

A National Trail of Korea

JIRISAN DULLE-GIL

English Edition

국가숲길 지리산둘레길

영문가이드북



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국가숲길 **지리산둘레길**
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By

Roger Shepherd

The author assumes no liability for any accidents sustained by readers who engage in the activities in this book.

Special thanks to Kang Euigoo for proofreading this guidebook.

Welcome to the Jirisan Dulle-gil.

Jirisan holds a special place in the hearts of Koreans. One of the three most famous mountains in Korea, along with Seoraksan and Hallasan, Jirisan is steeped in stories and history alongside its magnificent natural beauty. The Jirisan Trail, which follows the village roads, passes, and riverside paths that surround the mountain, is more than just a walking path; it's a way to connect with old memories, and to truly relax and reflect in a landscape where nature and people come together.

This guidebook is designed to share the charm of the Jirisan Trail with people around the world. We want tourists from all over the world to come to Korea and not just stay in the city, but to enter into the deep nature and people's lives. The Jirisan Trail is not just a road, but a pathway that connects people, nature, and history, and this book will enrich every moment you experience on it.

Walking in the forest is not just about observing nature, it's about immersing yourself in it. The Jirisan circumference path is the perfect stage for such an experience. Along the way, you will encounter the scenery of numerous villages and the warm hospitality of their inhabitants, discover traces of ancient paths and cultures, and feel the true essence of Korea. We sincerely hope that this guidebook will take you on that journey.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the author, Roger Shepherd, for his hard work in bringing this book to fruition, and to Professor Woo-Seok Gong for his editing, and to everyone involved. Thanks to all of you, this guide will be a valuable companion for all those who visit the Jirisan Trail.

We look forward to meeting you on the Jirisan Trail and hope you will write your own stories along the way.

Chun, Bomkwon Ph.D.

Chairman
Korea Mountaineering Support Center

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The Korean peninsula is a wonderful place to hike. About 70% of its landscape is made of mountains that form valleys and streams that gush into large rivers, and in the monsoon, charge to the oceans. Korea is an old land with indigenous people. They have their own language and customs that identify them unique to Northeast Asia. Because Korea is a mountainous land, its geography has massive influence on the mindset of the Korean people. Their history is set in the backdrops of mountains and rivers and their villages and cities were built according to the protection and sustenance a mountain and river can give them. Ancient thinking included the reverence of mountain spirits (san-shin) that helped the Korean people find harmony with nature and the powers it generates for the production of foods, water, shelter and physical and mental health. For that, much of Korea's, arts and cultures have themed around the influence mountains give them. Her greatest writers, scholars, painters, singers, political figures, revolutionists, activists, religious peoples, wanderers have all lived in the mountains to attain a clarity and understanding of nature and mankind.





Before industrialization, the way around Korea was on foot or by cart as well as by boat. Thousands of years of foot trails have been scoured into the valleys and ridges of Korea's mountains, leaving pathways into new and old neighborhoods.

Buddhist temples dot Korea's ledges. Old fortresses with stone walls that run for hundreds of kilometers, mark Korea's ridges. Memorial tablets mark the sites of Korea's patriots. Jangseung (totem poles) and mountain spirit shrines sit in the saddles, wishing travelers safe and healthy passage.

As a nation of Kingdoms, Korea has had several regional conflicts. The mountains were the defining boundaries between Kingdoms and armies. For foreign invaders from the Mongols, Chinese and Japanese, the mountains of Korea provided a bastion, a hideout. The mountain fortresses were a last point of defense, a viewpoint of the enemy, a place to regroup and plan.

The topography of Korea has been well mapped for at least four hundred years. The peninsula has a main 1700km unbroken ridge (Baekdu-daegan), 14 high and long subsidiary ridges (Jeong-maek) that control the flow of river water to the seas, and thousands of lesser ridges that all connect back to aforementioned ridges. The highest feature of all this network is Paektusan 2750m in D.P.R.K. (Democratic People's Republic of Korea; Hereafter referred to as "North Korea"), on the border with China. It is the end or start point of the Baekdu-daegan ridge that is never cut by water. The ridge ends at Cheonwangbong 1915m in Jirisan, the highest feature on mainland R.O.K. (Republic of Korea; Hereafter referred to as "Korea"). The Baekdu-daegan is seen as the spine of the Korean peninsula, and from the holy crater lake of Chonji, on sacred Paektusan, Korea's natural energies (pungsu-jiri) emanate through the Baekdu-daegan, and disperse through the Jeong-maeks and into the lesser ridges, and into the land and waters of Korea. If this energy is good, then Korea's welfare is good. The Baekdu-daegan is the watershed of the Korean peninsula. The Baekdu-daegan is Korea's spine, the pungsu-jiri

(geomancy) her central nervous energy, and the waters it creates are the blood-line of the nation.

These days, modern Korea, has kept most of her ancient trails and made them more readily available as recreational hikes. Over recent decades, Koreans have gained more personal wealth and leisure time. In Korea, hiking became a popular recreational activity. This meant more development of existing trails and the development of new trails, like the Jirisan Dulle-gil.



Heading up these developments, were recreational hiking clubs, local government bodies, and government organizations like the Korea Forest Service and KOMOUNT(한국등산-트레킹지원센터) who would knit the local groups together and champion legislation and funding for their trail projects.

So, what we have now in modern-day Korea, is many thousands of maintained and signposted trails that range from day hikes to multi-day hikes, and can be found in the inner cities and on the higher ridges of the Baekdu-daegan.

If you are thinking about coming to Korea to hike something like the Jirisan Dulle-gil, then I urge you to do so. You will find Korea to be a modern savvy nation and a good host to its visitors. On the Jirisan Dulle-gil you will experience a long walk on undulating ground, with outstanding scenery and fascinating local history and culture. There is a story to be heard in Jirisan. Maybe you can sense it as you walk? How old this land is, how long people have lived here for, and what it must have been like then, compared to now. No matter where you stand in Korea, it is likely something notable took place on that spot some time ago. Hiking the Jirisan Dulle-gil is one of the best ways to see and to get to know a Korea with a past.



The story behind the Jirisan Dulle-gil

The idea of designing a foot trail that encompasses the circumference of the sacred Jirisan began in 2004.

A group of pilgrims set off on the road to spread 'life-peace' in the Jirisan area. They found that connecting villages and their inhabitants through walking was an invigorating way for visitors and locals to reconnect and share each other's experiences and stories. It was a chance for outsiders from the busy cities to come to the fresh green valleys and rivers of Jirisan and breath in the clean air and absorb the slower pace of life. It was also a chance for them to feel their indigenous history. To see the battle sites of their ancestors, against the Japanese and even their own governments. To visit the hometowns of the famous figures they learned about at school. To learn about Jirisan's fine foods, its arts, its religious sites, its energy.

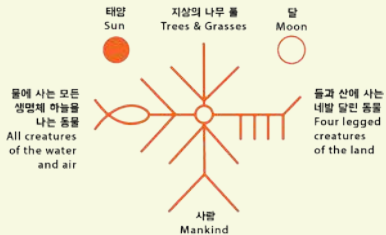
For the locals living remotely in villages, it was an opportunity for them to meet their ancestors from the cities and to feel a part of modern Korean society. To answer their questions, explain their lives, and orate the dark and light history of the Jirisan area.

To be able to do this achievable walk in such a sacred and historically ancient area like Jirisan, is only one reason why it quickly became one of the most respected hikes in the country.

Every Korean loves and admires Jirisan.

The mountain of exquisite wisdom.

The proposed trail went through three provinces and five counties. It was essential for the authorities to get an agreement of cooperation between the bodies involved.



Jirisan Dulle-gil Life & Peace Symbol

That occurred in 2008, when the parties concerned signed an agreement to begin construction of the Jirisan Dulle-gil. In 2012 the 300km Jirisan Dulle-gil was completed and officially opened.

The Jirisan Dulle-gil kept the 'life and peace' ethos from the original pilgrims, so users of the Jirisan Dulle-gil can find respect towards nature, humility towards people, and the recognition and maintenance of social justice for future generations.

Background on the history of Jirisan

The Jirisan mountain system that the Dulle-gil encompasses is one of Korea's most famous and sacred areas. Like in all ancient parts of the world, the oration of history, has been passed down from generation to generation and narrated differently over time. Korea's founding mythologies are mixed with Shamanism, Taoism and later Buddhism. It goes back thousands of years. October 3rd, 2333BC is a date still used today, to mark Korea's Foundation Day. That is a story about Tangun, the founding King of Korea.



The story of Mago halmi goes back further than that. She was a giant God. Her name translates as a Mother-God or Grandmother God. Her story goes like this. In the beginning of time when heaven and earth were not separate, and there was no light, everything was disorganized and chaotic. Mago halmi awoke from her heavy sleep and as she rose to stretch, the earth and heaven were finally separated. The trapped clouds released their might, and it rained down on earth, causing enormous floods.

Mago-halmi went back to sleep. As the water



rose, land disappeared, and mountains appeared. Hallasan on Jeju Island was where Mago-halmi lay her head as she slept. Her right leg lay in the East Sea and her left leg in the West Sea of Korea. Waking again, she splashed her feet in the oceans, causing more chaos and flooding on the land.

Sitting up, she saw the flooding, and with her fingers scratched channels into the land to form Korea's rivers and the land was drained. With her hands she molded the Baekdu-daegan range down the length of the peninsula. She stacked the leftover dirt on the Manchurian plain, and Paektusan was formed. Then she got up and walked away. This is how the Korean peninsula came to be.

Mago-halmi also appears in Jirisan mythology. The folk story starts with an unknown date, but it is BC period. Mago-halmi at that time was a shaman or God of sorts, a daughter of the Sky Heavens it was said. She lived high on the ledges of Jirisan. She met and fell in love with an Indian sage named Banyan. You might be thinking how does an Indian come to be in BC Korea? There are authentic records in the early foundations of Korean Buddhism of Indian monks and sages visiting Korea. Hwaeomsa temple formed in 544, was said to be created by the Indian Venerable Yeongi Josa, so there's a chance that there was a bit of interaction between the two peoples before that.

They lived together in Jirisan and had eight daughters. One day, Banyan decided to leave the home and practice asceticism on the higher peaks in Jirisan. Meanwhile Mago taught her daughters the highest forms of traditional martial arts and Korean folk customs. They eventually left home and became the head shamans of each of the eight provinces of Korea. But, after some time, Mago-halmi became saddened by Banyan's absence. To make herself feel better she prepared from hemp, clothing for Banyan. But he never showed up.

One day, she ripped up Banyan's new clothing and cast it to the wind. Then she passed away and turned to stone. The clothing arrived at the feet of the

sage Banya on a mountain peak. That peak became Banyabong 1732m. They were never reunited.

To this day you can see magical formations of light and colour spiraling around Banyabong, so the spirits of Banya and Mago-halmi can meet in privacy.

For a long time, an old undocumented stone statue of Mago-halmi sat on the peak of Cheonwangbong 1915m, Jirisan's highest feature. In modern day times, the stone statue was thrown off the mountain. It lay lost and broken for fifteen years until a Buddhist priest by the name of Hyebeop found it and repaired it. The stone statue now sits in the small temple of Cheonwangsa at the foot of Cheonwangbong in the village of Jungsan-ri. The blue green mottle coloured rock is made from matter not of this earth, and came from the remnants of a meteorite.

These days, the Jirisan region is the most heavily populated place in Korea for religious and spiritual sites. They range from Seondo, Taoism, Dangun-gyo, Buddhism, Christianity, and several other lesser-known faiths.

The Jirisan Dulle-gil will show the places where Korean history was first recorded. As historically early as the Gaya Kingdom (AD42-562) who being smaller were forced into the deeper parts of Jirisan by a larger Silla Kingdom to the East. They eventually merged with Silla.

It has the battle sites of two major Japanese invasions from the 13th and 15th Century. There are the 1895 Donghak peasant uprisings against the ruling classes. How the farmer militia hid in the high valleys and used Jirisan rocks to throw at their enemies. Then the 1910 -1945 Japanese occupation of Korea which led to the 1945 division of Korea by foreign forces. The political confusion that period created for the people of Korea. How anti-governmental and pro-communist factions in Korea got mistaken for the lives of thousands



of innocent villagers. The Dulle-gil will show these places. The Jirisan Dulle-gil promotes better social justice.

In June 1950, the Korean civil war started good and proper. North Korean troops marched into the south, taking most of it, except the Busan perimeter. Three months later the Incheon landings happened, and North Korean troops got trapped in the South. They hid in the mountains of Jirisan refusing to come out even for some decades after the fighting had stopped (1953). Movies and well known books have romanticized these times in Korea.

These days, the original old folk, the Jirisan Halmoni's (grandmothers) as they call them, still farm by hand their small patches of gosari (bracken) and onions from their humble clay and stone homes. Further along in the same village you might come across a post-war cinder block home that has been remodeled into a newer better insulated one, where the family owners return to on long weekends. In another home you might meet a young family who have swapped city life for country life. Or you might meet the modern-day bohemians, the writers and painters who have come to live in Jirisan for the same reasons all other artists in Korea did many centuries ago. You can spend some money at the young entrepreneurs cafes and restaurants. You'll see there are several good reasons why one would come to live in Jirisan.



How to hike the Jirisan Dulle-gil

If you are going to do the Jirisan Dulle-gil in one hit, then there are two ways to do it on foot. With a tent, or without a tent. As it only takes seven

to ten days, it is an ideal trail for a backpacker with a tent. In between the mountain valleys and rivers, the Dulle-gil with a backpack, will give you total independence, with plenty of awesome places to freedom tent. It will supply you with a daily run of shops, toilets, restaurants, water and accommodation if you need a room. But if you are without a tent, then the Jirisan Dulle-gil still offers you a fantastic multi-day hike with places to sleep. But because of language difficulty, getting a room each night might become part of a larger adventure. For example, locating a countryside minbak on your phone app and calling the number will most likely get you into a conversation with an old lady who knows not a word of English. So, door knocking the address will be your better chance. You can read more about how to get accommodations in that section.



The course

The Jirisan Dulle-gil is a 300km trail that contours around the circumference of Korea's Jirisan National Park. Passing through three provinces and five counties, the terrain is not overly difficult, and is well marked. By using navigation apps on your phone, you can do it easily without maps. You won't get lost.

The course has what is called Dulle-gil centers in each of the counties. They are open during normal business hours and some on weekends. They are manned by volunteers, so treat them kindly. The centers will have information on the trail and are good places for you to practice Korean or to see whose got the better English skills of the staff. They can help you with local information on accommodation, buses, shops etc. Some of the centers have shower rooms.

The Dulle-gil is not flat. Most of it is on undulating hillsides. Especially on the southern sections above the Seomjingang or Seomjin River. But it is not over strenuous and anyone who enjoys walking should be able to complete this walk comfortably. The trail courses along a mixture of graveled forest roads, narrow



village roads and bush trail. Every day you will pass through inhabited villages and often small towns. You can restock or sleep at these places daily. Carry 2L of water and you can refill anywhere there's a tap or a store. It passes through a good mixture of forests, ridges, streams, orchards, villages, temples, and towns. A really special way to discover Korea.

Jirisan stamp book

If you want to document your journey of the Jirisan Dulle-gil you can acquire a stamp book from any of the Dulle-gil centers. Along the Dulle-gil sections you can find a letterbox with the stamp and a pad inside it. Stamp your book. On completion of the Dulle-gil you can report to a Dulle-gil center and get an official certificate and photo of your completion. Cold beer too!

Seasons

Korea has a vivid four-seasons. The colours of the areas you walk through vary each season.

The best seasons to hike it are in the spring months from April to June where the temperatures are good and the bush is in early bloom, and from September to November where things cool down after the hot summer and the bush starts to change into reds and yellows before the snows. Winter offers a hard-core cold walk in the snow and ice, and remoter services like minbaks or restaurants will be closed. The other hard season is the Korean summer between July and August. It has exceptionally dangerous daytime temperatures in the high 30s° Celsius. It is also the rainy season with high humidity. The bush is alive with bugs and mosses. However, if you can manage that, then Jirisan will offer you cooling valleys with plump waterfalls in a chorus of crickets and frogs.

Equipment for a backpacking experience

- A 40-to-60-liter pack with rain cover and extra waterproofing (plastic bags or liners)
- A good pair of walking shoes or boots.
- A pair of Crocs or sandals for airing feet out.



- 3-season sleeping bag
- Sleeping mat
- Light backpacking tent - ideally it should be a stand-alone for concrete surfaces
- Deck pegs (pitching tent on a deck)
- 2L water bottle
- Cooking set for screw in butane gas canisters
- Wet weather rain jacket and trousers
- Extra set of clothing
- Hat, light gloves and sunglasses
- Toiletries, bug repellent, sun cream
- Headlamp
- Hiking poles (optional)
- Mobile phone with charging accessories
- Personal items

Phone Data and Essential Apps for traveling in Korea

These days your phone is an essential item in life. It can do a lot of things for you. You can purchase cellular data at any International airport in Korea. WiFi is widely available, but cell-data will be stronger in the hills. The technology for traveling with a smart phone has improved significantly since Corona or COVID 19. If you can't speak any Korean, then you will struggle to find any English or foreign language in the countryside of Korea. So, it is important for you to have apps that will help you communicate and locate the things you need. Here is a list of some essential apps that will help you in Korea. They are listed as English friendly or not. There are bound to be several more good ones not mentioned here.

Translation Apps - take your pick here. There are several very good ones now. For your travels in Korea, an app with a camera option will be better for menus and information boards.

NaverMaps - is a gps navigation app. It has option for English. It will provide you



with your exact location and show you on a satellite map what is around you. It has a hiking layer, which can drop off after system updates on your phone. Recheck the layer. You can enter a search in English for a 'motel, shop, sauna etc and it will show where they are nearby. Even better yet if you can search in Korean alphabet. It can also provide bus schedules. A must app for this type of travel.

Kakao Map - same functions as Naver Maps. Has better resolution, but less layers of hiking trails.

GaiaGPS - English. Has the Jirisan Dulle-gil.

Booking.com - Useful search app for hotels and motels in towns and cities.

Yanolja 야놀자 - A Korean search app for local accommodations.

Windy - A good weather app.

Kakao Taxi - Like an Uber. Has English version. Using its GPS, it will search for any nearby taxis. It will give you a price to your destination, and on the payment option, if you swipe left, it will let you pay the driver in person.

Uber - also works in Korea. Less so in the countryside.

Korailtalk is the reservation app for Korea's Rail Network. It has English.

Tmoney Go is an app for booking local and intercity buses. Korean only.

Tmoney Card is a credit card for public transportation in Korea. Very good.

Express bus Tmoney 고속버스티머니 is an app for booking inter-city and express buses. Korean only.

Tenting on the Dulle-gil



Let me cover the art of tenting in Korea. In Korea, backpacking or sleeping rough is not a common pastime these days.



In Korea, people will camp with a tent at an auto-camping site with their vehicle and family on the weekend. They are classy set-ups. However, some people do backpack and tent in Korea, sleeping out at predetermined places on hikes. But don't take tenting for granted here. Exercise respect for the community and try to get

a good feel about where is a good spot or not. Generally no one will mind as long as you're not in the way or pitching a tent on a historic or scared site.

Points about tenting in Korea

- Tenting is not normal behavior in Korea.
- Don't think you can just put a tent anywhere.
- Try and figure out if the area you want to pitch your tent in, is used a lot or not.
- It is normally better to arrive in the evening and see what is around before finding a place to pitch your tent.
- If locals are around, you can indicate to them what you would like to do and see what their reaction is. Normally they are inviting of your plan.
- Try not to be noisy.
- Make sure you leave the area clean when finished tenting. That includes sweeping out the pavilion (Jeongja) if you use one and taking your rubbish with you or disposing of it correctly.



If you wish to tent in the bush or on a peak of the Dulle-gil, then there is no problem with that for as long as it is not inside the national park boundary – which most of the Dulle-gil is not. Tenting is illegal in any national park in Korea.



However, if you are sleeping out on the trail, be aware that it is illegal to make an open fire anywhere in the bush in Korea, this includes using a butane gas cannister or smoking a cigarette.

They take their fire-prevention seriously here and you could be reported and fined if spotted. If you need to cook with your gas set, do so with care on clear ground, like concrete, away from dead-fall. Never start an open fire anywhere in Korea. In the villages you can use your butane gas freely.



Pavilions

In Korean these wooden structures are called Jeongja. You will see them a lot. They are round or square shaped open wooden pavilions with a roof and floor. Locals use them as rest areas, especially in the summer months. Some of them have electricity with a refrigerator and televisions. Some of them are encased with glass windows so they can be used in colder times. They are very awesome objects for the off-beat traveler. You shouldn't take them for granted as yours to sleep overnight in. That's not what they are designed for. But most locals will let you use them if no one is in them. Most Jeongja's require that you remove your shoes. Always sweep them out after using them.



Getting accommodations on the Jirisan Dulle-gil

If you cannot speak or read Korean then it will be hard to reserve local accommodation. Even if you find an accommodation with a phone number on Naver or Kakao Maps, there is a high chance the owner won't speak any English. So, the best bet you have is to try and arrange your accommodations beforehand, or just turn up on the day and see if they have a room. Country minbaks have bedrooms or ondol-bangs, which is a room with mats and duvets instead of a bed. There are a variety of accommodation styles on this walk.

Hotels & Motels - normally do not require reservations. Easily spotted. Are listed in NaverMaps. Costs from ₩35,000 to ₩80,000 a night. Hotels and Motels have western styled rooms with double bed, tv, wifi, shower, refrigerator. Medium to High standard.

Yeogwan 여관 - a cheap travelers Inn or hostel. Not so common anymore. No reservation required. Korean styled rooms with no beds. Low Price. Low standard.

Pensions - are stylish country homes. They are expensive and require phone or internet reservations. ₩100,000 to ₩500,000 a day. High to lucrative standard.



Minbaks - are homes in country villages where there is a spare room in the house you can sleep in and use. Sometimes the rooms might be semi-detached. Your host will be the homeowner. Likely an old lady and sometimes they can prepare a dinner and breakfast for an extra fee. Mostly cash only. A room can cost from ₩40,000 to ₩60,000 a night. A good experience. Low to high standard.

Buddhist Temples - Korea has a Buddhist temple stay program for foreign visitors. It is only offered at a selection of temples. You can make a reservation



for one of these temples at templestay.com or call the delegated number of the temple on their website and talk directly with what should be an English-speaking person. ₩50,000 to ₩100,000 per person a night. High but simple standard.

Private Homes - Don't be afraid to accept an invitation into someone's home for a meal or sleepover in Korea. They are marvelous hosts, and you should feel safe. Like anywhere in the world practice good judgment.

Food and Shops on the Dulle-gil

Everyday you will have an opportunity to eat in a local Korean restaurant. If you love Korean food, then you will enjoy it. If you prefer to eat other foods, then you can try a convenience store. The modern store brands are CU, GS25, 7-11 and emart24. They stock a wide range of snacks and instant meals, including toiletries and convenient accessories. The towns on the Jirisan Dulle-gil will also have private marts and the NongHyup Hanaro Mart chain. These are farmers coops. They sell fresh local produce and most things a super mart sells. Other eateries you can find in the townships are, pizza shops,



fried chicken hofs (beer & chicken), bakeries and local outdoor markets. If you have a restricted diet, then there are still ways for you to eat by using the above outlets. You will not have to carry a lot of food in your pack. Using the guidebook and your navigation apps you can see where the next stores or nearest towns are.



Water

You can easily buy bottled water just about anywhere in Korea. If you need to stock up with more water on the trail, then asking for tap water from someone's household is no problem. The water is clean. You may see sometimes; pipe taps protruding from the ground. If you turn on the tap, they will have good water. Water is not an issue on the Jirisan Dulle-gil. Jirisan spring water is totally drinkable as well.

Transportation and how to get around on the Dulle-gil

Inter-city Buses - will depart from most of Korea's larger metropolises to each of the five county's capitals on the Jirisan Dulle-gil.

Local Buses - If you need to take a local bus, then each section in this guidebook will give a basic amount of information on how to do that. But it won't have schedules or bus numbers. You should use the Naver and Kakao Map apps for this, as they will show local bus schedules from your location. Catching a local bus in Korea basically requires waiting at a bus stop. The stops have timetables in them. Korean only. And they are quite confusing to decipher, even for a Korean. So if your app isn't helping, then try and interact with a local to find out if there is a bus

coming or not. Payment for the ride can be made in cash and is normally a standard ₩1,000 or ₩2,000 fare. From a coin dispenser, you will only get change in ₩500 coins. Better, buses will accept a T-money card, or a domestic credit card.

Taxis - there are taxis in the countryside. They serve the aging populace who don't drive. The Kakao Taxi app probably works better in the Korean countryside than Uber. It is an excellent tool for getting a taxi to come to you. In the towns near bus terminals you will always find a taxi rank. Locals will also know numbers for local taxis. Taxis are very affordable in Korea. On the meter, about ₩1,000 a kilometer. In my experience they are totally trustworthy with fares. Even if they ask for a cashie.

Hitchhiking

Locals if they are going your way and have the space are happy to stop and give you a ride. As usual practice good judgment. FYI, hitchhiking is not a normal practice in Korea.

Money and Costs

For your money, Korea isn't bad. You can get well fed in restaurants for less than ten U.S. dollars. Rooms in a towns motel/hotel will cost anywhere from ₩40,000 to ₩80,000 a night. Your master or visa card will work in all the convenience stores, restaurants and local NongHyups, but it might not work in a small local store. So, carrying some KRW cash is a good idea. All the townships will have banks and post offices with ATMs where you can withdraw local currency from overseas cards. But this isn't always the case. You can also try the convenience stores as they have Global ATMs. Tipping is not customary in Korea. Hagglng for lower prices is also not customary. The price of an item in a local market is not inflated. Dishonesty by short-changing customers is unheard of.

Health & Public Toilets

Even if you are backpacking the Dulle-gil the entire time, you will still have plenty of opportunity to take care of your personal hygiene. Korea has plenty of public toilets and a lot of them will have running water. Some of the Dulle-



gil centers even have shower rooms.

The maps in the guidebook do not have every public toilet available marked, because I found that there were just plenty of them. But, always carry some toilet tissue as many may not have any. If at any stage you start to feel ill on the trail and need medication, then all the townships will have a pharmacist. They are easily spotted by a medical cross. The towns will also have medical clinics and a hospital.

Emergency Services in Korea 119

Bring Travel and Medical Insurance. If you think you need immediate help then the emergency number for Korea is 119. They provide support in several languages. If the cellular service is good, they will triangulate your position from the call. If your emergency requires a helicopter evacuation, they will do that. They have a good air rescue service in Korea. Otherwise, a stretcher crew will come to you, or if you can be accessed by road, then an ambulance. If you require hospitalization, then your travel insurance will be well spent. Korea's hospitals are some of the finest and best staffed in the world.



KOREAN LANGUAGE

Features

<i>san</i>	산	a mountain
<i>bong</i>	봉	a peak
<i>bawi</i>	바위	a prominent rock
<i>gyegok</i>	계곡	a valley/gorge
<i>ryeong</i>	령	a pass
<i>jae</i>	재	a pass
<i>gogae</i>	고개	a pass
<i>chi</i>	치	a pass
<i>gang</i>	강	a river
<i>cheon</i>	천	a stream
<i>saem</i>	샘	a fresh water spring
<i>Yaksu</i>	약수	a mineral water spring
<i>doltap</i>	돌탑	a cairn
<i>Jeongja</i>	정자	a pavilion for resting
<i>Motel</i>	모텔	
<i>Hotel</i>	호텔	
<i>Minbak</i>	민박	
<i>Pension</i>	펜션	
<i>Geusthouse</i>	게스트하우스	

Place Names

<i>si</i>	시	a city area
<i>dong</i>	동	a neighborhood in a city
<i>gun</i>	군	a county
<i>eup</i>	읍	a town ship
<i>myeon</i>	면	district
<i>ri</i>	리	a village
<i>maeul</i>	마을	a village

Places in Town

<i>beoseu-toeminal</i>	버스 터미널	Bus Terminal
<i>gi-cha-yeok</i>	기차역	Train station
<i>taeksi</i>	택시	Taxi
<i>pyeonui-jeom</i>	편의점	Convenience store
<i>Hyuge-so</i>	휴게소	a roadside rest area, often with a restaurant and convenience store.
<i>shi-jang</i>	시장	Market
<i>bak-mul-gwan</i>	박물관	Museum
<i>yak-guk</i>	약국	Pharmacy
<i>gyeong-chal-seo</i>	경찰서	Police station
<i>uche-guk</i>	우체국	Post Office
<i>shik-dang</i>	식당	Restaurant
<i>sa-u-na</i>	사우나	Sauna
<i>syu-peo-ma-ket</i>	슈퍼마켓	Supermarket
<i>annyeong-haseyo</i> (casual)	안녕하세요	Hello
<i>annyeong-hashimnikka</i> (formal)	안녕하십니까	
<i>jalgayo</i> (casual)	잘 가요	Goodbye
<i>annyeonghi-gyeseyo</i> (when leaving)	안녕히 계세요	
<i>annyeonghi-gaseyo</i> (when someone else is leaving)	안녕히 가세요	
<i>gomap-seumnida</i>	고맙습니다	Thank-you
<i>kamsa-hamnida</i>	감사합니다	

Other things

<i>Makoli</i>	막걸리	fermented rice wine
<i>Soju</i>	소주	rice vodka
<i>Maekju</i>	맥주	beer
<i>Mul</i>	물	water
<i>Dambae</i>	담배	cigarettes
<i>hyu-ji</i>	휴지	Toilet paper
<i>gae-san</i>	계산	The bill



A National Trail of Korea

JIRISAN DULLE-GIL

English Edition







Namwon-si 남원시



Namwon-si is a small city in the province of Jeollabuk-do. With a size of 752.21 km² and 23 districts, it has a population of about 74,000 residents. It is located on the northwestern part of the Jirisan Mountain area and on the western side of the Baekdu-daegan. The Jirisan Dulle-gil passes through the area of Namwon, but not the city. If you wish to start the Dulle-gil at section one, then Namwon-si is likely where you will travel to get to Jucheon-myeon on section one. However, there are plenty of things to do in Namwon should you decide to stay a little longer before commencing. You can see more at their homepage at www.namwon.go.kr/en or pick up a travel brochure at the bus terminal or train station.



Gwanghalluwon Garden is a traditional Korean garden from the Joseon Dynasty, famously depicted as the backdrop in the love story of Chunhyang, which involves the romance of the son of a noblemen, the daughter of a kisaeng and a cruel and corrupt government official. In the past, these type of royal gardens were designed with the intention of harmonizing nature with the abode of immortals.



Man-in Cemetery of Righteous

Fighters is an impressive well kept site where the remains of 10,000 souls are laid to rest. In July 1597, in the second invasion of Korea by the Japanese, a fierce battle took place in Namwon between more than 50,000 Japanese troops and an assembled Korean militia of 1000 government officials, 3000 soldiers from Ming China, and 6,000 local residents, who attempted to take back Namwon

fortress. The battle raged for four days until all the fighters in the militia army perished. After the battle, their remains were all buried in one tomb. The tomb was originally near the old Namwon train station, but due to residential development, in 1964, the remains were moved to the current location. On your hike, the Jirisan Dulle-gil will pass through many battle sites with the Japanese. It is an impressive ground and you can tell that the people of this region still owe great reverence to the human sacrifices the 10,000 souls made. There is a new museum being built on the grounds that will be open by 2025.



Gyoryong Mountain Fortress is the feature mountain behind Namwon city. Its mountain fortress is believed to have been constructed during

the Baekje era (18BC-660AD). The stone fortress has a circumference of 3,120m and was used as a battle station by various Korean Kingdoms for many centuries against the Japanese and other forces.



Chunhyang Theme Park Located on the southern side of the Yocheon (stream) that runs through Namwon, is a large tourist complex with monorail, park walks, quality restaurants, art museums and cafes.

Baekdu-daegan Ecological Education Exhibition Center The Baekdu-daegan is the 1700km spine that forms the backbone of the Korean peninsula. The Jirisan Dulle-gil will passover the Baekdu-daegan in section one. If you have a chance, you can stop by and visit it during business hours on your walk. It may be closed on a Monday. The center is used to educate its visitors of the history, ecology, and conservation of the Baekdu-daegan mountain range. Inside, visitors can learn, see, and experience everything about the Baekdu-daegan. You will be surprised by how many museums there are in Korea.





Namwon International Drone Festival is a new dynamic event for Namwon-si. The festival showcases the city's unique infrastructure, including Korea's only LX Drone Utilization Center, a dedicated drone leisure sports stadium, a drone and UAM cultural experience hall, and a drone control center. Utilizing these facilities, the festival focuses on the research of future aerial mobility and leads in new sectors of aerial leisure, drone sports, gaming, and tourism. Families can enjoy and participate in the world's most prestigious drone racing competitions and other drone leisure sports, along with conferences and expos on drone and UAM industries, offering a chance to explore advancements in future mobility.

Food Dish of Namwon is Chueotang (Mudfish Soup) Chueotang is the traditional dish for Namwon. It is made from pond loaches (small mudfish) which are boiled in water until very tender, and sieved to remove bones and skins.



The flesh along with beef or chicken broth is then boiled again and seasoned with gochujang (chili paste), doenjang (soybean paste), grated ginger, and ground black pepper. It comes served with rice and a few side dishes. There are over 40 such restaurants in Namwon that serve Chueotang.



SECTION 1

Jucheon-myeon ~ Unbong-eup (15km 6hr)

Jucheon-myeon is the start of section one of the official twenty-one sections that make up the Jirisan Dulle-gil. From the Dulle-gil center it is well signposted, heading north through the village and joining a road before turning east as it ascends up to a 500m plus ridge that is lined with native pine forest. To its south, it passes above the lush Guryong waterfalls valley which can also be used as a way to the Dulle-gil. Some 7kms from Jucheon, the trail will arrive at the village of Hoedeok-maeul 530m a.s.l. (above sea level). You are now on a plateau area. The trail will stay northeast on a small country road to Nochi-maeul, where it slips easily over Korea's Baekdu-daegan, before arcing around a small dam and down to the main road to Unbong. It follows the embankments, passing through Haengjeong-maeul, which has two different groves of red-leaved hornbeam, before arriving 3km later into the heart of the snug farming township of Unbong-eup.



Jucheon-myeon If you forgot anything before arriving at the start point, Jucheon-myeon has enough of everything to get you started again. It has a couple of excellent restaurants, including the popular 지리산취냉면 ice noodle restaurant next to the Dulle-gil center. On the same road are two stores. If you need accommodation, then east up the main road where there is a roundabout, is the Namwon Motel, and next to it the Songlim-sanjang 송림산장 (restaurant) with an excellent menu and rooms upstairs which can be arranged through the coffee shop next door.

Haengjeong-maeul has two distinctive forests. A 200-year old red-leaved hornbeam forest said to help protect the village from ill-will. And on the other side of the road is an old Korean Pine forest.



GURYONGPOKPO is a waterfall inside the national park area. But you can detour to it and get back on the Dulle-gil. Follow the main road #60 east for 500m to the roundabout then take the southeast road up the hill for about a kilometer and you can find the KNPS office and see the map boards to find the trail. There are also several more restaurants and coffee shops up this road. From the trail head, it is about a 3km hike up the Guryong valley to the top car park, where you can join 구룡폭포길 (Guryong road) north for 1km to Heodeok-maeul and meet the Jirisan Dulle-gil again.

At just over 500m absl, **Nochi-maetul** is the only village in Korea where the Baekdu-daegan passes through it. Because the Baekdu-daegan is a watershed, the stream-heads from Nochi go to the Nakdonggang in the east and the Seomjingang in the west. If you divert slightly into the village center you will find a Baekdu-daegan monument under their large Zelkova tree. It proudly displays the main mountain networks of Korea and the major rivers they direct. It also mentions the tragic past of this village during and after the Korean war. Where its residents were accused of collaborating with communist guerrillas, and subsequently removed or executed by Police forces. Nochi-maetul was also located right on the old territorial borders between Baekje Kingdom to the west and Silla Kingdom to the east. This often caused turmoil and conflict for the locals of this area. Remnants of the old fortress walls that separated these Kingdoms are still on the Baekdu-daegan ridge above Nochi-maetul.



Unbong-eup is the main town of this plateau. It has everything you will need. Many restaurants, chicken shacks, marts, pharmacies etc. If you are looking for accommodation there are no motels here. There are a couple of minbaks inside the town



JIRISAN DULLE-GIL



Information

Transport

A KTX bullet train runs from Yongsan in Seoul and stops at Namwon station 2hrs and 10mins later. Refer the Korail website for schedule.

Buses: There are 13 buses running each day between 06.50 and 19.30hrs from Namwon KTX station to Jucheon-myeon. Inter City Buses: You can also get to Namwon on an intercity bus from Seoul, Daegu, Gwangju, Jeonju and Busan. Kakao Taxi Works in this rural area well.

Tenting

On the north side of the town next to the river is Seolim park. Not officially a camping area, you can pitch your tent in that area for a night. There are public toilets nearby and a water tap.

Accommodation

There are a couple of minbaks in the small town of Unbong-eup **동지민박** Dungji Minbak & the **Geumseong Minbak**

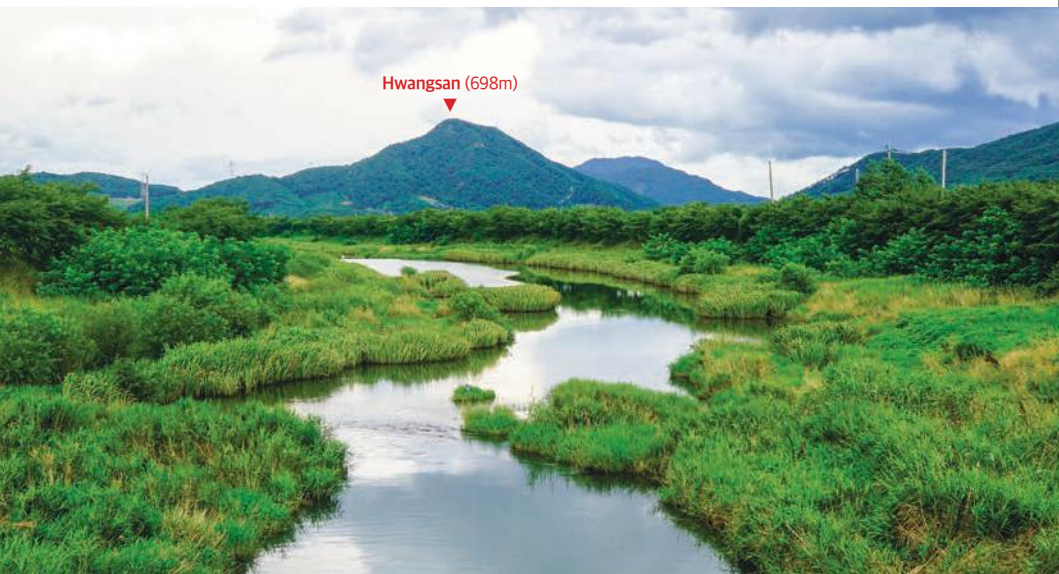


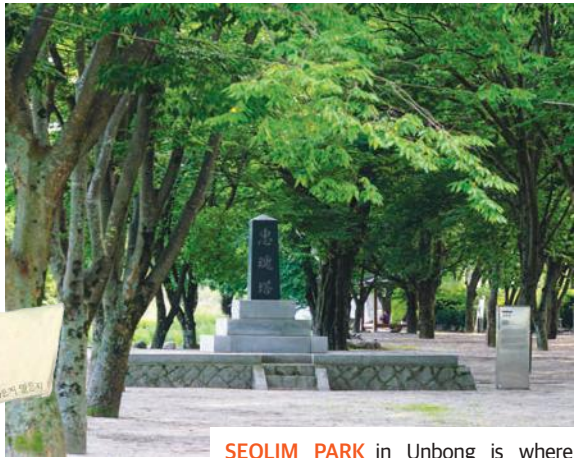


SECTION 2

Unbong-eup ~ Inwol-myeon (10km 4hr)

From Unbong township the Dulle-gil goes to Seolim park and then follows the embankment roads northeast towards Hwangsan 698m. In April the Cherry blossom trees are in full bloom alongside the embankment roads. It is flat walking all the way to the village of Gunhwa-dong at the foot of Hwangsan. You can really see and feel that you are on a small plateau tucked in between the Baekdu-daegan mountain range to the north, Jirisan National Park to the south. At Dongpyeonjae-maeul, you can grab a coffee before heading over the Hwasun battle site just before Gunhwa-dong. From there you cross the #24 road-bridge over the Ramcheon (river) and follow the narrow cement lane east for about 4km as it gently climbs over a range and then starts to descend north for 2kms towards the village of Wolpyeong-ri in front of the township of Inwol-myeon. If you wanted to climb over Hwangsan 698m from the School of Traditional Music, you can find the trail-head from its car park. You can hike directly into Inwol-myeon over the mountain from there. Hwangsan has an important story in Korean history.





SEOLIM PARK in Unbong is where villagers used to hold village rituals under the large Zelkova tree there. The stone Jangsung statues (totems) are from the surrounding Unbong area. The monument inside the park is a memorial to the actions of the locals from this area who were involved in the Donghak Peasant Uprisings around Korea during the late 19th century. If you camp there, do it respectfully and set up later in the evening. The nearby toilet block is large and clean.



Hwangsan Battle Site In the 13th century, Korea was in frequent turmoil from Japanese pirates who would venture inland on their raids. It was from Hwangsan mountain where General Yi Seong-gye launched an assault against one army of pirates. As the moon rose over the mountains, he launched an ambush on the infamous Ajibaldo pirates army, by assassinating him with an arrow shot through his neck on what is now called blood rock. The fight pushed up river to where the main site is now. The Japanese pirates were defeated there.

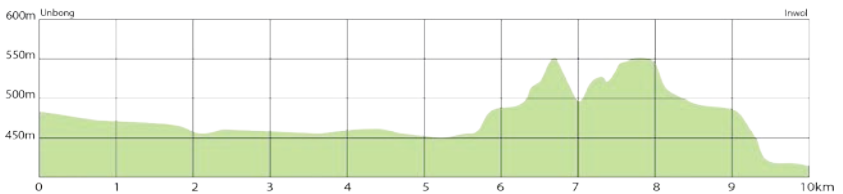


GUKAK SEONG-JI 국악의 성지

The area of Unbong has a long history dating back to the three-Kingdom period. It also has a strong background in traditional Korean music, known as Pansori. It is said that some of Pansori's traditional songs originated from this area. Several famous masters trained and taught here in that period. Therefore the School of Traditional Korean Music Hall was built at the foot of Hwangsan. Pansori is registered as a UNESCO World Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Inwol-myeon is another classic Korean country township. Like Unbong it is something out of the seventies, with good working class vibes and several very good local restaurants. Located between the old Baekje and Silla Kingdoms it has always been a hub for the provinces of Gyeongsang-do and Jeolla-do. There is a vibrant five-day mart in Inwol center. Even if it isn't market day, it will still be a good place to get local foods and meals. Inwol has everything you need for a backpacker. Local marts, convenience stores, pharmacies, motels and minbaks. Inwol-myeon is a good place to get a room, get a hot shower, get a hot meal, and take a rest for the night. There are at least five motels in town.

The Inwol Jirisan Dulle-gil Center is located on the eastern side of the township on the other side of the river.



Information



Transport

Inter City Buses: There are inter-city buses from Inwol terminal to Seoul, Daegu and Busan. Buses also run between Inwol and Namwon every 40mins from 06:00 - 20:00. The ride is 45min.

Accommodation

Motel Maru 모텔마루 & Jirisan Motel and Sauna
Both located near each other on the east side of the bus terminal near the roundabout.



SECTION 3

Inwol-myeon ~ Geumgye-maeul (21km 8hr)

From Inwol-myeon, the Dulle-gil goes back to Wolpyeong-ri and follows the river for 2kms to the entrance of Jungun-maeul. From here it is about a 5km walk on a mixture of road and trail over 600m high hills until you arrive at Janghang-maeul, where you can grab a snack or coffee. From here you cross the road and walk up into the village area, where the Dulle-gil will take you on a pleasant mixture of forest and village for the next 7kms to Dungguchi (pass). Just before the pass and with great views is a restaurant with excellent meals and rooms. From Dungguchi the Dulle-gil passes on imdos (forestry roads) and village roads as it descends through charming mountain villages to Geumgye-maeul. It is a long hilly section, but it has some outstanding views of the Jirisan range to your south.



Dungguryeong Swimteo A well known stopover for local hikers of the Dulle-gil, it has a healthy mountain menu of vegetable dishes, mushrooms, pancakes (pajeon), noodles and beverages. It also has rooms available if you feel like staying. But try to call ahead for a reservation as there's always a chance they might not be open - as is the case with all country accommodations - 010-8533-3145



SILSANGSA TEMPLE Not located on the Dulle-gil, but if you walk for about 1.5km along the #60, passing Sannaemyeon, to Baekil-maeul you will see the temple entrance between the shops and restaurant. After the temple you can rejoin the Dulle-gil by walking north for a couple of kms, up through the interesting mountain villages, to Sanghwang-maeul, near Dungguchi.



SACRED TREE As you enter the village of Janghyang, you are not able to miss seeing the large animated Korean Pine Tree. This is the village's Dangsan-namu (spirit-tree).

The Unbong basin area that you passed through before this has a legend that Unbong was once a lake caused by a great flood. And that various peaks that surround the area were used as ports for boats.

Baenomijae at almost 600m a.s.l. was supposedly one of those places.

Geumgye-maeul is a village area with homes reaching up the valleys from the Eomcheon river. In the car park is a Dulle-gil center and a couple of good local restaurants. There is also a shower in the toilet block. The shower keys should be collected from one of the two restaurants located in the car park. In the far corner of the car park is a large tree with wooden deck under it. You can camp there. There is no real store in Geumgye. About 2km west down the #60 you can find a CU in Macheon-myeon. Refer Map.





SECTION 4

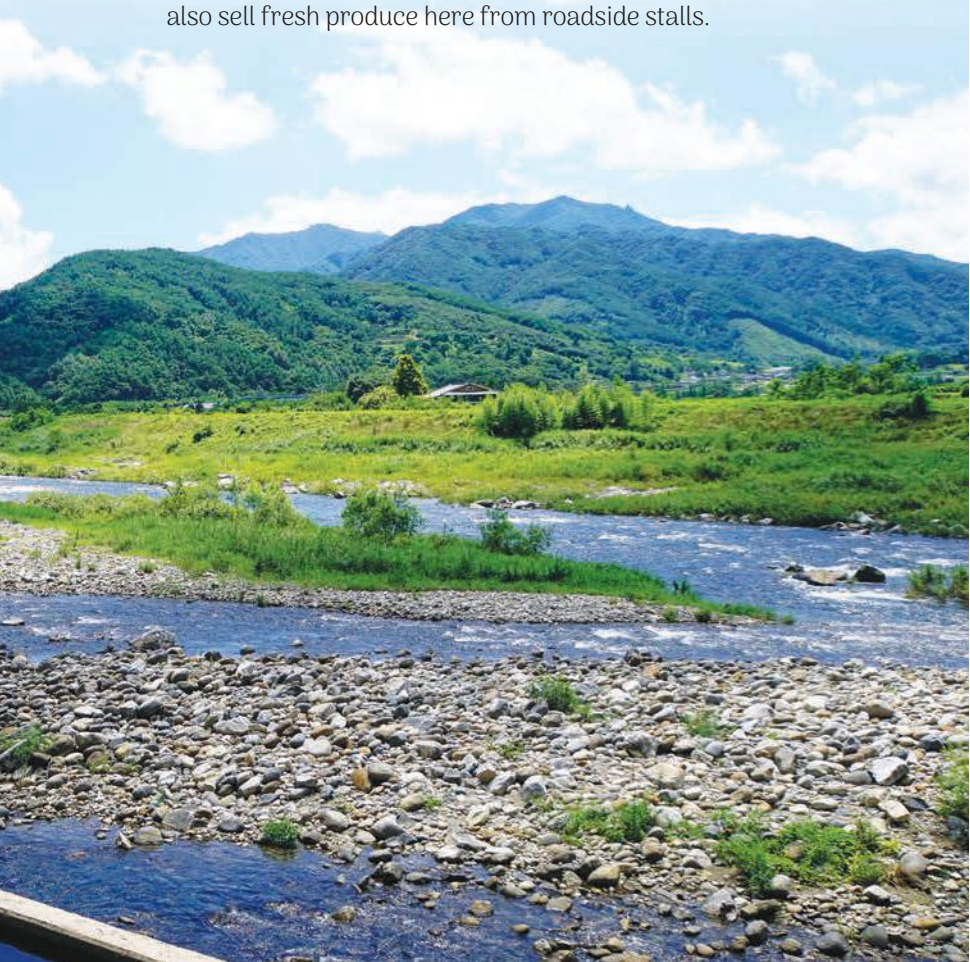
Geumgye ~ Donggang via Byeoksongsa Temple (11km 4hr or 20.5km 8hr)

From Geumgye-maeul you cross the road, following the signposts and walk up into the village of Uijung-maeul. This village and area once had a strong reputation for producing fine lacquer ware made from trees. Inside the village, the trail passes its large 600-year old Dangsan (spirit) tree, where village rites are held annually. From here you can take a 3km route east that will take you on a forest trail all the way to Yonggyu dam, next to the Eomcheon (river). Or you can take the chance to see two impressive Buddhist temple sites by following the Dulle-gil south for about 2km on a gently ascending forest trail. After Byeoksongsa, the trail stays in Jirisan forest and



Eomcheon River

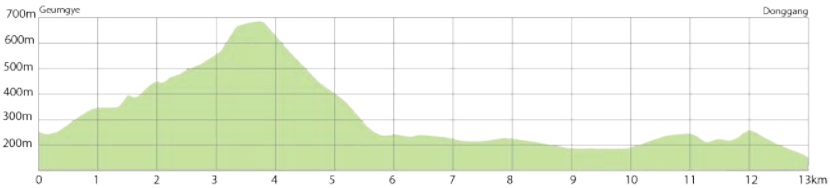
rises over a brow and starts its descent to Yongyu dam. From Yongyu dam the Dulle-gil becomes a village road that meanders alongside the impressive Eomcheon for about 3km before skirting over a hill on a thinner road for another 3km to the village area of Unseo-maeul. The Dulle-gil turns north and makes its way for 1km back to the river at Donggang-maeul. There you will see an old-school style fresh fish restaurant which also has a small store. Across the bridge are some good coffee shops, and a couple of restaurants. In season, locals will also sell fresh produce here from roadside stalls.



JIRISAN DULLE-GIL

GEUMGYE 13KM 5HR DONGGANG

Geumgye-maeul 2km to Segamjeongsa
 1km to Byeoksongsas 3km to Yongyu dam
 2.5km to Songjeong-maeul 3km to Unseo-maeul 1.5km to
 Donggang-maeul



Information



Transport

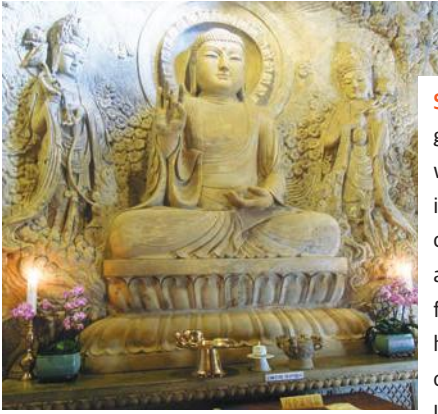
Local Buses will run on the #60 between Inwol and Hamyang.

Food

The nearest next town for a shop is Yurim-myeon 유림면. About 2km north on the #60. It has all the stores and restaurants you need.

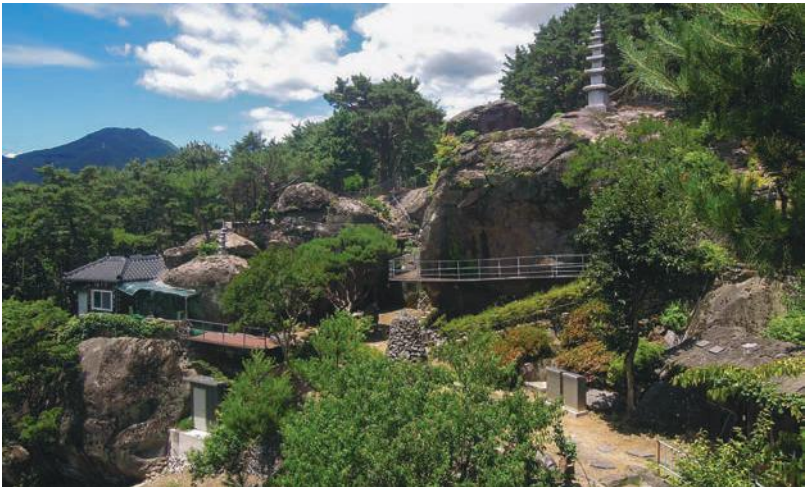
Accommodation

Motel Maru 모텔마루 & Jirisan Motel and Sauna
 Both located near each other on the east side of the bus terminal near the roundabout.



SEOMJEONGSA is a not-so-old Buddhist grotto located inside well kept grounds, with a main prayer hall. The site was built in 1989 by Wonjeong-sunim (monk). He claimed that as he was wandering in the area he could hear the wails of dead spirits from the Korean War. This area of Jirisan has some particular dark history. Now officially a temple, the site has very taoist like gardens, and the mountain spirit shrine up top at the back has marvelous views of Cheonwangbong 1915m in Jirisan. A spectacular site.

Byeoksongsa (not pictured) was originally a hermitage built in the 15th century by Master Byeoksong. It is now a highly recognized Zen monastery of this region. In the past several Master Monks practiced Zen here. At one time in its existence, it was the largest Buddhist temple in the Joseon dynasty for at least 300 years. During the Korean War, the temple was used as a field hospital by the North Korean Peoples Army. One night, it was attacked and burnt to the ground by Korean soldiers, claiming the lives of several patients, they say. Human bones have known to be found in the temple area.

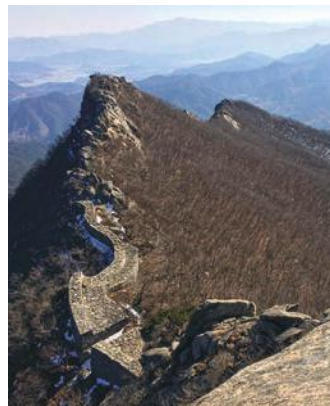


Hamyang-gun 함양군

Hamyang-gun is located in the northeastern area of Jirisan in the province of Gyeongsangnam-do. It has ten districts (myeon) and one township (eup) and covers an area of 725.03 km². Hamyang county brand themselves as Green Mountains Clear Water. About 40,000 residents live in Hamyang-gun. It is predominantly a food production area with a strong domestic tourism industry, and is another gateway to Cheonwangbong 1915m in Jirisan national park via Baekmudong in Macheon-myeon near the Dulle-gil. Like all the Jirisan regions, it produces fine health foods, with Ginseng being the most popular from this region. Throughout the year, Hamyang-gun will host a variety of festivals, including a wild Ginseng festival, the Cheollyeong culture festival, a Cheonwang festival related to Jiri Mountain and the Yeonam culture festival. Hamyang-eup is the capital of Hamyang county and the Jirisan Dulle-gil does not pass directly through the town. To get there you should follow the road north from Donggang-maetul to Yurim-myeon and take a bus or a 20 min taxi ride to Hamyang-eup from there. Hamyang town is another pleasant township with a tranquil Jirisan feel to it. It has everything you need for a recovery day. Shops, restaurants, several motels, saunas and an Inter-City bus terminal. Hamyang-eup is just another reason to experience the counties of the Jirisan Dulle-gil and the Jirisan region. They have an English page at www.hygn.go.kr/english.web

Scenic Views of Hamyang-gun 함양군

Hwangseok Mountain Fortress is located on the western boundary of Hamyang county in Anui-myeon. Surrounded by mountain ridge, Anui-myeon offers a long horse shoe shaped hiking trail that includes the Hwangseoksan 1190m mountain fortress. Mountain fortresses once prevailed all over Korea and were used for defense against



foreign invaders and other Kingdoms in times of conflict. They often included stone fire signal towers.



Doegyusan National Park lies on the Baekdu-daegan ridge with its southeastern section bordering into Seosang-myeon in Hamyang-gun. Doegyusan is a superb 1N/2D ridge hike which you can start at the lesser used Yukshipryeong (pass), climbing the hardy Baekdu-daegan over the horns of Namdoegyusan 1507m and staying at the Satgat shelter, or taking a trail down. Often overlooked, Doegyusan offers as good a hiking as Jirisan.



Jianjae & Odojae & Jeilmun-gate are S-shaped windy road passes that make there ways up to the Jeilmun Gate. The route was selected as one of the '100 Beautiful Roads' by the Ministry of Construction and Transportation. You can get long views of the Jirisan area as well as enjoy good snacks and an opportunity to buy some herbs or spices from the vendors at the pass.



Sanglim Park is one of Korea's oldest man-made forests. Curated by Choi Chi-won (857AD), another well known scholar, it was made to stop flooding of the Wicheon river that passed through the town. Now this superb facility acts as a recreational forest and park for the residents of Hamyang and has flora that suits all the four seasons of Korea. Covering an area of

21 hectares, it has as much as 20,000 trees of over 120 different types. It is a popular place for the locals to get shade and coolness in the hot summer months. The entrance area has good quality restaurants and the larger grounds are part of the Herb Center. Nice park.



Yongchu Valley is a popular recreational location for locals. Located in Anui-myeon, northeast of Hamyang township, the long north-south valley is full of great waterfalls and is flanked on both sides by good ridges with good trails. When the valleys are full of monsoon rains, Yongchu waterfall is the most popular to see. Legend has it, that a hornless dragon used to live in its pond, and that for it to



become a full dragon it had to pray and fast for 108 days (a Buddhist number), but the dragon lost count, and on the 107th day it flew up into the heavens to accept its new form, but instead was struck down by thunder and lightning where it fell into a pond and was no longer seen again. The locals reported that the water from that pond produced large harvests for three years.

Hamyang Herb Exhibition Center is located in the same area as Sanglim park. The exhibition halls are where you can learn about the origin of wild ginseng and other herbs and spices of this region. Hamyang is very well regarded for its wood cultivated wild Ginseng. The seeds of the wild ginseng are planted in a Mountain forest at 700 to 800m a.s.l. In the herb exhibition center you can get the opportunity to observe all the different kind of herbs in this area and how they are used and stored in regards to medicine, food, and living materials.



Standing stone Buddha in Macheonmyeon is probably closer to the Dulle-gil than Hamyang-eup, but it is a good example of the many hidden gems there are in the hills and rills of Korea. Presumed to date from the Goryeo era (10th century) it stands 6 meters high and despite what they say about its disproportionate feet and hands, it is a fine work of Buddhist art.



SECTION 5

Donggang-maeul ~ Sucheol-maeul (12km 5hr)

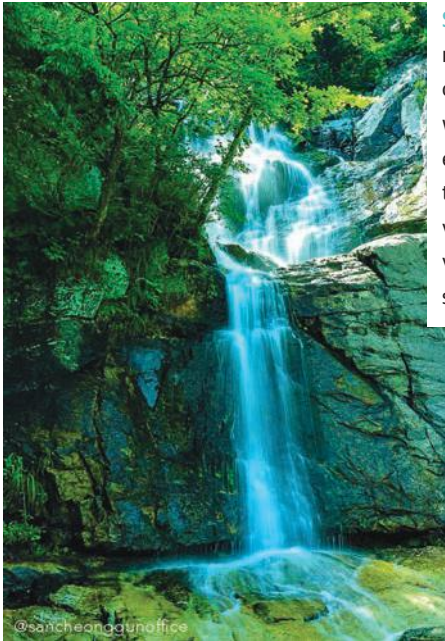
From the fish restaurant at Donggang-maeul you follow the signs on a narrow flat road for about 1km alongside the beautiful Eomcheon, before it turns south on a road and climbs gently for about 1.5km and arrives at the entrance to the Chumo-Gongwon, a national cemetery for victims of 1950-53 Korean War massacres. In this area there are pensions and coffee shops. From here it cuts around the top of the dam and climbs onto rough imdo (forestry tracks) for about 4kms to just under 600 a.s.l., where the fire-lookout is. Follow the Dulle-gil for about 1.5km more on good bush trail where it arrives at Godongjae. From here wind down on easy imdo for about 4km until you arrive at Sucheol-myeon. Take a break, and then wander for about 4km on flat village roads into Sancheong-eup, a cool town located beautifully on a bend of the Gyeonghogang in the middle of the mountains.



National Cemetery for victims of the Sancheong & Hamyang Incident

During the Korean Civil War (1951-53) there was a lot of confusion about who the enemy was. On February 7th, 1951, the 3rd Battalion of the 9th Regiment of the 11th Division of the ROK Army carried out the “Gyeonbyeok Cheongya” operation

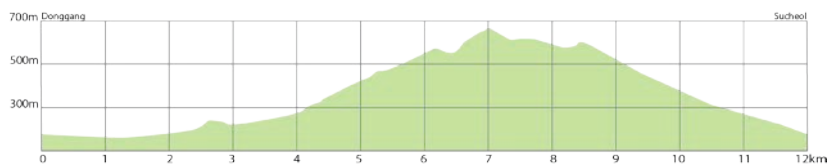
to suppress guerrillas in Jirisan Mountain. In nearby villages they massacred 705 innocent civilians, mostly women and children. The construction of the joint cemetery began on December 13, 2001, and was completed after four years of construction. A place to reflect on the precious values of social justice and human rights. Definitely worth a visit.



SANGSA FALLS According to legend, a man and a woman from the nearby village of Ssangjae, although fond of each other, were unable to convey their feelings to each other. Love sickness caused the man to die on a rock at Sangsa waterfall. The village girl, when hearing of his death, visited the waterfall and turned into a snake.



SUCHEOL-MAEUL was originally called Museokjeom because there was an iron caster here where pots and farm tools were made. There is a legend that the Gaya Kingdom (AD 42-523) was the last to cast iron in this region.



Information



Transport

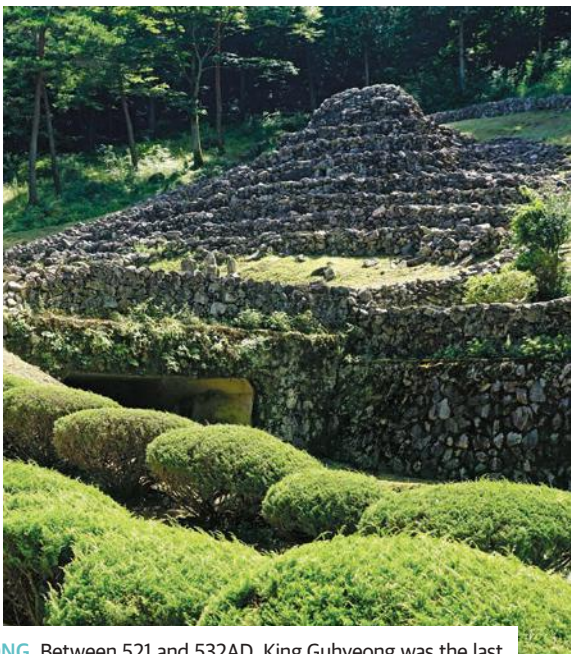
About 7 buses a day arrive from Sancheong-eup. Only a 10-min bus ride. Kakao Taxi will work in this area.

Accommodation

Using your Naver or Kakao Map Apps you may see a pension or two in the Sucheol-maeul area, but if you are looking for a room, then continue into Sancheong-eup where there are more options including motels.



GODONGJAE is a pass on a forestry road that connects Sucheol-maeul and Banggok-maeul. During the Gaya Kingdom, King Guhyeong and his troops came to this pass to access Wangsan. The royal tomb of King Guhyeong is located on the north side of Wangsan.



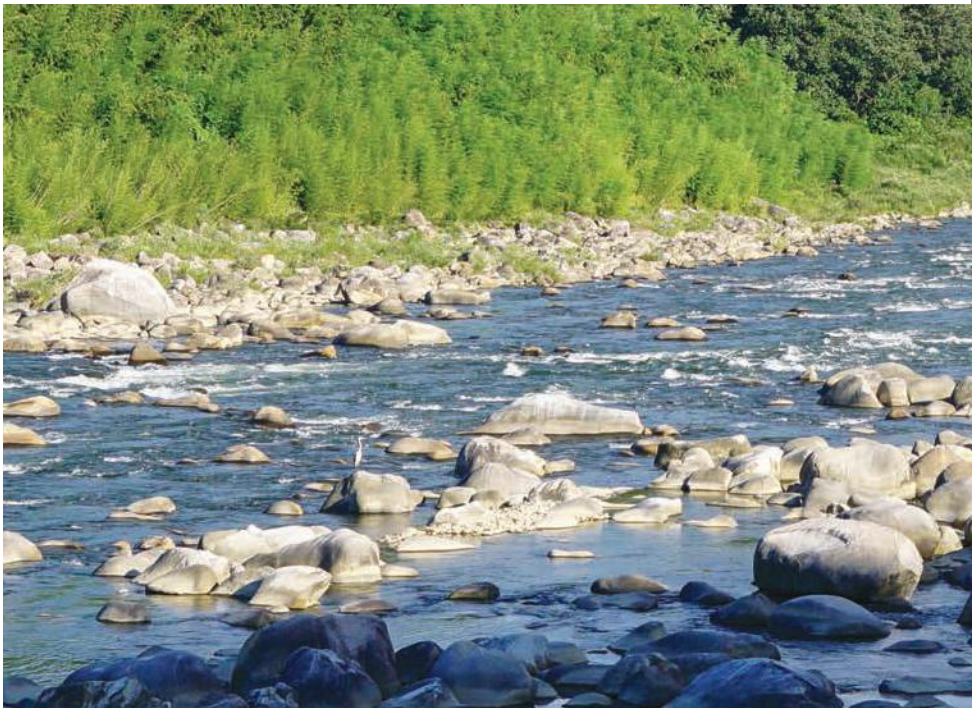
TOMB OF KING GUHYEONG Between 521 and 532AD, King Guhyeong was the last ruling King of the Gaya Kingdom. He surrendered to King Beopheung of Silla to the east, but his Kingdom was granted clemency for this act and lived to merge with Silla. The record describing the name of the King buried in this tomb was found in a book of travels called Wangsan Shimreunggi written by a Joseon dynasty scholar. In addition, there's also an entry in a book on the history of Wangsansa (a temple located west of the tomb) that the person buried in the tomb is King Guhyeong. Although not located on the Dulle-gil, it is a very interesting piece of local history for Jiri Mountain.



SECTION 6

Sucheol-maeul ~ Seongsimwon (12km 4hr)

From Sucheol-maeul it is an easy 4.5kms into the town of Sancheong. You'll pass along the back of an industrial area before walking under the #35 expressway at the Gyeongho river. The Dulle-gil takes you onto the other side of the river where the town is via a vehicle bridge, and then it loops around the western side of the town between the river. You will see in this area, several river rafting operators. It is likely okay to pitch your tent somewhere in this area. From here, the Dulle-gil follows the river out of town on a concrete lane, switching back to the other side. At that point the Dulle-gil splits. You can follow the flatter river option or go into the village of Jiseong-maeul, where for the next 5km, the signposted Dulle-gil will take you up past the Naeri dam and on a pleasant forest trail before elbowing back down to Baramjae, where it joins the river course for the next 3km to Seongsimwon.

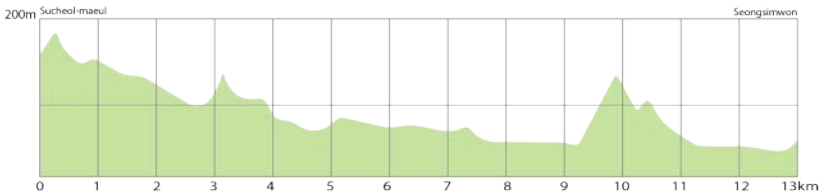


Rafting on the Gyeonghogang You may have noticed so far that the rivers and streams around Jirisan are plentiful. The 32km Gyeonghogang was named because the “water is as clear as a mirror.”



From Sancheong-eup it continues south to Jinju-si and into the Jinyang dam. There are countless pieces of classical literature written about the beauty and feelings this river gave the writers and artists at that time. These days you can see locals fishing on the river banks and in the summer season when the water is higher and warmer, they head to its pools for a swim. Visitors to Sancheong-eup also enjoy the opportunity to whitewater raft it. The operators can be found right on the Dulle-gil as per the map.





Information



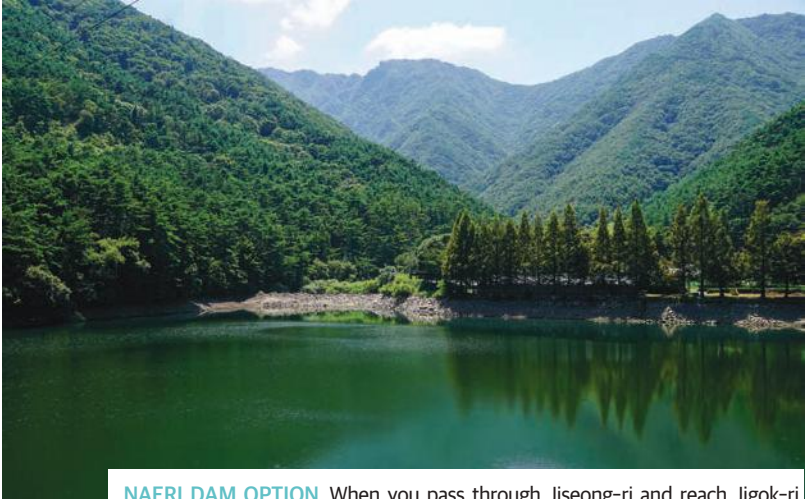
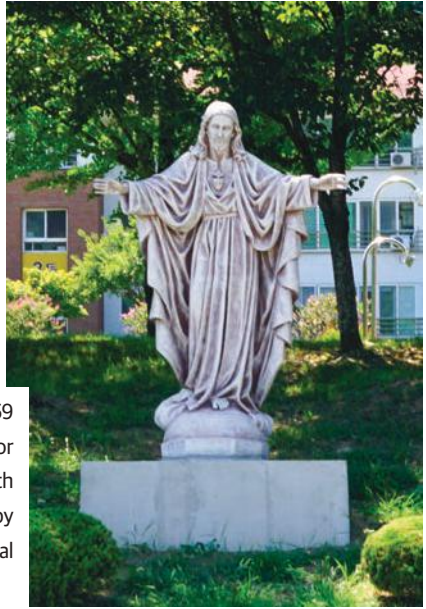
Transport

Intercity buses run from the terminal in Sancheong-eup to Jinju, Seoul, Daejeon and the West Terminal in Busan. Taxis will operate easily from the downtown or at ranks and Kakao Taxi will operate in the villages.

Accommodation

There are no obvious 4 or 5 star hotels in Sancheong-eup, but a search on your app will reveal motels, pensions and guesthouses that you can check out. Tenting in the park where the rafting operators are shouldn't be a problem. Just set up in the evening, so you're not in anyone's way. Public Toilets are there.

SEONGSIMWON Was founded in 1959 by members of the Order of Friars Minor (Catholicism) to help heal people with Leprosy. These days its facilities are used by the Korean Medical Service for the special care of severely disabled patients.



NAERI DAM OPTION When you pass through Jiseong-ri and reach Jigok-ri, you will see the Naeri dam nestled in the Jigok valley with the Ungseokbong ranges behind it. If you stay on the road you can get to Jigoksa temple. Founded by Monk Eungjin during the Unified Silla Dynasty - later on, in the Goryeo Dynasty, it was one of the five great Zen temples with over 300 monks. You can get back to the Dulle-gil by leaving the temple where it joins it on a scenic forest pathway. At the elbow where it turns back towards Baramjae, there is a trail to Ungseokbong 1099m.

Sancheong-gun 산청군

Sancheong county is located on the east side of Jirisan Mountain, in the province of Gyeongsangnam-do. There is evidence of settlement in Sancheong area from the Neolithic period. And there are also remnants of polished stoneware and earthenware from the Bronze age, as well as dolmens (stone coffins). Before it became part of the Unified Silla Kingdom (5th-9th century) it was part of the smaller Gaya Kingdom that was once prominent in the Jirisan area. Sancheong-gun is 794.59 km² in size with a population of about 34,000 residents. It has ten districts (myeon 면) and a township (eup 읍) called Sancheong-eup. The town of Sancheong is beautifully set in the big green mountains on the eastern side of Jirisan. A decent river, the Gyeonghogang runs through the town, offering activities like river rafting, fishing, and recreational walking and picnicking. Sancheong is a popular destination for domestic tourism in Korea and like a lot of country towns, it holds a variety of festivals throughout the four seasons of Korea. Its main attractions are traditional medicines, river rafting, and it serves as a gateway for hikers going to the eastern parts of Jirisan National Park, including the Jirisan Dulle-gil. Sancheong-eup is serviced by Inter-City buses from major centers in Korea. The #35 National Expressway links Sancheong-eup with Jinju city in the south, and cuts through central Korea, linking up with Seoul city in the north. More information in English can be found on their homepage at www.sancheong.go.kr/eng or stop at a visitor information center.

Nine Scenic Views of Sancheong 산청군

Donguibogam Village 동의보감촌 Sancheong is the origin of traditional Medicine. In the late Joseon period (17-19th century), the influence of famous practitioners from this area extended to China. One reason why this area is famous for oriental medicine is because of the quality of the mountain herbs. So, Sancheong-gun has built the Sancheong Oriental Medicine Museum and every September it has a Medical Herb Festival with the museum. This image has helped make Sancheong an internationally recognized mecca for medicinal herbs and oriental medicine.

Sunrise from Cheonwangbong 1915m Jirisan National Park



Daewonsa Temple 대원사 is a Zen Meditation temple for Buddhist nuns (Bhikkhuni). Built in the 6th century by the Indian monk Yeongi-josa, it is nestled in Daewon valley in a stand of tall native Korean pines called Geumgang underneath the Baekdu-daegan ridge of Jirisan National Park. These old pines only grow in mountainous areas and were once used as standing beams in the royal palaces and temple halls.

Royal Azaleas of Hwangmaesan Mountain (황매산 철쭉) Each May, hundreds of thousands of square meters of fields in Hwangmaesan 1113m bloom crimson with royal azaleas. Recognized as one of the best scenes for this type of seasonal event, in all of Korea.

Namsa Yedam Village 남사에담촌 has impressive traditional homes that are hundreds of years old. The village was constructed many centuries ago in harmony with the values of Korean



Pungsu-jiri (Geomancy). With high stone walls and fruit trees, the village has produced several distinctive people. The Confucian hall in the center makes it easy to feel how it once must have been like to live as a nobleman.

Gyeonghogang 경호강 비경 In the summer monsoon season the wide and bouldery 32km river runs swiftly through Sancheong. This allows river rafting operators to conduct white water rafting experiences.

Royal Tomb of King Guhyeong 구형왕릉 At the foot of the Wangsan there is the Royal Tomb of the last King of the Gaya Kingdom. Made with seven pyramid layers it is the only stone mound tomb in Korea. The grounds of the royal tomb bring more mystery. Overgrowth, moss or autumn leaves have never formed on the tomb. And it is said that no crows or sparrows fly over the tomb.



Historic Site of Jo Sik 남명조식유적지 Master Nammyeong Jo Sik was recognized as one of Korea's great scholars. A representative scholar of the Gyeongsangnam-do province, he was offered several official positions in government, but instead criticized the system, declining any offers from the Joseon King at the time. In 1561 he moved to Sicheon-myeon and began educating young people on how to make reformation plans for the betterment of society. During the Japanese invasions of Korea, his students actively resisted their incursions. Several of his students became well known scholars later in their careers.

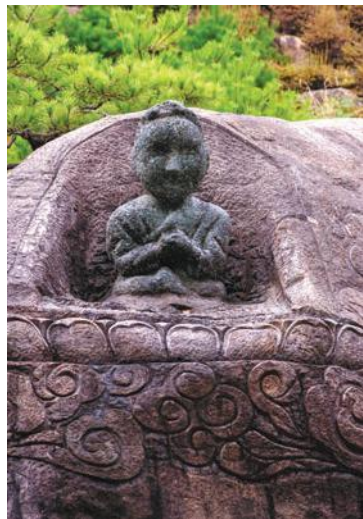


Jeongchwiam View Point 정취암 조망 They say that the scenery of Daeseongsan 593m from Jeongchwiam Hermitage is as magnificent as the Sogeuimgang Valley, which is located in Gangwon-do province in northeast Korea. Jeongchwiam was constructed by the Venerable Monk Uisang-daesa in 658AD. According to a hermitage legend, the Amita-bul (The Buddha of the Western Paradise) rose from the East Sea and shone two rays of light onto Korea. Uisang-daesa followed both

rays of light and created Wontongam Hermitage in the mighty Kumgangsan (North Korea), and built Jeongchwiam here on Mt. Daeseongsan in the mighty Sancheong-gun.

Jirisan's Cheonwangbong 지리산 천왕봉 in 1967, Jirisan was designated Korea's first National Park. Covering 471.75 km² it has numerous peaks over 1500m. Its main ridge is part of Korea's Baekdu-daegan spine. Cheonwangbong at 1915m is seen as the end or start point of Korea's Baekdu-daegan and is also the highest feature on mainland Korea. Climbing Cheonwangbong to witness the sunrise is seen as one of Korea's top ten bucket lists for a Korean. It is a sight to behold if you get a chance. Access to Cheonwangbong can be done via Jungsan-ri or Baekmu-dong.

Authors Pick if you decided to go to Cheonwangbong, via Jungsan-ri, then there is a couple of things worth seeing before that. In the southern end of the car park is the Jirisan Partisan Museum 지리산빨치산토벌전시관. An old museum, it houses the history of the Partisan Movement during the Korean War. Not far from that on a separate road is Cheonwangsa Temple. On the temple grounds is a stone statue of Korea's Mago halmi. She is considered the Holy Mother of Korea and the ancestor of Korean Folk culture. A long long time ago when Tigers smoked long pipes, she sent her home-schooled eight daughters to the eight provinces of Korea to begin the spread of Korean culture and thinking. The mottled blue-green stone statue of her was said to have once been on the peak of Cheonwangbong. It was cast off the peak, and a Buddhist monk searched for it, finding it broken into pieces, he repaired it and put it here at the temple. Even more mysterious, is that the statue is said to be made of matter not of this earth. Like some items in the Egyptian pyramids, it is made from meteorite rock. Korea is an old land with a lot of oral history.

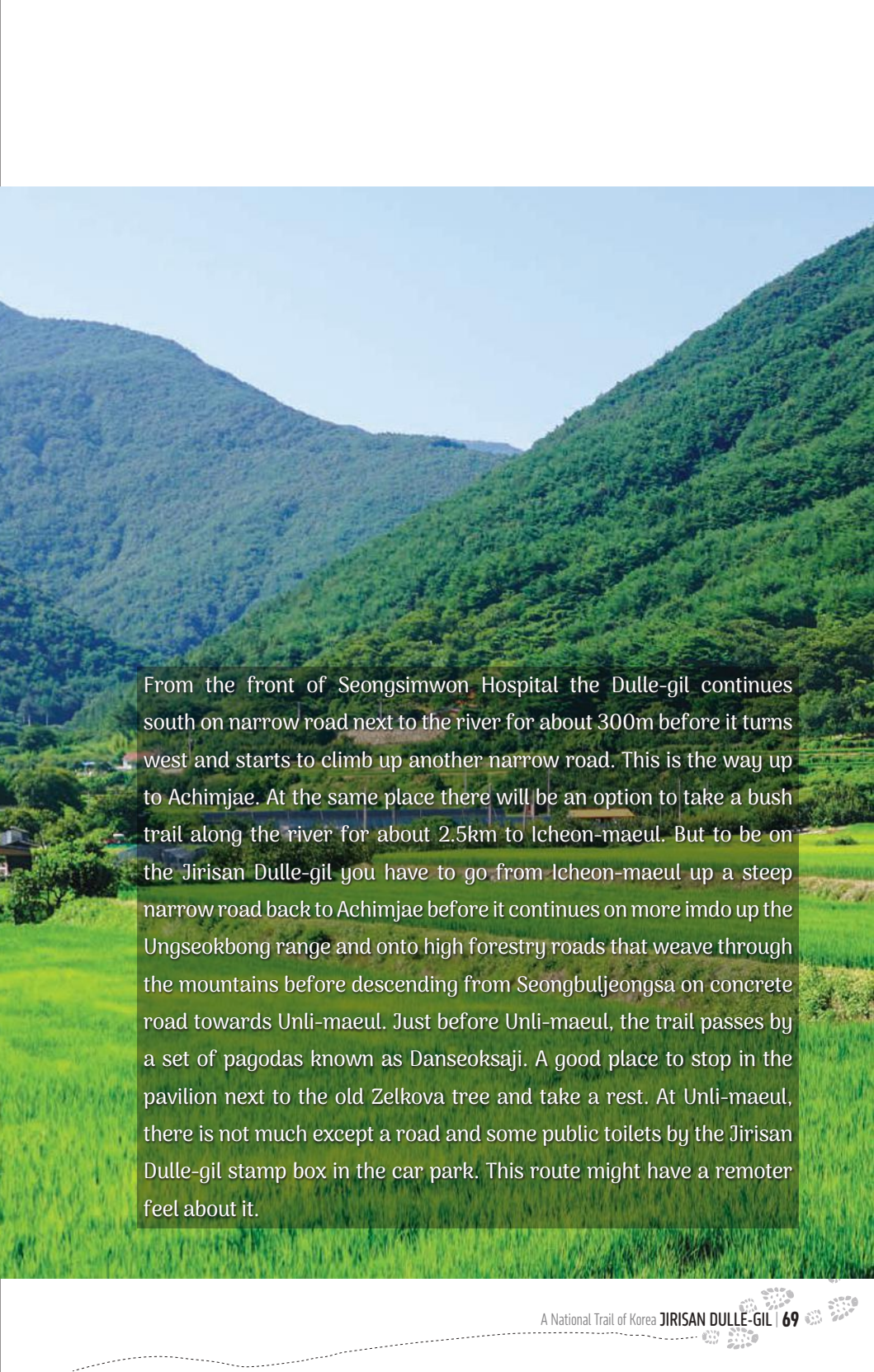




SECTION 7

Seongsimwon ~ Unli-Maeul (13.5km 5hr)





From the front of Seongsimwon Hospital the Dulle-gil continues south on narrow road next to the river for about 300m before it turns west and starts to climb up another narrow road. This is the way up to Achimjae. At the same place there will be an option to take a bush trail along the river for about 2.5km to Icheon-maeul. But to be on the Jirisan Dulle-gil you have to go from Icheon-maeul up a steep narrow road back to Achimjae before it continues on more imdo up the Ungseokbong range and onto high forestry roads that weave through the mountains before descending from Seongbuljeongsa on concrete road towards Unli-maeul. Just before Unli-maeul, the trail passes by a set of pagodas known as Danseoksaji. A good place to stop in the pavilion next to the old Zelkova tree and take a rest. At Unli-maeul, there is not much except a road and some public toilets by the Jirisan Dulle-gil stamp box in the car park. This route might have a remoter feel about it.



DANSEOKSAJI was once the site of Danseoksa temple. Saji, means an old Buddhist ruin. Danseok means to be a Buddhist monk leading a secular life. The temple before that had been called Geumgyesa, named after the valley it sits in and was said to be a great place of study for as many as 300 monks. And that it became so popular from visitors and the monks could never practice silently. So they changed the name to Danseoksa, and laymen visitors stopped going there so the monks could meditate. But by the mid Joseon Dynasty (13th to 20th century) the temple dissolved due to a lack of activity. The two pagodas at the site are all that remains, and are said to have been built in the 9th century of the late Silla Dynasty. The site was officially excavated in 1999.



UNLI-MAEUL It is said that 46 people from an old village worked together to build a school in memory of Master Zhu Xi of the Song Dynasty. The village was named Unli, and its valley was named Geumgye Valley, because it supposedly resembled the Wui Valley in China. Behind the village, there is a silk-like stream that flows from Oknyeobong.

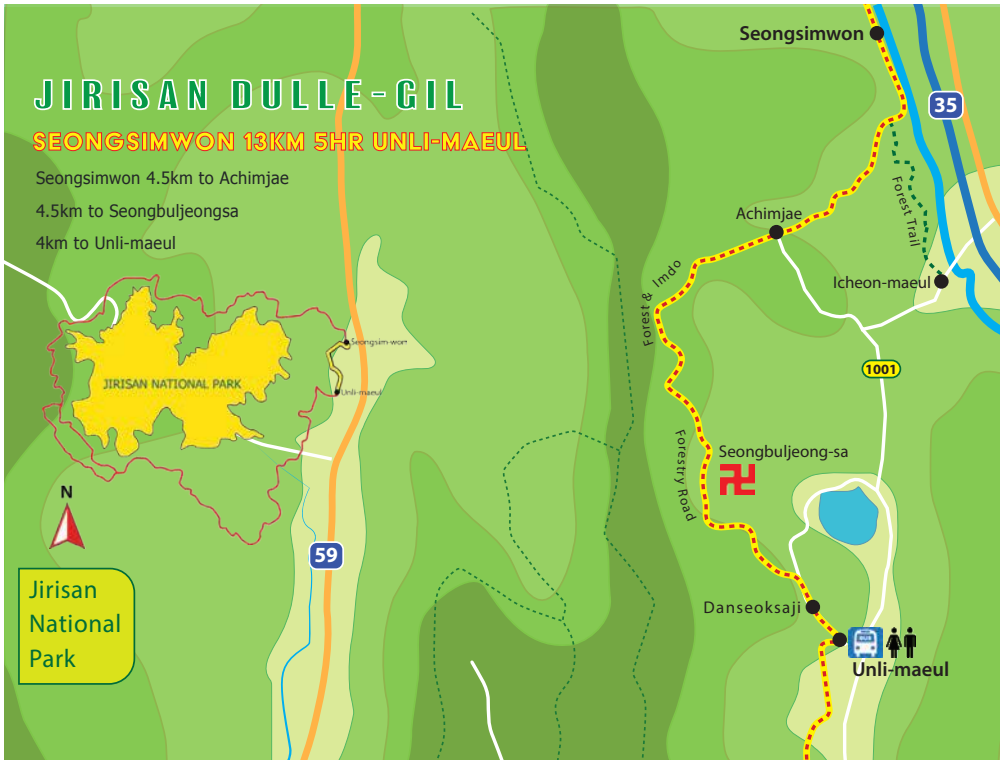
JIRISAN DULLE-GIL

SEONGSIMWON 13KM 5HR UNLI-MAEUL

Seongsimwon 4.5km to Achimjae

4.5km to Seongbuljeongsa

4km to Unli-maeul



Information

Accommodation & Transport

There is no noticeable accommodation in Unli-maeul, but there are some pensions in the village, but they will be expensive and a bit of overkill for a backpacker. So if you need to sleep in the village, probably the car park where the toilets and stamp box are is best. But there are no shops or restaurants in this area. As far as transport goes, there will be local buses trucking up and down the country roads that will take you to Sicheon-myeon [Danseok-maeul] and Danseong-myeon which has express buses to Seoul.



SECTION 8

Unli-maeul~ Deoksan-maeul (14km 5hr)

Is a hilly section as you hike through the outer peaks of Jirisan making your way south to Deoksan-maeul, which is more commonly known as Sicheon-myeon. A mixture of orchard roads, imdo, and bush trail, it is a scenic section and quite remote. Make sure you have enough water, although you can probably catch some in the valley streams that you cross over. At Mageundam there is a pavilion you can take a rest in. If you look west from there, you can get peeks of Cheonwangbong 1915m. It is all sealed road south for about 5km as it heads down to Deoksan-myeon. At that point where it joins the #20 you can see a store, toilets, and restaurants. A little further down the road is the historic site of noblemen Jo Sik, a very famous local. Less than 500m from there, the Dulle-gil will take you into the charming township of Deoksan-maeul, or better known by locals as Sicheon-myeon. There you can enjoy the five day market, or a convenience store, or more restaurants, all alongside another beautiful Jirisan river under Cheonwangbong.





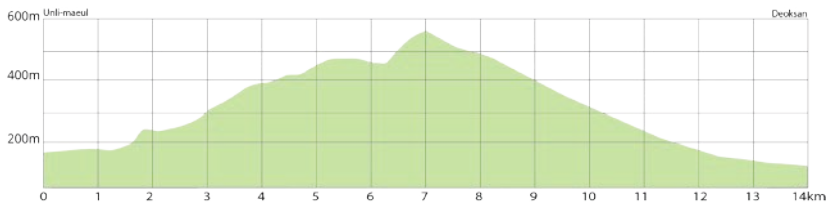
Jo sik, (pen-name) Nammyeong (1501-1572) was a representative scholar of the Gyeongsangnam-do province. He was offered several official positions in government, but instead in a letter to the Joseon King, criticized the government and its system. In 1561 he moved here to Sicheon-myeon and began an academy that educated young people on reformation plans for a better fairer society. During the Japanese invasions of Korea, his students actively resisted their incursions. Several of his students became well known scholars later in their careers. You can visit his Memorial Hall where the Dulle-gil arrives in Deoksan-maeul. On the other side of the road is where his lecture hall and other facilities were.



THE 5-DAY MARKET held every 4th and 9th in Deoksan-maeul is another treat. Here you can experience the common friendliness of the country folk and their unpretentious ways. Persimmons are the fruit of this area.



SAUNA HOUSE In Deoksan-maeul town there is a nice looking sauna house. Called the Jirisan Deoksan Public bath, you can find it by entering sauna in English on your Naver or Kakao Maps app. Open everyday except every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. It closes at 8.30pm.



Information

Accommodation

There is only one Motel, the Sambo Motel, next to the market by the river. Or you can find a couple of pensions behind the township on your app. Or if you have a tent you can pitch it down by the river on the grass area, but there are no trees there. There is a large sports park on the other-side of the river after the bridge, that has a good car park facility with a pavilion, grass area, and public toilets.



SECTION 9

Deoksan-maeul ~ Witae-maeul (10km 4hr)

From Deoksan-maeul you cross the bridge and follow the river back east for about 2km before turning south on a village road to Jungtae-maeul 1km later. At that location, there is a manned Dulle-gil center for the stamp, and a set of toilets. From here the Dulle-gil starts to ascend on a village road that gets narrower and narrower and by the time it gets to Yujeom-maeul it becomes a trail for the next 1km up to Jungtaejae at just over 400m absl. There will be forestry roads (imdo) in these sections, so don't end up on the wrong one - keep an eye out for the markers. From Jungtaejae, the Dulle-gil starts to descend for 2kms on village roadway down to Witae-maeul. Witae-maeul has zero facilities for the backpacker. If you need water find a tap next to a house or stop a local and indicate you need water, and they should help you.

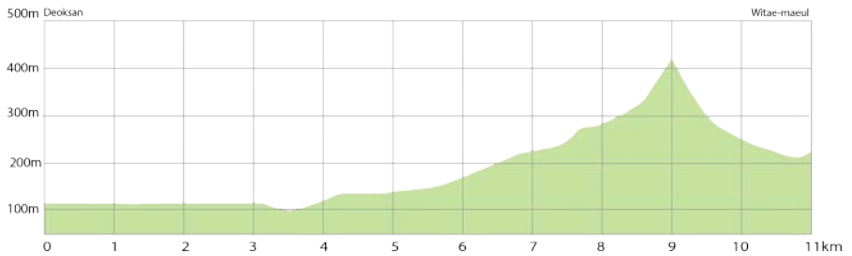




Jungtae Maeul was once famous for its mulberry paper production. Nowadays, persimmon trees have replaced mulberry trees. Jungtae-maeul is where some of the last patriots fell during the nationwide Donghak Peasant Uprising of 1895. At the time, village residents temporarily buried the corpses of the patriots in a nearby valley to avoid the government's eyes, so that their families could visit them.



YUJEOM-MAEUL is a village located high up the mountain road. It was a village that used to make brass ware. Nowadays, that work has disappeared. The small Seven Day Adventists Church in the quaint mountain village has been there since 1938.



Information

Accommodation

There are no Accommodations in Witae-maeul. This is the last stop for the BUS service from here to Okjong Intercity Bus Terminal in Hadong county. Other local buses will take you to Hadong-eup.



SECTION 10

Witae-maeul - Hadong dam (11.5km 5hr)

From Witae-maeul, follow the signposts past their small dam and start ascending on a village road through farming villages up to the pass at Jinaejae. From there you stay on the village road descending a wee bit before hitting the village of Oyul-maeul. From there it is up over a knobbly ridge and then down to the next village of Gunghang-maeul, located on road #1014. You can get more water there at their village hall (maeul-haegwan). There is also a minbak in the village. From Gunghang-maeul you make one more bound over a Jirisan ridge. At Yangtieojae, at just over 400m, you are crossing a large subsidiary ridge of Korea, known as the Naknam-jeongmaek. These type of large unbroken ridges in Korea,



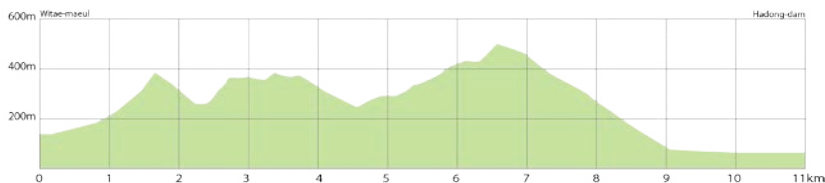
control the direction of Korea's major rivers into the sea. In this particular case, it is controlling the course of the Nakdong river to the north of it, and the Seomjin-river to the southwest, as it exits south of Jirisan. It is a nice steady downhill walk from there to the road on the eastern side of the large Hadong Dam. At this place there is a large Dulle-gil deck area with toilets, and the Donghojeong minbak behind the well made pavilion (Jeongja). You follow the boardwalk south from here for about 2kms until it gets you to the front wall of the dam. Cross the wall, and before you to go down on a bush and village trail to Cheongam-myeon, - the Vivace Resort around the corner from the dam, has a CU convenience store on its ground floor There are no modern convenience stores in Cheongam-myeon.



HADONG DAM There are no natural lakes in Korea. Their mountainous landscape with steep valleys, means that rainwater cannot pool anywhere. Instead it goes straight to the ocean. So there are a lot of dams in Korea, that provide water for drinking and agriculture. Completed in 1993, Hadong dam is an artificial lake created to supply agricultural water to Hadong-gun and Sacheon-si, in the province of Gyeongsangnam-do. For the dam to be completed, over 1,000 residents from 194 households in 7 villages had to sell-out their homes.



GUNGHANG-MAEUL sits in a gourd-shaped basin surrounded by the Naknam-jeongmaek (ridge). The name Gunghang is said to be a Chinese character for the village's shape, which resembles to the 'neck of a bow' in Feng shui, or Pungsu-jiri in Korean culture.



Information



Transport & Accommodation

If you walk down the road a bit from Hadong dam you get to the small township of Cheongam-myeon. Because you are now in the county of Hadong-gun, the buses will go to Hadong terminal, 20-30mins away. Taxis will work fine too. There are one or two old minbaks in Cheongam-myeon, and likely a place to pitch your tent if you scout around.



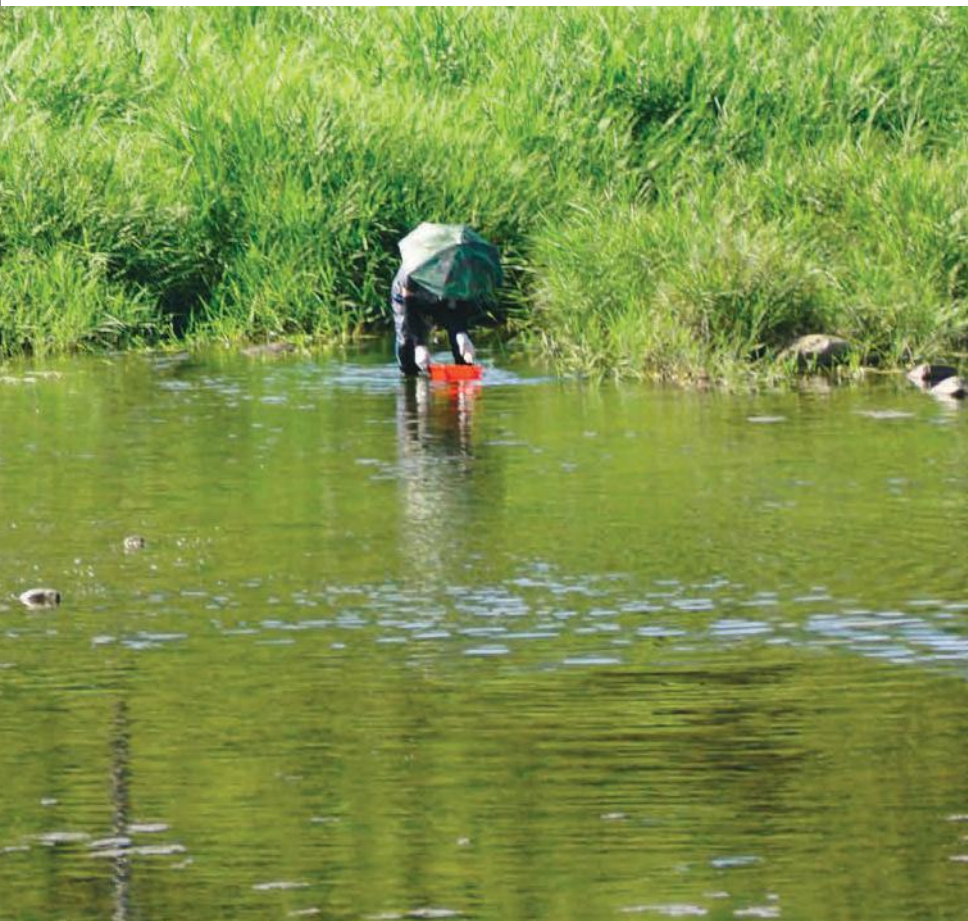
SECTION 11

Hadong dam - Samhwasil (9.5km 4hr)

From the car park at Hadong dam, the Dulle-gil cuts down some stairs into the bush and then south through farming land before it comes back out on the road near a sports park and proceeds into Cheongam-myeon. In Cheongam-myeon there are some restaurants, store, and a Nonghyup you can restock in. The trail cuts over the river from here, on a stepping stone bridge. It then guiles its way on farm lanes on and off the main road before arriving in the village of Myeongho-maeul. Staying on farm roads the Dulle-gil starts to ascend, arriving in the village of Myeongsa-



maeul 3km later. A kilometer later the Dulle-gil becomes a mixture of bush trail and imdo, as it strolls over the ridge at Juntijae. About 500m into your descent the Dulle-gil will join a narrow road. It is only a short walk through the village before arriving at the ECO House in Samhwasil. You might notice on the hillside, a large modern building, that looks out of place for here. It is an Art House. It is used as a residence for artists and as a school for learning. It also has a gallery. Shortly from seeing that you will arrive at the old school that is now used as a local hostel by the local villagers.



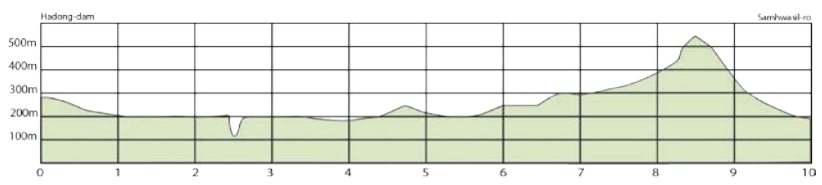


SAMHWASIL ECO HOUSE You may have noticed old abandoned schools on your walk of the Dulle-gil. Some of them remain abandoned, and others are taken on as public or private ventures. Korea still has plenty of schools, and these days they are serviced now by buses. So, it is impressive to see how far the older school system reached. The old school at Samhwasil has now become a shelter for travelers. Inside the facility, there are ondol-rooms (no beds) you can get for ₩30,000. You can also pitch a tent out the back, but you still have to pay ₩20,000 for that - and they don't encourage it. There are toilets and shower rooms there, and each of the large rooms, have some cooking equipment you can use. Also inside the old school is a small Jirisan Dulle-gil information office, that they use as an administration area for the Eco House too.

Information

Transport & Food

If you plan to sleep at the ECO House, you will need to bring your food with you as there is nowhere in the village to purchase food. But you might be able to hitch a lift to the nearest store. If you plan to get off the Dulle-gil here, then walk a short way down to the main road, where you can get regular buses to Hadong terminal. Kakao Taxis will work here. If you have done a bit of hitch-hiking in your global travels before, then Korea is a good nation for foreigners to try that. It's not a habit the Korean people would practice though.





SECTION 12

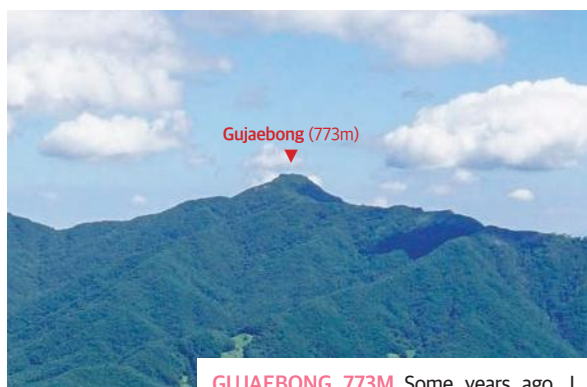
Samhwasil - Daechuk-maeul (17km 7hr)

From the Samhwasil Eco House continue on the roadside down to Leejeong-maeul where it crosses the main road and heads up to Bodijae at about 300m absl on a yet-gil (old-trail) before coming down the other side where it joins a narrow road and descends into the crossroad junction at Seodang-maeul. At this location is an excellent Jirisan Dulle-gil center. It is also the junction for a separate section of the Dulle-gil, that takes you on a 7km trail to the country town of Hadong. It takes about 3 hours to walk that. From Seodang-maeul, the continuation of the Dulle-gil goes north for about 1km until it reaches a pleasant dam. Here it follows the west side of the dam and then for the next 3kms it will wind its way up an imdo passing the last village of Sincheon-maeul, before arriving at Sincheonjae (pass). Here you can take the option to climb to Gujaebong 773m and continue on up that way and then down to Daechuk-maeul (6.5km), or you can stay on the other route which takes you over the



Seomjingang

ridge and then contours its way on a mix of imdo and trail (7.5km) before joining the Gujaebong route about a 1km short of Daechuk-maeul. It is a very up and down section this one, but it has outstanding views from the high areas of the white sandy Seomjingang and the panoramic Baekdu-daegan ranges as they cross Jirisan national Park to the north. If you get to Daechuk-maeul, you can walk up to Akyang-myeon and tent in the park opposite the CU store or get a small room for a shower and a rest.



GUJAEBONG 773M Some years ago, I was tasked to take photos of Gujaebong, as some geography professors in Pyongyang told me they thought it was the farthest southern peak on the 1700km Baekdu-daegan ridge before it gets cut by water. In this case the Seomjin-river. Its peak area has dramatically shaped rocks. If you climb Gujaebong you can get good views of Jiri Mountain, the Seomjingang and the quilts of rice fields in Akyang-myeon. In October these are a harvest yellow.



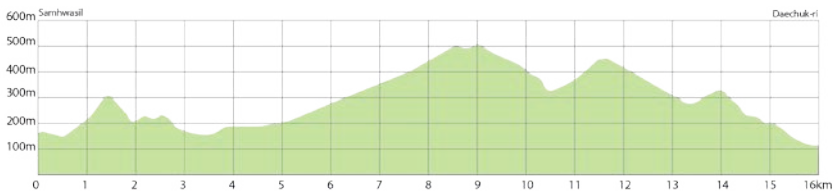


Information



Accommodation & Transport

When you get to Daechuk-maeul, you are effectively on the edge of a large basin of rice fields. The Dulle-gil cuts across it. But if you are after some shopping and would like to see another small Jirisan town, then Akyang-myeon is the place. Just stay on the road north for 1km and you will arrive there. There are some good local restaurants, stores, cafes, minbaks, airbnb, guesthouses and higher end pensions in this surrounding area. Branded as one of Korea's Slow City's it is famous for its quality food production, green teas, persimmons, and even has its own sugar-free Makoli. Buses run frequently to and from Hadong. Kakao Taxi works too.



Seodang-maeul is a name given to people in the past who set traps to catch tigers. A Jirisan Dulle-gil information center is located here. Operating like the rest of them with office hours, it is a good place to get your stamp, a cup of coffee, and a light snack or meal if available.



MUNAMSONG (ANCIENT PINE TREE) There is a superb 600-year old pine tree above Daechuk-maeul. There are a lot of old trees in Korea, and they are all considered sacred and spiritual. This one is called Munam – meaning to grow out of a rock. In the past poets and scholars used to dwell under the tree as its location provided enthusiastic views of the valley, mountains and river. The locals believe the tree and rock contain a guardian spirit and every spring they hold a ceremony here. The remarkable tree was designated a national treasure in 2008. It is 12m in height and has a 3m circumference.



SECTION 13

Hadong-eup ~ Seodang-maeul (7km 3hr)

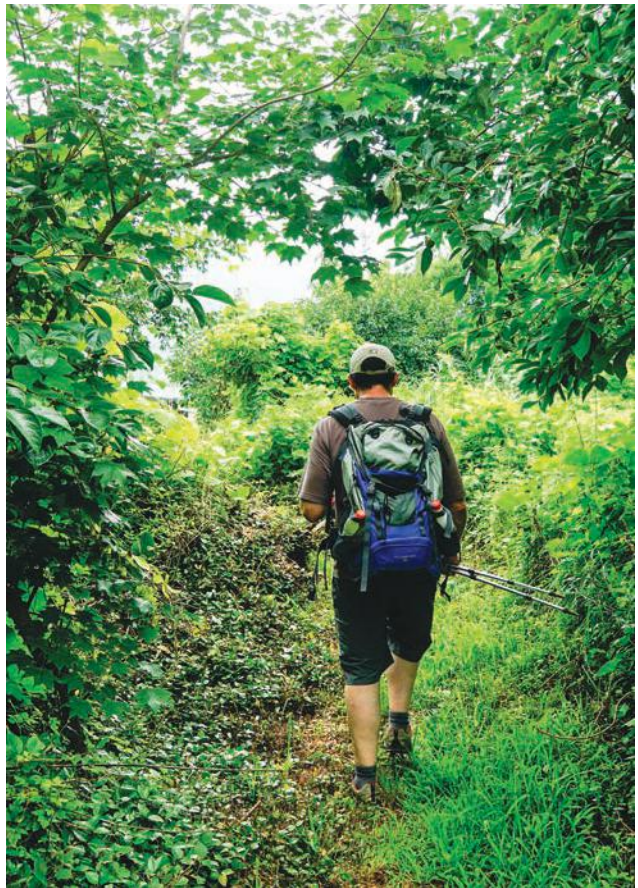
This section is an extension of the Jirisan Dulle-gil. It allows users to join the Dulle-gil in the popular Jirisan town of Hadong-eup. And of course that means it is a way for users to leave the Dulle-gil and go visit Hadong-eup for a break, or an exit. Sitting alongside the Seomjingang, Hadong-eup is the capital of the county of Hadong-gun. It is famous for being a large producer of Green Teas and fine country produce, as well as jaechopguk, a clear soup made from small freshwater marsh clams found in the Seomjingang which attracts many domestic travelers. From Hadong, it is a bit of climb for the first 3km on a mixture of trail and imdo,



before you reach Baramjae. After that, it is a relieving descent through the villages of Yulgok-maeul and Gwandong-maeul before arriving at the quaint Dulle-gil center in Seodang-maeul.

Hadong-eup Dulle-gil Center There is a Dulle-gil information office located about 100m up the hill from the main road where you start or finish this section.

Sangwoo-maeul According to Korean pungsu-jiri (geomancy), the village is shaped like an old rat coming down the field, and that there is good fortune to be found in a hiding place in the mountain. The mountains that surround this area are known as 돌땡이먼당 Dolddaengi-meondang. Because the many rocks and stones that lay loosely there, are ones that were used by members of the Donghak Peasant Uprisings (1895) as projectiles against government forces.





SEODANG-MAEUL Is a name given to people in the past who set traps to catch tigers. A Jirisan Dulle-gil information center is located here. Operating with office hours, it is a good place to get your stamp, a cup of coffee, and a light snack or meal if available.

Information

Transport

Hadong train station and an inter-city bus terminal are located about 1.5km southeast of the town center. Buses run between, Seoul, Jinju, Daejeon, Gwangju and Busan. Known as the the Gyeongjeon line - a Mugunghwa passenger locomotive runs between Busan and Mokpo once daily. Local buses for the county can be taken from the main streets in Hadong town.

Accommodation

Using your App, you will see that Hadong-eup has a mixture of motels, hotels, pensions and minbaks to choose from. Down by the river, there are two large parks on the southeast side of the town, with car parks and pavilions, where you might be able to pitch for a night.

Hadong-gun 하동군

The county of Hadong-gun is located on the southeastern corner of Jirisan National Park on the northern side of the Seomjingang. Located in the province of Gyeongsangnam-do, it covers an area of 675.53 km² with a population of about 48,000 residents. Hadong's claim to fame is its wild green tea production. Green Tea was imported to this region from the Tang Empire in China during the Silla dynasty. Every year Hadong hosts a Wild tea Festival lasting for 25-days, starting in May and continuing into June. Like all the counties around Jirisan, domestic tourism remains one of the stalwart industries of this region, along with food production and harvesting of marine food from the Seomjingang. Hadong is also another gateway to Jirisan National Park, and not far from the south coast Maritime Park of Hallyeo-haesang, which was the last battle place of Korea's Admiral Lee Sun-shin. Its capital Hadong-eup, is totally worth a visit and a stay over on your Dulle-gil walk at section 13. You can find more information on their English page at www.hadong.go.kr/english.web

Scenic Views of Hadong-gun 하동군

Wild Tea Field in Hwagaedongcheon was where the first wild tea seeds from China were planted. It is the birthplace of Korea's 1200-year-long green tea history. The tea farms in Hadong get foggy and humid conditions with a diurnal temperature range which are optimal for tea growing. The traditional tea roasting technique passed down over centuries is known to bring out the best qualities and flavor of Hadong green tea.





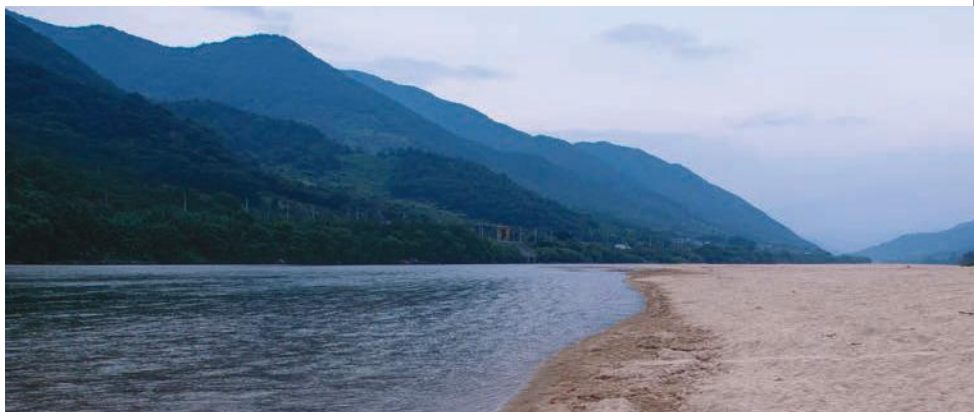
The House of Choi Champan There are a lot of places in Korea where famous movies were made or books written. The House of Choi Champan is known as the setting of the famous novel *Toji* (The Land) by novelist Park Kyong-ni. Located in Akyang-myeon, the estate consists of fourteen traditional buildings and has outstanding views over the rice plains of Pyeongsa-ri.



Royal Azaleas at Hyeongjaebong A decent 1115m peak that the Dulle-gil passes near, in spring, it blooms wild crimson mountain Azaleas.

Ssanggyesa Temple was originally built in 722 A.D. The temple was built here according to the orders of a Korean Sanshin (Mountain Spirit) in the form of a tiger. The monks that built it were the disciples of Uisang-daesa (625-702). After building the temple, they went to China for more study and upon their return they cached the skull of the Sixth Seon Patriarch, Hyeneung (638-713 A.D.). The temple was completely incinerated by Japanese marauders during the Imjin War (1592-98). With only its stone foundations left, the temple wasn't rebuilt until 1632. A visually spectacular temple.

Sunrise from Geumosan 842m located near the south coast, this distinctive round shaped peak offers access to incredible sunrises over the South Sea of Korea.



Buril Fall Located at 720m absl above the small hermitage of Burilam, it is a beautiful 60m waterfall. The 3km trail to this waterfall starts at the famous Ssanggyesa temple and has excellent views of Hwagae-myeon valley. If you continue on the trail up to the ridge and go over, you will come out at Samsunggung palace.



Samsunggung Is a large stone palace dedicated to the three founding figures of Korea, Hwanwoong, Hwanin and Tangun who are the progenitors of the Baedal tribe (2333BC). Meaning 'bright', they worshiped the Sun as a God. The palace is located in Cheonghak-dong, where in one tale, it is believed to be where the first people of Korea settled. In 1983, Seondoist (Korean Taoist), Hanpul-yeonsa, built the large structure of Samsunggung mostly by himself and mostly by hand. An enormous



White Sand and Green Pine Trees in Hadong Port Down by the river in front of the town is a 26,000m² forest with over 900 native pines. It was started in 1745 to prevent wind coming up the river and blowing river-sand into town.

feat, he built it to show the Korean people that their origins are very ancient and they should not be replaced entirely by modernism. It is a fantastic palace full of DNA and completely worth the visit.



Hwagae Market Cherry Blossoms Korea is famous for its cherry blossom festivals. From the markets at Hwagae-myeon, also near the Dulle-gil, the road that stretches north up the valley has over 4kms of cherry blossom trees, making this area, along with other festivals a buzzy and colourful place to be in late April and into May. They say that if you walk the entire 4kms holding hands, then you will live the rest of your life happy with that person.





SECTION 14

Daechuk-maeul ~ Wonbuchun-maeul (8.5km 4hr)

There's another decent ridge to get over on the other side of the rice fields once you arrive in Daechuk-ri. There are two ways to the other side of the rice fields known here as Mudumi(무덤이) for the Dulle-gil. If you take the more northern one, then you end up being very close to the village town of Akyang-myeon, where you can get supplies from stores and eat in a restaurant. Returning back to the trail, you follow the trail signs to Ipseok-ri and start climbing up to Witjae. It is about a 3km steep hike up to Witjae 630m. You're in the southern part of Jirisan now, where its ridges and spurs drop quickly into the Seomjingang. You'll be traversing over a few of these in the next sections to Gurye. At Witjae there are trails going north and south along the ridge. The northern one goes to Hyeongjaebong 1116m. From Witjae you stay on forest trail all the way to Wonbuchun-maeul. Nice walking.





Ipseok-ri Is an interesting village located on the side of a large ridge. An old village with neolithic origins it gets its name from a large stele that once stood here. These days it has a good mixture of old and new homes and an arty feel

about it. You'll pass by various sculptures and installations. In its center, known as Seondol square there is a makoli jip, and an art gallery with a standing stone behind it. It is called Jangdae. Legend says that the mountain Gods of Gujae and Hyeongje which face each other from opposite sides of the Akyang valley, got into a tussle here, and pieces of rock got broken, which made the spikes of Sinseondae up on the ridge and this Jangdae rock was one of the broken pieces from the confrontation.



IN SEONDOL SQUARE if you get there after 5pm the makoli jip might be open. It sells locally brewed makoli that has no artificial sweeteners in it. Very tasty. You'll be in no state for the steep climb up to Witjae after that, so think about sleeping in a Jeongja (pavilion) in the village, and starting off in the morning.





Information

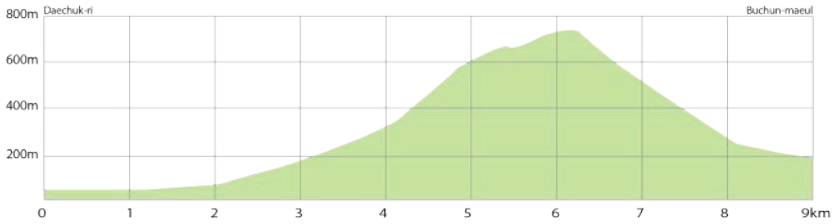


Transport

Don't wait for a bus to arrive in Wonbuchun-maeul. There's only one a day coming from Hadong-eup. It is a 4km walk down to the road #19 where you can catch a bus every 40mins between Hadong-eup and Hwagye-myeon.

Accommodation

There are a lot of high end Pensions in this area, and they will normally require a telephone reservation ahead of time. A lack of motels and hotels means that minbaks are your next choice. You can door knock on those. You should also inquire at some of the many coffee shops in this area, as they may know some options.



When you arrive at **Wonbuchun-maeul**, you are still quite high (250m) up the valley. You should be able to find water in the village, but there is no store here. By now you may have gotten a sense that Korea has a lot of old stories, especially in the Jirisan area. During the Goryeo Dynasty (9-13C) it was said that there was a large temple here called Wongangsa and the valley was called Bucheogol 부처골. The original locals says it means to be stuck on the side of a hill. And one more theory is that also during the Goryeo Dynasty, a scholar by the name Han Yu-han scribed on a rock Bul-chul-dong 불출동 meaning to depart and was never ever seen again. Can you locate the inscription?





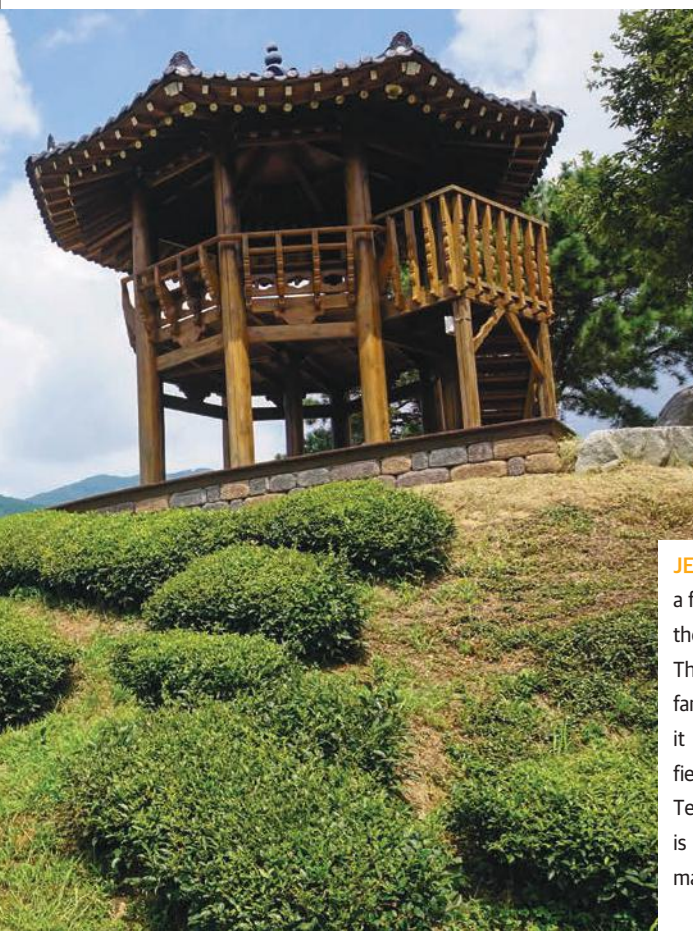
SECTION 15

Wonbuchun-maeul ~ Gatan-maeul (11.5km 6hr)

From Wonbuchun-maeul (250m) you follow the narrow road north for 4km all the way up to its highpoint at 800m. There an imdo joins another imdo that goes to a heli-pad they use for para-gliding. It is also a way to Hyeongjaebong. The forest trail of this section starts here too. There is also a freshwater mountain stream there for water and plenty of space along with a block of toilets for tenting. If you were to follow the other imdo, it would be about a 10km walk all the way around until it joins the Dulle-gil again near Dosim-maeul. Both options are excellent for



quietness and Jirisan bush walking. From Dosim-maeul you follow the signed trail to the outstanding Jeongja (pavilion) overlooking patterned tea fields. Instead of taking the old higher trail across to Gatan-maeul, follow the lower section as marked on the Dulle-gil. When you get to Gatan-maeul, there is not much there. The corner store might not be open. If you need supplies, head south down the main road for just over 1km and you will arrive in Hwagye-myeon. A well equipped tourist village with lots of restaurants, a good main store, coffee and cake shops, and a very famous traditional market. Buses run from here in both directions, to Gurye and Hadong and Busan.



JEONGGEUM TEA PAVILION is a fantastic place to stop and enjoy the grand views of Hwagye valley. This southern area of Jirisan is famous for the quality green teas it produces. The pavilion and tea fields are part of the 1000-year Tea Field Trail 천년차밭길, which is an 8km 5hr circuit trail of the major tea fields in this valley.



BUCHUN-MAEUL 11.5KM
5HR GATAN-MAEUL

Buchun-maeul 4.5km to Imdo (forestry road) 2km to Jeonggeum 2km to Samsin-ri 3km to Gatan-maeul

Information

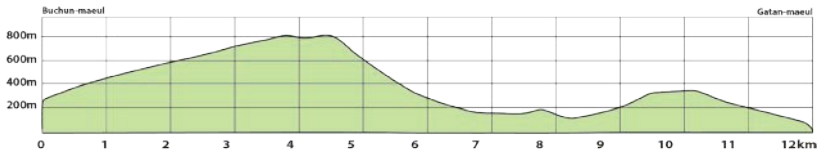


Transport

Don't wait for a bus to arrive in Wonbuchun-maeul. There's only one a day coming from Hadong-eup. It is a 4km walk down to the road #19 where there are buses to catch every 40mins between Hadong-eup and Hwagye-myeon. From Gatan-maeul you can walk a scenic km to Hwagae-myeon next to the Seomjingang. From there you can take frequent buses to Gurye or Hadong. Some of the buses that stop here are inter-city from Seoul and Busan.

Accommodation

The best option from Gatan-maeul is to walk south on the road for less than 2kms and you will arrive in Hwagye-myeon. There you can find older motels and minbaks as well as plenty of good restaurants.



Hwagye Valley



HWAGYE-MYEON is the main town for this valley. It is a popular tourist area as it cultivates some of Korea's finest green teas. Supporting this is an annual international tea festival and a large tea museum. Ssanggyesa temple up the valley is also a stunning location and attracts many visitors. Just about all of the tourist restaurants will serve large courses of mountain vegetables (jeong-sik 정식) with meats and rice. In the summertime the gushing Jirisan rivers become swimming holes.



Gatan-maeul



SECTION 16

Gatan-maeul ~ Songjeong-maeul (11km 6hr)

This is another hilly section of the Dulle-gil. And you should carry enough water for the forest sections. From the small supa at Gatan-maeul, the Dulle-gil crosses the Hwagye river and starts climbing immediately on the other side of the valley at the village of Beopha-maeul. There it becomes a forest trail again, climbing over a 500m ridge at Jakeunjae just over a kilometer later. Jakeunjae is the provincial border between the provinces of Gyeongsangnam-do and Jeollanam-do. An ancient border between the Silla and Baekje Kingdoms. It is another 2kms from there on pleasant forest trail as it descends through orchards into the back of the village of Gichon-maeul. The Dulle-gil crosses the river just north of Songlim island and quickly gets up onto orchard roads and then becomes forest trail on a ridge running north for about 2.5km to Mokajae 430m. From Mokajae the Dulle-gil re-enters the forest and for the next 3.5km, it contours southwards, with good views of the Seomjingang as it descends through the back of some houses and more orchards at Songjeong-maeul.



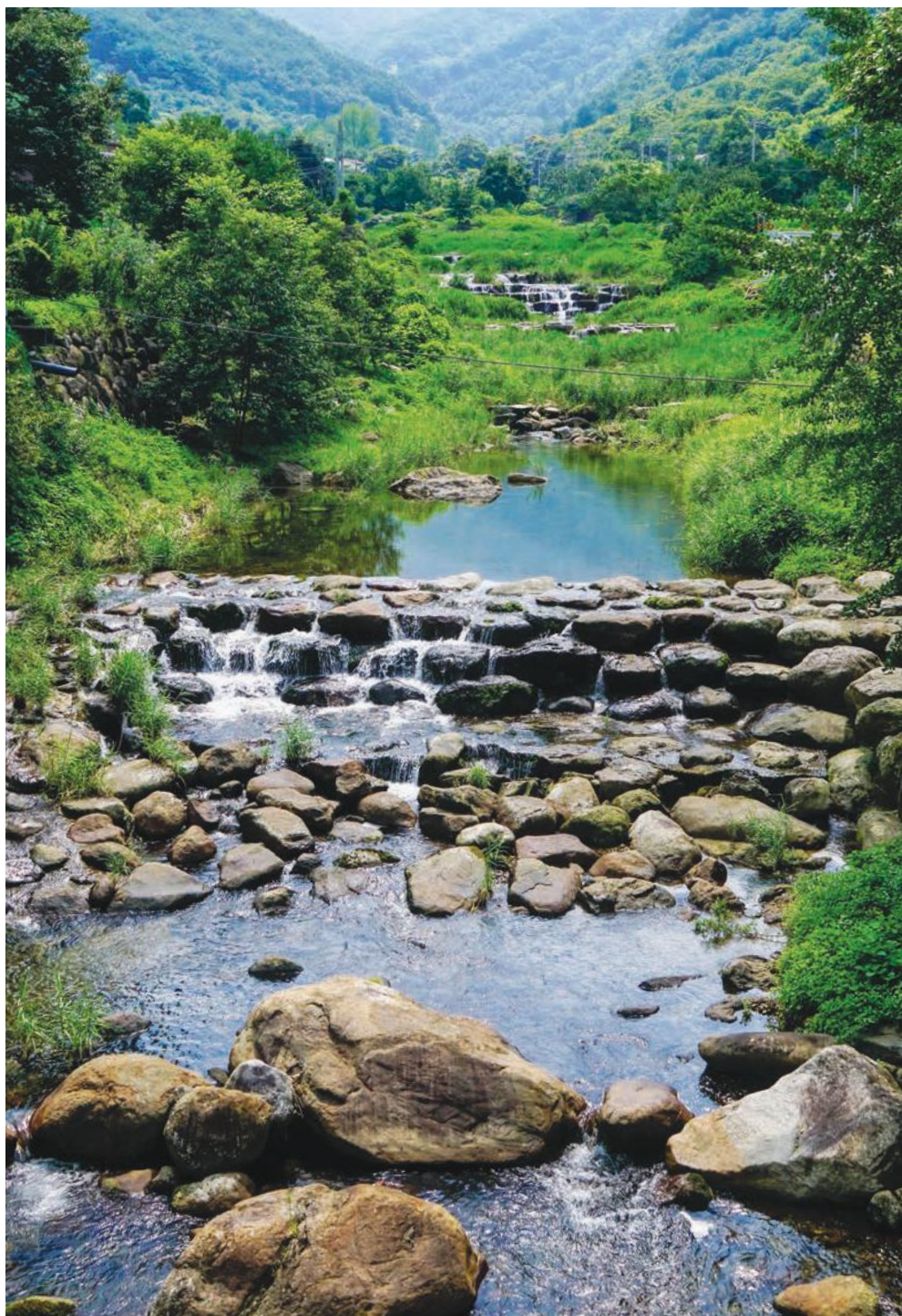


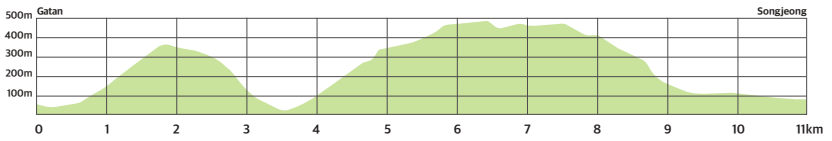
MOKAJAE at about 430m offers you some respite after the forest trail climb. There is a shelter here you can sit in and enjoy the views north of the Baekdu-daegan as it forms the main ridge of Jirisan. But no water here.



Gichon-maeul sits in the Piagol valley. A short distance south of here is a store, and a little further on is the less touristy village of Piagol, where there is everything you need. At Gichon-maeul, there is a block of toilets and an island in the middle of the river, named Songlimdo (pine forest island). The island gets its name from being the shape of a swallow in the traditions of Korean pungsu-jiri (feng-shui). Piagol is another deep valley of the Jirisan Ranges. Its upper reaches, under the Baekdu-daegan, once hid Korean partisans left over from the Korean War.

At **Songjeong-maeul** the Dulle-gil crosses a road straight into forest and mountain. There is no store or toilets. Less than 1km south down the road where it joins the Seomjingang, there is a large coffee shop with a Korean restaurant menu.





Information



Transport

Buses will stop and depart from the main road on the Seomjingang for Gurye and Hadong.



SECTION 17

Songjeong-maeul ~ Omi-maeul (11km 6hr)

The Dulle-gil from Songjeong-maeul starts from the other side of the road and for the next 1km will ascend almost 300m into more forest trail. From there it settles down and becomes a windy forest trail that descends gently through the southern arms of Jirisan. About 500m into that you will come across a Dulle-gil trail marker with an option to go to the Gurye Patriots Hall. From the trail marker the Dulle-gil continues contouring at about 100 - 200m absl passing for the next 4.5km on a mixture of forest and chestnut orchards until it comes out onto open ground near the village of Pado-ri. In this area you can get good views of the basin area of Gurye-eup. The Dulle-gil winds up and down the back of the Tojimyeon village area towards the Munsu dam. From there it drops into the charming village areas of Naejuk and Hajuk before arriving at the Hanok style traditional village of Omi-maeul. Omi-maeul has a number of high end pensions you can make a reservation to sleep in.

Gurye Patriots Hall (Seokjugwanseong) & Jeongeunsa These sites are located about 1km down a valley from the Dulle-gil. The stream that runs through it is called Hyeolcheon, meaning blood stream. The blood comes from local patriots of the Gurye area who bravely fought Japanese invaders here in the second major invasion of Korea in 1597. A hundred thousand Japanese troops were advancing up the Seomjingang. General Yi Sun-sin and seven noblemen from Gurye mobilized a civilian army of 3500 men and 153 monks and they met the Japanese here at Seokjugwanseong, which at that time was a garrison fort on the edge of the river. All seven noblemen were killed in the battle. Above the memorial site are some small house-temples, with shrines to the mountain spirits and stream gods. They are the original keepers of this area. Guarding the water of Hyeolcheon.

Munsu Dam is formed from the water of Nogo-dan peak 1505m. In October 1948, a communist uprising started in the city of Yeosu to the south. They were a red cell of 40 men that broke away from their Korean Army Regiment. Dressed in their RoK American army fatigues they took the city of Yeosu, released political prisoners, and together with local supporters became 3000 strong. As they paraded the streets

UNJORU PAVILION Built in 1776, Unjoru is a late Joseon dynasty nobleman's quarters. According to Korean pungsu-jiri (feng-shui) it is also considered one of the top three most auspicious places to build a residence. At the front entrance is a large wooden jar. The original one is in the museum in the nearby car park. It was used to supply free rice to the hungry.



they went on vigilante sprees, killing 500 civilians and 100 police personnel. They also took the city of Suncheon. However, the RoK army regrouped and by November, had taken the two cities back. Killing hundreds more civilian sympathizers. The rebels then fled north to Munsu valley in Jirisan, where some of them remained until well after the Korean War (1950-53). At the time, Korea's President Rhee Syngman was still facing a lot of resentment from the handling of the April uprisings on Jeju island.



Information

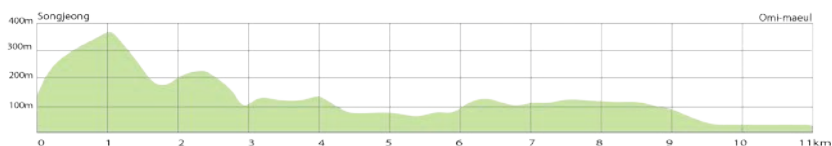


Transport

Buses will depart from Omi-maeul village to Gurye-eup. And Kakao Taxi will work from here too.

Accommodation

If you fancy sleeping on a floor in a traditional room in a Hanok jip, then there are several very good choices in Omi-maeul, including lower costs minbaks.



Seomjingang Otter Habitat and the Eco River Fish Museum: On the opposite side of the Seomjingang is a large complex that is the Eco River Fish Museum. It has an exhibition hall, an outdoor event hall, a sky garden, a freshwater fish study area, a ground cover plant garden, an ecological pond, a wild flower walkway, and a picnic garden. It is widely used as an ecological learning center and is popular as an experience learning center for kindergarten and elementary school students. If you take the route into Gurye-eup then you will walk along the Seomjingang. This area is lush with wetland, and is also habitat to native otter, wildcat (bobcat), deer, and birdlife. At 212kms in length, the Seomjingang is one of Korea's longest and empties the Jeollabuk-do province through the Honam and Baekdu-daegan ridges at Gwangyang-si, in south Jeolla province. It passes beneath the Jirisan Dulle-gil. And in pre-modern Korea, this river was navigable by sail and row boat to at least this point in Gurye from the Sea.





SECTION 18~19

Omi-maeul ~ Nandong-maeul:Gurye-eup (19km 7hr)

From Omi-maeul you have the option of visiting Gurye-eup. It takes a little longer but it is mostly all flat and offers you an opportunity to take a break in the town. A farmers town, a Jirisan Dulle-gil Center is located by the towns pool and gym facility on the Dulle-gil. Nearby that area are little parks where you can pitch your tent after dark. Or closer towards town you can get a room in a nearby motel, hotel, AirBnB, guesthouse etc. Everything you need for your backpack you can get in Gurye-eup. It also has some excellent nearby attractions, like Nogodan 1505m in Jirisan National Park, a vibrant 5-day market, Hwaeomsa Temple, and Saseongam hermitage nestled on a cliff side. Gurye is an old town in Korean history, and deeply rooted in the Jeolla province for its arts and culture. Check out its top ten attractions at its homepage at www.gurye.go.kr/en. From Gurye, the Dulle-gil stays north on a flat embankment road lined with cherry blossom trees. It follows the Seosicheon into Gwangui-myeon, and up to Nandong-maeul, where it joins the other Dulle-gil course coming from Omi-maeul.

Views from Nogodan

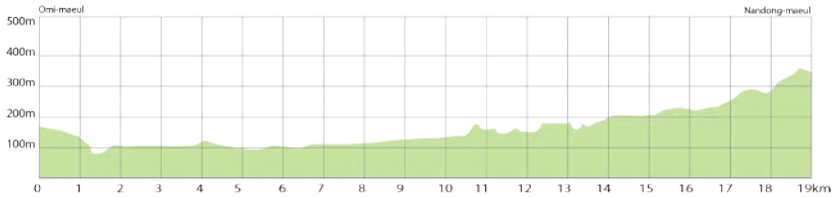


Omi-maeul ~ Nandong-maeul (16km 5hr)

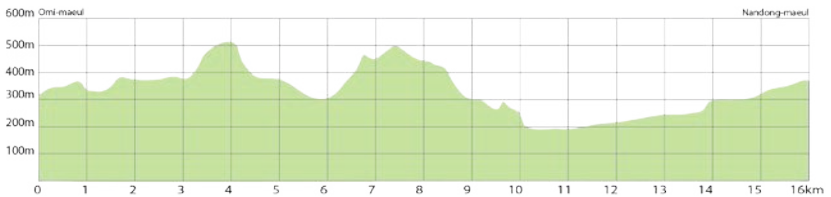
From Omi-maeul if you don't take the Gurye route then stay on the Dulle-gil as it takes you on flat ground pass endless fields of rice to Masan-myeon. Just before the Ssangsanjae Hanok the Dulle-gil pushes into a mixture of forest and village trail for 5km before it arrives in Hwangjeon-maeul. This is the administrative area for this section of Jirisan National Park and its Bear Restoration Program. It is also the main entrance to one of Korea's top Buddhist temples, Hwaeomsa. There are good accommodations here and some fine restaurants. The Dulle-gil returns to backcountry imdos and forest trails for a couple more kms before arriving at Ogo-ri (5-way junction) where you can find a store and restaurants. It then passes on village road through Banggwang-maeul where it enters forest and farm roads for about 2kms before it arrives at the plush artist village of Gwangui-myeon. Here you can find some coffee shops and small restaurants that might be open. About 1km from there on an uphill to Nandong-maeul, you meet the other Dulle-gil coming from Gurye-eup. From there the Dulle-gil goes onto forestry roads for 3.5km up to Guri-jae at about 500m absl.



Omi-maeul ~ Nandong-maeul:Gurye-eup



Omi-maeul ~ Nandong-maeul



Information



Transport

Gurye is serviced with intercity express buses from Suncheon, Yeosu, Gwangju, Seoul and Busan. About 10km out of town it also has a KTX train station. The Mugunghwa service stops there too. Taxis can be found on KakaoTaxi or in front of the bus terminal and train station.

Accommodation

There are plenty of motels, guesthouses, airbnbs in Gurye. Using the apps or methods as discussed in the front of this book, you can prepare your booking or just turn up and find a place. If you want to experience a templestay you can also try calling Hwaemosa temple 061-782-7600 or go to www.templestay.com.

Gurye-eup 구례읍

Gurye is a county in Jeollanam-do province. A flat river bed area rich in food production and domestic tourism its people still maintain the humble charms of the old ways. Situated between Jiri Mountain and the Seomjin river, Gurye has many historical and cultural sites to explore, and is totally worth staying a night over.



Mogwol Bakery If you want to try some excellent European style breads and pastries, then go to Mogwol Bakery 목월 빵집 in Gurye. It also has coffee on the 2nd floor.

Hwaeomsa Temple Built in 544 by the Indian monk, Yeongi-josa, who also built the surrounding temples of Saseongam, Yeonguksa and Munsusa, its name means the Flower Garden Temple, representing the Gwanseium-bosal (The Bodhisattva of Compassion). Its large quarters host several of Korea's finest national Buddhist treasures, and its old halls, although destroyed by fires and invasions over the centuries, are finely made, in particular the enormous Gakhwangjeon Hall that contains three giant Buddhas. You can get there by bus or taxi from Gurye Bus Terminal.



Gurye 5-day Market is held every fifth day of the month - 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28. A large colourful market with a good country vibe. Local farmers sell fresh produce and there are many ways to eat fresh food and try local dishes in the restaurants there.



Saseongam Temple A spectacular hermitage built on the side of Osan 530m on the other side of the Seomjin river in Gurye. Built in 544 AD, by the 13th century it got its current name because by then four prominent sages had practiced there; Wonhyo-daesa (617-686), Uisang-daesa (625-702), Doseon-guksa (827-898) and Buddhist poet Hyesim. Inside the elevated prayer hall is a relief carving of the medicine Buddha Yaksayeorae-bul said to have been carved by the finger of Wonhyo-daesa whilst in a meditative state. If you make your way up the other staircase, past the mountain spirit shrine, you can get incredible views of Gurye-eup next to the Seomjingang.





FESTIVALS

- Gurye Dongpyeon Sori (Folk Music) Festival (early October)
- Sansuyu Flower Festival (March)
- Cherry Blossom Festival (Late March - early April)
- Jirisan Namakjae Festival (Late March - early April)
- Jirisan Piagol Valley Autumn Festival (early November)

Jirisan Bear Center does allow members of the public to visit their Asiatic Bear Restoration Project. Themed for school education you can see inside the bear camps and learn more about them. Tel: 061-783-9120 or try a Gurye Visitor Center for assistance.

Nogodan 1505m can be seen from Gurye on the western side of Jirisan. You can get a bus to Seongsamjae from the terminal, and then it's an easy 1hour walk to the peak. You can see right into the heart of Jirisan from Nogodan. Get a high altitude look at the mountain you are walking around. Or you can make a full day of it and start at Hwaeomsa and come back on the bus from Seongsamjae. Taxis also run to Seongsamjae. Check the bus timings first. They are not frequent.

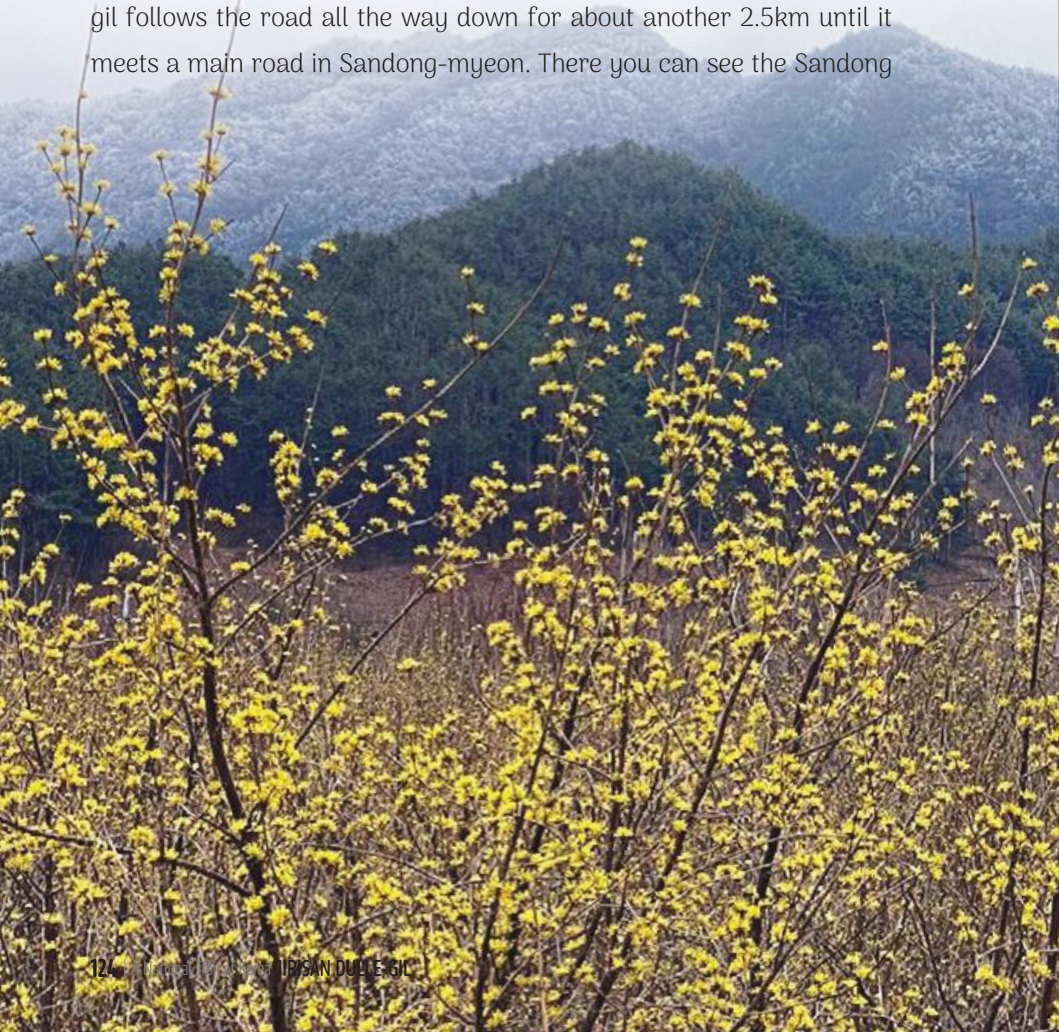




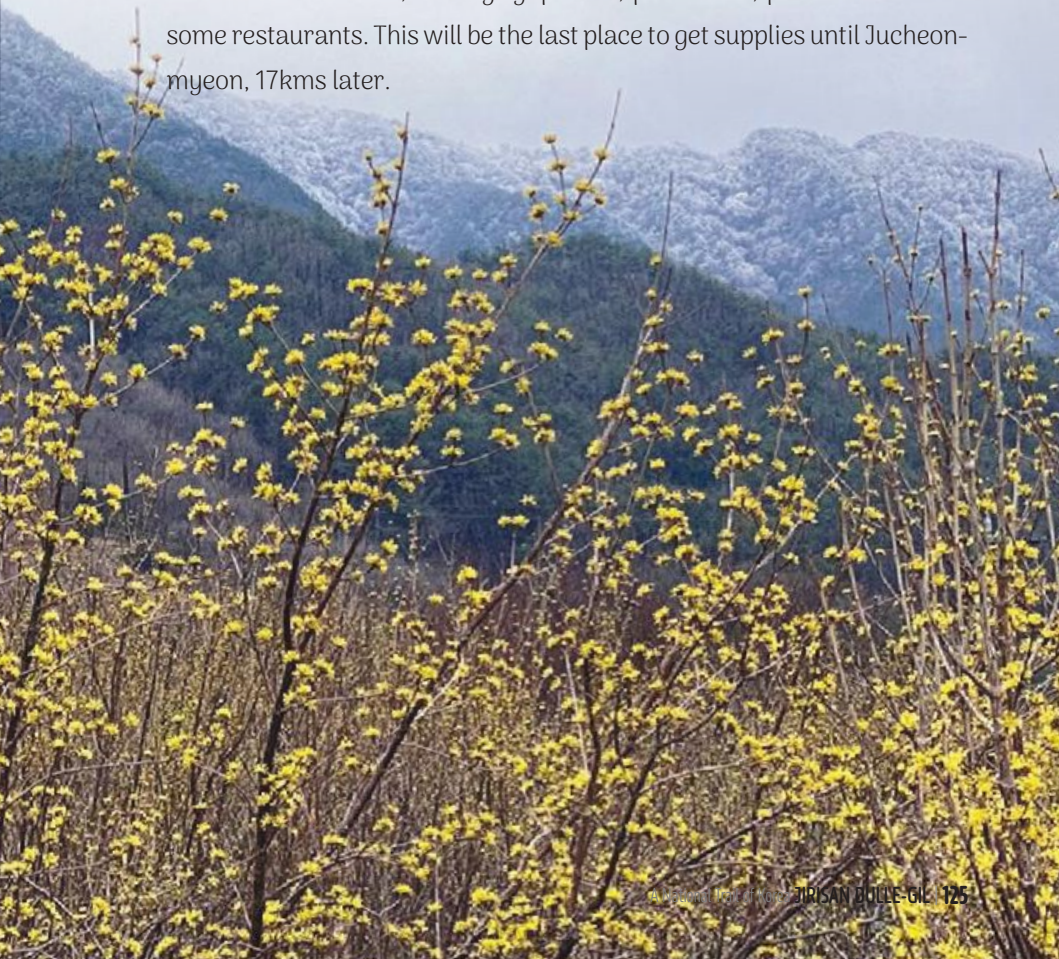
SECTION 20

Nandong-maeul ~ Sandong-myeon (13km 6hr)

From the car park to the Jirisan Sky Run, the Dulle-gil follows a steep road for a short while before it heads onto forestry road (imdo) flanked by pine forests. About 1km to the west is the Jirisan Garden Complex and the Jirisan Sky Run. It is still another 3.5kms until you arrive at the saddle at Gurijae. From here it descends on a mixture of more imdo and some bush trail. About 2.5km later it will join a vehicle road at the entrance to the Gurye Arboretum. There is a coffee shop here too. Designed on 54ha it contains 13 different themed styled gardens, a seed learning center and a healing forest with walkways for the public. From here the Dulle-gil follows the road all the way down for about another 2.5km until it meets a main road in Sandong-myeon. There you can see the Sandong



Yaksujang 산동약수장 which also has rooms and a BHC fried chicken restaurant. You can also see from here more restaurants, that continue on the road east up to Sansuyu-village where every late March they have a massive Sansuyu flower festival. The Sansuyu Tree is a cornelian cherry tree. Its blossom is a translucent yellow that people from all over Korea come to see. The festival is crammed with food tents, carnival activities, and loud music. It is one of the largest festivals in Korea. There are more accommodations in this area, including the Nogodan Guesthouse which has a dormitory, double bed rooms, and a downstairs restaurant that does a delicious black pig grilled pork. Bongsong makes a good Pizza. Back on the trail if you follow the signposts from Yaksujang, it is only 1km into the small village center of Sandong-myeon. In that area is a small store, a NongHyup mart, post office, police station and some restaurants. This will be the last place to get supplies until Jucheon-myeon, 17kms later.



Information

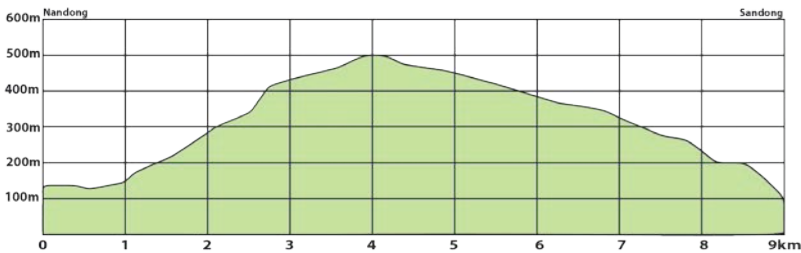


Transport

Local buses service this area from Gurye-eup. There is also a taxi rank in Sandong-myeon center and Kakao Taxi should work fine.

Accommodation

If you need somewhere to stay, then where the trail comes through in Sandong-myeon, there is the Yaksujang motel and sauna. If you walk about 1.5km up towards Sansuyu village there are more services, like a 7-11, motels including the Nogodan Guesthouse, restaurants, and if you fancy a pizza then Bongsong pizza has a good menu.







SECTION 21

Sandong-myeon ~ Jucheon-myeon [16km 7hr]

From the council offices in Sandong-myeon, where you can also get a stamp, the Dulle-gil continues on a back road. It stays on a small road for a couple of kms before it arrives at the village of Hyeoncheon, tucked in a valley beneath the peak of Gyeondusan 775m. From there the Dulle-gil goes north, undulating on a mixture of imdo and forest for 2 more kms before it gets to the village of Gyecheok-maeul with an interesting attraction. For the next 5kms the Dulle-gil elevates on a mixture of more imdo and forest, one section being through a stand of cypress trees. The trail comes out behind some remote farmhouses near the vehicle tunnel entrance and then it makes a big arc up to Bamjae at about 600m. It is more good forest trail for the next 3kms down to Ongchi-maeul, not really a village, just an area, where you pass under the main road and around the Jirsan Youth Camp, before slipping under another road pass and onto bushy imdo. From here the trail meanders nicely for the next 4kms to the Namwon office for the Jirisan Dulle-gil in Jucheon-maeul.

Bamjae is an old pass that separates Gurye-gun from Namwon-si and is also the provincial boundary between north and south Jeolla provinces. The vehicle tunnels beneath it were made in 1988. Bamjae gets its name from chestnuts of which you may notice there are many.





CYPRESS FOREST This is forest created on the road from Gyecheok Village to Bamjae. Thousands of cypress trees, some 30 years old, have been planted in this forest. Follow the signposts on pretty trail through the woods.

Information

Accommodation & Transport

In Jucheon if you make your way 500m east to the roundabout, you can see a motel on the corner. Then if you carry on around the corner you can see a coffee shop next to the Songlimsanjang 송림산장 (restaurant) which has an excellent menu and rooms upstairs which can be arranged through the coffee shop next door. You can get buses and taxis from Jucheon-myeon to Namwon-si from here. It is about a 20-30 min bus ride and less in a taxi.

Gyecheok-maeul is where the first Sansuyu-tree in Korea is said to have been planted. It is 1000 years old. The local legend says that a young girl came from Shangdong in China to marry a man from Gurye. She brought with her a seedling for the Sansuyu tree. This is it. The locals refer to it as the Grandmother tree of all the Sansuyu trees. It has kept its age very well. In front of the tree is a life size installment of the site where the famous Admiral Yi Sun-sin came to meet his troops and plan their assaults on the Japanese in the Jirisan and Seomjingang area.



SURAKPOKPO is a 15m high waterfall. When full of water it roars down. Surak waterfall and other falls similar to this in Korea were once used as acoustic training grounds for Pansori opera singers to strengthen their vocal chords.



About the Author



Tena Koutou Katoa.

Roger Shepherd is from Aotearoa-New Zealand.

Ko Tainui te Waka, Ko Taranui te maunga, Ko Waitohu te Awa,
Ko Ngati Raukawa te Iwi, Ko Ngati Kapumanawawhiti te Hapu,
Ko Mukukai te Taniwha.

My interest in Korean mountains began in 2006. Having taught English in 1999, I was back holidaying in Korea with a plan to do some hiking. I got introduced to the Baekdu-daegan, an unbroken mountain ridge forming the backbone of the entire peninsula. In the south, Koreans hiked it like a pilgrimage. So I set out on that. It was a remarkable walk. I wanted to make a guidebook.

In 2007, Korea based friend Andrew Douch and I, through-hiked the Baekdu-daegan and wrote the English guidebook. Writing that book opened up a new Korea to me. I came back in 2009 and through-hiked some of Korea's subsidiary ridges (Jeong-maek), which inspired me to start my company, Hike Korea, formed in December 2010.

Hike Korea offers tailor made guided hikes in South Korea. However, I found myself travelling to North Korea on expeditions, where I photographically documented many dozens of unseen peaks of the Baekdu-daegan. The North Korean photos were exhibited with my South Korean collection in Pyongyang and Seoul as a symbol of unity.

I published three photo-art books about my travels on the Baekdu-daegan in North Korea, and two English guidebooks for the South Korean part.

The opportunity to write this guidebook, about Jirisan, an area that I live in, was another chance for me to reveal Korea's culture and history through her mesmerizing mountain trails.

There are plenty of superb trails like this all over South Korea. You'll be amazed.

Roger Shepherd

www.solo.to/hikekorea

<https://www.hadong.go.kr/english.web> Hadong County Government Office

<https://www.gurye.go.kr/kr/main.do> Gurye County Government Office

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<https://www.jirisan-tour.com/> Jirisan Tour

<http://jirisan-trail.kr/> Jirisan Trail

Photo Credit – p57, Sangsa Falls @sancheonggunoffice

All maps were designed by the author.

All photographs were taken by the author.

Most of the information in this guidebook was sourced firsthand on the Jirisan Dulle-gil by the author.

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