



Chungcheongnam-do

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Stay

- Pinocchio Pension (p292)
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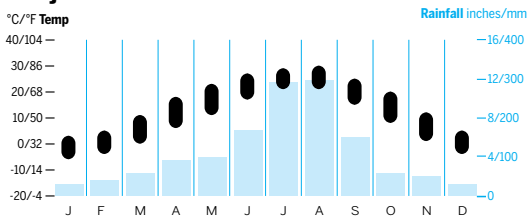
Why Go?

Much of the buzz in the region has focused on the new administrative city of Sejong, but until it gets up and running, it's Daejeon that's the capital manqué with all the trappings of modern Korean life. More interesting, however, are the small towns left in its wake: Gongju and tiny Buyeo were once capitals of the ancient Baekje dynasty, and have retained a surprising number of old fortresses, tombs and relics.

Chungcheongnam-do (충청남도) also has the best beaches within striking distance of Seoul. Gorgeous Daecheon Beach is popular with the young, active crowd, while those preferring some solitude can hop on a ferry to one of the nearby islands. To the north is Taeon-haeon Marine National Park, dotted with more islands, beaches and the promise of wind-whipped fresh air. In 2012, a series of trails – more than 100km long and flitting in and out of the coast – opened in the park.

When to Go

Daejeon



Apr See the spring blooms at the Cheollipo Arboretum and in Gyeryongsan National Park.

Jul Love it or loathe it, the Boryeong Mud Festival is one big (messy) throwdown.

Oct The region celebrates its rich links to the past via the Baekje Cultural Festival.

History

When the Baekje dynasty (57 BC – AD 668) was pushed south by an aggressive Goguryeo kingdom in AD 475, this is where the Baekje ended up, establishing their capital first in Ungjin (modern-day Gongju), then moving further south to Sabi (modern-day Buyeo). Its culture was fairly sophisticated, and coincided with the early flourishing of Buddhism in Korea, but after Sabi fell to the

joint army of Shilla and China in AD 660, the region passed into obscurity.

Daejeon

대전

042 / POP 1.5 MILLION

The fifth-largest city in South Korea, Daejeon (www.daejeon.go.kr) is a major science and research centre, thanks no doubt to the presence of the Korea Advanced



Chungcheongnam-do Highlights

- 1 Marvelling at the 1500-year-old treasures from King Muryeong's tomb in **Gongju** (p283).
- 2 Strolling from beach to beach along the new trails at **Taeon-haean National Marine Park** (p291).
- 3 Climbing the fortress in **Buyeo** (p286), the site of the Baekje army's last stand.
- 4 Chilling out at **Daecheon Beach** (p289) and indulging in mud spa treatments.
- 5 Rejoicing at the variety of flora at the **Cheollipo Arboretum** (p292).
- 6 Unwinding at a beachfront hut in tiny **Sapsido** (p290).
- 7 Hiking from one end of **Gyeryongsan National Park** (p282) to the other.
- 8 Going gaga over ginseng in the trading town of **Geumsan** (p287).