

Nature,
Our Future



Bandal and
Kkomi
introduce

National Parks of Korea



KNPS
KOREA NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Bandal and Kkomi Take You to:

National Parks of Korea : Charm and Beauty at Every Turn



The National Parks of Korea are: places whose ecosystems are of high value and worth preserving, places that preserve invaluable natural resources and cultural heritages, places that need to be protected and preserved for the benefit of all, and places that should be passed on to the next generation.

National Park

A national park refers to the area of high ecological, natural, cultural, and scenic importance. It is designated by the Ministry of Environment and maintained by the government for conservation through sustainable use.



22 National Parks of Korea

Mountain Parks

Jirisan, Gyeryongsan, Seoraksan, Songnisan, Hallasan, Naejangsan, Gayasan, Deogyusan, Odaesan, Juwangsang, Chiaksan, Woraksan, Bukhansan, Sobaeksan, Wolchulsan, Mudeungsan, Taebaeksan

Coastal and Marine Parks

Hallyeohaesang, Taeanhaean, Dadohaehaesang, Byeonsanbando

Historic and Cultural Park

Gyeongju



Introduction of the National Park System

The United States established Yellowstone as the world's first national park in 1872, and national park systems have subsequently spread across the world.

Today, many nations follow the example of the U.S. in creating national parks to save natural ecosystems from destruction and conserve environmental, cultural, and historical heritages. Korea designated Jirisan as Korea's first national park in 1967, and now the Korean government maintains twenty-two designated national parks.

The Past, Present, and Future of National Parks

- The national park system was originally adopted to vitalize local economies by expanding regional infrastructure and promoting tourism.
- However, the public has become increasingly aware of how industrial growth impacts nature and the environment, and the concept of national parks has transformed into refuges to be protected for the benefit of public health and welfare through sustainable use.

Do you know:



Uses of National Parks

- Provide ecological areas of rich biodiversity and a wealth of genetic resources for the future
- Offer relaxing places that provide the public with a clean natural environment and beautiful scenery
- Stimulate public interest through research on nature and the wonders of life inaccessible in other areas
- Serve as educational venues for cultivating natural and cultural sensibilities about the benefits of conservation

01 Jirisan National Park



All-embracing mountain mother

Designated as Korea's first national park in 1967, Jirisan is South Korea's largest mountain area, covering an area of 483.022km² and spanning five cities and counties in three provinces: Gyeongsangnam-do, Jeollanam-do, and Jeollabuk-do. It is home to many renowned Buddhist temples, including Hwaeomsa and Ssanggyesa, which boast a wealth of cultural treasures while serving as a silent witness to the vicissitudes of modern Korean history. Cheonwangbong, Banyabong, Nogodan and other major peaks are arrayed like a folding screen, with over 20 ridges and valleys between them.



Best places to visit with

Family Hiking for royal azaleas at Baraebong, terraced paddy fields
Friends Sea of clouds from Nogodan, Jirisan sunrise
Lover Sea of clouds from Jeseokbong, cherry blossom road to Ssanggyesa

Best photo spots

Sansuyu Village, Piagol, Nogodan, Gakhwangjeon at Hwaeomsa

02 Gyeongju National Park



Ancient city with 1,000 years of history

Gyeongju, designated as Korea's first and only national historic park in 1968, covers 136.55km², encompassing eight districts, including Bulguksa, a quintessential Korean Buddhist temple; Tohamsan, the mountain with Seokguram (grotto); and Namsan, a mountain often referred to as the "open-air Buddhist museum." Gyeongju is a popular destination for historical education thanks to its well-preserved relics from the Silla Kingdom that blend in with the natural surroundings. In 1979, this area earned a spot in the UNESCO's list of the world's ten most important historic sites.



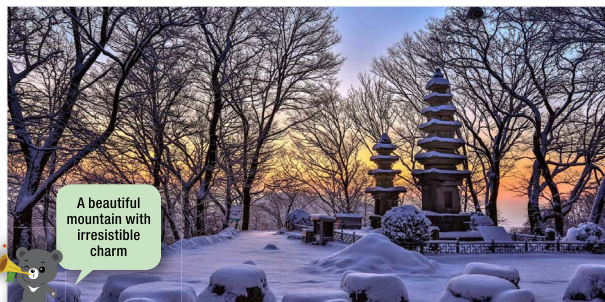
Best places to visit with

Family Bulguksa, Seokgatap, Dabotap
Friends Seokguram, standing Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva statue
Lover Samneung Forest, Sinseonam

Best photo spots

Sunrise at Daewangam, Geumbong

03 Gyeryongsan National Park



A beautiful mountain with irresistible charm

Gyeryongsan spans across Chungcheongnam-do and Daejeon City, covering an area of 65.335km². The mountain has 16 peaks and 10 valleys. The name "gye ryong" (chicken dragon) was derived from the mountain's shape, which is said to resemble a dragon with a cockscomb. The landscape is inviting, with a constantly-changing appearance. The park is crowded with visitors year-round because of easy access from Seoul, Daejeon, and other major urban areas.



Best places to visit with

Family Nammaetap, Donghaksa
Friends Sinwonsa, Sutonggol
Lover Eunseon Falls, Gapsa

Best photo spots

Jayeonseongneung, Geumjandi Gogae

04 Hallyeohaesang National Park



Beautiful blue waterways

Designated as Korea's first national marine park in 1968, Hallyeohaesang covers 535.676km², 76 percent of which is marine area. The unique ecosystem boasts a wealth of biodiversity and pristine landscape dotted with small and large islands along the 1,178-km waterway from Jisimdo (island) off Geoje, Gyeongsangnam-do, to Odongdo (island) near Yeosu, Jeollanam-do. Renowned for its unrivaled beauty, the Hallyeosudo Waterway includes 71 uninhabited and 29 inhabited islands.



Best places to visit with

Family Deungdaeseom on Somaemuldo, Boriam, Geumsan Nature Trails
Friends Doseonbawi, Hansando
Lover Jisimdo archipelago in Sacheon district

Best photo spots

Haegeumgang, Hallyeosudo seen from Mireuksan

05 Seoraksan National Park



Where mid-autumn snow remains until the following summer

Designated in 1970, Seoraksan National Park spans Inje-gun, Goseong-gun, Yangyang-gun, and Sokcho, Gangwon-do. The mountain is divided into three sections: Naeseorak (the area belonging to Inje), Namseorak (the area belonging to Hangryeong~Osak), and Oeseorak (the area belonging to Sokcho, Yangyang-gun, and Goseong-gun). There are over 30 peaks, including Daechongbong, Jungcheongbong, Socheongbong, and Hwachaeobong. Seoraksan National Park was designated as a Biosphere Preservation District by UNESCO in 1982.



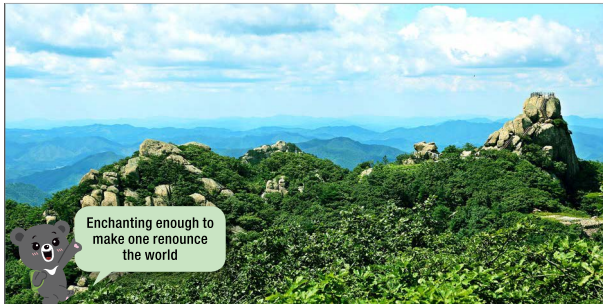
Best places to visit with

Family Cheonbuldong Valley, Yongajangseong, Gongryongneungseon, Gongryongneungseon Ambong, Baekdam Valley
Friends 12 Seomyeodang Valleys, Osak Jujeongil Valley, Ulsanbawi, Towangseong Falls
Lover Gombaeryeong forest trail on Jeombongsan, Daeseung Falls

Best photo spots

Jeohangnyeong Valley seen from Gwaongeumseong, Biseondae, Janggunbong, Ulsanbawi

06 Songnisan National Park



Enchanting enough to make one renounce the world

Designated as Korea's 6th national park in 1970, Songnisan is a rocky mountain that covers 274.766km² and spans parts of Chungcheongbuk-do and Gyeongsangbuk-do. The main peaks Cheonwangbong, Birobong, and Munjangdae are connected along the Baekdudaegan mountain ranges (Backbone of Korea) with well developed stone peaks and ridges. Songnisan is connected to adjacent mountains and its eight peaks, including Birobong, Munjangdae, and Gwaneumbong, stretch out in an arc.



Best places to visit with

Family Hwayangdong Valley, Beopjusa, Sejongil
Friends Cheonwangbong, Mokkyokso, Sesimjeong
Lover Sansagil, Orisupgil

Best photo spots

Songnisan seen from Munjangdae, Solhyang Park

07 Hallasan National Park



Spiritual mountain standing high at the southernmost tip of the Korean Peninsula

Designated as the 7th national park in Korea in 1970, Hallasan covers 153.32km². As one of the nation's three "soul mountains," along with Geumgangsan and Jirisan, Hallasan stands at the southernmost tip of the nation and is home to a wide variety of plant and animal life of high scientific value. There are over 360 parasitic cones, or oreum, in the Jeju dialect, of varying sizes that are built by the accumulation of pyroclastic materials as a result of volcanic eruptions.



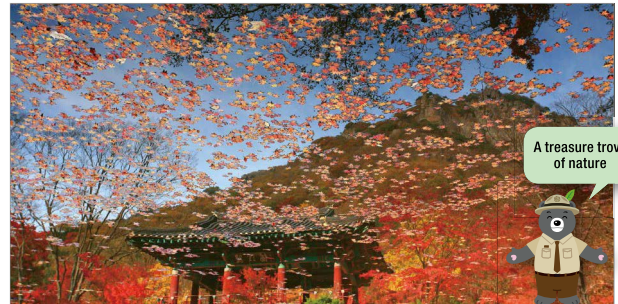
Best places to visit with

Family Korean azalea habitat, Hwagubryok, Gwaneumsa Temple
Friends Yeongsilgiam, Mujangori Oreum
Lover Baengnokdam, Seonjakjiwat

Best photo spots

Wild roe deer, snow covered Korean fir in Hallasan, scenery seen from Eoseungsangak Oreum, Sunset over Baengnokdam

08 Naejangsan National Park



A treasure trove of nature

Designated as a national park in 1971, Naejangsan is one of the five most popular mountains in the southern area and one of the eight most beautiful scenic views in Korea. Covering an expanse of 80.708km², Naejangsan is often referred to as "Geumgang of Honam (the Southwest)" as its main peak, Sinseonbong, and others are roughly 700 meters in height, but each boasts a unique rock formation. Many wonders are said to be hidden within, hence the name nae ("inside") jang ("concealed").



Best places to visit with

Family Ssanggyeru, Baekhakbong
Friends Seoraebong, Ipapsanseong
Lover Baekyangsa

Best photo spots

Maple tunnel, scenery of Baekyanggol

09 Gayasan National Park



Vestiges of ancient wisdom and tradition

Designated as a national park in Korea in 1972, Gayasan covers 76.256km², bordering Hapcheon-gun and Geochang-gun of Gyeongsangnam-do and Seongju-gun of Gyeongsangbuk-do. During the Joseon Dynasty (1392~1910), the mountain was renowned as one of the “ten most beautiful spots in the East Sea area” and included among the “eight scenic wonders.” Sangwangbong, the highest peak, has often been referred to as “Udobong,” as it is said to resemble a cow’s head. Gayasan boasts a wealth of historic attractions, such as Haeinsa (temple), home to the Tripitaka Koreana (woodblocks for printing the Buddhist canon), and Hongryudong Valley and superb scenic views.



Best places to visit with

Family Haeinsa, Sorigil
Friends Hongryudong Valley, Namsan Jeilbong
Lover Forest trail to Iljumun of Haeinsa

Best photo spots

Manmulsang Rock in the direction of Simwongil seen from Sangwangbong

10 Deogyusan National Park



A place of virtue

Standing at the center of the Baekdudaegan, the mountain ridge system dubbed the “backbone of the Korean Peninsula,” Deogyusan was designated as the 10th national park in Korea in 1975. The mountain covers 229.43km², spanning four regions in the Southeast and Southwest, including Muju-gun and Jangsu-gun of Jeollabuk-do, and Geochang-gun and Hamyang-gun of Gyeongsangnam-do. The mountain boasts thirteen magnificent rock formations, over ten ponds, twenty waterfalls in Gucheondong Valley, and various peaks, including the highest peak Hyangjeokbong. It also boasts a well-preserved sub-alpine ecosystem.



Best places to visit with

Family Sangodae on Hyangjeokbong, Gucheondong Valley, Chilyeounichong
Friends Chilyeon Valley
Lover Jeoksangsan Sanjeong Lake and Anguksa

Best photo spots

Mountain ridge seen from Jungbong

11 Odaesan National Park



Five tall peaks spreading out like a folding screen

Odaesan, which was designated as a national park in 1975, stands at the border of Gangneung, Hongcheon-gun, and Pyeongchang-gun of Gangwon-do, covering 326.348km². The five peaks, including the highest Birobong (1,563m), Dongdaesan, Durobong, Sangwangbong, and Horyeongbong, spread out like a folding screen, while the mountain area known as Sogeumgang, well known for its indescribably beautiful scenery, runs below Noinbong (1,338m). Odaesan is rather gentle with no sharp peaks or steep ridges, a common attribute for Korean mountains that are covered in soil rather than exposed rock.



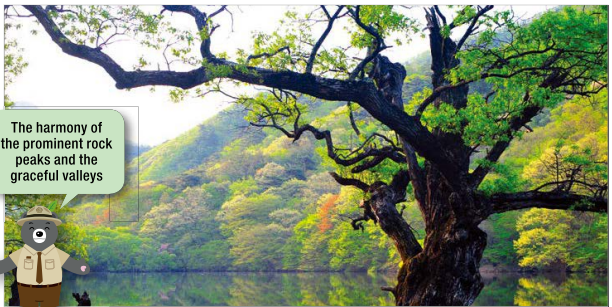
Best places to visit with

Family Woljeongs, yew habitat
Friends Sogeumgang Valley, Sangwonsa Temple
Lover Fir forest trail, Gyebsangsan

Best photo spots

Sogeumgang route

12 Juwangsan National Park



The harmony of the prominent rock peaks and the graceful valleys

Juwangsan, which became a national park in 1976, borders Cheongsong-gun and Yeongdeok-gun, Gyeongsangbuk-do, and occupies an area of 105.595km². One of the three rugged mountains along with Seoraksan and Wolchulsan, Juwangsan is linked to Taehaengsan (mountain), Daedunsan (mountain), and Wanggeoam (rock) to form a horseshoe-shaped ridge. This mountain boasts a unique landscape created by striking volcano stones, Yongchu Waterfall, and Jeolgu Falls, which are the product of pyroclastic flows some 70 million years ago.



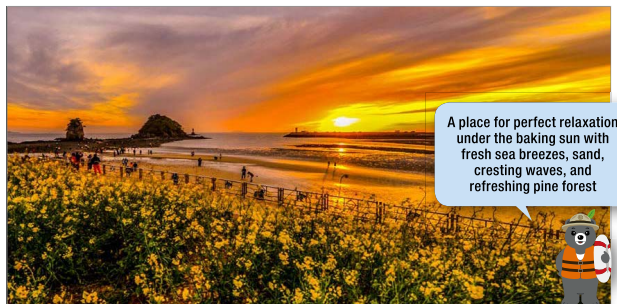
Best places to visit with

Family Juwangam, Bogwangjeon
Friends Juwang Valley, Yongju Waterfall Giamgil
Lover Yongyeon Waterfall, Jusanji

Best photo spots

Scenery captured at the peak of Gamebong

13 Taeanhaean National Park



A place for perfect relaxation under the baking sun with fresh sea breezes, sand, cresting waves, and refreshing pine forest

Designated as a national park in 1978, Taeanhaean National Park encompasses 377.019km² from Taean-gun to Boryeong, Chungcheongnam-do. Its 230-km coastline embraces the Taean Peninsula and Anmyeondo (island). The name "Taean (peace and comfort)" comes from the fact that the region enjoys a mild climate and abundant food supply without major natural disasters. The mudflats, sand dunes, curiously-shaped rocks and islets that spread out along the ria coast make the West Sea one of the most beautiful places in Korea.



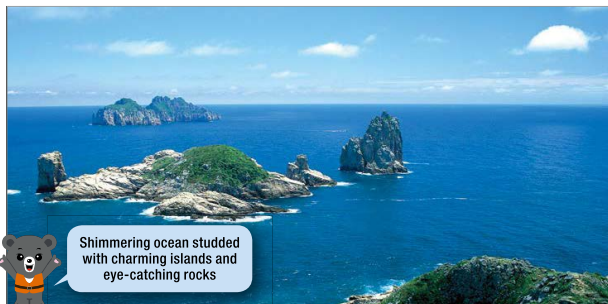
Best places to visit with

Family Sambong Beach, Mongsampo Beach, Gijipo Nature Trails, Sindori Sand Dunes
Friends Ggotji Beach, Bangpo Observatory
Lover Baramarae Beach, Cheollipo Arboretum

Best photo spots

Sunset behind Grandpa and Grandma Rocks, Gijipo sand dune plants

14 Dadohaehaesang National Park



Shimmering ocean studded with charming islands and eye-catching rocks

Designated as a national park in 1981, Dadohaehaesang National Park is the largest national park in Korea, covering 2,266km². The warm oceanic climate supports the existence of evergreen forests with high ecological value. The magnificent islands and fantastic rock formations created by past volcanic activities offer unique beauty. It is the very place where Jang Bogo (?~846) of the Silla Kingdom built his maritime kingdom and Admiral Yi Sunsin (1545~1598) of Joseon had his historic battles with the Japanese navy.



Best places to visit with

Family Cheongsando as a filming location for Seopyeongje, Yesongni coast on Bogildo
Friends Seoyeonjeong on Bogildo, Hyangilam
Lover Camellia forest trail and lighthouse on Geomundo

Best photo spots

Scenery of Baekdo, Sujikheolli on Baekdo, Independence Gate Rock on Hongdo, Guryedeung Beach in Jeongdo-ri, Nammun Rock on Hongdo, Namhae seen from Hyangilam

15 Chiaksan National Park



Rugged mountain ablaze with fall colors

Located in Gangwon-do, Chiaksan became a national park in Korea in 1984. It covers an area of 175.668km² and contains many steep valleys between high peaks that reach over 1,000m, including Namdaebong in the south and Maehwasan in the north. This rugged mountain is famous for its stunning views that change with each season, such as pink and purple azalea flowers that cover the whole mountain in spring, wooded pine forest and crystal clear water at Goryongsa (temple) in summer, autumn leaves in fall, and snow-covered mountain in winter.



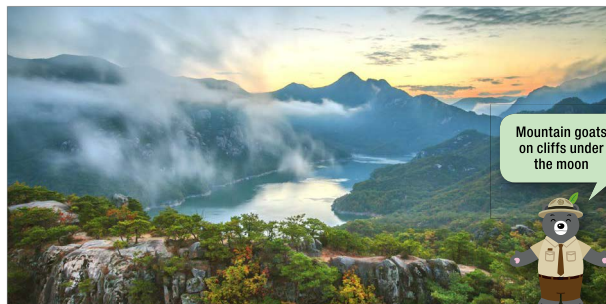
Best places to visit with

Family Guryongsa, Guryong Valley, Sangwonsa
Friends Seonghwagrim, Birobong
Lover Yeongsansanseong, Yeongsansa

Best photo spots

Fall colors around Yeongsansanseong

16 Woraksan National Park



Mountain goats on cliffs under the moon

Designated as a national park in 1984, Woraksan stands in the middle of Baekdudaegan, connecting Sobaeksan and Songnisan, and covers an expanse of 287.571km². The steep topography and tall cliffs have inspired legends that the mountain is divine. Major attractions include Doraksan (mountain) and Chungjuho (lake) in perfect harmony with the peaks Gudambong and Oksunbong.



Best places to visit with

Family Standing stone statue of Buddha in Mireung-ni, Chungju, Nature Trails along Mansu Valley, Haneuljae
Friends Deokjusa, Bodeokam
Lover Seonam Valley, Jebibong

Best photo spots

Mountain goats, Gudambong, Oksundaegyo seen from Wolaksan

17 Bukhansan National Park



One of only a few urban nature parks in the world, Bukhansan was designated as a national park in 1983. Covering an area of 76.922km², Bukhansan borders Seoul and Gyeonggi-do. Uiryeong (ridge) draws the boundary line between Dobongsan in the north and Bukhansan in the south. Bukhansan is home to over 100 Buddhist temples and numerous historical and cultural relics, such as Bukhansanseong (fortress wall) with 2,000 years of history that blend well with steep rocky cliffs and jagged mountain peaks.



Best places to visit with

Family Bukhansanseong, Bukhansan hiking trail
Friends Jeongneung Valley, Munsadong Valley
Lover Samnabawi, Azalea ridgeway

Best photo spots

Fall foliage seen from the Ullam Observatory

18 Sobaeksan National Park



Sobaeksan was designated as a national park in 1987. The fourth largest national park in Korea, following Jirisan, Seoraksan, and Odaesan, Sobaeksan stretches 322.011km² and contains peaks of varying heights, including Birobong. The mountain is popular throughout the year for the beautiful wildflowers in full bloom along the ridges that touch the sky in spring, fresh water running through the valleys in summer, and snow-covered Baekdudaegan in winter.



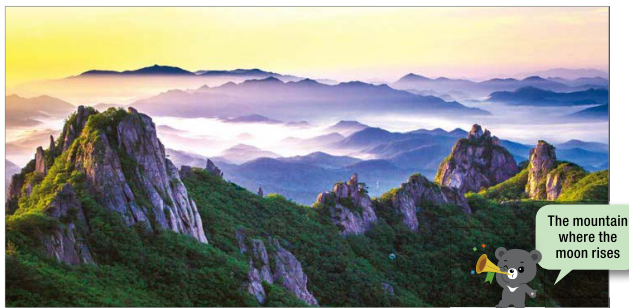
Best places to visit with

Family Huibang Valley, Sobaeksan ridges, Buseoksa, National Sobaeksan Astronomical Observatory
Friends Jukgye Gugok, Yeonhwabong
Lover Birobong, Cheondong Valley

Best photo spots

Azalea habitat, yew habitat

19 Wolchulsan National Park



Wolchulsan, which became a national park in 1988, is relatively small in size (56.22km²), but it is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna and cultural treasures. The highest peak Cheonhwangbong (809m above sea level) is speculated to have been used as a site where rituals were offered to the gods of heaven. With Cheonhwangbong in the middle, the east and north sides of the mountain are characterized by huge rocks sitting on deep ridges while the west and south sides of the mountain feature tower-like rock formations of varying sizes.



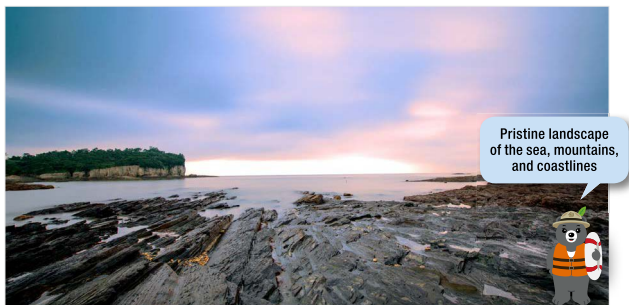
Best places to visit with

Family Dogapsa
Friends Sanseongdae Nature Trails
Lover Cloud bridge that spans Maebong and Sajabong

Best photo spots

Yeongam Plain seen from Cheonhwangbong, Cheonhwangbong, Sajabong, Gyeongbong, Janggunbawi

20 Byeonsanbando National Park



Byeonsanbando National Park is Korea's only peninsula-based park, encompassing both mountains and the sea. Designated as a national park in 1988, Byeonsanbando covers an expanse of 153.934km², comprising Nabyeonsan, the mountain area, and Oebyeonsan, the coastal area. Nabyeonsan consists of over 10 mountains of varying sizes with Jikso Waterfall, while Oebyeonsan includes the rivers of Chaeseokgang and Jyeokbyeokgang. Byeonsanbando, being on the west coast, is especially popular for its breathtaking sunset views.



Best places to visit with

Family Chaeseokgang, Naesosa, Gosapo Beach
Friends Jikso Waterfall, Gomsosyeonjeon Salt Pond
Lover Fir forest trail

Best photo spots

Landscape of Bunho, sunset on the west coast

21 Mudeungsan National Park



Mudeungsan, which became a national park in 2013, is a guardian mountain of Gwangju and Jeollanam-do and the centerpiece of Honamjeongmaek (mountain range), covering an expanse of 75.425km². Cheonwangbong, the highest peak, and other coastal cliffs, including Seoseokdae, Ipseokdae and Gwangseokdae, stand tall like a stone wall, creating a magnificent view. The mountain boasts distinct ecological characteristics for each season: azaleas and peonies are in full bloom in spring and summer, respectively, while maples and flame grass cover the mountain in fall, and snow creates a breathtaking landscape in winter. The pillar-shaped joint cliff on Mudeungsan was designated as Natural Treasure No. 465 for its geological value.



Best places to visit with

Family Mudeungsan Pyeongchon Bandi Village, Sheep Farm
Friends Seoseokdae, Ipseokdae, Jigongneodeol
Lover Baekmanjeongseon, Gwangseokdae, Ipseokdae, Seoseokdae

Best photo spots

Seondum, Gwangju Basin seen from Seoseokdae, Cheonwangbong and Inwangbong seen from Ipseokdae

22 Taebaeksan National Park



Taebaeksan, which gained its national park status in 2016, is the centerpiece of the Baekdudaegan, the mountain range system that stretches from north (Baekdusan) to south down the Korean Peninsula. The 70.052-km² elevation has been considered a sacred mountain for the nation and serves as the source of the Osipcheon (stream) in Samcheok, Hangang (river), and Nakdong (river). The area boasts diverse and superb ecological and scenic features, including Cheonjedan, an altar for heavenly rituals for thousands of years; Geomryongso, the source of the Hangang; Geumdaebong (peak), Korea's largest wildflower habitat and ecological and scenery conservation area; a habitat of rigid-branch yews near Janggunbong (peak); and the world's southernmost habitat of Manchurian trout, to name only a few.



Best places to visit with

Family Cheonjedan, Geomryongso
Friends Manhangje, Janggunbong
Lover Baekcheon Valley

Best photo spots

Wildflower habitat in Geumdaebong
Daedeoksan, landscape of Cheonjedan seen on the way up to Cheonjedan



Korea National Park Service (KNPS)

The KNPS is committed to systematically promoting sustainable use of national parks to provide the public with access to a healthier and more comfortable lifestyle through systematic protection and management of the natural ecosystems, natural and cultural landscapes, and topological and mineral resources.

Duties and Responsibilities of the KNPS

[Korea National Park Service Act, Article 9]

- Preserve national parks
- Protect wildlife and restore endangered species
- Install and manage park facilities
- Research resources in nature parks
- Clean nature parks
- Educate and advertise the use of nature parks
- Develop and provide fieldtrip programs, including nature park-related interactive projects, commentary and training
- Survey and research the impact of climate change on the ecosystems of nature parks and ecosystem restoration
- Form international partnerships to preserve and manage nature parks
- Undertake various projects sponsored by the central and local governments
- Engage in other Presidential projects designed to fulfill the goals of the KNPS

Core values of the KNPS



Ecological
health



National
wellbeing



Safety



Professional
management

- Protect and manage natural resources that increase ecological value
- Make national parks accessible to all
- Create safe park environments for all people
- Cultivate professionalism in park management

Nature is the Future!
The KNPS is Nature!



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