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TRAIL GUIDEBOOK

BY Roger Shepherd

BAEKDU DAEGAN HIKING KOREA'S MOUNTAIN SPINE

By ROGER SHEPHERD

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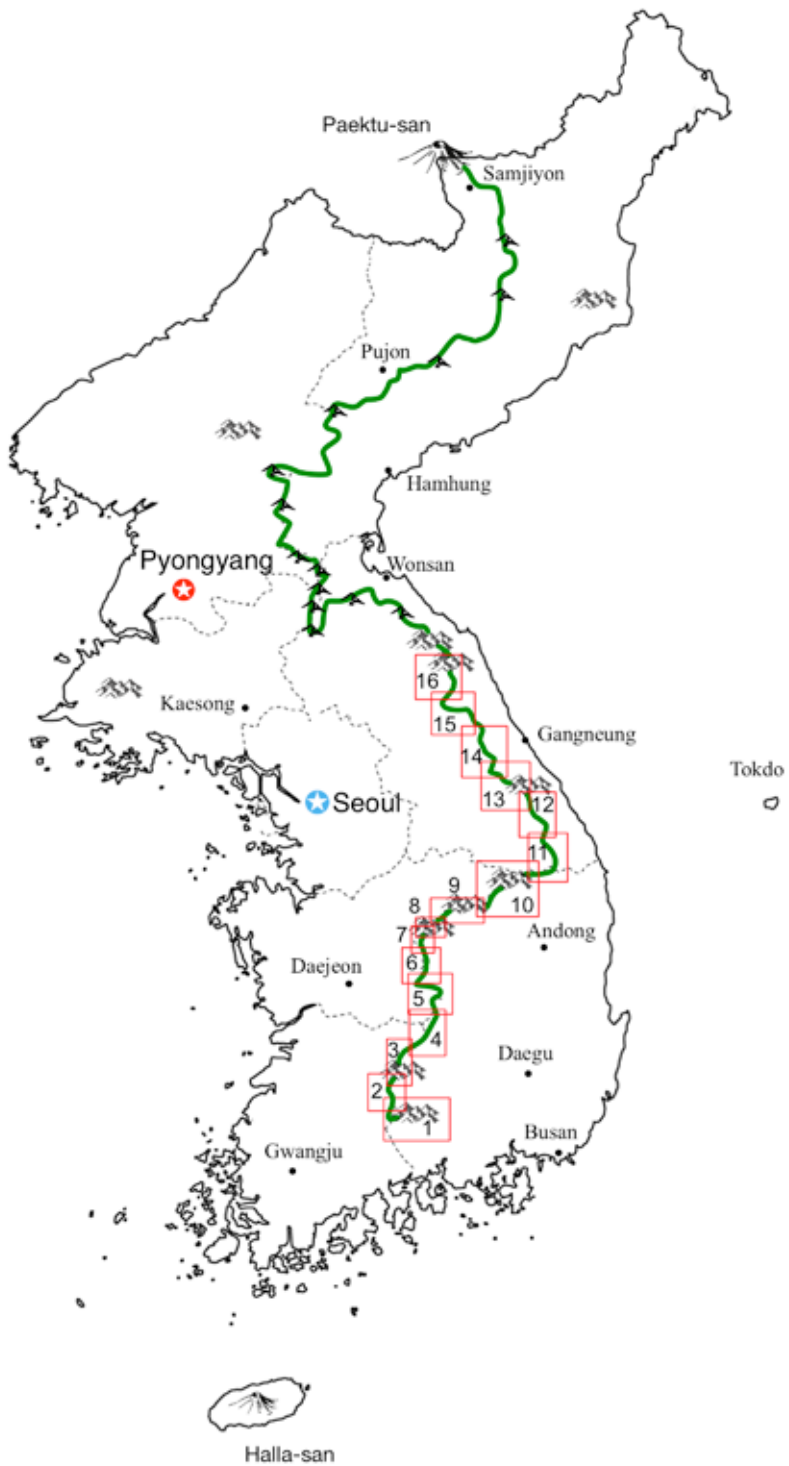
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Authors Note

It was by chance that I stumbled on the Baekdu Daegan in South Korea when it was introduced to me on a map by a friend of mine. I was in Korea on a holiday with a plan to explore its national parks, but when I saw that red line squiggling its way up the center of the peninsula, and I asked what it was, Andrew told me, people trekked it. I was instantly fixed. That's what I'll do, I said.

So, in June 2006, I set off on a walk, carrying little language skills with a set of large Korean wall maps. On the maps, the Baekdu Daegan mountain names had been transcribed into pronounceable English. It was on that walk, that I met other Koreans hiking the Great Ridge, and some spoke enough English to tell me, that the Baekdu Daegan was more than just a ridge that Koreans walked, it was also a pilgrimage that made them more Korean. This made me think more about where I was walking, and whether I should be recording this journey. By then, I was nearing the halfway mark, when I was met with a deluge of monsoon rains that wouldn't quit. So, I got off the ridge and on my way down I decided that I wouldn't return to the Baekdu Daegan. Instead, I made a vow to return the next year, complete it, and also write a guidebook about it.

The Baekdu Daegan had by then, not only provided great scenery on an unexplored part of Korea, that was still relatively unknown to outsiders, but it had also allowed me to meet many local people, on or near the trail, that added a human touch to the hilly journey. I wanted to write about it.

In September 2007, I set off with Andrew. We walked from Jiri-san for seventy days to the end of the Baekdu Daegan in South Korea, some 687.3km later, near the DMZ border with North Korea. We spent the next two years of our free time writing the guidebook, which was published in August 2010. By then I had contracted a bug for Korea's endless mountain scape, and its thousands and thousands of kilometres of trailed ridges and valleys. In 2009, I came back to Korea again and went on a six-month wander, exploring South Korea's subsidiary ridges, when I came to the decision to leave a perfectly healthy career in New Zealand behind for a new challenge in Korea. I started a company called HIKEKOREA, that would specialize in mountain guiding for foreign visitors, photography and writing that would be published into books, and an inter-Korean relationship that saw me travel between North and South Korea many times, taking photos and writing tales about the mountains of the Baekdu Daegan to share with the Koreans on both sides, who are currently, because of national division, not allowed to do so. In a way the wander didn't stop.

Folk painting of a Korean tiger - leopard getting harassed by a magpie

2 AUTHORS NOTE

Since the first guidebook, many other foreigners have come to Korea, and from what I was told, have had many memorable experiences along the ridge trail. When the publisher decided not to remake a newly updated edition, I went about the task of making and publishing it myself. To do this I wrote a series of short stories on foreigners experiences on the Baekdu Daegan. The stories were translated into Korean and posted weekly on Daum storyfunding. Money was subsequently raised from Korean sponsors. This meant that the opportunity of exploring one of the world's best, yet unknown long distance hiking trails, is kept alive.

I've yet to hear disappointment from any hikers of the Baekdu Daegan. Some jeer its physicality, which is correct, but all like to remark on its beauty, the social connection it gave them with the Koreans, and insight they garnered on themselves.

Please enjoy yourselves out there, leave no rubbish, and be sure to take your time, as there will be many unforgettable distractions for you along the way. Leave a good impression.

Roger Shepherd
HIKEKOREA
October 2017

백두대간

USEFUL INFORMATION

BAEKDU

DAEGAN

What is the Baekdu Daegan?

The Baekdu Daegan or “White-head Great-ridge” is a 1400km mountain-system that forms the backbone of the Korean Peninsula. It fittingly starts on the peninsula’s highest feature, Mt. Baekdu-san (2744m) a dormant volcano with a gigantic crater-lake that sits on the current border between China and North Korea, forming to its east the natural river-frontier of the Tumen River all the way to the East Sea, and to its west the other water-frontier of the Yalu (Amrok) River, which empties into the Yellow Sea. From the mythological hide-outs of Baekdu-san a ridge line runs south down the east coast of North Korea mutating into the Taebaek (Grand White) Mountain Range, piercing the barb-wired frontier of the DMZ, entering South Korea, and then veering west towards central South Korea, subsequently becoming the Sobaek (Smaller White) Mountain Range, where it then turns south and ends at its recognised point on South Korea’s highest mainland peak of Cheonwang-bong (1915m) in Jiri-san National Park.

This ridge line is genuine in that it never crosses water, and is, therefore, the disperser of all water all along the peninsula. Assisting the Baekdu Daegan with water management are fourteen subsidiary ridges known as jeong-maeks that channel all of Korea’s major rivers into its flanking three seas. The Baekdu Daegan’s geographical territory, therefore, includes most of Korea’s highest peaks, many of which have been regarded as places of cultural significance since ancient times. The sacred virtues of the mountains of Korea have been accepted by the people of Korea for at least 5000 years, and then historically recorded by early Korean scholars and Buddhists more than a thousand years ago. The topography of this nation is recognised as a living entity consisting of mountains and water that sustain life, making the Koreans one with the geomantic energies of their landscape.

The Baekdu Daegan in its essence is a geographical feature. The idea of hiking it probably developed in the 80’s period as a result of South Korea’s development in personal wealth, recreational freedom, cultural globalisation, and a genetically-ingrained nature for mountain-roaming. Over the next three decades, subsequent academic and empirical research has seen the Baekdu Daegan slowly become dotted with certain pieces of memorabilia and monuments that mark a newly-blazed trail that reflects an ancient course that covers the history of Korea.

The Baekdu Daegan as a Hiking Trail in South Korea



The Baekdu Daegan is not an official hiking trail. No one in South Korea has successfully taken ownership of it in that sense, and it is not managed or promoted as a national trail by the Korean government, which is perhaps one reason why the Baekdu Daegan remains an obscure and rarely visited trek for non-Koreans. Although the Korea Forest Service are the official custodians of the Baekdu Daegan zone, local governments, and the Korea National Parks Service also have their own say on regions of the Baekdu Daegan, that can leave it better managed in some places, and not so in others.

What it is, is a pure mountain ridge that organically became a pilgrimage trail for Koreans to develop personal national identity. To be more Korean. When they see a foreign face on it, they will want to know why, and whether you understand what the Baekdu Daegan represents to them. I'm sure you will discover that for yourselves, but hopefully, this book can help you become aware of its special place in the hearts and minds of the Korean people. At this stage in time, the Baekdu Daegan can only be hiked in South Korea. In South Korea, it reportedly extends for 687.3km from Hyangno-bong in the DMZ to Cheonwang-bong (1915m) in the central south. Figures differ according to each hiker. The elevation gain and loss figure is about 40,000m each way. Pretty big, so be ready for that. In some sections of the eight national parks it passes through, the trail is closed for as much as 80 to 100kms of the entire 687km distance. The ridge line of the Baekdu Daegan is tough and by no means an easy task. It continuously undulates steeply up and down over features ranging from 200m to 1915m absl, all of it evenly distributed. However, these attainable heights make the Baekdu Daegan accessible for anyone with the determination and will to complete it, either in short sections each weekend or vacation, or as a grand two-month trek.

The scenery along the ridge-trail ranges from low-lying green hills studded with deciduous forests that fringe the backyards of small rural farming communities where the hiker becomes a traveling pilgrim, exploring the social traits of rural Korean society, and a range of high, hard, gnarly, smooth, and rocky mountain obstacles that offer the hiker mind-blowing wondrous vistas that can only otherwise be found in northeast Asian art. The Baekdu Daegan is more than a panoramic montage of natural beauty. It is also a social and spiritual journey that provides the hiker with ample opportunity to discover the wholesomeness of the rural folk that live their pastoral lifestyles along the spiritually and nationalistically significant zones of the Baekdu Daegan mountain-system. The Baekdu Daegan ridge that became a long-distance trail, is a great opportunity for outdoor enthusiasts living in Korea or visiting to hike their way through a 687km geographic folder of culture and history that provides each of those that trek it, an unforgettable and special memory in what is a still largely-unexplored part the peninsula.



Preparation

For the first time visitor to South Korea, one of the biggest challenges you might face will be the language and culture. But don't let this stop you, as South Korea is a friendly, developed nation, with an indigenous culture that should fascinate you. If you plan to through-hike the Baekdu Daegan, then allow yourself between six and ten weeks to complete it. Although none of the peaks are above 2000m, there are plenty of them, and you will discover very quickly just how undulating this small country is. You can carry as much weight as you wish, but getting over 20kg is starting to push it a bit. You should be in reasonable physical condition to start this, or at least have some experience with long distance trekking, to complete the trail. You can also do this trail without experience, as the landscape itself is not particularly dangerous, and you'll never be that lost, that you won't find another person, temple, or village, in less than a day, but I promise you it will be a challenging walk.

Most of the time, you can get away with 2-3 days of food rations in your pack, and even less, but water is something you'll need to get more of every day. A minimum of 2-3 litres should be carried at the start of most of your days. Water and food re-supply stops are explained in each chapter of this book, which is done by leaving the ridge to the nearest small store. Carrying a free-standing tent is recommended as pitching a tent can be done almost anywhere outside a National Park, and often on solid surfaces, like wooden decks or concrete, hence the free-standing method is preferred.

The Korean peninsula hosts four seasons, and two best times of the year to visit and complete the walk, are in the spring months between April (average daytime temp 11°C) and early June (22°C) where Korea starts to wake up from her winter slumber, and the mountains reveal spring colours and bright wild flower in favourable weather conditions and the autumn months of September (21°C) through to early November (7°C) where the mountains begin their cooling off from a hot summer, and the forests are alight with fiery autumn colours. Be aware that by late October and early November, the northern and higher regions will produce morning frosts and even snow, so you should prepare for that weather change. The oppressively hot and humid months between late June and late August suffer from extreme temperatures above 30°C up to 100% humidity (although mountain areas above 500m are cooler and nicer). From July through early September monsoon-fronts and occasional typhoons can bring very heavy winds and rain that force all hikers off the trails, and flood the gorges. However, people still trek it in the hot summer months, as it brings a separate charm to itself with big steamy peaks shrouded in monsoon mists. From December to late March, the Korean winter is deathly cold, and the mountain ridges covered deep in snow and ice for most of the period, making a through-hike unlikely. Added to that, most mountain ridges are also officially closed during this period, as the air is very dry and the forest bare of vegetation, making it a fire hazard. Winter hiking the Baekdu Daegan, should be done in small sections.

Boots or trail shoes are the recommended footwear, and a set of wet weather gear is required. For those living in Korea, section-hiking the Baekdu Daegan on your weekends can become an enjoyable way to discover the ridge line and South Korea, or a two-month burst at the end of your working contract is also recommended as a great way to end your tenure. If you section hike the Baekdu Daegan, then it means you carry less. Ideally, you would need your own transport so to access your start point quickly, and then hitch back to the car, but if you are familiar with the country and language, the public transport system, along with the odd taxi will also serve you well.



Food

South Korea has a fine food culture with hundreds of different dishes, much of which, is a mixture of meat and red-pepper spice meals served with boiled or fermented vegetables and soy bean paste. But that's in the restaurants. For the Baekdu Daegan you'll need to be more humble than that, however, you will see many day hikers in Korea carrying a smörgåsbord of Korean dishes with them into the valleys and peaks, and more often than not, you'll be invited to share their delicious meals with them. Otherwise, what you need on your back are lightweight foods. In South Korea, most of the Korean supermarkets or small village stores will stock the lightweight basics you'll need. That is instant noodles, pre-cooked rice, canned tuna, spam, smoked eggs, chocolates, snack bars, coffee and tea sachets, and more. The large supermarket brands in the cities, carry a larger array of foods, some of it imported, and much more imaginative. Long distance hikers tend to have their own way of eating, so it's up to you on how you will adapt to the availabilities of Korean foods. For cooking, you should just carry a gas-set that fits a screw valve butane gas cartridge, as they are easy to replace in South Korea and cheap. Be aware, that lighting fires, which includes gas sets, or smoking in the mountains of South Korea are prohibited, especially in the national parks. Outside the national parks you won't see trekkers following this rule much, so don't worry about that, just cook your food safely, and smoke your durries out of sight.

Water



Water will be the biggest challenge you will face. As the Baekdu Daegan is quite a tough and physically demanding walk, you'll drink a lot of water. The water-stops and springs marked on the maps and found in the text of the guide book are not always reliable due to seasonal weather patterns, and even a drying planet. If there is no water at a spring, you should explore further down the valley. The spring water in Korea is excellent and safe to drink. It comes from hard rock, covered in snow during the winter, and drenched with the monsoon in the summer. The landscape is without free-grazing domestic stock, meaning no domestic animal polluting. All water above human and domestic farming populations should be safe to drink, the higher the better. Bottled water can be purchased at any store. All tap water, including in villages, can be considered safe to drink as well. In the villages, it's often bore-hole water. The only time you should heed caution when taking water is from streams near villages and all of Korea's rivers. Even if it looks clean, the water is undrinkable because of human encroachment and farming techniques.

Basic Equipment List

- Boots or trail shoes
- Pack 50 to 70 litre
- Pack cover
- 3-season sleeping bag
- Sleeping mat
- Water bladder or carrier (3litres)
- Gas cooking set and utensils
- Wet weather gear
- 1 extra set of clothing or more
- Hat and sunglasses
- Light set of gloves
- Pair of sandals
- Toilet bag and Towel
- Headlamp
- First aid with sun cream and bug repellent
- Toilet paper or wet-wipes
- Multi-knife
- Maps/Compass, and writing utensils
- The Baekdu Daegan guide book
- Smart-phone/camera and accessories
- Power adapter for Korea
- Ear plugs – great for sleeping in shelters, or noisy roadsides

Money and Cash



Rural South Korea is not an expensive country to travel in. Public transport is reasonably priced and good value for money. A reasonable room in a city or town motel outside of large cities will set you back about \$45USD or less, and a good Korean meal in a restaurant (sikdang) will cost you between \$4 and \$10. A local beer about \$2 to \$3, and a pack of cigs \$5. Local currency will be the preferred option of payment along the Baekdu Daegan, so be sure to carry it. If you are not living in Korea, then you can change all your money at the airport on arrival. Local cash is the best thing you should carry on the Baekdu Daegan. A visa card is also accepted widely around Korea, but might not be possible in a small village store, where all domestic cards can be taken. There are numerous banks and ATM's in Korea but they service domestic cards. Even the small towns have a Nong Hyup Bank and a Post Office with ATM in English, but not for foreign cards. You will need to find a place or bank with a Global ATM, found in larger centers. But they are also found in a lot of convenience stores like GS25, 7-11, and CsV, which you will find in all small towns near the Baekdu Daegan. Currently, the biggest note the Korean currency has is a 50,000W issue, which is about \$45USD. The other denominations are 10,000, 5,000, and 1,000. Coins come in 500KRW, 100KRW, 50KRW, and 10KRW. Koreans tend to be decent and honest people and in regards to the money, you should never be short changed, or over-charged. Tips are not accepted.

Smart Phones, Computers, and Internet Cafes

Back in the day when this book was made, smart-phone technology was nothing like it is now. If you like to carry a smart-phone, then you can get good data plans on arrival at all the international airports. In most parts of Korea, including the mountain ridges, you will be able to get a cellular signal, meaning you can access the internet if you are on a local plan or data-roaming. If you are not on a plan, you can still find a lot of free wifi in large cities and small towns at coffee shops, convenience stores, restaurants, and public areas. Sometimes even in farming villages, especially if they have a village community center. There are many excellent apps to use in South Korea, but none in English that are specific to the Baekdu Daegan. Only the guidebook can do that. As far as Korean map apps go, the Naver Map app is very good, as is Daum maps, and Kakao maps. The Google maps that come with the iPhone does work, but is useless in the mountains, as they currently don't have any updated data for Korea. If you're going to ditch the hardware and walk as a free soul, then the other way for you to get friendly again, is through the old system of PC Bangs (Internet Cafe). These smoky dark recesses are a blast from the past, but still very popular, and found even in small towns. Occupied with wagging school students and wired gamers, they offer high-speed computers at about \$1 an hour.

“Glad I brought the four season sleeping bag.” Sarah emailed me in late April from a smoky and noisy PC방 in 김천시. ‘Poor girl, she didn’t have a phone,’ I remembered. The idea of someone using a PC방 in 2015 to communicate with the outside world was sadly humorous.

Navigating the Trail



The Baekdu Daegan is quite well marked these days, but because it's not an official national trail, it is mostly marked by a course of signposts that list the name and distance of the next mountain in its region. These signposts aren't always the same design and are not always a regular distance from each other, as the method of marking the Baekdu Daegan trail varies from each province and each county. They are mainly in Korean but frequently English too. But where there is no English, you will have to memorise and become familiar with the Hangeul characters of major peaks and towns. Hangeul (Korean) text of mountains and villages are displayed in this guidebook and on its maps to help you. This involves matching the Hangeul text on your map with the Hangeul text on the signpost, a tedious code-cracking exercise that needs to be carried out if you are not sure. Hopefully, the maps in the book, along with a smart-phone navigation app, will be enough information to stay on the ridge. Navigating the Baekdu Daegan is not daunting, and can be a lot of fun.

Hiking Ribbons

Perhaps the best navigation symbol along the trail is the colourful hiking ribbons strung from the branches of trees by local hikers and clubs. They tend to form a course by themselves. However, one must be aware that some of these ribbons do not represent the path of the Baekdu Daegan and instead belong to local hiking clubs who have marked routes from nearby villages up to the ridge of the Baekdu Daegan. There is also the other likely scenario that some hikers have marked their trail with ribbons before realizing that they have taken the wrong way...leading you astray at the same time. Memorise the 백두대간 font on the ribbons and this will at least help you separate ribbons belonging to other courses, which the Baekdu Daegan crosses. As you progress along the trail you will begin to identify particular ribbon designs that are Baekdu Daegan bound. They become your visual rutters.

Maps

The best set of maps recommended for this walk is in Korean language only. Made by a company called Gosanja, they make a set of 24 waterproof tyvek sheets at 50 x 37cm each with a 1:50,000 scale. You can try buying the set from most large book sellers in Korea, or from the Jungang Map Shop 중앙지도문화사 (Jungang Jido Mun Hwa-sa) in central Seoul. To get there by subway, get off at Jonggak station, take exit 2, and walk one big block, ignoring any alleyways, and then turn left. It's located on the second floor above a flash coffee shop. The address in Korean is 중앙지도문화사 종로구 공평동125-1. Tel: 02 7309191-4. No one speaks English there. The maps in the guidebook are also very useful and a candid way to travel the spine of Korea.

GPS, Smartphones, and Compass

These days you can get a set .kmz and .gpx files for GPS devices for the Baekdu Daegan. Please contact me at roger@hikekorea.com for the folder, or search for them at the Baekdu Daegan Facebook group page. A Compass is also handy to have to help keep your known sense of direction when trudging through wet ridges covered in cloud. The last thing you want is to be going along the wrong ridge, or maybe that ain't so bad either. They also don't need batteries.

Getting Lost

In the unfortunate scenario that you may become misplaced, don't panic, it's not such a drama in the boutique peaks of Korea. Although there will be times on the Baekdu Daegan where you will feel quite isolated and not meet another hiker, there will always be a small village, temple, town, or even a large thriving city no more than 5 to 20kms away. Most of the time you will be able to see these places from the ridge line. If you think you don't know where you are and are reluctant to turn back and re-trace your steps, stay on the trail or track you are on as it will eventually take you down to a temple, village, 4WD track, or road. Getting lost can be a thrill in Korea.

Transport Along the Baekdu Daegan



Through South Korea the Baekdu Daegan is crossed by a total of 82 roads, both paved and unpaved. This is an average of one road crossing every nine kilometres or so ranging from rarely used mountain tracks to tunneling National Expressways connecting the main cities. This high frequency of road crossings makes the Baekdu Daegan trail very accessible, enabling hikers to enjoy short sections of the trek on holidays, weekends or even single days before seeking the comforts of a small town or heading back to their homes. Whether you intend to through hike the Baekdu Daegan or walk the trail in sections the roads crossing over the ridge will be your access points to more supplies and accommodation in the small towns and villages below. Most sealed roads crossing the ridge are served by local buses running to the nearest villages on both sides, and large roads are often crossed by inter-county buses which will pick you up or drop you off at the pass. The frequency of buses leaving the Baekdu Daegan varies depending on the population of the area and are not always practical options for the hiker so you can also make use of rural call taxi's whose numbers are often displayed at road passes on the Baekdu Daegan. Even better, you can rely on the kindness of strangers and hitch a ride – an experience which will provide you with many great memories from your hike. Although rarely seen in Korea, hitchhiking in the countryside is a useful and easy way to move about. Figuring out how to get to the delegated start point can be found in the first hiking section of this guidebook. All possible transportation options for getting on and off the Baekdu Daegan, just about anywhere along the trail, have been supplied in each hiking section of this book.

Where to Sleep on the Baekdu Daegan




Along the course of the Baekdu Daegan, you will have the chance to experience the full range of accommodation options available in rural South Korea. Unlike some world trails, the Baekdu Daegan does not have a system of shelters which spread its length. Although shelters are available in some of the National Parks where random camping is strictly prohibited, reservations must be made online – read the National Parks section for more. Outside the National Parks, you can camp freely just about anywhere in Korea on public land as long as you are not a nuisance. Carrying a tent will be practical. A free-standing tent is better for wooden decks and concrete pads. Take care not to camp at sacred sites, tombs, and religious areas. On the Baekdu Daegan, you will often get an opportunity to utilise a structure known as a Jeong-ja 정자. These are round shaped wooden pavilions with a roof, dotted throughout Korea's mountains, valleys, and towns. They are used as rest and picnic areas for locals or travellers, but not actually designed for campers, so sleeping in them should be done when no one else is around. They are found on the Baekdu Daegan in places, and you can even pitch your tent inside them. Jeong-ja can also be found in village centers, and you should always seek permission to use them from a villager, and do so in the night, once the villagers have retired back to their homes, as they are popular meeting places for them during the day. Be sure to rise early and vacate it, so the locals can use it in the morning. They get up at dawn in the countryside. A lot of the Jeong-ja don't allow footwear to be worn inside, so pay attention to that. In case you're not aware, Koreans remove their shoes when entering most residences. This is because they conduct most of their social activities whilst planted on the floor, therefore the floor is a clean area. The other options for sleeping on or near the trail are through paid-for types. These range from motels 모텔, Yeogwan 여관, minbaks 민박 (country homestay), Sanjang 산장 (mountain homestay), Yayeong-jang 야영장 (managed campsite), pensions 펜션 (high-end-lodge), guesthouses (higher-end-motel), Jimjil-bang 찜질방 (sauna house), Buddhist temple stays, and Forest Service Recreational cabins. In your case, Motels and Yeogwan are found in most cities, towns, and even in small rural towns. The motels provide a double bed room with TV, refrigerator, air-con, shower, and toilet. They normally range from 35,000 to 50,000W per night, with prices hiking on the weekends in the cities. Yeogwan are a bit of a lower end single room with no bed, but a small fridge, TV, and shower. They go a little cheaper. Country home-stays (minbaks) are found in villages. They provide a room in someone's personal home. Meals are sometimes included, and it cost about the same as a motel price, but be aware that these are private incomes, and sometimes the homeowner may not be there, or at the time, the spare room might be used for something else, or they simply may not feel like taking on a guest. Mountain home-stays (sanjang) offer the same type of service but are often located at end of a valley road at the foot of a trail, and can accommodate groups of hikers.

Pensions are higher end chalet type accommodations that are found in developed mountain valley areas. Buddhist temples can also offer sleepovers, but a reservation should be made online from a selected list at <https://eng.templestay.com/>. The temple stay program offers an insight into the daily life of a monk. You will be expected to partake in temple activities, including early morning prayer attendance, meditation, cleaning chores, and tea activities with an English speaking senior monk. All the while dressed in laymen Buddhist garb. At the time of print, there were six temples near the Baekdu Daegan that can do that. They are Hwaeom-sa 화엄사 (Ch.1), Jikji-sa 직지사 (Ch.4), Beopju-sa 범주사 (Ch.6), Woljeong-sa 월정사 (Ch.14), and Baekdam-sa 백담사 and Sinheung-sa 신흥사 in Ch.15.

The Baekdu Daegan in the National Parks

Staying in a National Park Shelter – Daepiso 대피소



The Baekdu Daegan runs through eight national parks in South Korea, of which four will provide ridge shelters that you can sleep in. Those four are Jiri-san, Deogyu-san, Sobaek-san, and Seorak-san. These shelters are known as Daepiso 대피소 and are inexpensive to use, costing between 7-12,000W per person. Reservations must be made online. You are not supposed to turn up without a reservation, therefore you should plan your course through the parks ahead of time. The shelters are normally large well-built wooden facilities, that can sleep anywhere between 30 and 200 people. Hikers sleep in an allocated space on a wooden floor, or in a bunk. They also can provide a mat or blanket at a low cost. In the colder months, the shelters are heated. The shelters are powered by generators and solar power, meaning they have lights for communal areas, including power banks for recharging your phones. Small stores can be found in them that supply basics like instant noodles, pre-cooked rice, chocolates, biscuits, gas canisters, and bottled water. Spring water can also normally be found at each of the shelters. Toilets are chemically controlled long-drops. There is no running water or showers at the shelters for hygiene as using soaps to wash your yourself, or toothpaste to clean your teeth is prohibited, due to environmental pollution. For cooking, the shelters have designated kitchen areas inside and outside, where you can cook your meals using your own equipment. They normally provide a waste basket for left-over food, otherwise all your other litter should be trucked out with you. Make sure you clean up with your own water and wet-wipes after cooking. Washing your pots and pans at the water spring is a no, no. All of the parks provide camp grounds too, but these are located at park entrances. They are popular for auto-camping and reservations must be made online.

Making an Online Reservation

All shelter and campground reservations must be conducted online. Camping anywhere inside the national parks, outside a designated area is strictly prohibited! If you are caught, you will be fined. Likewise if you enter a park with an intention to sleep in a shelter and you have no reservation, you may be declined entry at the gate. You can make an online reservation by opening an account at <https://reservation.knps.or.kr/foreigner/main.action>. From there login and begin navigating through the site. It might take a little time to figure out. The site works best on Windows OS, but does get by on Mac OS. It won't work on smart phones. Payment in the case of a foreigner is done at the shelter when you check in. Please ensure you bring a copy of your online reservation with you to the shelter or campsite. Reservations for shelters and campsites cannot be done before 14-days of your stay. On weekends, national holidays, and in-season periods, competition for space at these shelters can be extreme.

Access Time Restriction Policy

As part of their micro-management, the parks service also has a regulation on what they call the access time restriction policy. What this means is that there are certain times in the day that you cannot enter a trail head, or even pass a ridge shelter. This is to prevent night-trekking, and illegal camping. More information on those timings can be found at KNPS English site under [experience/access-time-restriction-policy](#).

KNPS Trail Closures on the Baekdu Daegan

KNPS do not have a national policy on the Baekdu Daegan and its management as a recreational resource in their parks. This in turn has allowed them to close some sections of the Baekdu Daegan ridge for long-term periods, causing some resentment from the Korean Baekdu Daegan community. These closures are implemented as a means of conserving wildlife, flora, erosion, and in some cases because that section is unsafe. For the most part the Baekdu Daegan travels unimpeded through four of the parks, but in the other four this isn't the case. The closed areas affect 81km of the total 683km ridge trail. The closures are in Songni-san, Worak-san, Odae-san, and Seorak-san. I and many Korean Baekdu Daegangers who are campaigners for opening the ridge, are not condoning that foreign trekkers pass through the closed sections, but as some Koreans do, you may feel you can as well. If you wish to do that, then I have provided the trail data for you. But I have also provided information on alternative routes around the closures, which I recommend you take. It should be noted that many of these long-term closure areas are manned by park officers, especially on the weekends, and a trespasser can be fined as much as 500,000KRW or more.

If that wasn't enough, during the drier and snowier winter months from mid-January to late April, many of the ridges throughout Korea, both from the national parks and provincial parks services are closed due to fire-risk and heavy snow.

This shouldn't affect the foreign visitor to Korea, as the recommended season to hike the Baekdu Daegan is from May to November.

More information on the Korean National Park Service can be found at their English site at www.english.knps.or.kr

Health & Safety on the Baekdu Daegan



South Korea has a developed health care system. Its citizens pay into a national health care service that provides plenty of excellent university hospitals, and an abundance of national health clinics that can even be found in mountain villages. Pharmacies can be found in all Korean small sized towns. There are no vaccine requirements for you to enter Korea, and if you carry prescribed drugs, please ensure you bring the prescription with you, as you'll need to see a doctor to get more. As a foreign visitor, you will more than likely be required to pay the unsubsidized price for any treatment you receive, but as long as it doesn't require serious surgery, the price will still be fairly low. Travel insurance is advised if you wish to stay protected. As with rough travel, getting sick can be expected. Some of the travel illnesses you might contract in Korea are, diarrhea, food poisoning, common colds, tuberculosis, and Hepatitis A. So always take note of the water you are drinking, and how you prepare your food. In Korea, most meals are eaten in a communal manner, where persons share plates of food with their chopsticks. There is normally little risk of becoming sick with this habit. For the most part, you can expect a healthy journey of the Baekdu Daegan.

Lyme Disease

In the mountains, you should be aware of Lyme disease, which is caused by ticks. If you are bitten by a tick, take care removing it. There are many myths and theories on how to do that, so please check which way seems best. Most damage is done when you leave the ticks incisor or any of its fluids in you, which can lead to scarring, local infection, or if the tick is carrying it, then Lyme disease. Typical symptoms of Lyme disease include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic skin rash called erythema migrans. If left untreated, an infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system. Lyme disease is diagnosed based on symptoms, physical findings (e.g., rash), and the possibility of exposure to infected ticks. Most cases of Lyme disease can be treated successfully with a few weeks of antibiotics. If you are bitten by ticks and experience these symptoms, go and see a doctor.

Snake Bites

The only other creatures you are likely to be bitten by are mosquito's and gnat flies, and that's in the summer months. Venomous snakes do exist in Korea, but they are thin with small mouths and fangs. But, the stouter, brown colored viper species (Short-tailed Mamushi) are more aggressive and not in a hurry to move out of the way. They also pack a good bite, so beware of them. The longer thinner species (Red-tongue viper), tend to move out of your way and are not aggressive. You will see snakes more than once on your journey. If you are so unlucky as to be bitten by one, settle into a comfortable position and try and keep calm. Wrap the bite area with a bandage or cloth, and if it's on a limb, wrap it up between the joints. All this does is apply some pressure and slow down the circulation a little. Don't apply a tourniquet unless you know how. Some first aid procedures suggest not washing the bite wound, because physicians may require samples of the venom left on the skin to determine what kind of snake inflicted the bite. Other institutions do suggest washing the wound with soap and water. As they do in the movies, do not incise the wound and suck out the venom, that doesn't work, and will only poison the sucker. Next, you need to get help. Call the Korean emergency number 119 and explain to the operator what has happened, including where you are, and they will send an ambulance or chopper to your location. It's rare that people die from snake bite in Korea, due simply to the small size of the reptile.

Heat Stroke

On the trail, it wouldn't be a surprise if you were to pick up common ailments, like blisters, cuts, bruises, sore joints, fatigue, and if you're doing it in extremely hot conditions, heat stroke too. Heat exhaustion occurs when the body is exerted in hot weather and has become dehydrated due to inadequate intake of water. A headache, dizziness, fatigue, and sweating are common symptoms. If heat exhaustion remains untreated, the core body temperature will continue to rise. As it rises between 38 and 40 degrees Celsius, the body will experience the onset of hyperthermia, an abnormally high fever initiated without the control of the body's thermoregulatory system. A continually rising core body temperature poses the risk of a medical emergency, namely heat stroke. If body temperature rises above 41 degrees Celsius, the body's ability to self-regulate temperature becomes compromised. The skin will be hot to the touch, headache is severe, gastrointestinal pain is present, and sweating, in fact, ceases. If treatment is not administered immediately, coma leading to death is inevitable. Drink plenty of water, and wear a hat. To prevent sunburn, wear sun cream. The sun's rays in Korea are quite strong.

First Aid Kit

Carry a small first aid kit with you. It need not be complicated. A good single bandage, plasters, strapping tape, Imodium, pain-killers, antiseptics, and iodine are just some basics you need. Your knife or multi-tool should be considered part of your first aid kit.

Rescue Services

Emergency services in South Korea have been steadily evolving since the 1988 Olympic Games were held in Seoul. By dialing 119, the Emergency Medical Service is activated, and the caller automatically obtains access to the National 119 Rescue Service. The National 119 Rescue Service and its regional 119 Rescue Service sub-organizations are responsible for all emergency rescue services in South Korea, including mountain rescue. They will speak English, along with several other languages when prompted. In an emergency situation, get access to a telephone as quickly as possible. Luckily, most local hikers carry smart phones, and villages, towns, and temples dot most of the Baekdu Daegan, therefore making it relatively easy to contact rescue services. If you must leave an injured individual on the trail to find help, be certain to make sharp note of the person's location so the person can be administered to quickly. On many mountain trails, you may see intermittently, a series of trail markers with location codes on them. These are for emergencies, and if you can remember the code number, then the helicopter or rescue team have a better chance of pin pointing your location. Of course, these days, the rescue services can triangulate your phone signal without you having the worry of trying to tell them where you are. So always ensure you have a backup charging device for your phone.

Etiquette on the Baekdu Daegan

Litter

The thin line of the Baekdu Daegan is ecologically very sensitive and cannot sustain irresponsible hiking practice, it is therefore important that all hikers tread carefully and respectfully along the trail following a code of minimal impact to ensure the future health of this region and its biodiversity. Please pack and carry all your litter out with you, and dispose of it at a refuse site or waste basket area found at road passes, or if you are detouring to a village for a restock, they will always have a communal refuse area. When having to go to the toilet in the mountains, please do so off the trail, and out of sight. A better practice is to carry a small foldable hand-shovel, so you can bury your poop and paper.

People

The Baekdu Daegan is a social journey of cultural and historical significance, and as you pass through the ever changing beauty of the landscape you will also pass through mountain villages and visit a number of temples and shrines. Some of these areas see few tourists and you should be aware of, and show respect to their customs and traditions when visiting.

18 USEFUL INFORMATION

Overall the Korean people are a friendly, energetic bunch, and you will be treated very well on your travels. You will meet many other local hikers on the Baekdu Daegan. All of them will practically be on the weekend when Koreans purge to the mountains to embrace the outdoors. Some may be hiking the Baekdu Daegan, others just enjoying that particular part of Korea. When you meet other hikers on the trail, they will more than likely greet you with a “annyeong-haseyo” or a “bangap seumnida.” The simple reply is the same. Take a look at the language section for some tips. These social moments can provide you with new friendships, and even free meals, as they invite you over for a snack or drink.

In the villages you pass through, the local farmers will welcome you with kindness and curiosity. So return any smiles with more smiles. Sometimes, they may invite you to sleep over in their home or give you food. Korean mountain villages are a big highlight of the Baekdu Daegan, as they provide you with some company, water, food restocks, and shelter. Please leave behind good memories for the locals, so others can pass freely in your footsteps.

Temples

There are literally thousands of Buddhist temples in Korea and walking the Baekdu Daegan is a great opportunity to visit temples of all styles, from small mountain hermitages to major centers of Buddhist practice. Korean temples are relaxed places and visitors are largely free to explore the buildings as long as respect is shown to customs and appropriate etiquette is followed. There is no official religious policy toward photography within temple buildings, some have signs banning all photos, others don't allow flash and others again encourage visitors to take as many pictures as they like.

Useful Help Services in South Korea

Tourist Information Hotline 1330

For additional transport timetables or general tourist information the Korean tourist information hotline is a very good resource. Be informed, they cannot make reservations. By simply dialing the area code of the province you wish to inquire about followed by 1330 (or 02-1330 for HQ in Seoul who will re-direct you), you will be connected to a Korean, Japanese, Chinese or English speaking guide who is there to answer your questions.

Before Babel Brigade (BBB) 1588-5644

Whether you're trying to direct a taxi, or get your point across over a drink, the BBB translation service is the place to call. BBB offers free translation in 16 languages by volunteers.

백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 1
JIRISAN NATIONAL PARK: Cheonwang-bong to Gogi-ri
44.5 or 51km over 3 or 4 days

Jeollabuk-do
전라북도

Namwon-si
남원시

1023

Samjeong-ri
삼정리

Baekmu-dong
백무동



Jiri-san National Park 지리산국립공원

8.6km
4.5hr



Yeonhacheon Daepiso
연하천대피소

Byeokso-ryeong Daepiso
벽소령대피소

Jangteomok D
장터목

Myeongseon-bong
명선봉 1586m

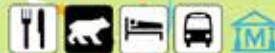
Deokpyeong-bong
덕평봉 1521m

Seseok Daepiso
세석대피소

Chilseon-bong
칠선봉 1558m

Chot
춧대

Uisin-ri
의신리



Jirisan National Park

지리산 국립공원 Days 1 & 2



Jangteomok Daepiso 1hr50min 3.4km to **Seseok Daepiso** 세석대피소 2hr 3.7km to **Deokpyeong-bong** 덕평봉 1hr 2.4km to **Byeokso-ryeong Daepiso** 백소령대피소 1hr35min 3.3km to **Yeonhacheon Daepiso** 연하천대피소 a total of 12.8km in 6hr25min.

Chibatmok Daepiso 치발목대피소

Jung-bong 중봉 1874m

Sseori-bong 씨리봉 1502m

Cheonwang-bong 천왕봉 1915m

Rotari Daepiso 로타리대피소

1.7km 1hr

11.7km 6.5hr

7.5km 5.5hr



20

Gyeongsangnam-do
경상남도

Section 1: The Jiri-san Crossing

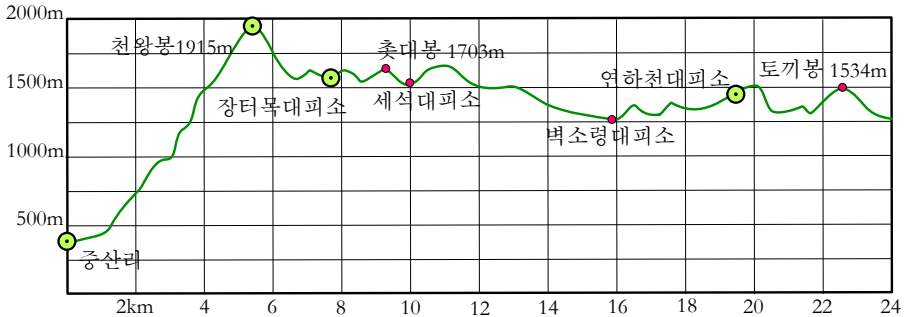
Cheonwang-bong 천왕봉 1915m to Gogi-ri 고기리 in 3 days over 44.5 or 51km

The Baekdu Daegan trail starts on South Korea's highest mainland peak inside Jiri-san National Park. The summit is called Cheonwang-bong (Heavenly King Peak) and stands at 1915m. There are three different ways to get to Cheonwang-bong to begin your epic journey, which are explained in this chapter.

Jiri-san National Park 지리산국립공원

Jiri-san was designated as Korea's first national park on December 29, 1967, and remains the largest land-area national park in Korea, covering 471.758km². Its summit Cheonwang-bong soars to 1915m and is the highest on mainland South Korea, second only to Halla-san at 1950m on the island of Jeju-do. Cheonwang-bong is flanked by the peaks of Jung-bong 1874m to its northeast and Jeseok-bong 1808m to the west which are the 2nd and 3rd highest peaks on the mainland. Jiri-san is home to scores of peaks over 1000m and the Baekdu Daegan trail will cross 21 of them. The name "Jiri" is a Buddhist-based term meaning "Exquisite Wisdom," and nowhere in Korea is there a greater concentration of religious sites than in the Jiri-san area. According to ancient oral history, Jiri-san is essentially the Holy Mother Spirit Mountain of Korea, and possibly the very foundation of Korea's shamanistic beginnings, with her numerous male and female mountain deities, and stories of hidden gates into mysterious kingdoms. Her many peaks, valleys and streams, are thought to contain some of Korea's strongest beneficial natural energies, which can sometimes be seen through her displays of stunning atmospheric light and colour. Jiri-san is home to some of Korea's highest quality air, waters, roots, herbs and spices, making her a healthy lifestyle and foods centre for Korea. In the past, village communities lived much higher on her slopes than where they are allowed to now. During the independence movement years against the Japanese occupation of Korea (1910-1945), and the calamitous years after Korea's 1945 liberation, national division, and the Korean War (1950-53) Jiri-san was a refuge for Korea's partisans, using her vastness as a hideout. These days Jiri-san's upper regions are off-limits for residential homes, but many people seeking an alternative lifestyle apart from the hustle and bustle of Korea's major cities now live in her valleys and pastoral foothill areas. Merging with the local populace, these new residents begin their new lives as organic farmers, artists, writers, potters and so-forth. Because of her numerous traits, the people of Korea have always had a strong fondness for Jiri-san and recognise her as a sacred mountain. When they talk about Jiri-san they are referring to a large area of peaks, ridges, and valleys that cover three provinces and five counties. To climb to her highest feature, Cheonwang-bong 1915m, and watch the sunrise is regarded as one of the most revered moments in a Koreans life. An entire encyclopaedia of Jiri-san's culture and history could be written by itself. This is a great way to start a great walk.

Day 1 to Cheonwang-bong then Jangteomok Daepiso



Route 1 Jungsan-ri 5hr30min 7.5km Cheonwang-bong

Jungsan-ri 증산리 is a mountain village located in the southeastern section of Jiri-san. It is part of Sancheon-gun (county) 산천군 in the province of Gyeongsangnam-do 경상남도. The village is probably the most popular gate entrance to Cheonwang-bong. In its center, there are some minbaks, motels, hotels, and pensions as well as supa 슈파 and sik-dang 식당. Jungsan-ri also has an interesting museum which



tells the story of North Korean guerrillas and South Korean independence fighters who hid in Jiri-san before, during, and after the Korean War. Another interesting attraction might be the large holy-mother-spirit of Jiri-san statue located on the other side of the stream. Known locally as Mago-halmi, the site is often visited by devotees whom pay reverence to the mother-spirit of Korea. The story of Mago-halmi is very ancient going back into pre-history. A long time ago there was a guru named Banyan living in the mountains of Jiri-san. He met Mago, a shaman lady of remarkable powers, and together they had eight daughters. These daughters became the progenitors of Korean folk-culture and shamanism and formed the

original eight provinces of Korea. Guru Banyan returned to the mountains and Mago grew old and grey. Hoping he would come back she made hemp cloth for him, but he never returned. So one day, fed up, she cast it to the wind where it fluttered away, later arriving at the feet of Banyan who was meditating on a peak. He quickly returned to her, only to discover she had passed away.

24 SECTION ONE

It was said that Mago became a mountain spirit (san-shin) of Nogo-dan 노고단 and Banya, the spirit of Banya-bong 반야봉, both of which you will pass on this section. What makes this legend more intriguing is the tale behind the original statue of Mago-halmi. You can see it at the Cheonwang-sa (temple) 천왕사 about 500m up a road on the western side of Jungsan-ri. There you will see an old pitted one-meter blue-green rock sculpture. The exact origins of this statue are unknown, but it once sat on the peak of Cheonwang-bong for as long as anyone could remember. Then one day it disappeared. They say in 1972 it was cast from the peak into a valley. A Buddhist monk spent ten years searching for it, and one day found it in large pieces, but repairable. He did that and this is where it is now. But wait, the material of which this statue is carved, is not of this planet! Welcome to Jiri-san.

Transport

There are 15 buses a day leaving from Seoul Nambu bus terminal 서울남부버스터미널 to Jungsan-ri, via Wonji bus terminal 원지터미널. The journey takes about 5hr. The only direct service is on the weekend, one bus only, departs at 11:30pm, arriving 03:30am. From the Seobu Sasang bus terminal in Busan 부산서부사상터미널 there are four direct buses a day, 08:15 11:16 12:15 16:00. From the local (siwa) bus terminal 시외버스터미널 (not express) in Jinju city, Gyeongsangnam-do, there at least 18 buses per day going to Jungsan-ri. To get to Jinju, you can take one of many buses from the Seoul Gyeongbu Express Terminal and Seobu Sasang terminal in Busan.

Camping 야영장

There is a nice little national park campsite at Jungsan-ri. It has 50 tent sites that range in price from 5 to 7,000W each. It is a first come first serve system and has toilets and water. The contact number is 055 972 7785. It is located at the end of the sealed road about 500m after the official entrance gate to the park.

Water Stops

(1) N35°19'33"E127°44'14" Rotari Daepiso

The trail to Cheonwang-bong from Jungsan-ri starts on a signposted road at the edge of the main car park, that'll take you about 1.5km north up to the national park entrance 중산리분소. There is also a cheap shuttle service that can run you to the same place. The park entrance also has a good sik-dang and public toilets. Be sure to access the park before the last entrance times (14:00 to 15:00), and have your daepiso reservations booked. After walking past the parks office, the trail to Cheonwang-bong begins about 500m later on your left at a signpost next to a set of public toilets and the campsite. From there it's a 1.5km northwest uphill to a trail junction, from where you'll take the right-hand fork up a mean but scenic route that climbs over 500m in elevation on 1.7km of trail to Rotari Daepiso and Beopgye-sa temple. From the temple, the trail to Cheonwang-bong maintains its steepness with a 1.8km grind and some more awesome views, gaining another 500m in elevation, until it pops out on the summit of Cheonwang-bong.



Beopgye-sa temple

Rotari Daepiso 로타리대피소 **1335m**
010-2851-1401 / 055-970-1000

A small daepiso that can sleep about 30 persons. It has toilets, a kiosk, and outdoor cooking area. A fresh water spring (1) is located just up the trail before Beopgye-sa. A space can be reserved online for 7-8,000W.

Beopgye-sa Temple 범계사 **1450m**

Beopgye-sa was built in 544 by the Indian missionary-monk Yeon-gi-josa who, according to legend, enshrined some of the Buddha's remains (sarira) there. Nestled in the southern shadow of Cheonwang-bong it is one of Korea's highest temples and offers fine sweeping views. Other than being a Buddhist temple, legend states that Beopgye-sa's geomantic energies can destroy the spirit of Japan. This prompted a visit in 1380 by Japanese pirates led by General Ajibaldo, who destroyed the temple. It was rebuilt in 1405 and destroyed

again by the Japanese during the Imjin invasion of 1592--98, and perished again during the colonial occupation of Korea by Japan in 1910. Shortly after Korea's 1945 liberation, Beopgye-sa was rebuilt again in 1948 but the perils of the 1950-53 Korean War saw it damaged again. It was rebuilt after the war. If they are on display, then you can get to see two artillery sized iron spikes at the temple. In Korea, these types of spikes were supposedly driven into mountains by the Japanese to impale Korea's natural energies and vanquish her spirit. These spikes were found and removed near this site in 2005 and 2006.

Route 2 Baekmu-dong 4hr30min 8.6km Cheonwang-bong 1915m

On the northern side of Jiri-san in the county of Hamyang-gun 함양군 in the province of Gyeongsangnam-do 경상남도 is the Baekmu-dong 백무동 entrance. It's less steep than the Jungsan-ri route but uphill all the way nonetheless. It passes through some sparkling Jiri-san cedar forest, and near the top it starts to offer some good view points. The trail comes out on the Baekdu Daegan ridge at the Jangteomok Daepiso 장터목대피소, meaning you could stay there, and hit the summit of Cheonwang-bong, about 1.5km to the east early in the morning for a sunrise start, before turning back and heading west along the Baekdu Daegan.

Transport

Easy! Buses run direct from Dong Seoul Bus Terminal 동서울버스터미널 eight times a day starting at 07:00 up to midnight. It'll take 4-5hrs to get there.

Camping 야영장

National parks have a campsite at the Baekmu-dong entrance. A deck or site can be reserved online for 7-9,000W. Tel: 055-963-1260.

Lodging and Food

There are a couple of minbaks and motels in the Baekmu-dong area near the bus stop. Mountain themed sik-dang can be found in the area too.

Route 3 Daewon-sa 대원사 6hr30min 11.7km Cheonwang-bong

This trail head starts at the temple of Daewon-sa 대원사, located in the eastern part of Jiri-san in the county of Sancheong-gun, Gyeongsangnam-do. The temple is run by Bhikkhuni (female monks) and was built in 583. Its best-known treasure is the nine storey Bangwang-tap pagoda. Legend states that the pagoda will glow a bluish light when Korea is under threat. From the temple the signposted trail to Cheonwang-bong heads northwest along the road for about 1.5km to the village of Yupyeong-maeul 유평마을, where it then turns west to southwest into the mountains and climbs for the next 4km to a track junction in the mountain. It should take about 4hr 30min to cover that whole leg. From the junction, you'll follow the trail left going south and then west for the next 1.6km until you arrive at Chibatmok Daepiso 1425m. From the daepiso you climb hard, south for 700m to Sseori-bong 씨리봉 1602m, where the trail then turns west and makes another brutal ascent for 1.7km to the Baekdu Daegan ridge joining it at the peak of Jung-bong 중봉 1874m, the second highest in mainland South Korea. If you've stayed the night at the daepiso, this section has fantastic early light scenarios. Once on the ridge you can see the peak of Cheonwang-bong 1915m only 500m away on the southern side of a saddle.

Chibatmok Daepiso 치밭목대피소 1425m

This quaint little daepiso can sleep 40 persons and costs about 5,000W. It has a small kiosk, water, and toilets. It operates on a first-come first-served policy.

Camping 야영장

There is a national park campsite at Daewon-sa called Somakgol 소막골야영장 055-972-7775. It has less than 30 sites ranging from 7-9,000W each. Reservations should be made online.

Lodging and Food

The small village of Yupyeong-maeul about 1.5km up the road from Daewon-sa has some good sik-dang, a store, and a few minbaks.

Transport

You can take one of 13 buses that depart from Nambu terminal in Seoul 남부버스터미널 to Daewon-sa temple via the town of Honggye, near Jiri-san. Buses also leave for Daewon-sa from the Jinju intercity bus terminal every hour between 0630hr and 2030hr.

Cheonwang-bong 천왕봉 “Heavenly King Peak” 1915m

At 1915m, Cheonwang-bong stands higher than any other peak on ‘South Korea’s’ mainland. It is an open summit dominated by a prehistoric mound of gnarly rock, atop which stands a thumb-shaped tablet bearing its name. In favourable conditions the view from the peak is far-reaching with grand panoramic views of heaving blue ridges that swim infinitely to the horizon, giving the foreign hiker an intimidating glimpse of the mountainous nature of the peninsula they’re about to traverse for the next two months. Guarding Cheonwang-bong are mainland Korea’s 2nd and 3rd highest peaks, Jung-bong 1874m, 500 meters to the north, and Jeseok-bong 1808m 1km to the west.

“Once at the top of the ridge we stopped at the 장터목대피소 for a late lunch then walked the 1.6kms towards the start, getting there around 4pm. The view was an amazing panoramic of the entire area and set the precedence of views to come. You could see so many ridges disappearing into the clouds in all directions, and the views of the mountains in the morning were absolutely gorgeous.”

June, 2015, Marilyn Marchand (Canada).



Day 1: Cheonwang-bong 1hr 1.7km Jangteomok Daepiso 1653m**Water Stops****(2)N35°19'56"E127°42'59" Jangteomok Daepiso**

From the summit of Cheonwang-bong the trail head drops steadily west for 1km toward the neighbouring peak of Jeseok-bong 계석봉 1808m. The trail is mostly open ridge and passes by some old damaged Yew trees (주목나무 - Jumok-namu), of which you'll see more of at this altitude on your long journey. In this area there are some viewing platforms offering wide views west and south out over the Jiri-san area. After Jeseok-bong the trail drops sharply down to the Jangteomok Daepiso about 700m away.

Jangteomok Daepiso 1653m 장터목대피소 010-2883-1750/055-970-1000

Located in a saddle, the large daepiso sleeps 150 people. It has a kiosk, toilets, cooking kitchen, outside eating area, water spring (2), and power point for charging phones. A heated space will cost 7-8,000W depending on the season. Reservations can only be done online. The name Jangteomok originates from its past as a high country market area where the people from both sides of the ridge would meet periodically to trade their wares.

Day 2

Jangteomok Daepiso 1hr50min 3.4km Seseok Daepiso 세석대피소 2hr 3.7km Deokpyeong-bong 덕평봉 1hr 2.4km Byeokso-ryeong Daepiso 벽소령대피소 1hr35min 3.3km Yeonhacheon Daepiso 연하천대피소 a total of 12.8km in 6hr25min



Water Stops

- (3) N35°19'04"E127°41'35" Seseok daepiso
- (4) N35°19'15"E127°39'42" Seonbi-saem (Deokpyeong-bong)
- (5) N35°19'34"E127°38'33" Byeokso-ryeong daepiso

Course Description

Jangteomok Daepiso 6hr25min 12.8km Yeonhacheon Daepiso 연하천대피소

From Jangteomok Daepiso the trail climbs southwest for almost 1km arriving at Yeonha-bong 연하봉 1730m. From here, it'll continue to ripple on a 1700m southwest ridge for the next 2km to the peak of Chotdae-bong 촛대봉 1703m which overlooks the Seseok Daepiso. From the open peak area it is a sharp but quick westerly descent to the Seseok Daepiso 1557m. In the late May early June season this area is beaming with crimson azalea, and there's a fascinating tale about why. Chotdae-bong translates as candlestick peak, and legend has it that a long time ago a childless couple lived on the southern side of the mountain, near here. One day a bear visited the woman and told her of a secret spring which could make her fertile, which excited her greatly, so she dashed to the spring, and drank from it. A tiger found out that the bear had revealed the secret and rushed to the Chotdae-bong mountain-spirit (san-shin), informing it of the bear's disloyalty. Enraged by the news the san-shin sealed the bear in a cave and exiled the woman to work alone in the thorny azalea fields at Seseok. There she lived a mournful life, sobbing endlessly as she toiled amongst the sharp rocks and barbed azaleas, her fingers always bleeding. Over time, the azaleas educed red dabs on their crimson petals, and as they bloomed open at dawn and closed at dusk, they did so with a heart breaking wane. Locals said that she later turned to stone, and sometimes on an eerie and windy night you might see the glow of a candle flickering on the rock as she kneels on the peak wailing for forgiveness.



Seseok Daepiso 세석대피소 1600m 010-3346-1601 / 055-970-1000

This large Swiss-chalet-like shelter sleeps 180 people and will cost between 7-8,000W for a space depending on season. It has a kiosk, outdoor cooking area, toilets, and water spring (3). Reservations must be made online.

At Seseok there is a four-way trail junction. The northern track descends for about 4.5km to the Baekmu-dong entrance. The southern track splits after 1km where the left-hand fork will descend about 5.5km to the village entrance of Naedae-ri 내대리. The right-hand fork splits again another kilometre later. The right-hand fork rambles southwest for 7km down into the remote valley areas of Daesong-ri 대성리 and Uisin-ri 의신리, which were once famous hideouts for Korean partisans. The straight-ahead fork continues on a glorious ridge for another 3km to the peak of Samsin-bong 삼신봉 1284m, where it can from there, either descend southwest for 5km to the temple of Ssangye-sa 쌍계사, or stay south 1.5km to the village of Chonghak-dong, where it actually contorts its way east as the unbroken subsidiary ridge of the Naknam-jeongmaek 낙남정맥 for 230km into the western bank of South Korea's longest river the Nakdong-gang 낙동강, where it spills out through Busan city into the South Sea of Korea. However, from Seseok Daepiso, your trail, the Baekdu Daegan, embarks west, climbing briefly to Yeongsin-bong 영신봉 1651m, where it then dips again and flattens out onto a good ridge arriving at the peak of Chilseon-bong 칠선봉 1576m with more good views, some 2km later. From there, the trail stays west, dropping slightly in elevation before arriving 1.5km later at a high altitude spring (4) called Seonbi-saem 선비샘 situated under the woody slopes of Deokpyeong-bong 덕평봉 1521m. After refreshing yourself here, the trail descends nicely, staying predominantly west for the next 2.4km all the way to Byeokso-ryeong Daepiso 1340m.

Byeokso-ryeong Daepiso 벽소령대피소 055-970-1000

Another large and popular shelter, it sleeps 120 people and will cost between 7-8,000W depending on the season. It has a kiosk, water spring (5), toilets, and two outdoor eating areas. The cooking zone is located downstairs. Reservations must be made online.

There is also a trail junction at Byeokso-ryeong. The northern track descends about 6km to the village entrance of Samjeong-ri 삼정리. The southern track descends about 3.5km to a smattering of small homes in an old partisan village, and then another 2.6km on forest road to Uisin-ri 의신리, where you can find some minbaks, sik-dang's, an Asiatic Moon Bear shelter with mother and cub, that can be open to the public on appointment, and a humble partisan museum outlining some important history of the Korean partisans that used to hide in Jiri-san whilst being hunted down by government troops before, during, and after the Korean War. These partisans were said to have holed-up in Jiri-san as late as the late 1960s.

Most eventually handed themselves in and became normal citizens. Some like Lee Hyeon-sang, hung in there and were killed in a valiant last stand, and some of the trails in this area are now named after him. From Byeokso-ryeong Daepiso, the Baekdu Daegan trail makes a 1.3km westerly step over the next peak of Hyeongje-bong 형제봉 1452m, and then 1km later arrives at the trail junction of Samgak-goji 삼각고지. Here there is a northerly track that joins the same track going north from Byeokso-ryeong. After that the trail continues to climb west before arriving at the humble Yeonhacheon Daepiso, 1500m, about 1km later.

Yeonhacheon Daepiso 연하천대피소 **1500m 063-630-8929 / 063-630-8900**

The smaller stone and timber built Yeonhacheon Daepiso can sleep 60 people. It costs between 7-8,000W depending on season. It has toilets, kiosk, water spring (6), and indoor cooking area. Reservations must be made online.



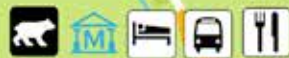


Jirisan National Park 지리산 국립공원

Days 3 & 4

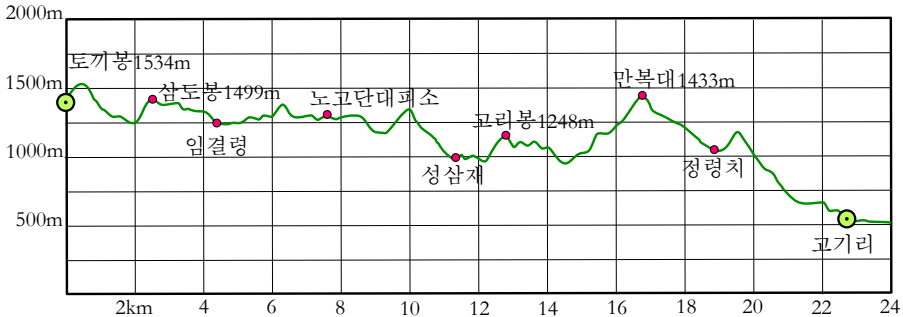


Yeonhacheon Daepiso 1hr30min 2.9km to Tokki-bong 토끼봉 50min 2.1km to Samdo-bong 삼도봉 1hr 2.1km to Imgeol-ryeong 임결령 1hr49min 3.5km to Nogo-dan Daepiso 노고단대피소, 1hr20min 3km to Seongsam-jae 정삼재 2hr10min 4.9km to Manbok-dae 만복대 50min 2.2km to Jeongryeong-chi 정령치 2hr 4km to Gogi-ri Village 고기리 a total of 24.7km in 11hr.



Day 3

Yeonhacheon Daepiso 1hr30min 2.9km Tokki-bong 토끼봉 50min 2.1km Samdo-bong 삼도봉 1hr 2.1km Imgeol-ryeong 임결령 1hr40min 3.5km Nogo-dan Daepiso 노고단대피소 1hr20min 3km Seongsam-jae 성삼재 2hr10min 4.9km Manbok-dae 만복대 50min 2.2km Jeongryeong-chi 정령치 2hr 4km Gogi-ri Village 고기리 a total of 24.7km in 11hr.



Water Stops

- (6)N35°19'42"E127°36'51" Yeonha-cheon Daepiso
- (7)N35°18'29"E127°35'09" Baemsa-gol Daepiso
- (8)N35°18'00" E127°33'46" Imgeol-ryeong
- (9)N35°17'45"E127°31'35" Nogo-dan Daepiso
- (10)N35°18'08"E127°30'50" Seongsam-jae
- (11)N35°21'35"E127°31'26" Jeongryeong-chi
- (12)N35°23'00"E127°30'30" Gogi-ri

Course Description

Yeonhacheon Daepiso 5hr 10.6km Nogodan Daepiso

From Yeonha-cheon Daepiso the trail will make a short southwest climb up to Myeongseon-bong 명선봉 1586m, where it then makes a rolling 2km southwest descent into a saddle, before busting a 1km grind up to Tokki-bong 토끼봉 1534m (rabbit peak). From there it makes a 250m elevation drop before arriving at the pass of Hwagae-jae 화개재 1.3km later. There used to be a daepiso down the northern side, but it's now gone, however the water spring (7) is still there. From Hwagae-jae there is also a very long 10km track that goes down to the famous Baemsa-gol-valley entrance.

Baemsa-gol 뱀사골

Baemsa-gol, means 'valley where the snake died.' Legend says that there was once a temple in this area named Songnim-sa. Every July it would hold a ritual where a selected monk would meditate and chant on a rock to the mountain spirit, and would be vanished when the morning arrived, people assuming that he had ascended to the heavens as a spirit-immortal. One year the great master-monk Seosan-daesa 서산대사 (1520-1604) visited Songnim-sa at the time of this ritual. He was very sceptical, and smeared the selected monk with a poison to see what would happen. The next morning a posse went to the rock to check and found the dead monk half protruding from the jaws of a dead serpent. Seosan had discovered how to kill a serpent. So the valley was named Baemsa-gol, Baem 뱀, meaning snake. Funnily enough, the small village at the end of the valley is called Banseon-ri 반선리 which means half immortal.

From Hwagae-jae, the trail becomes a very long staircase that climbs 250m in elevation on a westerly course for just under 1km before arriving at the bald rocky top of Samdo-bong 삼도봉, 1499m, marked by a triangle-shaped metal trig. Samdo-bong means Three Provinces Peak, and this is where the provinces of Jeollabuk-do to the northwest, Jeollanam-do to the southwest and Gyeongsangnam-do to the southeast all meet.



Nogo-dan

From there, the trail steers northwest for a wee bit where it arrives at the junction with Banyabong (Prajna or Wisdom Peak) 반야봉 1732m. If you're not planning on trying to make it out of the park today, then this can be a nice detour. The right-hand trail takes you almost 1km up to the summit of Banyabong which has awesome views out over the entire Jiri-san ridge. It is also the peak mentioned in the Mago-halmi story. About 300m up the Banyabong trail, there is another junction, that if you take left, you can arrive back on the Baekdu Daegan trail about 500m ahead of where you left off. This means you can dump your pack there and come back for it after visiting the peak of Banyabong. From the Banyabong junction, the Baekdu Daegan turns southwest and will stay on relatively good ground for the next 1.5km to the pass of Imgeol-ryeong 임걸령 1250m. On the northern side of the pass is a water spring (8). About 500m after this pass you'll arrive at a track junction called the Piagol-samgori 피아골삼거리 1336m. The southern arm runs for 6km down to the Pia-gol valley. In autumn this is a famous fall colour attraction of Jiri-san. About an hour down that track is the Piagol Daepiso 피아골대피소 789m that sleeps about 35 people. It operates on a first-come first-served policy. From the Piagol-junction, you keep climbing gradually southwest through highland forest, passing over a 1424m peak and then down a little to the pass of Doaeji-ryeong 돼지령 (pig-pass), which is set at the base of Nogo-dan 노고단. Then it's a 2km contour climb heading west along the northern slope of Nogo-dan where it joins a saddle 노고단고개 marked by a rangers hut on its northern face. This area has a large doltap (stone altar) to the right, and a short no-exit track going to the peak of Nogo-dan to the left. From the Nogo-dan saddle, you carry on west, straight down the stone pathway for 300m where it'll take you to the Nogo-dan Daepiso. From there you follow the road or trail for about 3km to the road pass of Seongsam-jae 성산재.

Nogodan 노고단 1507m

A sacred and famous peak, Nogo-dan, due to its ease of access from Seongsam-jae is all too popular, and now has a restriction access policy to control numbers. It allows visitors between 10:00 and 16:00hr. Normally you have to make an online reservation to do this, but there is no online platform to do it in English, so you should be given benefit of the doubt. Nogo-dan translates as Crone Altar and is famous for its huge doltap and commanding view over most of Jiri-san. On a fine day you can see all the way east back to Cheonwang-bong 1915m. It is also supposed to hold the spirit of Korea's holy mother Mago-halmi, and contain special geomantic powers, of which some persons claim to have experienced. Indeed this area for whatever reason and the neighbouring Banyabong have put on many fine atmospheric displays of colour and energy at certain times of the day and in certain weather conditions.

"It was an icy cold night, and the stars were shining brightly. I was the only one meditating on the peak, when a bolt of white light shot down from the heavens, and the next thing I knew I was having an out-of-body experience."

Park Dong Gun some 20 years ago.

Nogo-dan Daepiso 노고단대피소 1422m, 061-783-1507 / 061-780-7700

The Nogodan Daepiso is a little more stylish than the others. It has a bunk system that can sleep 82 people. A bunk will cost you between 7-11,000W depending on the season. Along with a kiosk and hot coffee dispenser, it has toilets, a separate cooking zone, and clean tap water (9). Reservations must be made online.

**Seongsamjae** 성삼재 1090m

Seongsam-jae is connected by the PR861 running 6km southwest to the rice fields of Gurye-gun and 20km northeast into Namwon County in northern Jirisan. Seongsam-jae is accessible by vehicle and bus, and can get quite busy with day visitors. Along with public toilets and a car park it has a coffee shop, outdoor gear store, snack store (10), and Korean sik-dang. You have three options at Seongsam-jae: you can continue north on the trail till it exits the park some 11km later; or you can take a bus to Gurye township; or you can trek west down to the village of Sandong-myeon where there is a fine guesthouse and famous hot-springs spa.

Mask Dancer

Gurye-eup 구례읍

You can see Gurye to the south from Seongsam-jae. A small farming town next to the Seomjin-gang River with all basic amenities you'll need. Over recent years, city people have started to move there for an alternative lifestyle, bringing with them their arts and entrepreneurial ideas. To get there, buses leave the pass seven times a day from 04:20 to 18:20hr. The ride takes about 40min passing by Hwaeom-sa temple. The same buses also return to Seongsam-jae.

Gurye-eup**Lodging and Food**

The Gurye Okjam guesthouse www.guryeokjam.com 010-7435-5353 hosts travelers in their very clean and pleasant home in the heart of the Gurye market area. They have dormitory bunks with breakfast for 25,000W, and a couple of individual rooms for a higher rate. It also has a kitchen, and laundry. If you're after a good coffee then the Tee-eut 티을 coffee shop has hand-ground and roasted organic coffee, located opposite the police station. Yummy hand-made organic bread can also be bought at the Thursday Bread Hut 목월빵집, and for a fine and cheap fusion-themed meal and craft beer try the Purun Mulgogi (bluefish) 푸른 물고기 sik-dang.

Sandong-myeon 산동면

If you'd like to walk to the village of Sandong-myeon to stay at the guesthouse and visit the spa, then walk across the road at Seongsam-jae and join the Baekdu Daegan trail to Gori-bong 고리봉 1248m. About 300m into that you'll come to a junction with a very steep 3.0km trail descending left to the village of Dandong-maeul 당동마을. From there it's another 2km to the tourist village of Sandong-myeon 산동면. Buses also run to Gurye-gun and Namwon-si from Sandong-myeon.

Nogo-dan Guesthouse 노고단게스트하우스 061-782-1507/010 5477-628

This facility has clean bedrooms, craft beer, wifi, and large lounge area for 50,000W p/n. The Jiri-san Oncheon (spa) 지리산온천 is a short walk from there. It also has rooms and a Jjimjil-bang 찜질방, which means you can sleep over in the lounge room area for a cheap rate.

Day 3 or 4 option**Seongsam-jae 5hr 11.1km to Gogi-ri Village** 고기리

The trail passes through Seongsam-jae, crosses the PR861, and re-enters the forest approximately 100 meters north of the car park, through a gate in the game fence. It now heads north, passing the track junction to Dangdong-maeul 300m later where it then starts to climb up to Gori-bong 고리봉 1248m arriving there about 1km later. It's then a steady northerly walk in green deckled forest for the next 1.6km to the pass of Myobong-chi 묘봉치 1108m which has a closed track running west.

Follow the trail north for 2km up to the lofty summit of Manbok-dae 만복대 1433m, beating out some 300m in elevation to get there. Manbok-dae is an open summit with 360° views and is the last summit you'll climb over 1400m until Deogyu-san national park. From Manbok-dae, the trail stays north and starts a 2km descent down to the road pass of Jeongryeong-chi 정령치 1100m. Jeongryeong-chi is marked by an eco-bridge that crosses the PR737, which coils west down to the village of Gogi-ri 고기리, your endpoint, some 6km away. To the east the road snakes its way down to the intersection with the PR861, the same road that runs over Seongsam-jae. At Jeongryeong-chi there is a hyugaeso 휴게소 that sells some snacks, curios, water (11) and cold drinks and has public toilets. It is popular place for weekend drivers as the pass has some impressive views of Banya-bong and Nogo-dan to the southeast. In the car park, there is also a small national parks office, so be sure that you continue your next leg to Gogi-ri before 14:00hr. About 300m after Jeongryeong-chi there is a signposted trail junction with a track heading right to the Jeong-ryeong marsh 정령습지. The course is a short 300m loop, passing the small marsh, and then carrying on to some old primitive Buddha relief carvings, where it heads back to the junction. Back on the Baekdu Daegan the trail ascends for 600m up to the peak of Keungori-bong 큰고리봉 1304m. From here you should ensure that you take a left or westerly turn so to stay on the Baekdu Daegan. The prominent northerly trail stays on this ridge all the way to Barae-bong 바래봉 1185m. So head west down a spur, and you should arrive at the roadside village area of Gogi-ri 고기리 about 3km later. You are now out of the national park and have more freedom to move and sleep.

Lodging and Food

The pleasant little village of Gogi-ri sits at the bottom of the PR737 where it joins the PR60. There's probably enough space at the trail head to pitch a tent, otherwise cross the road and check out the **Sanyu-sanjang** 산유산장 063-626-7300/73 which has some rooms for 30,000W and 50,000W. It also has a good sik-dang menu. From the trail head if you go 500m to the left and follow the stream (12) there are more small supas and places to freedom camp. About 1km north along the PR60 and about 100m down a driveway on your left-hand side is the **Songhak suimteo** 송학쉼터 063-626-1233, a three-storeyed beige coloured building with good rooms for 40,000W. They also have a sik-dang and will cook tasty meals for you.

Transport

Buses run west along PR60 from Gogi-ri to Namwon City 남원시 8 times daily between 06:45--19:55. Buses heading north along PR60 run to Unbong-eup Town.



백두대간



BAEKDU

DAEGAN

SECTION 2
RURAL KOREA
Gogi-ri to Yukship-ryeong, 58.2km in 4 days



Gogi-ri to Bokseongi-jae 27.7km 12hr 35min

- Gogi-ri Village 40min 2km to Nochi-maeul 노치마을 1hr 1.8km to Sujeong-bong 수정봉 1hr50min 4km to Yeowon-jae Pass 여원재 2hr 5.1km to Gonam-san 고남산 2hr10min 4.8km to Maeyo-ri Village 매요리 1hr10min 3km to Sachi-jae 사치재 1hr10min 2.3km to Saemogi-jae 새목이재 2hr15min 4.7km to Bokseongi-jae 북성이재

Jeollabuk-do
전라북도

Beonam-myeon
변암면

Namwon-si
남원시

Bokseongi-jae
북성이재

Amak fortress
아막성터

Siri-bong
시리봉 776m

Sachi-jae
사치재

Gonam-san
고남산 864m

Maeyo-ri
매요리

Inwol-myeon
인월면

Yeowon-jae
여원재

Unbong-eup
운봉읍

Sujeong-bong
수정봉 804m

Baekdu Daegan Museum

Nochi-maeul
노치마을

Gogi-ri
고기리

Section 2: Welcome to Rural Korea

Gogi-ri 고기리 to Yukship-ryeong 옥십령 in 4 days over 58.2km

Day 1

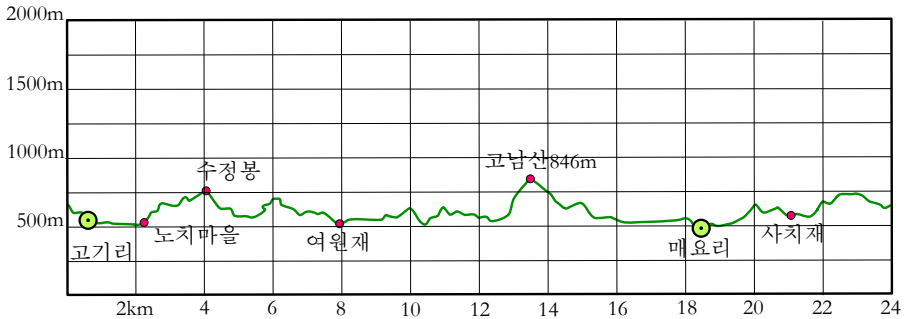
Gogi-ri Village 고기리 40min 2km Nochi-maeul 노치마을 1hr 1.8km Sujeong-bong 수정봉 1hr50min 4km Yeowon-jae Pass 여원재 2hr 5.1km Gonam-san 고남산 2hr10min 4.8km Maeyo-ri Village 매요리 a total of 17.7km in 8 hr

Water Stops

(13) N35°24'00"E127°30'09" Nochi-saem

(14) N35°26'42"E127°30'10" Jangdong-gi

(15) N35°28'08"E127°32'25" Maeyo-ri



Course Description

Gogi-ri 3hr20min 7.8km Yeowon-jae 여원재

From Gogi-ri the trail becomes the road joining the PR60 as it heads north for about 1km where you'll soon see a large complex ahead. This is the Namwon Baekdu Daegan Museum 남원 백두대간 생태교육장 전시관. From the museum, stay north following the ribbons for about 1km, heading towards the village of Nochi-maeul 노치마을 at the foot of Sujeong-bong 수정봉. The village should be identified by an impressive Baekdu Daegan monument, a jeong-ja 정자, and a spring.

The Baekdu Daegan Museum 남원 백두대간 생태교육장 전시관

This impressive complex is dedicated to the culture and history of the 백두대간. Inside, the captions and information are translated into English and worth a look. Door entrance is only 2,000W. It also has a convenience store, clean toilets, and a sik-dang. The staff are friendly and inviting; it's a worthy detour.

Nochi-maeul

A quiet, charming little village whose main feature is the Baekdu Daegan monument sitting under a large elm tree or neuti-namu 느티나무. The monument consists of a large granite slab with a relief map of the Korean Peninsula featuring the Baekdu Daegan and its subsidiary mountain systems. The small tablet to the left mentions the length of the Baekdu Daegan (1470km) and lists its 14 subsidiary ridges, called Jeong-maek 정맥, as well as the 10 great rivers generated from the Baekdu Daegan. The tablet to the right explains how Nochi-maeul is the only village the Baekdu Daegan passes through the center of, and that after the Korean War it was razed to the ground by government forces in their efforts to stop locals either helping, or being harassed, by communist guerrillas infiltrating in and out of Jiri-san. It then states that on Sujeong-bong, the peak located behind the village, you can see the remnants of an old mountain fortress that was built sometime between 892 and 935 during the “Later Three Kingdoms” civil-war period, and as Nochi-maeul was a border town between the eventually defeated “Later Baekje” rebel-state to the west and what remained of the Silla Kingdom to the east, it was often stuck in the middle of these border conflicts until the northern rebel-state “Later Goguryeo” won these wars and then founded the Goryeo Dynasty of a re-unified Korea.



Nochi-maeul 정자

Lodging and Food

You can use the jeong-ja to sleep in, but you should try and ask a village local if it's okay first, and not occupy it until after dark and when the locals have stopped using it. Make sure you clean it in the morning before leaving. Aside from the awesome jeongja, there is a minbak called the Nochi-suimteo 노치쉬터 located just beyond the Baekdu Daegan monument. They serve basic Korean light meals along with makgeolli, beer, soju and a couple of local wines. Inside is a basic store stocking biscuits, chocolate, steamed eggs, cigarettes, drinks etc. Just before the monument there is also a humble minbak called Nochi Minbak 노치민박 010 4660 1239 and along with a basic room, the hostess will cook you up a fine meal too.

“Umoni was snapping armfuls of brushwood, kindling a fire in a low hearth. The flames unfurled through the stone labyrinth beneath our room, heating a granite-flagged floor that was topped with a layer of sand, a sheet of lino, and a thick cotton quilt. This system was the ondol. Clean, dry and barefoot, listening to the steady pull of the fire and the last of the rain, we stretched out on the quilt and felt the warmth and sleepiness soaking into our muscles. An hour later, we joined Umoni in her living room, sitting on the floor to share the meal she had prepared: little bowls of warm purple rice, wild sesame leaves spiced with chilli paste, crisp sheets of seaweed roasted in salt and oil, and a kind of sweet, crunchy, fiery kimchi that had been fermented for a year in stoneware vats underground. Almost everything had been grown in the garden or foraged in the woods above the village.”

Daniel Adamson (Guardian Newspaper) Oct 25, 2013.

Nochi-maeul Spring

As you head up through the village to Sujeong-bong, you'll pass by a large spring (13). It was said to have been founded by a Taoist monk in the Goryeo dynasty and that the water is so pure that during outbreaks of typhoid people who drank from here did not get the disease. This well is therefore sacred to the people of the village, and on the night before every Lunar New Year they cordon the well off with hemp rope, and folks say that a tiger will visit the well to ensure no one takes water from it until the ceremony begins the next morning. In the morning, once the tiger has gone, they will start the ceremony and reopen the well. From Nochi-spring the trail stays on an uphill path, and passes by a tranquil grove of 250-year-old native pines. It'll then climb west and swing north through pine forest and the old fortress wall remnants, before it arrives some 1.5km later at the leafy summit of Sujeong-bong, marked by a stone stele. From the summit the trail plummets north, losing over 300m in elevation before settling at the signposted pass of Ipmang-chi 입망치, 580m, some 1.2km later. From there it stays north clambering for the next kilometre through native pines as it reaches a 700m peak, where it then begins a 2.2km slow descent down to the road pass of Yeowon-jae 여원재.

Yeowon-jae 여원재 480m

Yeowon-jae is connected by NH24 and marked by a large eye bulging totem pole keeping watch over the pass. To the west lies the medium sized city of Namwon about 12km away, and to the east the small rickety town of Unbong is only 2.5km away.

Lodging and Camping

Just before the trail meets the road there is the Baekdu Daegan Yeowon-chi Minbak 백두대간여치원민박 010-9283-1858 marked by a fence laden with colourful hiking ribbons. The main building at the road pass called the Yeowon-jae Hyugaeso 여원재휴게소 appears to no longer be in operation. About 1km into the northern side of the trail is the village of Jangdong-maeul 장동마을 which has an enclosed Jeong-ja located under a guardian tree in its center, a great place to relax and take in the sleepy rhythms of rural Korea. You may be able to sleep in it, with permission of the locals.

Jangong-maeul 장동마을

A tablet in the village describes Jangdong-maeul as resembling the tranquillity of a sleeping roe deer, and that the people of this village are good natured and polite, keeping this place peaceful.

We were born receiving Jeong-gi (vitality, energy) from Gonam-san.

We will be proactive about doing good things.

We will cooperate, trusting each other with true hearts.

Someday we will say that we have made Jangdong a good place to live

With our wisdom and persistence.

"From the scented pine I spill. I follow the lane to Jangdong-ri, where by chance I meet the ljang-nim (village head), a woman named Lee Gyu Tae. "Where are you going?" She asked. I point to the north, " Paektu-san!" I shout. This got us off on a good step. "Where will you sleep?" She asks. I point my nose to the hills. "The wild pigs will eat you," she replies. "I'll cut em' up n eat'm me self." I reply back. "ljang-nim, you got a Jeong-ja in your village?" I then ask. She nodded and we walked there. "ljang-nim, any Makoli in your village?" She took me to an ol' lady's house and I scored a bottle for a buck. I settle into my tree hut palace. "Ajjashi you eaten?" The village queries. "Ajjashi, you have water?" They query some more. Night. The frogs croak summer, and a mutt mangles its whine. Warm natter flickers the hamlet. I am fine here." May 11, 2016.

Transport

Buses cross Yeowon-jae every 15-20min during the day traveling to both Namwon City and Unbong-eup Town. Namwon has an inter-city bus terminal, as well as a KTX rail station.

Unbong-eup 운봉읍

This friendly little one-street-town of shambolic character is well equipped with marts, Nong-hyup, Post Office, ATM, sik-dang's and some tasty chicken shacks. The vibe of the Jiri-san Dulle-gil 지리산둘레길, a 300km trail that encircles the lower elevations of Jiri-san runs through the town, so there are a couple of motels down one of its side streets, including the Gapeul-sik-dang and minbak 갑을식당민박, 010-3190-7457 located at the south end of the main street which is a popular place to eat and stay. They do a great pork bbq 삼겹살 (samgyeop-sal) and also serve full spread Korean breakfast 아침식사 (achim-sik-sa).



Unbong-eup

Yeowon-jae 4hr10min 10km Maeyo-ri 매요리

The trail continues on the other side of the road. Following the ribbons you'll head west through the pine forest for about 1km, hugging the country lane to Jangdong-ri, before you spill out into the quaint village. Follow the lane till you see it do a bend next to a red corrugated fence, then follow the path up that for 70m and turn right where the ribbons are into the bush, which'll take you up to peak 561m. From there the trail slips into the pass of Jang-chi 장치, which in 1894 was a battleground in the massive peasant's uprising against the elite classes and foreigners in Korea, known as the Donghak Rebellion.

48 SECTION TWO

A band of local farmers armed only with farm-tools tried to conquer Unbong-eup, and soldiers stationed here and at Yeowon-jae failed to push them back as the peasants plucked rocks from the stone fortress walls and hurled them at the guards, forcing them to retreat.

From Jang-chi, the trail rolls north through enchanting pine forest speckled with pink azaleas in the spring months. The sometimes spiny ridge runs 2km before it begins a sharp 300m elevation ascent up to Gonam-san 고남산. The 1km climb is assisted with fixed ropes and staircases near the summit. Gonam-san, 864m, is marked by a fire watchtower and mast. It has commanding views over the Korean landscape, including Jiri-san. In 1380, this same view was seen from here by the scouts of Goryeo Dynasty General Yi Seong-gye as he pursued the marauding bandits of Japanese pirate commander Aji-baldo. They later killed Aji-baldo with a long-distance arrow-shot to the throat, at an ambush near the small village of Hwasu-ri 화수리 just 5km east of Yeowon-jae. From Gonam-san you can see a communications facility. The trail goes east towards that where it meets a service road. Follow the road down for about 1km where the trail re-enters the forest at Tongan-jae 통안재 670m. From there it'll begin a gentle easterly meander for the next 3.8km to the charming little village of Maeyo-ri 매요리 470m.

*“I was almost married off in Maeyo-ri. I literally ran for the hills at first light!”
Sarah Brown (U.K.) May, 2015.*



Gonam-san

Lodging, Camping, and Food

The Pungsan-gae Nongjang Minbak 풍산개농장민박 owned by Mr. Jang Yeong-du tel: 063 6341030, can provide a room. Otherwise, in the village center, the locals have built an open aired Jeong-ja 정자 on the edge of the rice fields. This can be used by Baekdu Daeganers. The nearby enclosed jeong-ja is for the locals. That area has good public toilets, and a water tap (15). If you have rubbish to discard, you can do so by burning it in an incinerator behind the community hall 매요마을경로당. Not far from the jeong-ja is the Maeyo-ri Hyugaeso 매요리휴게소 run by a famous but sometimes grumpy Baekdu Daegan Halmoni 할머니 (grandmother). It may not always be open, and it sells very basic commodities. Otherwise if you need to restock, get on a bus or hitch down to Unbong-eup, only 3km south on the PR743.



The local crew at Maeyo-ri working on the new jeong-ja.

Day 2

Maeyo-ri 1hr10min 3km Sachi-jae 사치재 1hr10min 2.3km Saemogi-jae 새목이재 2hr15min 4.7km Bokseongi-jae 복성이재 a total of 10km in 4hr35min

Water Stops

(16)N35°28'22"E127°43'14" Saemogi-jae

(17)N35°31'36.13"E127°33'48.76" Chi-jae car park



Course Description

Maeyo-ri 4hr35min 10km Bokseongi-jae 복성이재

The trail from the village is the road heading east past the hyugaeso, that'll take you 300m to the road intersection of Yuchi-jae 유치재 420m. You have two options from here. You can follow the PR743 road north for about 1km where it ducks under the NE12 expressway and then turns east through the village of Sachi-ri 사치리, where for the next 1.5km it'll saunter up to the pass of Sachi-jae 사치재 500m, marked by an eco-bridge riding over the NE12. Sachi-ri is an old village, and during the Korean War some soldiers were quietly patrolling here, noticing its few humble homes, when they heard the soft sound of woman weaving. They reported it as the desolate song of bird. The other option is to follow the trail into the forest on the northeast side of Yuchi-jae, where it'll drag you east for about 1.5km up to peak 618m, and then drop north to the top of the eco-bridge at Sachi-jae about 1km later. From the eco-bridge there is an opportunity if you need one to restock at the Jiri-san Hyugaeso, located about 1km from the eastern side of the eco-bridge. There is no trail, so you should flank the southern side of the expressway staying inside the barrier. The hyugaeso has a mart, sik-dang, wifi, toilets, coffee, ATM, and fried snack corner. The trail continues north on a staircase on the other side of the eco-bridge, climbing to its first peak at 620m where it then stays north for the next kilometre before arriving at peak 697m. A short distance after that the trail turns east for 1km dropping down to the pass of Saemogi-jae 새목이재 570m. It is possible to find water (16) down the south-eastern side of the pass.

From the grassy pass, the trail climbs north over hilly brows for 2.5km, arriving at its highest point at 781m, where you can get good views to the north of the shattered remnants of Amak fortress. From the fortress it's about a kilometre north down to the pass at Bokseongi-jae 북성이재 which is traversed by the PR751.

Amak Fortress 아막산성

The fortress is from the warring period of the 5-7th centuries between the Silla kingdom to the east and the Baekje kingdom to the west. With a 633m circumference that surrounds Amak peak, it is assumed to have been built by Silla. In the year 602, two great Silla warriors were known to have died here in a fierce battle with Baekje troops. They were Gwi Sang and Chwi Hang of the elite Hwarang (Flowering Knights) unit of model-like male youth warriors who were not only trained combatants but also highly educated in the arts, religion, and culture. During the heavy battle Gwi Sang's father, General Mu Un fell from his horse and Gwi Sang ran to his rescue, killing several Baekje soldiers as he did so, returned his father to his steed, and then turned and shouted to his troops, "Now is the time to never to retreat in battle!" On that battle cry, Chwi Hang and many others piled into the heart of the pitched barrage, but both of them were killed from a thousand bleeding wounds. They were posthumously given religious titles by King Jinpyeong (r.579-632).

Stone cairn 돌탑



Bokseongi-jae 북성이재 601m

Bokseongi-jae is connected by the PR751 road, which descends northwest about 5km to the small town of Beonam-myeon 빈암면 in Jangsu-gun and southeast 7km to another small town called Ayeong-myeon 아영면. Beonam-myeon has a bakery-café, some sik-dangs, NH, PO, and marts. You can pitch a tent alongside the stream there if you wish. Similarly, Ayeong-myeon has a Nong-hyup, Post Office, marts, sik-dangs, and chicken shacks. Most people don't know this, but the pass got its current name when a spiritual master named Byeon Do-tan informed the King of his premonition that Korea was about to be heavily attacked by the Japanese. The King removed him as an advisor saying he was disturbing the peace of the nation. Dejected, Byeon sulked to the mountains and built a mud hut made from rice powder at this pass. He spent his lonely nights living under the starlight of the Big Dipper's brightest star, which the Koreans call Bokseong. Shortly after, the Japanese launched a massive invasion of Korea (1592), and when hungry emaciated troops arrived to defend the pass they devoured Byeon Do-tan's rice-powder-hut which fuelled them with fighting energy, and they could drive the Japanese back. The King reinstated Byeon, and the pass got its current name.

A lot of Koreans know this next story though. To the east of Bokseongi-jae, there is a tale concerning two brothers, Nolbu and Heungbu. On their father's death, Nolbu tricked Heungbu out of his inheritance and kicked him out of the household, forcing him to fend for himself, who then became poor. But Heungbu had a kind soul and found a lovely wife with whom he shared a modest mountain home and had a number of children. Nolbu's vile reputation grew to one of *simsulbo* 심술보, which in Korea, means to have a 'bag of perverseness' which is a vile filled organ protruding under the left side of the rib cage. A horrible person, Nolbu's habits were to dance at a funeral, take a debtors wife as payment, piss in a well, force pooh into the mouth of a crying baby, and grave-robbing, to name only a few. One day Heungbu saw a snake slithering up a tree to catch a swallow, that fell from the tree, and broke its leg. He shoed the snake away, saved the swallow, and tended to its leg. Next spring, the swallow and its hatchlings returned with a seed and gifted it to Heungbu. He planted it and it yielded a vine with one large gourd, and when it was ripe he split it open, and gemstones of all varieties spill out, making his family extremely wealthy. On hearing this, Nolbu's bag of perverseness ached with envy, so he captured a swallow, broke its leg, and healed it. As anticipated, the swallow returned in spring with a seed, and Nolbu excitedly planted it. Upon harvest he split the gourd open, but repugnant diarrhoea spews out all over him, and imps emerge, giving him a good hiding, burning his home and stealing all his possessions. Destitute, he asks his brother for forgiveness, and his younger brother accepts him into his home.

Lodging and Camping

About 1km to the east, is the Cheol-jjuk Minbak 치재마을철쭉민박 063-626-1307 with a room and shower there for 35,000W. It also has a small store and can cook some meals. There's also a track back to the ridge from the minbak via a mountain road that runs west for 1km directly up to Chi-jae 치재 about 3km south of the main peak of Bonghwa-san. About 2km down the west side of the pass there is a large car park area with public toilets, a jeong-ja, and a water spring (17) where you could camp. There is also a trail from there going east directly up to meet the ridge at Chi-jae.



Baekdu Daegan north from Bonghwa-san

Bokseongi-jae to Baegun-san

15.8km 6hr40min

Bokseongi-jae 1hr50min 4km to
Bonghwa-san 봉화산 1hr30min 4.5km
to Gwangdae-chi 광대치 1hr20min 3km
to Jung-chi 중치 2hr 4.3km
to Baegun-san 백운산

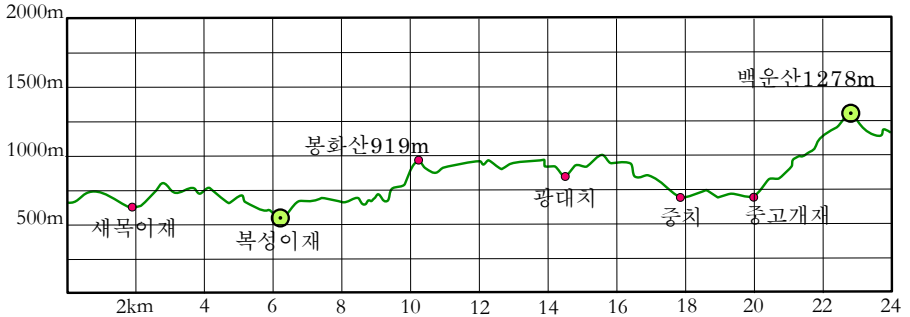


Day 3

Bokseongi-jae 1hr50min 4km Bonghwa-san 봉화산 919m 1hr30min
4.5km Gwangdae-chi 광대치 1hr20min 3km Jung-chi 중치 2hr 4.3km
Baegun-san 백운산 1278m a total of 15.8km in 6hr40min

Water Stops

(18)N35°35'50"E127°36'54" - Jung-chi



Course Description

Bokseongi-jae 6hr40min 15.8km Baegun-san 백운산 1278m

From Bokseongi-jae the trail enters the bush and climbs north for almost 1km to Mae-bong 매봉 712m, then drops down to the pass of Chi-jae 치재 660m. At the pass two tracks join up from both the east and west as explained already. The pass also has a fine jeong-ja and deck. In May and June this area is ablaze with crimson azalea and becomes a popular weekend destination. For the next 1.3km the trail stays north tracking on a steady elevation to the next pass called Ggoburang-jae 꼬부랑재, where it then begins its northerly 1.7km, 250m ascent towards Bonghwa-san 봉화산 919m, the last 500m being an easterly direction. The summit is open and marked by a stone fire tower, a stele, a deck and a bench. Good place to rest and take in some great views. The peak, like many in Korea was once a fire beacon signal tower from the Goryeo and Joseon dynasties. As an early warning device, smoke signals were used in the day and fire at night. It was said, a signal could reach Seoul from Busan in under twelve hours, and most modern-day communication masts have been erected on the same peaks as these fire-signal towers.

From the peak you can see how the ridge steers northeast staying at a nice elevation. For about the first 4.5km that same ridge will get to the pass of Gwangdae-chi 광대치 820m, then continue northeast for another 1.2km where just before Wolgyeong-san 월경산 980m the trail will meet a security fence which will divert you to a fork where the Baekdu Daegan goes north (left) and begins a 1.5km descent into the pass of Jung-chi 중치 650m. This pass is marked by a signpost and a set of benches. It is connected by a small mountain road that descends west for 1km where it meets a couple of homes on the PR742. If you're after water, then you can find it on both sides of the pass. The more reliable water source might be found (18) on the eastern side of the pass, about 200m down the mountain road, where streams start to converge on both sides. If you plan to sleep on Baegun-san, then stock-up plenty here. From Jung-chi the trail climbs east, then turns north before arriving at the pass of Junggogae-jae 중고개재 730m about 1.8km later. For the next 2.5km the trail will begin a big northeast climb up through sparkling forest, chomping at least 500m in elevation, until it jumps out onto the lofty summit of Baegun-san 백운산 1278m.

“Can I give you some advice?” Mr. 김은별 said in that mannerly Korean way. “You ‘must’ wear bug mesh,” and he starts to rapidly swipe the air around his face, “so to prevent serious injury, by tripping over.” Cory Ah (U.S.A) May, 2016.

Baegun-san 백운산 1278m

White Cloud Mountain is marked by a heli-pad and stele, and its summit area has enough space to pitch a tent. There are over 30 peaks in Korea that bear the same name, but this peak is the highest. Standing with broad verdant shoulders, early morning views from here will often see you standing above a sea of white bobbing clouds. These views also allow you to see south to the ridge running to Bonghwa-san and beyond that the high range of Jiri-san. To the north you can get your first proper view of the two prominent peaks of Seo-bong (west peak) and Namdeogyu-san (south peak) that form Deogyu-san's natural southern gate.





Baegun-san to Yukship-ryeong
14.8km 6hr40min

Baegun-san 1hr30min 3.4km to
 Yeongchwi-san 2hr20min 4.7km to
 977m peak 1hr45min 3.7km to
 Gitdae-bong 깃대봉 1hr5min 3.0km to
 Yukship-ryeong 옥십령

Baegun-san
 백운산 1278m

Muryeong-gogae
 무령고개

Yeongchwi-san
 영취산 1075m

Deokeun-bong
 덕운봉 983m

977m

Min-ryeong
 민령

Gitdae-bong
 깃대봉 1014m

Gyeongsangnam-do
 경상남도

Jeollabuk-do
 전라북도

Yukship-ryeong
 옥십령

Jangsu-gun
 장수군

Seosang-myeon
 서상면

Hamyang-gun
 함양군

743

26

37

35



Day 4

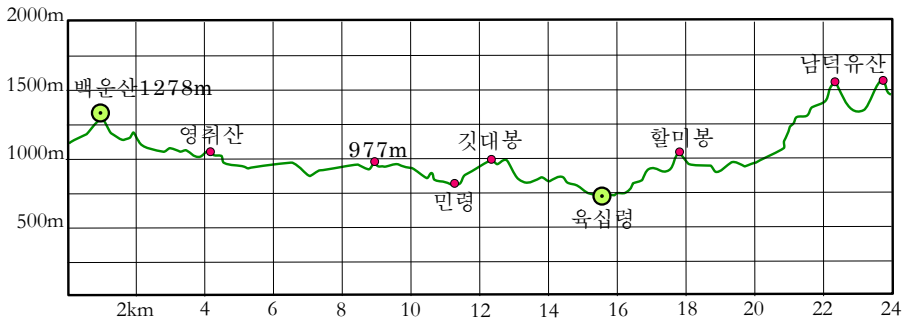
Baegun-san 1hr30min 3.4km Yeongchwi-san 2hr20min 4.7km 977m peak
1hr45min 3.7km Gitdae-bong 깃대봉 1014m 1hr5min 3.0km
Yukship-ryeong 육십령 a total of 14.8km 6hr40min

Water Stops

(19)N35°38'37"E127°36'59" Muryeong-gogae

(20)N35°42'09"E127°39'33" Gitdae-bong

(21)N35°43'08"E127°39'36" Yukship-ryeong



Course Description

Baegun-san 6hr40min 14.8km Yukship-ryeong 육십령

From Baegun-san the ridge descends smoothly northwest for 3.4km through enchanting forest and bamboo grass to the next prominent peak of Yeongchwi-san 영취산 1075m. However, just before that, there is an acute saddle called Seonbawi-gogae that used to have a track running west to Muryeong-gogae, instead the trail from that pass, now continues steeply straight up to Yeongchwi-san, from where you can take a track down to Muryeong-gogae. The summit of Yeongchwi-san is marked by a stone stele. Its name comes from a mountain in the Magadha region of Old India and means a 'mountain with sacred and beautiful features'. Due to Buddhism, it's not uncommon to find linguistic commonalities between Korea and India in the southern regions of the peninsula. This fact sometimes goes against the grain of schooled tradition that Buddhism arrived in Korea from China. If you want to check out the Muryeong-gogae, then the track running west from the peak follows a modern staircase 500 metres to the groovy pass. Otherwise, the Baekdu Daegan trail continues north.

Muryeong-gogae무령고개 **930m**

If you didn't camp out on Baegun-san, then Muryeong-gogae is a damn fine next option. Connected by an eco-bridge over a barren PR743 that runs north 10km to Odong-ri 오동리 and south for 15km to Beonam-myeon 번암면, the pass has excellent free tent sites nestled under shady tree canopy. More famously, there is a well-known sik-dang there operating from an old



shipping container. It's not a store, and they only serve drinking snacks (an-ju-안주), ramen, and pajeon 파전 (Korean pizza) which can be consumed with gallons of their own magical Dongdong-ju (rice wine), along with the availability of an electric guitar and amp. A freshwater spring (19) can be found at the site, and the public toilets are located on the other side of the road in the car park. Muryeong-gogae is also the start/end point of the Honam-Guemsan Jeongmaek 호남금남정맥 a super long subsidiary ridge that wiggles northwest for 65km before forking into the Honam Jeongmaek 호남정맥 that'll do a 430km oxbow shaped southern loop down through Jolla province, ending at the mouth of the Seomjin-gang (river) near Jiri-san. The other fork roams north then west spilling into the mouth of the Geum-gang (river) 126km later.

"I had no tent, just a bivvy bag. I awoke to hear what sounded like someone walking towards our campsite. I tried to unzip the hood on my bivvy and look out, but couldn't move. The footsteps got closer and closer, scrunching across the loose metal, the steps sounded heavy, like army boots. I tried to shout out, but couldn't say anything. So instead I just decided to play dead, and freeze. By now the heavy boot-steps had stopped right next to me. Then I felt the sole of his boot rub against my hip, and shake me. I didn't react. Next thing the man had stepped over me and walked into the forest. It wasn't until his boot steps had gone, that I could move again. I quickly opened my sleeping bag, sat up, and stared into the inky night. Nothing happened. I went back to sleep thinking it must have been a dream, but the next morning, as soon as I woke up, it was the very first thing I remembered. Must've been the Dongdong-ju, I thought? Surely?" Sep, 2007.

60 SECTION TWO

From Yeongchwi-san 영취산 the trail descends gently northeast for the next 2km to Deokun-bong 덕운봉 983m providing some excellent views back to Baegun-san. For the next 2.7km the trail stays northeast on good elevation to peak 977m, and then turns north where about 1km later you'll arrive at the rocky viewpoint of Buk-bawi 북바위. After that, the trail continues north on a slight 1.3km descent down to the pass of Min-ryeong 민령. This grassy saddle is marked by a signpost set under an old tree with some wooden stumps acting as seats. It's a good place to take a break. After Min-ryeong the trail steps over the deeply tunnelled NE35 marked by a pylon as it climbs up to Gitdae-bong 깃대봉 or Gusi-bong 구시봉 1014m as it is now known, arriving there about 1.4km later. From this peak, if you have an eagle eye, you can see the pass of Yukship-ryeong about 30° northeast, marked by a large white two-storey jeong-ja. About 500m into your descent off Gusi-bong, you'll pass a good spring (20) before the trail veers north and starts a steady 2.5km descent to Yukship-ryeong.

Yukship-ryeong 육십령 696m

Yukship-ryeong is connected by an eco-bridge over the NH26. To the west the chicaning road runs about 15km to the small town of Janggye-ri 장계리, and to the east about 8km to another small town called Seosang-myeon 서상면. The pass forms the old mountain border between Silla and Baekje. Back in those days, the pass was so full of bandits, that travellers would have to gather at an inn below, drink up, and when they were sixty strong, they'd boldly cross-over the pass as a drunken mob, which the bandits wouldn't dare bother. This is also how the pass got its name, as Yukship means sixty. During the Korean War, this area was one of the main escape routes for North Korean soldiers and many clashes were fought here and on the nearby granite ledges of Baegun-san and Deogyu-san.

Lodging, Camping and Food

The pass has two hyugaeso. The larger facility with car park and concrete Jeong-ja has a good menu and small store. On the eastern side the smaller venue has a tasty menu, small store, and if available, a room you can rent for 30,000W. It's also possible to find a minbak in the watermill village located on the same side. Public toilets are located on both sides, with a water tap (21) outside the eastern one. You can camp at the pass, including inside the jeong-ja, but try to do so in the evening once visitors have died down.

Transport

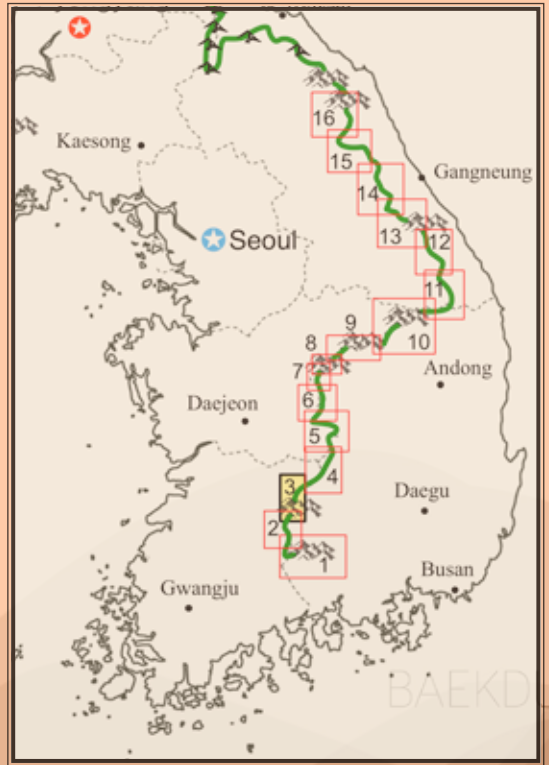
Buses head to Yukship-ryeong 육십령 up the NH26 from Janggye-myeon 장계면 to the west and from Seosang-myeon 서상면 to the southeast. The Janggye-myeon – Yukship-ryeong bus runs hourly from 07:40 – 18:40. The Seosang-myeon – Yukship-ryeong bus runs 12 times daily from 08:30 – 19:55. They leave hourly in both directions from the pass.



Namdeogyu-san



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 3
DEOGYUSAN NATIONAL PARK
Yukship-ryeong to Bbae-jae 32km in 2 or 3 days



Deogyu-san National Park
덕유산국립공원

Yukship-ryeong to Satgat Daepiso
11.5km 7hr20min

Yukship-ryeong 1hr20min 2km to
 Halmi-bong 할미봉 2hr50min 4.5km to
 Seo-bong 서봉 1km 60min to
 Namdeogyu-san 남덕유산 4km 2hr to
 Satgat Daepiso 사갓대피소

Jeollabuk-do
전라북도

Muju-gun
무주군

Seo-bong
서봉 1492m

Satgat-bong
삿갓봉 1419m

Muryong-san
무룡산 1491m

Satgat Daepiso
삿갓대피소

Namdeogyu-san
남덕유산 1507m

Geochang-gun
거창군

Yeonggak-sa
영각사

Gyeongsangnam-do
경상남도

Yeolbong-san
열봉산 1279m

Halmi-bong
할미봉 1026m

Yukship-ryeong to Satgat Daepiso
11.5km 7hr20min

Yukship-ryeong 1hr20min 2km to
 Halmi-bong 할미봉 2hr50min 4.5km to
 Seo-bong 서봉 1km 60min to
 Namdeogyu-san 남덕유산 4km 2hr to
 Satgat Daepiso 사갓대피소

Yukship-ryeong
육십령

Section 3: Crossing Deogyu-san National Park

Yukship-ryeong to Bbae-jae in 2-3 days over 32km

Day 1

Yukship-ryeong 1hr20min 2km Halmi-bong 할미봉 1026m 2hr50min 4.5km
Seo-bong 서봉 1492m 1km 60min Namdeogyu-san 남덕유산 1507m 4km
2hr Satgat Daepiso 사gat대피소 a total of 11.5km in 7hr 10min

Water Stops

(22)N35°46'29"E127°41'09" Wolseong-jae

(23)N35°47'12"E127°40'27" Satgat Daepiso



Deogyu-san National Park 덕유산국립공원

231.65km² of the Deogyu-san mountain-cluster, including one of South Korea's highest summits, was designated a national park on February 1st 1975. The main ridge of Deogyu-san spans more than 30km from south to north and represents the southern reaches of the Sobaek-sanmaek range which extends north through Songnisan, Worak-san and Sobaek-san national parks, forming the southern section of the Baekdu Daegan mountain-system. The ridge of Deogyu-san rises dramatically along the spine's mainline with impressive sharp and steep peaks averaging over 1300m. On your journey through the park you will traverse over 17 of these, and in certain conditions, with spell-binding effects, you may get to see reams of thick cloud rolling over the saddles like a mysterious potion. With the high altitude comes a change in vegetation with low sub-alpine species thriving on the high ridge. In late spring or early summer, large colonies of crimson royal azalea and the sherbet bloom of wild Magnolia appear on the trail edges. In mid-summer other wildflower species such as day lilies and edelweiss can be found lazing in the shade of the forest. During the deep winter snow months, twisted and gnarled Korean Yew and Korean Fir stand frozen in ice, like captured spirits, the victims of a mountain Medusa.

Course Description**Yukship-ryeong 7hr10min 11.5km Satgat Daepiso** 삿갓대피소

On the eastern side of the eco-bridge, there is a country lane that heads north for a short distance to a small brick hut at a signposted trail head that'll take you west up to the ridge. From the ridge, the trail climbs north for the next 2km gaining at least 250m in elevation. It passes over tough rocky sections that require scrambling, before it meets the summit of Halmi-bong, 1026m. The summit area provides excellent 360° views, including a look north at the pointy tips of Seo-bong 서봉 1492m and Namdeogyu-san 남덕유산 1507m, that look like a Doberman pinschers ears. From Halmi-bong you'll make a steep rope-assisted descent before the trail pans out and stays on a nice steady elevation for the next 2.5km until it meets a track junction, where a track runs about 2km southeast to the temple of Yeonggak-sa 영각사. From the junction, the trail starts a viscous but scenic 2km climb up to Seo-bong 서봉, 1492m. It'll gnaw over 500m in elevation as you climb. Once on its summit, you'll be rewarded with fine views south of your previous days trekking, and to the north the spiny back of Deogyu-san. Here the trail turns east, sliding down staircases for 100m into the brow of the pinscher, where it then continues east for 500m to a track junction at the base of Namdeogyu-san 남덕유산. Here you have the option to take the left-hand route that'll see you contour north around the foot of Namdeogyu-san, or you can follow the trail up to its impressive peak, granting you ultra-long views, as far south to your starting-point at Cheonwang-bong, 1915m. From there, you can take the northern trail down, re-joining the Baekdu Daegan Trail.

From Namdeogyu-san the trail lopes northeast dropping onto the dog's back as it cowls for the next 1.3km, losing 300m in elevation, before arriving at the Wolseong-jae 월성재 junction. The western track runs for 6km down to the village of Yangak-ri 양악리 next to the NH19. It is also possible to find water about 200m (22) down this track. The eastern track runs for about 3.4km down to the village of Wolseong-ri. From the junction the trail ascends northeast climbing almost 250m over the next 2km to the peak of Satgat-bong 삿갓봉, 1419m. From Satgat-bong it's downhill less than a kilometre to the Satgat Daepiso 삿갓대피소. A sat-gat is a conical shaped cane weaved rain hat, the type you see farmers wearing, and from afar this peak resembles that shape. Kim Sat-gat (1807-1863) was also the name of a famous minstrel mountain poet who roamed the peninsula wearing such a sat-gat.

Satgat Daepiso 삿갓대피소 **1280m 010-5423-1452**

A cosy shelter it sleeps about 46 people in a mixture of bunk and floor space for between 10-11,000KRW. It has a cooking area, toilets, and small kiosk selling basic amenities. Fresh spring water (23) can be found about 50m down the eastern track. Reservations must be made online.



*I wandered lonely as a tramp ten years -
But still my feet linger in the north western land,
My home looms far above the snowy horizon,
And I cannot sleep in my cold bed.
Hills and rills are pathways of mundane travelers for ages gone by -
Do not boast of your vain-glory in this fleeting life.
Even heroes and beauties soon sigh over their hoary hair.
Under the flickering lantern light in the tavern another year dies away,
As I recall loved ones at home in dreams.
Kim Sat-gat d.1863*



Hyangjeok-bong
향적봉1610m

Hyangjeok-bong Daepiso
향적봉대피소

Jung-bong
중봉1594m

Baekam-bong
백암봉1503m

Osuja Cave
오수자굴

Gwi-bong
귀봉1390m

Jeollabuk-do
전라북도

Muju-gun
무주군

Deogyu-san National Park 덕유산국립공원

Dongyeop-ryeong
동엽령

Muryong-san
무룡산 1491m

Satgat Daepiso
삿갓대피소

Sansu-ri
산수리



Samgong-ri
삼공리

Baekryeon-sa
백련사

Dae-bong
대봉 1263m

Bbae-jae
배재

Mot-bong
못봉 1343m

Woleum-jae
월음재

Galmi-bong
갈리봉 1211m

37

Hwanggyeong-jae
황경재

Songgye-sa
송계사

Sojeong-ri
소정리

37

Gyeongsangnam-do
경상남도

Byeonggok-ri
병곡리

Galgye-ri
갈계리

Satgat Daepiso to Bbae-jae 18.7km 8hr50min

Satgat-jae Daepiso 2hr30min 6km to
Dongyeop-ryeong 동업령 50min 2.2km to
Baekam-bong 백암봉 2hr30min 4.5km to
Mot-bong 1hr50min 3km to
Galmi-bong 1hr10min 3km to
Bbae-jae (Shinpong-ryeong)

Geochang-gun
거창군



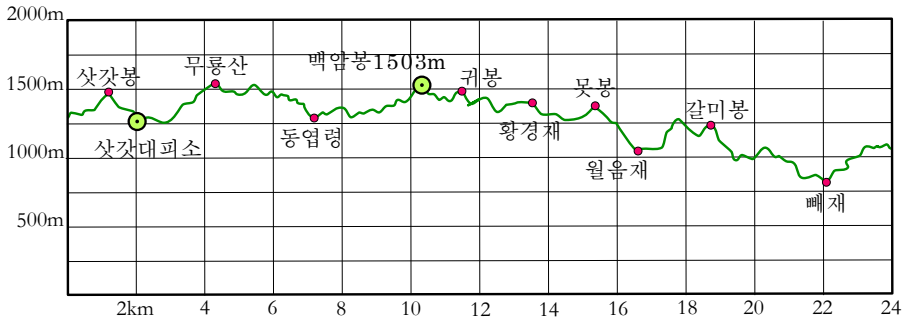
Day 2

Satgat-jae Daepiso 2hr30min 6km Dongyeop-ryeong 동업령 50min 2.2km Baekam-bong 백암봉 1503m 40min 1.5km to Hyangjeok-bong Daepiso a total of 9.7km in 4hr.

Water Stops

(24)N35°49'41"E127°44'13" Dongyeop-ryeong

(25)N35°51'19"E127°45'00" Hyangjeok-bong daepiso



Course Description

Satgat-jae Daepiso 4hr 9.7km Hyangjeok-bong Daepiso

From the shelter the trail stays northeast climbing for the next 2km as it gains about 250m in elevation to the first major peak of Muryong-san 무룡산 1491m. Some of the views back towards Satgat-bong and beyond are exceptional. Directly to its east you might be able to see the dorsal like shape of Gaya-san 가야산 1433m, cutting through the layers of mountain peaks. From Muryong-san the trail stays northeast, beginning a rickety up and down descent for some 4km until you arrive at the trail junction of Dongyeop-ryeong 동업령 1320m, marked by a lovely east facing wooden deck which makes for a great place to stop and eat. You can find spring water (24) about 500m down the western track which runs for 3.3km to the Chilyeon Waterfalls 칠연폭포 and then to a park entrance at Tongan-ri 통안리. The eastern track runs for about 3.5km to the remote village area of Byeonggok-ri 병곡리.

From this junction, the trail veers more to the north staying at about the same elevation until one kilometre later you arrive at the base of Baekam-bong marked by a signposted track heading west off the ridge that joins the same track to the Chilyeon waterfalls. From here the trail begins a one kilometre climb, gaining about 150m in elevation to the peak area of Baekam-bong 백암봉 1503m.

On arrival at the flat and open summit area you'll see the trail junction to Deogyu-san's highest feature, Hyangjeok-bong 향적봉 1610m. The trail to this peak is not part of the Baekdu Daegan, but if you wish to go there, it's about 1.5km away, passing the peak of Jung-bong on-route. At the end, there is a nice national park shelter there called Hyangjeok-bong Daepiso and does not operate under a reservation policy, instead taking people on a first-come first-served basis.

Hyangjeok-bong Daepiso 향적봉대피소 063-322-1614

The shelter sits on the south-eastern face of Hyangjeok-bong and sleeps about 65 people. It has a small kiosk and cooking area. You can also get good spring water (25) from an outside supply.

Hyangjeok-bong 향적봉 1610m

A short 400 meter climb from the shelter is the summit of Hyangjeok-bong 1610m, which offers splendid unimpeded 360° views of the park. Another 500m north is Seoljeon-bong 설전봉 which is the service area for the ski-slopes and cable car. It also has a well-stocked convenience store and sik-dang. A single return cable car ticket will cost you 14,000W. You can also walk down from there on the road that services the peak to the ski-resort village in Simgok-ri 심곡리. From the summit of Hyangjeok-bong and Jung-bong 중봉 1594m, there are also trails that go down to the park entrance village of Samgong-ri 삼공리.

Lodging, Camping and Food

The village of Samgong-ri has many minbaks, motels, hotels, and a national parks campsite, that has wifi, cooking areas, and toilets. A camp site will cost you between 10-12,000W and should be made online, although they may take you on arrival if it's not full. If you're after a meal, then Samgong-ri has a large collection of good sik-dang and convenience stores.

Transport

From the terminal at Samgong-ri buses run regularly throughout the day to the pleasant small town of Muju 무주. Other buses also leave the same terminal 15 times a day to Yeongdong 영동 and on to Daejeon city 15 times a day from 06:55 – 19:30.

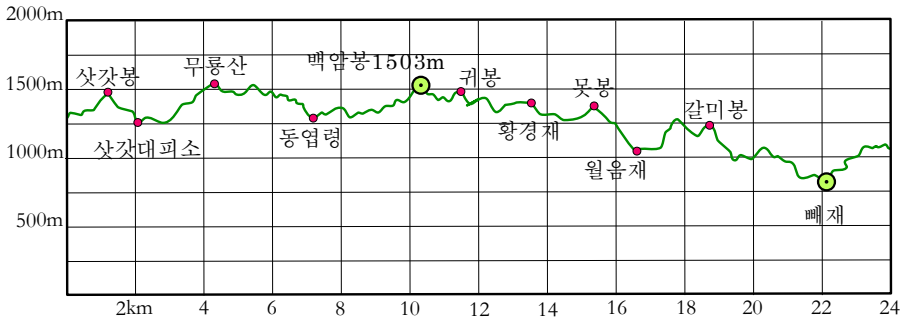
Day 3

Baekam-bong 2hr30min 4.5km Mot-bong 1hr50min 3km Galmi-bong 1hr10min 3kmt to Bbae-jae (Shinpung-ryeong) 1hr10min 3kmt
a total of 10.5km in 5hr 30min

Water Stops

(26) N35°52'03"E127° 49' 45" Bbae-jae

(27) N35°52'33.03" E127°49'32.07" Bbae-jae Yaksuteo 뼈재약수터



Course Description

Baekam-bong 5hr30min 10.5km Bbae-jae 뼈재 930m

From Baekam-bong the Baekdu Daegan Trail will swing east where it'll slowly fall on a decent track through rock and forest for the next 3km till it arrives at the pass of Huinggyeong-jae 황경재. The track running south from there, travels 2.8km to the village of Sojeong-ri 소정리. From the pass the trail dips into a long northeast running saddle which flows for about 1km, before making a short ascent up to the peak of Mot-bong 못봉 1343m, with good views. From here the trail veers east again, dipping 300m in a kilometre down to the pass of Woleum-jae 월읍재. The next 5km see you staying predominantly east as you continue to coast down to the pass of Bbae-jae, passing over at least two major peaks, Dae-bong 대봉 1263m a kilometre way, and then Galmi-bong 갈미봉 1211m another kilometre after that, before tumbling out onto the road pass 2.8km later.

Bbae-jae 뼈재 (Bone pass) or Shinpung-ryeong 신흥령 (Fresh wind pass) 930m

Bbae-jae is located on NH37 between the Deogyu-san Samgong-ri area 8.5km to the northwest and Goje-myeon 12.5km to the southeast. Like some passes on the Baekdu Daegan it is becoming more remote due to a road tunnel being built deep beneath it, giving it a forgotten feel.



After a long day, the pass is a peaceful place to camp and provides you with a nice jeong-ja and commanding views. The jeong-ja is called Sinpung-jeong **신평정**, meaning fresh wind pavilion, and was erected in memory of persons whom died at this pass over the course of Korea's bloody history. Bbae-jae meaning bone-pass acquired its name in 936 during the Goryeo Dynasty, as over-time many fatal battles were fought at this place. Therefore, it was not uncommon for peddlers and travellers to find remains from these battles as they passed over it, and during that period, the pass got its name, Bbae-jae, bone-pass. Later on during the Japanese Imjin invasions of Korea (1592-8) some folk fled to these nearby hills to train as fighters against the Japanese. These freedom fighters lived and survived off the land, and became so emaciated that their bones protruded distinctively from their starved torsos, adding more irony to the name of the pass. Later during the Korean War, Deogyu-san became a hideout and passage of movement for northern and southern Korean partisans fighting against the Republic of Korea armed forces, and they too became bony figures of resistance. Enjoy your dark night at the haunted bone-pass.

Lodging and Camping

Sleeping in the Sinpung-jeong or setting up a tent in the nearby grassy area is permitted, but set your space up near dark, in case some locals want to use it during the day. At time of updating (July 2016) a large complex was being built beneath the jeong-ja. Tap water **(26)** should be available there by completion. If not, then about 1.5km on the north side of the pass is the Bbaejae-yaksuteo **뼈재약수터** 063-322-9872 a small sik-dang with a freshwater spring **(27)**. It also sells a mean homemade dongdong-ju **동동주** rice-wine. The nearest accommodation is the Bbae-jae Sanjang **뼈재산장** 055-943-2957 located about 2km on the south side of the pass.

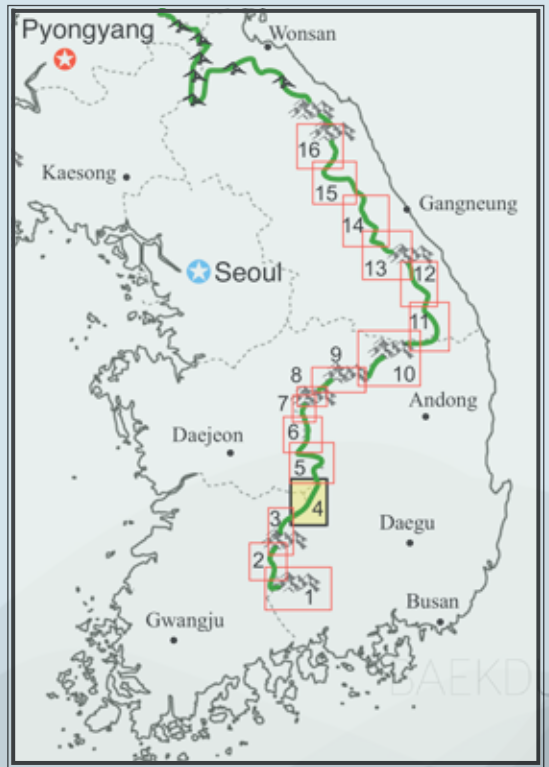
Transport

A tunnel now runs deep under the pass, meaning not much traffic flows over it. Hitchhiking from here may be a problem. The nearest bus stop is back in Samgong-ri, north of the pass. On the southern side the closest bus stop is 4km away at Sojeong-ri 소정리. Buses leave from there heading for the town of Geochang 거창, three times a day at 12:10, 15:50 and 17:30.



Korean Yew Tree (Jumok namu)

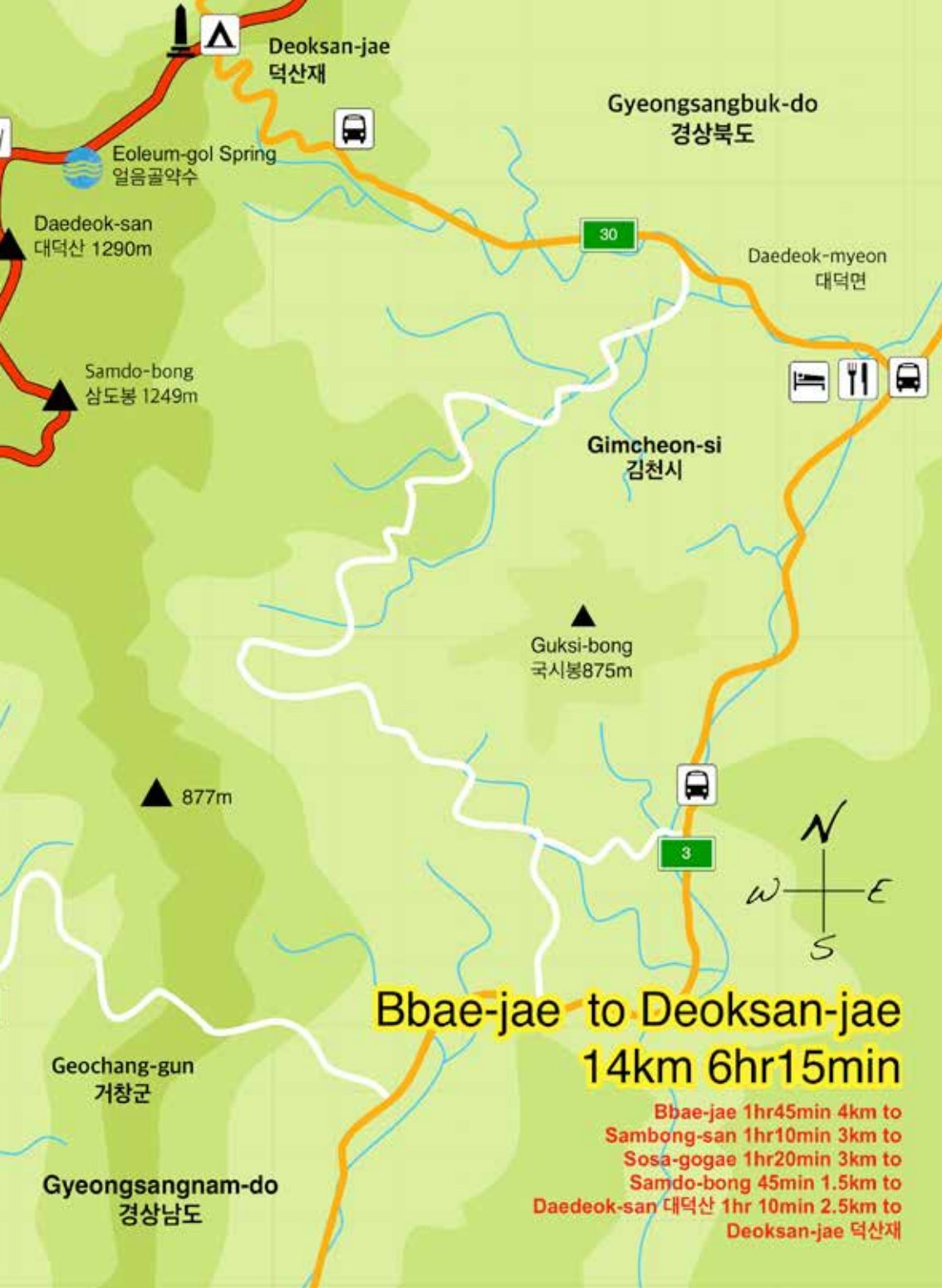
백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 4
STELE TRAIL: Bbae-jae to Gwaebang-ryeong
50.5km in 3 or 4 days





Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

Deoksan-jae
덕산재

Eoleum-gol Spring
얼음골약수

Daedeok-san
대덕산 1290m

Samdo-bong
삼도봉 1249m

Daedeok-myeon
대덕면

Gimcheon-si
김천시

Guksi-bong
국시봉 875m

▲ 877m

Geochang-gun
거창군

Gyeongsangnam-do
경상남도

Bbae-jae to Deoksan-jae
14km 6hr15min

- Bbae-jae 1hr45min 4km to Sambong-san 1hr10min 3km to Sosa-gogae 1hr20min 3km to Samdo-bong 45min 1.5km to Daedeok-san 대덕산 1hr 10min 2.5km to Deoksan-jae 덕산재

Section 4: The Stele Trail

From Bbae-jae to Gwaebang-ryeong in 3 to 4 days over 50.5km

Day 1

Bbae-jae 1hr45min 4km **Sambong-san** 1hr10min 3km **Sosa-gogae** 1hr20min 3km **Samdo-bong** 45min 1.5km **Daedeok-san** 대덕산 1hr 10min 2.5km **Deoksan-jae** 덕산재 a total of 14km in 6 hr15min

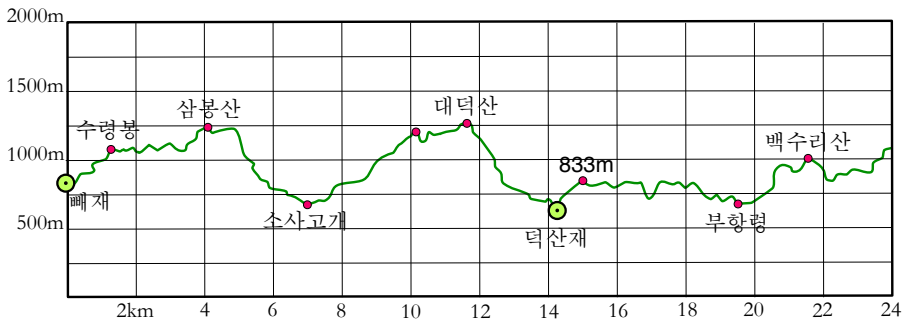
Water Stops

(28)N35°53'59"E127°51'54" Sosa-gogae

(29)N35°55'50"E127°53'06" Eoleum-yaksuteo

(30)N35°56'19"E127°54'03" Deoksan-jae

"There's this old dude sitting in the jeongja, and he starts chatting to me. He lives an exiled life in a hovel, just on the east side of the pass. We go down for lunch. So then he takes my pulse, and it's kind of fascinating, and he starts telling me things about my health. Then he goes into this cabinet and gets all these ingredients and starts mashing them up in to these little balls. After eating them, I start getting this incredible burning sensation in my chest, and it's alarming, like I had just eaten a briquette of hot coal, I thought he was murdering me with his chest burning Chinese medicine! I take a rest and later he appears over me, and he asks, 'So did it burn? Do you feel it?' 'Yeah, it's burning, it's pretty hot,' I gasp, and he looks me directly in the eye, and whispers, 'That's the medicine entering your heart.'" Jeff Hagen (U.S.A), May 2012.



Course Description

Bbae-jae 6hr15min 14km Deoksan-jae 덕산재

From the jeongja, the trail head is located approximately 100 metres down the southeast side where you'll see a set of wooden stairs. Follow the trail up to the ridge and turn east walking about 1km before arriving at a signpost.



Take the trail to Sambong-san 삼봉산 which will flow northeast on good ground, passing a couple of signposts, before arriving at Sambong-san's summit at 1254m, marked by a ring of low trees and two stone stele. Sambong-san means a mountain with three peaks. The trail from Sambong-san turns north on a rocky ridge for less than 1km offering you some nice views to the east over a farmer's valley with two large mountains on the other side. They are Samdo-bong 삼도봉 1249m and Daedeok-san 대덕산 1290m of the Baekdu Daegan. The trail will then turn east dropping over 500m in elevation for the next 3km, as it enters cabbage patches and apple orchards before arriving at an eco-bridge crossing over the PR1089. This pass is called Sosa-gogae 650m.

Lodging and Food

On the northwest side of the tunnel is the Tap-seon supa 탐선수파, Tel: 055-9449051. It is run by a local woman and her small dog called Boksunga meaning peach. Her business has a small but well stocked mart at the front and a basic room at the rear of the building next to her rabbit and chicken coops. The long-drop toilets are located outside in the farmyard. The small curious white dog is called Boksunga 복숭아 or peach. Water (28) is available from tap or the store.

Transport

From Tapseon-dong 탐선동 on the south-eastern side of the pass buses leave to Geochang 8 times daily from 06:50 – 19:10. From Dogye on the north-western side of the pass buses head for Muju 5 times daily at 07:30, 11:30, 15:20, 17:40 and 19:25.

Leaving Sosa-gogae, 650m, the trail head is located opposite the Tap-seon supa. The trail jumps in and out of lanes and forest as it heads northeast uphill for about 1km where it leaves the fields and enters the forest for good. Follow the ribbons on this steep 500m elevation climb northeast for about 1.5km until it joins the ridge at hopefully a trail junction where the southeast route is the beginning of a 105km subsidiary ridge trail called the Sudo-jimaek 수도지맥. Turn north here and follow the ridge north for about 500m coming out at Samdo-bong 삼도봉 1249m also known as Chojeom-san 초점산. The summit area has a signpost, two benches, and a stone tablet. Like its predecessor in Jiri-san, Samdo-bong marks the meeting of three provincial borders, Gyeongsangnam and buk-do, and Jeollabuk-do. There is enough space here for a small camp. Good views can be seen from the top. From here, the trail stays north dropping into a saddle before climbing up to Daedeok-san 대덕산 1209m, arriving there about 1.4km later. The open summit is marked by a large heli-pad, a signpost, and a couple of stone steles. The mountain is said to hold special powers that if harnessed can warrant your success. Its proximity offers long views to the east and west, and it is also a major water source of both the Geum River to the west and Nakdong River to the east. It was the scene of some fierce battles between warring Silla and Baekje, as well as against Japanese marauders. A signboard at the summit also says that tigers used to live at each end of this ridge. From Daedeok-san the trail continues north briefly, where it'll then turn east, beginning its descent to Deoksan-jae. A short time into that descent you'll come across a never-dry mineral spring named (29) Eoleum-gol. A sign there says it has a carbonic acidic taste with a touch of brimstone and its iciness cannot be compared with any other spring. This is a good place to top up, as there is no water source at your next road pass of Deoksan-jae. From the spring the easterly descent continues for another 2km until it spills out at Deoksan-jae.

Deoksan-jae 덕산재 644m

Deok-san-jae is connected by the NH30 which runs west for 8km to the small town of Mupung-myeon 무풍면 and east to Daedeok-myeon 대덕면. An NH30 road tunnel now runs deeply under the ridge, keeping this pass remote. The pass is marked by a four-meter-high Baekdu Daegan stele. A small house designated as the Sanshin-jeon 산신전 (mountain-spirit abode) sits at the back of a car park area and is owned by a shy hermit.

Camping and Food

On the southwest side is a grassy area that has enough space for a tent. If you can get a lift, food can be bought in the small towns either side of the pass. Pump operated tap water (30) is available at the hermit's house, but it's under lock and key, so you'll need to ask him politely for access.

Transport

Local buses don't cross the pass, but run from Deoksan-ri 덕산리 about 2km southeast of the pass to Daedeok-myeon, and about 2km on the northwest run from Bupyong-ri 부평리 to Mupung-myeon. Hitching or walking is recommended.



Deoksan-jae to Udu-ryeong 23.5km 10hr

- Deoksan-jae 덕산재 2hr15min 4.5km to Buhang-ryeong 부항령 4hr 8km to Samdo-bong 삼도봉 60min 3km to Milmok-jae 밀목재 1hr50min 4.5km to Hwaju-bong 화주봉 60min 3.5km to Udu-ryeong 우두령

Day 2

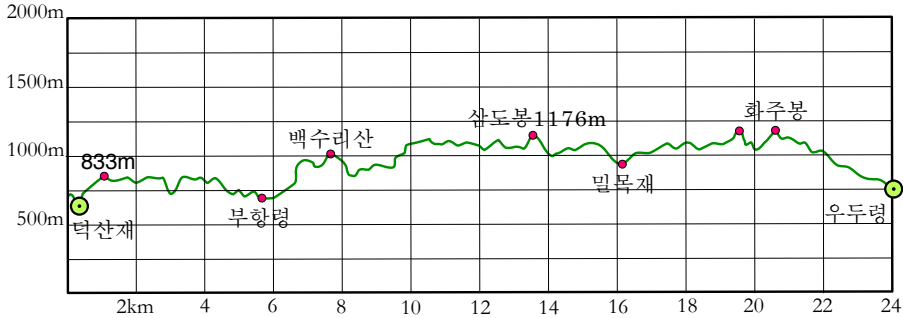
Deoksan-jae 2hr15min 4.5km Buhang-ryeong 부항령 4hr 8km Samdo-bong 삼도봉 60min 3km Milmok-jae 밀목재 1hr50min 4.5km Hwaju-bong 화주봉 60min 3.5km Udu-ryeong 우두령 a total of 23.5km in 10 hours

Water Stops

(31)N36°00'51"N127°53'07" track to Hae-in shelter

(32)N36°01'16"N127°52'00" Seokgi-bong near Samdo-bong

(33)N36°03'53"E127°57'47" Udu-ryeong



Course Description

Deoksan-jae 6hr15min 12.5km Samdo-bong 1176m

Leaving Deoksan-jae the trail is clearly marked by ribbons on the western side of the hermit's house. From there it climbs north up to peak 833m, where it'll stay more or less north at that elevation on pine flanked trail for the next 3.5km where it'll make a short yet sharp descent down to the road pass of Buhang-ryeong

Buhang-ryeong 부항령 680m

A forested eco-bridge crosses the PR1089 at Buhang-ryeong. The road to the east runs 6km to the village of Buhang-myeon, and west to the well-equipped small town of Mupung-myeon.

"There are leopards here." He said with a medically induced twinkle in his eye. It was early morning and a silent fog washed the hillsides. Mr. Kim had driven here because the air was good and the place calm. I told him there may have been leopards here in the past, but he shook his head in defiance. "They are here."

Lodging and Camping

About 600m on the eastern side of Buhang-ryeong is a neat park with a jeongja and long-drop toilets, but there is no water here. If you hitch 3.5km to the west you'll come to a road intersection with the Silla Garden restaurant and minbak 신라가든. They have rooms available for 30,000W and one of the best beef rib soups (Galbi-tang 갈비탕) you'll ever eat on this walk. Tel: 063 324 1055 or 010 3823 0084.

Back above the tunnel the trail climbs steadily for the next 2.2km in a north, west, then north direction, before arriving at the peak of Baeksuri-san 백수리산, 1034m. About 30min into the climb where the trail starts to veer west, there is a right hand trail option. This trail continues north, cutting out the western elbow, before joining the trail again below Baeksuri-san. It's a good detour. The open summit of Baeksuri-san is marked with a small stele nestled proudly in the center. Views are great in all directions. From Baeksuri-san the trail drops north, then lifts northwest, before climbing to the peak 1170m some 2.7km later. The trail will stay at good elevation for the next 3km on a northerly bearing, passing through forest until it reaches the foot of Samdo-bong 삼도봉, 1176m, at a trail junction. If you're thinking of camping out on Samdo-bong, then more water (31) can be found about 500m down the southern side of the junction.

Lodging

Some 500m more past the spring is the Haein-sanjang 해인산장, an excellent mountain accommodation run by Mr Kim Yong Won 김용원 and his kind wife. It's a good place to stay with rooms for about 30-40,000W and good food. Tel: 054 437 1991.



Samdo-bong 1176m

“I have no idea if I will get fed, I’m expecting not, we’ve had a long conversation about it and I’ve been shown a bowl of rice.” Sarah began to wonder if her ‘questionable’ phrasebook skills were getting her anywhere. “I was beginning to think that I might have to dig into my own meagre supplies and eat a chocolate bar.” So with her bowl of rice, Sarah ate her chocolate bar. “And soon after that Mr. Kim came and got me and took me into their house to eat. I was very pleased; you have no idea. We ate a delicious array of, lots of dishes of green things and more rice and some soup as well, which I think included tofu. We managed ‘goodness only knows how’ to establish that I don’t eat meat. ‘No meat,’ was part of my small Korean vocabulary.”

Samdo-bong 삼도봉 1176m

Samdo-bong divides the provinces of Chungcheongbuk-do to the north, Jeollabuk-do to the west and Gyeongsangbuk-do to the east. Its peak is celebrated by a huge monument called Hwahap-tap 화합탑 (Harmony Monument). This large stone statue features three turtles and three dragons with an orb on top. The turtles represent the foundation of each province, the dragons the heavens of each province, and the orb is the pearl of wisdom that the three provinces share.



Camping

Samdo-bong offers plenty of space to pitch a tent, including the wooden decks in front of the Hwahap-tap, but there’s no water at the peak. A trail to the west heads along a spur for 1.3km to the summit of Seokgi-bong 석기봉 1242m. Just short of Seokgi-bong is an elaborate jeongja offering shelter for the hiker, water (32) can also be found at this peak, marked by a small doltap. The other prominent pyramid shaped peak on the same ridge trail further northwest is Minjuji-san 민주지산 1241m.

Samdo-bong 4.5hr 10.8km Udu-ryeong

From Samdo-bong the trail drops quite quickly for 1km in a northeast direction to Sammagol-jae 삼마골재 1012m, where it then climbs north for 1km to peak 1123m, before it drops again heading northeast arriving at the pass of Milmok-jae 밀목재 at 760m. From there the trail starts a steady climb on good trail east then north for the next 3.5km until it arrives at peak 1172m.

The rocky open peak offers awesome vistas back along the jade ridge, and to the east the distinctive peak of Hwaju-bong 화주봉. To get to this next peak, the trail drops sharply east on a series of hair-raising fixed ropes into a deep saddle. From there the trail meanders its way back up the ridge before arriving at Hwaju-bong 화주, 1195m, also called Seokgyo-bong 석교봉 about 1km later. The summit has a small stone tablet bearing its name and height, offering more good views to the east and south. The stretch from Hwaju-bong to the road pass at Udu-ryeong is a northeast downhill for 3.5km all the way to the quiet saddle.

Udu-ryeong 우두령 720m

Connected by an eco-bridge that runs over the PR901, Udu-ryeong or “Cow’s Head Pass” 720m, is also known as Jilmae-jae 질매재 meaning “Pack Saddle Pass”. It got its name as its shape resembles a bull’s head. These days, a large cow shaped stele exists at the pass. The pass has an old tradition as being an isolated trading route between the regions to the east and west, and during Japanese pillaging of the peninsula, the locals would come here to hide. During the 1592 Imjin Invasion of Korea, a local troop led by Kim Myeon ambushed 2000 Japanese soldiers here, killing 1500 of them. During the Korean War this area was used by North and South Korean partisans fighting governmental troops. These days this high pass has more peaceful uses and on very hot summer days the locals will drive up to the eco-bridge and sit in the tunnel enjoying the shade and cool air getting sucked through it.



Views east from Udu-ryeong

Lodgings and Camping

Udu-ryeong has no facilities, but the area around the monument is a big enough place to pitch a tent. But there is a better place to camp about 700m down the southern side of the pass, where you'll see on the roadside a picnic area with tables and benches. It has fantastic views east down the huge valley. For water, not that much farther on, from a bend in the road, you should see or hear a mountain stream (33). The town of Sangchon-myeon 상촌면, located 12km on the north side of the pass, did have a hard to find Yeo-gwan 여관 (hostel) run by a blind old man who knew the size of the notes you gave him. You can try asking the locals. Otherwise the town has a Nong-hyup Bank, sik-dang, marts, supa, chicken shacks, and brewer, Kim Seon-do 김선도 who makes a fine wheat makoli; his brewery 양조장 (Yangjo-jang) is located just off the main road.

Transport

No buses come over the pass. You'll have to walk 3.7km to Heungdeok-ri 흥덕리 on the north side of the pass, where buses run only four times a day to Yeongdong-gun 영동군 passing Sangchon-myeon, starting at 08:00, 10:50, 15:40 and 18:30. On the other side of the pass, it's a long 5 or 6km walk to Masan-ri 마산리 where buses depart for Gimcheon city four times a day at 07:35, 09:55, 15:00 and 18:10. Hitching is the preferred option from Udu-ryeong, but you may have to wait a while.



Udu-ryeong (cow head pass)



☞

Gangjin-ri 강진리

Gwaebang-ryeong 과방령



Chungcheongbuk-do 충청북도

Yeongdong-gun 영동군

906

Unsu-bong 운수봉 668m

Hwangak-san 황악산 1111m

Jikji-sa 직지사

Hyeongje-bong 형제봉

Gimcheon-si 김천시

Baram-jae 바람재

Yeojeong-bong 여정봉 1034m

Gyeongsangbuk-do 경상북도

901

Samseong-san 삼성산 985m

Udu-ryeong to Gwaebang-ryeong
12.5km 5hr

Udu-ryeong 우두령

Udu-ryeong 2hr10min 5km to Baram-jae 바람재 1hr50min 4.5km to Unsu-bong 운수봉 1hr10min 3km to Gwaebang-ryeong

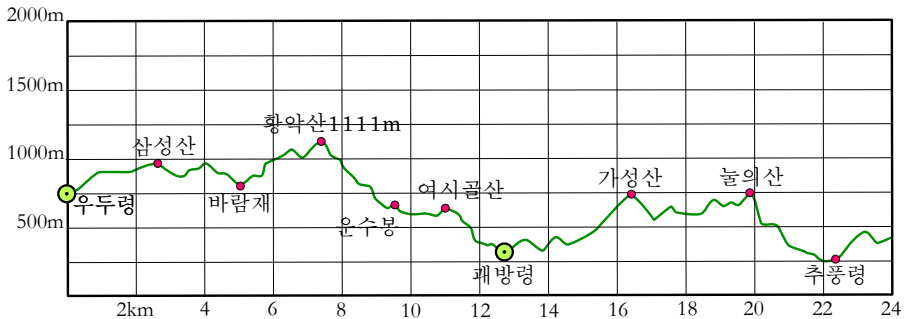


Day 3

Udu-ryeong 2hr10min 5km Baram-jae 바람재 1hr50min 4.5km Unsu-bong 운수봉 1hr10min 3km Gwaebang-ryeong a total of 12.5km in 5hr

Water Stop

(34)N36° 09'07"E127°59'26" Gwaebang-ryeong



Course Description

Udu-ryeong 5hr 12.5km Gwaebang-ryeong 괘방령

The ribboned trail enters the forest on the northern side of the road climbing east for 500m to peak 870m where it turns north and steadily makes its way for 1.8km to Samseong-san 삼성산 985m. From there the trail dips into a saddle before climbing out and arriving 1.5km later at Yeosang-san 여정산 1034m. There, the trail will switch east making its way for 1.2km to the pass of Baram-jae 바람재 810m.

Baram-jae 바람재 810m

The grassy pass is marked by some benches and a signboard. It used to be called Pung-ryeong, meaning windy-pass, which is the same meaning as Baram-jae. Both names come from a period when Confucian scholars had to make the long walk over these blustery saddles to sit their national exams in Seoul.

From Baram-jae, the Baekdu Daegan turns north climbs 200m in elevation for 1.2km up to Hyeongjae-bong 형제봉 1040m. From there it stays north on good ridge for another kilometre before arriving at the peak of Hwangak-san 황악산 1111m, marked by a helipad and signboard. The peak also offers fine views south to Gimcheon and the famous Jikji-sa temple.

Jikji-sa 직지사

Jikji-sa (Finger-Pointing Monastery) may be one of the oldest temples in Korea. Believed to be built in 418AD by Master Ado, this date is reputed to be more than 100 years before the mandated acceptance of Buddhism in Korea. Its site was inspired by the broad and high ridge of Hwangak-san and it is said that Master Ado simply pointed to this valley below the peak saying 'this is a good place to build a temple'. The temple has been rebuilt and renovated many times since. The road leading to the temple is dotted with motels and restaurants serving delicious mountain vegetable meals. There is also a Rose of Sharon botanical garden and a culture park with a number of interesting sculptures.

From the summit area you basically descend with the Jikji-sa signposts for the next 2.2km in a north east direction, dropping almost 500m in elevation, until you arrive at a trail junction marked by a signpost pointing 700m to Jikji-sa. From there you stay straight, heading up the brow to Unsu-bong 운수봉 668m, where the trail will undulate north for about 1km passing a cave, before arriving at the peak of Yeosigol-san 여시골산, 625m. Yeosi means fox, and the valleys of this area were once common for foxes, gol means valley, hence the name Yeosigol-san. From here it's a 2km northeast descent all the way to the road pass of Gwaebang-ryeong.

Gwaebang-ryeong 300m 궤방령

Gwaebang-ryeong is connected by the PR906 and acts a provincial border between Chungcheongbuk-do province to the west and Gyeongsangbuk-do to the east. It was once the main route that scholars of the Gyeongsang region took when traveling to Seoul to partake in the Gwageo (national civil-service examinations) of the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910). As seems to be the trend, it was also the location of fierce fighting during the Imjin invasion of 1592-1598, and is where General Park Lee-ryeong defeated the Japanese. A shrine to General Park named Hwangui-sa 화의사, is located about 1.5km west along the road in Oechon-ri 어촌리.

Lodging and Food

Today the pass is home to the Gwaebang-ryeong sanjang 괘방령산장 010-5281-8008. A well-made timber and rail sleeper structure, it is the home of Mr Park Gi-seong and his wife Jeon Yeong-ae, and was opened in 2007. Their Gwaebang-ryeong Sanjang offers a couple of clean rooms in a friendly environment. If they're around ask them if you can camp on the grassy area on the premises. If you're invited to eat and drink, please offer to pay them. In the evenings, the place can sometimes become a party or live music venue for guests. Further to the west about 1.5km away is the small village of Gangjin-ri 강진리. On its main road is a small rough looking supa that is normally well-stocked. On the eastern side of the pass is a covered jeongja area to camp in as well

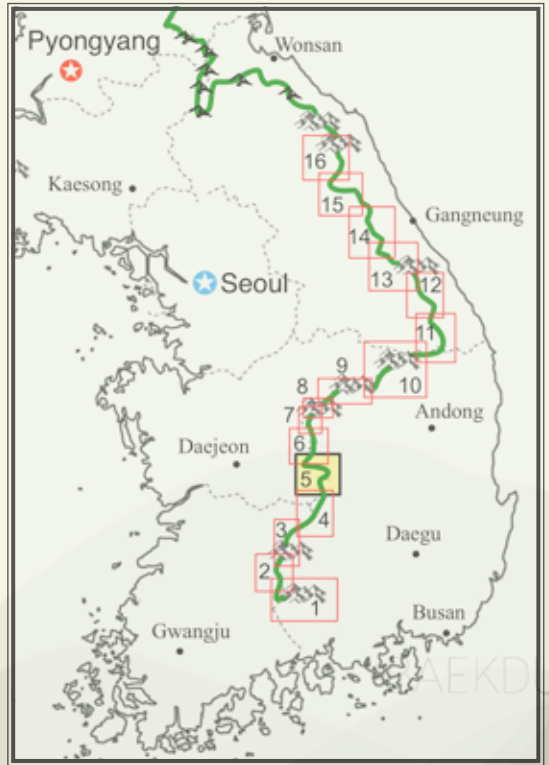
Transport

Buses running between Imsan-ri 임산리 to the west and Gimcheon City to the east cross Gwaebang-ryeong daily. They leave Gimcheon for Imsan at 06:35, 08:35, 14:35, 17:05 and 19:05 and Imsan for Gimcheon at 07:05, 10:00, 16:00, 18:20 and 19:45.



Gwaebang-ryeong Sanjang

백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 5
CENTRAL KOREA
Gwaebang-ryeong to Hwa-ryeong, 62.8km in 4 days



Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Keun-jae
큰재

Sangju-si
상주시

Guksu-bong
국수봉795m

Jijang-san
지장산772m

Yongmun-san
용문산708m

Yeongdong-gun
영동군

Gimcheon-si
김천시

Chupung-ryeong
추풍령

Jakjeom-gogae
작점고개

Nului-san
눌의산744m

Nanham-san
난함산733m

Gaseong-san
가성산730m

Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

Gwaebang-ryeong to Keun-jae 28.5km 13hr

- Gwaebang-ryeong 괘방령 2hr 4km to
- Gaseong-san 고성산 2hr 3km to
- Nului-san 눌의산 1hr 4km to
- Chupung-ryeong 추풍령 3hr40min 8km to
- Jakjeomgogae 작점고 2hr10min 4.5km to
- Yongmun-san 용문산 1hr 2km to
- Guksu-bong 국수봉 1hr15min 3km to
- Keun-jae 큰재

Gwaebang-ryeong
괘방령

Section 5: Central Korea

From Gwaebang-ryeong to Hwaryeong-jae in 4 days over 62.8km

Day 1

Gwaebang-ryeong 패방령 2hr 4km **Gaseong-san** 가성산 2hr 3km **Nului-san** 놀의산 1hr 4km **Chupung-ryeong** 추풍령 3hr40min 8km to **Jakjeomgogae** 작점고개 a total of 19km in 8hr40min

Water Stop

(35)N36°12'31"E128°00'12" Chupung-ryeong



Course Description

Gwaebang-ryeong 5hr 11km Chupung-ryeong

From Gwaebang-ryeong 300m, the trail crosses the road and ascends northeast into thick forest for about 1km before reaching an unnamed peak located at 418m. Follow the trail northwest, ascending about 300m over a distance of almost 3km to the peak of Gaseong-san 가성산 at 730m. The summit of Gaseong-san is thick with trees surrounding what is supposed to be a helipad, offering no views. On one edge of the heli-pad is a small stele set amongst a stone pile. Leaving Gaseong-san the trail descends north for about 800m losing almost 200m in elevation, into a saddle, before making a short crawl to the summit of Janggun-bong 장군봉, 625m. From there it starts an undulating rise for the next 2km in a northerly direction until it arrives at the summit of Nuli-san 놀의산, 744m. The summit is marked by a helipad and small stele, and offers good views east of the NE1, running parallel with NH4 and a central railway system. These main transportation arteries cut straight through the center mass of South Korea at what is the lowest pass over the Baekdu Daegan at Chupung-ryeong 추풍령, 221m. From Nului-san, the Baekdu Daegan descends east for about 4km losing over 500m in elevation.



Near the end you will come out of the forest into farmland, orchards, and family tombs, south of the small town of Chupung-ryeong. By following the ribbons, the trail meets a series of road tunnels that go under the expressway and train tracks, before taking you out onto the south-end of town.

Chupung-ryeong (35) 추풍령 221m

I like Chupung-ryeong. It has an old shameless feel about it that hasn't changed much in the last 50 years or so. With its low altitude, it is the easiest and most direct place to cross the Baekdu Daegan from the south-east, to the rest of the peninsula, but in the old days when Confucian scholars were making the pilgrimage to Seoul to sit their state exams, they preferred to use Gwaebang-ryeong, as Chupung-ryeong's meaning of 'fallen leaves in autumn' was too despairing and invoked bad luck. Maybe that's the reason why, still today, despite its geographical ease and arterial trunk-way, Chupung-ryeong is not a hub of peddling activity, instead it is a dusty ramshackle of sikdang, chicken shacks, and hof-bars, giving it the character of a tumbleweed Korean cowboy town. For shopping there is also a Nong-hyup, some supa's, and a well stocked CU store.

Lodgings

The best place to stay is near where the trail hits the town after ducking under the expressway. To your right will be the Karib Motel 카리브모텔 042-742-9938/043-742-9938 a white four storey building with rooms for 30-40,000W.

Transport

The Chupung-ryeong Bus Terminal is located on the western edge of town with buses that run regularly into Gimcheon city 김천시, Yeongdong-gun 영동군, and Cheongju city 청주시. The town also has a railway station, where the Mungunghwa service stops for passengers traveling between Seoul and Busan.

Chupung-ryeong 추풍령 3hr40min 8km to Jakjeomgogae 작점고개

From the Karib motel, the trail head begins on a small cement road that runs east alongside the NH4, where it ascends quickly up to the peak of Geum-san 금산, 360m. From there, it'll shimmy along the upper lip of an expired quarry before meandering southeast for the next 1.5km up to the summit of Mae-bong 매봉, 498m. This is the 200km mark of the Baekdu Daegan trail. There, it stays on a good but featureless southeast trail for the next 1km into a saddle junction where you then climb to a wooded summit at 500m. The trail then turns northeast and descends for 1km to the pass of Sagijeom-gogae 사기점고개 390m, where it then ascends to Namhan-san Im-do 남한산임도, which is a service road. If you like, you can follow that road north down to the pass of Jakjeom-jae some 2km later, or take the Baekdu Daegan trail as it parallels that road to the same location. Jakjeom-jae 작점재, 340m is connected by a sealed road 6km east of Chupung-ryeong and 8km west of NH3.

Lodging and Camping

The pleasant pass consists of a large grassy rest area containing a well-built jeongja called the Neungchi Suimteo 능치쉼터. There is ample space to pitch a tent, but there is no water source or toilet facilities here.



Transport

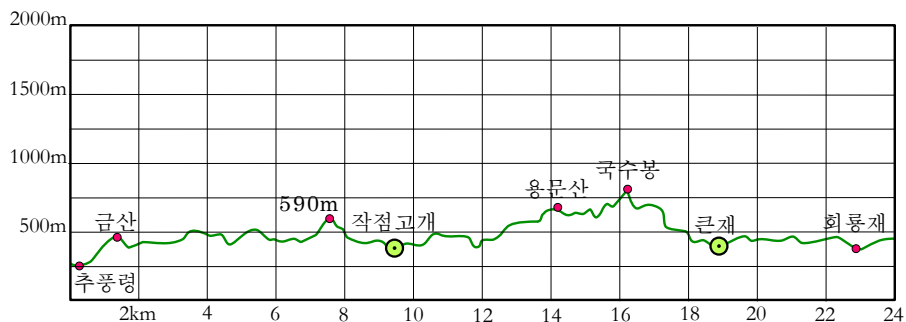
There is no bus service over the pass, meaning you will have to hitch or walk from the pass to get to Chupung-ryeong. If trying to get to the pass from Chupung-ryeong, the taxi rank is located outside the bus terminal.

Day 2

Jakjeom-gogae 2hr10min 4.5km Yongmun-san 용문산 1hr 2km Guksu-bong 국수봉 1hr15min 3km to Keun-jae 큰재 a total of 9.5km in 4hr25min.

Water Stop

(36)N35°16'35"E128°02'48" Keun-jae



Course Description

Jakjeom-gogae 4hr25min 9.5km Keun-jae 큰재

From Jakjeom-gogae, 340m, the trail ascends north then west for about 1km up to Mujwagol-san 무좌골산, 474m where it turns north again, descending to the pass of Galhyeon 갈현 350m. From there it climbs up, passing a creepy hut near an area called Gido-bawi 기도바위, which translates as “prayer rock”. After that it continues climbing northwest for about 2km before arriving at peak 687m, where the trail then turns northeast arriving shortly at the summit of Yongmun-san 용문산 708m, marked by a small stone stele. The trail bumps along northeast dropping into a shallow saddle marked by a signpost 800m later, which reads, 1.2km to Guksu-bong. Follow that as it climbs sharply back up the ridge to Guksu-bong 795m, the highest feature on this leg. From Guksu-bong, the trail starts a 450m elevation loss as it falls for the next 3km in a northerly direction to the road pass of Keun-jae.

Keun-jae 큰재 320m

Keun-jae is connected by PR68 that heads northwest 5km to a service area containing a sikdang and motel on the banks of the Sangpan lake 상판저수지 and to the east, 7km to the small town of Gongseong-myeon 공성면 where it meets NH3. On the other side of Keun-jae is the Baekdu Daegan Eco-Forest Center 백두대간 숲 생태원. This facility does not permit camping on its grounds, but it does have tap water (36) which you can take. The trail passes directly through its middle.

Lodgings, Camping and Food

You might be able to pitch a free-standing tent in the car park opposite the eco-forest center, otherwise, if you can't find somewhere to camp at the pass, then the nearest lodging is at the Ehwajang Park 이화장 054-534-3301 located just south of Gongseong town on NH3. Run by lovely Ms. Park Hye-sil and her husband Mr. Kim Min-gon, it has excellent clean rooms for 30,000W with small fridge, TV, shower and wifi. The one-street country town of Gongseong should have everything you need including many sikdang, supa, and a Nong-hyup.

Transport

Buses running between Sangju City 상주시 to the east and Sangpan-ri 상판리 about 8km to the west cross Keun-jae. They leave Sangju for Sangpan-ri at 09:15, 12:50 and 17:50. Going the other way they leave Sangpan-ri for Sangju at 10:30, 14:00 and 19:00.



Keun-jae to Hwaryeong-jae

42.1km 18hr

Hwaseo-myeon
화서면

Hwaryeong-jae
화령재

Yunjimi-san
윤지미산 538m

Mujigae-san
무지개산 438m

Sinuiteo-jae
신의터재

Hwadong-myeon
화동면

Nakseo-ri
낙서리

Sangju-si
상주시

Jigi-jae
지기재

- Keun-jae 2hr20min 5.5km to Gaeteo-jae 개터재 1hr40min 4km to Witwangsil-jae 윗왕실재 1hr 3km to Baekhak-san 백학산 1hr35min 4.3km to Gaemeori-jae 개머리재 1hr10min 2.5km to Jigi-jae 지기재 1hr35min 4.5km to Sinuiteo-jae 신의터재 1hr40min 4km to Mujugae-san 무죽개산길 1hr 45min 4.3km to Yunjimi-san 윤지미산 2.5km 1hr to Hwaryeong-jae 화령재



541m





Witwangsil-jae 윗왕실재

Baekhak-san 백학산 18m

Hyogok-ri 효곡리

Seongbong-san 성봉산 571m

Gyeongsangbuk-do 경상북도

Hoiryong-jae 회룡재

Gongseong-myeon 공성면

Gaemeori-jae 개머리재

Moseo-myeon 모서면

Modong-myeon 모동면

Sangpan Lake 상판저수지

Keun-jae 큰재

Baekdu Daegan Eco Forest Center

Day 3

Keun-jae 2hr20min 5.5km Gaeteo-jae 개터재 1hr40min 4km Witwangsil-jae **윗왕실재 1hr 3km Baekhak-san 백학산 1hr35min 4.3km Gaemeori-jae** **개머리재 1hr10min 2.5km to Jigi-jae 지기재 a total of 19.3km in 7hr40min**

Water Stops

(37)N36°20'04"E128°02'40" Witwangsil-jae

(38)N36°20'32"N128°01'33" 500mtrs west of Baekhak-san



Course Description

Keun-jae 5hr 12km Baekhak-san 백학산

The trail heads north through the eco-forest grounds into the bush, where it continues on flat elevation for about 3.8km to the pass Hoeryeong-jae 회룡재 340m, marked by a signpost. It continues on easy ground north for another 1.6km to Gaeteo-jae 개터재 380m, where it makes a small ascent east to peak 512m. From there the trail turns north again, and fringes the village of Hyogok-ri 효곡리 to the west for about 3km, before arriving at the pass of Witwangsil-jae 윗왕실재, 400m, marked by a small eco-bridge that crosses a mountain road. Depending on the season, water (37) can be found down the north-eastern side of the road in a mountain stream. From here, the trail begins a 2.8km north to west climb up to Baekhak-san 백학산 618m. The delightful summit is marked by a small stele and a couple of benches with nice views northwest of the ridge, and on a good day, you can make out the ominous shapes of Songni-san National Park in the far distance.

Baekhak-san 2hr45min 6.8km Jigi-jae 260m

From the peak the trail descends steeply west off the ridge losing about 250m in elevation before turning north and hitting a mountain road where good water (38) can be found in a stream. There is also ample space to pitch a tent here too. The descent continues southwest on a good wide trail for about 2km before it turns northwest passing through orchards and vineyards arriving at the small road pass of Gaemeori-jae 개머리재, 295m, also known as Sojeong-jae 소정재, about 1.5km later.

For the next 2.5km, you follow the ribbons north to the other side of the road, passing a family of tombs before the trail becomes-road-then a trail again as it climbs over the hill that separates you from the pass of Jigi-jae. Your descent then passes through more orchards as you arrive at the edge of the PR901 that crosses Jigi-jae 지기재 260m.

Jigi-jae 지기재 260m

Is a small rural road pass marked by a bus stop and toilet. About 7km to the northeast is the village of Pyeongji-ri 평지리 where it meets NH25 and 4km to the southwest is the junction town of Moseo-myeon 모서면 on the PR901 and PR49. Another roughneck backwater, the friendly place has a Nong-hyup, sikdang, chicken shacks, and even a GS25 store. There are no lodgings in Moseo-myeon.

Lodging

Located west of the ridge is the Jigijae-sanjang 지기재산장 mountain shelter - more a room on a farm. The sanjang is advertised at the pass and can be contacted by phone at 010-8950-2599. There is not really any space for camping at this pass and if you have enough time left in your day, it may well be worth it making one more bound to the pass of Shin-uiteo-jae, 4.5km away which has better off-road camping space, including water, at the pass.



Jansu Nongak village cleansing

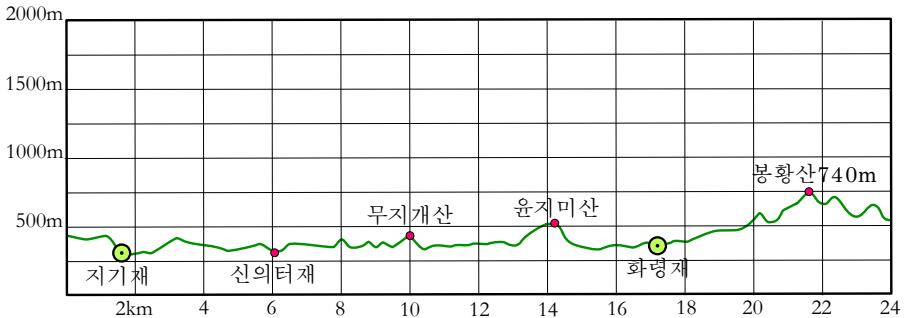


Moseo-myeon GS25

Day 4

Jigi-jae 1hr35min 4.5km Sinuiteo-jae 신의터재 1hr40min 4km Mujugae-san 무죽개산길 1hr 45min 4.3km Yunjimi-san 윤지미산 2.5km 1hr Hwaryeong-jae 화령재 a total of 13.3km in 6hours

Water Stop
(39)N36°23'38"E127°58'11" Shin-uiteo-jae



Course Description

Jigi-jae 260m 6hr 13.3km Hwaryeong-jae

Marked by hiking ribbons the trail begins on the other side of the road, joining a small concrete road which meanders north passing grape vines and farms. The trail barely gains any elevation as it heads towards a bald rocky feature granting good views back over the rice fields to the south. From there it slowly wanders north on steady elevation for the next 4km to the road pass of Sinuiteo-jae.

Sinuiteo-jae 신의터재 280m

Sinuiteo-jae is connected by a quiet country road running 5km east to Nakseo-ri 낙서리, where it meets NH25. If you need to get to a town then the small junction stop of Hwadong-myeon 화동면 is only 2km to the southwest. At Hwadong-myeon, you can find a Nong-hyup, sikdang, and supa. A story associated with the pass claims that during the Imjin invasions of Korea (1592-98) a battle flag was hoisted here to rally troops, but the Japanese overcame them, slaughtering many peasants in the nearby village of Pangok-ri 판곡리. It is sadly said that the woman threw themselves off a small cliff into a nearby pond named Nakhwa-dam 낙화담 to drown in fear of violation; Nakhwa means 'falling flowers'.

Camping

Sinuiteo-jae is a good place to camp. It has a jeongja and water tap. Please remove your shoes when using this pavillion. Next to that is also enough grass to pitch a tent. There is also a public toilet. There is no accommodation at nearby township of Hwadong-myeon.

Transport

Sinuiteo-jae is located less than 2km northeast of Hwadong-myeon, where you can take buses from. Otherwise you can try the Hwadong Taxi 화동 개인택시, tel: 054-534-4828 or 533-9793

Crossing the road at Shinuiteo-jae the trail joins a concrete road that becomes the trail and makes a slight northeast ascent through mountain tombs and forest for about 2.5km, before veering north for 1km to Mujigae-san Galrim-gil 무지개산갈림길 (turning point) some 1km later. You stay left here, following the trail mostly north on good elevation for the next 3km until it starts to climb up to Yunjimi-san 윤지미산 538m, arriving at its peak another km later. Yunjimi-san is marked by a stone cairn. From Yunjimi-san the trail wiggles west for about 1km and then veers north for the next 1.8km where it'll soon meet a mountain road which runs south to the Pangok-ri Reservoir or northwest to the village of Sinbong-ri 신봉리 on NH25. You can either stay northwest on the mountain road which will take you down to the western side of Hwaryeong-jae, or you can stay on the ribboned trail as it passes over the eco-tunnel where you will come out directly at Hwaryeong-jae.



Hwaryeong-jae 화령재 320m

Hwaryeong is a road pass connected by NH25, running east for about 20km to the small city of Sangju 상주시 and west 2km into the small township of Hwaseo-myeon 화서면. The pass is celebrated by a gigantic Baekdu Daegan stele erected on September 9th 2007. The seven metre high rock stands proudly in a parking area on the northern side of the pass and is one of the tallest on the Baekdu Daegan Trail.

Lodging, Camping and Food

A large wooden jeongja is located at the pass. This pavilion is well constructed consisting of a concrete floor and benches attached to its inner circumference making it a good place to camp. There are some makeshift public toilets located at the pass, but no water. The

nearest restaurant is the Baekdu Daegan Hyugaeso 백두대간효개소 only 1km to the west. Another kilometre farther is the small town of Hwaseo-myeon, which has basic accommodation at the Hwaryeong-jae yeogwan 화령장여관 043-533-3883, located opposite the bus terminal. You can get a cosy room there for 30,000W. Next to the bus terminal is also the useful Well-Mart 월마트. Hwaseo is another funky little rural town and has a number of sikdang, chicken shacks, a CVs, and Nong-hyup.

War History

After the Baekdu Daegan Hyugaeso you'll come to a bend in the road that takes you to Hwaseo-myeon. There you'll see a small outdoor war museum with a tank and APC. On July 17th, 1950, less than a month after the Korean War started, a North Korean division was advancing on the city of Sangju, when it was crushed in an ambush by a South Korean regiment at the museums location. Only a few days later on July 21, a South Korean battalion attacked an advancing North Korean regiment at Donggwan-ri 동관리 near Bi-jae비재 (the end of your next leg) on the Baekdu Daegan, claiming a victory there too. As you can see the Baekdu Daegan has been a natural fortification for the Korean people in many conflicts from the old Three Kingdom Era, through peasant revolts, Japanese repressions, and the Korean civil war. In this last instance, North Korean forces did manage to push through the Baekdu Daegan on many other fronts, and almost succeeded with a complete takeover of the peninsula, with a final assault on the city of Busan in August that same year, but were somehow kept out by a contingent of United Nations and local forces, until the North Koreans were eventually cut in half and left stranded of supplies, by the Incheon landings on September 15, 1950.

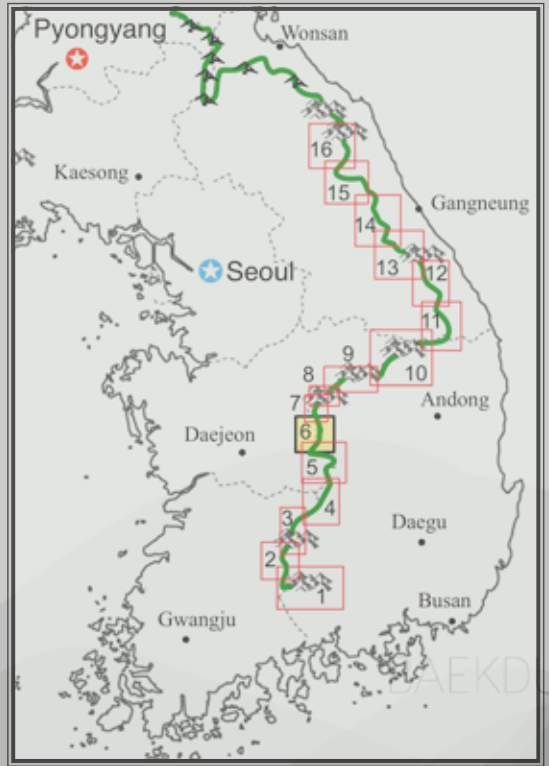


Transport

Buses leave 16 times a day from Hwaseo-myeon bus terminal to Sangju City. They also leave to Hwabuk-myeon, east of Songni-san National Park seven times a day, and to Hwadong-myeon, near Sinuideo-jae six times a day. A bus to Nam Seoul Terminal 남서울터미널 leaves Hwaseo-myeon six times a day, passing through Boeun-gun 보은군 and Cheongju 청주 on-route.



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 6
SONGNISAN NATIONAL PARK:
Hwa-ryeong to Neul-jae 28km in 2 days

Songni-san National Park
속리산국립공원



Cheonghwa-san
청화산 984m

49

997

Boeun-gun
보은군

Bamti-jae
밤티재

Neul-jae
늘재

Munjang-dae
문장대

Sinseon-dae Hyugaeso
신선대휴게소

Hwabuk-myeon
화북면

Hwaryeong-jae to Neul-jae
28km 15hr30min

32

- Hwaryeong-jae 50mins 2.2km to 450m peak 1hr20mins 2.3km to Bonghwang-san 봉황산 1hr 40mins 3.5km to Bi-jae 비재 1hr40mins 2km to Motje 목재 2hr 3.5km to Piat-jae 피앗재 2hr50min 5km to Munjang-dae 문장대 2hr 3.5km to Cheonwang-bong 천왕봉 1hr50mins 3.5km to Bamti-jae 밤티재 1hr20mins 3km to Neul-jae 늘재

Cheonwang-bong
천왕봉 1057m

Beopju-sa
법주사





Gyeongangbuk-do
경상북도

Sangju-si
상주시

Bonghwang-san
봉황산740m

Hwaseo-myeon
화서면

Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Gubyeong-san
구병산876m

Hyeongjeobong
형제봉829m

Piat-jae
피앗재

Piatjae Sanjang
피앗재산장

30

49

49

25



Daemok-ri
대목리

Section 6: Songji-san National Park

From Hwaryeong-jae to Neul-jae in 2 days over 28km

Day 1

Hwaryeong-jae 50mins 2.2km 450m peak 1hr20mins 2.3km

Bonghwang-san 봉황산 740m 1hr 40mins 3.5km Bi-jae 비재 1hr40mins

2km Motje 못재 2hr 3.5km Piat-jae 피앗재 a total of 13.5km in 7hr 30mins

Water Stops

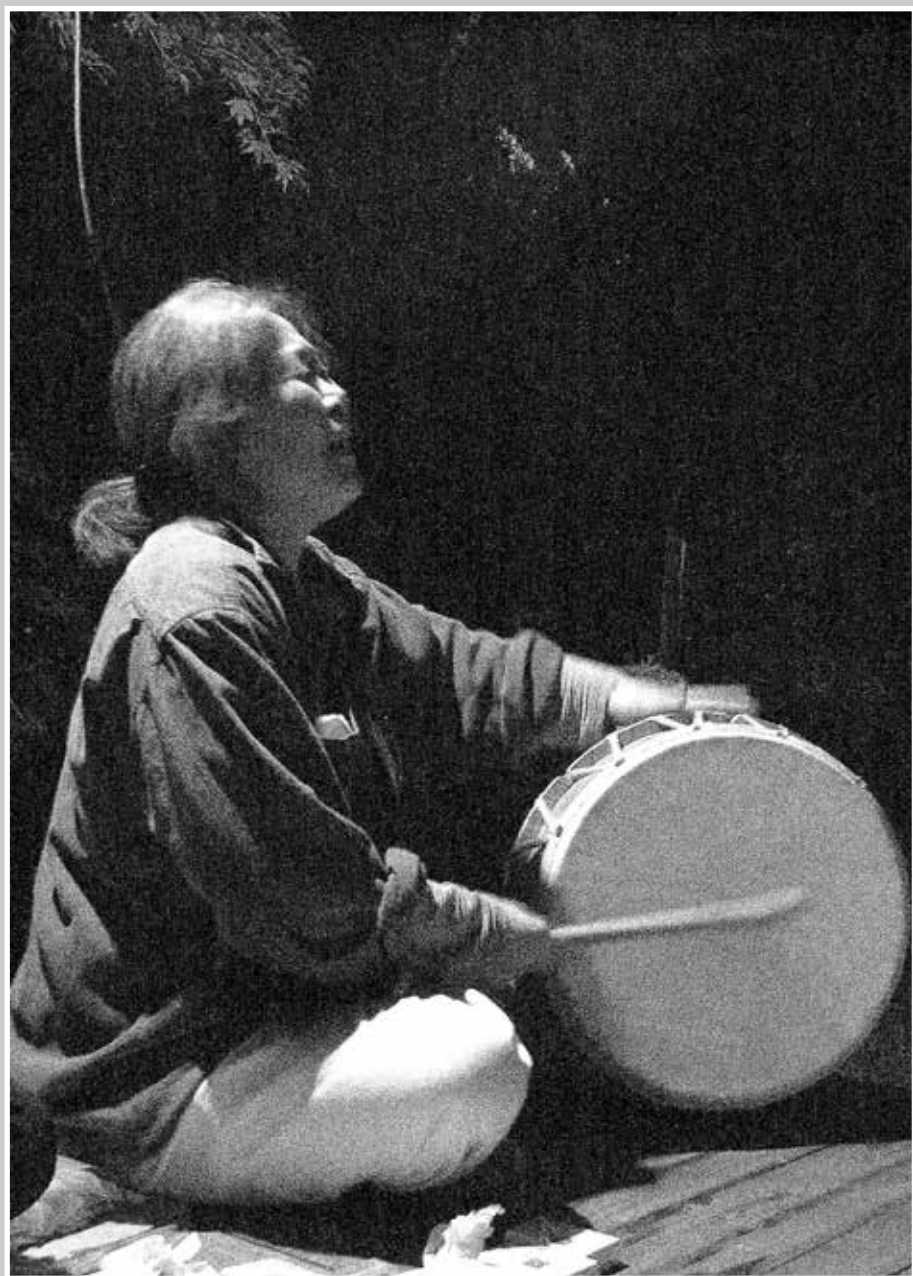
(40)N36°28'48"N127°54'55" Bi-jae

(41)N36°30'53"N127°54'14" Piat-jae



Songni-san National Park 속리산국립공원

Songni-san (*renouncing the world mountain*) was designated a National Park in March, 1970 and covers an area of 274.541km². Located in the center of South Korea, Songni-san is a stunning mountainous area with large white craggy peaks, fringed with native red pine forests, and sparkling steep valleys awash with gushing streams and hidden hermitages. The views in some parts are breath taking, and despite its status as a national park, Songni-san remains an area surrounded by pastoral charm. In its main southern arm where you first pass through, the land west of the ridge is owned by the Buddhist temple Beopju-sa, allowing a handful of small mountain hyugaeso to operate within its slopes bringing a warm human touch to the park. The Baekdu Daegan enters the park at Hyeongje-bong, 13.5km along the trail from Hwa-ryeong and continues through the southern half of the park to Neul-jae, where it leaves the park but then enters it again at Mil-jae near Daeya-san. However, 20km of the Songni-san ridge-trail is closed indefinitely. Alternative routes are discussed in this chapter. The southern section is the most popular area of the park and the 3.5km of ridge between Cheonhwang-bong 1057m and Munjang-dae 1028m peaks sees the vast majority of all hikers in Songni-san.



To the west of this section, three trails run down to a spectacular and historic valley which leads to the major Buddhist temple of Beopju-sa 법주사. Dating back to the year 553, Beopju-sa is a picturesque temple and home to a number of national treasures, including the tallest bronze Buddha statue in the world, the Cheongdong Miruek-bul, built in 1990 and standing 33m tall. Below Beopju-sa is the tourist village of Sanae-ri, the main entrance to the park. Sanae-ri is an upbeat gateway with all the amenities typical of popular Korean tourist zones including scores of sikdang specializing in fresh mountain vegetable and wild mushroom meals, dozens of motels and minbaks, and even a large tourist hotel, including a campground. The eastern side of the ridge is paralleled by the PR49 and its main trail to the ridge is from the Osong ticket booth in the sleepy town of Hwabuk-myeon up to Munjang-dae.



Course Description

Hwaryeong-jae 7hr30min 13.5km Piat-jae 피앗재

From Hwaryeong-jae, 320m, you walk west along the NH25 for about 500m until it arrives at a road junction. The trail begins on that corner marked by ribbons, and a signpost. It then ascends in a northwest direction through forest for about 4.5km gaining about 400m in elevation to the peak of Bonghwang-san 봉황산 740m. The summit is marked by a small opening and a round bench. The predominant views from here are to the north and west. To the NW you can see Hyeongje-bong 829m, the next major peak of the Baekdu Daegan, and further on you may be able to see the highest feature of Songni-san National Park in the background, Cheonhwang-bong 1053m. From Bonghwang-san the trail scoops west for about 1.5km to peak 660m, where it then turns north and continues dropping for the next 2km to the road pass of Bi-jae, also known as Bijo-ryeong 비조령.

Bi-jae 비재 320m

Bi-jae meaning 'Flying Bird Pass' is connected by an eco-bridge that runs over a quiet sealed country road which links PR49 2km to the east. To the west the road weaves its way into the backblocks of Songni-san. On the other side of the pass there is a wooden deck nestled in the tall black pine forest, that could be considered a comfortable camping option. The nearest water source (40) is about 300m to the west in a small village. Ask politely if you can get some water from their outside taps.

Crossing over the eco-bridge the trail joins a staircase and heads north straight up the mountain, climbing and undulating through forested ridge, that sometimes offer nice vistas. Large chalky coloured boulder formations hidden in the tree line like dishevelled polar bears begin to appear and the feel of a national park starts to emerge. Some 2.3km from Bi-jae you will arrive at Motje 못재, 655m, a small highland marsh, marked by some benches and signboards on its edge. Any water found in the marsh should be treated before drinking. The trail stays at good elevation from here as it heads north for 1.4km to the trail junction of Galryeong-samgari 갈령삼거리, 721m, marked by benches in a forest. From the junction, the track heading north goes east for 1km down to PR49 at Gal-ryeong 갈령. Your trail goes west, where it will climb 100m in elevation for the next 600m before arriving at Hyeongje-bong 형제봉, 828m. The trail scoots around the summit area, so take the time to make the small final ascent to the top where you'll be gifted with sweeping awe-inspiring 360° views. To the northwest you can see the craggy features of Cheonhwang-bong, 1057m. From Hyeongje-bong the trail turns north descending sharply, flattening out briefly, then dropping again to the wooded pass of Piat-jae, some 1.4km later.



Piat-jae sanjang

Piat-jae 피앗재 600m

Marked by a signpost, Piat-jae is a saddle clearing surrounded by thick forest and is a suitable spot for setting up camp at the end of a long days walk from Hwaryeong-jae. The track heading west from Piat-jae heads 1.2km to the remote and quiet Mansu valley 만수계곡. Stream water (41) is available about 500 meters down this track.

Lodging

Located less than 2km west from Piat-jae is the Piat-jae Sanjang 피앗재 산장 (043) 543-1058 or mobile 010-2761-7761. This pleasant abode is run by Mr. Seo Seong-su 서성수 and his wife, who both completed the Baekdu Daegan some years ago, and decided to move to this area and set up their homestay. Their residence offers Hwangteo (clay) rooms at 40,000W per person which includes a dinner and breakfast. The rooms are heated without beds, and a hot shower is provided. Mr. Seo is also prepared to let you sleep in the rooms at a cost of 20,000W per person as long as you provide your own food and means of cooking it.



Mountain Spirit Shrine
Sanshin-gak 산신각



Beopju-sa temple

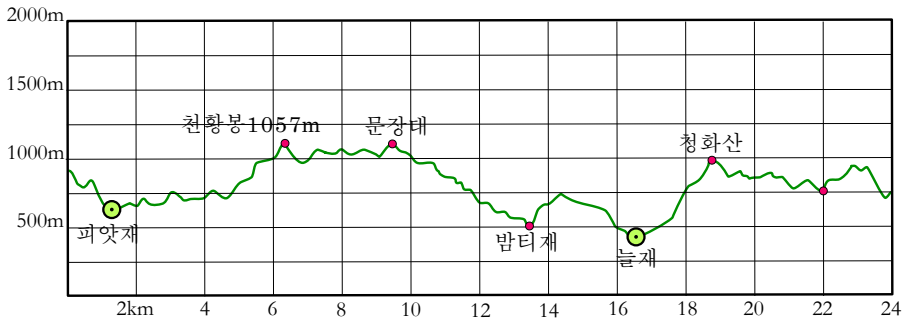
Day 2

Piat-jae 2hr50min 5km Cheonhwang-bong 천왕봉 **1hr50mins 3.5km**
Munjang-dae 문장대 **2hr 3.5km Bamti-jae** 밤티재 **1hr20mins 3km Neul-jae**
 늘재 **a total of 15km in 8hr**

Water Stop

(42)N36°33'19"E127°52'26' Shinseon-dae hyugeso

CLOSED SECTION: Munjang-dae 6.5km to Neul-jae



Course Description

Piat-jae 5hr 8.5km Munjang-dae 1028m

From your sleepy hollow of Piat-jae the trail stays north for about 1km as it moves on a steady and scenic ridge reaching 667m in elevation. From there, it veers northwest and continues its scenic climb for another 3km, bounding over two 700m spot heights, before arriving at the foot of Cheonhwang-bong. Here there is a signboard with a track breaking south down to the village of Daemok-ri 대목리 some 3.5km away. The national parks signboard says it's a 36.1° climb over 600m of distance with a 400m gain in altitude. It isn't wrong! After your grueling climb, the open summit area of Cheonhwang-bong 천왕봉 1057m, rewards you with excellent 360° panoramas. Take a break. To the north you will be able to see the continuation of the Baekdu Daegan as it juts along the rocky ridge all the way to Munjang-dae some 3km away, marked by a cell-tower.

From Cheonhwang-bong the trail will descend slightly as it travels north, where about 400m later you'll come across a helipad with an eastern track that runs for just over 3km to the village of Janggak-dong 장각동. Continue north on the Baekdu Daegan, where only a couple of hundred meters later you'll come to another track junction. The track running west goes just over 5km to the major temple of Beopju-sa.

Lodging, Camping and food

That stunning western track passes through two Buddhist hermitages, Sanggo-am 상고암 and Sanghwan-am 상환암 (slight detours need to be made), and at its trail head before it becomes a service road, the Saesim-jeong Hyugaeso 세심정휴게소, run by Mr. Choi Gi-cheol 최기철 and his wife, can cook you up an excellent hot meal, and a tasty bowl of pine-needle dongdong-ju 소땀동동주. They also have simple rooms for 40,000W per night. It's just over 3km from there, on an easy walking service road, to Beopju-sa temple, near the park entrance at Sanae-ri 사내리. On its main entrance road, Sanae-ri is lined with plenty of excellent sikdang, some small stores including 7-11 and CVs, coffee shops, a Nong-hyup, post-office, and numerous motels and minbak in the blocks behind the main street. The Sanae-ri Campsite 속리산 사내리야영장 043-544-5453 / 010-2304-5234 can be found in a pine forest behind the post office. With about 100 sites, it'll cost around 5,000W to pitch your tent there.



Hyugaeso in Songni-san National Park

Transport

Sanae-ri also has a useful bus terminal with services that go to Dong Seoul, Nambu (Seoul) terminal, Cheongju, Daejeon, and Suwon. Their first stop is the nearby town of Boeun-gun 보운군.

Back on the Baekdu Daegan, the trail continues north on good elevation, passing many outstanding rocky pinnacles and boulders as it ducks and weaves its way in-and-out of the beautiful high alpine forest and bamboo grasses of Songni-san.

Some 1.5km later, you'll arrive at your next trail junction, where the westerly route heads 400m down to the Gwaneum-sa hermitage (small signed detour again), a tiny hideaway nestled in between a rock and a hard place. From there the track will continue descending for 2km passing two more hyugaeso (often not open), and a track to your left, heading back up the mountain to Sango-am Hermitage, until it meets at a fork just before the Saesimjeong Hyugae-so. Back on the Baekdu Daegan, this trail junction sits just before the Shinseon-dae Hyugeso 신선대휴게소, 1026m, which sits luxuriously on the ridge with some nearby fantastic viewpoints, and serves a good basic menu and cold drinks, including bottled water (42) for sale. It's okay for you to eat your own food there. From here, stay on the trail for another up-and-down kilometre until you arrive at one of Songni-san's major attractions, Munjang-dae Peak.



Munjang-dae 문장대 1028m (Culture Guardian Platform)

Sitting like a displaced Buddhist prayer bead bobbing on the edge of a cliff, Munjang-dae is a giant boulder which trekkers can access via a staircase to be granted wonderful views for as far as the eye can see. Formally called Unjang-dae, as it was always covered in clouds, it got its current name from a story from during the reign of King Sejo (r.1455-68). Wherein it is said that he was taking rest from illness in the lower regions of Songni-san when he was visited in his dreams by a young nobleman, who told him to climb to the sacred peak of Unjang-dae, where his ailment would improve. At the peak, King Sejo found a book called the Oryun-samgang 오륜삼강, which is a Neo-Confucian scripture of the societal structure of the culture of the then Joseon dynasty, a very hierarchical, misogynistic, classist and ageist dynasty, controlled by a minority ruling Yangban class, where everyone was expected to know their respective standings in society and behave accordingly.

The book explains the five moral disciplines **오륜** of: righteousness and justice between monarch and people **의**, warmth and closeness between parents and children **친**, differentiation between husband and wife **별**, order between seniors and juniors **서**, and trust between friends **신** – and the three fundamental principles **삼강** of: loyalty to the King **충**, filial obedience to parents **효**, and differentiation between men and women **열**. King Sejo read the book all day, and then renamed the peak Munjang-dae, the Culture Guardian Platform.

Just before Munjang-dae, there are two tracks dropping east and west of the ridge. The western track travels about 3km down to the service road at Saesimjeong Hyugaeso, passing three hyugaeso on route. The eastern track travels the same distance again down to the Osong entrance in Hwabuk-myeon. As the trail is closed from Munjang-dae to Neul-jae, you should get off here. The eastern route to Hwabuk-myeon is recommended as the alternative, as it's easier to get back on the Baekdu Daegan at Neul-jae from there. Trail data on the closed section is still included in this book, in the event it might open during this edition.



ALTERNATIVE ROUTE

Walk east from Munjang-dae, down 3km to the Osong ticket booth, and then follow the road for another 2km to where it meets the PR32. Before the PR32 there is an opportunity on your left (N) to take a trail up to the Gyeonhwon mountain-fortress **견훤산성**. From the PR32 intersection you can turn left (N) and walk or hitch about 3-4km up the same road to Neul-jae. But it may be better to stay overnight in nearby Hwabuk, and then walk, taxi, hitch or bus it the 4-5km to Nuel-jae the next day. To get to Hwabuk, turn right (S) at the PR32 from Osong and walk 1-2km.

Hwabuk-myeon 화북면

Hwabuk-myeon is a small Gyeongsangbuk-do (province) town that'll give you a nice peaceful break from the trail. It has a Nong-hyup, chicken shacks, supas, and sikdang – the best one is the Suri-bong Sikdang 수리봉식당 located on the main road opposite the towns central car parking area. They are friendly operators and serve some delicious bbq pork and other dishes.

Lodgings and Camping

In the same area as the towns central car park is the Gaya Minbak 가야민박, 010-7763-3517. Out the back it has a small house with two rooms and a kitchen you rent. The large room is 50,000W and the small room 30,000W. A kitchen with fridge and utensils separates the two rooms that you can use. There is also a bathroom with washing machine. About 600m south out of town, there is a campsite called the Sangju Munjangdae Yayeong-jang 상주문장대야영장.

Transport

Buses leave Hwabuk 화북 for Sangju 상주 7 times daily between 07:00 – 18:15 and vice-versa starting at 07:50 – 18:05. From Hwabuk to Cheongju 청주 buses leave 4 times daily between 09:30 – 17:40 and vice-versa starting at 07:20 – 15:00. From Hwabuk to Mungyeong 문경 buses leave 3 times daily between 09:25 – 18:40 and vice versa starting at 07:00 until 16:50.

CLOSED SECTION

Munjang-dae 문장대 2hr 3.5km Bamti-jae 밤티재 1hr20mins 3km Neul-jae 늘재 a total of 3hr20mins 6.5km

If you wish to walk the closed section from Munjang-dae to Bamti-jae then to Neul-jae, then be aware of CCTV cameras at the Munjang-dae trail head, and that the downhill spur to Bamti-jae 260m, is extremely precarious in places and its obscurity may mean that it could take you much longer than the allocated 2hr. The trail head is hard to find but located to your right just after the eastern track to Osong entrance. At Bamti-jae there is an eco-bridge that crosses over the PR997, where you will then climb up to peak 696m before descending down to Neul-jae.

Neul-jae 늘재 385m

Neul-jae is connected by the PR32/49 which runs northwest 12km to the small town of Songmyeon-ri 송면리, and located outside the national park about 4-5km southeast to the township of Hwabuk-myeon. Neul-jae is home to a large stele commemorating the Baekdu Daegan, an old old sacred tree and its original shrine, and a newer but empty Sanshin-dang 산신당 (mountain-spirit shrine).



The sacred tree, supposedly 320 years old, is a *Kalopanax septemlobus (pictus)*, or more commonly known as the Prickly Castor Oil tree, a deciduous species native to China, Korea, and Japan that can grow up to 60 feet in height. Information at the pass explains how these shrines contain the energy and spirit of the Baekdu Daegan, but in the past, these shrines and guardian-spirit-poles (jang-seung 장승) that often featured on mountain passes, were used as early forms of worship towards mountain-spirits by the local villagers to ask for the prevention of unexpected disasters, diseases, and safe passage. The mountain-spirits thereby became the most recognised and ordained subject of worship for these passes, to the height of providing national prosperity and welfare for the people. As a low-lying pass, and border between the ancient Silla and Baekje Kingdoms, Nuel-jae was heavily protected and the Gyeonhwon Mountain Fortress 견훤산성 near Osong entrance, was therefore constructed as a garrison for soldiers of Silla. It was named after General Gyeon Hwon whom constructed many more fortifications in Silla Korea. Later on during the Japanese Imjin invasions of a Unified Joseon dynasty (1592-98), General Jeong Gi-ryong fought the Japanese in nearby Yonghwa-dong where Neul-jae was a vital supply link. In 1910, when Japan annexed the Joseon nation, patriotic locals raised a militia army and used Neul-jae as a means of ambush and infiltration back into the mountains.

Camping

You can pitch a tent at the pass. Some hikers even sleep in the empty mountain-spirit shrine, but do so with care and respect, and take your mess out with you. Approximately 600 metres north along the PR32/49 is the Cheonghwa-san Hyugesso 청화산휴게소 which has two sikdang and a set of toilets. The car-park there is suitable for pitching a tent.

Transport

Buses run from Neulti 늘티, the small village about 1km south of Neul-jae into Hwabuk-myeon 7 times a day from 07:10 till 18:50. Hitching is a good way to get to and from the pass, otherwise a Hwabuk taxi 화북택시 can be reached on 054-534-7447.



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 7
NORTHERN SONGNISAN
Neul-jae to Ihwa-ryeong, 44.5km in 3 days



Songni-san National Park
속리산국립공원

Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Goesan-gun
괴산군

Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

Mungyeong-si
문경시

Neul-jae to Beorimiga-jae
16km 7hr40min

- Neul-jae 늘재 1hr30min 2.5km to Cheonghwa-san 청화산 1hr20min 3.5km to Gatbawi-jae 갓바위재 1hr 2.5km to Gomo-chi 고모치 1hr20min 2.5km to Mil-jae 밀재 30min 1km to Daeya-san 대야산 2hr 4km to Beorimiga-jae 버리미가재

49

Neul-jae 늘재

Icons: Mountain peak, Dining, Lodging

Cheonghwa-san
청화산 984m

Gatbawi-jae
갓바위재

Gomo-chi
고모치

Johang-san
조항산 953m

Mil-jae
밀재

Yongchu Valley
용추굴

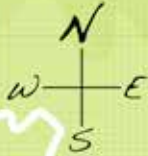
Daeya-san
대야산 930m

Beorimiga-jae
버리미가재

517

922

Gaeun-eup
가은읍



Section 7: Northern Songni-san

From Neul-jae to Ihwa-ryeong in 3days over 44.5km

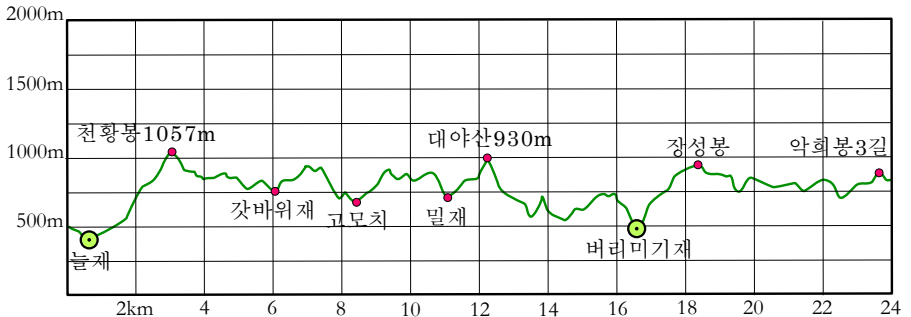
CLOSED SECTIONS; Daeya-san 대야산 6km to Jangseong-bong 장성봉, and shortly thereafter from Makjang-bong 막장봉 5km to Akhui-bong junction

Day 1

Neul-jae 늘재 1hr30min 2.5km Cheonghwa-san 청화산 1hr20min 3.5km Gatbawi-jae 갓바위재 1hr 2.5km Gomo-chi 고모치 1hr20min 2.5km Mil-jae 밀재 30min 1km Daeya-san 대야산 2hr 4km Beorimigi-jae 버리미기재 a total of 16km in 7hr40min

Water Stops

(43) N36°38'27"N127°56'21" Gomo-chi



Course Description

At Neul-jae 385m, you are not inside the national park. The trail from there heads northeast into pine forests as you begin your tough climb straight up the mountain towards the summit of Cheonghwa-san, 984m; that 2.4km trail gains 600m in elevation. Despite its toughness, there are some pleasant views south back towards Hwabuk-myeon and the ragged ridge of Songni-san. One of those viewpoints is the Shinseon-dae (spirit immortal platform) 신선대 marked by a black tablet sitting between two granite incense holders. Before reaching the summit area of Cheonghwa-san you will pass by a helipad, then a short time later a small stone stele placed in the center of a small clearing. From the summit area, the trail heads east maintaining good height, meeting a junction 500 metres later. The Baekdu Daegan turns left, dropping north and continuing for about 1.5km to a peak 858m.

Shortly after that the trail veers east for about 1km on a thin dicey ridge line that crags its way down onto the lip of a steep ravine, offering great views south towards the Ssangyong Gyegok (Twin Dragons Gorge) 쌍용계곡 and Siru-bong 시루봉 and to the north you can see the dark brooding Johang-san 953m 조항산. After that kilometre, the trail veers north for 1km dropping down to the saddle of Gatbawi-jae 갓바위재, 769m. At that pass there is a track running west down to a forest road that'll eventually take you to the Uisang Reservoir 의상저수지. Only metres later, you come across a helipad, where shortly after that you'll see another track running east down to the village of Gogi-ri 고기리. From that junction, it's about an hour of grafting 200m of rocky elevation and some fixed ropes, over the next 1.5km, until you arrive at the peak of Johang-san, 953m. More stunning views are granted on your ascent.



The Baekdu Daegan south from Johang-san

Johang-san is marked by a small scripted stele and a signboard that says:

*Vigorously hiking the Baekdu Daegan
All hopes and expectations are so sweet
Ah, ah, our mountains*

Because Johang-san has a rather steep and piercing appearance, its name means that of the neck of a bird arcing skyward. Many Korean mountains and passes incorporate the usage of 'bird' in their names if its situation is high and lofty. From Johang-san there is a twisty easterly track running down to the village of Gonggi-ri **공기리**. From the summit you can get informative views of Daeya-san a good 5km away in the distant north. You leave Johang-san in a northerly direction, where you'll shortly arrive at a trail junction with a track breaking west to Uisang Reservoir **의상저수지** again. Continue north descending 200m for about 1km to the pass of Gomo-chi marked by a signpost and signboard. The signboard states that this area was used to stage a KBS drama about Korea's famous 9th century Zen Buddhist and Daoist master-monk Doseon-guksa. This remarkable man roamed the hills and mountains of Korea and created the Korean version of Feng-shui called Pungsu-jiri. He is probably the first person to officially recognise the Baekdu Daegan as the central spine of all natural earth-giving energies on the Korean Peninsula, and that its Jeong-maek **정맥** (subsidiary ranges) are conduits of that energy allowing it to flow throughout the peninsula.



The pass also contains a freshwater spring **(43)** that can be located on the eastern side of the ridge. It is identified by a bamboo frame formed around the rocky spring, which is a permanent and reliable source of water. From Gomo-chi, 670m, you climb predominantly north gaining about 100m in elevation over the next 2km passing by some animistic rock formations. The first one is called Godzilla-bawi **고질라**, indicating the beginning of a beautiful rocky section fringed with native pine before you come across two more stone animations called Gumeong-bawi **구멍바위** (hole-rock) and Jipchae-bawi **집채바위** (home-rock). After that the trail starts a 800m dip to the pass of Mil-jae.

Mil-jae 밀재 662m

Mil-jae marks the boundary of this section of Songni-san National Park, and it is only one very steep kilometre from here to the awesome summit of Daeya-san 대야산 930m, where the trail begins its next closure, so you should consider climbing Daeya-san, and making the decision of getting off there on a track heading down east for 4.2km through the beautiful Yongchu-gol Valley 용추골계곡 and its emerald pools to a small car park near the valley's entrance, or passing through the closed area on the ridge line. As it is a national park, you cannot camp at this pass.

Lodging and Food

At the end of the eastward track from Mil-jae is a small lane of sikdang. The first one is the Cheongju Garden 청주가든 010-5490-8132 and other than excellent food and friendly service, it also has a room with wifi and shower you can rent for 40,000W. From the Yongcho-gol area, there is an option for you to get to the nearby small town of Gaeun 가은읍 located about 16km east of Yongchu Valley on the PR922. It has everything you need and even a small motel with wifi, called the Bunga Motel 분가모텔 054-571-3800 with rooms for 35-40,000W. It's located in the town about 100m up the PR901 towards Mungyeong 문경 County where it leaves the PR922.

Transport

From Yongchu Valley buses run to the nearby town of Gaeun-eup 4 times a day at 09:10, 09:55, 13:20 and 17:20. Buses from Gaeun run to Mungyeong City every 40min from 06:45 – 20:30. The Gaeun Taxi (가은택시) can be reached at 054-571-5789.

**Daeya-san 대야산 930m**

From Mil-jae it's worth making the effort to climb Daeya-san. It really is a spectacular route with many amazing vistas and fascinating rock shapes with names like Gorae-bawi 고래바위 (whale-rock), Koggiri-bawi 코끼리바위 (elephant-rock), and Daemun-bawi 대문바위 (great-gate-rock). Basically it's a 300m scramble north for the next kilometre to get to the summit, assisted with staircases and fixed ropes. Once up on the crest area of the mountain you will cross a foot bridge before dropping into a small saddle where you will see the other track to Yongchu-valley, marked as 월영대 Wolyeong-dae. About 1.9km east down that track, it will join the other track from Mil-jae. From this junction, carry on up to Daeya-san just a short clamber away.

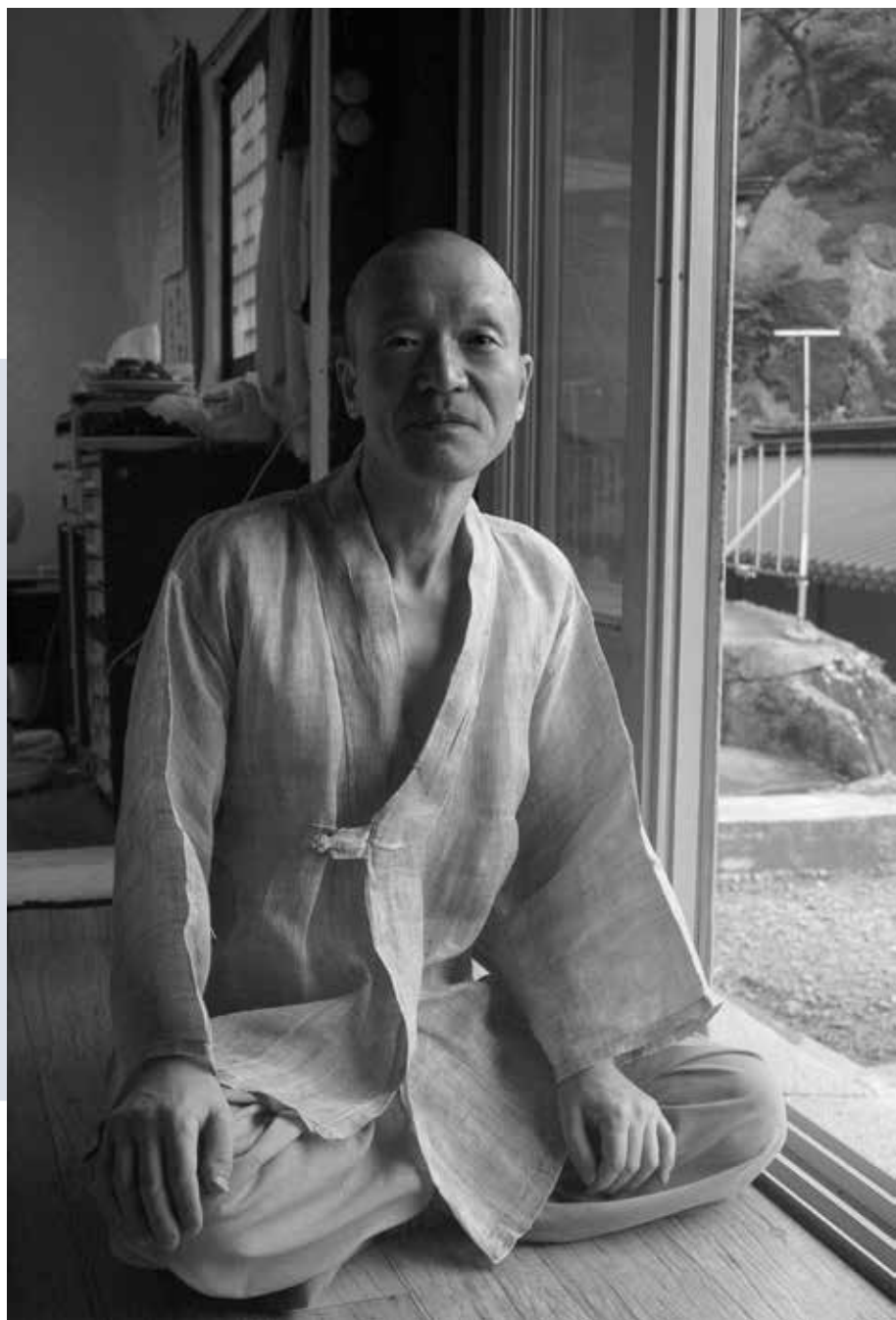
The summit area is flattish and its edges are cordoned off by a wooden barrier. On the other side of the barrier you will see an active CCTV camera. This is to catch hikers continuing on the closed section of the Baekdu Daegan down Daeya-san's vertical north-eastern face. Hiking ribbons still mark this location, and the descent is assisted by what's called the 100m vertical rope. The trail is effectively closed for the next 12km, but as the National Park Service has not provided any route to get back on the trail at its closure end at Akhui-bong, then this book will explain to you how to get back on the trail before that. Treat these closures as diversion adventures.

CLOSED SECTION Daeya-san 대야산 4.1km to Beorimigi-jae 버리미기재 (PR922/517) then 2km to Jangseong-bong 장성봉 and then shortly after that, from Makjang-bong 막장봉 5km to Akhui-bong-junction 악희봉갈림길.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE BACK TO THE BAEKDU DAEGAN FROM DAEYA-SAN. As explained, you can drop east off Daeya-san at the Wolyeong-dae junction where it's a 4.3km descent to the car park. You can either stay the night in this area or try and get to the next open area of the Baekdu Daegan. This closed section is probably the most awkward to get around. Basically from where the PR922 meets the Yongchu-valley entrance you need to hitch or walk the 5km left (N-W) passing over Beorimigi-jae and continue west to where the PR922 meets the PR517. From this 3-way road-junction 삼고리 you need to walk or hitch the PR517 north to one of two places. First place is the Jesuri-chi 제수리치. This is a pass located about 2.3km from the road junction and marked by a shoulder in the road, a tablet, and trail signpost. From here a tricky and demanding, rocky yet outstandingly scenic spur ascends east for about 4km for 3-4hr on open trail to Makjang-bong 887m 막장봉 where you can rejoin the Baekdu Daegan trail and turn north on the closed trail for 5km to Akhui-bong 악희봉. The other option is to continue past Jesuri-jae for another 3km and descend down to the Ssanggok Hyugaeso 쌍곡휴게소. Seen on your right, it is marked by a large car park and restaurant. This park entrance area also has minbaks 민박 where you can stay too. The Ssanggok-valley is an extremely beautiful part of the Songni-san park. At the end of the car-park is the trail head to Chilbo-san 칠보산 and Jangseong-bong on the Baekdu Daegan. Walk for about 15min on the main trail till you get to the trail junction marked by a signpost stating 4.7km to Jangseong-bong 장성봉 916m. Take this open trail southeast up the valley. It takes about 2hr to get to the top where it meets the Jesuri ridge 제수리 at Makjang-bong, the last 500m being notably steep, and then once on the ridge, you have another demanding clamber up to Makjang-bong before it joins the Baekdu Daegan at the intersection to Jangseong-bong. You don't go right (S) on the open trail to Jangseong-bong, where after it becomes closed again, instead you turn left (N) on the closed trail for about 2.5hr or 4km towards Akhui-bong.

CLOSED SECTION DAEYA-SAN 2.5HR 6KM to JANGSEONG-BONG 장성봉 916M

If you wish you can stick your nose out over the north-eastern rim of the peak, which is monitored by a CCTV camera, and clamber down a series of fixed ropes known as the 100m rope. It's a little hairy, so hang-on! After that it's about a 1.3km downward trek to almost 500m in elevation through good country before climbing back up to Chotdae-bong 촛대봉 668m. After that you turn north descending about 200m to Bulanchi-jae 불란치재 before climbing steeply again for 1km to Gomneomoi-bong 곶너미봉 733m before dropping for 1km down to Beorimigi-jae 450m. This closed section can be a little tricky and has rope sections. Beware this pass has security fencing and is sometimes manned. If you are caught you could be fined as much as 500,000W. The trail closure continues for 2km on the other side of the road towards Jangseong-bong 916m.



Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Goesan-gun
괴산군



Songni-san National Park
속리산국립공원

Chilbo-san
칠보산 778m

Akhui-bong
악희봉 845m

Ssanggok Hyugaeso
쌍곡휴개소

Eunti-gogae
은티고개

Juchi-bong
주치봉 683m

Jesuri-chi
제수리치

Jangseong-bong
장성봉 916m

Beorimiga-jae
버리미가재

Gyeongsang
경상

34

45

517

922





Beorimigi-jae to Ihwa-ryeong 30.4km 15hr40min

Beorimigi-jae 1hr 2km to Jangseong-bong 장성봉 3hr 6km to
 Akhui-bong junction 악회봉갈림길 70min 2.0km to
 Eunti-gogae 은티고개 90min 2.2km to Guwang-bong 구왕봉 90min 2km to
 Huiyang-san-junction 회양산갈림길 50min 2.5km to
 Iman-bong 이만봉 2hr30min 5km to Baekhwa-san 백화산 3hr 7km to Ihwa-ryeong 이화령

Day 2

Beorimigi-jae 1hr 2km Jangseong-bong 장성봉 3hr 6km Akhui-bong junction 악희봉갈림길 70min 2.0km Eunti-gogae 은티고개 90min 2.2km Guwang-bong 구왕봉, a total of 12.2km in 6hr 40min.

Water Stops

(44) N36°43'22"N127°58'30" Eunti-gogae



Course Description

CLOSED SECTION

BEORIMIGI-JAE (450M) 4HR 8KM to AKHUI-BONG JUNCTION 악희봉갈림길.

From the northern side of the PR922 the trail heads back into the forest behind the security fence and climbs steeply north for 2km, gaining about 400m in elevation to the peak of Jangseong-bong 장성봉, 916m. The trail from Jangseong-bong for 1km to Makjang-bong trail junction is actually open but instead steers the hiker at the junction either west along the Jesuri ridge or northwest down to the Ssang-gok valley. The Baekdu Daegan is neither of these. Instead it stays north and high on the eastern boundary of northern Songni-san National Park, making it disputable whether you are inside the park or not. From the Makjang-bong junction, it takes about 3hr to get to the Akhui-bong junction, but it's a scenic ridge that undulates between 750 and 830m in elevation with some great views of a white faced Huiyang-san 회양산 999m to the east, and Chilbo-san 칠보산 728m to the northwest. The trail doesn't actually go to the sharp peak of Akhui-bong 악희봉, 845m; instead, it veers southeast just before that, at a junction marked by a rocky outcrop.. Behind that outcrop, there begins a mesmerising closed trail heading northwest to Akhui-bong, which then links up with Chilbo-san and will take you down to the Ssang-gok Valley entrance.

OPEN SECTION AKHUI-BONG JUNCTION 약희봉갈림길
2HR40MIN 4.2KM to GUWANG-BONG 구왕봉.

From the Akhui-bong junction the trail swings southeast, where about 400m later it will fall sharply over the next kilometre to about 700m in elevation, and then spiral down again for another kilometre to the pass of Eunti-gogae 은티고개 582m. This dramatic drop is assisted with a series of ropes and a staircase, and is a strong exemplar for some of this course. For your effort you are rewarded with some fine vistas south into green mountain blades. Eunti-gogae is identified by a large tree with an old stone Seonang-dang 선안당 (tutelary altar) and a signpost. The southern side of the pass is crudely fenced off by Bongam-sa 봉암사 Temple, which is their way of saying, you can't go down there to the valley that is all temple property, because this Zen monastery conducts strict meditative practise continuously, and is off-limits to the public all year-round (except on the annual Buddha's Birthday national holiday). But, water (44) can be found on the other side of the barrier if you walk about 200 or 300m on an old trail to where a series of small streams meet. The northern track from Eunti-gogae goes about 2km to the village of Eunti.



Ribbons of the Baekdu Daegan

Lodgings and Food

Set amongst idyllic farmland and fruit orchards encircled by large peaks, Eunti village is a great little place to visit. The locals have embraced the opportunity of living under the mountains of the Baekdu Daegan and accommodation is available at a couple of modern home-stays. In the center of the village is the **Baekdu Daegan Suimteo** 백두대간쉼터, a bustling watering-hole and minbak adorned with ribbons from past trekkers, and a real iconic representation for Baekdu Daegan hikers. Eunti is located at the end of a dead-end road which runs 4km northeast into Yeonpung-myeon 연풍면, another small roughneck Baekdu Daegan town with some sikdangs, chicken shacks, supas, a Nong-hyup, and one motel namely the **Saejae Park** 새재파크 (**Zeus**) with simple rooms and wifi from 35 to 40,000W each.

Transport

From Yeonpung you can catch buses outside the stores on the main road running to and from Cheongju 청주, Geosan 괴산, Suanbo 수안보, and Jeomchon 점촌 also known as Mungyeong-si City 문경시.

If you get enough water from Eunti-gogae then you should be able to continue on the ridge and camp. From Eunti-gogae the trail stays easterly making a short sharp climb over Juchi-bong 주치봉, 683m, before descending to Obongjeong-gogae 오봉정고개. Shortly after this pass there is a tomb with a signpost indicating another track heading 3.8km north down to Eunti village, 3km back to Akhui-bong, and another 1.6km to Guwang-bong, 구왕봉, 879m (Nine Kings Peak). From this pass, it's a steep and grueling climb up to Guwang-bong and could take as much as an hour. Just before its summit there is a flat rocky area covered by native pines. At its wooded summit, there is small stele and enough space to pitch a tent. You can also get great views of your neighbor Huiyang-san just to the east. However, even though it's only 1.5km to Huiyang-san, it takes at least 90min to get there, on a series of downward and upward ropes.

Day 3

Guwang-bong 90min 2km Huiyang-san-junction 1.7km 1hr Siru-bong-junction 시루봉갈림길 50min 2.5km Iman-bong 2hr30min 5km Baekhwasan 백화산 3hr 7km Ihwa-ryeong 이화령 a total of 18.2km in 9hr

Water Stops

(45) N36°43'37"E128°00'50" Baeneomi-pyeongjeon

(46) N36°45'07"E128°01'56" Ihwa-ryeong



Course Description

Guwang-bong 9hr 20km Ihwa-ryeong

From Guwang-bong, 879m, the trail heads southeast down to a rocky ledge with mind-blowing views of the forbidden Huiyang-san. From there it cascades down almost 250m in elevation over a 600m section of crazy ropes to the pass of Jireumti-jae 지름티재, 650m. Get your breath back and take a rest. At Jireumti-jae there is fire-watch tower and another 3km track to Eunti-jae. The southern side of the pass is an off-limits trail to Bongam-sa, and marked by a small hut. Now for the gripping 300m elevation climb over 780m of ground, up to the Huiyang-san junction 회양산갈림길, 928m. This remarkable near vertical section consists of a series of fixed ropes. It is more physical than dangerous and sometimes you may wonder how on earth it could even be a trail, but it is a great feeling to get to the top. At the top, there is a 500m detour track to the summit of Huiyang-san 회양산, 999m, please take it, as on a clear day, you'll be rewarded with astounding views to the south and more.



After coming back to the Huiyang-san junction, the trail heads north, shortly arriving at the next trail junction called Sanseong-teo 산성터 marked by ancient fortress walls, once used as buffers between the Silla, Baekje and Goguryeo kingdoms. This pass also has another option to walk 3.2km to Eunti village. Stay north following the ancient fortress walls for 1.5km where the trail starts to slope downwards, soon arriving at the wooded four-way junction of Baeneomi-pyeongjeon 배너미평전, or for simplicity let's call it the Siru-bong junction. Here you can find water (45) on the Eunti village side of the pass. The Baekdu daegan trail is signposted as the one to your right or east going 2km to Iman-bong 이만봉. Other tracks here go north 0.9m to Siru-bong 914m where you can take another track 2km down to Jinchon village 진촌리 near Yeonpung town, or northwest 2.4km to Eunti-maeul.

Following the Iman-bong route the trail wanders southeast through forest for 100m before veering left and climbing steadily to an unnamed peak located at 963m, where shortly later it meets a track junction that contours northwest back to Siru-bong 시루봉. The trail continues southeast on a thinning rocky ridge before rising to meet the summit of Iman-bong, 990m, some 2km later. The trail rolls southeast, dropping into the pass of Sadari-jae 사다리재, 830m, 1km later, providing you with good views of the Baekdu Daegan horseshoeing northwest towards Ihwa-ryeong. The trail then stays at good elevation for the next kilometre before rising up to the Noijeong-san junction 뇌정산갈림길 981m, 600m later.

From there it diverts east for almost 1km before arriving at the pass of Pyeongjeon-chi 평전치, 890m. The big ridge trail stays east from there, making a steady gain up to Baekhwa-san (White Flower Mountain) 백화산 1063m, arriving about 1.4km later. From here the trail left heels into a northwest direction where for the next 7km you will walk on a steady downhill over good ground, all the way to Ihwa-ryeong. The first peak is 2km away at Hwanghak-san (Yellow Crane Mountain) 황악산, 915m, marked by a small stone stele, and from there it continues northwest through Larch and Oak forests carpeted with mountain grasses, that'll offer you occasional views northeast of the distinctive Juhuel-san 주흘산, 1108m, that guards the town of Mungyeong. Some 4km from Hwanghak-san, you'll arrive at the peak of Jo-bong 조봉, 680m, marked by a small stele, where it's a final 1.5km walk down to the road pass of Ihwa-ryeong about 1-2km later. Time for a beer!

Ihwa-ryeong 이화령 548m

Ihwa-ryeong is crossed by an eco-bridge that runs over the NH34 which heads east 7km to the rickety little town of Mungyeong-eup 문경읍 and west 6km to the roughneck yet kind Yeonpung-myeon 연풍면 Township. The eco-bridge was opened in 2012, not only serving as a safe passage for animals, but also to reconnect the energy-flow of the Baekdu Daegan, as it was said that the Japanese chiselled a deep road-pass through here in 1925, severing the geomantic transmission. Before that it would have been an old pathway (Yet-gil) 옛길. These days, two road tunnels forge beneath the pass, and now its usage is left to bicycle tourism, as Ihwa-ryeong is where cyclists making the river cycleway journey from Seoul to Busan, get off the Han-river to the northwest, and ride their bikes over this pass, to join the Nakdong-river in the southeast. You can see more information about that system at www.riverguide.go.kr. Therefore the pass has been facilitated for that, and provides an excellent hyugaeso with menu and coffee, carpark, public toilets, and decking. Water (46) can be purchased from the hyugaeso, but may be closed in the late evenings. Nearest spring water is on foot about 2km up the other side of the trail at Joryeong-saem 조령샘.

Lodging and Camping

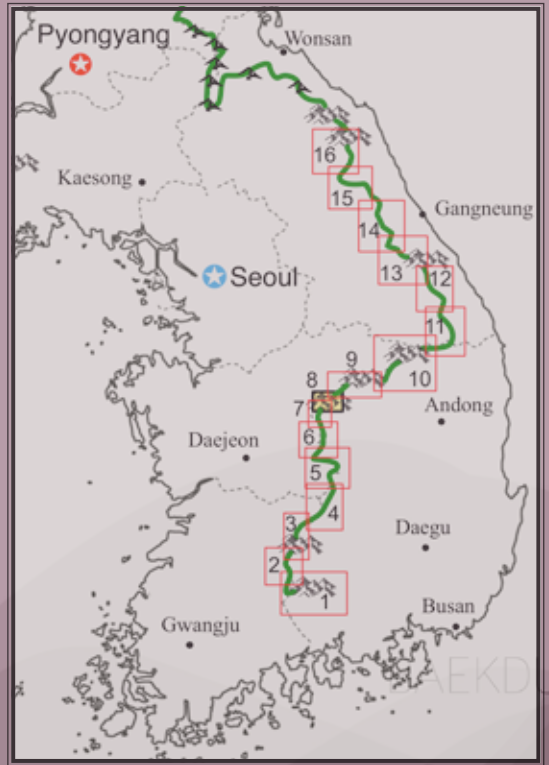
There is no paid accommodation at Ihwa-ryeong. You can use the jeongja on the eastern side of the tunnel, or pitch your self-standing tent on the modern decking on both sides of the pass, or back up in the forest on the ridge. If you want to travel down to Mungyeong-eup then there is a motel zone near the hot-spring water resort, or for something more low-key and downtown, the Surim Park Yeogwan 수림파크장여관 054-571-3291, will give you a clean room for 30,000W.

Transport

Buses no longer run up the extension of NH34 to Ihwa-ryeong. You'll have to call a Mungyeong-eup taxi 054-571-7300, if you can't hitch a ride.



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 8
MUNGYEONG-SAEJAE
Ilhwa-ryeong to Haneul-jae, 17.5km in 2 days

Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

597

Chungju-si
충주시

3

Worak-san National Park
월악산국립공원

Mapae-bong
마태봉 922m

Poam-san
포암산 961m

Jo-ryeong
조령(3)

Bu-bong
부봉 921m

Tanhang-san
탄항산 856m

Haneul-jae
하늘재

Juheulsan Junction
주흘산갈림길

Juheul-san
주흘산 1106

Sinseonam-bong
신선암봉 937m



Mireuk-saji
미륵사지





Ju-bong
주봉 1079m



Mungyeong-saejae Provincial Park 문경새재도립공원

2nd Gate

Joryeong-san
조령산 1026m

Ehwa-ryeong
이화령

1st Gate

ihwa-ryeong 이화령 1hr25mins 2.7km to
 Joryeong-san 조령산 1hr 1.7km to
 Shinseonam-bong 신선암봉 2hr 4.1km to
 Jo-ryeong 3rd gate 조령계3관문 2hr 4.2km to
 Donggam-muri 동감분 45mins 1.4km to
 Juheul-san junction 추월산감점길 1hr30mins 3.4km to
 Haneul-jae 하늘재

Mungyeong-saejae
문경새재

Mungyeong-eup
문경읍



3
901



Ehwa-ryeong to Haneul-jae 17.5km 8hr40min

Section 8: Mungyeong Saejae 문경새재

From Ihwa-ryeong to Haneul-jae in 2 days over 17.5km

Day 1

From Ihwa-ryeong 이화령 1hr25mins 2.7km Joryeong-san 조령산 1026m
1hr 1.7km Shinseonam-bong 신선암봉 937m 2hr 4.1km Jo-ryeong 3rd
gate 조령제3관문 a total of 8.5km in 4hr 25mins

Water Stops

(47) N36°45'50"E128°02'42" Joryeong-saem

(48) N36°48'24"E128°03'36" Jo-ryeong Yaksu

(49) N36°48'24"E128°03'36" Jo-ryeong Jeong-ja



Mungyeong-saejae Provincial Park 문경새재도립공원

About 7km up the Jo-ryeong cheon (stream) 조령천 in a tight valley between the impenetrable ridge that forms a “V” from Juheul-san in the east and Joryeong-san to the west, meeting acutely at Jo-ryeong [Bird Pass], stretches the renowned Mungyeong-sae Provincial Park. This treasure of North Gyeongsang is only about 1km wide, encompassing the only remaining section of the Great Yeongnam Road which was built to connect the cities of Seoul, then known as Hanyang, and Busan. The old road runs through three large fortified gates and watch towers set 3km apart to the pass. The areas around Mungyeong have always been important crossings of the Baekdu-daegan. As early as the 6th century, Silla had erected various fortresses in the area, many of which are still visible along the ridge today. The lower pass of Haneul-jae, which you’ll cross 9km to the north, was the favoured route for early carriage and it wasn’t until the Joseon period (1392-1910) that the Busan to Seoul road was built crossing Jo-ryeong.

Following the Japanese Imjin invasion of 1592-98, the second gate, Jogok-gwan, was erected with defensive walls in 1594, and that was followed 100 years later with the 1st gate (Juheul-gwan) in 1708, and then the 3rd gate (Joryeong-gwan) erected as a fortress for national defence to control traffic and protect travelers, traders, and scholars heading to Seoul to take the *Gwageo* national-service examination. In 1966 the three gates were designated as Historical Relic 147, and then ten years later President Park Chung Hee (r. 1961-79), a former teacher in the Mungyeong area and a man remembered for his sweeping modernization policies, ordered that the Great Yeongnam Road between the three gates never be paved, and that the gates be restored to their former glory, and so it is today.

The area was designated a provincial park the same year. Today the park has become one of Korea's great tourist destinations where visitors can enjoy a leisurely stroll along the banks of the beautiful Joryeong-cheon, enjoy the cooling forest and grand views of the Baekdu Daegan. "Barefoot walking" is promoted as a health-giving activity along this sandy pathway. In 2000 the Korean Broadcasting Service (KBS) built an impressive film-set just below the 2nd Gate, to resemble urban structures the Joseon period, including a palace, and produces Korean dramas of that era, of the sort that feature these days on TV throughout Asia. Entrance to the film-set is 2000won.



The Baekdu Daegan ridge in Mungyeong-saejae

Lodging and Food

Below the 1st gate is a tourist area known as Mungyeong Saejae 문경새재 with a number of very good sikdang, coffee shops, minbaks, supas, and vendors selling local products, souvenirs and various items. About 2-3 km from there is the small farming town of Mungyeong-eup 문경읍 that is guarded by the impressive peak of Juheul-san, 1106m. There are many motels by the famous hot springs (oncheon, 온천) located in southern part of the town, or for a cheaper accommodation, look for the 수림파크장여관 Surim Park Yeogwan 054-571-3291, located in the town center on the Juheul-ro road 주흘로 or PR901 that runs east. It has clean rooms with wifi at 30-35,000W.

Transport

The closest city to Mungyeong-eup is Jeomchon 점촌 which is also known as Mungyeong City 문경시 about 10km to the south. Buses run all the time to there. You can also catch buses to Dong Seoul, Daegu, Busan, Chungju, and many other places, including local villages, from Mungyeong-eup. Taxis can also be found next to the terminal as well as a nice Black Bean coffee shop.

Course Description

Ihwa-ryeong 5.5hr 9km Jo-ryeong Third Gate 조령제3관문 642m

Although less than 9km, this is a full days walk. The trail resumes on either side of the eco-bridge, with the least vigorous route starting from the east side. It contours nicely up the side of the mountain before meeting the ridge, where it continues to climb north for another 1.5km before arriving at the Joryeong-saem 조령샘, a fresh water spring (47). A signpost there



says 800m to Joryeong-san. If you wish to start from the west side of Ihwa-ryeong the trail takes you above the eco-bridge, north, straight up the ridge, where about 30min later you'll arrive at a wind-socked helipad surrounded by fighting trenches. Take the right-turn (not the left) there, following the ribbons, where it'll take you eventually to the spring at Joryeong-saem. From the spring, the trail is assisted by staircases for most of the way for the next 800m to the peak of Joryeong-san 조령산 at 1026m. The summit is celebrated by a stone stele with some good views north of the dragon-back landscape you're about to ride. The signage at the peak states, 1.6km to Sinseonam-bong 신선암봉, and almost 5km to the 3rd Gate.

It's not much distance, but with a big pack, it's a menace of a walk. From Joryeong-san the trail starts a wild drop for the next kilometre, assisted with stairways and ropes, where it'll arrive at a trail junction with an option to go east to Madang-bawi 마당바위. From there the trail continues north for the next 600m as it ascends to Sinseonam-bong, at one stage using more stairs to get you across a thin edge of rock (which used to be rope, before someone died), before encountering another larger but flatter boulder which you must haul yourself across by fixed rope.

None of these obstacles require technical climbing ability but the long drops on both sides of the ridge demand caution, particularly in high winds, rain or icy conditions. By then, you should almost be at Sinseonam-bong 신선암봉, 932m, translated as Spirit-Immortal-Rock Peak, which is marked by a small stone stele on a slanting rock face scattered with craggy Korean pines and an awe-inspiring view.



Jo-ryeong 3rd Gate on the Baekdu Daegan

From Shinseon-bong it's just over 4km to the 3rd Gate. Unfortunately, you will not see any more staircases to aid and quicken your journey, unless some have been installed since this edition was printed. It's a tricky series of rope descents to the first trail junction 1km later, with a tricky 1.2km track leading east down to the Yeongnam road just above the second gate. From the junction, the trail stays tough as it now ascends on more ropes up to peak 928, where after the trail starts a barely noticeable up and down 2km descent towards Gitdae-bong 깃대봉, passing by one trail junction with a westerly route down to Hanseom-jiri 한섬지리 located on NH3. After an exhausting arrival at the foot of Gitdae-bong, marked as a trail junction, you follow the sign taking you right and down for 1km to the 3rd Gate. Despite it all, on a good day, this is one of the most memorable and scenic parts of the Baekdu Daegan you'll experience.

Jo-ryeong Third Gate 조령제3관문 642m

Jo-ryeong is also known as Sae-jae. Both these names mean "bird pass" (Jo in Chinese, Sae in Korean) and the name comes from an old saying that the pass is so high even birds can't cross it. Jo-ryeong is higher than the neighbouring Haneul-jae and Ihwa-ryeong passes which were popular crossings before the Great Yeongnam Road was constructed during the late Joseon Dynasty. Constructed in 1708, the 3rd and final gate named "Joryeong-gwan on the Great Yeongnam Road" dominates the pass. Its fortress walls extend to the edge of the pass on both sides. As with all the gates on the Yeongnam road it has a raised watchtower with a traditional tiled roof. On the eastern side of the gate is a large grass field and public toilets which acts as a popular resting-spot for weary walkers arriving from the bottom of the pass. Although inviting, it is not permitted to camp in this field. On the northern side of the field is a sikdang set in the pine forest which serves fresh mountain-vegetable meals, homemade dongdong-ju, coffee and canned-drinks. At the trail head were you exit is the Sanshin-gak 산신각 (mountain spirit shrine)

acting as a vestige for travellers seeking safe passage. Just beneath the Sanshin-gak is the Jo-ryeong Yaksu (spring water) (48) providing clean cool water, which a sign here states will give you a long life. On the western side of the pass is a park area with a 5-meter Baekdu Daegan stele, and a jeongja.



Lodgings, Camping and Food

Camping is not permitted at the pass, but if you arrive late, then you might be able to tuck in somewhere after everyone has moved on. On the western side of the pass is a jeongja near some coffee machines and a **water-station (49)** which is a good place to stealth-camp. Another 1.5km west from the pass is the Joryeong-san Jayeon Hyuyang-rim 조령산자연휴양림 which is a municipality run cabin-style accommodation in conjunction with the national forest service. They have cabins here that vary in price according to size and time of year you book. Booking can only be done online at a Korean only site at www.jof.cbhuyang.go.kr or you can try over the phone at 043-833-7994. There are no tent sites there. Another 300m down the road there are some restaurants, coffee shops, and a couple of 민박 accommodations. This road carries-on for another 3km before joining NH3. It's at least a 7km walk on flat road all the way to the tourist village of Mungyeong-saejae where you can find plenty of sikdang, minbak, and other amenities as covered in the beginning of this chapter.

Day 2

From Jo-ryeong 조령 2hr 4.2km Dongam-mun 동암문 45mins 1.4km Juheul-san junction 주흘산갈림길 1hr30mins 3.4km to Haneul-jae 하늘재, a total of 9km in 4hr 15mins

Water Stops

(50) N36°48'43"E128°06'43" Haneuljae-saem 하늘재샘



Course Description

Jo-ryeong 4hr15min 9km Haneul-jae 하늘재

From Jo-ryeong the trail is signposted heading north to Mapae-bong 마패봉 as 0.9km at 45분 (mins) and heads up into the forest, passing a large boulder called Seon-bawi 선바위, on its 270m elevation ascent to the summit of Mapae-bong, 922m. From the peak, the boundary to Worak-san National Park 월악산국립공원 begins, and it follows the Baekdu Daegan as the southern frontier of the park all the way to Haneul-jae, where it then enters it proper. At Mapae-bong, the trail turns southeast and drops 200m in elevation and then flattens out as it starts to patrol along ancient fortress walls known as Bukam-mun 북암문 (North-Rock-Gate) for the next 3km before arriving at Dongam-mun 동암문 (East-Rock Gate). From Dongam-mun the trail turns south briefly as it climbs up the northern face of Bu-bong 부봉, 934m, where before it gets to the summit, the trail turns east and continues to climb for the next kilometre to the trail junction of Juheul-san 주흘산갈림길 at 960m. The track going south is a 2.5km ridge-walk to the summit of Juheul-san that overlooks the town of Mungyeong-eup. The Baekdu Daegan goes north towards the flat white face of Poam-san 포암산, 961m, about 5km away. The trail drops into Pyeongcheon-jae 평천재, before climbing northeast for 1km to the next peak of Tanghang-san 탕향산, 856m. This is the last peak before Haneul-jae, with good views over Worak-san National Park. For the next 1.8km, the trail rolls downhill through scenic rock formations in a southeast then northeast direction towards the old road pass of Haneul-jae 하늘재.



Haneul-jae Sanjang

Haneul-jae 하늘재 525m

Haneul-jae is a historic passageway of days gone by, and connects Gyeongsangbuk-do to the southeast with Chungcheongbuk-do to the northeast. The pass was opened in AD156, during the 3rd year of King Adala's reign of the Silla Kingdom as a route to attack the Goguryeo Kingdom to the north. Silla established the Mungyeong area as its bridgehead, where it could advance into the reaches of the Han River while defending themselves against attacks from Goguryeo and Baekje. These days Haneul-jae is a peaceful quiet area surrounded by high mountains and forest. The road arriving from the east stops abruptly at the pass, as it turns into a broad pathway on the western side, leading its few visitors, 2km to a remarkable temple-site known as Mireuk-saji. The pass is marked by a Baekdu Daegan stele, public toilets, and the Haneul-jae Sanjang, which provides good space for free camping.



"I found Mireuk-saji sublime, and another of Korea's wonderful secrets. The ambience of the place is superb, with apple orchards, the surrounding Worak mountains, and generally a quiet rural setting. As for the stone Buddha - stunning, superb, unique - the photo in your book really does not do it justice! I really recommend that you include a photo of Mireuk-saji that includes the huge stone turtle as well as the Buddha, with the mountains towering as a backdrop."

Jeffrey Hanna, 2011 (Australia).

Mireuk-saji 미륵사지

If you have time, go visit this marvellous piece of Buddhist architecture, only 2km down the western track. There you'll see a 10m-tall standing Buddha carved from six separate blocks of stone. It is more than likely that Haneul-jae was the pass that the Crown Prince Maui and Princess Deokju, the founders of this site according to legend, fled through whilst escaping from their defeated Silla-Kingdom capital of Gyeongju. During their dash, the brother and sister were persistently ordained in their dreams by a Buddhist saint who led them to the site of what became Mireuk-sa temple. While soothing their grief for the demise of their Silla Kingdom, they instructed the erection of this 10m Buddha statue that still stands there today. On its head is an original thin stone mortar board which acts as a rain hat to prevent water erosion. The face therefore of the Mireuk (future) Buddha appears smooth and polished, unlike the rest of its torso which although sturdy and strong, reveals a typical pitted stone appearance. The site flourished for the next 600 years before retreating into the surrounding bush, where it remained as unseen oral history. Then in 1977 it was remarkably rediscovered and excavated by archaeological students from Chungju National University. Now the site is well-protected, and despite its importance it still sits in a very remote and undeveloped part of Worak-san National Park. There is a small modern Buddhist temple serving as caretaker for the ruins just a bit further down the road.

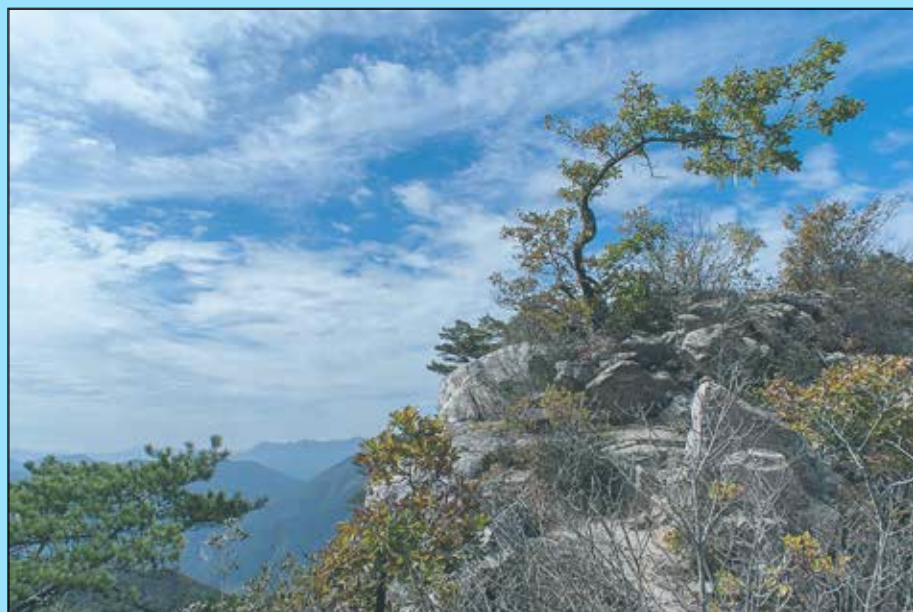
Lodging, Camping and Food

At Haneul-jae there is a colourful decorated building called the Haneuljae Sanjang, but it is locked and not suitable for sleeping in. Because it is not located inside the park boundary, and is instead on its edge, Baekdu Daegangers can camp there. A stand of shady trees provides space for pitching a tent, along with benches, tables, and a water tap (50). Just before you enter Haneul-jae, there is an impressive Baekdu Daegan stele with enough lawn space to pitch a tent. At the pass itself is a modern and very clean public toilet, and a ranger's hut. There are three simple rules to the pass: (1) take away your trash, (2) no parking of vehicles in this spot, (3) do not make fires under the trees. If you're after food, then you have to either walk the 2km to the Mireuk-saji entranceway, where there are some small supas, sikdang, and minbak in the nearby village of Mireuk-ri, or walk/hitch the other way for 6km to Galpyeong-ri 갈평리 on the road junction with the PR901 which has two small supas and one sikdang.

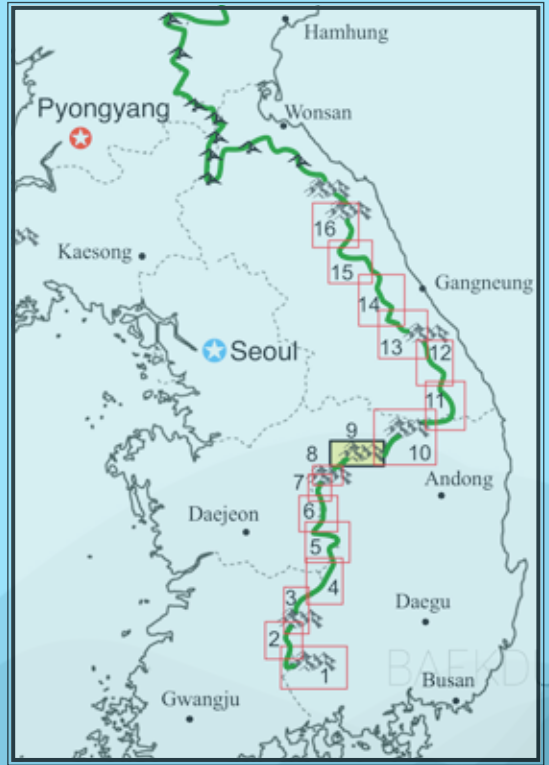
Transport

Mireuk-ri (village) is located 2km northwest of Haneul-jae and buses leave from Cheongju city and Suanbo arriving at Mireuk Village 11 times a day from 05:40-17:55, and turn return with the same frequency. About 1km southeast of Haneul-jae is the small village of Poam-ri 포암리 where buses leave Mungyeong-eup for Poam-ri 4 times daily at 08:20, 12:05, 15:35 and 19:35; returning with the same frequency.





백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 9
WORAKSAN NATIONAL PARK
Haneul-jae to Jeosu-ryeong, 32.2km in 3 days

Worak-san National Park 월악산국립공원



Mansu-bong
만수봉 985m

Magol-chi
마골치

Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Jecheon-si
제천시

Munsu-bong
문수봉 1161m

Haneul-jae 하늘재 1hr 1.2km to
Poam-san 포암산 1hr 20min 3km to
Magol-chi 마골치 1hr 20min 3km to
Ggokdubawi-bong 꼭두바위봉 2hr 20min 5.5km to
Daemi-san 대미산 3hr 6.8km to
Jajeun-chagat-jae 자은차갯재

Poam-san
포암산 1961m

Ggokdubawi-bong
꼭두바위봉 838m

Mungyeong-si
문경시

Daemi-san
대미산 1115m

Chagat-jae
차갯재

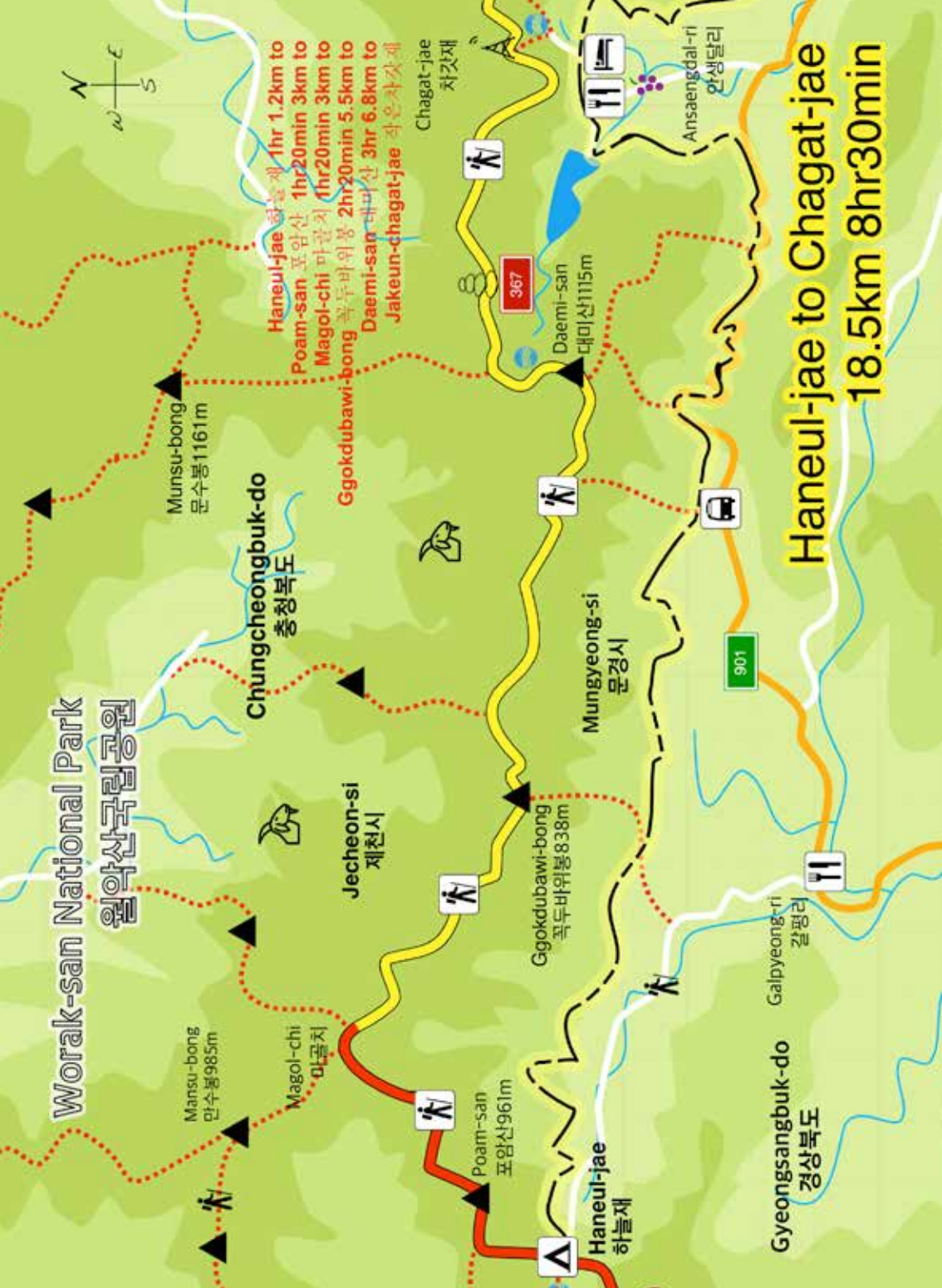
Haneul-jae
하늘재

Galpyeong-ri
갈평리

Ansaengdal-ri
안생달리

Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

Haneul-jae to Chagat-jae 18.5km 8hr 30min



Section 9: Worak-san

From Haneul-jae to Jeosu-ryeong in 3 days over 32.2 km

CLOSED SECTION: Magol-chi 마골치 14.5km to Jakeun-chagat-jae 작은차갓재 and shortly thereafter from Hwangjang-san 황장산 5.3km to Beol-jae 별재. These sections had been scheduled to reopen on Feb 28, 2017, but inquiries revealed that these sections will remain closed indefinitely for the following reasons, (a) they are not official trails, (b) the area is a habitat of endangered plants and fauna, and (c) the rugged terrain of the ridge poses dangers to visitors.

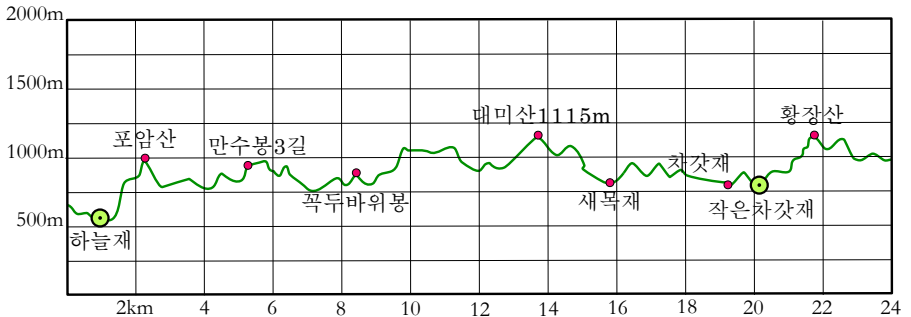
Day 1

From Haneul-jae 하늘재 1hr 1.2km Poam-san 포암산 1hr20min 3km
Magol-chi 마골치 1hr20min 3km Ggokdubawi-bong 꼭두바위봉 2hr20min
5.5km Daemi-san 대미산 3hr 6.8km to Jakeun-chagat-jae 작은차갓재,
a total of 19.5km in 9hr

Water Stops

(51) N36°49'00"E128°13'04" Nunmul-saem

(52) N36°48'57"E128°15'49" Jakeun-chagat-jae



Worak-san National Park 월악산국립공원

Worak-san is located right in the middle of the Baekdu Daegan mountain range within South Korea, connecting Songni-san with Sobaek-san. Its main feature, located north of the ridge-trail but visible to the eye, is Yeong-bong 영봉 1092m, meaning Divine Peak. Founded as South Korea's 17th national park in 1984, it covers an area of 287.777km². The park has more than 22 small and large peaks, with its highest being Munsu-bong 문수봉, 1161m, located in the eastern side of the park. Its most famous living inhabitant is the Amur Goral 산양, a mountain goat, listed as an endangered species. The nearby towns of Chungju, Suanbo and Danyang accommodate the majority of visitors to Worak-san. Famous for its steep, white rocky peaks with jutting stands of native pine that weep and arc precariously from thin sharp ridges, Worak-san has sometimes been coined with the name "Little Kumgang-san," after the famous cluster in Kangwon-do province of North Korea. During the Japanese and Mongol invasions of Korea, Worak-san was a haven for locals escaping the blight of their invaders. Its stands of broadleaved trees turn a blood red during the fall, casting an invisible dye into the crystal clear freshwater mountain streams. It is said that when you cusp your hands into the water of these streams they turn red with the colour of fall. It is also said that during the night, the moonlight reflects on to the rocks and water and creates fluttering scenes of a fairyland with the moon shades in the groves. The translated meaning of Worak-san is Moon of Steep Mountain, and although you won't pass through its stunning depths, you'll still get a good sense of its grandeur as you view inside it, from its southern boundary.



Poam-san 포암산

Course Description

Haneul-jae 하늘재 9hr 19.5km to Jakeun-chagat-jae 작은차갯재

A set of stairs marks the 1.2km northerly ascent to Poam-san 포암산 961m, that'll see you climb over 400m in elevation to get there. The summit of Poam-san is marked by a stone cairn and a small tablet. The meaning of its name seems to be that its exposed southern face is thought to resemble the texture of hemp cloth, and is possibly related to the previous chapter's story of Prince Maui, who wore hemp during his flight from the fallen Silla Kingdom. From Poam-san you can get your first peeks into Worak-san National Park, with Mansu-bong 만수봉 983m, 2km to the north, and farther on, and Yeong-bong 1092m a good 10km away. From Poam-san the trail turns east then north, staying at fairly good elevation for the next 3km until it reaches the trail junction of Magol-chi 마골치, 941m, also known as Mansubong-galrimgil 만수봉갈림길. The trail heading north from there goes to Mansu-bong; do not take this, but stay to the right, heading southeast. The trail from Magol-chi all the way to Jakeun-chagat-jae and then shortly after from Hwangjang-san to Beol-jae is a closed section.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTE From Haneul-jae you can walk west for 2km to Mireuk-ri and then hitch or walk north on the PR597 for 5-7km, stopping off at either Deokju village or Songgye-ri 송계리 to stayover at any number of minbak or park campsites (refer KNPS website), and access trails to Yeong-bong 영봉. Or you can trek to Magol-chi and take the Mansu-bong route for 5km to Mansu village. Either way, to get back to the trail head at Beol-jae, you can decide to explore the open trails within Worak-san by exploring it from the PR597 north to NH36, then east for about 33km to where it joins the NH59, and then switches north for about 20km to Beol-jae. Or you can decide to go east from Haneul-jae, 5.7km to Galpyeong-ri 갈평리 and then either hitch or road walk all the way east on the PR901, 16.8km, to Dongro-myeon, where you can then take the NH59 about 4km north to Beol-jae. If you decide to take an alternative route, take a day or two to do so, and enjoy the unknowingness of where you are going, who you'll meet, and what you're see.

CLOSED SECTION MAGOL-CHI 마골치 15.3KM TO JAKEUN-CHAGAT-JAE 작은차갯재

From Magol-chi the trail starts a wavy southeast descent through tall stands of deciduous forest flanked by knee-high verdant bush for about the next 3.6km to the peak of Ggokdubawi-bong 꼭두바위봉, 838m. From there the trail turns east starting a 1km ascent up to peak 1034m, where the trail will then pan out on that elevation for the next 2km, before it drops down into the pass of Burigi-jae 879m 부리기재. There is an old trail from this pass heading south to the village of Jungpyeong-ri 증평리, on PR901. From the pass, the trail stays east and starts a 1.4km climb up to your highest peak of this leg at Daemi-san 대미산, 1115m. The open summit area of Daemi-san offers good all-round views. From Daemi-san the trail turns north for the next kilometre where 400m later, in a saddle, you can have access to a water spring.

Marked by a signpost reading 눈문샘 Nunmun-saem, a track from there descends east about 70m to a terrace with a spring (51). Back on the trail another 600m will take you to the trail junction of Munsu-bong called Munsubong-galrimgil 문수봉갈림길 at 1046m. The continuation of this junction goes north to the summit of Worak-san's highest peak Munsu-bong 1161m. Instead the Baekdu Daegan swings east and roller-coasters for the next 2km until it meets a special object of the Baekdu Daegan.

Halfway Mark of the Baekdu Daegan Trail



Perched precariously in the middle of the trail at about 943m elevation, on a steep downhill incline, a stone and granite monument, somehow dragged in their by Korean hikers, who made it themselves. It marks the halfway-mark of the Baekdu Daegan trail within South Korea. The monument was installed on the 14th of September 2007 after a previous marker had been destroyed and removed. It states that this spot is exactly 367.325km

between Cheonhwang-bong to the south in Jirisan National Park and Jinbu-ryeong to the north at the very end of the Baekdu Daegan trail. This calculation means that the trail is 734.65km long in South Korea.

After the halfway-mark of the Baekdu Daegan trail monument, the trail continues east on its roly-poly descent to the pass of Chagat-jae 차갯재 760m some 2km away, then one more bound over a small hill marked with a power pylon to the next pass of a similar name, Jakeun-chagat-jae 작은차갯재, 816m.

Lodging, Camping, Wine and Food

The pass at Jakeunchagat-jae has enough space to pitch a tent, but you can also get off the ridge here on a track running south for 1.5km to the small mountain farming village of Ansaengdal 안생달, where you can find a minbak. Stream water (52) can be found a short distance down the track. About 700m along this track you'll come across a large grotto which is the "Wine Cave." Run by a company called the Wine People, located further down in the village, they make and sell their own wine, using this old mine shaft to cool-store their production. It'll be worth a visit, I reckon. About another 500m down the track you'll enter the upper reaches of the Ansaengdal village, consisting of a few of the modern homes that operate as minbaks. The first one you'll pass, on your left, is the Hwangjang-san Minbak 황장산민박. There are no shops in Ansaengdal, but there is a small village located about 4 km further south at the junction with the PR901, called Saengdal-ri 생달리, which has a small supa.

Transport

Buses leave Saengdal-ri heading east into the small town of Dongro-myeon 동로면 5 times a day from 08:20 to 18:50. From Dongro-myeon buses head to Mungyeong-eup 15 times a day from 07:00 to 18:30, passing by Saengdal-ri.



Day 2

From Jakeun-chagat-jae 작은차갯재 2hr 2.1km Hwangjang-san 2hr15min 5km, Beol-jae 벌재, a total of 7.1km in 4hr15min

OPEN SECTION Jakeunchagat-jae 2.1km to Hwangjang-san exit

CLOSED SECTION: Hwangjang-san exit 5km to Beol-jae

Water Stop

(53) N36°48'00"E128°19'09" Beol-jae



Worak-san National Park 월악산국립공원

Jakeunchagat-jae
작은차갯재

Hwangjang-san
황장산 1077m

Hwangjang-jae 황장재

Ansaengdal-ri
안생달리

Beol-jae
벌재

Munbok-dae
문복대 1077m

Chotdae-bong
춧대봉 1080m

Jeosu-ryeong
저수령

Mungyeong-si
문경시

Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Danyang-gun
단양군

Banggok-ri
방곡리

Donggro-myeon
동로면



59



59



901



Jakeunchagat-jae to Jeosu-ryeong

13.1km 7hr15min

Jakeunchagat-jae 작은차갯재 2hr 2.1km to
Hwangjang-san exit 2hr15min 5km to
Beol-jae 벌재 45min 1.5km to
Deulmok-jae 2hr15min 4.5km to
Jeosu-ryeong

Course Description

Jakeun-chagat-jae 4hr15min 7km Beol-jae

From the pass, the trail climbs steeply for 1.2km in a mainly eastern direction over a series of rock obstacles, which are now assisted with staircases, before it gets to the top of the ridge and turns south for 600m towards the summit of Hwangjang-san 황장산, 1077m. It is a spectacular part of the trail with mind-blowing views. From Hwangjang-san the trail continues south, providing great views on open rocky sections, descending slightly for the next 300m until it arrives at a trail junction, with a track heading west down to Ansaengdal village. From there, the trail continues south arriving at Hwangjang-jae 500m later, where the trail then veers east for 4.5km all the way to Beol-jae 625m. Most of this section remains on open rocky ground offering glorious views of the Korean landscape, one of the many highlights of this long-distance walk.



Hwangjang-san

Beol-jae 별재 625m

Beol-jae is connected by NH59 with the small junction township of Dongro-myeon 동로면 located 4km to the south and the small village of Banggok-ri 방곡리 2km to the north. The pass now has an eco-bridge and a small park with a jeongja on the southern side, that was constructed in 2013 as a measure of reconnecting the earth-energies of the Baekdu Daegan and animal migration. The new pass-area provides enough space to pitch a tent. On the northern side, there is a spring (53) about 300m down the road.

Lodging, Camping, and Food

About 2km north of Beol-jae on NH59 is Banggok-ri, a pottery village with a restaurant and a minbak called the Sinseonbong garden 신선봉가든 054-555-8486/010-8575-6011. It has rooms downstairs for 40,000W. About 4km south of Beol-jae is the small berry-growers town of Donggro-myeon. There are no accommodations here, but there is space in the car park alongside the small river which runs through the town to pitch a free-standing tent. In Donggro-myeon there is a good mart next to the police station and a couple of sik-dang. On the corner is a new coffee shop with a menu of pizza, chicken, and pork cutlet (돈까수). On the southern outskirts of Donggro-myeon, there is a NH mart located behind its bank.

Omija 오미자 (Magnolia Berry)

The Donggro-myeon region stretching along the southern base of the Baekdu Daegan as it threads through Mungyeong-si and lower Worak-san, is famous for the production of quality Omija. This tiny red berry that grows in bunches on woody vines at elevations between 400 and 700m is harvested and dried into syrups, tea, and cordials. Omija means five-flavoured fruit, with 'o' being five, 'mi' meaning flavour, and the suffix 'ja' pertaining to a drinkable medicine providing male stamina. In the past, Omija was traditionally used as a medicine for colds, including seasickness by the ancient Japanese Ainu, and these days Omija remains popular as an all-round health drink, including for women, where its tea-drinking qualities are rewarding for the skin. Omija is also used in alcoholic beverages such as makoli wine, and even as a craft beer. An Omija festival where you can sample all its benefits, is held every September at Mungyeong-saejae.

Transportation

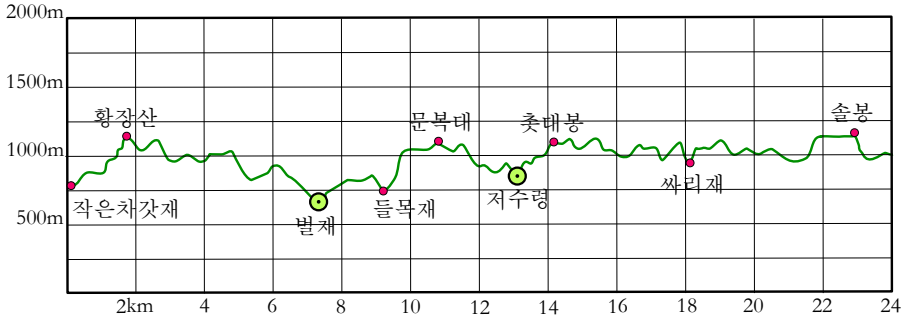
About 3km north of Beol-jae on NH59 in Banggok-ri, buses run 5 times a day from 07:50 - 17:30 to Danyang 단양, and at Donggro-myeon, buses will run regularly to Mungyeong-si. The only way to get back to the pass is to walk, hitch or call a local taxi 동로 택시 054-552-7891.



Day 3

Beol-jae 45min 1.5km Dulmun-jae 2hr15min 4.5km Jeosu-ryeong, a total of 6km in 3hr

No water located on this leg.



Beol-jae 3hr 6km to Jeosu-ryeong 저수령

From Beol-jae the trail starts on the farmers road that'll take you to a staircase and then east up the ridge on a signposted trail towards Munbok-dae 문복대, some 3.7km away. It'll stay southeast for about 1.2km towards peak 822m, where it then drops and turns northeast before climbing up again and the veering east to Munbok-dae 1074m, identified by a small stele. From Munbok-dae the trail stays east on the ridge at steady elevation before arriving at Oknyeo-bong 옥녀봉 about 500m later. From here the trail begins its descent down to Jeosu-ryeong about 2km away. Just before the end it crosses a small unused road before taking you back over one more brow and arriving at the dilapidated road pass of Jeosu-ryeong.

Jeosu-ryeong 저수령 **850m**

Jeosu-ryeong is connected by the barely used PR927 with the town of Yecheon 예천 25km to the south and Danyang 단양 30km to the north. There is a small park with a jeongja and an old closed down Hyugaeso. There are two tales about the origin of its name according to information found at the pass. The first tale describes how in the old days the track up to the pass was so rough and steep that travellers walked with weary heavy heads, so they named it that way ("jeo" means "low", and "su" implies "head"). The second tale is that, in the past during some of Korea's bloody battles, locals would take refuge at the pass to avoid attacks, and that all foreign soldiers who used this path were captured and decapitated, another form of a lowered head.

Lodging, Camping and Food

Unfortunately, there is nothing open at the ghostly pass. The old Hyugesso is now defunct, including its public toilets. There is also no known water here. You can camp somewhere in the small park with jeong-ja. Otherwise, about 1.7km east of the pass in Yongdu-ri 용두리 is the Dume-sanjang 두메산장, 054-653-0500. They appear to have Hwangteo-bang (clay) style rooms for 30,000won. This information is untested.

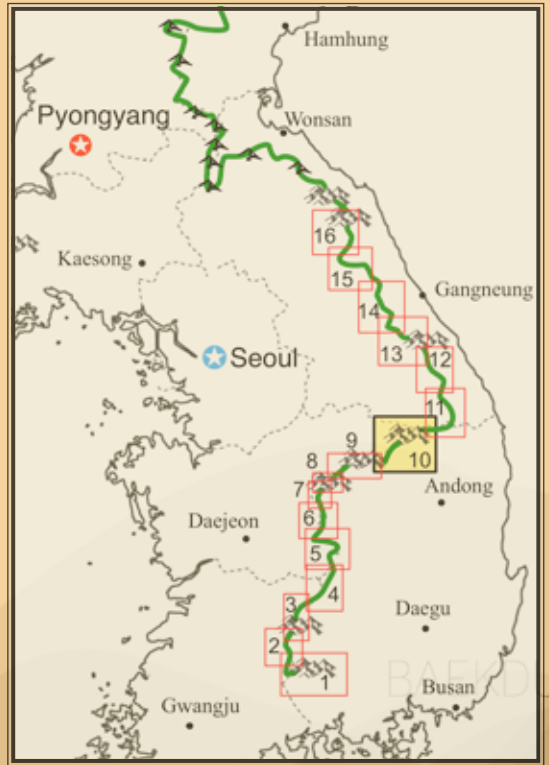
Transport

If you need to get off the ridge here, then the best option is to cook a brew, wait for a ride and hitch it.

Woraksan 1092m



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 10
SOBAEKSAN NATIONAL PARK
Jeosu-ryeong to Doraegi-jae, 71km in 3 days



Sobaek-san National Park
소백산국립공원

Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Danyang-gun
단양군

Daegang-myeon
대강면

Yeongju-si
영주시

Samhyeongje-bong
삼형제봉 1225m

Dosol-bong 도솔봉 1315m

Myojeok-bong
묘적봉 1156m

Myeokjeok-ryeong
묘적령

Sol-bong
솔봉 1102m

Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

Siru-bong
시루봉 1116m

Ssari-jae
싸리재

Heulk-mok
흙목

Jeosu-ryeong
저수령

Jeosu-ryeong 저수령 2hr55min 6.5km to
Heulk-mok 흙목 2hr 30min 5km to
Myojeok-ryeong 묘적령 2hr30min 4km to
Samhyeongje-bong 삼형제봉 1hr35min 3.5km to
Juk-ryeong 죽령

Yecheon-gun
예천군

Jeosu-ryeong to Juk-ryeong
19km 9hr50min

Section 10: Sobaek-san National Park

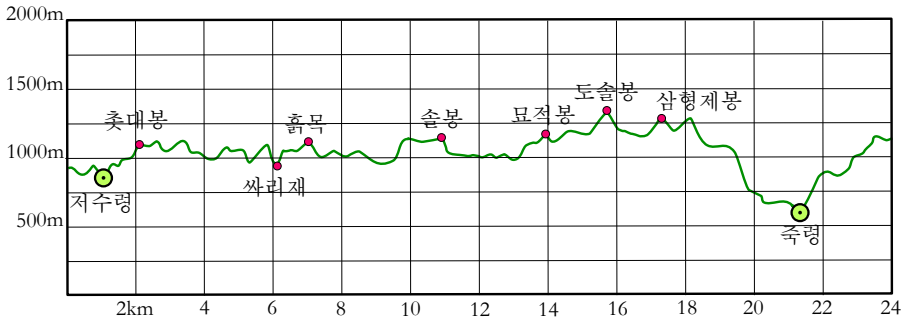
From Jeosu-ryeong to Doraegi-jae in 3 days over 71km

Day 1

From Jeosu-ryeong 저수령 2hr55min 6.5km Heulk-mok 흙목 2hr 30min
5km Myojeok-ryeong 묘적령 2hr30min 4km Samhyeongje-bong 삼형제봉
1hr35min 3.5km to Juk-ryeong 죽령 a total of 19km in 9hr 50min

Water Stop

(54) N36°53'14"E128°25'49" 19km into this leg



Sobaek-san National Park 소백산국립공원

Sobaek-san was designated a National Park in December 1987. The parklands consist of a total area of 322.383km², expanding through Danyang-gun in Chungcheongbuk-do, and Yeongju-si and Bonghwa-gun County of Gyeongsangbuk-do. Most of Sobaek-san's major peaks stand between 1200m and 1400m, with the summit Biro-bong at 1439m being the highest. Sobaek-san provides its hikers with long sweeping west-east ridges allowing unimpeded 360° views over wind-swept slopes and spurs. The open ridge contains alpine grasses and wild flowers, and undulates nicely, allowing trekkers steady progress. Its slopes are rich in wild plants consisting of edelweiss and royal azaleas that fully blossom in the later spring month of June, creating graceful scenery, along with the largest community of Yew trees in Korea beneath Biro-bong. The lower reaches of Sobaek-san, are also extremely rich in Confucian and Buddhist sites, relics and contemporary culture, being home to the famous Buseok-sa, Biro-sa, Huibang-sa and other temples, and out in the Punggi District flatlands, the Sosu Seowon Neo-Confucian Academy with Seonbi-chon Village, best place in the nation to learn about Korea's Confucian heritage.

Course Description

Jeosu-ryeong 850m, 5hr 30min 11.5km Myojeok-ryeong

The trail starts at the foot of a staircase marked with ribbons. It climbs northeast arriving at your first peak Chotdae-bong 춧대봉, 1080m, about 1km later. From here, you'll stay in a northeast direction for almost 2km keeping good elevation, passing over Tugu-bong 투구봉 and Siru-bong 시루봉 1116m, before the trail starts to veer east for the next 1.6km as it makes a couple of dips and descends to Bae-jae 배재 marked by a signpost. Continue east from here up to Yudu-bong 유두봉, 1059m, and down to Ssari-jae 싸리재, 850m. From Ssari-jae it's a short climb up the ridge to Heulk-mok 흙목, 1033m, where the trail returns northeast on a nice ridge walk for the next 5.5km to the western boundary of Sobaek-san national park at the peak-pass of Myojeok-ryeong 묘적령, 1025m. This is about the halfway mark of this leg.



The Sobaek-san ridge from Jeosu-ryeong

Myojeok-ryeong 4hr 7.5km Juk-ryeong

From Myojeok-ryeong the ridge heads north passing a flat area of rock called Jeonmang-bawi 전망바위, offering tremendous views. Only another 700m from there is your next feature named Myojeok-bong 묘적봉, 1156m. Staying north, the trail drops into a saddle before making a big climb into the higher peaks of this leg, the first one being 1.8km away, and the highest on this called Dosol-bong 도솔봉, 1315m, a name indicating a Buddhist heaven. From the summit marked by a helipad and a staircase, you'll be able to see to the north, road NH5/36, and the saddle of Juk-ryeong 죽령. The trail from here turns northwest dropping into another saddle before climbing up to Samhyeongje-bong 삼형재봉 1225m about 1km later, then as it gets rockier, the trail descends into another saddle before rising to the track junction of Huinbong-sandamgol 회봉산담골 1288m, some 500m later. Here, the trail swings north, and begins its 3.5km descent to Jung-ryeong. About 2km into this leg, you'll arrive at the only spring (54) on this long leg, identified by a small memorial plaque, reading:

*Here, Jong Cheol, our friend who liked mountains
Returned to the bosom of the Baekdu Daegan.
Rest in peace! Jong Cheol. 2001. 7.*

Juk-ryeong 죽령 689m

Juk-ryeong is connected by the NH5, also known as number NH36. It is also the 400km mark of the Baekdu Daegan Trail. The small vibrant country town of Punggi lays 12km to its east, and the cool riverbend town of Danyang set in the heart of Chungbuk's mountains 20km to its west. The NE55 Juk-ryeong road tunnel runs deep beneath the pass; at about 5 km it is the longest tunnel in Asia. As Juk-ryeong is a popular trail head to Sobaek-san's highest feature, Biro-bong 1427m, the pass can be a bustling hive of activity, streaming out the toe-tapping, hip swinging beats of Korean Trot music, and the aromas of hot food accompanied with the merry banter of Koreans enjoying their treasured weekends or golden years. Juk-ryeong is an old saddle pass with 2000 years of history. Its name comes from a story stating that in 158CE, a man by the name of Juk-juk made this pass-crossing and died of exhaustion shortly afterwards. Since then it has been a major pass from the south-eastern area of Korea to the north-western regions. The old roadway, still in use now has ninety-nine turns, and before the vehicular era people said that it was such a tiring task to get to Juk-ryeong, that even the clouds would stop to rest. The old foot pathway (Yet-gil 옛길) that passed directly over Juk-ryeong, has been revived as part of a longer eco and culture trail called the Sobaek-san Jarak-gil, 소백산자락길 that contours for 143km in 12 sections around the foothills of Sobaek-san; more information can be found at its Korean-and-English website, www.sanjarak.or.kr. Historically this pass, like many you have passed over on the Baekdu Daegan so far, was often the scene of ferocious battle between the Goryeo, Baekje and Silla Kingdoms, as well as invading foreign forces. On one such occasion, during the reign of King Sejong, some 600 years ago, an old grandmother joined with the King's Royal Troops in a battle against marauding bandits, which they won. The troops reported that the unnamed elder fought like a ferocious tiger, and shortly after her death, local populace started describing seeing her as a Sanshin 산신 (Mountain-spirit) in their dreams. A Sanshin shrine in her commemoration can be found just off the road on the north-western side. Juk-ryeong was also one of the passes where scholars would take their route to Seoul to sit state examinations. It was also where the state posted their results, so later, as scholars gathered to see their results the pass was often full of either great joys or sorrows, shared with the many travelers and peddlers that passed by there too. Another story at the pass states that in the 5th year of Silla King Adala (154-184CE) an enlightened Buddhist monk stuck his bamboo staff into the earth and left it there. The staff germinated into a bamboo forest, otherwise unlikely to grow at such altitude, and so the pass was named 'juk' meaning bamboo, and 'ryeong' meaning pass.

Lodging and Food

On both sides of the pass there are restaurants that will sell good quality Hanguk-eumshik 한국음식 (general Korean meal). On the Chungcheongbuk-do side there is the Juk-ryeong Hyugae-so 죽령휴게소 010 3522-7998 run by Mr. Jang Gyeong-seok 장경석, which has a downstairs restaurant and small store. The upper level of his building has some simple rooms ranging from 30,000W for an individual to 40,000W for a couple. Wifi is available on the restaurant floor. It is normally open daily from 0700 to 2200. Next to the Hyugae-so are a line of small stores selling local herbs, roots, and spices, and public toilets further on. On the Gyeongsangbuk-do side of the pass there is also a nice little restaurant called the 죽령주막 Juk-ryeong Jumak (Local Inn) that sells excellent mountain themed dishes and fried chicken. It also makes its own 호박동동주 Hobak-dongdong-ju, which is a fermented wine made from pumpkin. There is no accommodation here. To its southeast some 10km away on the Gyeongsangbuk-do side lays the charismatic small country town of Punggi 풍기 which is famous for its ginseng products, a large natural hot springs complex and one of Korea's greatest Neo-Confucian Shrine-Academies, the Sosu Seowon with neighboring Seonbi-chon Village and museum, worth a visit. The more modern accommodations are located on the south-side of the river, while the older and cheaper minbaks are in the old-town center area. Danyang is a picturesque river-bend tourist town with a variety of Korean and fusion themed cafes and sikdang's are located on the northwest side of the ridge about 20km away. It has guesthouses, motels and hotels. Both Punggi and Danyang can be reached from Juk-ryeong by bus.

Transportation

A bus will run from Juk-ryeong to Danyang four times a day, leaving at 07:25, 09:05, 14:00, and 17:55. Buses to Punggi from Juk-ryeong only leave twice a day at 09:00 and 15:50. More buses leave to Punggi from the bus stop at Huibang-ri 회방리 about 3-4km down the road from Juk-ryeong. You can also access the Punggi side of the pass quickly by taking the old Yet-gil 옛길 trail off the ridge to the Huibang-sa train station 회방사역, only 2.8km away. Trains leave from the station for Seoul at 16:17 and 18:19 daily, taking 2hr40min. Going the other way, two trains will leave daily at 09:04 and 10:50, going to Yeongju. The first train then continues to Andong, and the latter to Busan. Hitching is also easy from the pass



Punggi Insam (Ginseng)

Day 2

From Juk-ryeong 1hr30min 5km Je2-Yeonhwa-bong 제2연화봉 1hr50min 4km Je1-Yeonhwa-bong 제1연화봉 1hr10min 2km Biro-bong 비로봉 2hr30min 5km Neujeun-maeki-jae 늦은맥이재, 2hr50min 6km Madang-chi 마당치 1hr15min 3km to Gochi-ryeong 고치령 a total of 25km in 11hr 10min

Water Stops

(55) N36°55'30"E128°26'55" Sobaek-san Daepiso

(56) N36°56'56"E128°28'22" Je1-Yeonhwa-bong

(57) N36°57'13"E128°29'14" 300 meters down SE side of Biro-bong

(58) N37°00'46"E128°35'25 Gochi-ryeong



Course Description

Juk-ryeong 4hr30min 11km Biro-bong

You will need to get an early start for this leg if you aim to get to Gochi-ryeong some 25km later. The start-point follows a sealed road passing the rangers hut, where it continues snaking in a predominantly northerly direction offering good views for 7km, climbing about 670m in altitude, till you get to the park shelter located at Je-2-Yeonhwa-bong 제2연화봉, 1357m. There are three peaks in this region all called Yeonhwa-bong. Despite its name Je-2, you're at the first one on this leg.

Sobaek-san Daepiso Shelter 소백산대피소 043-423-1439

The 2-Yeonhwa-bong shelter has been opened in 2016. It has 128 individual bunks in six different rooms at a cost of 10,000W. Reservations must be made online. The shelter also sells water, coffee, rice, ramen, chocolates, canned tuna and ham, cooking gas, and toilet paper.

Sobaek-san National Park 소백산국립공원

Danyang-gun
단양군

Madang-chi
마당치

Gochi-ryeong
고치령

1031m

Neujeunmaekji-jae

Gukmang-bong
국망봉 1420m

Biro-bong
비로봉 1439m

Cheondong-ri
천동리

Yeonhwa-bong(1)
영화봉 1394m

Yeonhwa-bong
연화봉 1383m

Yeonhwa-bong(2)
영화봉 1357m

Samga-ri
삼가리

Yeongju-si
영주시

Sobaeksan National Park

Sunheung-myeon
순흥면

Juk-ryeong to Gochi-ryeong

25km 11hr10min

Juk-ryeong 1hr30min 5km to

Je2-Yeonhwa-bong 제2연화봉 1hr50min 4km to

Je1-Yeonhwa-bong 제1연화봉 1hr10min 2km to

Biro-bong 비로봉 2hr30min 5km to

Neujeun-maeki-jae 늦은매펀이재 2hr50min 6km to

Madang-chi 마당치 1hr15min 3km to

Gochi-ryeong 고치령

931

Juk-ryeong
죽령

5

400





Je2-Yeonhwa-bong shelter

From Je2-Yeonhwa-bong the trail stays on the road traveling northeast passing a water spring (55) indicated by a signpost about 1km later. From this area you can easily see the major peaks of Biro-bong and Gukmang-bong 국망봉. About 2km later you'll arrive at the peak of Yeonhwa-bong 연화봉 1383m with an impressive astronomic observatory on it. Construction of the observatory began in June 1997 and was completed on the 13th of May 1999. It is owned and operated by the Korean Astronomical Observatory and is open to the public by appointment only. On the southern side of Yeonhwa-bong is a track heading down to the temple of Huibang-sa 회방사 and the impressive waterfall of the same name, just below the temple. After Yeonhwa-bong, the sealed road ends as you veer north on good open ridge for about 1.5km in a northerly direction to the peak of Je-1-Yeonhwa-bong, 제1연화봉, marked with a scripted stone plaque that reads:

Oath of Mountain Climbers

Mountain climbers search for the eternal world.

Until they reach their destination,

They get over their adversity with passion and cooperation.

There is never despair or abandonment.

Mountain climbers must assimilate with Mother Nature

And be without deception and decoration.

There is only a march to the true world of freedom, peace and love.

Staying at a lofty elevation the trail continues northeast for about 2km until it reaches the summit of Biro-bong 비로봉, 1439m. Before that, it will pass by lush alpine grasses, and in the right season, crimson fields of royal azalea called Cheol-Jjuk 철적, which is a Chinese word meaning 'bewitched' because travelers used to stop and marvel at the soft-hued blossoms. But, the royal azalea is a poisonous plant and cannot be eaten whereas the common azalea can be eaten, therefore the Koreans call the royal azalea the 'Gaeg-got' meaning cannot eat, and the common azalea the 'Cham-ggot,' the edible flower. The royal azalea begins to blossom in mid-May and its bloom is romantically known as the 'pleasure of love'. A kilometer after Je1-Yeonhwa-bong there is a signpost indicating a spring (56) located on the eastern side of the track. Near the foot of Biro-bong you will see some boardwalks to a wooden building which can be used as a shelter to rest from the wind and have some lunch. You cannot sleep overnight there. From that station, you can see stands of Yew trees.

Korean Yew Tree

The Yew trees in this region only average about 7m in height due to the extreme wind exposure. The bark, branches, and leaves of the Yew tree provide good medicine for diabetes, and the fruits are also edible. There is enough antibiotic material in one 60-year old Yew tree to allegedly cure one adult of cancer. The Yew tree can supposedly stand for 1000-years alive, and another 1000 in its dying state, where it starts to hollow out and generate its eerie figure. Therefore, the timber of the Yew tree is of an exceptional hardwood quality and was well sought, during the Joseon Kingdom to produce regal crowns and furniture for the royal palaces. Because of its riches, the Yew tree was only allowed to be planted in the gardens of royal palaces and high court officials.

Biro-bong 비로봉 1430m

At the peak of Biro-bong, 1430m, you will have panoramic 360° views. On a good day, you can practically see the remaining 13km of the ridge heading northeast, and if you know your stuff, the Baekdu Daegan as it blends into Taebak-san area. A stone plaque at the summit says '*A great work made by Heaven and Earth*'. More water (57) to be found 300 meters down a track located on the southeastern side of the peak.

Camping

From Biro-bong it's a long walk to the nearest campsite located about 5.5km down the southeastern side to Biro-sa temple, then to the Samga National Park Campsite, tel: 054-637-3794.

Biro-bong 6hr35min 14km Gochi-ryeong

From Biro-bong the trail drops north down a staircase then veers northeast at 1300m elevation on open and vast ridge before arriving at the summit area of Gukmang-bong, 1420m, some 3km later.



Biro-bong 1430m

Gukmang-bong 국망봉

You may recall the story of the Silla Prince Ma-eui and his sister Princess Deokju back at Haneul-jae. Well, Gukman-bong, was where in 100AD period, on their subterfuge escape from their crumbling Kingdom, Ma-eui stood and looked back south for his last time, at what was his Kingdom of Silla. There he shed tears of sorrow for his murdered parents and regret towards the kingdom he failed to save. Disappearing over the ridge he fled north, ending up in Geumgang-san in what is now North Korea. As he roamed the mystic peaks and pinnacles of this outdoor wonderland, his robes disappeared for hemp. In Korean, Ma-eui means hemp. Hemp was once very common in Korea, and on the death of a parent, it was worn as rough-fabric robes for three years as a measure of their sorrow. So deep was the lament of Prince Ma-eui, that he wore hemp for the rest of his life.

After Gukmang-bong, the trail heads east for 800m to the summit of Sangwol-bong 상월봉, 1394m, where it then turns north for 1.5km to the pass of Neujeun-maeki-jae 늦은맥이재, 1265m. From there, the trail begins its descent from the Sobaek elevation, traveling east, passing a helipad 2km later, and then another 1km more. At this helipad, there is a signpost and track junction. The track heading south off the ridge goes about 5km to the small mountain village of Jwaseok-ri 좌석리 located about at the bottom of the mountain road from Gochi-ryeong. About 1.5km farther on from the helipad is another trail junction, with another track breaking south to the mountain village of Yeonhwa-dong 연화동, not far at all from the previous Jwaseok-ri. Both these villages are part of the 143km Sobaeksan Jarak-gil 소백산자락길.

Lodging

Gukmang-bong 1420m

There are accommodations at the end of these two track junctions. In tranquil Jwaseok-ri there is a big flash guesthouse 게스트하우스 054-634-5445 that accommodates walkers of the Sobaek-san Jarak-gil. At the end of the Yeonhwa-dong 연화동 track there is the home of the Yeonhwa-dong Minbak 연화동민박 054-638-4535. This simple brick farm house with humble hosts, will rent you a room for 30-40,000 won, and hearty meals for an extra 5000-10,000W per head. These two remote mountain villages are not far apart and can also be reached on foot from Gochi-ryeong.



From the helipad track junction, the trail veers to the north for about 2km coasting at 1000m elevation before dropping east for 1km and arriving at the pass of Madang-chi 마당치. There the trail heads northeast, making one bound over a peak 1032m, where it then starts its final descent southeast for 2km to the pass of Gochi-ryeong 고치령.

Gochi-ryeong 고치령 760m

Gochi-ryeong is connected by the PR935 that links Dansan-myeon 단산면 of Gyeongsangbuk-do in the southeast to Yeongchun-myeon 영춘면 in Chungcheongbuk-do in the north. The remote pass is rarely visited by vehicles and the road represents that. Other than a water-spring (58) located a short distance down the northern side there are no amenities here, but there is a lot of character. As a relic of Korea's past, Gochi-ryeong has a well-kept Sanshin-gak 산신각 (mountain-spirit shrine). There are two distinctive paintings inside. The main one depicting the mountain-spirit himself and the other the ghost tale of King Danjong b.1441. At the age of 12 he became the sixth King of the Joseon dynasty before being forced to abdicate, then exiled in nearby Yeongwol County where he was ordered to drink poison at the tender age of 16. The painting is of his ghost riding to the sacred mountain of Taebaek-san to become a mountain-spirit (Sanshin). Danjong was posthumously restored as a King in 1698. The two wooden tablets represent the mountain-spirit of Taebaek-san to the left, and that of Sobaek-san to the right.

Lodging and Camping

As per park policy it is illegal to camp, but if you must there is enough space in this area to pitch a tent, but please do it discreetly and not in front of the shrine. Above the shrine there is a helipad which is out of sight of any passersby and offers lots of space to pitch a tent. Minbaks and guesthouses are available in Jwaseok-ri and Yeonhwadong as explained previously.

Transport

Don't expect to hitch a ride off Gochi-ryeong, as you might become a Sanshin by the time a car arrives. The closest bus stop is in Jwaseok-ri 좌석리. Buses leave from there for Dansang-myeon 단상면 and on to Yeongju 3 times a day at 07:40, 12:40 and 18:30.





Sanshin-gak at Gochi-ryeong



Chungcheongbuk-do
충청북도

Danyang-gun
단양군

Gochi-ryeong
고치령

Namdae-ri
남대리

Magu-ryeong
마구령

Sobaek-san National Park
소백산국립공원

Yeongju-si
영주시

Buseok-myeon
부석면

Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

935

935

931



Gochi-ryeong to Doraegi-jae 26.5km 13hr20min

- Gochi-ryeong 4hr 8km to Magu-ryeong 마구령 2hr30min 5km to Galgot-san 갈곶산 1hr45min 3km to Seondal-san 선달산 2hr20min 5km to Bakdal-ryeong 박달령 1hr20min 2km to Okdol-bong 옥돌봉 1hr10min 2km to Doraegi-jae 도래기재

Mulya-myeon 물야면



Day 3

From Gochi-ryeong 4hr 8km Magu-ryeong마구령 2hr30min 5km Galgot-san 갈꽃산 1hr45min 3km Seondal-san 선달산 2hr20min 5km Bakdal-ryeong 박달령 1hr20min 2km Okdol-bong 옥돌봉 1hr10min 2km Doraegi-jae 도래기재 a total of 26.5km in 13hr 15min.

Water Stops

- (59) N37°01'21"E128°42'09" Neujeunmoji
 (60) N37°02'19"E128°43'00" Seondal-san
 (61) N37°01'32"E128°45'20" Bakdal-ryeong
 (62) N37°02'6"E128°48'06" Doraegi-jae



Course Description

Gochi-ryeong 13.9km 6hr40min Neujeun-mogi 늦은목이

Most of this leg is marked every 500 meters with a signpost. After your night with the mountain spirits at Gochi-ryeong, the trail ascends southeast for 500 meters to your first peak at 950m, where it then drops and travels northeast for about 3km at about 800m elevation, before it starts a northerly climb for 2km to peak 1096m. From there it's a 2km descent through splendid wooded forest to the pass of Magu-ryeong 마구령, which is connected by a barely used extension of the PR935 that runs a north-south direction. Marked by a stele, Magu-ryeong is an old pass between the provinces of Chungcheong-do and Gyeongsang-do. In the old days, folk said that the pass was so high and demanding that it felt like one had spent the whole day harvesting rice once you got there. Folk, therefore preferred to travel over the pass on horseback, and the pass became known as Magu, meaning, horse saddle.

From Magu-ryeong the trail continues east up over a small brow, down into a saddle and then climbs for almost 1km up to peak 1057m. From there the trail will undulate downwards through forest in a southeast direction for the next 3km to the peak of Galgot-san 갈곶산, 966m, marked by a T-junction. The barely used track to the south goes to the famous Buseok-sa Temple. It is only a 3.5km walk down to the backyard of this picturesque and well-sited monastery steeped in remarkable history. Otherwise from Galgot-san, the Baekdu Daegan makes a 160m northerly descent for 1km to the pass of Neujeun-moki 늦은목이 which is also the exit boundary of Sobaek-san National Park.

Camping and Lodging

Neujeun-mogi sits in a clearing under the forest canopy, which is big enough to pitch a tent. About 2km down the eastern track is the village of Saengdal 생달 in Ojeon-ri 오전리, which has a selection of minbaks and pensions, including the Hanmi minbak 한미민박. About 3km past Saengdal is Ojeon mineral spring town which has a free camp ground with bathrooms, showers, and electricity. You can get here easier via the Bakdal-ryeong exit 7km later. Buses leave from Ojeon-ri to Bonghwa Town twice a day at 08:00 and 14:40. About 3.6km on the western side of the pass, where the trail hits the PR935, is the Jumak-geori 주막거리 auto campsite, which has a well-equipped mart. There is also stream water (59) on either side of the pass.

Buseok-sa 부석사

Buseok-sa is a majestic temple built in 676 by the great monk Uisang Daesa, under the instruction of King Munmu of the Silla Dynasty (57BC-935AD). Its name comes from an interesting story. Ancient records say that upon Uisang Daesa's return from ascetic practice in China, he was unknowingly followed by a mystical dragon that had transformed from a Chinese maiden that loved Uisang dearly, and couldn't bear to be without him. When Uisang was commissioned to build monasteries around the Silla kingdom, he selected this site to build Buseok-sa. However, he was met by an angry resistance of local farmers who rejected the idea of a Buddhist temple being built on their animistic site for mountain-spirit worship, as Buddhism was still very much a new and foreign religion for the Korean people then. As the farmers, brandishing farming tools, gathered in protest around Uisang, his shadowing dragon-girlfriend swooped invisibly from the heavens and uplifted a huge slab of rock, levitating it above the heads of the peasant mob. Fearing this was the powers of Uisang, they retreated back and granted him the power to build a temple on the mountain spirit site. As a measure of appreciation and cooperation, Uisang in return, built a mountain-spirit shrine 산신각 (sanshin-gak) and this practice of the having a sanshin-gak at the back and above the main prayer hall, as a landlord of the temple site, remains today. Translated, Buseok-sa means "Floating Rock," and you can see that famous rock sitting next to the main prayer hall.



Amitabha, the Buddha of Western Paradise at Buseok-sa temple

Transport

Buses run from Buseok-sa to Yeongju City 15 times a day from 06:50 to 20:30, passing through Punggi. From Yeongju buses run back to Buseok-sa, 15 times a day and from Punggi 20 times a day. Or you can call a Buseok Taxi 부석택시 (054-633-3103 / 054-636-1280).

Neujeun-mogi 6hr35min 12.6km Doraegi-jae 도래기재

The trail continues vigorously north for almost 2km up to the peak of Seondal-san 선달산, 1239m, eating away at 500m of elevation. The summit is marked by a stele with good views to the east and south. From there, the trail, starts to veer east, and about 1km after Seondal-san a spring (60) can be found marked by a signpost about 150m down the southern side of the ridge. The remaining 4km to Bakdal-ryeong are achieved on a gentle downward ridge.

Bakdal-ryeong 박달령 970m

Bakdal-ryeong is located on a north-south running mountain road. It is a large open pass located in quite a remote area. A spring (61) can be found about 100m down a track in the forest from the northern side of the pass, beneath the helipad; it's not on the roadside, don't follow that. There is plenty of space to pitch a tent at this pass, with the helipad being the most notable. On the other side of the road you will see a number



of structures, notably a beautiful 2.5m stele erected on the 18th of October 2006. It sits in the middle of a rock fringed garden in front of a lovely wooden shelter. There is also a painting-less, mountain-spirit shrine (Sanshin-gak) there; it was remodeled in 1994 and religious services to the mountain-spirit are performed here on the 8th Day of every Fourth Moon. Information found states that in the past Bakdal-ryeong was frequented by peddlers and travelers moving between Gyeongsangbuk-do in the south and Gangwon-do in the north.

From Bakdal-ryeong you'll stay east, climbing steadily on a 3km trail to Okdol-bong 옥돌봉 1244m, that provides great southeast views. From there, the trail turns northeast, slowly descending, where about 1km later you'll come across a white picket fence. Inside the fence's perimeter is a 550-year old Royal Azalea tree or Cheol-jjuk-namu. 철쭉나무. The tree stands there in an impressive state, spreading its twisted branches out in all directions. From this rare tree, it's only an hour's walk for the last 2km to the road pass at Doraegi-jae.

Doraegi-jae 도래기재 760m

The road pass of Doraegi-jae straddles the PR88 and is crossed by an eco-bridge. It was once a main route for fish merchants from the East Seacoast area of Gyeongsang-do to Seoul. About 100m on the southern side of the pass there is a small park in front of an old tunnel built during the Japanese colonial period to transport gold and coal. During that period, the pass area was also logged for Korea's famous Geumgang-seong native pine that solidly stood over 40m high, and was used mostly for palace construction. In the park, there is also a jeongja and enough flat space to pitch a tent. Run-off water (62) might be available there in the wetter months.

Lodging

6km south of Doraegi-jae on PR88, is the road junction village of Seobyeok-ri. There is a small store and restaurant there called the Baekdu Daegan Sikdang 백두대간식당, 010-7746-5040. They own an accommodation a short walk from there. Their accommodation has no wifi, but there is a washing machine, and kitchenette. If you need internet you can try the Invil-center (information-village) next to the police station. Invil's are little business centers with internet set up for the old country folk. The small village is a great place to stay-over where you can chill out and have a beer or soju under the village guardian tree with the rest of the locale. Another 8km down PR88 is the small town of Chunyang-myeon 춘양면. Another cool backwater of unpretentiousness, It has everything you need including convenience stores and a Nong-hyup Bank. The best place to stay is at the Chunyang Donga Motel 동아모텔 054 672-3109. It has clean rooms with wifi for about 35,000W or 40,000W for 2 people.

Baekdu Daegan National Arboretum 국립백두대간수목원

On road 915 where it joins road 88 at Seobyeok-ri there is a brand new massive Baekdu Daegan National Arboretum. Its area size is 5,179ha. The complex is a celebration of the Baekdu Daegan and its impact on the environment. One of its primary functions is as a wild seed vault, which is off-limits to the public, however the arboretum has many attractions that are open to the public including forest walkways, education tours, exhibition halls, restaurant, and recently introduced a 4.8ha tiger camp that has a population of four Siberian tigers, or Paektusan tiger as the Koreans like to call them. Entrance is free, and should normally be registered via an online reservation, but as a Baekdu Daeganer, I reckon if you turn up, you should be warmly invited inside.

Transport

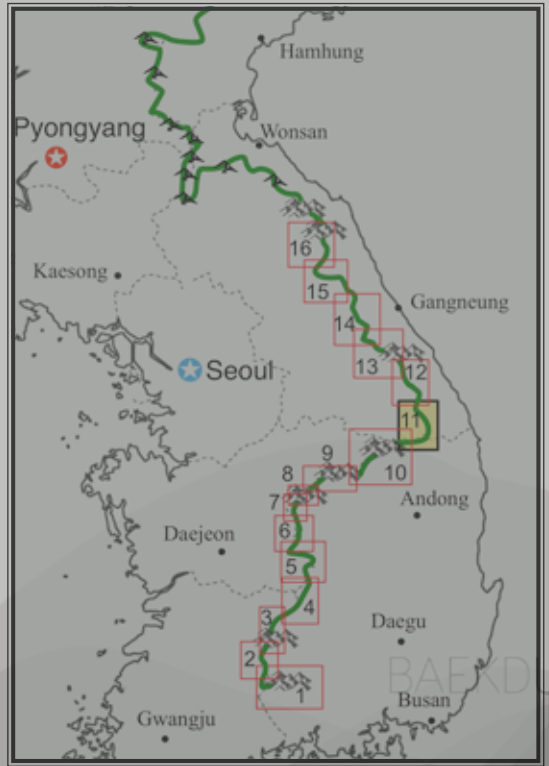
Although Doraegi-jae appears to be quite isolated, it can be busy with vehicular traffic. A local bus does pass over there twice a day in both directions. It'll be easier to hitch a ride down to Seobyeok-ri where you can take another bus to Chunyang and larger towns from there.



Korean leap frog in Chunyang-myeon



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 11
TAEBAEKSAN NATIONAL PARK
Doraegi-jae to Pi-jae, 45km in 2 days

Doraegi-jae to Hwabang-jae 24km 11hr35min

Doraegi-jae 도래기재 2hr40min 5.3km to
Guryong-san 구룡산 2hr10min 5km to
Shinseon-bong 신선봉 2hr50min 5km to
Gitdaebaegi-bong 깃대배기봉 2hr5min 4.5km to
Janggun-bong 장군봉 1hr45min 4.2km to
Hwabang-jae 화방재

Gangwon-do
강원도

Yeongwol-gun
영월군



Guryong-san
구룡산 1344m

Gojik-ryeong
고직령

Gomneomi-jae
곰넘이재

Gyeongsangbuk-do
경상북도

88

Doraegi-jae
도래기재

Sin
신선



414

31

31

Hwabang-jae
화방재

Sagil-chi 사길치

Dangun Seongjeon
단군성전

Yuil-sa 유일사

Danggol Valley
당골계곡

Janggun-dan 장군단1567m

Manggyeong-sa
망경사

Cheonje-dan 천제단

Munsu-bong
문수봉1515m

Ha-dan 하단

Buso-bong
부소봉1546m

Taebaek-san National Park 태백산국립공원

Taebaek-si
태백시

Gitdaebaegi-bong
깃대비기재

Duri-bong
두리봉1353m

seon-bong
선봉

Bonghwa-gun
봉화군

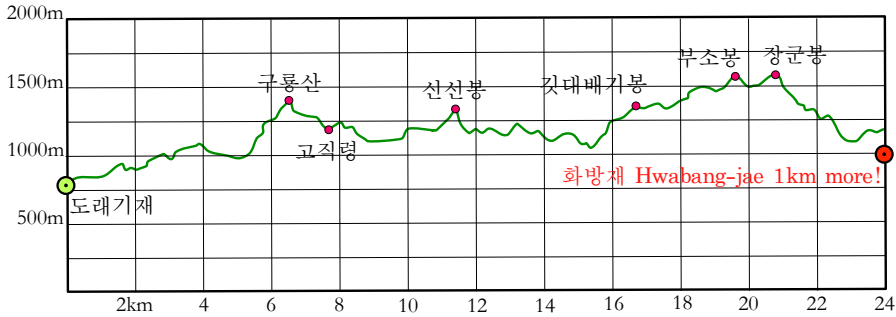
Section 11: The Mountain Worshippers Trail

Doraegi-jae to Pi-jae in 2 days over 45km

Day 1

From Doraegi-jae 도래기재 **2hr40min 5.3km Guryong-san** 구룡산 **2hr10min 5km Shinseon-bong** 신선봉 **2hr50min 5km Gitdaebaegi-bong** 깃대배기봉 **2hr5min 4.5km Janggun-bong** 장군봉 **1hr45min 4.2km to Hwabang-jae** 화방재 **a total of 24km in 11hours and 35min**

Water Stops
 (63) N37°02'46"E128°52'15" Gomneome-jae
 (64) N37°05'42"E128°55'14" Yong-jeong spring
 (65) N37°05'27"E128°55'13" Yuil-sa



Taebaek-san National Park

Taebaek-san, located in Gangwon-do province, was previously a provincial park and became Korea's 22nd national park in 2016. It is a popular park for hikers and mountain worshippers, with its open ridge and ancient stone towers. On its summit area stand the famous stone altars of Cheonje-dan, Janggun-dan, and Ha-dan; ancient relics, still used today as places of reverence for national, heavenly and mountain spirits, and personal well-being and healing. On the neighboring peak of Munsu-bong 문수봉 1517m, there is also a fine collection of doltap stone towers, that make a worthy detour off or back to the summits of Taebaek-san. The ridge area of Taebaek-san also has a fine collection of old Korean Yew Trees 주목나무 (Jumok-namu), that in winter become icy gargoyle like creatures that make fascinating winter photos. The major city of the area, aptly named Taebaek-si, is the hub of this region, and has all the facilities that a hiker requires for re-nourishing their tired bodies, including bars, hotels, motels, western takeaways, movie theatres, and shopping.

Taebaek-san is a node mountain that is part of the Taebaek mountain range 태백산맥 (Taebaek-sanmaek) that averages over 1000m in altitude, and runs down the east coast of Korea starting at Paektu-san in North Korea and ending on the eastern banks of the Nakdong River 낙동강 in Busan. The actual range-section from Taebaek-san to Busan is also known as the Nakdong-jeongmaek 낙동정맥, and some trekkers hike its 500km distance. It also forms the eastern watershed-ridgeline for the Nakdong-gang, forcing it to spill out in Busan, and not anywhere on the east coast. You can find good English information on this ridge at www.nakdong.blogspot.com. Where the Taebaek-sanmaek range meets Taebaek-san from the north, another range called the Sobaek mountain range 소백산맥 (Sobaek-sanmaek) starts and wrangles east, then south all the way to Jiri-san, as the Baekdu Daegan. So, combined; the Taebaek and Sobaek sanmaeks form the entire Baekdu Daegan on the Korean Peninsula. On either side of Taebaek-san, two of South Korea's major rivers start. On the southern and eastern side, the headwaters of the Nakdong River 510km, Korea's third longest and South Korea's longest waterway starts. You can see the subterranean sources of that at Hwangji Pond 황지연못 in the Taebaek city-center, as it bubbles into sapphire blue waters from beneath the ground; another source is the springs at the Mangyeong-sa and Cheongwon-sa temples on the mountain. To the north and west the headwaters of Korea's fourth longest river and South Korea's second longest, the Namhan 494km, begin and later converge with the Bukhan River that forms in Kumgang-san, North Korea, just to the east of Seoul, where it then spills into the West Sea of Korea.



Transport

Buses run to and from Taebaek Bus Terminal 태백시외버스터미널 for the Taebaek-san National Park entrance at Dang-gol Maepyo-so 당골매표소 27 times a day from 07:38 - 22:25, and to the other park entrance at Yuil-sa Maepyo-so 유일사매표소 18 times a day from 06:30 - 22:35. Buses leave Dong-Seoul for Taebaek-si 8 times a day from 06:00 - 22:01. Buses regularly leave Taebaek-si to all major cities of Gangwon-do.

Course Description

Doraegi-jae 10hr 19.8km Taebaek-san

From Doraegi-jae the Baekdu Daegan trail continues northeast, and will climb steadily for the next 4km to the base of Guryong-san 구룡산, 1344m, where it will then steeply traverse up its side for one more kilometer until you arrive at its peak. It's quite a gutsy first leg. Guryong-san means Nine Dragons Mountain. Once upon a time, a local woman was carrying an urn of water back home from an alpine spring near the peak, when she saw nine dragons soaring towards the heavens. She managed to catch one of the dragons by its tail and pull it back down, and when it landed it became a snake. From the summit of Guryong-san the trail drops sharply southeast where 1km later it arrives at an old pass called Gojik-ryeong 고직령, 1231m, marked by a bench and a signpost. If you venture a little down the southwestern side you'll be able to see a Sanshin-gak 산신각 (mountain-spirit shrine). Back on the trail the Baekdu Daegan continues its southeast descent and becomes an old vehicle track where 2km later it arrives at a signposted pass called Gomneomi-jae 고평이재. There is head-water (63) to be found on both sides of this pass. From Gomneomi-jae the trail stays a southeast vehicle track for about 1km as it ascends to peak 1184m where you then leave it in a northerly direction as it makes a mean 1km series of staircase ascents to Shinseon-bong 신선봉.

From Shinseon-bong the trail makes a distinctive southeast descent marking the beginning of a marvelous section as it undulates through deciduous forests and enters the Taebaek-sanmaek. After 2km the trail arrives at what is your last southern point of the Baekdu Daegan as it makes its turn north, where it'll stay on that course predominantly all the way to Paektu-san, some 1300km afar.



This point is called Chadol-begi 차돌베기, 1200m, and is marked by a signpost and bench. There is supposedly a water spring there, but unconfirmed. From there the trail begins its northern stretch, descending slightly for the next 2km to a saddle called Sageori-anbu 사거리안부, where the trail then starts a big 1.5km northeast climb up to Gitdaebaegi-bong 깃대배기봉 1368m.

From Gitdaebaegi-bong 깃대배기봉 you might see, in the far north, the summit of Taebaek-san and its Cheonje-dan stone altar. You're now entering the northern regions of South Korea in the province of Gangwon-do, and the mountain-scape starts to take on a different appearance, including many Yew trees in this area. You leave Gitdaebaegi-bong in a northerly direction, slowly climbing for the next 3km, until you arrive at the summit of Buso-bong 부소봉, 1546m, marked as a trail junction. The easterly track from here goes to the doltap-dotted peak of Munsu-bong 문수봉, 1515m, and then will also take you down to Danggol Valley and the Taebaek-san National Park entrance. Otherwise stay north on the trail for the next 1.6km all the way to the summit of Taebaek-san, dipping into a saddle on-route, marked by the Ha-dan stone altar, before climbing up to the Cheonje-dan altar. The actual highest point of Taebaek-san is another few hundred meters up behind this, at Janggun-bong 장군봉 1567m.

Views of Cheonje-dan



The Stone Altars of Taebaek-san

Ha-dan 하단

This stone altar is the first and smallest of the set of three. Like the other two, its exact age is unknown. It is called Ha-dan meaning lower altar as its original name is unknown. One popular belief is that Ha-dan was built for Hwan-ung, the son of the King of Heaven (Hwan-in).

Cheonje-dan 천제단 1560m

Cheonje-dan, meaning “Heaven-Ceremony Shrine”, is a spectacular circular structure made of oil-stained shards of natural rock. Its age is unknown, as it has been rebuilt many times over the centuries. Local legend claims that Cheonje-dan was built for Dan-gun, the mythic founder of Korea’s “first kingdom” Gojoseon in 2333BC. Dan-gun was the grandson of the Heavenly King, Hwan-in, and the son of Hwan-ung and Ung-nyeo, a bear transformed into a woman. Cheonje-dan is the most-visited and finest-looking structure of the three. On Korea’s national foundation day 개천절, celebrated every 3rd day of October, and also on the 3rd day of the 10th lunar month, the peak is host to a large Cheon-jesa 천제사 or Heaven-venerating Ceremony, celebrating the founding of the Gojoseon Kingdom 2333BC-108BC. It is a vibrant ceremony headed by Taebaek City’s mayoral staff, dignitaries, head-shamans and members of the public.

Because the story of Dan-gun, just like Korea itself, is so ancient, then its origins remain confusing yet worth a yarn. A long time ago the King of Heaven Hwan-in, sent his son Hwan-ung to earth to set up a nation of humans at Taebaek-san. Hwan-ung arrived at Taebaek-san with a flurry of wind, rain, and clouds. Upon completion of the first kingdom a tiger and bear whom had been watching this miracle asked Hwan-ung if they too could become human. Hwan-ung summoned them to a cave for 100 days and instructed them to eat only garlic and mugwort. The tiger quit halfway through, but the bear persevered and after 100 days became a woman named Ung-nyeo, literally meaning bear-woman. Being a woman she yearned for her own child, and Hwan-ung took pity on her, and together they produced a son, naming him Dan-gun or “Altar-King,” who became the founding monarch of this first Korean Kingdom named Gojoseon (Ancient Joseon). In an era where oral history talks about giants and long life, Dan-gun is said to have ruled Gojoseon for 1908 years. Upon his abdication, he became an immortal San-shin (mountain spirit) at the sacred mountain of Kuwol-san in what is now North Korea. The other theory goes like this; during that same pre-historical period the prince of a tiger-hunting clan married the princess of an opposing bear-hunting clan, bringing the two warring clans together in peace, and their subsequent son was named Dan-gun, who then ruled the newly united clans as the kingdom of Gojoseon, the first Kingdom of what became the Korean people. These days the belief of Dan-gun as a godlike founding-father is practiced as a quasi-religion or cult in South Korea, and Taebaek-san is home to many temples that practice this worship.

On the outskirts of Pyongyang in North Korea there is a gigantic stone mausoleum built by the late Kim Il-sung that claims to house the skeletal remains of Dan-gun and his wife. The skeletons are said to be longer, (but not giants) than the average human height of the Korean people from that period. It is claimed that their remains were moved frequently from varying tombs over the course of history. This was to protect them from being desecrated by the many foreign forces that have invaded Korea over its history. Eventually, the location of their remains disappeared, but was rediscovered later through recent research. The mausoleum is built on the side of a mountain also called Taebaek-san.

Cheon-jesa



Janggun-dan 장군단 1567m

About 250 meters further up the trail you can see the last altar on this part of the ridge, Janggun-dan, meaning Guardian General Altar. Janggun-dan is said to have been built for the King of Heaven, Hwan-in. The Baekdu Daegan Trail descends northwards from here.

The stone altars, particularly Cheonje and Janggun-dan, are still very much used by shamans and some laymen-monks of the nearby temple of Manggyeong-sa 망경사. As the altars are open-air theatres, you will also see everyday normal people using them; meditating, praying or chanting for whatever purpose it is they are there for. This could vary from self-healing, fertility, economic prosperity, educational success for their children, or even the unification of Korea. Like a church or temple, the altars are used for peaceful personal reasons, and when inside them, please respect others that are using them, or have a little prayer yourself. If you feel you've walked long enough for the day, then there is an option to get off the ridge at Cheonje-dan, and head down to the park entrance in Danggol 당골 (Shrine Valley) about 4.5km away. This highly sacred set of valleys, now with some modern recreation and parking facilities and many mountain-cuisine restaurants, features the Dan-gun Seongjeon 단군성전 Shrine, three significant scenic temples named Mandeok-sa, Cheongwon-sa and Baekdan-sa, and many colorful Shamanic shrines; yet more temples and shrines are on the NH31 that runs across the north edge of the park.



Lodgings

At the park entrance, there is the Ujin motel **우진모텔** 033-5536448 or 010-53646447 which has good rooms with wifi for 40,000W. Along with a coal museum, there are also lots of sikdang and stores in the park entrance area. From the park entrance, you can take a regular bus to Taebaek City where there is a plethora of hotels and motels. Most of them won't be at the cheap end, but the Surak Park motel **수락파크** 033-552-2007 located behind the Hwangji Pond area, has good rooms with wifi for 35,000W.



Manggyeong-sa **망경사**

From the eastern side of Cheonje-dan, behind the tall stele, there is a trail that goes down 300m to the temple of Manggyeong-sa (All-encompassing-view Temple) and then another 4km to the entrance area of Taebaek-san. Before reaching Manggyeong-sa you will pass a large wooden shrine. This is a shrine to the mountain-spirit of Danjong, the same figure that you saw as a ghost riding the white horse at the Gochi-ryeong Sanshin-gak in Sobaek-san, on his way to becoming a supplementary mountain-spirit of Taebaek-san. Manggyeong-sa, founded by Great Master Jajang-yulsa in the mid-600s, is now a fusion-spirituality temple frequented by Dan-gunists, Shamanists, Daoists, Buddhists and lay-people. Worshippers that come to Manggyeong-sa are normally on a spiritual mission seeking some form of severance from issues preventing them from progression in life. If these persons are serious about their plight they are normally accompanied by a shaman. At Manggyeong-sa there is a Samshin-gak **삼신각** or Three Spirits Shrine, containing paintings of Dan-gun, Sanshin and Dokseong. It is possible to sleep at Mangyeong-sa, but you won't get a room. If given permission, you'll sleep on the heated interior floor in the main room along with everyone else. Throughout the night, people will come and go from the main room, as they make their way to and from the altars on the peak, and you won't get much sleep, but it's still an interesting cultural experience. They will charge you for your space, about 15 or 20,000W, but that'll include a communal meal. However, don't be disappointed if they don't allow you to stay over, as the place is strictly for worshippers. Out the front of the building there is also a small kiosk selling food items and soft drinks. Located next to the kiosk is a coffee machine. The mainly female staff-members are friendly and curious to foreigners, but sometimes wary too.

Yeongjeong-spring 용정

Located at the same venue is the highest (1470m) mountain spring (64) in Korea, called Yong-jeong 용정 or “Dragon Well”, one of the sources of the Nakdong River. Since ancient times those who worshiped the heavenly and other spirits up here have used this mineral-spring-water to serve in their rituals. This water-spring is called by afficianados the best among the famous ones of all Korea, because the sun rising from the East Sea shines on it before any other in the morning. Taste its refreshing mineral-water, and be showered with the energy of Taebaek-san. There is a Chinese legend that a carp fish, which symbolizes richness, fecundity, and prosperity, could become a dragon if it can pass up though the Yong-mun or Dragon-gate, [a set of fierce rapids in the middle of the Yellow River in China]. Here, if a carp can successfully pass up the Nakdong River and pass through the fast-flowing subterranean waters of a swamp and cave to get to this spring then it will also turn into a dragon.

Janggung-bong 1hr45min 4.2km Hwabang-jae

After the Janggung-bong altar the trail basically descends northwest for 1.6km to a trail junction, named 유일사갈림길, where there is track heading a short distance west to the temple of Yuil-sa 유일사, a nice religious site to visit in-itself. From there the trail continues on its descent, and 2km later, it arrives at the saddle of Sagil-chi 사길치, 1174m, marked by a Sanshin-gak with an impressive painting of the mountain-spirit inside. When most people walked on foot or rode horses, Sagil-chi was a remote gateway to Gangwon-do. However, wild animals and gangs of mountain-bandits posed grave threats for innocent travellers, so they built this Sanshin-gak here. When they passed by it, they paid homage to its spirit to ensure safe passage. After you've done that, it's less than 1km down a dirt road to the road-pass of Hwabang-jae.

Hwabang-jae 화방재 936m

The road-pass of Hwabang-jae is connected by the east-west running NH31. Taebaek City is located 12km to the east on NH35, and 6km to the west is the riverside junction town of Sangdong 산동. The only facility at the pass is the two-storey E-pyeong Hyugae-so 이평휴게소 with a small store and restaurant downstairs. The area is a little run-down these days and it's hard to say what it's future holds.

Lodging

The E-pyeong Hyugae-so 010-6218-3632 at Hwabang-jae also has rooms upstairs for about 50,000W. Their condition inside is unknown. There is a store of sorts there to, but poorly stocked and often not open.

Transport

Buses run from Hwabang-jae into downtown Taebaek City 5 times a day from 09:10 – 19:55. Buses from Taebaek run to Hwabang-jae 6 times a day from 06:00 – 19:55.



Hwabang-jae to Pi-jae 21km 9hr35min

- Hwabang-jae 화방재 1hr45min 4km to
- Manhang-jae 만항재 1hr20min 3km to
- Hambaek-san 함백산 2hr50min 6km to
- Geumdae-bong 금대봉 2hr50min 6km to
- Maebong-san 매봉산 50min 2km to
- Pi-jae 피재



Taebaek-san National Park 태백산국립공원





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Taebaek-si
태백시

31

35

관

관

관

Gangwon-do
강원도

31

Jungham-baek
중함백 1505m

Hambaek-san
함백산 1572m

Changok-bong
창옥봉

Suri-bong
수리봉 1214m

Jeongam-sa
정암사

414

Manhang-jae
만항재

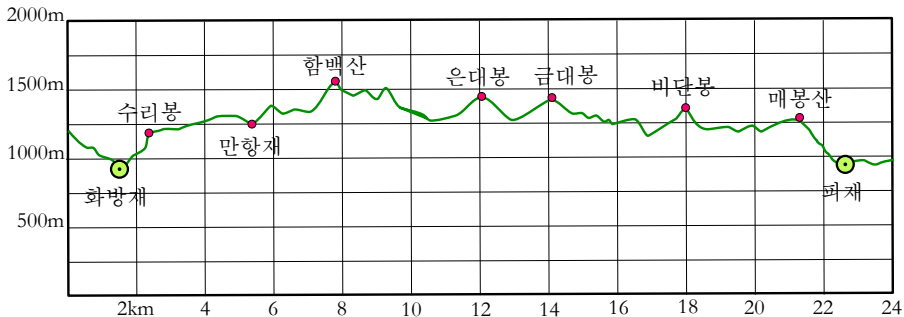
Hwabang-jae
화방재

Day 2

From Hwabang-jae 화방재 1hr45min 4km Manhang-jae 만항재 1hr20min 3km Hambaek-san 함백산 2hr50min 6km Geumdae-bong 금대봉 2hr50min 6km Maebong-san 매봉산 50min 2km to Pi-jae 피재 a total of 21km in 9hr 35min.

Water Stop

(66) N37°10'33"E128°55'06" Jajak-saemteo



Course Description

Hwabang-jae 9hr35min 21km Pi-jae

The Baekdu Daegan Trail begins on the other side of the road between two shabby homes. It heads north straight up the ridge climbing over 300m in elevation, before arriving at the peak of Suri-bong 수리봉, 1214m, about 1.3km later. The trial then continues north staying on steady elevation for the next 2km before arriving near a communications facility which will then take you onto a small road that'll lead you to the pass of Manhang-jae.

Manhang-jae 만항재 1330m

Provincial road PR414 crosses the pass, making it supposedly the highest sealed road pass in all South Korea. Located at the pass, is a nice little sikdang there called the Manhang-jae Yasaeng-hwa Suim-teo 만항재야생화쉼터, basically the "wildflower rest-area of Manhang-jae." A set of public toilets sits alongside the sikdang. Back in the day, Manhang-jae was where merchants carrying large bundles of sea-salt from the east coast would pass over by foot. It is now a wildflower theme park, and convenient spot to stop and take a rest.

From Manhang-jae, the Baekdu Daegan joins the road briefly as it turns east for about 150m down to the next elbow in the road, where the trail will then re-join the mountain from a car-park area opposite some interesting artwork. From there it will ascend east towards Changok-bong **창옥봉**, 1350m, arriving there about 500m later. From there the trail turns north paralleling an extension of the PR414, for about 1.5km, before it starts to take you up a decent 1.2km climb to the main feature of Hambaek-san at 1572m. The summit of Hambaek-san, sixth-highest in the nation, shares its space with a broadcasting mast. Imagining what it was like before the mast, the summit area is adorned with rocky cairns signifying its allegiance with the heavens. From this peak there are good 360° views including the city of Taebaek-si. Continue north from Hambaek-san passing the helipad by an impressive old Yew Tree.



Korean Yew Tree

These ancient evergreen survivors, found only on Korea's highest alpine ridges, are a famous feature of Taebaek-san's peak-areas. They are related to the Yew trees common to northern Europe, held sacred by the Celts and other pagan peoples. Just like Koreans, they regarded them as symbols of immortality, markers of sacred spots and powerful charms against bad fortune and malign spirits. It is considered quite unlucky to damage one. Yew trees have remained symbolic to many religions. Christians see them as symbols of immortality and resurrection, and they are also highly respected by Buddhists. Korean Shamans consider them to be enlightened ancestral beings.

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From the old tree, the trail stays north, descending as it reenters the forest which house more Yew trees including some Japanese species (*Taxus cuspidata*), and then makes one bound over Jung-hambaek 중함백 1505m, 1km later, and descends again for another kilometer, before arriving at a trail junction where a small water spring (66) known as Jajak-saemteo 자작샘터 1300m, is located a short distance down the east side of the ridge. The track to the western side will take you 1.2km down to the PR414, passing about halfway a trail-fork offering a 30-minute trail detour to Jeokjo-am Hermitage, one of the nation's highest-altitude temples. One km north along PR414 from where the trail (by then a dirt road) meets it is the great temple Jeongam-sa 정암사, just 1500m west of the Baekdu Daegan crestline, also founded by Great Master



Jajang-yulsa in the mid-600s. This is one of the special holy sites of Korean Buddhism, containing a “Jeokmyeol-Bogung” brick pagoda that enshrines a *saria* cremation-relic of Sakyamuni the original Buddha. Jeongam-sa sometimes offers a TempleStay program, if you reserve it in-advance. Continuing north, the trail dips a little before climbing up and arriving at Eundae-bong 은대봉, 1442m, almost 2km later. The summit is marked by a helipad and small stele. From there the trail descends north for 1km to the road pass called Ssari-jae 싸리재, 1268m, marked by a gun-metal 4m stele. At the pass there is a small sikdang called the Hambaek-san-suimteo 함백산쉼터 and some public toilets. Crossing the road, the trail continues north for 1.2km climbing past another helipad to the peak of Geumdae-bong 금대봉, 1418m, marked by another small stele.

From Geumdae-bong the trail veers northeast to east descending for 3km to a saddle called Ssuabat-ryeong **쑤아밭령**, 1120m, marked by a signpost. From there it climbs east for almost 1km to Bidan-bong **비단봉**, 1281m, marked by a stele which offers good views back along the ridge. The trail stays east for a short distance before it starts to veer south a little, where about 1km later it'll meet a network of cabbage patches and farm-roads that form the village of Maebong-san. In 1962 the village under the tutelage of the Korea-America Foundation (Peace Corps) began the cultivation of cabbage here for making kimchi. The trick in this area is to follow the signposts and ribbons southeast towards the wind-turbines of Maebong-san **매봉산** about 1.5km away.

The trail will take you right under the wind-turbines, which were first installed in 2004. The summit of Maebong-san 1303m is marked by a small stele and a large mast, and is also where you leave the national park boundary. On a good day you might be able to get your first glimpses of the East Sea of Korea from this area. From Maebong-san the trail will change direction to the northeast, starting its descent to Pi-jae, and about 1km later you'll come across a small signpost and stone stele, that marks the trail head for the Nakdong-jeongmaek **낙동정맥**, which is the start or end-point of a large continuous subsidiary ridge that shoots south 500km all the way south to Busan. It is also a hard-core hiking trail, forming the eastern watershed-ridgeline of the Nakdong-river. Ya wanna go there? From this point, the trail to Pi-jae darts in and out of the forest onto farm roads, and about 1.5km later it arrives at Pi-jae 900m.



Ya wanna go there? From this point, the trail to Pi-jae darts in and out of the forest onto farm roads, and about 1.5km later it arrives at Pi-jae 900m.

Pi-jae 900m

Pi-jae, also known as Samsu-ryeong 삼수령, is located on NH35 between Taebaek City 6km to the south and a long stretch of road north towards the Gwangdong-ho 광동호 reservoir and dam some 18km away. In its garden area on the eastern side of the road are three triangular sculptures. The largest one represents the Nakdong River to the south, the second tallest represents the Han River to the west, and the smallest one represents the Oship-cheon stream 오십천, which runs north and then east to the city of Samcheok where it spills into the East Sea. Pi-jae is the node of all three of these waterways. Pi-jae is also the 500km mark for the Baekdu Daegan. Congratulations! Grab a beer at the Hyugaeso there and take a rest.

Camping and Food

Located in the same garden area is a set of public toilets and an old jeongja which overlooks an impressive valley to the east, and the Nakdong-jeongmaek ridge to the southeast. You can camp in this area, but once again do so nearer dark once people have moved-on. Pi-jae also has a small hyugaeso with some basic supplies, but it doesn't have a menu. You can buy a cup of ramen and they'll give you hot water for it.

Transport

Buses running along NH 35 between Hajang 하장 20km to the northeast, and Taebaek-si, 6km south cross at Pi-jae. Buses leave Taebaek-si for Hajang every hour from 06:25 to 18:25. If you are wishing to get off at Pi-jae you must state your intention to the driver, otherwise he might shoot straight over the pass, while you're having a kip. Being only 6km north of Taebaek-si, taxis are not expensive to Pi-jae. Taebaek-si Taxi 태백택시, 033-552-3389 or 010-5375-3380, or you can ask the staff at the hyugaeso to call one for you; otherwise hitching should be a breeze.



백두대간





DAEGAN

SECTION 12
HIGH RIDGE HIDDEN DEPTHS
Pi-jae to Baekbok-ryeong, 54.2km in 3 days

Pi-jae to Daet-jae

25.3km 11hr

Pi-jae 피재 2hr20min 6.3km to
Geoneui-ryeong 건의령 3hr10min 8km to
Deokhang-san 덕향산 3hr 6km to
Keun-jae 큰재 2hr20min 5km to
Daet-jae 댕재



Dae-iri County Park 대이리군립공원

Gangwon-do
강원도

Samcheok-si
삼척시

Taebaek-si
태백시

Dogye-eup
도계읍

Daet-jae 댕재

Hwangjang-san 황장산 975m

Keun-jae 큰재

Hwangseon Cave 환선동굴

Deokhang-san 덕향산 1072m

Gubusi-ryeong 구부시령

Hannae-ryeong 한내령

Geonui-ryeong 건의령

Pi-jae 피재

Hajang-eup
하장읍

Guinemi-maeul 귀네미마을

Jaam-jae 자암재

Jigak-san 지각산 1081m

35

412

38

500

424

Section 12: High Ridge, Hidden Depths

Pi-jae to Baekbok-ryeong in 3 days over 54.2km

Day 1

From Pi-jae 피재 2hr20min 6.3km Geoneui-ryeong 건의령 3hr10min 8km
Deokhang-san 덕향산 3hr 6km Keun-jae 큰재 2hr20min 5km Daet-jae
맷재 a total of 25.3km in 11hr

Water Stop

(67) N37°22'56"E 129°00'54 Daet-jae



Course Description

Pi-jae 25.3km 11hours Daet-jae

From Pi-jae the trail begins at the top of the park and flanks a mountain road for 1km before crossing it at a junction called Norume-chi 노루메치, where it then heads into the hills. It's pretty much north, all the way, on smooth undulating ground for the next 4km, before the trail makes an easterly turn and winds its way down to the pass of Geoneui-ryeong 건의령, 1km later, where you'll see a Sanshin-gak (Mountain-spirit shrine) tucked in behind some trees. If you peek through its planks you might be able to see the colorful painting inside. Geoneui-ryeong 850m, got its name from the Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392), whose last monarch was King Gongyang. After the demise of Goryeo as the new Joseon Kingdom was launched, he was sent into exile in nearby Samchoek where he died two years later (1394). His loyal public servant followers used this pass to leave Samcheok and retreat to what is now Taebaek City. At the pass, they hung their official hats and garb on branches and declared they would leave public service forever. Geon means hat and eui means clothes; hence Geoneui-ryeong. Don't forget to take your hat when you leave!



From Geoneui-ryeong, the trail heads north again for 1km to the peak of Pyotdae-bong **꽃대봉**, 1009m, where it'll then turn east and swerve north arriving at the pass of Hannae-ryeong **한내령**, 880m, 2km later. For the next 3.5km the trail will swivel northwest and then northeast where it arrives at the pass of Gubusi-ryeong **구부시령**, 960m, marked by a doltap. There is ample space to pitch a tent at this pass. Once upon a time, there was a local woman from a nearby village, who was born under an unlucky star, as every man she married passed away, and was widowed nine times. In Korean custom, every Korean wife must serve rituals to her husband's spirit as-if he were a king after his death; due to this story, Gubusi-ryeong means to "serve nine husbands."

After Gubusi-ryeong the trail ascends northwest for 1km to the peak of Deokhang-san **덕향산**, 1071m, marked by a small stele and fire watchtower. Under Deokhang-san is one of Northeast Asia's biggest cave systems, called Hwanseon-donggul **환선동굴**, which means the practice-cave of a Taoist hermit or mountain-wizard with supernatural powers. If you want to detour and see the caves, there are two ways to get there from the ridge. The first trail is located about 500m after Deokhang-san and will take you about 2km down to the village that services the caves. The next trail is about 2.7km after that on the ridge at Jaam-jae **자암재**, 932m. You'll get a good sense of the deepness of this area, as the trail has some good drop-offs on the eastern side where the cave is located. From Jaam-jae, a trail will take you 1km directly down to the cave entrance.

Hwanseon Donggul Caves: Tel-033 541-9266

The Hwanseon Donggul Cave claims to be the largest show-cave (meaning that it is accessible to recreational visitors) in the East. The height of the passage averages 15m and its width 20m. The main chamber, 40m in diameter, features white sands and is big enough to hold thousands of people. The rivers inside the caves have formed ten pools and six waterfalls along the tour path. The cavern is loaded with a variety of stalagmites and stalactites. Outstanding is a structure named after the Great Wall of China, and an Okchwadae (Jade Royal Throne) in the main chamber. Numerous other caves like, Gwaneum, Sadari bahwi, Yanhtuhmokesh, Dukbatesh, and the Keunjehseh caves can also be found in this area. This cave-system is thought to have developed during the Sub-Paleozoic Era of the middle Cambrian Period some 550million years ago. There should be an entrance fee of about 4,500W to pay. During the summer season, it is open daily from 0800 to 1700hr and can take from 1 to 2 hours to explore.

Lodging

The entrance to Dae-iri County Park and the Hwanseon-gol Cave area has a couple of Yeogwans including Hwanseon Yeogwan 환선여관033-541-9988.

Transport

Buses run to Hwanseon-gul from Samcheok-si Bus Terminal 삼척터미널 on the east coast. Samcheok to Hwanseon-gul, 6 times a day at: 06:10 08:20 10:20 14:20 17:20 18:50. Hwanseon-gul to Samcheok 8 times a day at: 06:50 09:00 11:20 13:10 15:05 16:35 18:00 19:40. The trip takes 40 minutes.



Gubusi-ryeong

After Jaam-jae you stay north at consistent elevation, and start to enter some large cabbage farms located on the western side of the ridge. The village area is called Guinemi-gol 귀네미골. The Baekdu Daegan trail will hug the fringes of these cabbage patches for about 3.3km until the pass of Keun-jae 큰재. Just keep following the hiking ribbons north if it gets confusing. From Keun-jae it's an easy going north direction for the next 5km with the last 500m seeing you drop down to the pass of Daet-jae

Daet-jae 댛재 **810m (67)**

Daet-jae is traversed by the PR424 which connects to NH35 7km to the west, and to NH38, 16km east near Samcheok-si (city) 삼척시, on the east coast of Korea. It is quite a large area with car-parks, public toilets, water taps, and grassy areas. On the eastern side of this pass is a Sanshin-gak. There is also a poem posted at the pass, which I translated as;

*I carry the heavy salt on my back
 Birds are singing at the pass
 Rain in the faraway hills
 Azaleas bloom like fire.
 I sit on the rock, my coat tattered
 For ten years, I have lived as this
 Eating roots and vines
 Hiding in the echo of the mountain
 I am this man
 The clouds move on, and so do I.
 2008 by 임규.*



Lodging, Camping, and Food

There is a minbak and store located at the road pass, here called the Datjae Hyugaeso, run by the friendly Nho family, Tel 033 554 1123. You can get an upstairs room, with wifi, for 40,000W. Downstairs, it has a good little store and a sik-dang with food menu. If you're discreet about it, you should also be able to camp at the pass.

Transport

Buses run from Samcheok-si 삼척시 to the east and Hajang 하장 to the west across Daet-jae, 3 times a day each. They leave Hajang for Samcheok at 08:40, 14:50, and 18:00. They depart Samcheok for Hajang at 07:20, 13:30, and 16:20. If you want to get to Samcheok, which is quite a large coastal city, then it should be easy to hitch from Daet-jae.

Day 2

Course

Daet-jae 3hr 6.5km Duta-san 두타산 **2hr50min 5km Gojeok-dae** 고적대 **50min 1km Sawonteo-junction** 사원터갈림길 **2hr 5km Mureung scenic-gorge** 무릉계곡 a total of 17.5km in 8hr25min

Water Stops

(68) N37°24'32"E129°00'30" Tonggol-jae

(69) N37°25'22"E129°00'25" Duta-san

(70) N37°25'48"E128°58'30" Cheongok-san



Course Description

Daet-jae 3hr 6.5km Duta-san 두타산 **1355m**

From Daet-jae the trail starts next to the Sanshin-gak, then ascends north for 700m, where it meets a signpost at the peak of Haetdaet-deung 햇댓등 928m, which offers great views north of the ridge to Duta-san about 5km away. It then turns west descending to a saddle called Myeongju-moki 명주목이, where it then begins a steady ascent for 1.5km, before arriving at another track junction called Tonggol-jae 통골재, 980m. If you need water (68) you can find it about 200m down the western track. After Tonggol-jae it's a big 350m elevation climb for 2km in a westerly then northern direction, offering majestic views, until you arrive at the summit area of Duta-san 1355m.



Samcheok-si
삼척시

424



Daet-jae 대재



Samcheok-si
삼척시

Tonggol-jae 동골재

Duta-san
두타산 1355m

Cheongok-san
청옥산 1403m

Manggun-dae 망군대 1244m

Gojeok-dae
고적대 1353m

Sawonteo-junction
사원터가림길

Yongchu-waterfalls
용추폭포



Duta-san 두타산 1355m

It's possible to find water (69) on the south-eastern edge of the summit. A small stone tablet on the summit dated 2001/05/27 celebrates the efforts of 1000 local people who planted 1000 Yew trees over 1000 meters of the Baekdu Daegan ridge-top. Duta is the name of a key Buddhist heaven, and means to renounce worldly desires, avoid material gain, and instead practice the austerities and clear teachings of Buddha. Duta-san and its two brother-peaks are also collectively known as Haedongsam-bong 해동삼봉, meaning sea-east-three-peaks; the other two are Cheongok-san and Gojeok-dae, located further north on the trail. On a good day you can easily see the East Sea from here. From Duta-san there is an 8km north-heading track that heads down into the Mureung Gorge 무룡계곡, famous as one of the nations' most beautiful ravines (see below); an eastern branch of that trail leads to a historic temple named Cheoneun-sa. The trail passes two old fortress ruins on-route; these old stone forts are scattered over many mountains in Korea, some still in fine condition, others reconstructed, and others crumbling and receding into the forest. The first and highest fort on this track was said to have been built in the first century (102 AD) by King Pasa, the fifth ruler of the Silla period. It was rebuilt again in 1414 by the mayor of Samcheok-si 삼척시 and stood 15 meters in height with a circumference of 2500 meters. During the 1592 Japanese invasions, local people hid in the fort and formed a peasant army. They set up fake soldiers in the gaps between the cliffs at the bottom of the walls foundations, fooling the Japanese for awhile. Unfortunately, this only made the Japanese return with extra numbers, and after three days of fierce fighting, overtook the fortress. According to the larger stele on the summit, Duta-san therefore is an area of immense heroism and is embedded with patriotism and a sublime spirit.

The Baekdu Daegan ridge as it crosses Duta-san





Yongchu waterfalls in Mureung gorge

Duta-san 3hr40min 6km Sawonteo-junction 사원터갈림길

The Baekdu Daegan veers west descending 200m in elevation before flattening out and maintaining its course for 2km, arriving at track junction called Bakdal-ryeong 박달령, 1100m, marked by a doltap and signpost. The eastern track from here goes 3km down to Mureung Gorge. From Bakdal-ryeong the trail stays west, ascending a good 300m on rocky and spectacular ground for the next 1.3km to your highest feature of this leg at Cheongok-san 청옥산, 1403m. There should be a mast at the peak. You can also find water (70) about 50 meters down the south-western side. Cheongok-san means Sapphire Mountain, another name derived from Buddhism, and in the past it was possible to find many medicinal plants here. From Cheongok-san the trail drops 200m northwest, where about 1km later, it arrives at a saddle marked by a doltap called Yeonchilseong-ryeong 연칠성령, 1180m. From here, there is a third track going down to Mureung Gorge. The Baekdu Daegan meanwhile, climbs up to the feature of Manggun-dae 망군대, 1244m, some 300m away, a peak providing outstanding views. After that it continues climbing sharply, for about 600m up to the summit Gojeok-dae 고적대, 1353m. From there you've got more memorable views; back along the ridge, down into the gorge, and looking forward to some fine rocky pinnacles that you'll be passing by. At Gojeok-dae the ridge meanly drops northeast for a kilometer before arriving at the track junction of Sawonteo-gallim-gil 사원터갈림길. This is the fourth and last track down to the Mureung Gorge. If you want to sleep on the ridge there are some great spots of flat rock with long views, just past this junction.

Mureung Gorge 무릉계곡

Mureung Gorge is a visit well-worthwhile. In the autumn season, it is one of Korea's most famous destinations with blood red maple leaves dripping from trees that flank a heavy-set gorge of rocky cliffs and gushing water. It also hosts many beautiful rapids and waterfalls, featuring the spectacular twin Yongchu Waterfalls 용추폭포 (photo), and abounds in animated crags and huge boulders scribed with ancient scriptures by old poets, monks and scholars of days gone by. Near the provincial park entrance, you will see the stunning 1380-year old temple of Samhwa-sa 삼화사. According to old records, it is said that Great Master Jajang-yulsa founded this temple in 640 AD, during the reign of Silla Queen Seondeok. To help him build the temple, the great Jajang seduced three female spirits, wrought with wickedness, into helping him. The three female spirits worked in such great harmony that they became awakened, and the temple was aptly named Samhwa-sa meaning "Three Harmonies Temple," and the village downstream from it became Samhwa-dong.

Lodgings and Food

The entrance to Mureung Gorge has motels, minbaks, hotels, sikdangs and stores for you to stop, rest, shower, eat and drink in.

Transport

Buses run to Mureung Valley from Donghae Local Bus Terminal 동해시외버스터미널, 26 times a day from 06:14 to 20:38. They all return to Donghae, the last one at 21:59.



Day 3

Sawonteo Junction 5km 2hr10min Igi-ryeong 이기령 3km 1hr30min
Wonbang-jae 원방재 7km 3hr30min Baekbok-ryeong 백복령 a total of
15km in 7hr

Water Stops

(71) N37°25'30"E128°59'15" Igi-ryeong

(72) N37°29'32"E128°58'20" Wonbang-jae



Course Description

Sawonteo Junction 7hr 15km Igi-ryeong

From the pass the trail stays northeast, climbing slightly as it passes the impressive pinnacles. About 1km later it arrives at the summit of Galmi-bong 갈미봉 1260m. Still staying northeast, the trail starts a long descent, later flanking some forestry roads, before arriving at the mountain road-pass of Igi-ryeong 이기령 815m, some 4km later. It is possible to find water (71) at Igi-ryeong, but not reliable. From Iri-ryeong, the trail will climb north then turn west for before arriving at Sangwol-san 상월산 970m some 1.6km later. It then stays west a short time, before turning north and dropping down to the pass of Wonbang-jae 원방재 730m, 1.2km later. If you hunt west and then north along the forestry road at Wonbang-jae you can find stream water (72) in a bend.

From Wonbang-jae there should be a signpost saying it's 7.09km to Baekbok-ryeong 백복령. Follow that, where the trail heads north and then west, climbing hard over the next 2km to peak 1022m, marked by a helipad. From there you descend north down some stairs for 1km where it picks up and climbs for another kilometer to the next peak located at 959m. After that it's about a 3.2km northerly descent offering views of the East Sea down to the road pass of Baekbok-ryeong.

Baekbok-ryeong 백북령 780m

The road pass is connected by NH42 which runs east for 20km to the port city of Donghae, and 20km west to the small town of Imgye. At the pass there is the Baekbok-ryeong Suimteo 백북령쉼터, a small rustic and characteristic eatery that serves basic hot meals. It also has some beer, soft drinks, and bottled water. In the nearby carpark there is some public toilets and a jeongja suitable for camping.



Lodgings and Food

About 2.5km west of the pass and of similar name is the Baekbong-ryeong Suimteo 백봉령쉼터. This roadside diner area has at least a dozen small restaurants, normally specializing in Hwangtae-tang, a tasty dried Pollack fish soup from this East Sea area. Located in the same area is a three-storied accommodation called

the Pension House 편션하우스 033 563 5376. The town of Imgye-myeon a further 18km more, has all the amenities you need, and the Noblesse Motel 노블레스모텔 033-563-2290, for 40,000W a room can be recommended.

Transport

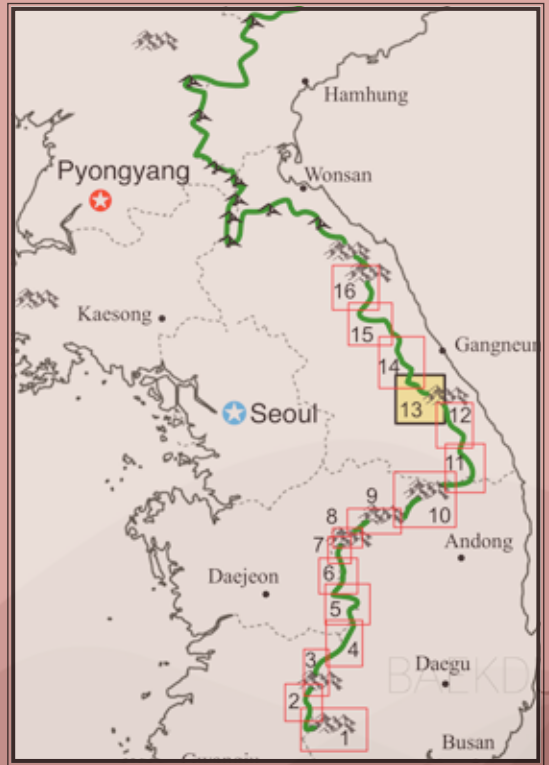
Buses run 2 times a day from Imgye over Baekbok-ryeong to Donghae City 동해시 on the east coast. They leave Imgye at 08:40 and 19:04. From Imgye buses run to Taebaek 3 times a day at 10:10, 12:10 and 16:50. Buses also leave Donghae for Imgye at 05:46 and 16:30.







백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 13
THE RIDGE BY THE SEA
Baekbok-ryeong to Daegwan-ryeong, 43km in 3 days

Baekbok-ryeong to Sapdang-ryeong

16.5km 7hr40min

Baekbok-ryeong 백복령 3hr40min 6.5km to
Neungseon-samegeori 능선삼거리 2hr 5km to
Seokbyeong-san 석봉산 2hr 5km to
Sapdang-ryeong 삼당령



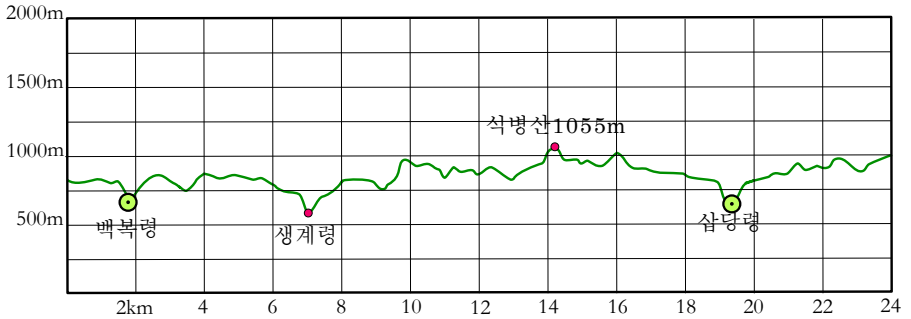
Section 13: The Ridge by the Sea

Baekbok-ryeong to Daegwan-ryeong in 3 days over 43km

Day 1

Baekbok-ryeong 백복령 3hr40min 6.5km **Neungseon-samgeori**
 능선삼거리 2hr 5km **Seokbyeong-san** 석병산 2hr 5km **Sapdang-ryeong**
 삽당령 a total of 16.5km in 7hr 40min.

Water Stops: None



Course Description

Baekbok-ryeong 7hr 16.5km Sapdang-ryeong

The trail starts on the other side of the road behind the carpark, climbing steeply north through forest, passing two masts, before turning southwest into the brunt of a controversial quarry that is hacking away at a nearby mountain named Jibyeong-san 지병산, 872m. It stays southwest before meeting a small road that leads to a section of the quarry. Less than a kilometer from here, the trail meets a fork. The right-hand option is the Baekdu Daegan, staying mainly west on undulating terrain for about 2km before dipping slightly and meeting the pass of Saenggye-ryeong 생계령, 640m. From there the trail stays west climbing a kilometer to peak 829m, where it starts to crank northwest for 400m then turn west again climbing up to a peak junction called Neungseon-samgeori 능선삼거리 at about 900m. There are excellent views from here north of the ridge.

232 SECTION THIRTEEN

Here the trail turns north where about 2km later it'll meet the pass of Gobyongi-jae 고병이재, 840m, marked by a signpost with a northeast track heading down to a cave system. From this pass the trail stays north for 2km climbing up to the peak of Seokbyeong-san 석병산, 1055m, marked by two rocky pinnacles. The summits have good views all round, with a small shrine area located in the hollow between the two. Seokbyeong-san also has another name, Ilwol-mun 일월문 meaning Gate of the Sun and Moon. The two pinnacles represent the sun and the moon, and the gate is located on the northeast side in the shape of a hole in a rock, and exhibits signs of local mountain worship. From Seokbyeong-san the trail turns northwest again, arriving at Duri-bong 두리봉, 1033m, some 1.7km later. From here, the trail swings southwest for the next 4.5km passing through good forest canopy and patches of bamboo grass, as it descends to the road pass of Sapdang-ryeong 삼당령, 721m.



Seokbyeong-san 1055m

Sapdang-ryeong 삽당령 721m

This pass is connected by NH35 running in a north-south direction. The nearest town, Imgye-myeon 임계면 is 9.5km south, and covered in the previous chapter. At the pass, there is a small tent sikdang, that sells hot foods, water, coffee and booze. On the other side of the road is a couple of steles, and in the tree line a set of toilets, with some benches and enough space to pitch a tent. There's no spring-water at the pass, but there are some homes on the south-side that'll have outdoor tap water. The wooden shrine at the pass is called a Seonghwang-dang, and much like the one back at Gochi-ryeong is a tutelary spirit shrine with its own unique story. It was first put there during the reign of King Yeongjo (1724-76) in the Joseon Dynasty. One late evening after working the land, a young woman, who had moved to Sapdang-ryeong from Andong to be married, went to fetch water in the nearby hills. By night she hadn't returned so a search began which lasted three days before they found a small tangled bundle of her hair on a flat rock. From this they assumed she had been taken by a tiger and was dead. Some days later they found her remains and then built this shrine, to console her lost soul. The shrine was also built as a reminder to travelers using these mountains and their passes, to pay blessing to her soul and the mountain-spirits, so as to ensure safe passage. A ceremony is held every year on the 1st day of the 8th Moon (Lunar Calendar 8.1).

Transport

Buses running between Imgye, 10km to the south and Gangneung-si (City) 강릉시 on the east coast cross Sapdang-ryeong. They leave Imgye 2 times a day at 06:20 and 17:20 and depart from Gangneung 2 times a day at 05:40 and 16:10. Hitching shouldn't be difficult from the pass.

Sapdang-ryeong to Daegwan-ryeong

26.5km 11hr35min

- Sapdang-ryeong 삼당령 2hr25min 6km to Seokdu-bong 석두봉 2hr30min 5.5km to Hwaran-bong 화란봉 1hr 2km to Dalkmok-ryeong 달목령 2hr50min 6km to Gorupogi-san 고루포기산 2hr10min 5km to Neunggyeong-bong 능경봉 45min 2km to Daegwan-ryeong 대관령



Seonghwang-sa
성황사

Daegwan-ryeong 대관령

Neunggyeong-bong
능경봉 1123m

Gorupogi-san
고루포기산 1238m

Gangneung-si
강릉시

Hwaran-bong 화란봉 1069m

Gangwon-do
강원도

Dalkmok-ryeong
달목령

Seokdu-bong 석두봉 995m

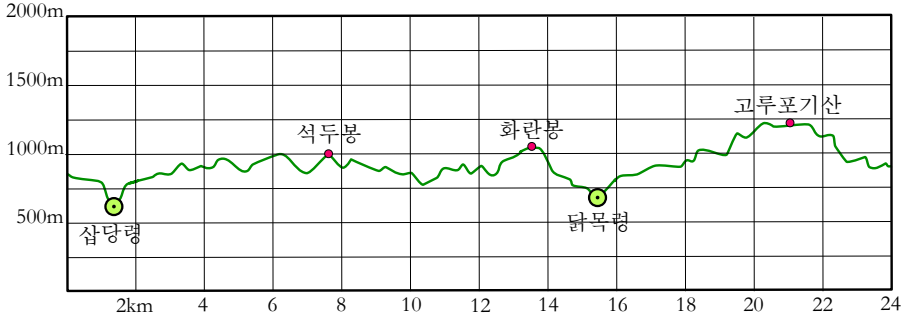
Daegi-ri
대기리

Sapdang-ryeong
삼당령

Day 2

Sapdang-ryeong 삽당령 2hr25min 6km **Seokdu-bong** 석두봉 2hr30min 5.5km **Hwaran-bong** 화란봉 1hr 2km **Dalkmok-ryeong** 닭목령 a total of 13.5km in 5hr55min

Water Stops: None



Course Description

Sapdang-ryeong 5hr50min 13.5km **Dalkmok-ryeong** 닭목령

The trail is signposted and begins a gradual northerly climb for 1.5km passing by a mast and crossing a forest road, before meeting peak 862m. From there, it'll turn west for about 800m before going north where it climbs gradually for the next 2km reaching peak 978. After that it drops west into a saddle before climbing back up to the summit of Seokdu-bong 석두봉, 995m, about 1km later. Good views can be found at this peak. From Seokdu-bong the trail steers north for about 2km on good elevation, reaching peak 989m, where it'll then suddenly veer west for the next 3km or so before reaching the summit of Hwaran-bong 화란봉, 1069m. At Hwaran-bong the trail will then drop southwest allowing good country views, before arriving at the road pass of Dalkmok-ryeong some 2km later.

Dalkmok-ryeong 닭목령 700m

Dalkmok-ryeong, meaning chicken-neck pass, is located on a quiet PR415, about 14km south of the dam area known as Seongsan-myeon **성산면**, and 4km north of the junction village of Daegi-ri **대기리**. At the pass, there is a Sanshin-gak, stele, mapboard and a couple of jangseung (spirit-guardian) poles. If you need to camp here, there should be enough space. Water can only be found by asking politely at the neighboring house.

Lodgings and Food

To the north, the small junction town of Seongsan-myeon has one motel called the Seongsan Motel **성산모텔** with reasonable rooms and wi-fi for 40,000W. The town also has a GS25, marts, and sikdang's. To the south, the junction village of Daegi-ri has a supa located in a house and a coffee shop.

Transport

Buses run to Dalkmok-ryeong from Gangneung City leaving 3 times a day at 07:30, 13:30 and 18:20. Buses leave Gangneung for Dalkmok-ryeong at 06:00, 12:00 and 17:00.



Day 3

Dalkmok-ryeong 2hr50min 6km Gorupogi-san 고루포기산 2hr10min 5km Neunggyeong-bong 능경봉 45min 2km Daegwan-ryeong 대관령 a total of 13km in 5hr45min

Water Stop

(73) N37°40'45"E128°45'48" Yeongchon-yaksu at the end of the leg.



Course Description

Dalkmok-ryeong 5hr45min 13km Daegwan-ryeong 대관령

For the next 2km the trail will ascend northwest up to a spot that is 955m high. From there it'll switch north arriving 1km later at a signpost and start to slowly elevate for the next 2km up to a peak 1210m. It'll then veer west for 1km arriving at a peak junction called Gorupogi-san 고루포기산, 1238m, marked by a signpost and bench. You should be able to notice the numerous wind turbines in this area. The trail drops off Gorupogi-san passing by an old stone cairn. Named the stone tower of fortune, whenever ancestors passed a steep mountain path, they picked up scattered stones and heaped them one by one on the pathway. As the heaps became piles they prayed at these markers for good health and safe passage. Like our ancestor's custom, we stand a stone tower of fortune here so that hikers who are walking the Baekdu Daegan and tracking its history can pray for their own good health and safety. We wish everyone passing here to pile a stone at this stone tower with the same heart, and take with them the spirits and energy of the Baekdu Daegan so they can be healthy and lucky forever.



From the stone tower of fortune, the trail climbs up and out of the saddle, where it then descends northeast for the next kilometer to the pass of Hoinggye-chi 횡계치, which is located right on top of the NE50 tunnel which connects Seoul to the city of Gangneung-si on the East Coast of Korea. From here it's about a 2.5km northeast climb to your next peak called Neunggyeong-bong 능경봉, 1123m, marked by a small table and good views to the east and north down to Gangneung-si, the biggest city on the

northern half of Korea's east coast. From Neunggyeong-bong it's just a 2km northerly downhill trek to the end of this section. Just over a kilometer into it, you'll pass by a good mineral-spring (73) known as the Yeongcheon-yaksu spring 영천약수, located on the very old road that used to traverse the range. Near the end, you will start to see more wind turbines located at the road pass of Daegwan-ryeong.

Daegwan-ryeong 대관령 750m

The "Great-Twisting pass-road" is recognized by a large car park and an impressive large statue of a turtle, with a stele on its back and a dragon-cap atop. This type of symbolic history-monument is common throughout East Asia, and it signifies the basic oriental trinity of Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist thought comprising *Cheon Ji In* 천지인, or Heaven, Earth and Humanity. The turtle represents the Earth, the standing black stone stele represents Humanity with a record of its achievements, and the dragons atop represent Heaven's powers. These ones are clutching with their hind-talons the pearl of wisdom. This one at Daegwan-ryeong is one of the tallest you will ever see in Korea. Selfie?

Daegwan-ryeong, is connected by the PR456 with the small village of Daegwanryeong-myeon 대관령면, also known as Hoing-gye 횡계, 5km to the west and 13km to the northeast by the village of Seongsan-myeon. Gangneung city is a further 6km west from Sanseong-myeon. Most vehicles travel via a tunnel on the NE50 back at Hoinggye-chi, where it snakes and exits about 1km on the east side of the Daegwan-ryeong. Other than the massive wind turbines spinning overhead, the first thing you'll see at the pass is the New and Renewable Energy Park with a museum exhibiting the background of the installation of the turbines. In the carpark, there might also be a food shack. If you cross the vehicle bridge to the other side, you'll come across a large Hyugaeso zone that sells hot meals and has a small store. Next to that is the windmill café, selling freshly ground coffee. Public toilets are available at the pass.

Lodging, Camping and Food

There is no accommodation at Daegwan-ryeong, but camping may be permitted in the car park or tree-line on the trail. Otherwise, the nearest town to Daegwan-ryeong is Daegwanryeong-myeon, also known as Hoing-gye 횡계, located about 5km west on PR456, with motels, marts, sik-dang's, and most other things you'll need. To the northeast is Seongsan-myeon already mentioned in day 2 of this chapter. The Korea Forest Service has cabins and campsites available at the Daegwan-ryeong Recreational Forest 대관령자연휴양림 033-541-9990, located in Aeheul-ri 어흘리 up a mountain-road which turns off PR456, 9km east of the pass. If you want to walk there, there is a long track that runs from the Yeongcheon-yaksu spring 영천약수, but make a call first.

Transport

Because of the wind turbines, a nearby touristy sheep-farm, and views of the East Sea, Daegwan-ryeong is a popular visitor site. Buses run to the pass. Otherwise it should be easy to hitch from the pass. The nearby town of Hoinggye-ri 횡계리, 5km to the west has a taxi service which will come to the pass. The number is Hoinggye Taxi 횡계택시 033-335-5596. Otherwise, from Hoinggye, buses run to Dong Seoul Terminal 9 times daily from 07:00 to 18:35 and over to Gangneung every 15-20min throughout the day.



Located a short distance (1km) up the northern side of the pass just beneath the Baekdu Daegan ridge is a famous sacred-site known as Seonghwang-sa 성황사. There is no Buddhist temple there, instead two shrines that supposedly house the spirit of the 9th century Seon Buddhist master Beomil-guksa in the larger, and in the other, the Mountain-spirit (Sanshin) of Daegwan-ryeong Pass. In the larger one, known as the Tutelary Spirit Shrine, there is a painting inside of a warrior on horseback. The English information boards at the site states that sometime after these two deities were enshrined here, they were visited by a 10th-century army general who then as a result won a local battle in this area against his rival; and so the painting may actually be of him. Ever since that time, the locals have held ceremonies at these shrines on the morning of the Fourth Full Moon of every Lunar-Calendar year, which usually occurs sometime in May. This event is the formal beginning of the annual Dano Festival, and it climaxes when the (male) Mountain-spirit possesses the soul of a shaman and direct her to a young tree, which is decorated and cut down. This tree is then paraded down to the shrine of a female Sanshin at a city on the east coast, and erected in front of it so that they can “mate” during the festival period, granting the fertility and prosperity of the Gangneung area through good harvests from the sea and land. The Gangneung Dano-je Festival, one of Korea’s best-known and most-colorful traditional events, climaxes on the Fifth Day of the Fifth Moon, after which the sacred tree is burnt and the residents bid farewell to the spirits.



城隍祠



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 14
ODAESAN NATIONAL PARK
Daegwan-ryeong to Guryong-ryeong, 46.6km in 2 days



Gangneung-si
강릉시

Odae-san National
오대산국립공원

Duro-bong 두로봉 1421m

Duro-ryeong
두로령



Sangwon-sa
상원사



Dongdae-san
동대산 1433m

Noin-bong 노인봉 1338m

Jin-gogae
진고개

Pyeongchang-gun
평창군

Sohwangbyeong-san
소항병산 1328m

Woljeong-sa
월정사



Gangwon-do
강원도

59

446

6



Daegwan-ryeong to Duro-bong 32.1km 13hr10min



Sogeumgang Valley
소금강계곡

Park

- Daegwan-ryeong 대관령 2hr 5km to Seonja-ryeong 선자령 1hr 3km to Gonshin-bong 곤신봉 1hr40min 4km to Mae-bong 매봉 2hr 4.8km to Sohwanbyeong-san 소황명산 1hr 30min 3.5km to Noin-bong 노인봉 1hr20min 4km to Jin-gogae 진고개 3hr40min 7.8km to Duro-bong 두르봉



Mae-bong 매봉 1173m



Gonshin-bong
곤신봉 1136m



Seonja-ryeong
선자령 1157m



Section 14: Odae-san National Park

Daegwan-ryeong to Guryong-ryeong in 2 days over 46.6km

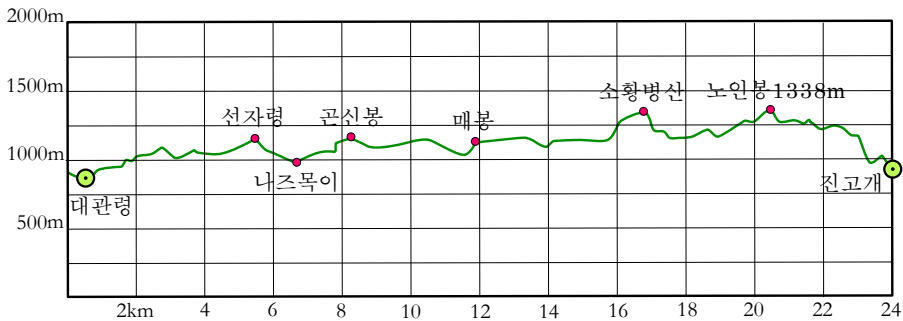
Day 1

Daegwan-ryeong 대관령 2hr 5km **Seonja-ryeong** 선자령 1hr 3km **Gonshin-bong** 곤신봉 1hr40min 4km **Mae-bong** 매봉 2hr 4.8km **Sohwangbyeong-san** 소황병산 1hr 30min 3.5km **Noin-bong** 노인봉 1hr20min 4km **Jin-gogae** 진고개 a total of 24.3km in 9hr 30min

Water Stop

(74) N37°41'32"E128°45'25" Daegwan-ryeong Shrines

(75) N37°45'57"E128°36'42" Jin-gogae



Odae-san National Park CLOSED SECTIONS

Day 1) 8.7km from Mae-bong 매봉 1173m to Noin-bong 노인봉 1338m

Day 2) 5.1km from Duro-bong 두로봉 1421m to peak 1210m (park boundary)

CLOSURE NOTE From Daegwan-ryeong it's about a 12km walk to the southern boundary of Odae-san national park, where the trail meets Mae-bong 매봉, 1103m. Unfortunately, there is a long term 8.7km closure in place from Mae-bong to Noin-bong 노인봉 1338m, where it opens again joining a valley trail from Sogeumgang, and then continues from Noin-bong for 4km to the road pass of Jin-gogae, where the open trail continues for another 7.7km to Duro-bong, from where it closes again. From there you can turn west on an open trail, and walk to Duro-ryeong and join an open mountain road (PR446) north out of the park. Other options on how to detour around these closures are provided in this chapter.

Odae-san National Park 오대산국립공원

Odae-san, meaning “Five Platforms Mountain” is home to 860 species of plant-life, 26 known species of mammal including wild boar, goral and deer, 85 species of bird including five colored woodpeckers, 1124 species of insects, and 31 species of clear-water fishes. It attracts about 1,000,000 visitors to its peaks and valleys every year. The main entrance to Odae-san is in the south end of the park at Woljeong-sa Ticket Booth 월정사매표소. Odae-san National Park offers a nice alternative to get off the trail and do some exploring of the many waterfalls, hermitage-temples, peaks and gorges that are open to the public. Its highest peak is Biro-bong at 1563m on the western side of the old road that cuts-through and traverses the park.



Cultural History

Upon returning from China, the important Silla Dynasty master-monk Jajang-yulsa named this area Odae-san due to its topographical and religious similarity with a famous sacred mountain-complex in China called Wutai-shan. Not too far in from the front gates is Woljeong-sa Monastery. This famous Buddhist temple, headquarters of this region for the national Jogye Order, was established by Jajang in 645 AD. At the center of the temple grounds is the octagonal nine-storied pagoda he built to enshrine relics, standing 15.5m in height but leaning 15° to the southeast. Another famous temple in the grounds called Sangwon-sa sits a further 10km up the road entrance to Odae-san at the base of the mountains. It was built by disciples of Master Jajang and is the route towards Odae-san's highest mountain-peak called Biro-bong 비로봉, 1563m. Inside the temple grounds exists a bronze bell called the Sangwonsa-dongjong 상원사동종. It is the oldest existing bell in Korea, cast in 725AD. It stands 1.68m high with a diameter of 91cm, weighing 3,300lbs. The

bell has stood there for 1,200 years and has seen the full history of Korea. Its chime is said to make varying noises per the time of the year, and can be heard through every valley in the region. Odae-san was declared by Jajang to be the Korean residence of Munsu-bosal (the Bodhisattva of Wisdom), said to sometimes appear in various guises to test people's faith and ethics. There is a well-known tale that early-Joseon King Sejo once encountered this deity in the form of a small boy while bathing in the nearby stream, and the mysterious meeting cured the monarch's skin-disease. Sejo ordered the carving of an over-life-sized statue of Munsu-bosal as the boy from lovely woods, and it is still enshrined here at Sangwon-sa; a famous National Treasure, it is visited and venerated by many. Two kilometers after the temple of Sangwon-sa on the way up to Biro-bong, you can visit the very famous and sacred *Jeokmyeol-bogung* or "Silent-Nirvana Treasure-Palace" site above Saja-am Hermitage, which enshrines some sarira relics of Buddha carried by Jajang from China. They are buried beneath a flat grassy hump behind the shrine-building, where you should be able to watch numerous people bowing, praying or contemplating before the relics-site.



Course Description

Daegwan-ryeong 9hr30min 24.3km Jin-gogae

From here it is advised to take the signposted road straight to the Guksa Seonghwang-dang 국사성황당 and then, after seeing the shrines, take the trail east up to the Baekdu Daegan crest. Water (74) is also available at the site. Once on the ridge, the trail continues north on open ground flanked by wind turbines for about 4km to the pass of Seonja-ryeong 선자령, 1157m, marked by an impressive stele. The stele states it was placed there in 2006, as a celebration of the first year of the Baekdu Daegan as a protected area, and as a prayer for the reunification of Korea. From there the trail stays north dipping for a kilometer into the pass of Najeu-moki 나즈목이, 990m, before ascending for the next 2km to the flat peak area of Gonshin-bong 곤신봉, 1136m. From here the trail will turn northwest climbing slightly for 3.8km pass a series of roads and wind turbines, to the summit of Mae-bong 매봉, 1173m, which represents the boundary of Odae-san National Park.



CLOSED SECTION For the next 4km the trail travels west along the fringe of an escarpment to the northern side of Sohwanbyeong-san 소황병산, 1328m. Once on the western side of the peak, the trail stays its course, and drops a little before arriving at a saddle some 1.5km later, where it then ascends again and 2km later will arrive at the open section of Noin-bong 노인봉, 1338m, marked by a helipad. From there it's a 3.9km downhill to the road pass of Jin-gogae.

Jin-gogae 진고개 960m

Jin-gogae is traversed by the NH59, also called the NH6. An eco-bridge now crosses the road. At the pass there is a large Hyugaeso and small store selling hot meals (75), with public toilets, and a small parks office. As it is inside the national park, camping is prohibited here. Jin-gogae has some military history, as in 1949 local police fought a viscous battle with about 100 communist guerrillas, killing 50 of them and capturing 12. The communists had traveled along the Baekdu Daegan from Taebaek-san and were terrorizing local populations en-route. Only a week later another battle ensued and 9 police officers were killed. Later, in 1952, six communist guerrillas were cut off at the pass here after having plundered a nearby village killing some of the locals.

Transport

Buses do not run to Jin-gogae. The nearest town Jinbu-myeon has a taxi service which will run to the pass; the number for the taxi service is Jinbu Taxi (진부택시) 033-335-1050. Buses from Jinbu do run to Sangwon-sa temple in Odae-san National Park 8 times a day from 08:30 – 16:40, with a later bus running at 19:40. Jinbu is a gateway town to Odae-san National Park and the surrounding ski area, buses run regularly from Jinbu to Seoul, Wonju and other main centers.

Views of the Baekdu Daegan from Biro-bong 1563m



CLOSED SECTION OPTIONS**a) DAEGWAN-RYEONG TO WOLJEONG-SA and/or JIN-GOGAE**

The nearest way to rejoin the trail from Daegwan-ryeong is to hitch or walk west about 16km on the PR456 to the intersection of NH59/6 at Ganpyeong-ri. From there it's about a 4km ride or walk north to a fork in the road where the left-hand-side road numbered as the PR449 goes into the entrance-area of Woljeong-sa temple of Odaesan, or the right-hand-side road stays as the NH59/6 and winds its way about 8.5km up to the pass of Jin-gogae 진고개 at 960m, where you can join the Baekdu Daegan again for 7.7km, until Duro-bong, where they close the trail again.

b) DAEGWAN-RYEONG TO WOLJEONG-SA then to NAM-MYEON 10HR 30MIN 23.4KM

If you decided to go to the Woljeong-sa temple entrance, then you can walk 4km to the temple, and then it's a 5.7km road walk north to the trail turn off to Dongdae-san 동대산, 1433m, at Dongpi-gol 동피골. From there if you want to, you can take the 2.7km trail east up to Dongdae-san, rejoining the Baekdu Daegan. From there you turn north and walk the awesome 6km ridge to Duro-bong where the trail closes. At Duro-bong, you take the west trail for 1.6km down to Duro-ryeong 두로령, and then the 10km road trail north down to the quiet less visited park entrance at Nam-myeon 남면. You can also bypass the Dongdae-san option, stay on the road, and just walk through the Odae-san park all the way to Nam-myeon.



Transport

If you can hitch to Jinbu-myeon 진부면, a small township 23km west of Daegwan-ryeong, then frequent buses leave for Odae-san National Park from there, 12 times daily from 06:20 to 19:40. All these buses head to Woljeong-sa Temple. The buses between 8:30-16:30 continue past Woljeong-sa on to Sangwon-sa Temple deeper in the park. Buses leave the park for Jinbu from 06:40 to 20:00.

c) SOGEUMGANG GORGE 소금강계곡 16HR30MIN 32.6KM to NAM-MYEON 남면

In a sense, from its start point, this route offers much more continuity, and covers some fantastic scenery beginning at the incredible Sogeumgang valley. To get to Sogeumgang, you should try hitching from Daegwan-ryeong on the PR456 east till it becomes the NH35, and where it reaches the intersection with the east coast road NH7, some 20km later. From there get off, and hitch north on NH7 about 15km to where it meets the NH6 heading west inland. Take that west for about 12km till it meets the Sogeumgang Samgeo-ri (3-way intersection) 소금강삼거리 and get off there. From there this entrance road winds south for about 10km to the Odae-san park entrance at Sogeumgang Gorge. This is where the campsite is located. Or if you can get to the city of Gangneung-si from Daegwan-ryeong, then you can take bus 303 from the terminal there, to Sogeumgang. They leave 13 times a day from 05:35 to 21:15



Lodging, Camping and Food

The Sogeumgang Gorge Campsite 033-6614161, is set alongside a stream in shady trees. It has about 150 sites for tents, auto-camping, and caravans. The site is also equipped with wifi, electricity, showers, kitchen, and tables, and prices for sites are seasonal from 13-16,000W. Reservations must be made online. There are also a handful of minbaks at the entrance area, along with small restaurants and stores.

Sogeumgang Gorge 7hr 13.3km Jin-gogae

This is one of the nation's most spectacular-scenery ravine-courses that slowly climbs up to the peak of Noin-bong, where it joins the Baekdu Daegan ridge before descending to Jin-gogae. The trail criss-crosses a mountain stream tumbling over many waterfalls and flanked by bizarre rock formations and outstanding cliffs, amongst a back-drop of native Korean pine and maple forests. The name Sogeumgang was conceived and inscribed on a boulder near the entrance by the famous Neo-Confucian scholar "Yulgok" Yi I, whose face you will find on the 5000 Won bill in your pocket. It means "Little Diamond" as its beauty resembles that of the famous Geumgang-san or Diamond Mountains area in North Korea. Having been to both, I can testify this to be true.

Jin-gogae to Nam-myeon 9hr30min 19.3km

If you want to back-track to Noin-bong 노인봉, 1338m, and start there, then it's a 3.9km uphill walk that'll take you about 90min. If not, then the trail starts on the western side of the road at a signpost and staircase. From there it's a good 500m elevation climb over 1.5km till you get to the first peak at Dongdae-san 동대산, 1433m, marked by a small stele. From here the trail turns north where it'll swoop down to about 1200m elevation into a saddle called Chadol-baegi 차돌배기 1230m, some 2.5km later. The trail then does a 2km bound over to another saddle called Shinseon-moki 신선모기, before beginning a final 2km climb up to Duro-bong 두로봉, 1421m. From there turn west 1.6km down to Duro-ryeong, and then 10km north on the old road out north to the Nam-myeon entrance.

Nam-myeon 남면 to Guryong-ryeong 구룡영

From the remote and pastoral Nam-myeon entrance it's another 3.2km on the PR442 until it joins the NH56 that'll take you north to Guryong-ryeong. It's a good 6.4km of uphill road to the pass from there, so hitching a ride might be the best decision. At Nam-myeon there is the Odae-san Minbak and Sikdang which has rooms, otherwise, as you are now outside the park, there may be a place to pitch a tent along the quiet roadside before it joins the NH56.

Jin-gogae to Guryong-ryeong

22.3km 9hr15min

Jingo-gae 전고개 3hr40min 7.8km to
Duro-bong 두로봉 2hr35min 8km to
Eungbok-san 응복산 3hr 6.5km to
Guryong-ryeong 구룡령

Yangyang-gun 양양군

Maneul-bong 마늘봉 1126m

Guryong-ryeong 구룡령

Eungbok-san 응복산 1359m

Manwol-bong 만월봉 1280m

Sinbae-ryeong 신배령

Nam-myeon 남면

Gangneung-si 강릉시

Duro-bong 두로봉 1421m

Hongcheon-gun 홍천군

Sangwang-bong 상왕봉 1491m

Gangwon-do 강원도

Odae-san National Park
오대산국립공원

Biro-bong 비로봉 1563m

Sangwon-sa 상원사

Dongdae-san 동대산 1433m

Jin-gogae 전고개



Day 2

Jingo-gae 진고개 3hr40min 7.8km **Duro-bong** 두로봉 2hr35min 8km
Eungbok-san 응복산 3hr 6.5km **Guryong-ryeong** 구룡령
 a total of 22.3km in 9hr 15min

Odae-san National Park CLOSED SECTION: 5.1km from Duro-bong
 두로봉 1421m to peak 1210m

Water Stop

(76) N37°50'23"E128°31'27" Nam-myeon



Jin-gogae 진고개 3hr40min 7.8km **Duro-bong** 두로봉

The trail starts on the western side of the road at a signpost and staircase. From there it's a good 500m elevation climb over 1.5km till you get to the first peak at Dongdaesan 동대산, 1433m, marked by a small stele. From here the trail turns north where it'll swoop down to about 1200m elevation into a saddle called Chadol-baegi 차돌배기, 1230m, some 2.5km later. The trail then does a 2km bound over to another saddle called Shinseon-moki 신선모기, before beginning a final 2km climb up to Duro-bong 두로봉, 1421m.

CLOSED SECTION DURO-BONG 5HR30MIN 14.5KM GURYONG-RYEONG

From Duro-bong the trail enters the tree line and steeply drops north off the summit. It's actually possible from this area to see the conical shape of Daechong-bong 대청봉 in Seorak-san some 50km away. After that, the trail cascades down a smooth and easy-going ridge line for the next 2km where it reaches a pass known as Shinbae-ryeong 신배령. It stays north continuing its slow descent for about 1.5km till it meets the parks boundary indicated by a fence at 1210m elevation.

OPEN SECTION From there the trail ascends in a northwest direction for about 1km until it arrives at the peak of Manwol-bong 만월봉, 1280m, with good views of the ridge ahead. The trail then does a dip before pulling up at Eungbok-san 응복산, 1359m. From there the trail makes a steep descent down to a saddle losing almost 250m in elevation before it starts its climb back up to Manul-bong 1126m, some 2.7km later. After that it undulates northwest for another 1.2km providing good views to the north, where at unnamed peak 1280m, the ridge turns dramatically southwest quickly losing 100m elevation, where it rises again and starts to veer south. About 1km later it will come out onto the summit of Yaksu-san 약수산, 1306m. From there it's all downhill for about 1km to the road pass at Guryong-ryeong.

Guryong-ryeong 구룡령 1013m

Guryong-ryeong is traversed by NH56 which runs north for 30km to meet NH44 near Osaek Valley and south for 60km to Jinbu near Odae-san National Park. An eco-bridge now crosses over the road. There is nothing at the pass in the way of food or water. The building there is not used. There is a giant stele that is supposedly the tallest monument on the trail. The back of the stele explains how this pass is where ten thousand valleys and one thousand peaks accumulate at the top of a pathway so long and twisted it resembles a sheep's intestine. Guryong-ryeong translates as a place where the spirits of nine dragons fill the atmosphere.

Transport

Buses running between Yangyang 양양 Town on the east coast and Hongcheon 홍천 Town to the southwest cross Guryong-ryeong Pass once a day. The bus leaves Hongcheon Terminal at 07:10 and will reach Guryong-ryeong 2 hours later. The bus from Yangyang leaves at 08:10 and reaches Guryong-ryeong 1 hour later.



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 15
ENTER SEORAKSAN NATIONAL PARK
Guryong-ryeong to Hange-ryeong, 44.5km in 2 days



Section 15: Enter Seorak-san

Guryong-ryeong to Hangye-ryeong and the Osaek Gorge in 2 days over 44.5km

Day 1

Guryong-ryeong 구룡령 1hr40min 3.9km **Galjeongok-bong** 갈전꼭봉 3hr30min 7km **Yeongari-gol Saemteo (spring)** 연거리골샘터 2hr 5km **Barambuli-samgeori** 바람불이삼거리 1hr40min 5km to **Jochim-ryeong** 조침령 a total of 20.9km in 8hr 50min

Water Stops

(77) N37°54'51"E128°28'32" Wangseung-gol-anbu

(78) N37°55'51"E128°28'13" Yeongari-gol Saemteo

(79) N37°57'38"E128°29'45" Barambuli-samgari



Course Description

Guryong-ryeong 8hr50min 22.9km Jochim-ryeong 조침령

The next leg of the walk starts on the western side of the road at the base of a set of wooden stairs. Follow the steps up to the crest of the ridge where the trail then starts an up and down course for the next 4km all the way northwest to the peak of Galjeongok-bong 갈전꼭봉, 1204m, marked by your first signpost. From here, the trail undulates and descends for the next 3.5km, losing about 200m of elevation, until it arrives at the pass of Wangseung-gol-anbu 왕승골안부 marked by a signpost and some benches. Water (77) can be found about 100m down the western side of this pass. The sign at the pass says that the Baekdu Daegan begins at the sacred mountain of Paektu-san, 2744m, guarded to the east and west by the Tumen and Yalu Rivers. The great 15th-century Joseon Dynasty, King Sejong (r.1418-50), secured Korea's sides of those great rivers so that the entire sacred Paektu-san can truly belong to Korea.

Author's Note: Historical border disputes at Paektu-san, the only landmass that connects China and Korea, are not uncommon, as the Korean people have been traveling and residing in the Manchuria regions (Gando) of China, for thousands of years, and were once areas part of the older Korean territories. In 1712, a border agreement between Manchu and Korean officials, agreed that the border was from a watershed on a peak near the southern side of Paektu-san. In 1909 under illegal Japanese occupation, Paektu-san's northern and eastern regions were declared part of China, so the Koreans lost more territory. Korean academics dispute this agreement, as it was done under foreign authority, and the Japanese had intentions of invading China anyway, which they did. In 1962, on a divided peninsula, North Korea made a border agreement with China (a Korean War ally), that saw them control 54% of the mountain and caldera lake, regaining 230 km² of territory, which is the recognized border today. However, these territory disputes over what is Korea's highest and holiest mountain, continue today, with South Korea claiming rather obtusely that because North Korea is their territory, they therefore claim that the Paektu-san border should extend to the northern side of the caldera and the inside part of the ridge up to its crest.



From Wangseung-gol-anbu the trail continues north undulating on good ground for the next 2.5km until it drops about 200m in elevation for the last 500m down to the pass of pass of Yeongari-gol Saemteo 연가리골생터, marked by a clearing and some benches and a good spot for lunch as water can be found (78) about 50 meters down the western track in a mountain-stream. From this pass the trail stays north climbing slowly for the next 2.5km to peak 1080m, before the trail veers east and for the next 2.5km drops down to the pass of Barambuli-samgari 바람불이삼고리 at about 750m elevation, marked by a signpost with enough space for camping. Water (79) can be found on the northwestern side of the ridge. From here the trail turns north, rippling up and down the ridge for the next 5km to the pass of Jochim-ryeong 조침령 located above the road tunnel of the PR418 and marked by a big fat stele.

Jochim-ryeong 조침령 770m

Jochim-ryeong sits on an old dirt road, and is the halfway point of the entire Baekdu Daegan in Korea. Down on the roadside, where the PR418 meets the road tunnel entrance, it's 4km east to the village of Seorim-ri 서림리, at the intersection with NH56 which rides over Guryong-ryeong, and 23km to the west where it meanders to the roadside town junction of Hyeon-ri 현리, where it meets NH31. The only way off the pass is via the old dirt road, which snakes its way down both sides. Jochim-ryeong means a pass so high not even a bird can pass over it within a day. The area north of here towards Jeombong-san is said to be rich in plant diversity, especially wildflowers, including a thistle endemic only to Korea, and is therefore protected.



Lodging, Camping, and Food

Four kilometers east of the pass at the junction with NH56 at Seorim-ri are minbaks and the Guryong-ryeong camping ground 구룡령야영장 033-673-887 located next to the Hu-cheon stream 후천. The military town of Hyeon-ri 23km, to the west has all amenities, and some motels, including the Daeo Motel 대오모텔 010-5048-5955, with wifi for 40,000W p/n.

Transport

Buses do not run to the high pass of Jochim-ryeong. To the east the PR418 meets NH56 at Seorim-ri 서림리 where buses head into Yangyang 16km away, 5 times a day between 07:05 and 17:00.



▲ Gari-bong
가리봉 1518m

Hangye-ryeong 한계령



Pirae Yaksu
필레약수



Mangdaeam-san
망대암산 1236m



Inje-gun
인제군



Jakeunjeombong-san
작은점봉산 1297m



Gangwon-do
강원도



Gwidun-ri
귀둔리



Jochim-ryeong to Hangye-ryeong 25km 10hr35min

Jochim-ryeong 조침령 2hr50min 7km to Bukam-ryeong 북암령 7hr10min 3km to Danmok-ryeong 단목령 3hr10min 6km to Jeombong-san 점봉산 3hr25min 9km to Hangye-ryeong Pass 한계령



Day 2

Jochim-ryeong 조침령 2hr50min 7km **Bukam-ryeong** 북암령 1hr10min 3km **Danmok-ryeong** 단목령 3hr10min 6km **Jeombong-san** 점봉산 3hr25min 9km **Hangye-ryeong Pass** 한계령 a total of 25km in 10hr35min

Water Stop

(80) N38°01'42"E128°28'44' **Bangtae-cheon** 방대천 at **Danmok-ryeong**

Seorak-san CLOSED SECTION:

Danmok-ryeong 단목령 15km to **Hangye-ryeong Pass** 한계령



CLOSURE NOTE

A trail detour has been provided in this section. If you don't wish to attempt that or the tricky closed section, you could always consider getting off the trail at Jochim-ryeong and bussing, or hitching to the Osaek Gorge where you can easily find accommodation and get to Hangye-ryeong via bus, taxi, or by taking a trail direct from Osaek-ri to Daecheong-bong and rejoin there. However, the trail from Hangye-ryeong is very rewarding and should be considered.

Course Description

Jochim-ryeong 4hr 10km Sangbu-dam

The trail starts next to the fat stele on the wooden boardwalk that skirts north up the ridge for a steady 2km to peak 943m, where in late spring hikers can cavort through blooming azaleas. It then marks a sharp west turn and climbs slowly for 1.7km to a saddle marked by a signpost at 962m. Here there is a track descending west for about 2.5km down to the village of Jindong-ri 진동리, which can offer a detour around the closed section from Danmok-ryeong.

DETOUR OPTION SANGBU-DAM to HANGYE-RYEONG

After leaving the ridge at the saddle 962m, you walk past the Sangbu-dam 상부댐 to the road intersection at the remote area of Jindong-ri. Turn north and walk 2.5km to the Gombae-ryeong 곰배령 trail entrance, which will be marked by a car park. The Gombae-ryeong restaurant and minbak곰배령식당민박010-4734-1424, is also there with rooms if you want to stay over. This village area is called Seolpi-ri 설피리 and marks a wildflower trail head. The name “seolpi” means a snowshoe, as this is supposed to be one of the snowiest areas in Korea, and that’s what local people had to wear. When not in use, the snowshoes were used as amulets, allowing the spirits of their ancestors to ward off evil spirits by inhabiting them. In summertime, this area is now popular due to the many wildflower species that grow on the mountain. Outside the national park, this trail is managed by the Korea Forest Service. They permit 300 trekkers a day, and users are required to make an online reservation to walk there. There is no English page to allow you to do this, so you can turn up and try, otherwise here is the Korean address: www.forest.go.kr 휴양문화/산림생태탐방/점봉산곰배령. The entrance area is manned by an office. The trail is normally a 10km circuit that goes west for 5km up to a south running ridge from Jeombong-san to the pass of Gombae-ryeong, and back to the entrance. Upon getting to the ridge, you can decide to switch north on that closed section of ridge and follow it for about 4-5km to Jeombong-san, and then 7km on more closed ridge on a tricky and difficult trail to Hangye-ryeong. Or, at Gombae-ryeong, it is possible to hike west for 2.5km on a trail called the Gombae-gol 곰배리 to the village of Gwidun-ri 귀둔리. About 4km from the trail-end in Gwidun-ri, there are some small stores, and a road junction, where if you hitch a ride in a north-east direction, it will take you to Hangye-ryeong some 16km later. This is quite a remote and interesting part of Korea, and it offers you a great adventure if you have the time.



Danmok-ryeong

Back on the Baekdu Daegan, the trail from the Sangbu-dam saddle 962m continues north for the next 3km climbing up to 1100m before dropping down to the saddle of Bukam-ryeong 북암령, 940m, where there is another westerly track down to Jindong-ri at the Seolpi-ri entrance. Otherwise from Bukam-ryeong you make one more northerly climb then the trail starts to turn west before dropping down to Danmok-ryeong 단목령 855m, some 3km later, marked by some Korean spirit-guardian poles (*jangseung*). You are now inside the national park. This area is officially closed for all trekking.

DETOUR OPTION

From Danmok-ryeong, you can take the closed track north for about 4km down to HN44, where you can then hitch west to either the village of Osaek-ri 오색리 some 2.5km more, or all the way to Hangye-ryeong some 8km farther. The trail heading south from Danmok-ryeong goes to Jindong-ri. At the end there is a locked gate and CCTV to monitor trespassers.

CLOSED SECTION DANMOK-RYEONG 7HR 15KM HANGYE-RYEONG

The trail turns southwest and climbs almost 500m in altitude for 2km before summiting Jeombong-san 점봉산, 1424m. The summit of Jeombong-san consists of an open area which accommodates a roundish boulder acting as a monument for the summit. On the boulder, it states that Jeombong-san was voted the most beautiful mountain in Korea during a 21st century contest. On a good day, the peak offers splendid views to the north and south. The trail from Jeombong-san immediately descends off the peak in a northerly direction, where almost 2km later it meets the rocky outcrop of Mangdae-am-san 망대암산, 1236m. It continues descending north on tricky ground for another 2km till it reaches a saddle at about 900m. From here it ascends about 250m in elevation for the next kilometer where it holds that elevation on thin rocky ground before falling into a sharp jagged saddle. Things may get a little hairy around this point so pay attention to the terrain and what trail you can make out, as it is a closed section and barely used anymore. Once in the clear it's about 1.5km downhill to the roadside which should take you out at the intersection of the NH44, and the Pillae-yaksu (mineral-spring) road 필례약수, which winds all the way back to Gwidun-ri. From there stay on the road and head north up to Hangye-ryeong, less than 1km away.

Jeombong-san is getting closer and closer. Up towards the mountain, I can look over to the very heart of Seorak-san, where rock formations extend themselves, pulsating towards the sky. An army helicopter flies over, hopefully not in pursuit of me. The last part of the climb up to the summit (1424m) is steep, but not as hard as I had feared. It would be a pure lie to say that my body is not aching a little now; the walk has taken its toll. The most beautiful mountain demands a break. For now, cliffs and rocky formations are breaking up around me as well, which I have to climb across and around. I can look down towards the Osaek gorge (the five colours valley), which apparently is a beautiful valley like the Mureung gorge. Navigating down are however starting to turn a little bit difficult. In the midst of all the cool scrambling that I like, I struggle a little bit finding the correct way. The guidebook did warn me about this part. At a point, I take a wrong turn down, and have to spend some time going back up to the trail again. The view is atoning for the entire struggle, it is an enjoyment all the way down, I can look down towards Hangyeryeong and dream of all that exists of food and drinks there: Tarjei Naess Skrede Oct 15, 2014.

The way to Hangye-ryeong



Hangye-ryeong 한계령 920m

Connected by NH44, the small and quaint tourist village of Osaek-ri sits 8km to the east of the pass. On the road, down to the west there are some pensions and minbaks nearer the road intersection with the NH46 some 16km away. At Hangye-ryeong there is a large and popular Hyugaeso with hot meals, coffee, and drinks. It has no accommodation. Public toilets also exist there, as does the trail head to the next leg of your journey to Daecheong-bong and the eye-popping “Dinosaur Spine.”

Transport

The only buses that cross Hangye-ryeong are the ones traveling from Yangyang to Dong Seoul and vice versa. There will be one at least every hour from 0700 to 1900hr. Otherwise taxis are often at the pass, or the staff at the Hyugaeso can get one to come up from Osaek-ri.

Osaek Gorge 오색계곡

The *Osaek-gyegok* (Five-Colors Gorge) is surrounded by the mountains of Seorak (Daecheon-bong), and Jeombong-san. The gorge consists of a beautiful mountain stream of pure greenish-hued water that gushes and tumbles through a steep-walled ravine of sheer cliffs and towering pinnacles of rock. In autumn, the area is extremely popular for visitors who come here to see the amazing fiery colors of the gorges maple trees. Despite this, the village area remains rather small. From Osaek Village there is a 5km walk up the valley that begins near the Osaek mineral-spring. It is said that the naturally-carbonated water from this source is of such a high quality that it can help to cure diabetes, stomach related problems, high and low blood pressure, and constipation. The valley walk is full of folktales. One of them depicts a hidden cave called Chujeon-donggol 추전동굴 where it was said that during the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910), locals could hear what sounded like coins being dropped onto rock in this area. They claimed the noise came from bandits hiding in an unknown cave minting illegal coins. This story remained a mystery until one day a flood in 2006 revealed the hidden cave, but no coins were found. Further up the trail you will come across a pond called Seonnyeo-tang 선녀탕, where another tale describes how a group of *seon-nyeo*, which translates as immortal women, meaning heavenly-angels or fairies with their divine robes giving them ability to fly, would descend to this pond, remove their clothes and bathe. If a man was to see this, then if he could steal the robes of one of the fairies, he could take her as his wife. The Osaek gorge is a splendid walk and a nice break from the trail if you wish to spend some downtime in Osaek village.



Osaek-ri to Daecheong-bong 대청봉 1707m

There is also a direct 4hr trail from Osaek-ri straight up to the summit of Daecheong-bong, where you can rejoin the Baekdu Daegan trail at Jungcheong Shelter. It's an arduous and steep climb through forest, with the only real views granted to you near the top. The trail starts at the top of the Osaek-ri road where it joins the NH44.

Lodging and Food

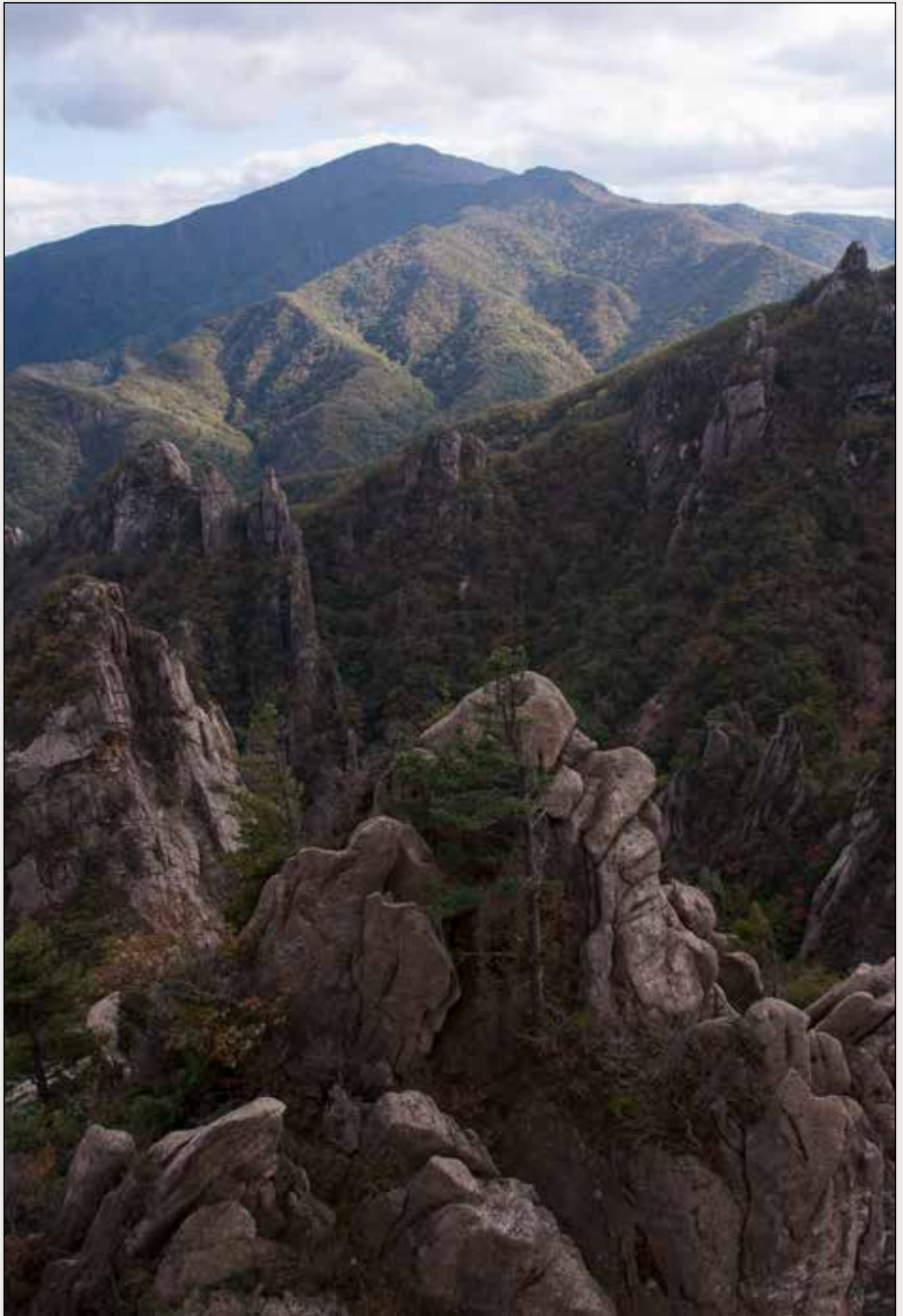
Osaek-ri has many different accommodations. Perhaps one of the best and cheapest off-season hotels is the Seorak Oncheon Jang 설악온천장033-672-2645, which has clean rooms for 35,000KRW each. Osaek-ri has an array of mountain-food restaurants to choose from, offering excellent meals; a specialty here is rice cooked in a stone pot using the Osaek mineral-water, served with many wild-vegetable and mushroom side-dishes.

Transport

The Osaek Gorge area is a very popular entrance to Seorak-san National Park, and buses run directly here from Dong Seoul Terminal, leaving 7 times a day from 06:30 to 18:05. Buses also run from Yangyang to Osaek hourly throughout the day from 06:20 to 19:30.



Gari-bong 1518m



Jeombong-san in background



백두대간



DAEGAN

SECTION 16
SEORAKSAN TO THE DMZ
Hangye-ryeong to Jinbu-ryeong, 43km in 4 days

Hangye-ryeong to Misi-ryeong

Misi-ryeong
미시령

21.5km 15hr45min

Yongdae-dong 용대동

Gangwon-do
강원도

Seorak-san National Park
설악산국립공원

Inje-gun
인제군



56



56

1080m



Ulsan-bawi
울산바위



Hwangcheol-bong
황철봉 1381m



Sokcho-si
속초시

Sinheung-sa
신흥사

56

Madeung-ryeong
마등령 1326m

56





Baekdam-sa
백담사

Osae-am
오새암

Yeongsil-am 영시암

Sunyeomdong Daepiso 수림도대피소

Bongjeong-am 봉정암

Gwidaegicheong-bong
귀대기청봉 1577m

Socheong Daepiso 소청대피소

Jungcheong Daepiso
중청대피소 1664m

Huiungak Daepiso
회운각대피소

Daecheong-bong
대청봉 1707m

Dinosaur Spine
공룡능선

Yangyang-gun
양양군

Yangyang-gun
양양군

Hangye-ryeong 한계령

Hangye-ryeong 한계령 2hr 2.5km to
Neungseon-saetgeori 능선삼거리 3hr 5.5km to
Jungcheong-bong 중청봉 1hr30min 2km to
Huiungak Daepiso 회운각대피소 5hr 4km to
Madeung-ryeong-samgeori 마등령삼거리 1hr55min 4km to
Jeocheong-ryeong 지형령 50min 1km to
Hwangcheol-bong 황철봉 2hr10min 4km to
Misi-ryeong 미시령

44

Section 16: Through Seorak-san and to the End

Hangye-ryeong to Jinbu-ryeong in 4 days over 43km

Day 1

Hangye-ryeong 한계령 2hr 2.5km **Neungseon-samgeori** 능선삼거리 3hr 5.5km **Jungcheong-bong** 중청봉 30min 500mtrs to **Daecheong-bong** 대청봉 a total of 8.5km in 5hr 30min or push on to **Huiungak Daepiso** (2km) or **Socheong Daepiso** (1km)

Water available at all National Park Shelters
(81) N38°07'06"E128°27'44" **Jungcheong Daepiso**



Seorak-san National Park 설악산국립공원

The Baekdu Daegan forms the crest of Seorak-san National Park, one of South Korea's more famous parks; renowned for its high craggy pinnacles and beautiful seasonal displays of colors, it will provide you with a fitting end to your long walk. The 400,000km², park is divided into three parts: Wae-seorak 외설산 or Outer Seorak-san on the east coast, Nae-seorak 내설악 or Inner Seorak-san on the western side of the Baekdu Daegan ridge, and Nam-seorak 남설악 or South Seorak-san, covering the park area south of NH44 including Gari-san, Jeombong-san and the Osaek Gorge. The main zone is the Outer Seorak-san region where most visitors enter, as it has a popular temple called Sinheung-sa, a cable car, and a trail head to the famous Ulsan-bawi boulder-peak, a jagged spine. Seorak-san is a park for all four seasons with each holding its own appeal. It reportedly has 1400 species of animals within its boundaries including the rare goral antelope, lynx cat, musk deer, and otters. As Seorak-san offers a lot of trails to explore, this chapter has included those options if you wish to see more. It should also be noted that there is a long-term 16km closure in Seorak-san from Madeung-ryeong to Daegan-ryeong (Day 3). Alternative routes are discussed in this chapter.



Course Description

Hangye-ryeong 5hr30min 8.5km Daecheong-bong 대청봉

The trail head to Daecheong-bong starts on the northern side of Hangye-ryeong, next to the public toilets. It's about a 300m steep climb in a northerly direction for 2.2km where the trail meets an east-west ridge at a trail junction called Neungseon-samgeori 능선삼거리 at about 1340m. From here the Baekdu Daegan turns east on the only trail that'll take you directly to Seorak-san's highest peak Daecheong-bong, 1707m. It is a spectacular introduction to the park, as you start to get a glimpse of the 'inner' area, and the Dinosaur Spine ridge that you'll be crossing the next day. There are plenty of great views. The trail for the next 5.5k to the shelter is a mixture of forest and rock, and twists up and down over the ridge slowly gaining in elevation before arriving at the Jungcheong-bong Daepiso located in a saddle next to Daecheong-bong.

Jungcheong Daepiso

중청봉대피소 1676m

This shelter can sleep about 120 persons. An allocated floor space cost between 7-8,000W depending on the season. There is a downstairs kitchen facility with cooking water from a tap (not drinkable they say). The office sells snacks, drinks, water (81), gas, and coffee. You can also rent blankets. Reservations must be made online.

Jungcheong-bong 20min 500mtrs Daecheong-bong

From Jungcheong-bong you can see the neighboring peak of Daecheong-bong towering over the saddle. This is not a continuation of the Baekdu Daegan proper, but it is worth dropping your pack and heading up to the summit for some amazing views and photos. On a good day, you can easily see your course through south Seorak-san, and your next day's course along the Dinosaur Spine to Madeung-ryeong. If you're staying



overnight in the shelter then there are nice sunsets to be seen from the northern side of Jungcheong-bong, or get up early and catch the sunrise over the East Sea of Korea from Daecheong-bong. If you have the time and energy, you can consider pushing onto the next shelters of Socheong Daepiso or Huiungak Daepiso, only a couple of kilometers away. See Day 2 for more notes.

Osaek-ri to Daecheong-bong 대청봉 1707m

If you wish to start from Osaek-ri instead of Hange-ryeong, there is a direct 4hr trail from Osaek-ri straight up to the summit of Daecheong-bong, where you can rejoin the Baekdu Daegan trail at Jungcheong shelter. It's an arduous and steep climb through forest, with the only real views granted to you near the top. The trail starts at the top of the Osaek-ri road where it joins the NH44.



Day 2

Jungcheong-bong Daepiso 중청대피소 1hr30min 2km Huiungak Daepiso
 희운각대피소 5hr 4km Madeung-ryeong-samgeori 마등령삼거리

CLOSED SECTION: Madeung-ryeong 16km Daegan-ryeong

Water Stops

(82) N38°07'33"E128°27'24" Socheong Daepiso

(83) N38°07'45"E128°28'00" Huiungak Daepiso



Course Description

Jungcheong-bong 1hr30min 2km Huiungak Daepiso

From Jungcheong Daepiso the signposted trail runs for 600m towards Socheong-bong 소청봉, 1550m, along the northern side of Jeongcheong-bong, before dropping down a series of staircases with impressive views of inner Seorak-san, where it then arrives at the trail junction to Socheong Daepiso and Bongjeong-am Hermitage 봉정암. The track heading left or west, drops heavily for 1km to Bongjeong-am, spectacularly located amongst mounds of white pinnacles with stunning views. Before the hermitage, the track passes by the Socheong Daepiso only 400m away. From the trail junction, the Baekdu Daegan continues north or right and begins a steep 1.3km descent, dropping about 500m in elevation, down to the base of the “Dinosaur Spine” ridge at the Huiungak Daepiso 1000m. It takes less than an hour to get there. At Huiungak, there is another track heading down the Thousand Buddha Gorge to the Outer Seorak-san entrance. The Baekdu Daegan, continues onto the Dinosaur Spine from Huiungak Daepiso.

Socheong Daepiso 소청대피소 1450m

This shelter was rebuilt in 2016 and is now a modern facility with individual bunks that can sleep about 75 people. It has a kiosk, cooking area, water supply (82), and outstanding deck with fantastic sunset panoramas. It’s not much of a detour if you choose to stay there the first night. Reservations must be made online and cost between 7-8,000W.



Bongjeong-am 5hr 12.5km Baekdam-sa Temple and Inner Seorak-san entrance

You can trek from Bongjeong-am to Baekdam-sa near the western entrance to Inner Seorak-san. It takes about 4hr over 8.5km, and is another spectacular walk. From Baekdam-sa you can take a shuttle-bus to the park entrance, or walk that road for another 4km or so.

Huiungak Daepiso 희운각대피소 1000m

Nestled in forest next to a boulder stream, this shady recluse sleeps only 30 people for a price between 7-8,000W. It has a small kiosk, cooking area, and water spring (83). Reservations must be made online.

Huiungak Daepiso 4hr40min 8.5km Outer Seorak-san entrance via the Cheonbuldong-gaegok 천불동계곡 (Thousand Buddha Gorge).

Just past Huiungak Daepiso, there is a signposted trail junction at Muneomi-gogae 무너미고개, where the right-hand track heads down a scenic valley walk that will take you to the eastern entrance of Outer Seorak-san. The valley flanks a jade green stream with a series of pools and waterfalls cascading between white rocky cliffs. In traditional time the thousand-or-so outstanding boulders along the way were fantasized to be enlightened-deities manifesting into this world. It takes about 2.5hr to get to the end of the valley at Biseon-dae Valley, and another hour from there to Sinheung-sa Temple near the entrance.



The DINOSAUR SPINE 공룡능선

Huiungak Daepsio 5hr20min 5.1km Madeungryeong-samgeori 마등령삼거리 1260m

Welcome to what might become one of the most memorable parts of the entire walk for you, the Dinosaur Spine 공룡능선 (Gongryong-neungseon) of Seorak-san. From Huiungak Daepsio, the trail continues north past the junction to Outer Seorak-san, where it then starts its gnarly twisting leg all the way to Madeung-ryeong some 5km later. It'll stay between 1100 and 1300m elevation for the next 5km. The walk is arduous but not dangerous. Along its route there are many viewpoints to stop and take it all in, as the ridge shimmies around massive pinnacles of rock, and up and down some steep saddles. You'll soon start to understand why it feels like you are but a small parasite on the back of dinosaur. This section won't fail to marvel you. Please note that the trail is now closed from Madeung-ryeong for 16km all the way to Daegan-ryeong in the northern section of Seorak-san National Park. The following sections explain how to rejoin the trail at Daegan-ryeong 대간령. Information on trail data for the closed section can be found under Day 3 in this chapter.

Madeung-ryeong 3hr30min 5.1km Baekdam-sa and Inner Seorak-san

Some 4.5km later, about 500m before the Madeung-ryeong junction you'll come across a trail junction, where the western track runs for 1.4km to Osae-am hermitage 오새암, then 2.5km to Yeongsi-am hermitage 영시암, then 1.2km to Baekdam-sa temple 백담사.



The Dinosaur Spine 공룡능선

Lodgings and Food

From Baekdam-sa you can take the regular shuttle-bus to the inner Seorak-san entrance area, or walk the road for 6km. In this area there are sikdangs, marts, minbaks, pensions, and motels. There's also a private campground there, but sites aren't cheap, about 40,000W each.



TRAIL CLOSURE DETOUR

Inner Seorak-san entrance 7.5km Daegan-ryeong 대간령 trail head.

Another 1.5km west from the Inner Seorak-san entrance-area is a major road junction with the NH46. From the store in that area, you can take a bus to Dong Seoul Terminal or Sokcho. In your case, to get to the Daegan-ryeong trail head, you should take the Sokcho or Jinbu-ryeong bus, only 3.5km up the road, to the Yongdae-dong samgeori 용대삼거리. Be sure to ask the driver to stop there. This junction is identified by a number of Hwangtae (Pollack fish) sik-dang's 황태식당. Here the NH46 continues north to the Baekdu Daegan end-point at Jinbu-ryeong, and the PR56 heads east, splitting into one road that heads under the Baekdu Daegan, through a road tunnel to Sokcho, and the other older road which snakes its way over the Baekdu Daegan at Misi-ryeong. Your trail head is on the old road, so after getting off the bus, it'll be easier to find the old PR56, as it slithers under the new PR56, and walk up it for one kilometre, passing a military base, before arriving at a small café called the Bakdal-namu-suimteo 박달나무쉼터. The exact co-ordinate is [N38°13'21.4" E128°22'58.1"](#). From there you walk to the end of the private camp ground, where on the other side of the stream you can see a north-running valley. You'll have to cross the stream to get to the trail head, which'll be marked by hiking ribbons. From there it's about a 5km north-eastern walk up to the pass of Daegan-ryeong, passing through some decent forest and past an old wooden home. Daegan-ryeong is marked by an old stone cairn.

Madeung-ryeong-samgeori 3hr30min 6.5km Outer Seorak-san

From Madeung-ryeong it's a steep 3km trek down a forested and rocky spur all the way to Biseon-dae 비선대 Waterfall-valley, identified by a park office, swing bridge, and chasm of rock and water where two streams become one before tumbling over wide granite cliffs, marked with old carvings of numerous Chinese characters. From there it's a 3km tourist trail to the park entrance at Outer Seorak-san and should take you an hour.

Outer Seorak-san 외설악

After a hard slog on the Dinosaur Spine, Outer Seorak-san will provide you with a Disneyland of sikdangs, coffee-shops and other beverages. Also in the area is the famous Sinheung-sa Temple 신흥사, that has a Temple Stay program, and a massive 14.6m seated bronze Buddha. From this area, there is also a cable car that'll take you up to a 670m dead-end viewpoint, that offers breath-taking views of Seorak-san's ruggedness.

Ulsan-bawi



Ulsan-bawi 울산바위

If you're thinking about staying in the Outer Seorak-san area, then the stand-alone rocky feature known as Ulsan-bawi (*bawi* = outstanding rock; this is fully a craggy peak of its own) is a worthy day detour. Located past the trail to Sinheung-sa, the 2km trail passes through forest, before arriving at the pleasant Gyejo-am hermitage 계조암, that has a tangy freshwater spring, grotto, and a rocking-rock attraction. The trail pushes on up, using a series of wooden staircases, before arriving at the top of the dragon-like ridge, where you get stunning views of this weird spiny feature. The legend of Ulsan-bawi goes like this: Long ago, Korea's chief mountain-spirit (*Sanshin*) decided to build a new mountain in Gangwon-do, but he needed help. So he asked the other Sanshins to each bring the most beautiful piece of their own mountains to Gangwon-do, and make this new alpine gem. They did this, slowly putting their bits together to form a beautiful mountain, naming it Geumgang-san 금강산, now in present-day North Korea (just across the DMZ from Seorak, on the Baekdu Daegan). However, one of the Sanshins from the southern regions was still struggling to bring his exceptionally large piece to the area before it was completed. When the chief Sanshin told him the project was already finished, he became angry and slammed his piece of rock to the ground, and returned to his own mountain. That piece is what Ulsan-bawi is now.

Lodgings and Camping in Outer Seorak-san

For the backpacker the only place where you might find cheaper accommodations is in the sprawling village of Pigol-maeul 피골마을 also known as Seorak-dong, less than 2km from the entrance gate, where there are many motels and minbaks. The National Park Authority also has a very good camping ground in Pigol-maeul, called the Seorak-dong camp site. Primarily an auto-camping site, it has a delegated section for backpackers, 백캠핑. A site for your tent will cost about 4,000W, and you don't need to make a reservation. The campground is quite picturesque with plenty of grass and trees. It has a cold-shower block, cooking areas, toilets, and permits small campfires.

TRAIL CLOSURE DETOUR**Outer Seorak-san to Daegan-ryeong trail head**

It is best advised to get a bus to Sokcho city, and then transfer to another bus going to Inje 인제 on the PR54 through the Misi-ryeong Tunnel, making sure that the driver will stop at Yongdae-dong samgeori 용대동삼거리 on the other side of the tunnel. From there refer to the trail closure detour from Inner Seorak-san Entranceway 7.5km to Daegan-ryeong 대간령 trail head in the earlier page.



Day 3

CLOSED SECTION

Madeung-ryeong 마등령 1hr55min 4km **Jeohang-ryeong** 저항령 50min 1km **Hwangcheol-bong** 황철봉 2hr10min 4km to **Misi-ryeong** 미시령 a total of 9km in 4hr 55min

The trail passes over several huge fields of large boulders. The wind is blowing hard and keeping my balance on the rocks is difficult and time consuming. Stubbornly and slowly, I move downwards, on lookout for the best path through the boulders. A fall here could cause serious trouble. The sun is on the wane when I am getting close to Misi-ryeong, I locate a path that leads me down to the road just below the pass. I was somewhat anxious to end up in the dark again on the way down, but I got down before that time. While the wind is blowing cold around me, I am unsure of what to do. Stay at the pass or leave the ridge for a place. It feels unreal to think that tomorrow is probably the last day of my walk. A beautiful day. Tarjei Naess Skrede, Oct 17, 2014.

Water stops: None



CLOSED SECTION: Madeung-ryeong 4hr55min 9km Misi-ryeong 미시령

From Madeung-ryeong the trail undulates north for about a kilometer before veering northwest where you can start to make out a distinctive ridge line that resembles the previous Dinosaur Spine course. The trail will follow that for the next 2km before it turns north again and begins a rocky and cumbersome descent down to Jeohang-ryeong 저항령, 1106m. From the saddle you can see east right down the Jeohang-ryeong Gorge 저항령계곡 for about 5km, all the way to the back-yard of Shinheung-sa Temple in Outer Seorak-san. From the saddle, it's a grinding 250m elevation climb for the next kilometer, north to the peak of Hwangcheol-bong 황철봉, 1381m, with good views. From there, the trail turns northeast staying at good elevation for the next 2km as it passes over more moraine-like terrain before it meets another peak at 1318m. After that the trail starts to turn north again, and then begins a big 2km descent down to the once-famous but now-forgotten pass of Misi-ryeong 미시령 .

Misi-ryeong 미시령 767m

Misi-ryeong is connected by the old PR56, with the city of Sokcho about 15km to the east and the junction village of Yongdae-dong 요대동 about 5km to the west. A new PR56 now runs through a tunnel under the pass. Therefore, the old Hyugaeso that used to operate from Misi-ryeong is now closed. The park closures on both side of the pass haven't helped the business survive either. The pass is quite heavily fenced off to prevent Baekdu Daeganers from accessing the closed sections. However, this doesn't deter many who still make the effort to complete their personal pilgrimages.

Lodging and Camping

There are no minbaks or motels in this area. You can try and hitch east down to Sokcho, or 7km west to Yongdae-dong samgori where you can find some minbaks. Camping is forbidden at Misi-ryeong, as it is within the national park boundary.

Transport

No buses run over the pass. As some vehicles come to the pass to admire views of the East Sea of Korea, then your only chance off the ridge is by hitching a ride with them.



Jeohang-ryeong Gorge



East Sea

North Korea

DMZ

Goseong-gun
고성군

Goseong
고성



7



46

Hyangno-bong
향로봉 1287m

Misi-ryeong to Jinbu-ryeong
14km 7hr55min

Gangwon-do
강원도

Inje-gun
인제군

Misi-ryeong 미시령 1hr30min 2km to
Sang-bong 상봉 50min 1km to
Sinseon-bong 신선봉 1hr20min 3km to
Daegan-ryeong 대간령 1hr55min 3km to
Masan-bong 마산봉 1hr 2km to
Nunmul-gojae 눈물고개 1hr20min 3km to

Jinbu-ryeong 진부령



Chiljeol-bong
칠절봉 1172m

Jinbu-ryeong
진부령

Heul-ni
홀리

Masan-bong
마산봉 1052m

Daegan-ryeong
대간령

Sinseon-bong
신선봉 1214m

Sang-bong
상봉 1244m

Misi-ryeong
미시령

Seorak-san National Park

설악산국립공원

Inje-gun
인제군

Yongdae-dong
용대동



46

56



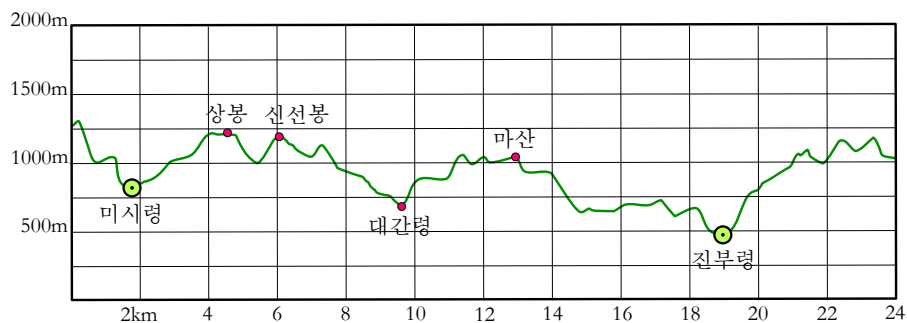
Day 4

Misi-ryeong 미시령 1hr30min 2km **Sang-bong** 상봉 50min 1km **Sinseon-bong** 신선봉 1hr20min 3km **Daegan-ryeong** 대간령 1hr55min 3km **Masan-bong** 마산봉 1hr 2km **Nunmul-gojae** 눈물고개 1hr20min 3km to **Jinbu-ryeong** 진부령 a total of 14km in 7hr 55min.

CLOSED SECTION from Misi-ryeong 6km to Daegan-ryeong

Water Stops

(84) N38°15'01"E128°25'08" Daegan-ryeong



CLOSED SECTION From Misi-ryeong the trail climbs 500m in elevation north for the next 2km to the summit of Sang-bong 상봉, 1244m, marked by a large *doltap* and providing outstanding views. If you're lucky there might be an old mountain spring (84) still working about 1km up the trail to Sang-bong. From here the trail stays north for a kilometer dipping into a saddle, before beginning its ascent and arriving at the mystic peak of Sinseon-bong 신선봉, 1214m, some 600m later. The trail passes the southwestern face of Sinseon-bong, but it's worth dropping pack and making the short detour up to its summit, as it'll be your last view of the East Sea from there. Likewise, Sinseon-bong also means a place where spirits depart, and this is the last place on your entire walk, that you'll be heading due-north inside South Korea. From here, the trail swings northwest, losing about 600m in elevation before arriving at Daegan-ryeong 3km later. Water (85) can be found down the southern side of the pass in a mountain stream.



OPEN SECTION Daegan-ryeong 대간령 641m, represents the northwestern boundary of Seorak-san National Park. From Daegan-ryeong it's about a 3.5km northwest climb to Masan-bong 마산봉, 1051m, your last major peak of the Baekdu Daegan in South Korea. So after saying goodbye to your last peak, you now begin an easterly descent for the next 2km down to the small abandoned ski-town of Heul-ri 홀리, 650m, where it passes through a ghostly ski-resort with its clock tower still stuck at 11:14. Or has something moved it? Some of the small stores might be open in the village if you fancy a cold drink. Once in the small village you can either follow the road east for the next 3.5km to Jinbu-ryeong, or duck on-and-off the adjacent signposted ridge-trail to Jinbu-ryeong. Just keep following the ribbons as you have for the last 700km or so.



Masan-bong 1051m

Jinbu-ryeong 진부령 526m

The final road pass of the Baekdu Daegan in South Korea is connected by the NH46 where 6km to the south it comes out at the intersection with PR56 at Yongdae-dong 용대동, and to the northeast it travels about 25km to the seaside town of Goseong 고성. At Jinbu-ryeong there is a large stele erected in September 2006. On the back, it says the Baekdu Daegan is the backbone of Korea which connects its southern and northern eco-systems. It further states that some parts of the Baekdu Daegan have been destroyed by indiscreet developments and even now there are more problems with the conservation and utilization of the trail. On the other side of the road, next to the military camp, there is now an Art Museum with some very good collections. Restaurants and some small stores can be found at Jinbu-ryeong. The continuation of the Baekdu Daegan would start on the dirt road next to the military camp, but permission to enter that zone is unlikely.

Lodging

There is no motel at Jinbu-ryeong, but a couple of the restaurants might run rooms as minbaks. Otherwise there is a the Neungeutt-maeul-pension 눈꽃마을펜션
Tel: 010-6297-2972 which can provide rooms.

Transport

From the end of the trail buses run into Sokcho City 8 times a day from 08:35 to 19:10. Buses also leave Jinbu-ryeong for Seoul 9 times daily from 06:55 to 17:45.



Jinbu-ryeong 687.3 odd kilometers and many memories later

Section 17: Into the Danger Zone

Jinbu-ryeong to Hyangno-bong 18kms

On the 2007 expedition to make this guidebook, we were granted special permission to walk to the last peak of the Baekdu Daegan in South Korea. Hyangno-bong 향로봉 1296m is located 18km from Jinbu-ryeong at the end of a series of switchbacks on an unsealed road inside the civilian restricted zone of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) that divides Korea's. It is unlikely that you will get permission to walk to Hyangno-bong (Incense-Burner Peak), as it is normally done through an arrangement with the military. The walk itself is not very spectacular, as it is conducted on the unsealed road under a military escort.

The area is known as the Hyangno-bong Zone. The summit of Hyangno-bong is about 2kms south of the 4km-wide DMZ. In accordance with its name, there is a large beautiful cast-iron incense-burning-pot located at the top of the peak amidst all the military paraphernalia. The base itself has a mess, barracks, church, and an observation post. From the observation post, you can clearly see into North Korea and, further on in the distance, Geumgang-san. The peak's name originated from observations made by locals, that the summit when enshrouded in white clouds, resembled the shape of an incense-burner.

Designated a natural monument in 1973, the Hyangno-bong Zone is inhabited by a variety of flora and fauna. There are reportedly no less than 648 species of flora to be found in this zone, 27 of them being endemic to Korea. Of its known 739 species of insect, at least 40 new species were found in this zone during a 1972 survey which led to its subsequent designation as a national monument. There are also over 40 different species of Mammalia including wild boars, deer, elk and possibly Bandal (half-moon) bears. The Gojin-dong valley to the north is known to have thick stands of lush virgin forest consisting of Mongolian Oak, Acicular Pine and Fir trees growing amongst deciduous species within the actual wired-off DMZ.

As you stand on the Gwangmang-dae 광망대 (OP) looking north, having walked 690 or more kilometres of a remarkable mountain ridge, you may have an urge to go further. All Koreans who have experienced this feel the same. Until Korea is reunified or living as two peaceful states on one peninsula, no one has that chance. As foreigners, we should be aiding both Korea's towards peaceful cooperation so we can all enjoy the Baekdu Daegan on a reunified peninsula.



MOUNTAINS OF THE 백두대간 NORTH KOREA

1. Mae-san
2. Chol-ryong
3. Saepo-gowon
4. Mastang-san
5. Okjeong-bong
6. Seongjae-san
7. Duryu-san
8. Minbong-san
9. Cholong-san
10. Sasu-san
11. Kodae-san
12. Chonsandae-bong
13. Chail-bong
14. Sambong-san

15. Huchi-ryong
16. Dongjeongryong-san
17. Tongol-san
18. Duryu-san
19. Taebul-bong
20. Paektu-gowon



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백두대간

The BAEKDU DAEGAN in NORTH KOREA

It is the dream of all South Koreans who have hiked the Baekdu Daegan in the South to do so in the North. Until the other dream of unification happens, this will remain unfulfilled. As a foreigner, I have been fortunate to have explored many sections of the undiscovered Great Ridge in North Korea, documenting it with photography, and publishing my visits by way of photo exhibitions, photo-art books, and short stories, that have been greatly appreciated in the South. Since 2011, I have climbed about sixty peaks of the Baekdu Daegan in North Korea. The adventures of getting to these remote places, located at the top of a track, where the vehicle can move no longer, camping out, are part of the collection of exploring the Baekdu Daegan. So, I decided to include some of those mountains in an introduction chapter of the Baekdu Daegan in North Korea. I hope one day this chapter can become a reality, and that all Koreans, North and South, can travel freely on their own land.

The Baekdu Daegan in North Korea is called the **PAEKTUDAESAN-JULGI**. There is no hiking trail that runs its length, but there are natural trails on its ridge, that have been used by local people for thousands of years to get from one village to another. These trails start in valleys between the villages separated by the ridge. In other parts of the Paektudaesan-julgi, the ridge is largely untouched by human trails. Overall the Paektudaesan-julgi zone of North Korea is in a pristine and undamaged state, and offers a large amount of geographic variety due to its length that stretches north into the Manchurian regions, and its bigger heights. It is possibly one of the least explored regions left in the world that hasn't been frequented by outsiders.

They view the geographic significance of their landscape a little differently. During the Japanese occupation of Korea from 1910-45, the Japanese were trying to advance their western techniques of land surveying on the Korean peninsula. The Korean people by then understood that the spine of the Korean peninsula was continuous and never broken by water. Without western mapping techniques, they had still managed to map their nation out rather accurately, Kim Jeong Ho's hand-made masterpiece, the Taedongyo-jido, hand-printed in the late 19th century, perhaps one of the best examples of that. Instead, the Japanese had incorrectly broken the Baekdu Daegan up in at least three places, stating it wasn't connected. These were all in the northern regions on the Saepo plateau, Cholong-san region, and the Kaema-gowon region. Some saw this as their attempt to break the spirit of the Korean people, by stating that the Baekdu Daegan wasn't one entity. Under their subjugating regime, the Koreans were educated to agree with them, and so it stood like that until the 1960s when Korea had a resurgence for its geographic identity. They mapped their landscape again, North and South, so to reconfirm that the Great Ridge did exist as an unbroken feature, which they easily proved.

The South Koreans preferred the concept of the Baekdu Daegan being one single main ridge (Great Ridge 대간) that runs from Baekdu-san 백두산 all the way to Cheonhwang-bong 천황봉 in Jiri-san, although clearly the ridge does continue further all the way to the peak of Yeondae-bong 연대봉447, on the eastern side of the Seomjin-gang river 섬진강 as it spills into the South Sea near the island town of Nam-hae 남해. The South also prefer that the Baekdu Daegan's subsidiary ridges that control the flow of Korea's major rivers to the sea, are called Jeong-maek 정맥, and that the lesser ridges are called Gi-maek 기맥, Ji-maek 지맥, based on their height and lengths. This is a rather biological description of an arterial network or rivers and ridges.

In the North the Paektudaesan-julgi is the ridge that runs from Paektu-san all the way south to a peak called Kujae-bong 768m south of Jiri-san area, near the mouth of the Seomjin-gang river. All the ridges on the peninsula use the suffix 'Julgi' preceded by a mountain name that represents that area. In a way what they mean is that all the ridges and spurs in Korea are part of the same mountain "Julgi" system, and all are connected back to the Paektudae-san-julgi.. If I may quote the late Kim Jong IL who described it best as, "Our country is the three-thousand-ri golden tapestry-like land with the same mountain range." Ri is an old land measure in Korea, it represents about 390m.

North and South agree that all mountains are connected back to Paektu-san, the only difference being how they systemize that. It would be good to bring both academic sides together one day, to nut out the definition of the Korean landscape, be it geographic, scientific, spiritual, or romantic.

So this chapter won't explain in detail how to trek the Paektudaesan-julgi in North Korea, as it is currently impossible to do that in its length. But as I have been to see more parts of it that anyone else currently alive right now, then this chapter can be a glimpse of its natural beauty and an introduction towards the idea that one day it should be accessible for all Koreans and visitors. It'd be a Hell of a Walk! That's all I can say.

남북통일.

The Southern regions of the Paektudaesan-julgi in the DPRK. Phyongannam-do and Hamkyongnam-do.

Kumgang-san 금강산 - Oct 2011

After crossing the mangled wire of the DMZ, the Great Ridge will continue into the high craggy peaks of the stunning Kumgang-san mountains, also known as the Diamond mountains. Located on the eastern seaboard of Kangwon-do province, it is perhaps one of the most beautiful regions in all of Korea. Kumgang-san covers a size of 400km² through three counties, and possesses over 12,000 peaks, its highest being Piro-bong at 1639m. Like other coastal mountain zones in Korea, it has three zones. An inner, an outer, and a sea zone. During the progressive administrative terms starting in 1998, of presidents Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo Hyun it was possible for Koreans to visit Kumgang-san, overland from the South. A shooting incident that left one tourist dead stopped all of that in 2008. Now Kumgang-san's impressive pinnacles and wreathing valleys can only be seen by visitors within DPRK, mostly Chinese, but tourist numbers are not high. Kumgang-san does have some very good trails that can still be used, but none of them are part of the Paektudaesan-julgi ridge. Manmulsang is probably the highlight of Kumgang-san, consisting of a screen fold of wrinkled granite cliffs that form an auditorium over a valley pierced with sharp pinnacles packed with ancient tales of fairies, heavenly gates, and animated rocks that become creatures. Despite the fact that tourists do go to Kumgang-san, most of it remains relatively unexplored, and there is no doubt that to traverse its ridge as part of a Baekdu Daegan walk might be a tricky excursion.



Mae-san 매산 1231m – May 2017

Located about 20km north of Kumgang-san's highest peak, Mae-san sits outside the arena of the jagged and illustrious peaks of Kumgang-san, and becomes more ridge like in a Korean way, offering a layer of soil that produces forests and grasses, carpeted over a foundation of rock, that occasionally bayonets out to form white specks on the concertinaed landscape. I visited it in May 2017. Approaching from the east coast through the village of Nuengdong-ri 능동리, the Baekdu Daegan was quite distinctive as its foothills could be clearly made out at the end of the rice fields that stretch inland briefly from the white sands of the East Sea coast. Our local guide had told us many stories that day, including one of how some South Korean soldiers, 비적 (Bi-jeok), had remained on the peaks in this area, long after the Korean War had ended. They often raided the villages, harassing them for food, and were one-day found and rounded up, where they became prisoners of war, before deciding if they wanted to stay in the North or be repatriated South. On the peak of nearby Satgat-bong 1143m, which sits on a short spur that joins the Paektudaesan-julgi from the east, we found remnants of trenches and command posts from the Korean War. These had been used by the Chinese. The area was densely wooded, but foot trails used by some locals who forage for herbs and hunt small game were still scattered lightly on the canopy floor.





Chol-ryong 철령 680m – Oct 2011

Located on the Paektudaesan-julgi as it rolls west inland from the east coast of Kangwon-do, Chol-ryong is a switchback strategic road pass that connects the counties of Kosan to the north and Huiyang to the south. It was a famous battle scene during the Korean War. During the spring months, the ridges slopes are ablaze with crimson azalea's.

Saepo-gowon 세포고원 - Oct 2011

The region of Saepo-gowon is a highland plateau about 600m in elevation. It sits in the land space between the Paektudaesan-julgi as it forms an elbow heading south on the eastern arm for about 30km, then turns and heads north on the western arm for the same distance, before jutting west again. This distinctive shape can be clearly seen on a map and was one of the zones that the Japanese believed the Paektudaesan-julgi was disconnected. It was once the main train route between Seoul and Wonsan, and the old rail track is still in use inside DPRK. During the Korean War, its flat area provided a landing zone for UN force parachutists. A barren and windswept region, the area is mainly farmed for sheep and cattle, but recently had one of largest apple orchards in North East Asia constructed there.



Masang-san 마상산 1120m – May 2017

We started off from Sambang-ri 삼방리 in the crux of the elbow that forms the Paektudaesan-julgi around Saepo. The old trail, climbed up through the forest alongside a clear mountain stream. At the pass, we turned south and started walking on the ridge of the Paektudaesan-julgi. Chestnut trees grew everywhere and kept us protected from the sun as it blazed in the bright blue sky. Soon, the forest ended and the trail broke out onto grassy banks beneath the bushy tip of Masang-san. We sat down and enjoyed the cool wind as it brushed the grass around our faces. Then we scuffled through the bush to the summit where we found strewn rock, and in the middle of it stood what looked like a stone tower. It had a stick protruding from its top. It was a trig-station. I figured it might have once been part of a stone fire tower too. We couldn't agree on that.

**Okjeong-bong 옥정봉 1201m - May 2017**

It wasn't a difficult climb up the pass beneath Okjeong-bong. The trail was well used by the locals as they shifted from the county of Kosan to Saepo, using the Paektudaesan-julgi like an ancient pathway. As we turned south and made our way up the ridge, we got great views of the Kosan area to the northeast, and the Paektudaesan-julgi as it paralleled us on the eastern side of the Saepo plateau. At its summit I could easily see the great ridge as it started bending west for a short distance before wrapping back north again.



Seongjae-san 성재산 1102m - June 2017

Goats and their herders strolled past our tents as they headed down from the mountain. There was a chill in the air, but we weren't concerned about it, as it was early June, and we were only at about 500m. The big fire and the clink of our glasses kept us warm for the night, and we got drunk. A freak hailstorm came over the Paektudaesan-julgi, pelting us with snow and ice before shooing us into the tents, where we slept a fitfully cold night. The next day we rose and climbed Seongjae-san. A big walk, full of tiger and bear tales. We got to the summit and found an old Koryo dynasty stone fire tower. One of its walls were still intact. It was a great find!



Duryu-san 두류산 1323m – Oct 2011

When we saw it the day before, it looked like a mean peak. Now our forest guide was telling us it would only take an hour to climb it. We were suspicious of that, so we shuffled our feet on the ground, hands silently in our pockets. We set off. It was five brutal hours before we got to the ridge from the long steep trail less valley. It was mid-October and the interior was damp and brown. A ground wind hounded the dead leaves and spun them magically up to the leafless trees, who then cast them to the ground again. We followed a thin animal track up the ridge to Duryu-san. Another hour and a bit passed before we broke out onto the small summit covered in a dry yellow grass. The sun came out from the grey day and glared its light strongly across the mountains to the south. Meanwhile to the north, the sky turned a cobalt blue, and thin strands of white cloud scratched the sky. The views were grand.



Minbong-san 민봉산 1135m – June 2017

We drove through the highland area southeast from Maeng-san to Yangsin-ri, and then followed the Dongmyeon-gang, a mountain stream, fording it frequently, until we reached a tight valley in a place called Changpung-dong **창풍동**. This is where we would start our climb to Minbong-san. Changpung-dong was inhabited by a few pastoral families that farmed crops, honey, and some livestock. It took us a couple of hours to get to the ridge. On the ridgeline, the forest to the east had been removed to expand a natural grassland plateau for grazing livestock, mainly Korean cow and sheep. It looked like New Zealand.



Cholong-san 철웅산 1094m – Oct 2011

The flat unsealed road was flanked with spent fields of sun beaten maize, intermittently framed by thin wooden power poles. These poles didn't share the same burden of their cable choked counterparts in the South; here they looked unstressed. Only a single strand of cable dipped lightly between each one, pulsing the landscape with an easy charm. I began to get a sense for the plateau, I felt slightly lofty. Two blades of mountain that were the Baekdu Daegan stood on both sides of us, the still air was warm and void of aircraft, machinery, and vehicles, all that spun was the static buzz that fills the universe. As if to make the moment more angelic, a distant chorus of singing school children tickled the air. Looking in the direction of the sweet tones, I saw a green stack of pine (비버숲) that marked the village centre. Cholong-san mountain filled the background, and I admit, it was a little surreal.

Kodae-san 고대산 1766m – July 2012

Secret camps (that's what they called them) can be found on parts of the Paektudaesan-julgi. They are the cultural relics of an era when Koreans were fighting their colonial masters, the Japanese. The camps are from around the 1930s period and are where these freedom fighters hid and met other fighters during the resistance years. These days they were kept as historic sites by members of the KPA (Korea People's Army) and we were fortunate to be able to stay with them so we could climb the nearby Kodae-san. The night was spent around an oil lamp, eating rabbit meat, rice, mountain vegetables, and listening to bear stories. One of the female guards, gently strummed her guitar from a room next door, her sweet voice filling the night.

Chonsandae-bong 천산대봉 1977m – July 2017

We had camped at Taebaek-ryong the night before. Now on our way to find Chonsandae-bong we stood early in the morning looking ahead. The Paektudaesan-julgi looked so far away. After all the effort to get there, and at almost 2000m in elevation, the ridge was still heavily forested with Manchurian Fir. This blocked any views from the ridge. I searched for a tree to climb, and saw an old boy with its branches spread open. I climbed up it and managed to get some shots of the Paektudaesan-julgi from above the Manchurian canopy.





Sasu-san 사수산 1746m – August 2017

I had missed out on climbing Sasu-san in my July 2012 expedition. This time it was back on the list and still proved to be a hesitant and hard to reach peak. From our campsite, we got a lift in the back of a logging truck on an extremely rough track, before crossing a wide river and beginning our walk. For the most part the going was good as it gained altitude on a well used local trail, but once we got to the ridge proper, the way to Sasu-san quickly disappeared into thick tangles of spindly trees and thorns. However, we still cut our way through arriving at a grassy saddle just beneath Sasu-san. It was dark by the time we returned to cross the wide swift river and then trundle into our campsite near midnight. Sasu-san was one of the toughest peaks I had to climb.

Chail-bong 차일봉 2506m – August 2017

Although not on the Paektudaesan-julgi, Chail-bong is worth a mention, as all mountains in Korea are connected back to Paektu-san. One of the tallest peaks in all Korea, we managed to get to its foothills at about 1500m in altitude where we slept some frosty mornings next to a cattle herder. The climb up was straight-up the guts over loose moraine style boulders. A wicked wind blew on the bare top and the all-round views were commanding. The highland grasses were full of post-summer alpine flora, like rhododendron, blueberry, low lying native pine, azaleas, mosses, and many other unidentifiable species. I could see a good 70km stretch of the Paektudaesan-julgi as it ran north-south across the eastern horizon about 30kms from where I was standing. None of us were in a hurry to leave..

Sambong-san 삼봉산 1985m – August 2017

We camped in some good places in North Korea. Normally at the top of a valley where the vehicle track would start to peter out, past the last house in the village, next to a mountain stream, on the edge of the forest. That didn't always mean the peaks were nearby. Some of the walks continued up the mountain stream valley for half the day, before the real steep climb began, often without knowing what to expect view-wise. It wasn't uncommon in North Korea for peaks to be covered in forest above 2000m, especially in the Phyongannam-do region. To compensate, I'd be lucky sometimes, and our trail-less walk would break from the thick impassable forest, out onto the rocky strewn wastes of these old mountains. We'd always stop, take a rest, and ponder over the views.

The Northern region of the Paektudaesan-julgi in the DPRK Kaema-gowon and Ryanggang-do

Huchi-ryong 후치령 1332m – July 2012

From Bukcheong-gun on the east coast of Hamkyongnam-do, you drive north towards the Paektudaesan-julgi, where it starts a relentless climb up its southern slopes on a series of endless chicanes that spiral up to Huchi-ryong. At the pass, there is a high altitude spring tucked in the back of a pine larch forest. A concrete plaque holds the history of this pass through the words of Kim IL Sung. From here, the highland plateau area of Kaema-gowon begins. The Kaema-gowon will fill the interior from Huchi-ryong all the way to the river-border-town with China, of Hyesan. Smooth hills filled with large Larch forests that roll across the landscape, broken up every now and then by small hamlets with acres of potato farms.



Duryu-san 두류산 2309m – June 2012

I asked Pak Geum Chol how many bears he had seen in this area before? He replied he had seen a lot of sign, but rarely seen a bear, but then he paused took a breath and added he once had a close encounter with one. We all propped up from examining the dung and then he told us what happened. Huddled in a circle around the fresh bear shit, he started how some years ago, not far from here, he was scouting through the woods, when one suddenly and without warning stood up straight in front of him. He said it stood two meters high no more than six meters from him. When he said that, we glanced nervously over our shoulders into the dark woods, "It let out a loud angry roar, and flashed his sharp white teeth and impressive claws at me," Mr. Pak said before letting out a loud 'roar' himself. Pak went on to demonstrate how the bear stood on its hinds with its front legs elevated above its head, his fingers bent imitating the bears protruding claws, his mouth wide open gnashing his teeth like the white daggered set on his man eating bear. He then let out another roar...a louder one...and that made the small Mr. Pak look pretty big all of a sudden. Bang Ryong was standing opposite me, he eked out a tiny girlish yelp cupping his fists together, his arms retracting to his chest just under his chin, and a frightened grimace split his kind face.

He looked scared. Hwang Chol Young swung his eyes momentarily Bang Ryong's direction, disdainful of him, before focusing back on Mr. Pak, a big man he stood stooped with his hands on his knees, like a rugby prop listening intently to his captain's instructions, he knew that if he paid serious attention here, then this information might be enough to save his slow frame from being mauled by the maker of this fresh shit we were standing over. Mr. Pak showed us how he then next lowered himself into a crouched position and started retreating backwards, never taking his eye off the black beast by pointing his index finger backwards and forwards from his eye. He stopped for a second and balanced on his right leg only, slightly bending it, his left leg was raised and bent at the hip. He was the North Korean version of an African bushman I thought. Then he snapped back onto his legs and showed us, how when he was faraway enough from the bear he then turned on his heel and ran as fast as he could through the woods, spinning and running on the spot for us at a zillion miles an hour. That last act made us all laugh. There on his mountain stage, Mr. Pak's plimsolls were doing a Korean super jig, his thin wiry arms spinning rapidly in a lampoon blur against the emerald backdrop of this high altitude theatre in the middle of nowhere and beyond. This break of laughter returned some ease upon us, but we weren't totally stupid, we knew he wasn't fibbing; Pak Geum Chol was no fibber, and this was real bear shit!





Tonggol-san 통골산 2103m

Sometimes it's not about the mountain. Sometimes it's the adventure of getting there. The long drives, the new countryside, the villages, the foods, the campfires, the friendships. The climb to Tonggol-san was tiring. We crawled up a long valley thick with riverine scrub. We got fed up with that, so decided to climb up to a ridge and try and get to the peak from that, but that was also a discouraging route. Our forest worker guide was slow and seemed more interested in picking mushrooms, so I left him behind, and knowing where to go, I made a dash for the summit, which opened up providing photo views. I'm glad I did that. We took a different way out, spending about the last 15km of it, straddling in the dark, clumsily along old railway tracks built during the Japanese colonial period.



Dongjeongryong-san 동정령산 2113m

After a colourful sunset, we had slept out at about 1850m in good weather under a full moon. The sunrise over nearby Duryu-san the next morning was even better. We strode slowly up through the Larch pine and White birch forests on easy trails used by the locals. The summit area was open and rocky with vast views. Old bunkers hidden in the rock were found here. Remnants of the Korean War, used by Chinese communists and North Korean Peoples Army to watch the UN Forces on their October 1950 advance north to the Amrok river, where they (UN) eventually became surrounded, and were forced out. That night we could see a spectacular lightening storm flashing in the direction of Paektu-san some 70km to our north.

Taeheul-bong 태흘봉 1970m – June 2012

The summit area of Taeheul-bong was cleared of trees, and had been taken over by long grass filled with violets and daisies. Most Koreans make the effort to see Paektu-san once in their life, traveling great distances to do so. But public transport is non-existent in these rural parts of the North. So, our forest guide told us that on a good day the local people of this area will come to Taeheul-bong to see Paektu-san some 60km north of here. On this day we couldn't see it.



Paektu-gowon 백두고원

The regions that sit south of the volcanic flanks of Paektu-san are divided into three highland zones. They are the Kaema-gowon (plateau) to the west, Paektu-gowon to the south, and Musan-gowon to the east. They cover 45,000km². As you drive from Samji-yon, north, you pass through vast larch pine forests, that become shorter and sparser as you gain altitude. Then the plateau opens up to a treeless landscape of volcanic soils and pumice, laden with rhododendrons, azaleas, and wild flowers, that grow in the alpine grasses. Even in June, snow can be found thawing in valleys before the July rains come and wash the remainder away. The area is sacred to the North Koreans. During the Japanese occupation of Korea, the communist inspired guerillas used this area to infiltrate in and out of Manchuria, hiding in the dark forests and using the mountains as view points. The area now has a small collection of what they call secret camps, where the Partisan fighters hid, that are kept as historic sites. The Paektudaesan-julgi passes through this region, punctuating it with the peaks of Sobaek-san, Soyeonji-bong, and Daegak-bong, before rising up to Janggun-bong 2750m, on Paektu-san. It is a very pristine place.





Paektu-san 백두산 2750m

Paektu-san is Korea's highest and most beloved mountain. Located about 385km north of Pyongyang in the province of Ryanggang-do, on the border with China, Paektu-san is a not-dormant volcano. Its last serious eruption was in 946. Called the Tianchi eruption, it was one of the biggest eruptions in the last 5000 years and created the caldera at the top of Paektu-san that you can see today. The caldera lake has a 20km circumference and sits about 500m below the craters rim. Sixteen peaks over 2500m surround the caldera. The lake is a brilliant blue with an average depth of 400m and in some places almost 1km. The lake is called Chonji, meaning Heaven Lake. Paektu-san gets its name from its all white appearance. From October to June, Paektu-san has snow on it, and in the other months it is marked by tracts of white pumice. Paek means white and Tu means 'head', so white-head mountain, in this case, that of a wise old man. Paektu-san is also seen as the mythological birthplace of the Korean people. That the first Koreans were from this region and formed their first civilisations here, and that when they die, they are returned to this mountain. Since the Joseon dynasty, the mountain has been shared with China, and during the Japanese occupation the area was an infiltration zone for anti-Japanese fighters. When Korea was liberated from the Japanese at the end of WWII and then went into division, Paektu-san was lost to the Chinese. It wasn't until the 60's that Kim IL Sung negotiated a deal with the Chinese that saw North Korea recover one-third of the mountain area back, practically the southern side of the mountain, including its highest peak Janggun-bong 2750m. The two rivers that form the border with China both stem from Paektu-san. The Amrok is Korea's longest and runs to the west, and the Tumen, Korea's third longest, runs to the east. Paektu-san is the only landmass that connects the peninsula to the continent of Asia. The Baekdu Daegan, or Paektudaesan-julgi, therefore has an even greater sense of geomancy, as it forms an artery of vital energy, starting at Chonji Lake and transpires all the way down the peninsula. Indeed, some view the Paektudaesan-julgi as stretching from Paektu-san to Halla-san on Jeju island in the south. Both of these peaks are volcanic, and both are the highest in their regions, in fact, Halla-san 1950m is the highest in South Korea. Paektu-san, therefore, is the grandfather mountain of Korea, and Halla-san the grandmother mountain of Korea. They are connected by the spine of Korea, called the Baekdu Daegan, and all mountains on that, and that stretch out beyond that, are part of the entire family of mountains in Korea. Korea has a unique topography in that sense, and it can be seen in the Korean language, her arts and in literature from the past. These days, the Koreans from the South make the pilgrimage to Paektu-san by the Chinese side. Visitors to North Korea can see Paektu-san from that side.

We had been holed up in our hotel for the past five days. Paektu-san never concealing himself. The next day, the weather broke and we drove north. Each time we rounded a corner, someone would exclaim, "It's Paektu-san!" but it wasn't.

We rounded another corner, and although we couldn't see its top, we knew it was Paektu-san. Its girth stretched across the horizon. We drove on to its foot. By the time we got to the summit the weather had cleared. At this altitude, I wasn't sure if the air was thinner, or if I was out of shape. Huffing, I walked towards the crater's edge, and Chonji lake opened out below me. Its depth, size, and planet like blue waters, were easily the best natural scene I had witnessed in my whole life. Here I was staring at the beginning of Korean civilization, at the emitter of the peninsula's natural energies, the start or end point of the Paektudaesan-julgi. Paektu-san not only looked holy, it felt like a holy mountain.





We climbed from Samji-yon all day to reach the base of Bukpotae-san 북포태산 2288m. We carried our bivvy bags and spent a minus zero freezing night around a fire waiting for the sun.



The volcanic caldera of Paektu-san, known as Chonji 천지, and the start or end point of the watershed ridge called the Baekdu Daegan that runs down the entire length of the Korean peninsula. Chonji is also the source of Korea's longest river, the Amrok-gang running to the West Sea and its third longest river the Tumen-gang, running to the East Sea.



Bukpotae-san 북포태산 2288m



Both form frontiers with China, and a small section of the Tumen also with Russia. Chonji is the birthplace of the Korean people, the source of all the nations waters and energies. It is a sight to behold.

Language

Outside of the main centers there is little English spoken in Korea, and along the Baekdu Daegan you will encounter very few locals who can communicate freely with you. Learning a little Korean before setting off will serve you well along the trail and in towns and will no doubt add to your experience. If you can't speak any Korean it's not the end of the world as rural Koreans are a patient lot and you will soon become a master of friendly body language, which should never be under-estimated, it is highly recommended however that you take some time and learn to read the Korean alphabet, Hangeul, as well as a few basic pleasantries before heading off. Hangeul is very easy to learn and can be picked up by most people after a couple of days of study. It is very helpful along the trail as signposts, advertisements for accommodation, menus and bus schedules are for the most part written entirely in Korean.

Features along the trail

~san 산 – a mountain	~bawi 바위 – a prominent rock
~bong 봉 – a peak	~gyegok 계곡 – a valley/gorge
~ryeong 령 – a pass	~gol 골 – a gorge
~jae 재 – a pass	~cheon 천 – a stream
~gogae 고개 – a pass	~gang 강 – a river
~chi 치 – a pass	~saem 샘 – a fresh water spring
~anbu 안부 – a saddle	~yaksu 약수 – a mineral water spring
~doltap 돌탑 – a cairn	~san-shin gak 산신각 – mountain spirit shrine
~Jeongja 정자 – a pavilion for resting	
~Hyugae-so 휴게소 – a rest area, often with a restaurant and convenience store.	

Places and areas

~si 시 – a city area	~maeul 마을 – a village
~eup 읍 – a town area	~myeon 면 - a village
~gun 군 – a county	~ri 리 – a village
~myeon 면 – a sub-county	~dong 동 – a neighborhood, an area of a town

Temples

Temple 절 – jeol

Jeol is the non-specific term for a temple, for example Daewon-temple is not called Daewon-jeol. Major temples are usually followed by the suffix –sa 사, with supporting temples or hermitages called –am 암, but they are also sometimes given other names such as –dae 대 - platform, -jeongsa 정사 retreat temple, -seonwon 선원 meditation garden and –gung 궁 palace

Useful Language

The following language guide is specific to the trail and will help you with general greetings as well as obtaining supplies, seeking accommodation, directions, transport and food. To help you further it is always a good idea to carry a lightweight Korean phrase book or English – Korean dictionary, both of which are available from bookstores in all major centers.

Equipment and necessities

- Backpack 배낭 bae-nang
- Bandage 붕대 bung-dae
- Band Aid 밴드에이드 Baen-deu-eideu referred to as Baen-deu
- Batteries 배터리 bae-teo-ri
- Boots 등산화 deung-san-hwa
- Camping stove 휴대용 가스렌지 hyudae-yong gaseu-renji
- Compass 나침판 Na-chim-pan
- Crampons 등산용의 아이젠 eijen
- First Aid Kit 비상약품 bisang-yakpum
- Hat 모자 mo-ja
- Headlamp 전조등 jeon-jo-deung
- Gloves 장갑 jang-gap
- Gas bottles 부탄가스 butan-gaseu
- Insect repellent 해충약 :모기, 벌레를 쫓기 위한 용도 hae-chung-yak
- Jacket 자켓 jaket
- Lighter 라이터 la-i-teo
- Map 지도 jido
- Pocket knife 휴대용 칼 hyudaeyong-kal
- Rope 로프 ro-peu
- Scissors 가위 ga-wi
- Shoelaces 신발끈 sin-bal-kkeun
- Sleeping bag 침낭 chim-nang
- Bedroll 휴대용 침구, 담요 hyudaeyong chimgu
- Socks 양말 yang-mal
- Sun block 썬 크림 sseon-keurim
- Tape 스카치 테이프 seukachi-teipeu
- Tent 텐트 ten-teu
- Toilet paper 휴지 hyu-ji
- Toothbrush 칫솔 chit-sol
- Toothpaste 치약 chi-yak
- Trekking poles 등산 폴 deung-san-pol

Places in town

Bakery 제과점, 빵집 jegwa-jeom, bbang-jip
 Bank 은행 eun-haeng
 Bus station 버스 정류장 beoseu-jeongryujang
 Camera/photo shop 사진관 sajin-jeom
 Coffee shop 커피숍, 다방 keopi-shop, da-bang
 Convenience store 편의점 pyeonui-jeom
 Drycleaners/Alterations 세탁소 setak-so
 Hospital 병원 byeong-won
 Hiking Store 등산 용품 가게 deungsan-yongpum-gage
 Hot spring 온천 oncheon
 Laundromat 빨래방 bbal-lae-bang
 Market 시장 shi-jang
 Museum 박물관 bak-mul-gwan
 Pharmacy 약국 yak-guk
 Police station 경찰서 gyeong-chal-seo
 Post Office 우체국 uche-guk
 Restaurant 식당 shik-dang
 Sauna 사우나 sa-u-na
 School 학교 hak-gyo
 Supermarket 슈퍼마켓 syu-peo-ma-ket
 Train station 기차역 gi-cha-yak

Shopping

Where is the ~ ? 은 어디입니까? ~ eun eodi imnikka?
 Do you have ~ ? 을 가지고 있어요? ~ eul gajigo-isseyoyo?
 How much is it? 얼마입니까? ~ eolma-imnikka?
 It's too expensive 너무 비싸요 ~ neomu bissayo
 I'm just looking 그냥 둘러보고 있어요 ~ geunyang dolleo-bogo isseyoyo
 It's too small 너무 작아요 ~ neomu-jakayo
 It's too big 너무 커요 ~ neomu-kayo
 Can you repair this? 이것을 고쳐 주실 수 있어요? ~igeoseul gochyeo jusil su isseyoyo?
 Can you clean this? 세탁 해 주실 수 있어요? ~ setak hae jusil su isseyoyo?

Transport

Bus 버스 beoseu
 Taxi 택시 taeksi
 Train 기차 gicha
 Where is the bus station?
 버스 정류장은 어디입니까?
 beoseu jeongryujang eul eodiimnikka?

Where is the train station?

기차역은 어디입니까? ~ gicha-yak eul eodi imnikka?

Where is the nearest bus stop?

가장 가까운 버스 정류장은 어디입니까?

gajang gaga-un beoseu jeongryu-jang eun eodiimnikka?

What time does the bus leave for~?

로 가는 버스는 몇 시에 있습니까?

ro ganeun beoseu neun myeot shi e isseum-nikka?

A ticket to ~ please ~으로 가는 표를 주세요 euro ganeun pyoreul juseyo

Does this bus go to ~ ? 이 버스는 ~로 갑니까? i beoseu-neun ~ ro gamnikka?

I am going to ~ 저는 ~로 가려고 합니다 jeoneun ~ ro garyeogo hamnida

Can you take me to ~ ?

저를 ~로 데려다 주실 수 있어요?

jeoreul ~ ro deryeoda jusil su isseoyo?

Can you pick me up from ~ ?

로 저를 태우러 오실 수 있어요?

ro jeoreul taeureo osil su isseoyo?

How long will it take? 시간이 얼마나 걸리나요? shigani eolmani geolli nayo?

Let's go together 같이 가요 gachi-gayo

Accommodation

Where is the nearest accommodation?

가장 가까운 숙박시설이 어디입니까?

gajang gakkaun sukbaeksi seoli eodi imnikka?

Is there a minbak nearby? 근처에 민박집이 있어요? geuncheo-e minbak-jipi isseoyo?

Is there a motel nearby? 근처에 모텔이 있어요? geuncheo-e moteli isseoyo?

Is there a camp ground nearby?

근처에 야영장이 있어요? geuncheo-e yayeong-jangi isseoyo?

Do you have any rooms available? 빈 방 있어요? bin-bang isseoyo?

How much is a room? 숙박료는 얼마입니까? sukbakryo-neun eolma imnikka?

Do you cook meals? 식사 됩니까? shiksa doimnikka?

Can I have a towel please? 수건 좀 줄 수 있어요? sugeon jom jul su isseoyo?

Do you have hot water? 뜨거운 물 있어요? ddeugeo-un mul isseoyo?

Do you have a room with a bed? 침대 방 있어요? chimdae bang isseoyo?

Can I leave some things here? 짐을 놔둘 수 있어요? chim-eul nwadul su isseoyo?

I'll be back on ~ 요일에 돌아 올게요 ~ yo-il-e dola olgeyo

At the restaurant

Menu please 메뉴판 있어요? menu-pan isseoyo?

What's this? 이게 뭐예요? ige mueo-ye-yo?

I'm a vegetarian 저는 채식주의자입니다 jeoneun chaeshik jui ja-imnida

What do you recommend? 추천 요리가 뭐예요? chucheon yoriga mueo-ye-yo?

I'll eat anything 아무거나 주세요 amugeona juseyo

Not too spicy please 너무 맵지 않게 해 주세요 neomu maemju ange hae juseyo

I am very hungry 정말 배가 고파요 jeongmal baega gopayo

I'm full 배불러요 baebulleo-yo

It looks delicious 맛있게 보여요 mashitge boyeoyo

It was delicious 맛있었어요 mashisseosseo-yo

Meals common in mountain areas

Sanchae-jeongshik 산채정식 - a huge meal of mountain delicacies, rice, and more

Sanchae-bibimbap 산채비빔밥 – mountain veges with rice and red pepper paste

Son-dubu 손두부 – soft tofu with kimchi and vegetables

Dotorimok 도토리묵 – an acorn jelly

Pajeon 파전 – a flat omelette with a variety of toppings

Kimchi-jeon 김치전 – a kimchi omelette

Gamja-jeon 감자전 – potato omelette

Haemul-pajeon 해물파전 – seafood and vegetable omelette

Doenjang-jjigae 된장찌개 – thick soybean paste soup with side dishes

Kimchi-jjigae 김치찌개 – thick kimchi soup with side dishes

Maeuntang 매운탕 – spicy fish soup

Dalkbaeksuk 닭백숙 – whole chicken, rice and ginseng stew

Tokki-tang 토끼탕 – rabbit stew

Samgyetang 삼계탕 – chicken, ginseng and rice broth

Deodeok-gui 더덕구이 – spicy grilled deodeok root with side dishes

Met-doeaji 멧돼지 – wild pork

Dalk-dori-tang 닭도리탕 – spicy chicken stew

Beoseot-jeongol 버섯전골 – mushroom and beef broth

Drinks

Dongdong-ju 동동주 - unfiltered rice wine

Makkeolli 막걸리 - filtered rice wine

Soju 소주 - rice vodka

Maekju 맥주 - beer

Bokbunja 북분자 – mountain berry wine

Deodeok-ju 더덕주 – deodeok wine

Kolla 콜라 - cola

Saida 사이다 – cider, sprite 7UP lemonade

Juseu 주스 - juice

Mul 물 - water

Health

Hospital 병원 byeong-won

Dentist 치과 chi-gwa

Pharmacy 약국 yak-guk

I'm sick 아파요 apa-yo

Symptoms

Fever 열 yeol

Headache 두통 dutong

Cold 감기 gamgi

Diarrhea 설사 seolsa

Food poisoning 식중독 shikjung-dok

Stomachache 복통 boktong

I need a doctor 의사한테 가 봐야겠어요 uisa-hante-gabwa-ya gesseoyo

It hurts here 여기를 다쳤어요 yeogi-reul dacheosseoyo

My ~ hurts 를 ~ 다쳤어요 ~ reul dacheosseoyo

I have a ~ 이 있어요 ~ i isseoyo ~

Directions

North 북쪽 buk-jjok

South 남쪽 nam-jjok

East 동쪽 dong-jjok

West 서쪽 seo-jjok

Go straight 직진 하세요 jikjin-haseyo

Turn left 왼쪽으로 가세요 woin-jjok-eu-ro gaseyo

Turn right 오른쪽으로 가세요 oreun-jjok-eu-ro gaseyo

Go up 위쪽으로 가세요 Ue-jjok-eu-ro gaseyo

Go down 아래쪽으로 가세요 arae-jjok-eu-ro gaseyo

Weather

What will the weather be like tomorrow?

내일 날씨는 어때요?

naeil nalssi-neun eoddaeyo?

Sunny 화창해요 hwachang-haeyo

Rainy 비가 와요 biga-wayo

Windy 바람이 불어요 barami-buleoyo

Snowy 눈이 와요 nuni-wayo

Hot 더워요 deowa-yo

Cold 추워요 chuwayo

Fine 날씨가 좋아요 nalssiga-joayo

Icy 얼음이 얼어요 eoreumi-eoleoyo

Stormy 폭풍우가 쳐요 pokpung-uga-chyeoyo

Distances

Kilometre 킬로미터 kilomiteo

Metre 미터 miteo

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More information and books on Mountains of Korea can be seen at www.hikekorea.com and www.onekoreaphotography.com



