,000 ☎ 25-50 Hangnam 2-gil, Hangnam-dong, Tongyeong ☎ 010/3597-5963.

Simgane Seafood Jjamppong

\$ | **SEAFOOD** | This extremely popular local joint specializes in the Korean-Chinese dish *jjambbong* (noodles in spicy red broth) piled high with heaps of fresh

seafood. Diners are given the option of 1–3 on the heat scale, though there is a mild version (*Hayan jjambbong*) for the chili-adverse. **Known for:** mild option; “couples” jjambbong set; seafood jjambbong. ☎ *Average main:* ₩9,500 ☎ 163-35 Seoho-dong, Tongyeong ☎ 055/649–8215.

Songhak Hoe Jib

\$\$\$ | **SEAFOOD** | Located in Tongyeong Jungang Market, this down-home seafood joint specializes in raw sashimi, along with *maeuntang* (spicy fish soup) and *hoe deop bap* (raw fish over rice). Eating in a bustling Korean market is always an experience worth pursuing, and being so close to the source you’re guaranteed that everything will be as fresh as can be. **Known for:** anchovy sashimi; fish soups; wide variety of seafood. ☎ *Average main:* ₩20,000 ☎ 39-2 Jungang-dong, Tongyeong ☎ 055–644–2460.

Coffee and Quick Bites

Meonge House Ggulbbang

\$ | **KOREAN** | While *ggulbbang* (honey bread) can be found all over town, this is probably Tongyeong’s most famous (or at least most conspicuous) purveyor of the sweet treat. The building housing the bakery sits next to the main harbor and is done up in the shape of a giant orange sea pineapple, the marine creature that’s also a delicacy in these parts. **Known for:** honey bread; memorable orange exterior; harbor location. ☎ *Average main:* ₩9,000 ☎ 337 Tonyeonghaean-ro, Tongyeong ☎ 055/646–6615.

Hotels

Hotel Pico

\$\$ | **HOTEL** | In an area dominated by impersonal, behemoth tourist hotels and aging “love motels,” this brand-new boutique hotel is a breath of fresh air. **Pros:** nice breakfast; impeccably clean and modern facility; great location near the harbor. **Cons:** lacks good ocean

views; on-site parking limited; limited English spoken by staff. ☎ *Rooms from:* ₩120,000 ☎ 19 Hangnam 4-gil, Tongyeong ☎ 24 rooms ☎ No Meals.

Nightlife

Viento

BARS | Situated on a pleasant corner in the maze of side streets that makes up Tongyeong’s Hangnam neighborhood, Viento is a nice place for a quiet drink, with a great array of bottled European beers, along with wine, cocktails, and a couple of draft brews. The inside is home to just three or four tables, while outside there’s a tiny windowfront bar that’s perfect for sitting, sipping, and watching the night unfold. ☎ *Hangnam 1gil, 18 beong-gil, Hangnam-dong, Tongyeong* ☎ 010/7600–2193.

Activities

Skyline Luge

LOCAL SPORTS | If the tranquil charms of Tongyeong have got you feeling sedate, you can get your blood pumping with a couple of rides on the Skyline Luge. Inspired by the Winter Olympic sport, these one-person wheeled carts shoot down a hillside course designed with twists, turns, hairpin curves, and tunnels. Once you get to the bottom you can jump on the chairlift to take you back up the mountain for another go. ☎ 178 Bal-gae-ro, Tongyeong, Gyeongsangnamdo ☎ 070/4731–8473 ☎ skylineluge.com/en/tongyeong ☎ ₩21,000 (for two rides).

Geoje Island

Before 2010, Geoje Island was only accessible from Busan via ferry or a circuitous land route that went through the cities of Changwon, Masan, and Tongyeong. This all changed with the construction of the Geoga Bridge, an 8.2-km (5.1-mile) link of spans and tunnels that put Geoje within



Guro Beach beckons with clear water, golden sand, and restaurants serving fresh fish.

quick reach of South Korea's second city, shortening the trip some 60 km (37 miles). Since then the island has become a favorite weekend getaway for Busanites.

As one of the country's centers of shipbuilding, the northern part of Geoje (around Geoje City) is quite urbanized and industrial. Once you head to the southern half, however, you quickly feel the island's draw. Geoje is home to clean, aquamarine waters, imposing rock formations, hidden beaches, lovely fishing villages, and islands within in a quick boat ride from the main landmass. Though the area has seen an explosion of development in recent years, it's still possible to experience the fresh air and calming effect that comes with a trip to the seacoast, punctuated by great scenery and fresh local food.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

There is regular bus service between Busan's Seobu Terminal and Geoje's Gohyeon Bus Terminal via the Geoga Bridge. The trip takes about an hour and 20 minutes each way, depending on traffic.



Sights

Historic Park of Geoje POW Camp

HISTORY MUSEUM | Geoje was home to the biggest POW camp of the Korean War, at one point housing more than 170,000 Chinese and North Korean prisoners. While the camp is long closed, the site has been transformed into a kind of museum, complete with exhibition halls containing detailed (and sometimes graphic) dioramas meant to give the visitor a feel for how life was for both the prisoners and the guards. There is also some military hardware on the premises, including old tanks. The camp is a fascinating visit for any history buff, a vivid reminder of the brutality unleashed upon Korea just some decades before.
☒ 61, Gyeryong-ro, Geoje-si ☎️ 🌐 pow.or.kr 🚗 ₩7,000.

Windy Hill

VIEWPOINT | This viewpoint overlooks Dojangpo Fishing Village as well as the ocean beyond, including Oedo. It's most famous as a filming location for more

than one Korean drama (including *Eve's Garden*), and comes complete with a faux-windmill on top. While it may be tailor-made for Instagram shots, Windy Hill does afford some terrific views and the area around it contains footpaths that are well-worth exploring on their own.

☎ *Dojangpo Maeul, Geoje* ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline.

Beaches

Gujora Beach

BEACH | This 1.1-km-long (.68 miles) sandy beach is famous for its crystalline waters. The nearby village is also a great spot to sit down for a meal of fresh *hoe* (raw fish). **Amenities:** food and drink; parking (fee); showers; toilets; water sports. **Best for:** sunrise; sunset; swimming; walking; windsurfing. ☎ 500-1 *Gujora-ri, Irun-myeon, Geoje* ☎ 055/639-3000.

Hakdong Mongdol Beach

BEACH | Made up entirely of smooth, small dark pebbles, this 1.2-km (.75 miles) stretch of beach is the perfect place to grab a coffee and listen to the waves wash over the clattering stones. While you're there, make sure to take advantage of the beach's therapeutic effects: remove your shoes and socks and stroll barefoot over the rocks while they massage the pressure points on the bottom of your feet. **Amenities:** food and drink; parking (fee); showers; toilets; water sports. **Best for:** sunrise; swimming; walking. ☎ 18-1, *Hakdong 6-gil, Geoje*.

Restaurants

Guijoara

\$\$\$ | **KOREAN** | This great fried fish place sits in the row of restaurants just opposite the Oedo Cruise Terminal in Gujora Village. They also offer *jaeyuk deopbab* (spicy fried pork), *donkas* (breaded pork cutlet), and *gyaeran mari* (rolled egg with green onions) if you're not in the mood for seafood. Just make sure to get there

early, as they close up shop at 5 pm.

Known for: great location; fried fish set menu; friendly service. ☎ *Average main:* ₩15,000 ☎ 44-1 *Gujora-ro, Irun-myeon*.

1 Bak 2 Il Mashitnun Jib

\$\$\$ | **KOREAN** | Located in the little village around Hakdong Beach, this popular eatery serves up an array of seafood prepared in different ways. While they're set up to serve groups, it's also possible to order dishes for just one person, a luxury not always available at seaside joints in Korea. **Known for:** seafood bibimbap; fried fish set meal; anchovy and rice lettuce wrap. ☎ *Average main:* ₩15,000 ☎ 307-2 *Hakdong-ri, Dongbu-myeon* ☎ 055-637-1472.

Hotels

Geoje Hakdong Sunrise Ocean View

\$ | **MOTEL** | This small motel offers surprisingly good value with spacious rooms, a location just four minutes from the beach, and ocean views. **Pros:** free Wi-Fi; nice views; clean rooms. **Cons:** English not spoken; few amenities; not directly on the beach. ☎ *Rooms from:* ₩40,000 ☎ 935-1, *Geoje-daero, Dongbu-myeon* ☎ 050-35050-5149.

Activities

★ Oedo Botania Cruise

CRUISE EXCURSIONS | Cultivated by Lee Chang-ho and his wife Choi Ho-suk over a period of 30 years, Oedo Island is one of Korea's few Western-style botanical gardens, home to more than 3,000 species of plants. The site is only accessible by ferry from the main island. There are several to choose from, though your best bet is the boat from the terminal in the port of Gujora, which takes you out and around Haegeumgan, a majestic rock formation of stony spires, sheer cliffs, and natural caves. While the gardens on Oedo are impressive, the boat ride is nearly worth the price alone. Explanations are all done over a very big loudspeaker in



Take a ferry to Oedo Botania island to enjoy cliffs and botanical gardens.

dramatic and rapid fire Korean. Once you land on the island you are given two hours to wander, which is more than enough time to soak up its splendor. As Geoje's biggest tourist attraction, Oedo sees crowds on the weekends, especially when the weather is good. If you're seeking isolation, consider visiting during the week. ☎ 37 Gijora-ri, Irun-myeon ☎ 055/681-1188 🚗 ₩30,000 (₩20,000 boat fare/₩11,000 Oedo admission fee).

Yeongnam Alps

While not quiet as lofty or majestic as the European Alps, the Yeongnam Alps still possess myriad charms. This outlying cluster of Taebaek range contains several peaks over 1,000 meters (.6 miles)—tall by Korean standards—and the area is full of valleys, ridges, rivers, and waterfalls that makes it the region's undisputed natural playground. Add cultural treasures such as the Tongdosa Temple complex, and you have several ideal side excursions within an hour of central Busan.

While there are a few options of places to make your base, the town of Eonyang may be your best bet, as it has plenty of restaurants and accommodations and is close to most of the action.

GETTING HERE AND AROUND

Eonyang Bus Terminal is served by regular buses from Busan's Central Terminal in Nopo-dong. The trip takes about 35 minutes. There are regular buses from Busan's Nopo-dong Terminal to Tongdosa. Gajisan Provincial Park and the Eoreumgol Cable Car can be reached by bus from the town of Miryang. The Baenegol Valley is accessible by bus from Yangsan, a northern suburban city of Busan. With the exception of Tongdosa, however, the area is best explored by car, since bus service can be spotty, at best.

CONTACTS Eonyang Intercity Bus Terminal.

☎ 52-264-3900.

TOURS

Hike Korea

GUIDED TOURS | Headed up by Kiwi expat Roger Shepherd (who has led trips on both sides of the DMZ), Hike Korea offers private guided excursions of the Yeongnam Alps for those keen to hit the trail. Clients can opt for routes scaling peaks such as Sinbulsan and Gajisan, or opt for an overnighter where you stay in a tent or a homestay. ☎ 10-2966-7612 🌐 www.hikekorea.com 📅 2 days and 1 night: \$1,000 USD for 1 person, \$600 USD each for 2 people, \$500 USD each for 3 people, and \$450 USD each for 4 people.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Visitor information in English is available at the 1330 Korea Travel Helpline.



Amethyst Cavern Park

CAVE | This former amethyst mine has been turned into a tourist attraction that's worth a visit if caves are your thing. The 2.5-km-long (1.55 miles) cavern can be accessed on foot and offers views to amethysts, rotating exhibitions, as well as subterranean boat rides. There are a few older carnival rides outside in case the cave itself wasn't thrilling enough for you. ☎ 212, *Jasujeong-ro, Ulju-gun* ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline 🌐 jsjland.co.kr 💰 ₩7,000.

Baenaegol Valley

NATURE SIGHT | A popular summer getaway for Busan residents, who flock to its bracing river waters to beat the heat, this long valley is a beautiful area full of pine trees, apple orchards, waterfalls, and plenty of accommodations in the form of country pensions. It's also a great base from which to launch hiking trips up into the Yeongnam Alps, which act as a natural rock walls on both sides of the valley. ☎ *Dae-ri, Wondong-myeon, Yangsan-si*.

Eonyang

TOWN | Famous for its *hanu* beef bulgogi, the town of Eonyang sits in the shadow of Sinbulsan mountain on the far outskirts of the city of Ulsan and makes the perfect base for exploring the Yeongnam Alps. Most of the main attractions are within a 20-minute drive of the town, which offers plenty in the way of lodging and food options. ☎ *Eonyang Eup*.

Eoreumgol (Ice Valley)

NATURE SIGHT | Situated on the northern flank of Cheonwangsan mountain, this natural wonder is famous for its unusual climate. In the heat of the summer, the valley's streams and water freeze; in the winter, they thaw out and run at higher temperatures than normal in the region. There is also a cable car that runs to the top of nearby Jaeyaksan mountain (1,112 meters/3,648 feet), a rugged peak that's considered the eastern gateway to the Yeongnam Alps. ☎ 1647, *Sannae-ro, Miryang-si* ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline.

★ Tongdosa

TEMPLE | Nestled at the base of the stone-crowned Yeongchuksan, Korea's largest temple is a village unto itself. With more than 65 buildings within the temple grounds, Tongdosa is one of the country's "Three Jewel Temples" and is famous for having no outside statues of Buddha. This is because the temple contains relics of the Buddha himself, including a robe, a begging bowl, and a supposed piece of his skull. For all of its history, art, and heritage, Tongdosa shines brightest as a nature destination. The valley it calls home is a stunning piece of real estate, and the mountain that looms over the temple and surrounding town is like a gargantuan stone sentinel. You can feel the power emanating from the rock and understand at once why, centuries ago, it was decided that this was a holy place. Tongdosa also hosts temple stays, if you're in the mood to experience life



Apples grow in the unusual climate of the Miryang Ice Valley, located in the Yeongnam Alps.

from the inside. ☒ 108 Tongdosa-ro, Yangsan ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline ☎ tongdosa.or.kr, templestay.tongdosa.or.kr ₩3,000 ☺ Closed Mon.

★ Ulju Gajisan Provincial Park

MOUNTAIN | At 1,240 meters (4,068 feet) Gajisan is the highest mountain in the Yeongnam Alps, and makes a great day trip for anyone wanting to summit the peak. The best approach is from the trailhead at Baegyeonsa Temple. While it's a challenging hike in spots, the trail is well-developed and it can be done by anyone in reasonable physical condition. And like any great trek, the view from the top makes all the hard work worth it. ☒ Eoreumgol-ro 3334-1 ☎ 1330 Korea Travel Helpline.

Restaurants

Eonyang Giwajip BBQ

\$\$\$ | **KOREAN** | Situated in a large, hanok-style house, this restaurant serves the hot coal-grilled hanu beef bulgogi for

which Eonyang is famous. The marinated meat is tender and both sweet and savory, and the traditional surroundings only serve to add to the flavor. **Known for:** traditional atmosphere; crowds on the weekend; cold buckwheat noodles.

☎ Average main: ₩22,000 ☒ 86 Heonnyang-gil, Eonyang-eup ☎ 052-262-4884.

Eonyang Nongjang Saeng Ori

\$\$\$ | **KOREAN** | Just a quick walk from the main gate of Tongdosa Temple, this wonderful restaurant specializes in boneless duck meat grilled at your table with a pile of assorted mushrooms. Diners can choose between a mild or spicy marinade accompanied with side dishes made from fresh, local vegetables.

Known for: grilled duck; flavorful sides; convenient location. ☎ Average main: ₩25,000 ☒ 202 Jisan-ri, Habuk-myeon ☎ 055-382-4534.

 **Hotels**
Brown Dot Hotel Ulsan KTX

\$ | **MOTEL** | Located in Eonyang next to Ulsan's KTX station, this branch of the Korean chain is probably the best place to stay in town. **Pros:** complimentary Wi-Fi; continental breakfast on weekdays; new facilities. **Cons:** not so many amenities; no breakfast on weekends; slightly generic feel. [5] *Rooms from:* ₩100,000 ☎ 1-9, Doho-gil Samnam-eup ☎ 052-264-8113 🚗 47 rooms 🏠 Free Breakfast.

Solpark Pension

\$\$ | **B&B/INN** | Situated deep in the pines of the Baenaegol Valley, this rustic pension delivers tranquility and comfort in the most natural of surroundings. **Pros:** cooking and barbecue facilities on site; spacious grounds; rustic feel. **Cons:** far from any stores; few amenities; frequented by groups who can sometimes be loud. [5] *Rooms from:* ₩100,001 ☎ 976-8 Dae-ri, Wondong-myeon ☎ 055-388-3055 🌐 *Solpark.co.kr (Korean only)* 🚗 13 rooms 🏠 No Meals.

 **Shopping**
Eonyang Market

MARKET | This traditional street market contains well over 400 vendors selling fresh fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, clothing, dry goods, and traditional Korean medicine. Like many traditional markets, the street stalls are a main attraction, with delicacies such as *tteokbokki* (rice cakes in sweet, spicy sauce), *bindaetteok* (mung bean pancakes), *guksu* (thin noodles), and the deep fried snacks known as *twigim*. A covered arcade roof over the main concourse keeps browsers out of the rain. ☎ Nambu-ri, Eonyang-eup ☎ 052-264-0607.