

# Gyeongsangnam-do

## 경상남도



South Gyeongsang province is a study in contrasts. Travellers looking for big-city action are unlikely to go away disappointed as Busan is full of interesting restaurants, thousands of places to drink and enough cultural assets to fill a few days of exploring. It's the country's second-largest city and one of the world's busiest container ports, but Busan is not a high-energy Asian megacity. It is evolving into an interesting place thanks to a number of ongoing and proposed megaprojects. Chief among these is Lotte World 2, a 107-storey tower currently under construction in slightly dilapidated Nampodong.

The goal of turning Busan into Korea's movie capital took a great leap forward when the city government announced plans to build MGM Studio City, an amusement park with studio sets and a film academy in conjunction with US media giant Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. With the closure of the US military installation at Camp Hialeah, the city is left with a difficult question: what to do with a large, valuable tract of land that's 10 minutes on foot from Seomyeon?

While developers are busy rearranging the urban landscape, change comes slowly in the towns and fishing villages dotting the expansive countryside. Adventurous travellers willing to hop on a bus and explore will be rewarded with pristine islands, scenic mountains and lush rice paddies. While wandering the streets of a quiet village, don't be surprised if a local resident asks if you need help and then insists that you join his or her co-workers for dinner. Find yourself lost on the back roads? Stick your thumb out and you might be surprised to learn that hitchhiking works here. Few people speak English, but all you really need to succeed is a warm smile, patience and the ability to read body language.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Shock your taste buds with Busan seafood specialities like raw fish at **Gwang-an beach** (p237)
- Go island-hopping off the coast of **Tong-yeong** (p242)
- Rejuvenate your body at **Hursim-chung** (p231), one of the world's largest hot spas
- Explore **Jirisan** (p247), one of the best places to hike in Korea
- Take a stroll on the soft, white sand at **Sangju Beach** (p246)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 055

■ POPULATION: 7.9 MILLION

■ AREA: 10,500 SQ KM

## History

South Gyeongsang province has a long history of warfare, though it's difficult to beat the *Imjin Waeran* for destruction, treachery and the birth of an icon. In 1592 the Japanese were eager to secure a land route to China. The Joseon government refused assistance, so the Japanese attacked. Led by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the Japanese landed 160,000 troops at several places including Busan, Sangju Beach and Jinju, where the Koreans made a valiant yet unsuccessful stand against a superior enemy.

The war's star was Admiral Yi Sun-sin, a brilliant tactician credited with the development of the turtle ship, an ironclad vessel instrumental in harassing Japanese supply

lines. Despite his significant wartime contributions, Yi was arrested in 1597 for disobeying orders thanks to a clever ruse concocted by the Japanese, who were eager to see the good admiral removed from the war. With Yi behind bars, the Japanese launched a massive assault that destroyed all but 13 of Korea's 133 vessels. Shaken by the loss, the King released Yi and put him in charge of the tattered navy. In a classic case of size doesn't matter, the admiral destroyed or damaged 133 Japanese vessels. One year later, Yi defeated a Japanese armada near Namhae Island that cost the invaders 450 ships. It also cost Admiral Yi his life. In September of 1598, Hideyoshi died and the Japanese leadership lost its appetite for the war.

## National & Provincial Parks

There are five national parks scattered across the province. On the western flank, Jirisan National Park is noted for serious climbs. Hallyeo National Maritime Park is a spectacular ocean playground encompassing coastal islands from Namhae to Geoje. Along the border separating South and North Gyeongsang provinces, Gayasan National Park is famous for Haeinsa, one of the country's most important temples (although it's located in South Gyeongsang province, access is easiest from Daegu p195). Tucked into the northwest corner of the province, Deogyusan National Park is where you'll find downhill skiers and snowboarders hitting the slopes at Muju Resort (p301).

There are two provincial parks: Yeonhwasan (40 minutes southeast of Jinju) and Gajisan (40 minutes north of Busan). Travellers looking for stimulating day trips from Busan should consider visiting Gajisan Provincial Park for terrific temples like Seongnamsa and a challenging hike up Mount Gaji (1240m).

## Getting There & Around

Most train travellers stop at Busan station, a big glassy facility close to the city centre. Some inbound trains also stop at Gupo, a handy west-end terminal ideal for travellers who don't need to go downtown. Train travel in the rest of the province is possible, though schedules are not always convenient. For regional trips, the bus is a superior option with departures from Seobu and Dongbu bus terminals. By air, travellers land at Gimhae International Airport, about 30 minutes west of central Busan.

## BUSAN 부산

‰ 051 / pop 3.6 million / 763 sq km

There's a noticeably absent cosmopolitan feel in this port city known for raw fish and a harsh dialect that people in Seoul sometimes find incomprehensible. Underneath the drab urban landscape created by an unimaginative use of concrete, quirky people jump the queue, shout while conversing and giggle at the sight of international travellers. Rough around the edges indeed, but like any rogue there's a charming side that begins to emerge once formal barriers have been dropped over dinner and drinks. Cultural mores prevent most people from initiating contact with foreigners. But if you take the first step, the level of kindness and generosity extended your way can be surprising.

## Orientation

Busan is a sprawling coastal city tucked into the southeastern corner of the peninsula. The city's manufacturing centre and new container port are at the western end in Gangseo-gu (Map p230). Gimhae International Airport is further west, 27km from Busan's city centre. Agricultural and fishing communities continue to survive in Gijang County in the city's east end, though development pressures may bring significant changes over the next decade.

The heart of the city is concentrated in a band of north-south development running through the centre of Busan. Busy container ports dominate the southern coastline and around Nampodong, an ageing commercial district with a mishmash of back alleys. Two passenger ferry terminals, the immigration office and a community of draggletailed buildings that serve as a living museum of 40 years past are one subway stop north at Jungangdong. Further north, Line 1 and 2 of the subway intersect in Seomyeon (Map p233), the city centre packed with bars, restaurants and street vendors. Continue north on Line 1 (Map p232) to find Hurshimchung spa, Beomeosa temple and a trail leading to Geumjeong Mountain. Gwang-an and Hae-undae (Map p235) beaches are easy to reach on the eastern section of Line 2.

## Information

### EMERGENCY

Fire & rescue ‰ 119

Police ‰ 112

### INTERNET RESOURCES

City government (<http://english.busan.go.kr>) For basic socio-economic and travel data.

Pusanweb ([www.pusanweb.com](http://www.pusanweb.com)) A site to find teaching employment and chronic kvetchers.

South Gyeongsang (<http://english.gsnd.net/default.jsp>) Learn about South Gyeongsang's sites and geography.

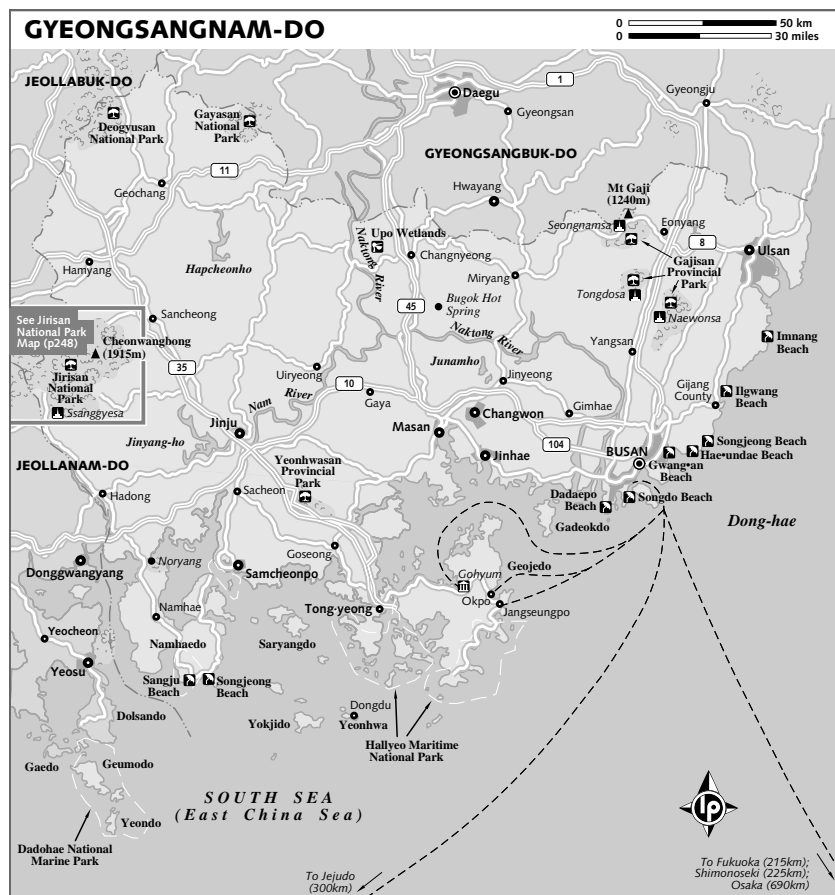
### MEDICAL SERVICES

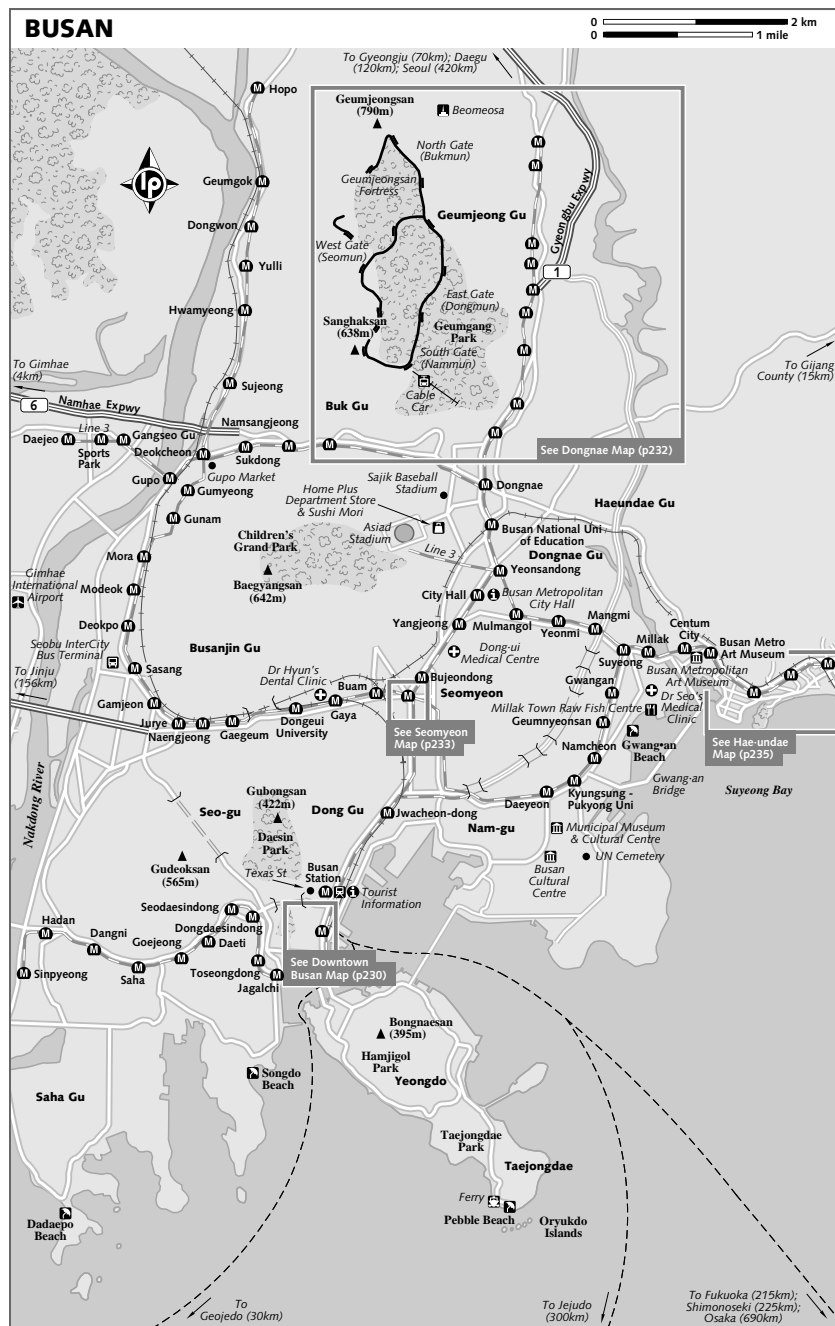
Dong-ui Medical Centre (Map p228; ‰ 850 8523)

Marie Kim is an RN who can help travellers. Take Line 1 to Yangjeong station; outside Exit 4, take local bus 8 or 8-1.

Dr Hyun (Map p228; ‰ 897 2283) For dental problems. His 2nd-floor office is near Line 2 Gaya station, Exit 2.

Dr Seo (Map p228; ‰ 755 0920) For general medical maladies. Dr Seo speaks English well. His clinic is at a major intersection beside a pharmacy in Milak-dong, 10 minutes on foot from Line 2 Gwang-an station, Exit 1. Turn right at the second corner and walk 600m.





## MONEY

Most banks exchange currency, though the level of service varies; your chances of finding reasonably efficient service are greatest at the Korea Exchange Bank (KEB). There's a black market for US dollars in Jungangdong and Nampodong; look for women sitting on chairs clutching black purses and whispering, 'change'.

**Gimhae International Airport** currency exchange domestic terminal (Map p228; ㄱ 9:30am-4:30pm); international terminal (ㄱ 8:30am-9pm).

## POST

Is Korea a wired country? Hell yes, even the post office has free internet access.

**Central post office** (Map p230; ㄱ 8am-6pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat & Sun) Line 1 to Jungangdong station, Exit 9.

## TOURIST INFORMATION

**Busan station office** (Map p228; ㄱ 441 6565; ㄱ 8:30am-8pm) There's a modest selection of maps and knowledgeable staff.

**Gimhae International Airport desk** (Map p228) domestic terminal (ㄱ 973 4607; ㄱ 9am-9pm); international terminal (ㄱ 973 4537; ㄱ 7am-9pm) Try these when you need help finding a bus into the city.

**Hae-undae office** (Map p235; ㄱ 749 4335; ㄱ 9am-6pm) A great selection of material; beside the Busan Aquarium on Hae-undae beach.

## TRAVEL AGENCIES

It's easy to find a travel agency. Finding one with English-speaking staff, well that's a different matter.

**Kangsan Travel** (Map p235; ㄱ 747 0031; www.kangsantravel.com; ㄱ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, to 2.30pm Sat) provides English-language services geared towards expats. Take Line 2 to Hae-undae station, Exit 7; the agency is on the 2nd floor above a Family Mart.

## Dangers & Annoyances

It's best to avoid Texas St – a small commercial district opposite Busan station that's home for shifty people, Russians, hostess bars and the occasional street hold up – at night. Never drink tap water; don't even cook with it. Typhoon season – roughly mid-July to the end of August – brings heavy rain, ferry cancellations and on occasion severe property damage. Yellow dust storms in the spring don't compare with the thick sheets of gunk that blanket Seoul, but there are days when it's best not to go outside.

## Sights & Activities

### BEOMEOSA 범어사

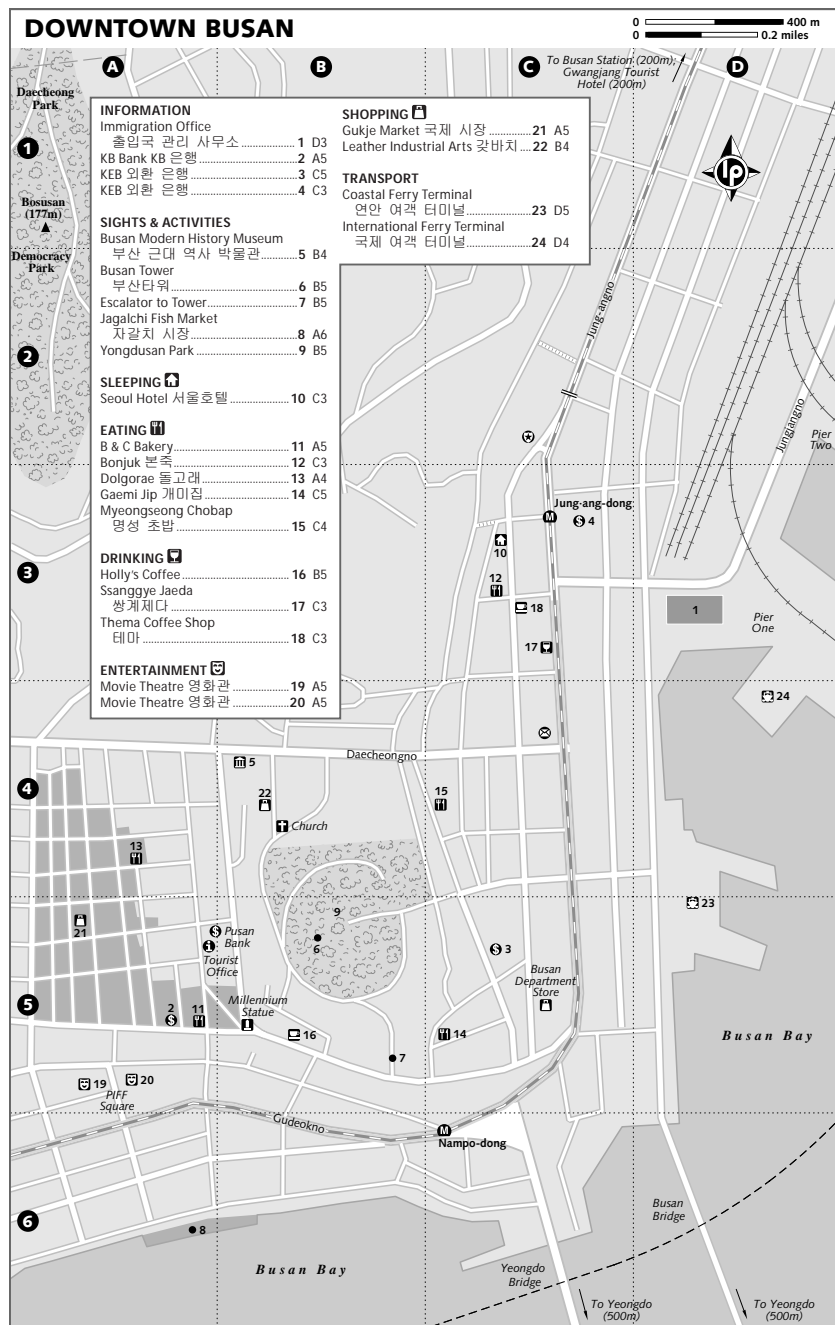
Magnificent Beomeosa temple (Map p232; adult/youth/child W1000/700/500; ㄱ 7am-7pm) is Busan's best sight. Founded in AD 678, all of the original structures have been rebuilt at some point during Korea's history of invasions and conquests. Despite its city location, Beomeosa temple is a world away from the urban jungle, with beautiful architecture neatly set against an extraordinary mountain setting. It's a busy place, as the path leading to the temple serves as the northern starting point for trails across Geumjeong Mountain. Before heading back to the city, visit the restaurants near the bus stop to enjoy *pajeon* (파전; green onion pancake) for W6000. Take Line 1 to Beomeosa station, Exit 5. At street level spin 180 degrees, turn left at the corner and walk 200m to the terminus. Catch bus 90 (W900, 15 minutes, every 15 minutes from 8am to 8pm) or take a W2500 taxi to the temple entrance.

### GEUMJEONG FORTRESS 금정산성

Travellers climbing Geumjeongsan (Geumjeong Mountain) expecting to see a fort will be disappointed because there isn't one. Geumjeong fortress (Map p232) is a long stone wall with four gates serving as expensive trail markers. Not all is lost because this is where you'll find some of the city's best hiking. Outdoor enthusiasts seeking an intimate experience with nature should avoid the mountain on holidays and weekend mornings – peak times for maddening crowds of fashionable hikers.

The journey to Geumjeong Mountain is as good as the destination. Most hikers start at the north end of the trail that begins with a mildly steep climb along the left side of Beomeosa temple. This trail eventually leads to the North Gate (북문). The 8.8km hike from Beomeosa to the South Gate (남문) is a comfortable hike with a couple of steep stretches. Trails are well marked in Korean with a handful of English signs, though there is a need for signage at the East Gate (동문). Travellers coming from Beomeosa temple should pass under the gate and walk down hill to a paved road. Turn right at the road and walk to a large signboard. Turn left here to pick up the trail to the South Gate.

The least arduous route is by cable car (Map p232; one way/return adult W3000/5000, child W2000/2500; ㄱ 9am-6.30pm) inside Geumgang Park (Map p232;



adult/child W600/300; 11 9am-6pm Mar-Oct, 9am-5pm Nov-Feb) at the southern base of the mountain. Climbing 540m, the ride provides a splendid view of the city's valley development. From the cable car, it's a comfortable 10-minute walk to the South Gate.

The cable car is a 15-minute walk from Oncheonjang station on Line 1. Take Exit 1 and walk left towards the overhead pedestrian crosswalk. Cross the street, walk down the left staircase and turn right at the first corner. Down the street, there's a sign pointing to Geumgang Park. Once through the park's gate, take the middle paved road to the cable car, called Rope Way in English.

### SEOKBULSA 석불사

Hard to find, difficult to reach and a wonder to behold, Seokbulsa temple (Map p232; admission free; 11 7am-7pm) is a hermitage carved into rock. Two massive boulders stretching 40m in height jut out from the mountainside to form a U-shaped enclave with three rock facings that is now a place of worship. Inside the enclave, enormous Buddhist images have been meticulously etched into stone. Visually powerful in scale and impact, it's the kind of work that moves first-time visitors to exclaim 'Wow' as they step back and arch their necks to get the full picture. Quietly walk past the women bowing on the 'shoes-off' platform and step into the small caves for a close-up look at the Buddha glowing in soft candlelight.

Getting to Seokbulsa is a worthwhile challenge for anyone with a desire to explore out-of-the-way places. The most interesting – and strenuous – route is to add this stop to your Geumjeongsan Mountain hike. From the South Gate (남문), the path indicated by the Mandeokchon (만덕촌) sign leads to a collection of restaurants and foot-volleyball courts in Namman Village (남만 마을). At one point, the path stops at a court; walk right and pick up the trail on the other side.

About 500m down the trail, look for a sign that reads 석불사 입구 (Seokbulsa entrance). Turn right and walk down the steep hill to the road sign pointing the way to a 600m uphill hump to the temple. On the way back, there's no need to return to Namman Village. Take the trail to the top of the mountain and ride the cable car down. Bottom line: add 4km and 1½ hours to the Geumjeongsan Mountain hike to experience one of the most unique temples in Busan.

### PUBLIC BATHS

You can't really experience Korea unless you've been to a public bath.

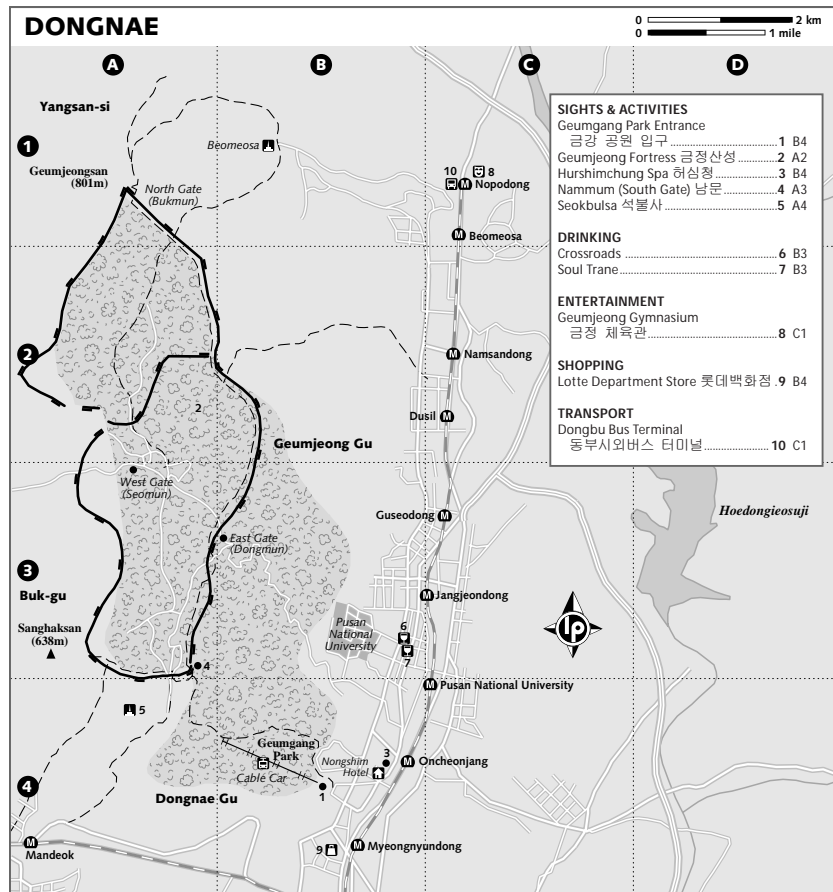
With 4300 sq metres of floor space, Hurshimchung (Map p232; adult/youth/child W7900/4000/5000; 11 5.30am-10pm, last entry 9pm) is the best place to take the plunge. Reportedly the largest *jjimjilbang* (bathhouse) in Asia, the soaking tubs, saunas and domed roof make this spectacle a great place to relax, wash and exfoliate. Guests can stay as long as they like and take a break in the 3rd-floor snack bar; put on the *jjimjilbang* uniform (Monday to Saturday W1000/Sunday free) in the change room and use the locker key to pay. The bill is settled as you leave the spa. Located opposite the Nongshim Hotel, it's a 15-minute walk from Oncheonjang station or the cable car.

Vesta Spa & Jjimjilbang (Map p235; adult/youth spa W5000/5000; spa & jjimjilbang W7900/5000; 11 24hr) can not compare with Hurshimchung in terms of size. It does however have a cosy atmosphere with an attractive interior design that relies heavily on wood and flagstone. What's the coolest feature of this must-try facility? The outdoor balcony where guests can stand in the buff overlooking the sea. Located on Dalmaji Hill, a W3000 taxi from Hae-undae beach is the only practical way to get here.

### BEACHES

Hae-undae (Map p235) is the country's most famous beach. During the peak travel season in August, umbrellas mushroom across the 2km beach while frolickers fill the water with truck-size inner tubes rented from booths behind the beach. It's a fun family outing with 500,000 friends, though the marketing bump portraying Hae-undae as a world-class resort is bunk. Take Line 2 to Hae-undae station, Exit 3, and walk to the beach.

Among the city's seven other beaches, Gwang-an (Map p228) is the best option for access and quality (the other beaches are Dadaepo, Songdo, Songjeong, Ilgwang, Imnang and Pebble Beach). Although the ugly wall of commercial development behind the beach diminishes the daytime experience, Gwang-an really shines at night. The multi-coloured light show illuminating the bridge is grand. The shortest route to Gwang-an is Line 2 to Geumjeongsan station, Exit 3. Rotate 180 degrees at street level and turn right at the corner; the beach is five minutes down the road.



### YONGDUSAN PARK 용두산 공원

In the centre of this humble park stands the 118m **Busan Tower** (Map p230; adult/youth/child W3500/3000/2500; 11 8.30am-10pm Apr-Oct, 9am-10pm Nov-Mar). If the haze is not too thick, daytime views of container-ship traffic in the harbour provide a sense of the port's scale of operations. Other things to do: buy corn from a kiosk or watch pigeons swoop for food.

### JAGALCHI FISH MARKET 자갈치 시장

Anyone with a love of seafood and a tolerance for powerful odours could easily spend a couple of hours exploring the country's largest fish market (Map p230). Waterfront warehouses, tiny shops and elderly women perched on street corners sell an incredible

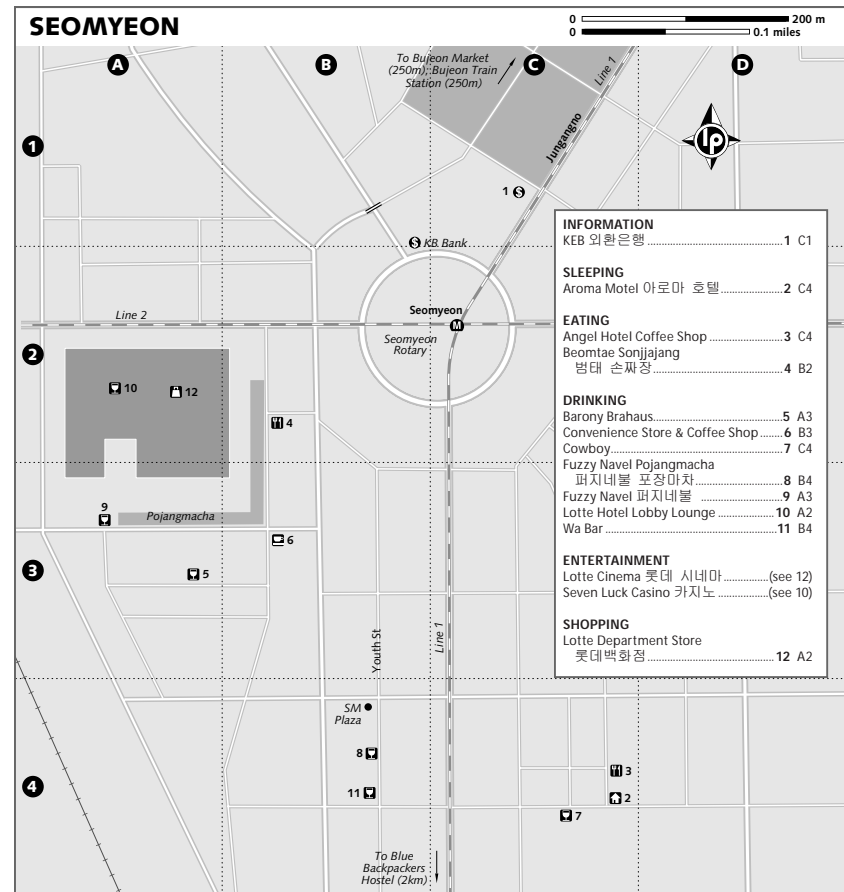
variety of seafood. Sea-weathered sailors offering a 20-minute boat tour of the harbour might approach you on the pier.

### MUSEUMS & EXHIBITIONS

Busan frowns upon bourgeois pursuits like art and urban design, so it isn't surprising that the arts scene is, well, lacking.

The **Busan Metropolitan Art Museum** (Map p228; 11 744 2602; adult/youth/child W700/300/free, Sat free; 11 10am-6pm) is hardly a must-see but it does come in handy during the typhoon season when you need a place to escape the rain. Take Line 2 to Metro Art Museum station, Exit 5 and walk 150m.

In Hae-undae, the **Busan Aquarium** (Map p235; 11 740 1700; adult/youth/child W15,000/12,500/10,000;



11 10am-7pm Mon-Fri; 9am-9pm Sat, Sun & holidays, to 11pm Jul-Aug) is a large fish tank with 50,000 creatures. The aquarium also hosts a shark diving class open to nondivers. Visit [www.scubainkorea.com](http://www.scubainkorea.com) for details.

The **Busan Modern History Museum** (Map p230; 11 253 3845; admission free; 11 9am-6pm; closed Mon) is a modest effort but it does display hard-to-find information about Busan's development. It's located north of Yongdusan Park, 300m west of the Jungangdong central post office.

In Uamdong, the **Busan Municipal Museum** (Map p228; adult/youth/child W500/300/free; 11 9am-6pm, closed Mon) has a small collection of Korean War photos and film footage.

Across the street, the **UN Cemetery** (Map p228; [www.unmck.or.kr](http://www.unmck.or.kr); 11 625 1608; admission free; 11 9am-

5pm) appeals to history enthusiasts, though the photo exhibition is an embarrassingly modest tribute. English-speaking tour guides are inside the kiosk. Line 2 to Daeyeon station, Exit 5. At street level turn 180 degrees and you'll see a sign pointing to the UN Cemetery.

### Tours

Mipo Wharf (Map p235), the small wharf at the eastern end of Hae-undae beach, is home base for two ocean tours.

The 50-minute circuit (round trip adult/child 13,000/7000; tours 7.30pm, 8.20pm, 9.10pm and 10pm) runs around Gwang'an Bridge.

An 80-minute tour-shuttle service to the Coastal Ferry Terminal in Jungangdong (Map p230; one way adult/child 14,900/7450)

departs Hae-undae every 90 minutes from 9am (last departure 4pm). On the return trip, departures from the Coastal Ferry Terminal start at 10.30 (last departure 5.30pm).

## Festivals & Events

In August special events are held on the city's beaches as part of the **Busan Sea Festival**, including the **Busan International Rock Festival** ([www.rockfestival.co.kr/birof\\_english](http://www.rockfestival.co.kr/birof_english); Dadaepo beach). Limited information is online.

The **Pusan International Film Festival** ([www.piff.org](http://www.piff.org)) is the city's largest and most significant festival. First launched in 1996, the 10th version in 2005 screened 307 films from 73 countries. The festival is held sometime between September and October.

## Sleeping

### BUDGET

**Blue Backpackers Hostel** (☎ 634 3962; [www.busanbackpackers.com](http://www.busanbackpackers.com); dm W15,000, tw W25,000-35,000 a i ) Everything today's discriminating budget traveller needs is here: free washing machine, breakfast and internet. Take Line 1 to Beomnaegol station, Exit 3, and cross the street at the light. Turn left and walk towards the bridge. On the bridge, look for a door leading to a staircase. Walk down to the parking lot and go to building 106 with '1-2' over the entrance. Take the elevator to 1802.

**Seoul Hotel** (Map p230; ☎ 469 7001; d W25,000; a ) Unremarkable rooms close to the ferry terminal. You get a simple bed in a small room with a crap TV. If you need more, this is not the place for you. Take Line 1 to Jungangdong station, Exit 17. Turn left at the first street. Walk straight and turn left at second block.

**Arpina Youth Hostel** (☎ 731 9800; [www.busanayouthhostel.co.kr](http://www.busanayouthhostel.co.kr); dm W28,600; ste from W150,000; a i s ) Hostel and golf anyone? You get both and more at Arpina, a nonsmoking, mixed-use

facility with dorm bunks, a five-lane pool, health club and driving range. For W100,000, you can rent a dorm room. Take Line 2 to Metropolitan Art Museum station; take Exit 3 and walk straight two minutes. The hostel is down the road beside the green net.

**Haotel Motel** (모텔 하오텔; ☎ 863 0413; d W30,000; a ) Spend W30,000 at any love motel and you might be disappointed, but spend your money here and be charmed by the country-inn feel of this understated property. From hallways adorned with green vine on white lattice to the wicker basket of towels, this place embodies cosiness. Take Line 1 or 3 to Yeonsan-dong station, Exit 1, walk straight and turn left at the second block then turn right at the first block.

### MIDRANGE

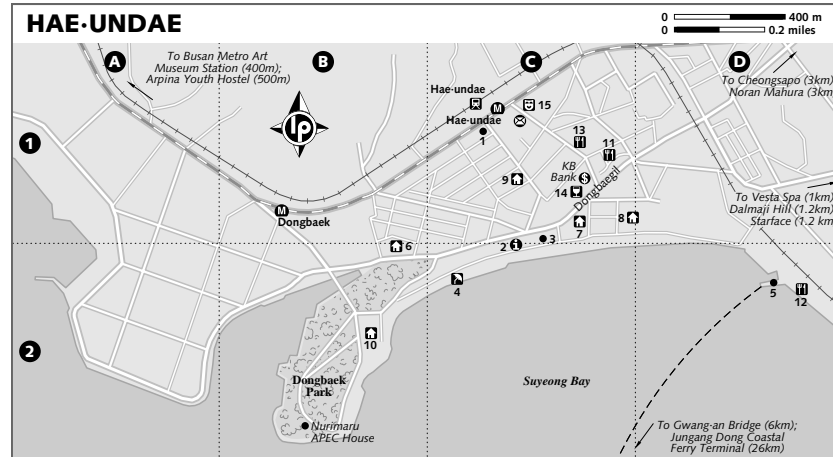
**Sugar Motel** (Map p235; ☎ 747 8620; standard/special/VIP W40,000/50,000/60,000; a i ) If your idea of a romantic getaway includes a supply of battery-operated devices, this motel is worth inspecting. Hae-undae beach is around the corner, but with so much stuff in the room you may not get that far. Add W10,000/20,000 Friday/Saturday. Take Line 2 to Hae-undae station, Exit 3 and walk towards the beach; turn right at the first major intersection.

**Four Season Motel** (포시즌 모텔; ☎ 866 1712; standard/deluxe/ste W40,000/50,000/80,000; a ) It's finally here: a motel with a water park. Aqua fans go weak at the knees inside the Blue Hawaii room when they see the tub big enough to make a splash with any group. Friends stopping by later? No problem – there's room for a party in the shower. Line 1 or 3 to Yeonsan station. Take Exit 5 and walk right at street level. The hotel is on the 12th floor of the CMC building.

**Gwangjang Tourist Hotel** (광장 관광 호텔; ☎ 464 3141; d/tw/ondol W43,000, ste W60,000; a i )

## BUSAN IN FILM

*Chin-gu* begins in the 1970s with four boys running behind a truck spewing a thick cloud of insect repellent, a powerful image underscoring this gangster film's theme of blindly chasing after something without considering the reasons or consequences. By the 1990s the boys are men and their lives have taken radically different directions, with two friends ending up as leaders in rival gangs, leading to a compelling courtroom scene. Artfully directed and skilfully acted, the semiautobiographical story based on director Kwak Kyungtaek's life is set in Busan, with local sites such as Jagalchi fish market and a gang fight inside a movie theatre – which today sits as an underutilised skin-flick venue. *Chin-gu*, which is Korean for friend, is the highest grossing movie in the country, and attracted eight million viewers. The DVD version has English subtitles.



Perhaps the city's best tourist-class hotel, it's ideal for travellers who require only a proper place to lie down after a busy day of sightseeing but can't stomach the idea of slumming in a comparably priced love motel. Line 1 to Busan station, Exit 8, and walk across the plaza.

### TOP END

**Westin Chosun Beach Hotel** (Map p235; ☎ 749 7201; r W193,000; a i s ) It's Busan's oldest international hotel, but gets better with age. A hint of retro shaken, not stirred, with modern touches, creates a James Bond – à la Sean Connery – dashing cool. Inside and out, this is the best hotel on Hae-undae beach.

Other recommendations include:  
**Novotel Ambassador Busan** (Map p235; ☎ 743 1234; d W190,000; a i s ) Staff could benefit from a customer-relations training seminar.  
**Grand Hotel** (Map p235; ☎ 740 0114; d W200,000; a i s ) Better-than-average facilities (like a 50m pool) across the street from Hae-undae beach.  
**Paradise Hotel** (Map p235; ☎ 749 2111; tw W240,000; a i s ) Busan's first casino is here.

## Eating

The food in Busan is salty, spicy and raw, just like the people of this fair metropolis. Seafood in various shapes and forms – like eel, octopus, and swellfish – is popular and plentiful.

### BUDGET

**Dolgorae** (Map p230; meals from W2500) The interior looks like a penitentiary but the stern women who run this shop serve some of the city's best

### INFORMATION

Kangsan Travel .....	1 C1
Tourist Office 관광 안내 .....	2 C2

### SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Busan Aquarium 부산 아쿠아리움 .....	3 C1
Hae-undae Beach 해운대 해수욕장 .....	4 C2
Mipo Wharf 미포 .....	5 D2

### SLEEPING

Grand Hotel .....	6 B2
Novotel Ambassador Busan Hotel 부산 노보텔 엠버서더 호텔 .....	7 C1
Paradise Hotel 파라다이스 호텔 .....	8 C1
Sugar Motel 슈가 모텔 .....	9 C1
Westin Chosun Beach Hotel 웨스턴 조선 비치 호텔 .....	10 B2

### EATING

Geumsu Bogguk 금수 복국 .....	11 C1
Grandmother Lee's Raw Fish House 이씨 할매 횡집 .....	12 D2
Ops Bakery .....	13 C1

### DRINKING

U2 .....	14 C1
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### ENTERTAINMENT

Megabox .....	15 C1
Paradise Casino 카지노 .....	(see 8)

*doenjang jjigae* (된장찌개; spicy soy-bean stew). The soup bowls are small but with prices this low, order another set. Located at the end of a narrow lane one block west of the KB bank near B&C Bakery.

**B&C Bakery** (Map p230; meals from W3000; 11.30am-10.30pm) One of the best places to stock up on carbohydrates before exploring Nampodong's

## A RAW DEAL

Raw fish is called *hoe* (회); sounds similar to 'when' without the 'n'). A typical raw-fish dinner starts with a small banquet of appetisers including raw baby octopus still wiggling on the plate. A platter of thinly sliced raw fish without rice is the main course. Fish is dipped into a saucer of *chogochujang* (초고추장), a watery red-pepper sauce, or a dish of soy sauce (간장) mixed with wasabi (와사비). The meal is customarily finished with rice and a boiling pot of *mae-untang* (매운탕; spicy fish soup). Most Koreans love raw fish, which they say has a delicate taste and smooth texture. Western travellers may find the taste bland to a slightly tough, almost rubbery texture. A small platter starting at W40,000 is rarely sufficient to satisfy a pair of raw-fish aficionados. Japanese sushi is also popular, also called *chobap* (초밥) or the longer, more accurate name *saengseon chobap* (생선 초밥). Like most special outings in Korea, raw fish is best accompanied with *soju* (the local firewater, Korea's national hootch and leading cause of headaches).

**Millak Town Raw Fish Centre** (민락타운 외 센터; Map p228) This collection of raw-fish shops provides a rustic dining experience. Located at the northeast end of Gwang-an beach, purchase a fish for W15,000 to W30,000 and walk upstairs to eat; the woman selling you the fish will indicate which floor. Inside the seating area, your fish will be prepared and served for W10,000 per person.

**Haryu** (☎ 753 1126; Millak Town Raw Fish Centre; per person from W20,000, set courses from W40,000; 11 24hr) If you don't need to pick a fish, walk up to the 2nd floor to a restaurant run by the English-speaking owner, Mr Jeon. Take Line 2 to Gwang-an station, Exit 5. At the top of the stairs, turn 180 degrees and then right at the first street. Walk 600m and turn left at the beach. The raw-fish centre is the large, brown building 300m down the road.

**Grandmother Lee's Raw Fish House** (Map p235; per serving W20,000; 11 10am-sunrise) Stop by for raw fish and you might end up partying until sunrise. It's a small restaurant with ground-floor fish tanks and space for groups upstairs. The affable Mr Lee speaks English well and takes the time to explain the features of each fish. Walk to the eastern end of Hae-undae beach, turn left at the first street past the Mipo ferry terminal and then a quick right turn. It's the first restaurant on your right.

**Myeongseong Chobap** (Map p230; sushi sets from W12,000, raw fish W30,000-60,000) A popular Japanese-style restaurant serving *saengseon chobap* and *saengseonhoe koseu* (생선회 코스, Korean raw-fish set menu). Located in Jungangdong, it's 100m north of the Tower Hotel with 'sushi' written on the signboard.

The **Jagalchi Fish Market** (p232) in Nampodong is the city's sprawling wholesale and retail centre for all things fishy. There are heaps of waterfront restaurant options to enjoy raw fish, all surrounded by boats off-loading their catch, enormous seafood warehouses and salty characters. Although it's a popular destination for Japanese tourists who seem to enjoy the 'roughing it on the pier' dining experience, the primitive interior design of many shops does not hold the same level of attraction for local citizens who prefer a less rustic environ, like that found in the restaurants in and around Gwang-an and Hae-undae beaches.

back alleys. Pastries, cakes and coffee are on the 1st floor; light meals are served upstairs.

**Beomtae Sonjjajang** (Map p233; meals from W3500) Here's a sterling example of a successful restaurant owner who won't update, modernise or even clean up the shop interior. According to superstition, the good fortune a successful shop enjoys could be lost if the interior were changed. Consequently, some shoddy-looking restaurants, like this one, serve great food. The *jjambong* (짬뽕; spicy seafood soup) and *tangsuyuk* (탕수육; sweet-and-sour fried pork) are all excellent.

**Ops Bakery** (Map p235; meals from W3500; 11 7am-11pm) You thought everything in Hae-undae was overpriced? Well, almost everything, now that Ops serves bacon and eggs for breakfast. Located on the street opposite the Novotel.

**Podo Cheong** (Map p233; ☎ 806 9797; per serving W5000; 11 midday-midnight) It's not the best *subul galbi* (숯불갈비; charcoal-fired barbecue) restaurant but it is very good. The main draw of this busy restaurant is the backyard barbecue feel in the outdoor patio. Lean *moksal* (목살; pork chop) tastes great, though most Koreans choose *samgyeopsal* (삼겹살; bacon). Unless

you're hoping to accelerate the likelihood of a heart attack, avoid this cut, which is essentially a slab of fat with a hint of pork.

**Bonjuk** (Map p230; meals from W6000; 11 8am-10pm, closed Sun) When you need a break from Korea's flamethrower-hot food, try porridge. *Juk* (죽) comes in several flavours including vegetable and silky smooth pumpkin. It's outstanding stick-to-your-ribs food suitable for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

## Seafood

**Sushi Mori** (수시 모리; sushi plates from W1500) The environs are not especially attractive but this restaurant in the Home Plus department store (p231) food court has sushi on a conveyor belt. If you'd prefer to eat on the run, go to the back of the store's grocery section and buy a box of sushi for the unbelievably low price of W390 per piece. It's not outstanding quality but it is good.

**Pungmi Chueotang** (퐁미추어탕; meals W6000; 11 11am-9pm Sun-Fri, 11am-10pm Sat) This scruffy-looking restaurant draws people from great distances for the *chueotang* (추어탕; loach soup). Made from ground loach and leafy cabbage, the dark-green soup has a mild taste. If it's too mild, dip into the plastic tubs of seasoning, which includes *sancho* (산초), a brown spice that adds a rich, earthy flavour when used sparingly. With a self-serve counter of unlimited side dishes like baked fish and seaweed, it's an outstanding meal and one of the city's best deals.

Getting here is not easy, though. Take a taxi from Seomyeon or Sports Complex station, Exit 11, and go to the main gate of Children's Park. Walk along the road to the right of the park entrance then follow the cement lane another 200m.

**Halmae Jaecheopguk** (할매 재첩국; per serving W6000; 11 24hr) Hungover in Gwang-an beach? Do what many Koreans do and stumble over to this restaurant respected for hangover remedies disguised as food. *Jaecheopguk* (재첩국; marsh clam soup) is a clear shellfish broth. Located on Gwang-an's one-way street opposite the Giant Step jazz bar; look for the 24-hour restaurant with a blinding yellow interior.

## MIDRANGE & TOP END

**Angel Hotel Coffee Shop** (Map p233; meals from W8000; 11 8am-11pm) When the idea of rice and *kimchi* for breakfast has you considering the benefits of fasting, try this economical and tasty

option: bacon and eggs with change back from a W10,000 note.

**Gaboja Eonyang Bulgogi** (가보자 언양불고기; ☎ 751 9232; per 150g serving W20,000; 11 10am-6am) Located on Gwang-an's Eonyang Bulgogi one-way street, this *subul galbi* restaurant serves sumptuous though stratospherically expensive Eonyang beef. There is a belief in Korea that domestic beef – called *Hanu* – is superior in quality to imported meat and therefore warrants high prices. Maybe, but at W130,000 per kilogram it better rock your world.

## Seafood

**Gaemi Jip** (Map p230; meals from W7000; 11 9am-11pm) The speciality is *nakji bokkeum* (낙지볶음; octopus stew), a fiery dish that can cause customers to sweat profusely, so keep a good supply of beverages close at hand. Located on a small lane in Nampodong near the steps to Yongdusan Park, it's worth the effort to find this place if you want to try something different.

**Geumsu Bokguk** (Map p235; meals from W8000; 11 24hr) Remember the Simpson's episode when Homer ate blowfish and was told he had 24 hours to live? This restaurant serves that fish. A worthwhile restaurant for anyone who wants to experience a seafood delicacy and earn bragging rights: 'I ate poisonous fish and survived'. Stay on the 1st floor for relatively inexpensive dishes. Head upstairs and join the Japanese tourists who have a strong yen for the pricey sets. Located on a lane across the street from the Paradise Hotel.

## Drinking

There are thousands of places to drink, ranging from sophisticated hotel bars to *pojangmacha*, Korean late-night drinking establishments fashioned out of tarpaulin and plastic chairs.

## PUSAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

It's the original party zone for expats, with heaps of places to drink and eat, all geared towards fickle university students.

**Soul Trane** (Map p232; drinks W4000) It's a dance club that falls in and out of fashion with English-language teachers and Korean women hoping to brush up on their conversation skills. It's near the front gate of the university.

**Crossroads** (Map p232; drinks W4000) Across the street from Soul Trane, Crossroads often plays the foil for people looking for a less intense place to quaff. On occasion, a rowdy place in its own right.

**KYUNGSUNG-PUKYONG UNIVERSITIES**

The commercial district in front of Kyung-sung and Pukyong universities is an electric party district with eating and drinking options catering to 40,000 hungry, thirsty and frugal students. Most expats hang out in one or two places.

**Ol' 55** (drinks W4000; ㄱ 7pm-2am Tue-Thu, 7pm-5am Fri & Sat, closed Sun) A testosterone-charged tavern with everything a beer-chugging man needs: ale to match budget and taste, a prohibition on hip-hop music, and women who play billiards in high-heel shoes and cut-offs. Take Line 2 to Kyung-sung-Pukyong station, Exit 3, turn 180 degrees, walk to the corner and turn left. Turn left at the second street and right at next block.

**Vinyl Underground** (drinks W4000; ㄱ 7pm-5am) Bring your A-game to this hip-hopping dance club that's wall-to-wall flesh late Fridays and Saturdays. Mingle with local women sporting the latest music video-inspired club wear and the baddest home boyz to come out of Sas-katchewan. It's up the street from Ol'55.

**HAE-UNDAE BEACH**

Drinks in Hae-undae can put a serious dent in your wallet. The beachfront hotel bars are popular with the corporate crowd who can set up a tab, though travellers with a refined sense of budget head elsewhere. If you're looking for a low-cost option, grab some beverages from a nearby convenience store and plop down on the beach.

**U2** (Map p235; drinks W3000; ㄱ 7pm-3am, 7pm-5am Fri & Sat) Finding a bar that plays George Thorogood isn't easy. Luckily, Busan has one and this is it: a fine rock-and-roll bar with bourbon, scotch and beer. It's opposite the Marriott Hotel.

**Starface** (Map p235; drinks W4000; ㄱ 7pm-4am) Everything a fun neighbourhood pub needs is here: decent bar selection, regular specials and the occasional brawl. Friday night is all-you-can-drink for W15,000 (some limitations). Located on Dalmaji Hill, a W3000 taxi from Hae-undae is the only practical way to get here. Not many drivers are familiar with Starface but they all know 김성중 추리문학관, the next-door bookstore.

**Noran Mahura** (Map p235; drinks W4000; ㄱ 2pm-sunrise) It's a tent restaurant on Cheongsapo (청사포), an out-of-the-way harbour where people come for a drink to watch the sunset and unexpectedly stay for the sunrise. The

harbour road is packed with tent restaurants so if this one happens to be busy, walk along the pier to find another. Snacks include *garibi* (가리비), grilled clams with a salsalike sauce that tastes great. It tastes even better with *soju* at sunrise. Catch a W3000 taxi from Hae-undae beach.

**GWANG-AN BEACH**

Gwang-an's interesting bars are located on the busy beachfront road and the small lane one block behind the drag.

**Fuzzy Navel** (drinks W4000; ㄱ 7pm-6am) Most of the stimulating places are beside or behind this funky bar, where the recipe is simple: take one shack and decorate liberally with California beach-bum graffiti. Add Plexiglas windows and presto, one of the city's most interesting concoctions.

**SEOMYEON**

**Cowboy** (Map p233; drinks W4000; ㄱ 4pm-2am) Anyone doing the rounds in Seomyeon at some point pulls into Cowboy. Dark and smoky with thumping Korean pop music interspersed with classic-rock tunes, the open-floor concept and wooden bar make it possible to mingle and on occasion hook up.

**Lotte Hotel Lobby Lounge** (Map p233; drinks W4000) Here's the upscale lizard lounge you've been looking for. Palm trees, comfy chairs and live muzak created by the duo with a piano and iMac. Throw in a decent Irish coffee and you've got the perfect place to impress a date.

**Barony Brahaus** (Map p233; drinks W5000) Formerly known as Dojima, it's Busan's first microbrewery and a popular after-work watering hole for the upwardly mobile crowd. With a 550cc mug starting at W5000 it's easy to run up a substantial tab quickly. That's why prudent drinkers drop W16,000 on the all-you-can-eat-and-drink option; gorge and binge daily from 6pm to 10pm. Located on a small lane one block behind Lotte Department Store.

Other recommendations:

**Fuzzy Navel** (Map p233; drinks W5000; ㄱ 6.30pm-6am) The newest Fuzzy Navel and a real party for the 20-something crowd on Seomyeon's Youth Street. It's on the 4th floor.

**Fuzzy Navel Pojangmacha** (Map p233; drinks W5000; ㄱ 8pm-5am) There's a long line of orange pojangmacha tents behind Lotte Hotel. This is the black one.

**Wa Bar** (Map p233; drinks W5000; ㄱ 5pm-6am) A big open-concept ice bar. On Seomyeon's Youth St half a block from Fuzzy Navel.

**NAMPONDONG**

Most of the drinking establishments in Nampodong cater to Japanese and Korean business travellers. But there are a number of shops where you can experiment with unusual teas or sip espresso.

**Holly's Coffee** (Map p230; drinks W2000; ㄱ 8am-11pm) Where else in the world can you drink great espresso and free high-speed internet access? Well, lots of places in Nampodong actually, and this is one of them.

**Thema Coffee Shop** (Map p230; drinks W2500; ㄱ 8am-8pm) Fine espresso with a bacon-and-eggs breakfast from 8am to 11am. From Jungang-dong station, Exit 13, turn left at the first street.

**Ssanggye Jaeda** (Map p230; drinks W3000; ㄱ 10am-9pm) A teahouse with medicinal drinks like the dark and slightly bitter *ssanghwa* (쌍화차). Take Line 1 to Jungangdong station, Exit 11, then walk two blocks past the post office.

**Entertainment****LIVE MUSIC**

**Giant Step Jazz Bar** (drinks W5000; ㄱ 5pm-3am, closed Sun) You've got friends coming to town and you need a place to impress. The usual haunts are out because you've earned a reputation for table dancing after multiple shots of *soju*. Enter the Giant Step, a jazz bar with all the trappings you'd expect in an upscale joint, like burgundy wood, black-and-white photos and a good supply of recordings, plus live 30-minute sets on stage Wednesday to Saturday (9pm, 10pm and 11pm). It's near Gwang-an beach on the street behind the Fuzzy Navel (opposite).

**Monk** (drinks W4000; ㄱ 6pm-2am) Before and after jazz sets (9pm to 11pm, Wednesday to Saturday), Monk can be an empty sound stage with a few offbeat characters. When live music hits the stage, the place is full of offbeat characters. Poetry Plus runs one Saturday every six weeks (9pm to 11pm). It's across the street from Ol' 55 (opposite).

**SPORTS**

Professional sports provide a day of fun with ticket prices in the W5000 to W10,000 range. Perennial bottom feeders, the Lotte Giants, play baseball at Sajik Stadium (Map p228). From October to March, the KTF Magicwings play pro basketball at Geumjeong gymnasium (Map p232; Line 1 Nopodong station, walk 1.2km from Exit 1). The Busan Icons of the Korean soccer league play in Asiad Stadium

(Map p228), located behind the Asiad Home Plus department store and a 10-minute walk from Sajik baseball stadium.

**CINEMA**

Several theatres show first-run English-language movies including the multiscreen cinemas in Nampodong next to PIFF Sq (Map p230), the **Lotte Cinema** (Map p233; 10th fl, Lotte department store, Seomyeon), and the 10-screen facility at **Megabox** (Map p235; Hae-undae), 100m from Line 2 Hae-undae station, Exit 1; the ticket booth is on the 1st floor and screens are on the 6th floor.

**GAMBLING**

**Paradise Casino** (Map p235; 96 742 2110; Hae-undae; ㄱ 24hr) Anyone who understands the science of gambling can test his or her skill.

**Seven Luck Casino** (Map p233; 96 665 6000; Lotte Hotel, Seomyeon; ㄱ 24hr) Downtown travellers with an itch could try here.

**Shopping**

Busan's traditional markets offer a unique and occasionally shocking experience.

**Bujeon Market** (Map p233) The city's largest downtown traditional, open-air emporium and best place to buy low-cost, in-season fruit and vegetables. It's accessible from Bujeon-dong station (Exit 5).

**Gukje Market** (Map p230) West of Nampodong; has hundreds of small booths with a staggering selection of items, from leather goods to Korean drums.

**Gupo Market** (Map p228) A large selection of clothing, pungent Korean food and butcher shops specialising in fowl and dog meat. Whatever one's take on the ancient practice of using man's best friend for human nourishment, images of an eviscerated canine carcass are bound to produce lasting memories. Take Line 3 to Deokcheon station, Exit 3, turn right at the first street and then left at the first street.

**Leather Industrial Arts** (Map p230) Handcrafted leather goods are made at this small shop with an impressive selection of bags, belts and wallets. It's around the corner from the Busan Modern History Museum.

Experience the country's department-store culture of saturating the floor with sales assistants and free food samples. All stores have ready-to-eat food and some Western goods. **Hyundai department store** Slightly downmarket compared to Lotte, which usually means lower prices. Take Line 1 to Beomil-dong station, Exit 7.

**Home Plus department store** (Map p228) Beside Asiad stadium, with a multiscreen movie theatre, 10-pin



bowling lanes, health club (you only need to bring running shoes) and a decent supermarket. Take Line 3 to Sports Complex station, Exit 11. At street level follow the sidewalk and turn left at the first lane.

**Lotte department store** (Map p233; Seomyeon) The biggest; there's also a smaller version outside Myeongnyun-dong station, Exit 1, on Line 1 (Map p232).

## Getting There & Around

### AIR

Korean Air Lines (KAL) runs one airport limousine service from Gimhae International Airport to the major hotels in Hae-undae (adult/child W6000/3500, one hour, every 30 minutes). A taxi from the airport to Seomyeon takes 30 minutes and costs W20,000, depending on traffic. A 10-minute taxi to Deokcheon station costs W7000. The most economical link between the airport and city is a W1500 bus: the 307 to Deokcheon station, 201 to Seomyeon station (Lotte department store) or the 300 to Hadan. There are also buses from the airport to regional cities including Gyeongju (W9000), Masan (W5700) and Ulsan (W7400).

International flights are mostly to Japan (Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya and Fukuoka), with infrequent departures to Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Manila and Vladivostok.

On domestic routes, the Busan-Seoul run on Korean Air or Asiana (one hour, every 30 minutes from 7am to 9pm) usually requires reservations for weekend and holiday travel. Most flights from Busan to Seoul land at Gimpo Airport, which has few international connections. If you're flying out of the country, you'll need to catch the express bus from Gimpo to Incheon International (see p137). Flights also connect Busan and Jeju (one hour, every 30 to 90 minutes from 7am to 8pm).

### FERRY

There are two ferry terminals located near the immigration office (Map p230). From Jungangdong station, take Exit 12 and walk towards the containers visible down the road and cross the major street. To find the International Ferry Terminal continue straight and turn right past the immigration office; the terminal is about 150m down the path. To find the Coastal Ferry Terminal (domestic departures), do not walk towards the immigration office. Instead, turn right and walk 200m along the waterfront to the large building on the left.

First-floor booths in the International Ferry Terminal sell tickets for overnight ferries to three Japanese cities: Fukuoka (round trip W152,000, departs 10.30pm, arrives 6am); Shimonoseki (round trip W161,000 to W608,000, departs 8pm, arrives 8am); and Osaka (round trip W237,000, departs 4pm, arrives 10am).

For a quick trip to Fukuoka on the Kobe or Beetle hydrofoils, go to the 2nd floor. There are five daily departures (round trip W171,000, three hours, departs 8.45am, 10am, 2pm, 3pm and 3.45pm) and an additional departure Friday morning (9.30am). Add a W2600 departure tax for all international trips.

The Coastal Ferry Terminal handles domestic departures to Goeje Island: Gohyun (one way W19,700, 75 minutes, departs 10.30am, 12.30pm, 2.30pm, 4.30pm and 5.45pm); Okpo (one way W19,200, 55 minutes, departs 6.30am, 9am, 11am, 1pm and 3pm); and Jangseungpo (one way W19,200, 45 minutes, departs 8am, 10am, midday, 2pm, 4pm, 5pm and 6pm). There is one departure daily (except Sundays) for Jeju Island (one way W36,000, departs 7pm, arrives 6am).

### BUS

Dongbu bus terminal (Map p232) is located at Nopodong station on Line 1. Intercity buses travelling to Dongbu allow passengers to get off at Dusil station, a great time-saver if you don't need to go to the terminal. Departures from Dongbu include the following:

Destination	Price (W)	Duration	Frequency
Daegu	9800	2hr	every 30-120min
Gyeongju	5300	1¼hr	every 10min
Seoul	30,000	5½ hr	every 10-30min

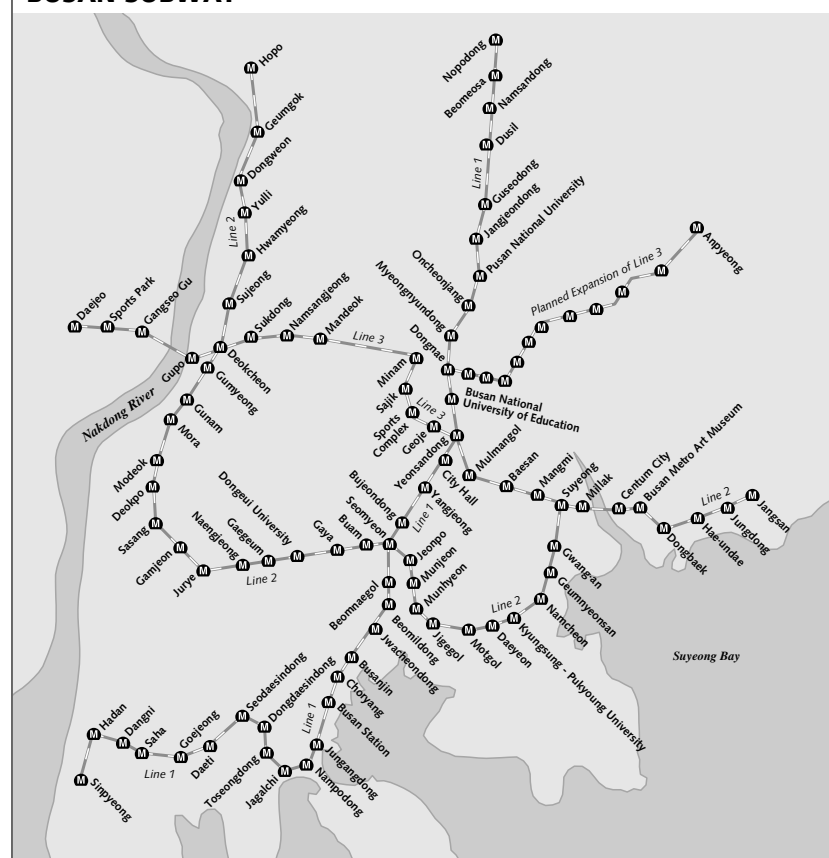
Seobu intercity bus terminal (Map p228) is located outside Sasang station on Line 2 with street level access through a department store. Westbound departures include:

Destination	Price (W)	Duration	Frequency
Hadong	9500	2½hr	every 30-60min
Jinju	6000	1½ hr	every 10 min
Namhae	9800	2½hr	every 30min
Ssanggyaesa	11,400	3½hr	every 2hr

### SUBWAY

Busan's three-line subway uses a two-zone fare system: W900 for one zone and W1000

## BUSAN SUBWAY



for longer trips. Purchasing a Hanaro card (W2000 plus travel credits, available at ticket booths) is handy: you get a small discount on fares and avoid the hassle of buying a ticket for each trip. See p241 for a subway map.

### TRAIN

Most trains depart from and arrive at Busan's downtown station (Map p228). There are also departures from Gupo (Map p228), a station with easy subway access to Line 3 that saves the hassle of going downtown. Between Busan and Seoul, KTX is the quickest service with most trips taking three hours or less (adult/child W44,800/22,400; every 30 to 60 minutes). First-class tickets are more expensive, though the wide seats have ample legroom.

The *Saemaul* used to be known as the express service. Today, the 4½-hour ride to Seoul seems like an eternity (adult/child W36,800/18,400, departures every 60 to 90 minutes). Travellers desperate to save a buck – or wanting to read an entire book on the train – could try the painfully slow *Mugunghwa* service, which wheezes to Seoul in 5½ hours (adult/child W24,800/12,400, departures every one to three hours).

Bujeon station has limited *Saemaul* and *Mugunghwa* regional connections to places like Mokpo (adult/child W23,100/11,650, three times daily). The Korea Rail ([www.korail.go.kr](http://www.korail.go.kr)) website has detailed schedules.

If you're heading to Japan, a Korea-Japan Through Ticket provides discounted travel

between the two countries. It covers travel by train to Busan, the ferry crossing between Busan and Shimonoseki and a train to your destination in Japan. Contact Korea Rail at Busan train station for details.

## GAJISAN PROVINCIAL PARK

### 가치산 도립공원

This park has three sections (Map p226). The northernmost section, not far from Gyeongju, is known for rocky terrain. This is where you'll find Mt Gajisan (1240m), the park's highest peak. Tongdosa, one of the country's most heavily commercialised Buddhist temples, is in the smallest of the three sections.

## SEONGNAMSA 석남사

An easy day trip from Busan, this temple (Map p226; adult/youth/child W1700/1300/1000; ㄱ 3am-8pm) is a visual masterpiece. The 800m walk from the park entrance cuts through a heavily wooded forest where patches of sunlight struggle to break through the thick canopy of foliage. At the temple's main gate, pause halfway up the stairs and take in the image of a multi-storeyed pagoda and a stand of bamboo trees juxtaposed against the horizontal spread of a hip roof and sprawling green mountain. Just before the temple, the path forks right over a bridge to a Korean-only map and starting point for a 6.4km hike to Gajisan.

There is a handful of motels 15 minutes on foot down the road.

**Hera Motel** (헤라 모텔; % 263 4466; d/ondol W30,000/W50,000; a i ) has attractive rooms with a computer and round bed.

For more pizzazz, go next door to **Motel Alps** (알프스 모텔; % 254 5666; d W30,000; a ). No computers, but it does have beautiful rooms decorated in rich earthy colours and a whirlpool or steam sauna.

Buy snacks from the shop near the park entrance or try one of the few restaurants in the area like **Jangbaeksan Saeng Galgukso** (장백산 생갈국수; meals W4500; ㄱ 10am-9pm) where hand-made noodles take 15 minutes to prepare.

The most scenic route to Seongnamsa leaves Miryang bus terminal (W4500, 60 minutes, every 30 to 60 minutes). During the second half of the trip, the bus climbs a steep, winding road carved into the mountainside with stunning views of peaks and valleys smothered in a green forest. Sit on the right side of the bus to get the best view. Originating from points east, local buses depart Eonyang (연양; W900, 25

minutes, every 15 to 45 minutes). From Busan's Dongbu terminal, take an express bus to Eonyang (W2800, 40 minutes, every 20 minutes) and transfer to a local bus to Seongnamsa.

## TONGDOSA 통도사

**Tongdosa** (Map p226; adult/youth/child W2000/1500/1000; ㄱ 3.30am-8pm) is one of the country's most important Buddhist temples, noted for a *sari*, a crystalline substance thought to develop inside the body of a monk who leads a pure life. The *sari* is enshrined in a fenced area outside the main hall and cannot be seen. It is a focal point of devotion, which is why Tongdosa does not have a Buddha statue in the main hall, a rarity in Korea.

The **Tongdosa Museum** (adult/youth W2000/1000; ㄱ 9am-4.30pm Nov-Feb, to 6pm Mar-Oct, closed Tue) houses a substantial collection of Buddhist paintings with limited viewing hours (9am to 11am, 1pm to 5pm) to minimise light exposure. There are 30,000 artefacts with full-day access including gongs, roof tiles and wooden printing blocks. Before entering, shoes are placed in a bag at the front door.

From Busan's Dongbu terminal, buses run to Sinpyeong (신평; W2000, 25 minutes, every 15 to 30 minutes). Facing the modest bus terminal, walk left and turn right at the first corner; the temple entrance is past the parade of shops, restaurants and motels.

It is an easy day trip from Busan, but the yakkity bus tours and seemingly endless opportunities to pull out your wallet give Tongdosa a carnival atmosphere. If time is short, take a pass on Tongdosa and visit Seongnamsa.

## TONG-YEONG 통영

pop 134,000 / 235 sq km

On the southern tip of Goseong Peninsula, Tongyeong (Map p226) is a coastal city wedged between Namhae and Geoje islands. Most of the picturesque sights are in and around Gangguan (강구안), a pretty harbour just made for sunset strolls. Visiting Tongyeong's truly spectacular sights – the 190 or so islands dotting the coastline – usually requires an overnight stay and early-morning ferry departure to some of the most pristine territory in the province.

The tourist information booth outside the bus terminal has maps available but it might not be staffed by anyone who can speak English.

## Sights & Activities

### GANGGUAN 강구안

It's not the only harbour in the city, but Gangguan is the prettiest. It's also a busy pier anchored by a promenade that serves multiple civic functions including dock, basketball court and picnic ground for package-tour travellers who aren't squeamish about a mid-morning *soju* pick-me-up. Towards the north end of the promenade, there's a *turtle ship replica* (admission free; ㄱ 10am-5pm) and the **Jung-ang Live Fish Market**, an open-air building with grannies selling seafood out of plastic tubs.

Not long ago, the narrow zigzagging streets west of the promenade were ideal for an hour of window-shopping. Today it's a commercial block straight out of a developer's cookie cutter. Fortunately the far more interesting **Seoho Bay** (서호만) road is just around the corner. Set aside an hour in the early evening to get the full neon show as you walk past the **Passenger Ferry Terminal** (여객선 터미널; Yeogaekseon Terminal), a string of fishing-gear shops and raw-fish restaurants. Locally promoted as an important sight, the **Undersea Tunnel** (해저 터널) is a dull (imagine a long cement corridor) but necessary step if you're going to take in the panoramic view from the other side of the bay.

## YEONHWA ISLAND 연화도

Anyone with the vaguest interest in independent exploration should take a ferry to one of the nearby islands. There are heaps of options departing the Passenger Ferry Terminal, which together could easily involve a fortnight of island hopping. If time is limited, the day trip to Yeonhwa Island is such a pleasurable experience it's hard to imagine how even the crustiest of souls wouldn't be stirred by the beauty of this unspoiled island. The trip begins with a 45-minute ride through islands silhouetted by the early-morning sun.

Once on land, there are a couple of trail options. Travellers looking for a stimulating yet mildly challenging walk will probably be satisfied by turning left and following the cement road past garden plots of lettuce, a school and a brown cow. Turn right at the fork and walk up the hill past **Yeonhwasa** (연환사), a small Buddhist temple. At the top of the hill near a pagoda, turn left and follow the narrow trail for outstanding views of the ocean and **Yongmeori** (용머리; Dragon's

## ACCORDING TO SUPERSTITION, DID YOU KNOW...

- a pig's head is placed in front of new businesses to bring good luck
- at a Korean wedding, the groom's mother tosses dates and chestnuts to the bride. The number of caught pieces indicates the number of children the bride will have
- you could die if you leave a fan on in a room with the window and door closed
- children who lose a tooth throw it on the roof for good luck
- writing someone's name in red ink can bring them bad fortune
- new-car buyers hire a shaman to perform rituals for good luck

Head), a string of rocks cascading into the sea which islanders say resembles a dragon's head. The trail eventually leads back to a road that terminates at a fishing outpost called **Dongdu** (동두). On the road to Dongdu, there are several dirt trails that might appeal to hikers eager to get above the treeline. Travellers unable to rappel boulders stay on the road, which is where you might meet Pastor Lee, a friendly island resident who walks this course twice a day.

In Dongdu, the path behind the second *minbak* (a home that rents rooms to travellers) crosses the back end of a mountain and passes a herd of black goats not far from a rocky oceanfront. On the return trip, get back to the pagoda and follow the dirt path to the mountaintop (215m) for a photogenic view of Yongmeori and, if you use your imagination, a dragon's head

At a leisurely pace this walk will take about three hours excluding breaks. Back at the terminal, there's a convenience store plus half a dozen raw-fish restaurants and *minbak*. Raw fish and *soju* – staples of any seaside trip for Koreans – cost W30,000 per person. For an inexpensive meal, try the *mae-untang* at the tent restaurant called **Four Rocks Raw Fish House** (Naebawi hoetjip; 네바위 횡집; soup W5000). It's typically served as a side dish rather than a separate menu item, but the accommodating restaurant makes an exception for hungry international travellers.

## Eating & Drinking

Gangguan's promenade is the place for *chungmu gimhap* (총무 김밥), a spicy squid-and-radish dish made famous in Tongyeong, while the Seoho Bay road is known for raw fish. The city's evening entertainment district is in Mujeon-dong, a 10-minute walk behind the bus terminal.

**Ddongbo Halmae Gimhap** (똥보 할매 김밥; per serving W3500; 11 7am-2am) Hungry travellers with limited Korean skills come here because there's no need to speak or read: this place only serves *chungmu gimhap*. The waitress will ask how many servings you want and if necessary she'll use her fingers to count. One serving of this spicy dish, which will test the red-pepper tolerance of the hardest Korean food-lover, should be enough for a single person.

**Paldo Sikdang** (팔도 식당; meals W4500; 11 6.30am-9pm) Blue-collar workers come here for hearty meals including *kimchi jjigae* (김치찌개; *kimchi* stew), served with a stack of dried seaweed that tastes great folded over a dollop of rice and dipped into seasoned soy sauce. Exit the bus terminal, turn right and then right at the first corner. The restaurant is down the street on the right.

**Hoerak Hoetjip** (희락 횡집; meals W10,000) It looks like all the other raw-fish restaurants opposite the Passenger Ferry Terminal, but the food is outstanding. *Mae-untang* comes with an impressive array of colourful side dishes including glazed squash and baby shrimp.

**Prowstar Espresso Coffee** (drinks W2500) Traveling without good coffee isn't just painful – it's pointless. That's why java lovers flock to this haven of joe, a remarkably uncommon sight in the province where coffee usually means a W300 cup of vending-machine swill. It's near the Gangguan harbour beside an entrance to the Jung-ang Live Fish Market.

**Paseo del Rio** (drinks W4000; 11 6pm-4am) If a small Korean town could ever have a bar like the TV show *Cheers*, this is it. Stop by a second time and everybody remembers your name. Unlike *Cheers*, customers have to pay. Hell, the bar owner even charges his mother for a drink.

## Sleeping

The streets immediately behind and beside the bus terminal are good places to start looking for a room. Near Gangguan, there is a handful of motels on or near the lane next to the KB bank, which is where Tongyeong's seedy side comes to life at night.

**Saejongjang** (세종장; 96 645 5711; d W20,000; a ) It's not going to win any awards for interior design – unless they start handing out prizes for nouveau grunge – but the price and location are right for travellers catching an early departure from the nearby Passenger Ferry Terminal. From the southern end of the Gangguan promenade, exit Paseo del Rio and walk left. The motel is down a small lane near the Lotteria restaurant.

**Sweet Motel** (스위트 모텔; 96 642 6381; d W30,000; a ) This place has simple, clean rooms unlikely to disappoint or amaze. Older than the more expensive properties in the area, it's a decent option for budget travellers who want to be close to the bus terminal and Mujeon Dong's nightlife. It's on the street immediately behind the bus terminal.

**Motel Palace** (펠레스 모텔; 96 645 8533; d W40,000, ondol W35,000-50,000; a ) This is one of the newer properties near Gangguan's waterfront with rooms that don't yet have the dents, scratches and cigarette burns customarily found in love motels. Despite the curious selection of ornate furnishings that give rooms a dollhouse feel, there's tremendous value for a group that doesn't mind an *ondol* room. It's near Gangguan harbour on a small lane beside the KB bank.

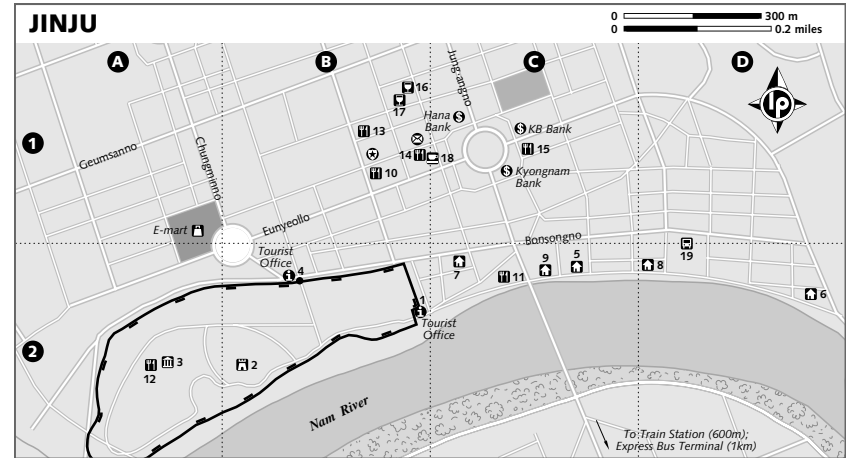
## Getting There & Around

The bus terminal is 2km north of Gangguan. Express buses connect Tongyeong with Jinju (W7600, 1½ hours, every 10 to 20 minutes) and Busan (W9100, 2½ hours, every 30 minutes) with frequent local buses to Gohyeon (W900, 30 minutes, every six minutes). Immediately outside the terminal, all city buses (W900) pass through Gangguan. Ferries depart Tongyeong's Passenger Ferry Terminal daily for Yeonhwa Island (W7700, 6.50am, 11am and 3.30pm) with three daily return trips (W7700, 8.30am, 1.20pm and 5.20pm).

## JINJU 진주

pop 342,000 / 713 sq km

Jinju is known as 'the education city.' Students driven to succeed leave Jinju and the best way to escape is to study hard and enter a university in Seoul. Migration of the youth pool gives Jinju a laid-back feel, a refreshing change for anyone looking for a day trip to escape Busan's comparatively frantic pace.



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## Orientation

Jinju's interesting sights are located north of the Nam River. East of the Jinju Fortress, Jung-ang separates two worlds: a traditional market to the east and modern trappings like coffee shops, bars and cinemas to the west. Jinju is the largest city in the area and a convenient transport hub from which to explore the province's western region.

## Sights & Activities

**Jinju Fortress** (adult/youth/child W1000/500/300; 11 9am-6pm Sun-Fri, 9am-7pm Sat) is the city's most interesting and historically important site. Local street signs call it a castle, but it's actually a well-preserved fortress partially destroyed during the Japanese invasion of 1592. It was here that one of the major battles of the campaign was fought, in which 70,000 Koreans lost their lives. Inside the fortress walls, traditional gates, shrines and temples dot the grassy knolls of this heavily wooded park. Enter the fortress from the North Gate, not

far from a large E-Mart department store, or the East Gate. Information booths (9am to 6pm) with a good supply of English-language maps are at both gates. The East Gate booth is closed weekends; the North Gate booth is open seven days.

Inside the fortress, the **Jinju National Museum** (96 742 5951; adult/youth/child W1000/500/free; 11 9am-5pm Tue-Fri, 9am-7pm Sat, Sun & holidays, closed Mon) specialises in artefacts from the *Imjin Waeran War* (임진왜란), a seven-year bloody tussle between Joseon and Japan's Toyotomi Hideyoshi Shogunate that began with the latter invading the former in 1592.

## Festivals & Events

In October several important festivals take place, including the Nam River Lantern Festival and Jinju Bull Fighting Contest.

## Sleeping

With the exception of October, finding a room to match your budget won't be a problem. The

river road behind the north-end bus terminal is lined with motels ranging from dumpy to delightful. There is a good selection of low-cost *yeoinsuk* (family-run motels with small rooms and shared bathrooms) two blocks from the fortress's East Gate.

**Ewha Yeoinsuk** (☎ 747 7417; ondo W10,000; a ) You probably won't find a cheaper place than this anywhere. Rooms come with dangling light fixtures, flimsy doors and common baths. If full, there are at least six more *yeoinsook* of comparable quality and price within a one-block radius.

**New Tema Motel** (☎ 741 1467; d/internet r W30,000/35,000; a i ) Standard rooms are slightly larger than nearby competitors but they also look a little more beat up. The most intriguing feature is the sex machine available in some 'special' rooms (W50,000). It's an odd piece of engineering, though the card providing detailed instructions on safe use is helpful. Experimentation costs W5000 for 30 minutes, W10,000 for the power hour.

Other recommendations:

**Byeoksan Hwang Tobang Motel** (☎ 741 7738; d W30,000; a ) It ain't pretty but it's got a private bath.

**Dong Bang Tourist Hotel** (☎ 743 0131; d & tw W106,000, ste from W165,000; a ) An oasis of quality behind the bus terminal with satisfying though underwhelming rooms.

**Versace Motel** (☎ 741 4888; d W40,000; a ) One of the newest and most attractive properties behind the bus terminal. Bigger rooms are W50,000; add W10,000 Saturday and Sunday.

## Eating & Drinking

For something different, try one of the eel restaurants along the waterfront near the fortress. They're all about the same quality and price (W13,000 per person).

**Won-gung Galbi** (per serving W6000; h 11am-5am) This is the place if you're looking for *sutbul galbi* (숯불갈비), charcoal-barbecued meat. Each table comes with a pull-down vent to exhaust smoke. Around the corner from the police station, it's one block north on the east side of the street.

**Zio Ricco** (meals W8000; h 10am-midnight) With low chairs and cool music, it's a popular eatery with the locals and expats. Pasta and pizza are the specialties with Chilean wine starting at W32,000 per bottle.

Other recommendations:

**Bobos** (W5000; h 7pm-7am) A dimly lit bar with a convivial atmosphere.

**Charles & Johnson** (drinks W5000; h 6pm-6am)

Ask any university student on the street and they'll know where to find this popular bar and dance club.

**Gwannamgaek Sikdang** (meals W2500; h 9am-5pm)

A simple place to relax inside the Jinju museum.

**Holly's Coffee** (drinks W2500; h 9am-11pm) Great espresso and inspired potato cake.

**Yoo Gane** (meals from W5000; h 11am-11pm) The *dakgalbi* (닭갈비; spicy chicken) is more hot than not.

## Getting There & Around

### AIR

The closest airport is in Sacheon, 20km from Jinju. Three daily flights connect with Gimpo Airport in Seoul via Korean Air and Asiana. Korean Air also has two flights per week to Jeju Island. Local buses connect Jinju's northend bus terminal to Sacheon airport (W900, 30 minutes).

### BUS

There's an express bus terminal south of the river. Most travellers use the terminal north of the river. Departures from the north terminal include the following:

Destination	Price (₩)	Duration	Frequency
Busan	6700	1½hr	every 10-20min
Hadong	4100	1hr	every 30min
Namhae	4500	1½hr	every 20min
Ssanggyaesa	6100	1½hr	every 1-1½hr
Tong-yeong	5700	1½hr	every 15min

### TRAIN

The train station is south of the Nam River. *Mugunghwa* connections include Daegu (adult/child W9600/4800, 3¼ hours, six daily); Daejeon (adult/child W18,400/9200, seven hours, twice daily); and Seoul (adult/child W27,700/13,900, seven hours, twice daily). One daily *Saemaul* departs for the capital (adult/child W41,100/20,600, six hours, 9.50am) and Daejeon (adult/child W27,300/13,700, 5½ hours, 6.25pm).

## NAMHAE ISLAND 남해도

pop 67,000 / 357 sq km

It's the country's third-largest island and a terrific place to explore a slower pace of life, so clearly evident in the countryside where some farmers continue to use oxen to plough rice paddies. Some of Korea's nicest beaches are located on the southern coast, including **Sangju** (상주 해수욕장) and **Songjeong**

(송정 해수욕장). Sangju is an especially attractive beach thanks to its soft white sand and a stand of trees that create an illusion of isolation. Public transport to Sangju from Namhae City is available (W1800, 40 minutes, every 30 minutes to two hours) but the return trip can involve long roadside waits. It's not popular, but hitching a ride back to Namhae City is possible.

Budget sleep options and the town's best drinking street are a short walk from the bus terminal. Inside the terminal go up one floor, walk out the main door and turn right. Follow the path past the garden plots to a stone wall. Turn right and follow the road to the intersection with a Baskin Robbins. One block before that intersection, turn right and walk down the road to find **Jangsujaeng Yeogwan** (장수장 여관; ☎ 864 2172; d & ondo W25,000; a ), a respectably clean and quiet inn.

The small lane immediately behind Baskin Robbins is famous for economical boozing. Many shops are called *silbi* (실비), a one-woman operation with expensive *soju* and a parade of free side dishes – including mussels and *pajeon* – that easily qualify as a meal. **Mullaebang-a Silbi** (물레방아 실비; h 4pm-2am) is a good one but there are also many others.

There are six daily buses to Hadong (W3400, one hour, 6am, 7.10am, 10am, 1.05pm, 3.35pm and 6.05pm) as well as frequent service to Jinju (W4500, 1½ hours, every 30 to 60 minutes) and Busan (W10,100, 2½ hours, every 30 to 60 minutes).

## JIRISAN NATIONAL PARK – EAST

### 지리산 국립공원

**Jirisan National Park** (Map p248; adult/youth/child W3400/1300/700; h 2hr before sunrise-2hr after sunset) offers some of Korea's best hiking opportunities with 12 peaks over 1000m forming a 40km ridge. Many peaks are over 1500m high, including **Cheonwangbong** (1915m), the country's second-highest mountain. If you plan to hike here, the Jirisan National Park map (W1000, available at the park entrance) lists topographical information as well as trails, camp sites, springs, shelters and other points of interest. There are three principal park entrances, each with a temple. Two of the three temples, Ssanggyesa and Daewonsa, are in South Gyeongsang province. From the west, Hwa-eomsa is accessible via Gurye in Jeollanam province (see p258).

The **Jirisan Bear Project** (p58) was established with the aim to build up a self-sustaining group of 50 wild bears in Jirisan, so keep a look-out on your travels

### SSANGGYESA 쌍계사

The visual imagery of this temple is a feast for the eyes, and like any exquisite dinner should be consumed with deliberation in order to enjoy every morsel. Stone walls supporting multiple levels of buildings notched into the mountainside, combined with mature trees and a trickling creek, create a pleasant sensory experience. Three gates mark the path to the main hall; take time to read the signs to appreciate the symbolism of your visit. One of the most attractive temples in the province, it's a long day trip from Busan. For a more relaxing pace, consider an overnight stopover in Jinju and an early-morning departure to the mountain.

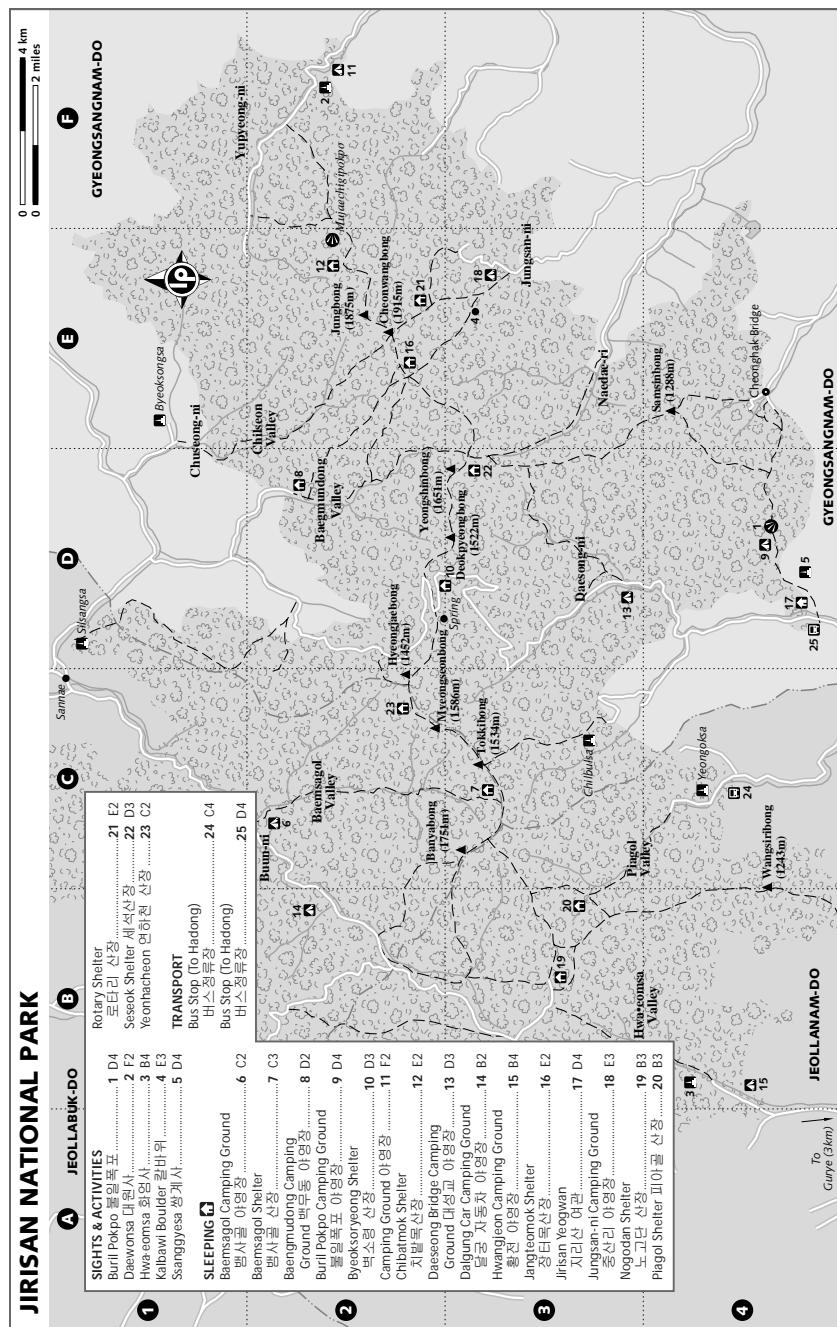
### HIKING

It's impossible to describe the myriad of trails within this great park. The traditional course runs east to west (Daewonsa to Hwa-eomsa), which experienced Korean hikers say requires three days. Some LP readers have suggested an alternate three-night route that puts hikers in position for a sunrise view atop **Cheonwangbong**. The route starts with a night at the **Nogodan** shelter. The next two nights are spent at the **Baemsagol** and **Jangteomok** shelters. On the final day, follow the trail to **Jungsan-ni** and then catch a bus to Jinju or Busan.

Travellers with less-ambitious plans, but who want to experience Mt Jirisan's beauty, hike the popular trail to **Buril Pokpo** (불일폭포; Buril Falls). Starting from Ssanggyesa, the mildly challenging trail (2.4km each way, three hours return) winds through a forest along a rippling creek. About two-thirds along the way, just when you've noticed the sound of the creek has disappeared, the trail bursts onto an open field. Down the path, hikers can buy beverages and snacks at a hermit's home. At the foot of the falls, there's a large rocky pool where hikers meditate to regain their chi.

### Sleeping CAMPING

There are nine camping sites (from W3000): **Hwangjeon**, **Daewonsa**, **Jungsan-ni**, **Baemsagol 1 and 2**, **Dalgung**, **Daeseong**, **Buril Pokpo** and **Baengmu-dong**. Facilities are basic.



**SHELTERS**

There are 10 shelters (W5000 to W7000). From west to east, they are: Nogodan 1 and 2, Piagol, Baemsagol, Yeonhacheon, Byeoksoryeong, Saeseok, Jangteomok, Chibatmok and the Rotary shelter. Jangteomok has enough space for 150 bodies, and sells film, torches, noodles and drinks. Seseok is the largest shelter, with space for 220 people. For overnight hikes bring bedding, food and tea/coffee, as most shelters have limited supplies. Online bookings are recommended and are essential for weekends and holidays. See the Korea National Park Service’s website ([www.npa.or.kr](http://www.npa.or.kr)) for details.

**MINBAK & YEOGWAN**

The path to Ssanggyesa is lined with restaurants, souvenir shops, a water wheel and a grandmother selling *saengchikjeup* (생취즙; per glass W1000), a muddy juice thought to provide hikers with a blast of energy. A few metres before the wheel, Jirisan Yeogwan (지리산 여관; ☎ 883 1668; ondol W30,000) has basic *ondol* rooms overlooking a creek. A group of

travellers will find better value in a *minbak*; turn right past the water wheel to find a dozen or more places with rooms for W30,000.

**Getting There & Away**

Buses to Ssanggyesa often pass through Hadong, a small village and useful transfer point in the region. If you can’t get a direct bus to Ssanggyesa, travel to Hadong and catch one of the frequent buses to the temple (W2000, 30 to 60 minutes, 13 times daily). On route to Ssanggyesa from Hadong, buses pass a large bridge and shortly thereafter make a quick stop in Hwagae; don’t get off there. Further down the road (usually the next stop), the bus stops beside a concrete bridge. Do get out here, cross the bridge and follow the winding road to the park entrance. Return-trip tickets are purchased inside the restaurant beside the concrete bridge. The signboard lists times for several destinations, though most travellers are best served by heading to Hadong, where frequent buses connect with Busan (W9700, 2½ hours, every 30 to 60 minutes) and Jinju (W4100, 1½ hours, every 30 minutes).

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