

# Jeollabuk-do 전라북도



The southwestern province of Jeollabuk-do has always been Korea's rice bowl, and the image of white egrets standing in terraced rice fields is a provincial icon. Unspoiled national, provincial and county parks cover the more mountainous parts and offer some of Korea's finest get-away-from-it-all hikes and scenery. Buddhist temples, frequently rebuilt over the centuries, still house shaven-headed monks who find the surrounding rocks, hills and trickling streams an aid to Zen meditation as they try to escape from the chains of material desires.

Another form of escape is to off-shore islands, sun drenched in summer, when the beaches could almost be Thailand. In winter thrill-seekers head to the slopes of Muju Ski Resort, with its European alpine atmosphere.

Jeonju city is famous for its food (especially *bibimbap*, a dish of rice, meat and vegetables served up by countless restaurants nationwide), its traditional culture and its *hanok* (traditional house) village suburb with its craft workshops, museums and rustic teashops. Fans, dolls, boxes and even ties made of *hanji* (paper made by hand from mulberry bark) are popular buys. *Pansori*, a traditional musical drama performed by a solo singer and a drummer, is particularly associated with the province. Like its sister province to the south, its radicalism and artistic side combine in the annual Jeonju Film Festival, which focuses on indie films from around the world.

Jeollabuk-do has recently faced conflict over two major environmental issues: the storage of nuclear waste and the Saemangeum reclamation project on the west coast (p60).

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore Jeonju's fascinating **hanok village** (p297)
- Be amazed by the unique rock-pinnacle temple garden in **Maisan Provincial Park** (p300) in the shadow of 'Horse Ears' mountain
- Zip round **Seonyudo** (p305) on a nippy quad bike before relaxing on the beach
- Amble through pretty **Seonunsan Provincial Park** (p303) to a giant Buddha carving on a cliff
- Ski, skateboard or sled down the slopes at **Muju Ski Resort** (p301)
- Take a cable car up to the skyline in **Daedunsan Provincial Park** (p300) or **Naejongsan National Park** (p302)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 063    ■ POPULATION: 2 MILLION    ■ AREA: 8050 SQ KM

## History

The Donghak rebellion, led by Chon Pongjun, took place mainly in Jeollabuk-do in 1893 when a raggle-taggle force of peasants and slaves, armed with various homemade weapons, seized Jeonju fortress and defeated King Gojong's army, before being destroyed by Japanese forces. Their demands included the freeing of slaves, better treatment of the *chonmin* or low-born, the redistribution of land, the abolition of taxes on fish and salt, and the punishment of corrupt government officials.

## National & Provincial Parks

An atmospheric temple, coastal views and a waterfall are features of **Byeonsanbando National Park** (p304). A cable car takes you near the peak in **Daedunsan Provincial Park** (p300) and afterwards you can relax in a hot-spring spa. Skiers and hikers both enjoy the super scenery in **Deogyusan National Park** (p301). **Maisan Provincial Park** (p300) is famous for its 'horse ears' mountains and mystical stone towers, while the big drawcard at **Moaksan Provincial Park** (p299) is its superb temple. **Naejongsan**

**National Park** (p302) has a great ridge hike and a cable car up to it for softies. Pretty **Seonunsan Provincial Park** (p303) has a giant Buddha carving on a cliff.

## Getting There & Around

If you arrive by train or bus, you can then base yourself in Jeonju, the *hanok* city, where buses radiate to every nook and corner of the province.

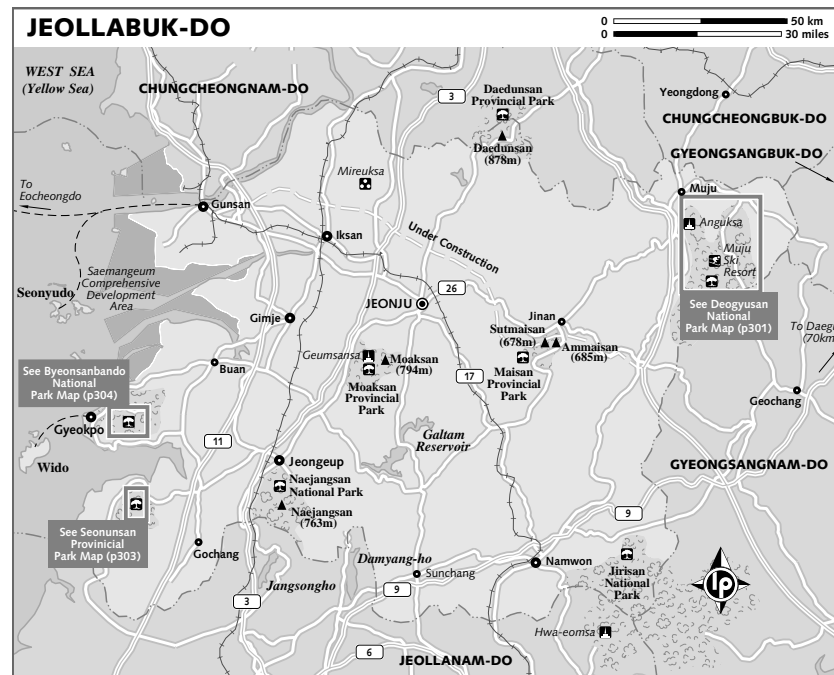
## JEONJU 전주

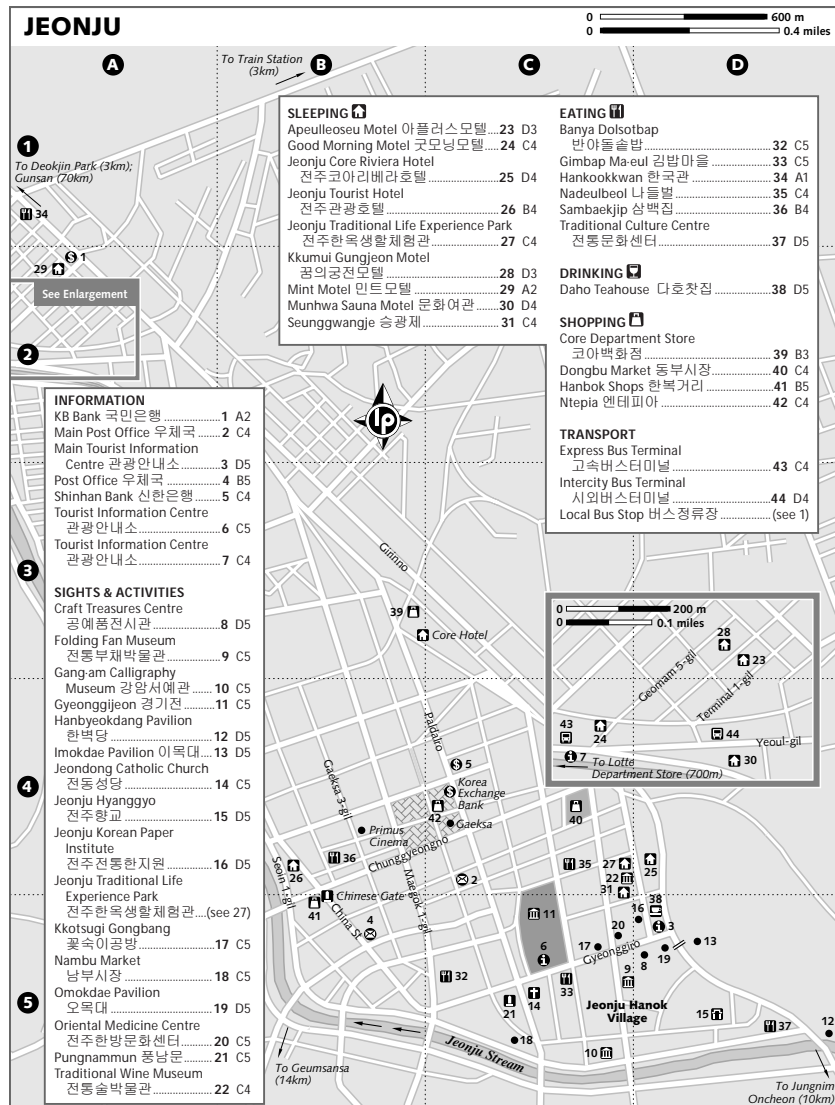
pop 622,000

Jeonju ([www.jeonju.go.kr](http://www.jeonju.go.kr)), the provincial capital, is famous for being the birthplace of both the Joseon dynasty and *bibimbap* (rice, meat, egg and vegetables with a hot sauce). Centrally located, the city is the perfect base from which to explore Jeollabuk-do as it's the hub for all the bus services. The historical area of the city has many outstanding *hanok* buildings, old and new.

## Information

KB Bank (Girrinno) Global ATM and foreign currency exchange.





**Main post office** (h 9am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Sat)  
Free internet access.

**Main tourist information centre** (☎ 282 1338;  
Gyeonggiro) Free internet access.

**Post office** (China Street)

**Shinhan Bank** (Girino) Global ATM and foreign-currency  
exchange.

**Tourist information centre** bus terminal (☎ 281

2739; outside Express bus terminal); Gyeonggiro (☎ 232  
6293; outside Gyeonggiro)

### Tours

**Good-value coach tours** (tours/tours incl Seonyudo  
W9000/W19,000; h 8am-7pm Sat & Sun Mar-Nov) visit  
different sights every weekend. Book at a tour-  
ist information centre.

## Sights & Activities

### JEONJU HANOK VILLAGE 전주한옥마을

This historical urban village can take all day  
to look around – ask at a tourist information  
centre for the excellent 'Invitation to Our  
Tradition' brochure.

The **Oriental Medicine Centre** (☎ 232 2500; www.  
hanbangcenter.com; admission free; h 10am-6pm) offers  
medical tests and diagnosis from an Asian-  
medicine perspective for a fee of W1000 to  
W4000, and recommends herbal, acupuncture,  
moxibustion and massage therapies, but lan-  
guage can be a problem.

Housed in a beautiful old *hanok*, the **Tradi-  
tional Wine Museum** (☎ 287 6305; admission free;  
h 9am-6pm Tue-Sun) has a *gosori* (traditional  
still). You can learn how to make your own  
*soju* (Korean vodka), and (more to the point)  
taste and buy traditional Korean liquors.

See sheets of *hanji* being manufactured  
in the **Jeonju Korean Paper Institute** (☎ 232 6591;  
admission free; h 9am-5pm), housed in a gloriously  
atmospheric *hanok* down an alley. A slop of  
fibres in a big tank magically solidifies into  
paper.

The tiny but fascinating **Kkotsuki Gongbang**  
(Gyeonggiro; h 10am-9pm Mon-Sat) is a workshop,  
where lessons are available in the art of making  
traditional Korean paper dolls. Feel free to pop  
in and watch.

Run by a third-generation Jeonju fan maker,  
the **Folding Fan Museum** (☎ 232 2008; admission free;  
h 9am-9pm) has the fan-maker's father's tools  
on display along with antique fans. It takes 12  
hours to complete one fan and the designs are  
burnt on by hand.

**Gyeonggiro** (☎ 281 2790; Gyeonggiro; admission free;  
h 9am-6pm) was originally constructed in 1410  
but was reconstructed in 1614 and contains a  
portrait of Yi Seong-gye, the founder of the  
Joseon dynasty (1392–1910), whose family  
came from Jeonju. Portraits of six other Joseon  
monarchs, and palanquins, are also on show.

On the left are shrines, storehouses and  
guardrooms relating to the Confucian rituals  
that used to be held here. Treating ancestors  
with the utmost respect was a cornerstone of  
the Confucian philosophy that ruled Korea  
for centuries.

The stylish red-brick **Jeondong Catholic Church**  
(☎ 284 322; admission free) was built by French  
missionary Xavier Baudouin on the spot  
where Korean Catholics were executed in  
1781 and 1801. Built between 1908 and 1914,  
the architecture is an outstanding fusion of

## HYANGGYO & SEOWON

*Hyanggyo* were neighbourhood schools  
established by *yangban* (aristocrats) in the  
1500s to prepare their sons for the *seowon*  
(Confucian academies), where the students  
took the all-important government service  
exams. The pupils studied Chinese char-  
acters and key Confucian texts. Over 600  
*seowon* were spread across the country,  
making Korea more Confucian than China.  
In the 1860s Regent Heungseon Daewon-  
gun forced most of them to close as he  
reasserted the king's authority, but the  
buildings remain as symbols of Koreans'  
unwavering passion for education.

Asian, Byzantine and Romanesque styles.  
The elegant interior contains stained-glass  
windows portraying early martyrs.

Housing the artwork and art collection of  
a well-known 20th-century calligrapher, **Song  
Sung-yong** (pen name, Gangam), is **Gangam  
Calligraphy Museum** (☎ 285 7442; admission free;  
h 10am-5pm Tue-Sun). The artist's response to  
the meaning and connotations of the words is  
expressed through the brush strokes.

Stroll around **Jeonju Hyanggyo** (☎ 288 4548;  
admission free; h 10am-7pm), a well-preserved  
and very atmospheric Confucian shrine, school  
and dormitory complex that dates back to  
1603 (see above).

Don't miss the lanterns, boxes, ties and  
clothing all made out of paper at the **Craft  
Treasures Centre** (☎ 285 4403; Gyeonggiro; admission  
free; h 10am-7pm). The courtyard is pleasant for  
a rest and on the nearby hill is **Omokdae**, a pav-  
ilion where General Yi Seong-gye celebrated  
a victory over Japanese pirates in 1380, prior  
to his overthrow of the Goryeo dynasty. Cross  
the bridge to **Imokdae**, a monument to one  
of Yi Seong-gye's ancestors written by King  
Gojong.

**Pungnammun**, an impressive stone-and-  
wood gateway, is all that remains of Jeonju's  
fortress wall and four gateways. First built  
in 1398 but renovated many times since, it's  
a landmark that marks the beginning of the  
sprawling **Nambu Market**, where farmers' wives  
sell fresh produce direct to the public.

Just past the Traditional Culture Centre,  
go under the bridge to **Hanbyeokdang Pavilion**,  
on rocks overlooking the river, where herons,  
egrets and swallows can be seen in summer.