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Community Publication

# KOREA

VOLUME 14 NO. 23

MARCH 12 – MARCH 25, 2026

**FREE**

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## Rendering salutes to ROK officers

The military salute is a tradition of respect believed to date back to medieval knights, who would raise their visors to identify themselves and show an empty weapon hand. Today, this custom continues as a vital sign of mutual respect between allies. U.S. military personnel are required to render proper salutes to superior officers of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Armed Forces, and ROK forces extend the same courtesy in return.

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A STORYBOOK BREAKFAST AMONG SEOUL'S HANOK HOUSES  
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## Time to enjoy Cherry Blossoms!

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- Beautiful blossoms of ancient Gyeongju
- Where the trees will be blooming
- Tips for viewing cherry blossoms
- Top places to check out festivals

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### Korea in One Page: History & Identity

If I had to explain Korea's entire identity in one page, I wouldn't begin with dates or kings or wars. I would begin with a feeling. Because Korea is not a place you memorize — it's a place you feel. It is emotion shaped by hardship, pride shaped by recovery, and culture shaped by resilience.

But for you — the American reader who truly wants to understand Korea — I will give you the simplest, clearest explanation of the spirit behind this country.

Understanding Korea's past is not about learning history.

It's about understanding the heart that still drives Korea today.

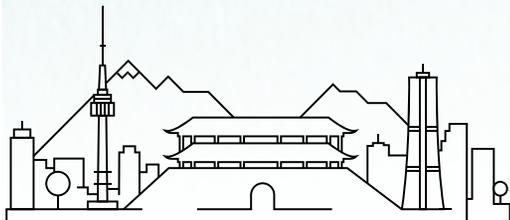
### A Small Nation Surrounded by Giants

For thousands of years, Korea lived beside much larger powers — China, Japan, Russia — countries with bigger armies, bigger populations, and bigger influence. Korea faced invasions, occupations, civil conflicts, and endless pressure. Many nations would have lost themselves. But Korea never did.

Korea survived by holding tightly to its values: family, loyalty, community, respect, endurance, and an unbreakable belief in effort.

These values didn't just shape history — they shaped personality.

They created a national character built on: moving quickly, working hard, rebuilding after every crisis, loving deeply, protecting one another, fighting to keep dignity even when



# KOREA DECODED

Gianni Youn



everything else was taken.

This is why Korea feels intense, emotional, and full of life — because the country had to become strong to survive.

### A Century That Left a Deep Scar

To understand modern Korea, you must understand its greatest wound: the 20th century. Colonization. A divided homeland. A devastating war. Families torn apart forever.

The Korean War didn't just destroy buildings — it carved pain into the national memory. Many Koreans today still feel that history living inside them.

But what makes Korea extraordinary is not the suffering.

It's the comeback.

### From Ruins to Global Power

In just one generation, Korea transformed itself from war-torn poverty into one of the most advanced, innovative

countries in the world.

This transformation happened not because Korea had resources. It didn't.

It happened because Korea had spirit.

A national determination that said:

"Tomorrow must be better than today. We will rise again. Together."

This mindset still shapes everything in modern Korea — the speed, the ambition, the competitiveness, the passion, the pride.

### What Modern Korea Feels Like

If I had to describe Korea's identity in a few lines, it would be this:

A small country with a giant soul.

A people who rise each time they fall.

A culture that values connection, sincerity, and community.

A nation defined by resilience, emotion, and endless creativity.

Korea is a place where ancient tradition and modern innovation live side-by-side:

- Skyscrapers next to quiet temples
- Street food beside luxury dining
- Cutting-edge tech beside old markets
- Emotional sincerity inside a fast-paced society

This blend of old and new is part of Korea's beauty.



**About the author:** Gianni Youn is a Multimedia Consultant at Stars and Stripes and author of *KOREA DECODED: A Handy-dandy Guide for Americans Who Want to Understand Korea*. For more cultural insights, follow Gianni on Instagram: @Gianni\_Youn



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# Spring escape

# Your guide to Geoje Island

STORY AND PHOTOS BY ERIN HENDERSON,  
STRIPES KOREA

For the latest festival updates, follow @jgfestival on Instagram. Geoje Island (Geojedo) is South Korea's second-largest island after Jeju, and you can reach it without hopping on a plane or ferry. This shipbuilding hub lies about four hours southeast of Camp Humphreys (around 60 minutes from Busan), and having a car makes it easy to move between beaches, lookouts, and cafés. Here's what to see, eat, and do while you're in Geoje!



1



2



3



5



6



1



2



3

With spring on the horizon, now is the perfect time to plan a getaway to Geoje Island. To make the most of your long weekend, time your trip to coincide with the Jinhae Cherry Blossom Festival, which runs from March 27 to April 5, 2026.

## What to see & do in spring

1

### Geoje Maengjongjuk Theme Park (Bamboo Forest)

This small bamboo park was mostly empty while we were there. Towards the top, it opens up to stunning views, and a bonus was seeing the cherry blossoms in bloom on the hill. Plan to spend one to two hours here.

2

### Hakdong Pebble Beach

For any young travelers in your group, this beach is a kids' paradise. Though walking on the pebbles can get a bit tricky, children love searching for the perfect rock among the sea of pebbles.

3

### Windy Hill

This was the most crowded place we visited in Geoje because it was a filming location for several K-dramas. The views offer panoramic scenes of the sea and cliffs, and it is quite beautiful on a clear day. Of course, the windmill is also a big draw.

4

### Coastal Walk 옥하마을 해맞이길 산책로

If you are looking for a pleasant coastal stroll, this walk is for you. We only encountered a handful of people on our walk, and it was a great way to spend an hour outdoors on the water.

5

### Maemi Castle 매미성

This European-style stone fortress was built by Baek Soon-sam to protect his crops after a typhoon destroyed his farm in 2003. Now, a tourist attraction, the stone ruins offer stunning sea views and are free to explore.

6

### Catch a glimpse of haenyeo at Deokpo Beach 덕포해수욕장

Though Jeju is famous for its haenyeo, Geoje has quite a few, including two young haenyeo, Sohee and Jungmin, who are quite famous throughout Korea. If you are at the docks in the morning, typically around 9:00, you might get lucky and catch them preparing to head out on their boat for the day.

7

### Odeo Botania 외도 보타니아

(requires a 40-60 minute ferry from Geoje) Enjoy a morning stroll through the grounds of this formerly uninhabited island, now a botanical garden along the sea. Plan to spend two hours roaming around, and it's highly recommended to arrive first thing in the morning to avoid the crowds.

8

### Spend a day at the Jinhae Cherry Blossom Festival

Just a forty-minute drive from Geoje (using Deokpo Beach as a base), you can spend half a day or a full day taking in the cherry blossom festivities in Jinhae. The drive from Geoje to Jinhae is quite lovely, and you will see roads lined with blooming trees everywhere you look.

## Where to eat

1

### Oedo Nursery Glasshouse Cafe 외도넬서리

(not located by Odeo Botania, located on Geoje Island)

In spring, the grounds of this cafe are brimming with tulips and cherry blossoms, set right on the water. Inside, the café is designed as a greenhouse, making it one of the prettiest in Korea. Parking for the café is located past the grounds—follow the signs and stickers on the ground. The lot is paid, but the café will validate your parking for up to 90 minutes (ask the clerk before you leave).

2

### Geoje Cafe W181 더블유181

This wouldn't be a list of things to see in Korea without another fabulous café. As with many things in Geoje, this café offers unforgettable sea views paired with an Instagram-worthy interior.

3

### Cafe Guana 구아나 카페&레스토랑

For spectacular sunset views paired with great pizza and salad, this café is a must. It has fantastic indoor and outdoor seating spaces to soak up the sea views.



WEBSITE

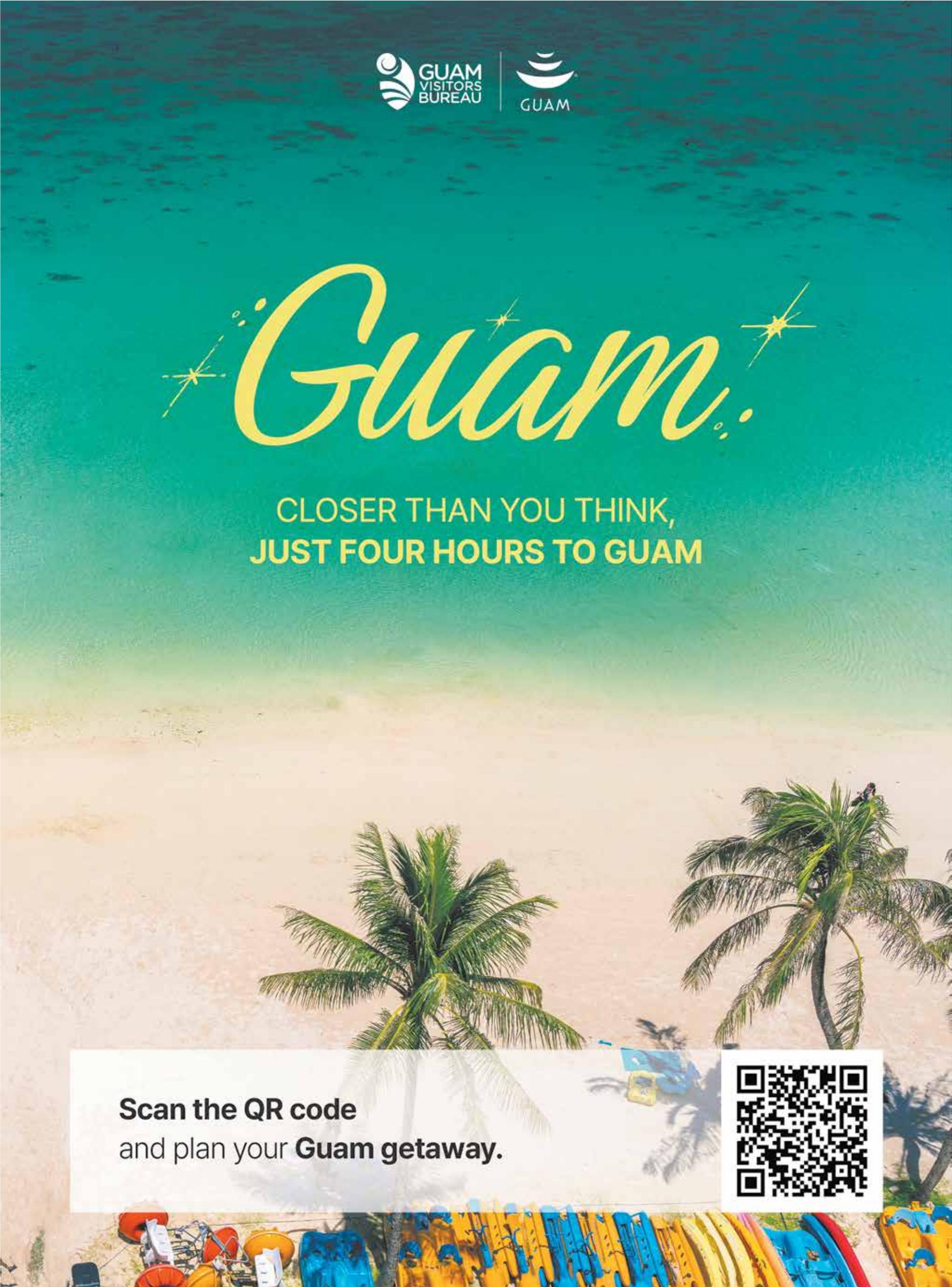
For 15 years, Erin Henderson has been a photographer capturing compelling stories around the world – from travel and food to conservation and military life. She's published internationally and mentors entrepreneurs from her base in Stuttgart, Germany. You can find more of her work at erinhendersonmedia.com or on Instagram @erinhendrnsn.



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# Gyeongju City

## Capital of ancient Korean kingdom top cherry blossom destination

STORY AND PHOTOS BY HYEMIN LEE,  
STRIPES KOREA

If you're planning a special trip during cherry blossom season, you should check out Gyeongju City, the ancient capital of Silla Kingdom, as it's one of the most beloved destinations to see the blooms.

There were three kingdoms in ancient Korea, and Silla unified the three kingdoms. From the beginning to the end of Silla, Gyeongju, previously called

"Seorabeol," was the capital for a thousand years.

Today, this historic city preserves the glorious history of Silla and is referred as "a museum without walls." Here you'll find the most of Korea's UNESCO World Heritages sites concentrated in one city. The city attracts visitors year-round, but its historic buildings and streets are transformed when the cherry blossoms make their yearly appearance. Check out Gyeongju's top 7 cherry blossom spots.

lee.hyemin@stripes.com

### Cherry blossom season in Gyeongju: late March-early April

#### Gyeongju Cherry Blossom Festival

DATE: Fri.-Sun. during late March to early April

\*Check exact festival date on their IG: @gj\_cherryblossoms

ADDRESS: 493-26 Hwangnam-dong, Gyeongju-si  
[Daereungwon Stone Wall Trail]



NAVER MAP

#### 1. Cheomseongdae Observatory (첨성대)

The symbolic landmark of Gyeongju, Cheomseongdae was constructed in 633 during the reign of Queen Seondeok for star observation to forecast the weather. Cheomseongdae is the oldest astronomical observatory in Asia, preserving its original appearance for 1,400 years. Both daytime and evening are great to take a trip around the flower garden of this scientific stone building.

- \* HOURS: 9 a.m. – 10 p.m. daily
- \* ENTRANCE FEE: Free



NAVER MAP



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

#### 2. Daereungwon Tomb Complex (대릉원)

These giant tumuli are placed through downtown Gyeongju, marking the city's past and present. Make sure to take your time to wander the 23 ancient tombs belonging to the kings of the Silla era. Don't miss the Gyeongju Cherry Blossom Festival held at the Daereungwon Stone Wall Trail to enjoy a variety of food and activities among the royal tombs surrounded by cherry blossoms!



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

- \* HOURS: 9 a.m. – 10 p.m. daily
- \* ENTRANCE FEE: Free



NAVER MAP

#### 3. Donggung Palace & Wolji Pond (동궁과 월지)

Donggung Palace and its adjacent Wolji Pond were originally part of the royal grounds and banquet venues for princes of the Silla era. The palace and the pond are a must-visit, especially in the evening, to see the spectacular scene of illuminated palaces and trees reflected in the water.

- \* HOURS: 9 a.m. – 10 p.m. daily
- \* ENTRANCE FEE: Adults 3,000 won / Teenagers 2,000 won / Children 1,000 won



NAVER MAP



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

#### 4. Woljeonggyo Bridge (월정교) & Gyochon Hanok Village (교촌한옥마을)

The bridge is built over the Namcheon Stream and located right next to Gyochon Traditional Hanok Village. In the daytime, walking from the bridge through the village is a great way to enjoy viewing canola flowers and cherry blossoms along the stream. In the evening, don't miss the stunning night view of the bridge and stream.



- \* HOURS: 10 a.m. – 10 p.m. daily

- \* ENTRANCE FEE: Free



NAVER MAP



#### 5. Bomunjeong Pavilion (보문정)

This park was named by CNN as one of the "Beautiful scenic locations in Korea." When you visit, you'll see why. Bomunjeong's ponds and pavilion are stunning, but especially in the spring with cherry blossoms and fall for its amazing autumn leaves. This place is open anytime without an entrance fee.



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization



NAVER MAP

#### 6. Bulguksa Temple (불국사) & Seokguram Grotto (석굴암)

The foremost Buddhist heritage sites of Korea, Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto are both located on Tohamsan Mountain. These two cultural sites are within eight kilometers from each other, making them easy to explore on the same trip. Bulguksa Temple is especially a famous spot for the double-layer type of cherry blossoms that usually flower two weeks later than regular ones.



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

- \* HOURS (BULGUKSА): 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. daily

- \* HOURS (SEOKGURAM): 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. daily

- \* ENTRANCE FEE: Free



BULGUKSА TEMPLE  
NAVER MAP



SEOKGURAM GROТTO  
NAVER MAP

#### 7. The Nine-story Pagoda of Hwangnyongsa (황룡사 9층 목탑)

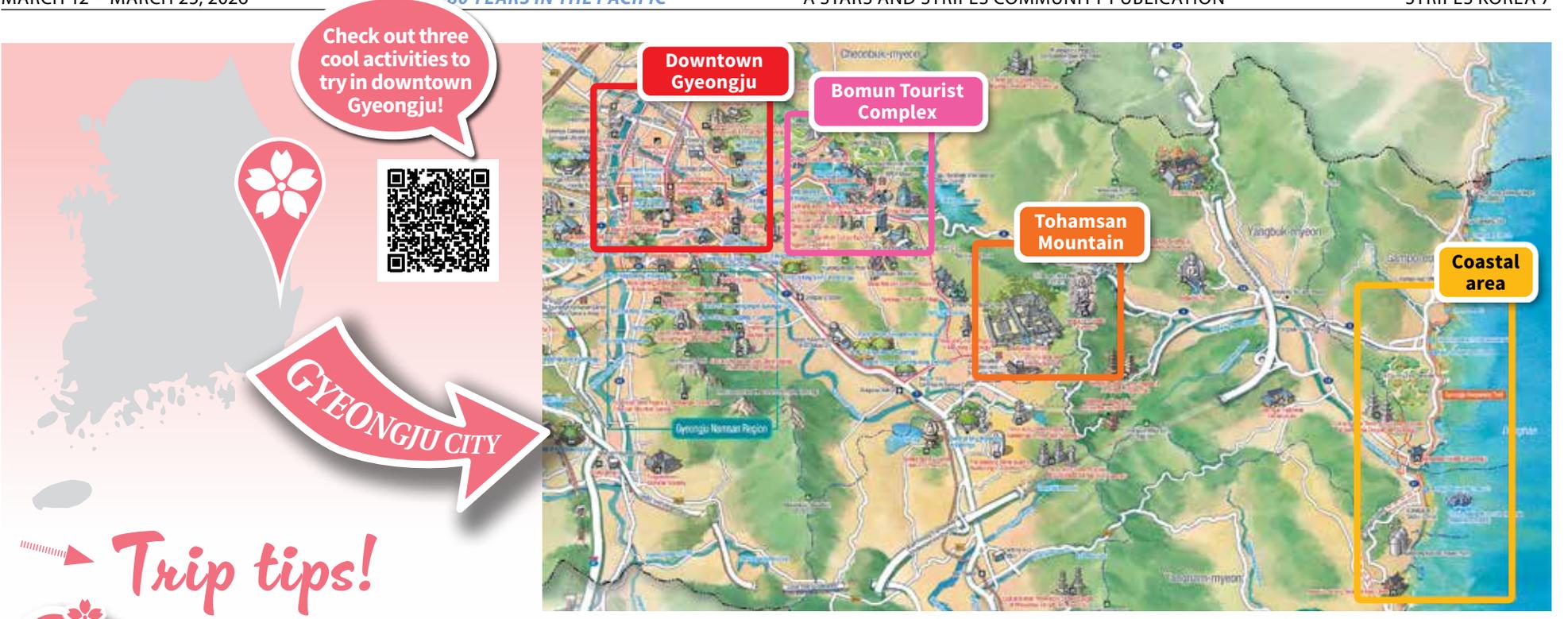


Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

One of Gyeongju's best spring photo spots is the cherry blossom road by the Nine-story Pagoda. The tower is a modern recreation of the original Silla era pagoda, and it's especially beautiful when surrounded by soft pink blossoms.



NAVER MAP



Map courtesy of Gyeongju Tourguide

# Trip tips!

**1** *Plan ahead*

Gyeongju is not only a historic city with numberless cultural assets from the Silla era and Joseon Dynasty, but also a coastal city with a variety amusement parks and resorts. Plan ahead so you can prioritize the spots you really want to see.



Photo courtesy of Gyeongju Tourguide

**2** *Choose from the city's important districts*

- With a plenty of destinations, here are the top districts in Gyeongju to check out.
- \* **DOWNTOWN GYEONGJU:** The most important attractions of Gyeongju are located within walking distance here. Cheomseongdae, Woljeonggyo Bridge, Daereungwon, Donggung and Wolji, Gyeongju National Museum, Hwangridan-gil Street (food & dessert street) and more.
  - \* **BOMUN TOURIST COMPLEX:** Gyeongju World (amusement park), Bomunjeong, Bomun Lake, Gyeongju Expo Park, and more.
  - \* **TOHAMSAN MOUNTAIN:** Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto
  - \* **COASTAL AREA:** Tomb of King Munmu, Jeonchon Pine Beach, Gampo Port, Songdaemal Lighthouse and more.

**3** *Try to stay at a special accommodation*

Staying at a traditional house (hanok) hotel is very affordable in Gyeongju. They are usually located near the mountains but not far from downtown. It's absolutely a must-try experience to spend a night at a traditional house surrounded by peaceful forests and mountains. Also, Gyeongju is a famous glamping (glamorous camping) spot in the summer and fall because of its beautiful nature. You can find these accommodations on online travel shops like "Trip.com" and "Agoda."



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# Get ready for ch

## PYEONGTAEK REGION

### Pyeongtaekho Tourist Complex

This artificial lake in western Pyeongtaek created by building a seawall for Asan-ho Lake, is another cherry blossom hot spot. Enjoy a walk under the blossoms along the decks that border the edge of the lake. If you're lucky, you might catch some traditional music performances at the Soriter Art Center, see some local art at the Asan-ho Art Gallery and enjoy Morae-top Park, which all located inside the complex. Bring your blanket and some snacks for a scenic picnic on the grass near the art gallery.

**ADDRESS:** 159, Pyeongtaekho-gil, Hyeondeok-myeon, Pyeongtaek-si



NAVER MAP



Photo by Chihon Kim

### Pyeongtaek University



Photo courtesy of Pyeongtaek City

This spot is about a 20-minute drive from Camp Humphreys. The campus itself is beautiful and the bell tower building which houses the school's library make for a great backdrop to the season's blush blooms. Pyeongtaek University is considered one of the most popular cherry blossoms viewing spots in Southern Gyeonggi-do. Every first weekend of April, the university holds a cherry blossom festival, featuring a variety of food trucks amidst the cherry blossoms and forsythia.

**ADDRESS:** 3825, Seodong-daero, Pyeongtaek-si



NAVER MAP

### Kookje University (Eunhye-ro road)



Photo by Chihon Kim

Another go-to place to see the cherry blossoms in all their glory is at Kookje University near Osan Air Base. Every year in early April, the 1.2-km-long Eunhye-ro Road is lined with blush blossoms spanning from the entrance of the Ichung Cultural Center to Eunhye Middle and High School. Take a leisurely stroll under the cherry blossoms reminiscent of a wedding arch with a cup of coffee in hand and you'll soon learn nothing can't beat this view. I recommend you park your car in the Ichung Leports Park then walk towards Eunhye Middle School.

**ADDRESS:** 149, Janganut-gil, Pyeongtaek-si



NAVER MAP

### Gakwonsa Temple



Photo courtesy of Chungnam Office

Enjoy the warm spring weather and king cherry trees with a trip to the beautiful temple. Gakwonsa Temple sits at the foot of Mt. Taejosan, which creates a relaxing, peaceful place to breathe in the fresh air, reflect and enjoy the picturesque scenery. What I like about this area is that there is more than just a beautiful temple and stone pagodas. There are also walking paths where you can stroll at your own pace and a street in front of the temple full of restaurants and stores. And, there's a giant Buddha! If you have a penchant for traditional architecture and want to check out this well-known temple – you're killing two birds with one stone!

**ADDRESS:** 245, Gagwonsa-gil, Dongnam-gu, Cheonan-si



NAVER MAP

### Tongbokcheon Stream



Photo by Chihon Kim

Tongbokcheon Stream runs 10 kilometers through Pyeongtaek City and is one of the most popular bike paths amongst cyclists and locals. In the spring, this path turns into a cherry blossom spot crowded with visitors who want to enjoy the pretty pink flowers lined up along the stream. Before you hit the path, rent a FREE bike from the Pyeongtaek Public Bike Rental Shop, which you can ride along Tongbokcheon Stream.

**ADDRESS:** 174 Dongsak-ro, Pyeongtaek-si (Pyeongtaek Public Bike Rental Shop at Tongbokcheon)



Learn more about renting a free bike



NAVER MAP

STRIPES KOREA

Cherry blossom viewing is probably one of the best ways to fully enjoy the spring in South Korea with your family and friends. Usually you'll see the delicate pink flowers begin to appear the last week of March and into early April and peak a week later. Pyeongtaek and Daegu have some amazing locations for enjoying the springtime views and a close look at these far blossoms. Below are a few of the best, avoid crowds, make plans to visit on we

## CHERRY BLOSSOM

HAPS KOREA

As spring approaches, South Korea's cherry blossom season, drawing travel floral displays. The 2026 cherry blossom blooming sightings into the best times and locations for

City name Arrival Full Bloom

Incheon April 4 April 11

Daejeon March 29 April

Jeonju March 26 April

Gwangju March 27 April

Jeju March 22

See Osan Reg

# Cherry blossoms!



## DAEGU REGION

### Riverside of Geumho River

Well known for its beautiful river scenery and various spring flowers such as forsythias, the Geumho River Cherry blossom street is yet another fantastic spot to enjoy the warmer temperatures of spring. This spot also holds evening illuminations, so grab a sweater and head over for a magical evening walk surrounded by bright blossoms.

**ADDRESS:** 984-9, Geomsa-dong, Dong-gu, Daegu  
Daegu Subway Metro Line 1 - get off Dongcheon Sta. - exit # 2 or 3



NAVER MAP

Photo courtesy of Daegu City Hall

## BLOSSOM FORECAST

A MAGAZINE

Daegu prepares for its much-anticipated cherry blossom festival. Residents are eager to witness the country's stunning display. The festival schedule has been announced, offering an opportunity to enjoy this seasonal spectacle.



### Daegu E-World

Photo courtesy of E-World

This theme park features a 1.4-km-long road lined with cherry blossoms. Love taking photos to share on SNS? You'll spot the more than 83 spots for snaps in the park where the delicate blooms become the perfect backdrop for your Instagram photoshoot. And, make plans to stay into the evening, as the pink neon lights go up and the cherry blossoms put on a vibrant glowing display. The cherry blossom festival at E-World is one of the must-visit events for Daegu residents during the season.

**FESTIVAL:** mid-March-early April  
**ADDRESS:** 20, Duryugongwon-ro 28-gil, Dalseo-gu, Daegu



WEBSITE



NAVER MAP



### Suseongmot Lake

Photo courtesy of Suseong district

Every year, the banks of Suseongmot Lake in southern Daegu are blanketed in faux snow. The lake had been developed for agriculture during the Japanese colonial era, now serves as a great place for leisure. The king cherry trees line the 2-km-long lakeside make it an ideal spot for a picnic or leisurely stroll. This area is host for many activities beyond flower-viewing like open-air concerts, exhibitions, and street performances. Grab a bite or a nice cup of coffee at the many outdoor cafes and restaurants by the lake. As a bonus, the nearby Suseongland, a small amusement park, is a great spot for kids!

**ADDRESS:** 512, Dusan-dong, Suseong-gu, Daegu



NAVER MAP



### Palgongsan Mountain

Photo courtesy of Daegu City Hall

One of Daegu-area's most popular provincial parks is Mt. Palgongsan. This place is a favorite for hiking and every year the mountain goes blush with pink flowers from the many cherry blossoms trees, drawing many from near and far for a peek. Here you'll find Gatbawi, a giant stone buddha known for granting visitor's earnest wish, housed at the Donghwas Temple built in 1732. If, like me, you're not a big fan of hiking, opt for a drive through the cherry blossom-lined road called "Palgongsan-ro" that circles around the mountain.

**ADDRESS:** 13, Sinmu-dong, Dong-gu, Daegu



NAVER MAP



### Yeungnam University

Photo courtesy of Yeungnam University

Yeungnam University, which boasts the second-largest campus size on the Korean Peninsula, is a wonderful place to visit in spring when it is covered in cherry blossoms. Make a plan to spend a half-day walking along the cherry tree-lined paths and picnicking in its open knoll behind the university. As a bonus, there is a folk village where you can take in the charm of the architecture. The highlight of the place is "Love Road," a romantic, a tunnel created by the cherry blossoms. It is said that couples who are interested in each other can fall in love together if they walk down the road without looking back until they've reached the end.

**ADDRESS:** 280, Daehak-ro, Gyeongsan-si, Gyeongsangbuk-do  
Take Daegu Metro Line 2 (green) - get off Yeongnam University Station - exit3 or 4



NAVER MAP



hapskorea.com

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

# OSAN REGION

Osan Region

Photo courtesy of Osan City Hall



## Osancheon Cherry Blossom Road

Considered as one of the prettiest spots for cherry-blossom viewing in Osan, Osancheon (오산천 벚꽃길) that runs across the city is an ecological park, a home to resident birds such as mandarin duck, kestrel, white heron and more.

Take a relaxing stroll along the riverside promenades and gardens with thousands of cherry trees planted along the stream.

When you go there, don't forget to swing by octagonal

pavilion(팔각경), a beautiful photoshoot location. Spring is not just a great time to visit the road for its popular cherry blossoms. Every spring, beautiful orsythia in full bloom also greet visitors here.

Another good way to see cherry blossom at this place is from the seat of your bike. Here you'll find a path that will take about a 20-minute bike ride where you'll be surrounded by cherry blossom trees and a shower of petals. Too short to ride a bike? Don't worry, the road is connected with Sinricheon and Dongtan Lake Park which great spots for cherry blossom viewing and longer rides.

**ADDRESS:** 10, Nojak-ro, Hwaseong-si



NAVER MAP

## Osan Mal-geum-teo Park



Photo courtesy of Osan City Hall

Situated in the southern region of Osan, the Mal-geum-teo Park (오산맑음터공원) is primarily a cherry blossom viewing spot during the spring season. This park originally a home to a sewage treatment plant serving Osan, turned into a great park that features sculptures, attractions and open space in 2005.

The park is gorgeous at any time of year. But in the spring, several sections light up with pink blossoms, plum blossoms, forsythia and rape. Look for a pink weeping cherry trees put on a breathtaking, pastel show, when their elegantly arched branches bloom pale pink flowers.

Inside the park, Osan Ecorium allows visitors a glimpse of the process of recycling. The museum has a 76-meter-high observatory offering stunning views of the whole city including the park full of cherry blossoms. This kids-friendly park has swimming pool, fountain square, eco pond and even rabbit hutch where you can feed bunnies.

**ADDRESS:** 115-1 Nueup-dong, Osan-si  
**ENTRY:** Free (Open throughout the year)



NAVER MAP

## Mulhyanggi Arboretum

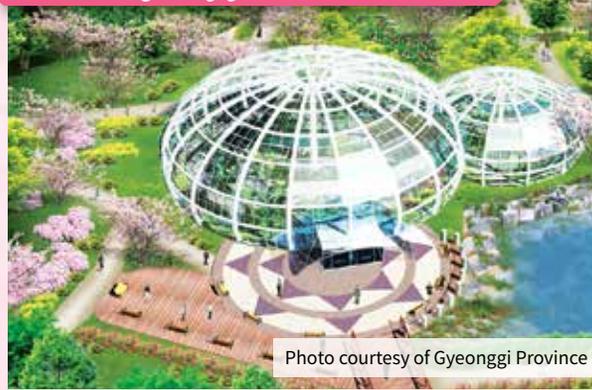


Photo courtesy of Gyeonggi Province

With 19 different themed gardens with over 1,920 different plants and flowers, the Mulhyahgii Arboretum (물향기 수목원) is the perfect spot for a walk in all seasons. Spring is an especially glorious time to enjoy cherry blossoms along with other flowers.

The path in the garden is a mixture of level walkways and challenging hills. The garden features many unique themed sections to explore, including Mankyungwon, which is comprised of vines and creepers, Yousilsoowon where trees that bear edible fruit are planted, and Korea's Pine Exhibit.

It's only 30-minute drive from Osan Air Base or it is also accessible via the subway. Take the subway from Songtan Station to Osan College Station. From there it's only a short five-minute walk to the arboretum. Make sure to pick up a map at the front entrance or it would be easy to find yourself wandering around all afternoon!

**ADDRESS:** 211, Cheonghak-ro, Osan-si  
**ENTRANCE TICKET ADULTS:** 1500 won/ Teenagers (Ages 13 - 18): 1000 won/ Children (Ages 12 and under): 700 won \*Free admission: Preschoolers, senior citizens (ages 65 & older)

**HOURS:** 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (March - Oct.), 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. (Jun. - Aug.), 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Nov. - Feb.) \* Last admission is one hour before closing. \* Closed on every Monday

**PARKING FEES:** Compact cars 1,500 won / Small & medium cars 3,000 won / Large cars 5,000 won



NAVER MAP



Daereungwon Tomb Complex in Gyeongju.  
Photo by Korea Tourism Organization

# Tips for viewing cherry blossoms

BY HYEMIN LEE,  
STRIPES KOREA



### Check the time and weather

Check the flowering and peak time of the area where you're planning to view cherry blossoms in full bloom. Due to unpredictable weather, the cherry blossom forecast is often inaccurate, so it's recommended to check weekly as the blooming season approaches. Make sure to plan your trip before heavy rain arrives.



### Prepare picnic items

Bring your favorite picnic items such as a picnic mat, blanket, and a variety of food and snacks to relax under the cherry blossom trees. Also, you can easily purchase picnic items at convenience stores or Daiso near the viewing areas.



### Expect crowds

During cherry blossom season, most of the best viewing spots will be crowded and there will be limited parking. Bring comfortable shoes because you'll likely be walking a lot.



### Take photos

Blink and cherry blossom season will be over. Don't hesitate to take photos and selfies with the beautiful blossoms while they're around!

lee.hyemin@stripes.com

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# Top cherry blossom festivals!

*Editor's Note: In recent years, forecasts have failed to accurately predict the cherry blossom blooming period, resulting in many cherry blossom festivals being held without cherry blossoms. This year, many festivals plan to announce their festival dates in March (after this paper was sent to print). If you plan on attending a festival, check websites on Naver Map links for date changes as well as cherry blossom blooming conditions of the area you plan to visit.*

BY HYEMIN LEE,  
STRIPES KOREA

As spring unfolds from March to May, Korea becomes a canvas of beautiful colors with blooming flowers under the warm sun. The highlight of this season is undoubtedly cherry

blossom viewing! These delicate blooms are captivating but disappear in the blink of an eye. So, planning ahead is crucial to seize this fleeting spectacle! Many Top cherry blossom spots host festivals and here are the top ones.  
lee.hyemin@stripes.com

## 1. Jinhae - Naval Port Festival (Gunhangje)

Jinhae is a district of Changwon City in the south, known for its famous Gunhangje cherry blossom festival. Crowds flock to witness Jinhae's mesmerizing beauty embellished with around 360,000 cherry blossom trees.

The unique feature of the festival is its blend of military themes with cherry blossoms. The festival features captivating military airshows, parades, and the Military Band & Honor Guard Festival from both ROK and U.S. military branches. Of course, you can find a variety outdoor markets and activities, including food trucks, too!



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

- \* **DATE:** Fri., March 27–Sun., April 5
- \* **FESTIVAL LOCATIONS:** Jungwon Rotary, Gyeonghwa Station, Yeojwacheon Stream, Jinhae Tower, Jungang Market, Naval Academy, U.S. Naval Base CFAC, and more.



NAVER MAP



WEBSITE

## 2. Jeju Cherry Blossom Festivals



Jeonnong-ro Road

Photo courtesy of Jeju city



Noksandro Road

Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

Many wonder about the best time to visit Jeju, but March to April is undoubtedly the best as it is the blooming time for both canola flowers and cherry blossoms on the island! Cherry blossoms bloom from mid-March to early April in Jeju.

There are numerous magical cherry blossom spots including Jeju University, Jeonnong-ro Road, Aewol-eup Town, Samseonghyeol Shrine, and Noksandro Road. Notably, Noksandro Road offers a fantastic collaboration of canola flowers and cherry blossoms.

Two cherry blossom festivals are held in Jeju, featuring various event booths, flea markets, street food, performances and more.

### JEONNONG-RO ROAD CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

- \* **DATES:** Last weekend of March (may vary depending on peak bloom)
- \* **ADDRESS:** Samdo 1dong

### AEWOL-EUP KING CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

- \* **DATE:** Last weekend of March (may vary depending on peak bloom)
- \* **ADDRESS:** 1167-9 Jangjeon-ri, Aewol-eup



NAVER MAP FOR  
JEONNONG-RO ROAD



NAVER MAP FOR  
AEWOL FESTIVAL

## 3. Han River Park - Yeouido Spring Flower Festival

Enjoy a stunning view of the Han River and the magnificent cherry blossom path in Seoul while picnicking, cycling, taking a yacht or boat cruise and sampling all the delicious festival foods.

The Yeouido Spring Flower Festival takes place at Yunjung-ro Road near the National Assembly Building. In the festival, you can enjoy various food trucks, parades, performances, activities and photo zones.



Photo courtesy of Yeongdeungpo Cultural Foundation

- \* **DATE:** 5 days during early April including the weekend
- \* **ADDRESS:** Line 9 National Assembly St. Exit 1 / Yeoui-ro 60-2



NAVER MAP

## 4. Seokchon Lake Cherry Blossom Festival

This beautiful urban lake in Seoul is painted with pink cherry blossoms while featuring harmonious blend of the national tallest skyscraper Lotte Tower, and Lotte World Adventure.



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

During the festival, various events full of youthful energy are held such as busking, event booths, flea markets, and more. Also, the neighborhood nearby the lake is Songridan-gil Street, where trendy cafes and restaurants with outdoor terraces line up.

- \* **DATE:** Usually Wed.–Sun. in late March–early-April (varies by peak bloom)
- \* **ADDRESS:** Line 2 & 8. Jamsil Station Exit 2



NAVER MAP

## 5. Nami Island Cherry Blossom Festival

If you missed the cherry blossom viewing season in the south, head to Nami Island where a variety of blush blooms and other spring flowers arrive throughout April!

Nami Island's festival spans from two to three weeks and features live performances on the weekends, activities and markets.



Photo courtesy of Nami Island

- \* **DATE:** About two weeks from early to late April
- \* **ADMISSION INCLUDING ROUND TRIP FERRY:** Adults 19,000 won / Teens 16,000 won / Children 13,000 won



WEBSITE



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Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

### 6. N Seoul Tower - Blossom Tower

N Seoul Tower, a romantic cherry blossom spot, offers panoramic views of the city and cherry blossom trails with the backdrop of N Seoul Tower. Couples can join special events inside the tower or simply stroll along the beautiful paths for free. Cooler temperatures in the area prolong the blooms compared to other areas of Seoul.

- \* **DATE:** From late March to mid-April
- \* **ADDRESS:** San 1-3, Yongsan-dong 2-ga, Yongsan-gu, Seoul



NAVER MAP

### 7. Hadong Hwagae Market Cherry Blossom Festival

In Hadong County, known for its blend of tradition and nature, the festival takes place along the Hwagae Sip Ri Cherry Blossom Path, a 6 km route from Hwagae Traditional Market to Ssanggyesa Temple. When over a thousand cherry blossom trees bloom, the path is called the “Wedding Road” as couples walking hand-in-hand here are said to have 100 years of happiness together. The festival features local delicacies, stunning sights and cultural events.

- \* **DATE:** Fri., March 27–Sun., March 29
- \* **ADDRESS:** Hwagae-myeon District Office or Sip Ri Cherry Blossom Path



NAVER MAP



Photo courtesy of Korea Tourism Organization

### 8. Andong Cherry Blossom Festival



Photo courtesy of Tour Andong

Andong, a historic city known for its rich traditional heritage like Hahoe Village and traditional mask dances, hosts a unique cherry blossom festival that blends traditions with natural beauty. Enjoy traditional games, performances, exciting festival programs, and delicious street food!

- \* **DATE:** Wed., April 1–Sun., April 5 (may vary depending on peak bloom)

- \* **ADDRESS:** Talchum (Mask dance) park, Yuksa-ro 239, Andong-si, Gyeongbuk



NAVER MAP



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# A storybook breakfast among Seoul's hanok houses at Dotori Garden

STORY AND PHOTOS BY DENISSE RAUDA, STRIPES KOREA

**T**ucked away behind Seoul's picturesque houses near Bukchon Hanok Village is Dotori Garden. Nestled behind a traditional hanok house, this aesthetically cottage-core eatery will fit into a Ghibli movie or Dutch countryside.

The building is like an abandoned house that nature and Little Bo Peep reclaimed. Inside the distressed walls, dozens of knickknacks and peeling paint added to its storybook vibe.

The two-story restaurant is split into rooms. One room has a bakery setup where you grab a tray and pick your own pastries and breads. The next room is where you order from a Greek yogurt bar featuring an impressive selection of toppings like fresh fruits, figs, pumpkin seeds and honeycomb. If you're skipping the yogurt, which I don't suggest, this room is also where you order a delightful breakfast and beverage.

On the first floor, there are also places to pick up your tray and return it when you're done, a couple of small dining rooms and a conservatory with heaters to keep diners warm.

On the second floor, more rooms with dining space, each with

## THINGS TO KNOW

**ADDRESS:** 19-8 Gyedong-gil, Jongno District, Seoul, South Korea

**HOURS:** 8 a.m. – 11 p.m. daily



NAVER MAP



INSTAGRAM

mismatched furniture which together creates a cohesive aesthetic. During a recent visit, my sister and I chose a table on the second floor with schoolroom chairs and an old workshop table.

After selecting our seats, we went back down to the first floor to order but made sure to start at the bakery room to choose a sweet treat. It was a difficult choice, but we picked two adorable acorn-shaped madeleines, one lemon and one pistachio.

In the next room, I couldn't resist ordering the Real Strawberry Greek yogurt for 18,500 won (about \$13). The employee loaded the heaping serving of creamy yogurt with generous portions of strawberries, chocolate granola, pistachios, pecans, almonds, walnuts, honey and a honeycomb chunk.

Here we also ordered from the small but mighty soup and brunch menu. I selected the French Toast Brunch for 14,500 won, which included a side salad topped with Reggiano cheese. My sister went for the Pretzel Brunch for 16,000 won. This plate included two mini pretzel buns, scrambled eggs, bacon, stir-fried vegetables and an avocado half. To drink, I chose the ABC (apple, beet, carrot) juice for 9,500 won and my sister picked the Rendezvous iced tea featuring black tea, strawberry syrup and rosemary garnish.

After paying, we were given our buzzer to wait for our order. We used that time to explore the restaurant a little and connect to the free Wi-Fi to figure out where we were heading next.

The wait was about 15 minutes. We went to the pickup window on the first floor and carefully navigated our way up the steep, narrow stairs with our trays.

We settled in for a decadent meal that was just as delicious as it looked. My ABC juice was tart and lightly sweetened and the French toast was rich with honey butter and soft with the right amount of crispy caramelized edges. I was glad for the side salad because I often end up skipping on veggies while I'm on vacation.

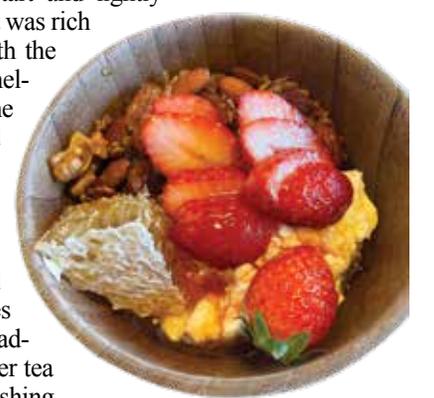
My sister enjoyed her meal, but the pretzel buns were a little stiff. She said the scrambled eggs were good and chili flakes sprinkled on top were a nice addition. She gave me some of her tea and it was very herbal but refreshing.

Probably the best, and most expensive, part of the meal was the yogurt bowl. The creamy, slightly sour yogurt balanced the decadent toppings. This was my first time trying honeycomb, so it was a little confusing as to whether you're supposed to eat the wax. I opted not to, but I guess you can if you want.

A few bites in and we started to realize our eyes are bigger than our stomachs. I still regret having to leave most of the yogurt bowl behind. The staff graciously obliged our request to bag our madeleines so we could have them to go.

Of all the breakfasts we had on our short trip to Seoul, Dotori Garden was the best. From the atmosphere to the bakery, tasty dishes and delicious yogurt, it was a delightful way to start our day of exploring.

rauda.denissem@stripes.com



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# Stripes Sports Trivia

What city did the Thunder play in before making the move to Oklahoma City in 2008?

**Answer**

Seattle

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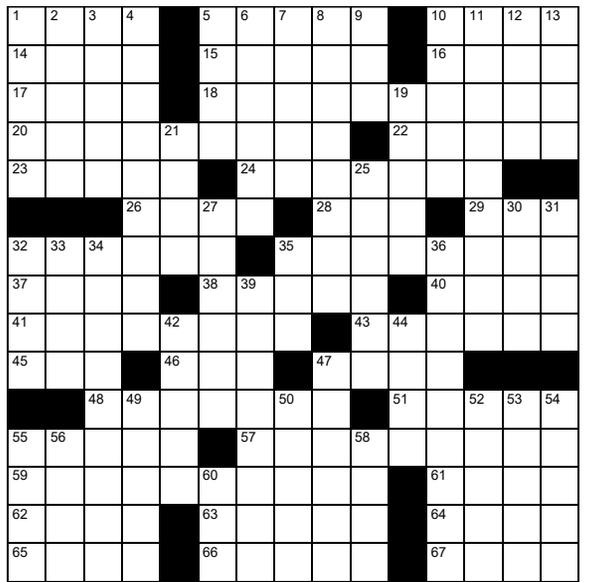


### Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

#### ACROSS

- 1 Highlands miss
- 5 Mosey along
- 10 Take for a ride
- 14 Bart's teacher
- 15 Asia's Peninsula
- 16 Kind of wolf
- 17 Midday hour
- 18 Not up to snuff
- 20 Desert mount
- 22 Like a new candle
- 23 Part of a flower
- 24 Text, for instance
- 26 Indian royal
- 28 Aniston rom-com, "Rumor \_\_\_ It..."
- 29 Luxurious resort
- 32 Bahamas island group
- 35 Bedtime drink
- 37 Comparable (to)
- 38 Figure of speech
- 40 Painter Magritte
- 41 Infatuated
- 43 Like old-time gasoline
- 45 Thanksgiving side
- 46 Aquatic shocker
- 47 Twosome
- 48 Mediocre
- 51 Anatomical cul-de-sac
- 55 Red Square figure
- 57 Posh city dwelling
- 59 Indiana city on the Ohio
- 61 Fingerboard ridge
- 62 DeSoto's "Emergency!" partner
- 63 Hubby's mom, for one
- 64 80s flick, "St. Elmo's \_\_\_"
- 65 Small bills
- 66 Pharaoh's land



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#### DOWN

- 1 Gives for a bit
- 2 Really love
- 3 Rapping Dogg
- 4 Country within Italy
- 5 Encircled by
- 6 Bahrain's capital
- 7 Play loudly
- 8 Nobility title
- 9 Storm center
- 10 Hurlled through the air
- 11 Joined
- 12 Virus prefix
- 13 It often has dashes
- 19 Put down
- 21 Get-up-and-go
- 25 In a wise way
- 27 Act nervous
- 30 Glazier's item
- 31 Made like
- 32 Pampered one?
- 33 Swedish furniture giant
- 34 Run poorly

- 35 Doze (off)
- 36 Compromises
- 39 Telling, as a story
- 42 Low double digits
- 44 Apiece
- 47 Turkey's wattle
- 49 Swings for Tarzan
- 50 "Holy smokes!"
- 52 Vatican tribunal
- 53 \_\_\_ manual
- 54 Distributes, with "out"
- 55 Toy with theme parks
- 56 Peters who played Dahmer
- 58 Pond denizen
- 60 Fight (for)

#### Answers to Previous Crossword:

A	M	O	S	P	U	R	S	E	L	E	A	D	
L	O	P	E	A	B	E	T	S	A	U	R	A	
D	E	E	R	R	E	C	A	P	T	U	R	E	D
A	N	N	A	F	A	R	I	S	A	R	O	S	E
S	P	I	T	T	H	E	R	E					
O	N	E	H	O	R	S	E	N	O	N	F	A	T
W	A	S	R	O	A	R	E	D	C	O	L	E	
E	V	A	S	I	O	N	A	L	B	E	R	T	A
N	A	M	E	P	A	S	T	E	L	T	A	R	
S	L	E	D	G	E	A	S	S	U	R	E	R	S
A	I	R	E	R	S	T	O	P					
C	A	S	T	S	E	C	O	N	O	M	I	S	T
A	L	L	I	T	E	R	A	T	E	P	A	L	O
L	M	A	O	L	I	S	T	S	E	N	O	S	
L	A	W	N	M	E	M	O	S	R	O	W	S	

## DID YOU KNOW?

**K**nown as the "museum without walls," Gyeongju is one of Korea's most historically rich cities. It was the capital of the Silla Kingdom (57 B.C.–935 A.D.), which once unified the Korean Peninsula during ancient times. The city is full of royal tombs, ancient temples, palace ruins, and stone pagodas. Many historic sites including Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto are UNESCO World Heritage sites. Gyeongju also is even more beautiful during cherry blossom and autumn foliage seasons.



Hangul of the week 유적지  
Yoojeokji (Historic site)

## Language Lesson

I'll go to Gyeongju.

Jeoneun Gyeongju-eh gal geoyeyo.  
(는 경주에 갈 거예요)



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## SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Medium

	1		4					
	9				5			
		4				8	6	
				4				1
7						9		
	5	8	9		2	7		
				8		3		
1		7		9				8
		2		1		6		

#### HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

5	2	8	1	3	9	6	7	4
4	3	6	8	5	7	2	9	1
9	7	1	4	6	2	5	8	3
1	4	7	2	8	5	3	6	9
8	9	3	7	1	6	4	5	2
2	6	5	9	4	3	7	1	8
6	5	4	3	9	1	8	2	7
3	1	2	6	7	8	9	4	5
7	8	9	5	2	4	1	3	6

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