



Seoul

**“All you’ve got to do is decide to go
and the hardest part is over.**

So go!”

TONY WHEELER, COFOUNDER – LONELY PLANET

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Contents

Plan Your Trip

4

Welcome to Seoul	4	If You Like.....	20	Hiking.....	30
Seoul's Top 10.....	6	Month by Month	23	Eating	32
What's New	13	With Kids	25	Drinking & Nightlife.....	36
Need to Know	14	Like a Local	26	Entertainment.....	39
First Time Seoul	16	For Free	27	Shopping.....	42
Top Itineraries	18	Courses & Tours.....	28	Sports & Activities	45

Explore Seoul

48

Neighbourhoods at a Glance	50	Western Seoul	88	Northern Seoul.....	135
Gwanghwamun & Jongno-gu.....	52	Itaewon & Yongsan-gu.....	101	Day Trips from Seoul	145
Myeong-dong & Jung-gu	75	Gangnam & Southern Seoul	114	Sleeping	159
		Dongdaemun & Eastern Seoul	128		

Understand Seoul

169

Seoul Today	170	Food & Drink	177	Architecture.....	196
History.....	172	Religion & Culture	189	Arts	200

Survival Guide

205

Transport	206	Language	216
Directory A-Z	210	Index	222

Seoul Maps

228



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(left) **Myeong-dong p75** The city's shopping centre.

(above) **Lotus Lantern Festival p23** Celebrating Buddha's birthday.

(right) **Namsan p77** Peaceful mountain park.



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Top Itineraries

Day One

Gwanghwamun & Jongno-gu (p52)

 Start your tour of **Gyeongbokgung** at the palace's expertly restored main gate, Gwanghwamun, where you can watch the pageantry of the changing of the guard on the hour. Explore the winding streets of **Bukchon Hanok Village** and **Insa-dong**, pausing for refreshments at a cafe or tea-house in between browsing the equally ubiquitous art galleries and craft stores in these areas. If you finish early, continue on to the cool converted *hanok* cafes of **Ikseon-dong**.



Lunch Sample legendary dumplings at Koong (p66), or have a vegetarian feast at Osegyehyang (p68).

Gwanghwamun & Jongno-gu (p52)

 Join the afternoon tour of **Changdeokgung**, which also includes the Huwon (Secret Garden). Explore the wooded grounds of the venerable shrine **Jongmyo**, housing the spirit tablets of the Joseon kings and queens.



Dinner Sample Korean street food at Gwangjang Market (p132).

Myeong-dong & Jung-gu (p75)

 Take your seat at a fun nonverbal show such as **Nanta** or **Jump**. Be dazzled by the bright lights and retail overload of **Myeong-dong** and neighbouring **Namdaemun Market**, where the stalls stay open all night.

Day Two

Itaewon & Yongsan-gu (p101)

 Survey centuries of Korean history and art by selectively dipping into the vast collection of the **National Museum of Korea**. Shuttle over to the west side of Yongsan-gu to enjoy the contemporary art and architecture at the splendid **Leeum Samsung Museum of Art**.



Lunch Tuck into Southern American barbecue at Linus' BBQ (p108).

Myeong-dong & Jung-gu (p75)

 Wander the lively, multicultural lanes around Itaewon and the more boutique Hannam-dong, then for a post-lunch workout, hike up **Namsan** to **N Seoul Tower**. It's not a difficult climb, but if you don't have the energy there's a cable car or a bus. It's very romantic watching the sunset from atop this central mountain as the night lights of Seoul flicker to life. Freshen up with a steam in the saunas and a soak in the tubs at the **Dragon Hill Spa & Resort**.



Dinner Savour delicious bibimbap at Mokmyeoksanbang (p82).

Itaewon & Yongsan-gu (p101)

 Explore **Itaewon** after dinner for a fun night of hopping between cafes, bars and dance clubs.

Day Three

Northern Seoul (p135)

 Reflect on the struggles and sacrifices of Koreans to overcome colonialism and create a modern country at **Seodaemun Prison History Hall**. Afterwards, hike up nearby **Inwangsan** along **Seoul City Wall** for fabulous views of the city, surreal rock formations and the otherworldly shamanistic rituals of **Inwangsan Guksadang**.



Lunch Fuel up on elegant dumplings at Jaha Sonmandoo (p142).

Northern Seoul (p135)

 Keep on shadowing the **Seoul City Wall** down to Buam-dong and over **Bukaksan** and to Seongbuk-dong, a hike of around two hours. Catch your breath and rest your feet in the beautiful teahouse



Dinner Gorge on rice-cake comfort food at I Love Sindangdong (p132).

Suyeon Sanbang, and the equally serene surrounds of the temple **Gilsang-sa**.

Dongdaemun & Eastern Seoul (p128)

 If your hiking legs haven't given out, it's only another hour or so following the City Wall over **Naksan** and down to **Dongdaemun**, where the night market will just be starting to crank up (alternatively, take the subway). Admire the 21st-century architectural styling of **Dong-**

Day Four

Western Seoul (p88)

 Both contemporary art and panoramic views up and down the Han can be enjoyed at **63 Sky Art Gallery** on Yeouido. Hire a bicycle in Hangang Riverside Park and pedal out to **Seonyudo Park** on an island in the Han River.



Lunch Pick your own seafood and have it cooked at the Noryangjin Fish Market (p91).

Western Seoul (p88)

 If you're interested in contemporary architecture, then **Ewha Womans University's** stunning entrance building and **KT&G SangsangMadang** in Hongdae are both worth seeing. Hongdae and neighbouring Sangsu-dong and Yeonnam-dong are brimming with hip hang-outs; if it's Saturday you can shop for quirky, original craft souvenirs at the **Free Market** or **Dongjin Market**. A late-afternoon visit to the atmospheric Buddhist temple **Bongeun-sa** can segue nicely



Dinner Treat yourself at Jungsik (p123), or go cheapo at Banpo Romantic Moonlight Market (p121).

into browsing the boutiques of **Apgu-jeong**, **Cheongdam** or **Garosu-gil**.

Gangnam & Southern Seoul (p114)

 After dinner pitch up at the **Banpo Hangang Park** by 9pm to see the

Behind the Scenes

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Index

63 Sky Art Gallery 91
313 Art Project 119-20

A

accessible travel 210
accommodation 15, 159-68
 language 216
activities 23-4, 45-7, see
 also individual
 neighbourhoods
air travel 206-7
alcohol 37, 183-4, see
 also beer, makgeolli
Alternative Art Space Noon
 (Suwon) 151
Ansan 31
Apgujeong, see Gangnam &
 Southern Seoul
Arario Museum in SPACE
 62-3
architecture 21, 196-9
 contemporary 20, 199
 Gangnam 121
 Northern Seoul 136
area codes 213
Arko Art Center 139
art galleries 21, 64, see *also*
 individual
 neighbourhoods
arts 200-4
Artside 64
Artsonje Center 64
ATMs 212

B

Bank of Korea Money
 Museum 81
Banpo Bridge Rainbow
 Fountain 119
Banpo Hangang Park 119
barbecue 178
bargaining 17, 43

Sights 000
Map Pages 000
Photo Pages 000

baseball 39-40, 45
basketball 39
bathrooms 214
beer 109
Beomjongru 59
bibimbap 178
bicycle travel, see cycling
Bomun-sa (Ganghwado) 156
Bongun-sa 119, **28, 194**
books 170, 204
 architecture 197
 culture 195
 food 181
 history 173
Bosingak 65
Bridge of No Return
 (DMZ) 146
Buddhism 190-1
budget, see planning
Bukaksan 31
Bukchon, see Gwanghwamun
 & Jongno-gu
Bukchon Hanok Village 7, 57,
 67, **6, 67, 230-1**
Bukchon Traditional Culture
 Center 57
Bukhansan National Park
 156, **30**
bus travel 15, 207-9
 business hours 33, 37,
 43, 212

C

cable car 77
car travel 15, 209
Caribbean Bay 152
cell phones 14, 213
Central Buddhist Museum 59
ceramics 201
Changdeokgung 7, 56, **7**
Changgyeonggung 138-9
Changuimun 139-41
Cheondogyo Temple 65
Cheong-gye-cheon 11, 60,
 11, 60
Cheong-gye-cheon
 Museum 131

Cheongwadae
 Sarangchae 62
Chichipopo Library 98
children, travel with 25
Children's Grand Park 131-2
Choong Ang High School 63
Christianity 191
cinema 170, 203-4
Citizens Hall 79-80
climate 15, 23-4
clothing 16
Confucianism 190
consulates 211
costs 14, 33, 37, 160
courses 28-9
credit cards 212
culture 170-1, 189-95
Culture Station Seoul
 284 80
currency 14, 212
customs regulations 210
cycling 15, 46, 93, 208

D

Daehan Empire History
 Museum 78
Daehangno, see Northern
 Seoul
Daelim Contemporary Art
 Museum 61
Daeseong-dong (DMZ) 146
Daeujeon 59
dance 39, 204
dangers 213
Deoksugung 78
Deoksugung Stone Wall
 Road 79
disabilities, travellers with 210
discount cards 210
DMZ 12, 146-7, **12**
Dongdaemun Design Plaza
 & Park 130, **130**
Dongdaemun & Eastern
 Seoul 51, 128-34, **247**
 accommodation 167-8
 drinking & nightlife
 129, 133

see also separate subindexes for:



EATING P225



DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE P226



ENTERTAINMENT P226



SHOPPING P226



SLEEPING P227



ACTIVITIES P227

entertainment 133-4
food 129, 132-3
highlights 128-30
shopping 129, 134
sights 130-2
transport 129
Dongdaemun
 (Heunginjimun) **12, 12**
Dongdaemun History
 Museum 130
Dongdaemun Stadium
 Memorial 130
Dora Observatory
 (Dorasan) 147
Dorasan 147
Dorasan Peace Park
 (Dorasan) 147
drinking & nightlife 36-8,
 see *also Drinking &*
 Nightlife subindex,
 individual
 neighbourhoods
drinks 183-4
driving 209

E

eastern Seoul, see
 Dongdaemun & Eastern
 Seoul
Edae, see Western Seoul
electricity 210
embassies 211
emergencies 211
 language 217
entertainment 39-41, see
 also Entertainment
 subindex
etiquette 17, 37, 181, 193
Eungbongsan Park 131
events 23-4
Everland Resort 152

Ewha Womans University 91

F

fashion 42, 195
festivals 23-4, 40
film 170, 203-4

Folk Museum 117
 food 32-5, 177-88, see
 also *Eating subindex*,
 individual
 neighbourhoods
 courses 28-9
 glossary 185-8, 217-18
 football 40, 90
 Football Faentasia 90
 fortune-tellers 195
 free attractions 27

G

Gahoe Minhwa
 Workshop 57
 Gallery Hyundai 64
 Gallery Simon 64
 Ganghwa Dolmen Park
 (Ganghwado) 156-7
 Ganghwa History Museum
 (Ganghwado) 157
 Ganghwa Natural
 History Museum
 (Ganghwado) 157
 Ganghwa Peace
 Observatory
 (Ganghwado) 157
 Ganghwado 155-8
 Gangnam & Southern
 Seoul 51, 114-27, **114**,
250-1, 252, 248-9
 accommodation 166-7
 drinking & nightlife 115,
 123-5
 entertainment 125
 food 115, 121-3
 highlights 114-17
 shopping 115, 125-7
 sights 116-20
 sports & activities 127
 transport 115
 Gangnam Style 'Horse
 Dance' Stage 120
 Gangnam Style
 Sculpture 119
 Gapgot Dondae
 (Ganghwado) 157
 gardens 21
 Geunjeongjeon 55
 Gyeong-dong (DMZ) 146
 Gilsang-sa 141
 golf 45
 Gonsindang 58
 Goryeogungji Palace
 (Ganghwado) 156
 Gungsi Relics Exhibition
 Hall 80
 Gwanghwamun & Jongno-
 gu 50, 52-74, **52**,
232-3, 234-5
 accommodation 162-3

drinking & nightlife 53,
 69-71
 entertainment 71-2
 food 53, 65-9
 highlights 52-3, 54-60
 shopping 53, 72-3
 sights 54-65
 sports & activities 74
 transport 53
 walks 67
 Gwanghwamun Square 62
 Gwangjang Market 9, **8**
 Gyeongbokgung 54-5,
54, 189
 Gyeonggi Provincial
 Museum (Suwon) 150
 Gyeonghuigung 61-2
 Gyeongui Line Book
 Street 90
 Gyeongui Line Forest Park
 13, 90

H

Hakgojae 64
 Hanagae Beach
 (Muuido) 157
 Hangaram Art Museum 118
 Hangaram Design
 Museum 118
 hanok 57, 67, 79, 197-8
 Hanyangdoseong
 Exhibition Hall 141
 health 211
 Heunghwamun
 (Gyeonghuigung) 62
 Heunginjimun 131
 Heungnyemun 54
 hiking 21, 26, 27, 30-1
 history 172-6
 Hoam Art Museum 152
 holidays 213
 Homo Hill 110
 Hongdae 10, **10**, see
 also *Western Seoul*
 Hongneung Arboretum 131
 Huwon 56
 Hwabong Gallery 64
 Hwaseong (Suwon) 149-50
 Hwaseong Haenggung
 (Suwon) 150
 Hyangwonjeong 55
 Hyeonwamun 141

I

Ihwa Mural Village 138
 Ikseon-dong, see
 Gwanghwamun &
 Jongno-gu
 Incheon 151-5, **154**

Incheon Art Platform
 (Incheon) 153
 Incheon Fish Market
 (Incheon) 153
 Incheon Landing Op-
 eration Memorial Hall
 (Incheon) 153
 Incheon Metropolitan City
 Museum (Incheon) 153
 Incheon Open Port
 Museum (Incheon) 153
 Injeongjeon 56
 Insa-dong, see
 Gwanghwamun &
 Jongno-gu
 insurance 211
 internet access 212
 internet resources,
 see *websites*
 Inwangsan 31, **140, 140**
 Inwangsan Guksadang 138
 IPark Museum of Art
 (Suwon) 151
 Itaewon Bugundang
 History Park 105
 Itaewon & Yongsan-gu 51,
 101-13, **101, 244-5, 246**
 accommodation 166
 drinking & nightlife 102,
 109-12
 entertainment 112
 food 102, 105-9
 highlights 101-4
 shopping 102, 112-13
 sights 103-5
 sports & activities 113
 transport 102
 itineraries 18-19

J

Jayu Park (Incheon) 153
 Jean Art Gallery 64
 Jeoldusan Martyrs'
 Shrine 90-1
 Jeondeung-sa
 (Ganghwado) 158
 Jeonggwaneon 78
 Jeongjeon 58
 jjimjil-bang 45
 Jogye-sa 59
 Joint Security Area
 (JSA) 146
 Jongmyo 58, **58**
 Jongmyo Daeje 23
 Jongno-gu, see
 Gwanghwamun &
 Jongno-gu
 Jongno Tower 65
 Jung-gu, see *Myeong-dong*
 & *Jung-gu*
 Junghwajeon 78

K

K-Drama 22
 Kim, Young-sam 175
 kimchi 180
 Korea Furniture
 Museum 137, **137**
 Korean Emigration History
 Museum (Incheon) 153
 Korean Folk Village
 (Suwon) 150
 Korean Stone Art
 Museum 138
 Korean War 173
 K-Pop 22, 25, 120, 202
 K-Star Road 120
 KT&G Sangsang-
 Madang 92
 Kukje 64
 K-Wave Experience 119

L

language 14, 17, 216-19
 courses 29
 Lee, Myung-bak 175
 Leeum Samsung Museum
 of Art 106
 LGBTQ+ travellers 37,
 70, 212
 literature 204
 local life 26
 Lock Museum 139
 Lotte World 117, **117**
 Lotte World Tower 13,
118, 199
 Lotus Lantern Festival
 9, 23, **9**

M

magazines 210
 makgeolli 37, 183-4
 maps 212
 markets 13, 44
 Marronnier Park 141
 media 210
 medical services 212
 medical tourism 120
 MMCA Deoksugung 80
 MMCA Seoul 63
 mobile phones 14, 213
 Modern Design
 Museum 91-2
 money 14, 212
 Mongchon Museum 116
 Moonlight Rainbow
 Fountain Viewpoint 120
 motorcycle travel 120
 mountains 21
 movies 170, 203-4

Mr Toilet House (Suwon) 150-1
 Mullae Arts Village 98
 Museum of Gugak 118-19
 museums 21, 22, 27, see also *individual museums*
 music 39, 40, 201-3
 Muuido 157
 Myeong-dong & Jung-gu 50-1, 75-87, **75, 238-9**
 accommodation 163-5
 drinking & nightlife 76, 83-4
 entertainment 84-6
 food 76, 81-3
 highlights 75-6, 77-8
 shopping 76, 86-7
 sights 77-81
 sports & activities 87
 transport 76
 walks 85
 Myeong-dong Catholic Cathedral 81

N

N Seoul Tower 9, 77, **8**
 Naksan Park 141
 Nakseonjae 56
 Nam Jun Paik Art Centre (Suwon) 150
 Namdaemun Market 82
 Namsan 9, 77
 Namsan Botanical Garden 80
 Namsangol Hanok Village 79
 National Assembly 92
 National Children's Museum 61
 National Folk Museum of Korea 55
 National Hangeul Museum 105
 National Museum of Korea 103, **103**
 National Museum of Korean Contemporary History 61
 newspapers 210
 nightlife, see *drinking & nightlife*
 Northern Seoul 51, 135-44, **135, 254-5**
 accommodation 168

Sights 000
 Map Pages **000**
 Photo Pages **000**

drinking & nightlife 136, 142-3
 entertainment 143-4
 food 136, 142
 highlights 135-7
 shopping 144
 sights 137-41
 sports & activities 144
 walks 140

Noryangjin Fish Market 13, 91

O

Oil Tank Culture Park 90
 Olympic Park 116
 opening hours 33, 37, 43, 212

P

palaces 20, 197
 Park, Chung-hee 174
 Park, Won-soon 170-1, 176
 parks 21
 pharmacies 212
 planning 16-17
 budgeting 14, 27, 33, 37, 160
 children, travel with 25
 festivals & events 23-4
 itineraries 18-19
 local life 26
 repeat visitors 13
 Seoul basics 14-15
 Seoul's neighbourhoods 50-1
 travel seasons 15, 23-4
 websites 14

plastic surgery 171
 politics 170-1
 population 171
 postal services 213
 pottery 201
 public holidays 213
 Pyeongando Jokbal Jip 132

R

radio 210
 religion 171, 189-92
 Ryugaheon 64

S

safe travel 213
 Sajik Daeje 24
 Sajikdan 62
 Sajin Changgo 131
 Samcheong Park 141

Samcheong-dong, see *Gwanghwamun & Jongno-gu*

Samsung Child Education & Culture Center 106

Samsung D'Light 118
 Sejong Gallery 62

Sejong, King 62, 175-6

SeMA Gyeongju Museum of Art 62

Seodaemun Independence Park 141

Seodaemun Prison History Hall 139

Seokjojeon 78

Seongsu-dong 13, **254-5**, see also *Northern Seoul*

Seongsu-dong 13, 132, see also *Dongdaemun & Eastern Seoul*

Seonjam Museum 141

Seonjeongneung 120

Seonyudo Park 92

Seoul Animation Center 81

Seoul Arts Center 118

Seoul Arts Space - Mullae 98

Seoul Baekje Museum 116

Seoul Calligraphy Museum 118

Seoul Central Mosque 105

Seoul City Hall 80

Seoul City Wall 10, 77

Seoul City Wall Museum 131, **11**

Seoul Dulle-gil 30

Seoul Forest 131

Seoul Fringe Festival 24

Seoul K-Medi Center 131

Seoul Lantern Festival 24, 60

Seoul Metropolitan Library 81

Seoul Museum of Art 80

Seoul Museum of History 61

Seoul Olympic Museum 13, 116

Seoul Plaza 81

Seoullo 7017 79

Sewol ferry disaster 171

shamanism 192

shopping 26, 42-4, see also *Shopping subindex, individual neighbourhoods*

language 217-18

Simsimheon 63

Sinchon, see *Western Seoul*

skiing 46, 47

smoking 210

SMTown coexartium 13, 118

soccer 40, 90

SOMA 116

Some Sevit 118

Southern Namsan Circuit 77

southern Seoul, see

Gangnam & Southern Seoul

spas 45

sports 39-40, 45-7, see also *Sports & Activities subindex, individual neighbourhoods*

Stairway Flea Market 105

Starfield Library 13

subway 15, 209

Sun Art Center 64

Sungnyemun 81

Suwon 148-51, **148**

Suwon Hwaseong Museum (Suwon) 151

T

taekwondo 40, 46

Tangent 118

Tapgol Park 63

taxes 17, 43

taxis 15, 209

tea 183

telephone services 213-14

temples 21-2, 197

templestays 28, 59, 119

theatre 39, 204

Third Infiltration Tunnel (Dorasan) 147

time 14, 214

language 218

tipping 17

toilets 214

tombs 197

tourist information 14, 214

tours 29, 209

train travel 207

travel to/from Seoul 15, 206-8

travel within Seoul 15, 208-9

Teok & Kitchen Utensil Museum 63

TV 210

U

Unhyeongung 61

V

vaccinations 211
 vegetarian travellers 33, 179

visas 14, 214
visual arts 200-1
volunteering 214

W

walks

Bukchon Hanok
Village 67, **67**
Inwangsan Shamanist
Walk 140, **140**
Namsan Circuit 85, **85**

War Memorial of Korea
104, **104**

War & Women's Human
Rights Museum 90
Waryongmyo 77

water 211

weather 15, 23-4

websites 14

accommodation 15
entertainment 40
food 33
music 204
sports & activities 46

West Gate (Ganghwa-do)
157-8

Western Seoul 51, 88-100,

88, 240-1, 242

accommodation 165-6
drinking & nightlife
89, 95-7

entertainment 89, 98-9

food 89, 92-5

highlights 88-9

shopping 99-100

sights 90-2

sports & activities 100

transport 89

Whanki Museum 138

wi-fi 212

Wolmido (Incheon) 153

Wolmi Observatory
(Incheon) 153

Wolmi Park (Incheon) 153

work 214-15

World Cup Park 91

World Peace Gate 116, **198**

Y

Yeongnyeongjeon 58

Yeouido, see Western Seoul

Yongsan-gu, see Itaewon &
Yongsan-gu

EATING

63 Buffet Pavilion 95

2046 Pansteak 69

A

Ahn 95

Andong Jjimdak 83

Aoitori Bakery 94

B

Bad Farmers 122

Baker's Table 108-9

Balwoo Gongyang 69

Balwoo Gongyang Kong 69

Banpo Romantic Moonlight
Market 121

BC Gogitjib 106

Bibigo Gyejeolbabsang
68-9

Brooklyn the Burger
Joint 121

Bua 108

Busan Ilbeonji 95

C

Casablanca
Sandwicherie 105

Chang Hwa Dang 68

Cheonjinpoja 65-6

Chosun Gimbap 65

Chung-jeong-gak 82

Cine de Chef 122

Ciuri Ciuri 95

Congdu 83

Coreanos Kitchen 106, 122

D

Dadabok (Incheon) 154

Ddobagi Chicken 94

Dejangjangi Hwadeog-
Pijajip 68

Deongjang Yesool 142

Dongdaemun Market 133

Dongmu Bapsang 94

Dongwon Jip 81-2

Downtowner 107

E

Euro Gourmet 66

F

Fell & Cole 94

G

Gangnam Gyoja 122

GastroTong 66

Gati 123

Geumwang Dongaseu 142

Gilbert's Burgers &
Fries 122

Gino's NY Pizza 108

Gogung 68

Gosang 83

Gwanghwamun

Dduckam 66

Gwanghwamun Jip 65

Gwangjang Market 132

Gyeongju Restaurant 94

Gyeyolsa Chicken 142

H

Hadongkwan 83

Hanmiri 66, 123

Haru 121

HBC Gogitjib 106

Himesiya 94

Hongik Sutbul

Galbi 94-5

Hyehwa Kalguksu 142

I

I Love Sindangdong 132

Ikseon Dimibang 68

J

Jaha Sonmandoo 142

Jilhal Bros 121-2

Jirisan 68

Jungsik 123

Just BLT 107

K

Koong 66

Korea House 83

L

La Ferme 108

Lay Bricks 122

Leo's 108

Linus' BBQ 108

M

Maddux Pizza 107

Menya Sandaime 94

Min's Kitchen 122

Mokmyeoksanbang 82

Morococo Cafe 105-6

Muwol Table 95

Myeong-dong Gyoja 81

N

Namdaemun Market 82

Namul Meokneun Gom 92

Nekkid Wings 108

Newijo 68

N.Grill 83

Normal by Ryunique 123

Noryangjin Fish

Market 91

O

Ogawa 66

Olde Knives 108

Onion 132

On Ne Sait Jamais 107

OR:ER 132-3

Osegyehyang 68

P

Passion 5 105

Pho for You 107

Pipit Burger 106-7

Plant Bakery 107

Plant Cafe & Kitchen 105

Potala 82

Pyeongando Jokbal Jip 132

R

Raw Vega 92

Rogpa Tea Stall 65

Root 108

Ryunique 123

S

Samarkand 133

Samchi St (Incheon) 154

Samwon Garden 123

Scoff 142

Seasons Table 122

Seouresoo Duljaero
Jalhaeunjeon 66, 68

Share D Table 133

Shim's Tapas 95

Sindang-dong Tteobokki
Town 133

Sinpo Market
(Incheon) 154

Sinseon Seolnongtang 82

Sobok 94

Soi Yeonnam 94

Song's Kitchen 66

T

Tartine 106

Tongin Market Box Lunch
Cafe 65

Tosokchon 66

Tuk Tuk Noodle Thai 92

V

Vatos 107-8

W

Wangjaejeong
(Ganghwado) 158
Wood and Brick 69, 142
Wooraeoak 133

Y

Yeong-yang Centre 83
Yeonpo Galbi (Suwon) 151
Yongsung Fried Chicken
(Suwon) 151

**DRINKING & NIGHTLIFE****A**

aA Café 97
Against the Machine 111
AleDang 70
Almaz 110
Always Homme 110
Amazing Brewing Co 133
Anthracite 95
Ape Seoul 143
Arcade Bar Seoul 96
Art C Company 124

B

B One 112
Baekseju-maeul 71
Baesan Warehouse Cafe
133
Barcode 70
Blacklist 111
Blue Star Pub 71
Booth 109, 125
Bread Blue 96
Brew 3.14 70
Burn 112

C

Cafe Castle (Incheon) 155
Cafe More 124
Café Sukkara 95
Cafe the Story 84
Caffe Themselves 71
Cakeshop 109
Caligari Brewing
(Incheon) 155
Cha Masineun Tteul 70
Channel 1969 96

Sights 000

Map Pages 000

Photo Pages 000

Club Espresso 143
Club MWG 97
Club Octagon 123-4
Cobbler 69
Coffee Bar K 124
Coffee Libre 84
Comics Shop 71

D

Daelim Changgo 133
Daewoo Sochom 69
Dalsaeneun Dalman
Saenggak Handa 70
Davansa Teahouse 84
Dawon 70
Dukes Coffee Showroom
96-7

E

Eat Me 110
Edge, The 84

F

Flower Gin 111
Fox Wine Bistro 97

G

Gaepul 143
Gopchang Jeongol 96
Grand Ole Opry 110
Greenmile Coffee 124

H

Hakrim 143
Hello, Stranger 97
Hongdae Playground 96

J

Jungnim Dawon
(Ganghwado) 158

K

Keg B 97
Kopi Bangasgan 71

L

Labris 97
Living Room 111

M

M2 97
Madang Flower Cafe 70-1
Made in Pongdang 109
Magpie Brewing Co 109
Man Pyung 97

Mikkeller Bar 124
Miracle 110
Mix & Malt 143
MK2 69
Moon Jar 124
Mowmow 111
Mulwinda 84

N

Nakrang Parlour 97
Namsan Winery 111
NB2 96
Neurin Maeul 84, 124

P

Pet Sounds 111
Pongdang 124

Q

Queen 110

R

Rose & Crown 112

S

Sanmotoong 143
Shortbus 71
Sik Mool 69-70
Slow Garden 143
Soap 111
Soho 110
Sorori Wolhyang 96
Southside Parlor 109-10
Standing Coffee
Roasters 111
Steamers Coffee Factory
124-5
Su Noraebang 96
Sunset Beach 110
Suyeon Sanbang 142-3
Suzie Q 96

T

Takeout Drawing 112
Tea Therapy 71
Trance 110

V

Venue/ 110

W

Walkabout 84
Ways of Seeing 111
White Rabbit 109
Why Not 110

Y

Y.Pot Coffee 111
Yri Cafe 97

**ENTERTAINMENT**

All that Jazz 112
ArkoPAC 143
Boogie Woogie 112
Café BBang 99
Cinematheque KOFA 99
Cinematheque 71-2
Club Evans 98
DGBD 99
FF 98
Indie Art-Hall GONG 99
Insa-dong Outdoor
Stage 71
Jangchung Arena 133-4
Jazz Story 143-4
Jeongdong Theater 86
Jump 86
LG Arts Center 125
Megabox COEX 125
Mellowa 98
Mudaeruk 98
Musical Chef 72
Nanta Theatre Hongdae 99
Nanta Theatre Jung-gu 84
National Gugak Center 125
National Theater of
Korea 84
Oh! Zemdong 86
Once in a Blue Moon 125
Owl's Rooftop 98
Post Territory Uijeonguk 99
Sejong Center for the
Performing Arts 72
Seoul Arts Center 125
Seoul Namsan
Gugakdang 86
Seoul Racecourse 125
Seoul Theater Center 144
World Cup Stadium 99
YES 24 Live Hall 133

**SHOPPING**

10 Corso Como Seoul 126
10X10 144
Aland 87
Ando 113
Boon the Shop 127
Cerawork 73
COEX Mall 126
Comme des Garçons 112
Dapsimni Antiques
Market 134

D-Cube City 100
 Dolsilnai 73
 Dongdaemun Market 134
 Dongjin Market 100
 Doota 134
 Eelskin Shop 113
 Filipino Sunday Market 144
 Free Market 99
 Galleria 126
 Gallery Art Zone 73
 Gentle Monster 99
 Hyundai Department Store 126
 Insa-dong Maru 72-3
 I'Park Mall 113
 Jilkyungye 73
 Jonginamoo 73
 Joongang Building C and D 87
 KCDF Gallery 73
 Key 100
 Kukjae Embroidery 73
 Kyobo Bookshop 72
 Lab 5 126-7
 Lotte Department Store 87
 Lotte Fitin 134
 Lotte World Mall 126
 Market m* 86-7
 Mecenatpolis Mall 100
 Mik 73
 Millimetre Milligram 113
 Mono Collection 72
 Namdaemun Market 82
 Object Recycle 100
 Pleasure Lab 126
 Primera 86
 Pyounghwa Clothing Market 134
 Sejong Art Market SoSo 72
 Seoul Folk Flea Market 134
 Seoul Selection 72
 Seoul Yangnyeongsi Herb Medicine Market 134
 S-Factory 134

Shinsegae 86
 Ssamziegil 73
 Steve J & Yoni P 126
 Stylenanda Pink Hotel 86
 Su:py 134
 Veronica Effect 100
 Vinyl & Plastic 113
 What the Book 113
 Yido 73
 Yongsan Crafts Museum 112
 Yongsan Electronics Market 113
 Yuimaru 72

SLEEPING

An Hostel 162
 Banyan Tree Club & Spa 164
 Bibimbap Guesthouse 162-3
 Bukchon Maru 163
 Chi-Woon-Jung 163
 Come Inn 165
 Conrad Seoul 165
 Crib49 164
 Doo Guesthouse 162
 Eugene's House 168
 Fraser Suites 163
 Grand Hyatt Seoul 166
 H Avenue Hotel 167
 Hanagae Beach Huts (Muuido) 157
 Hide & Seek Guesthouse 162
 Hostel Korea 11th 162
 Hotel 8 Hours 163
 Hotel 28 164
 Hotel Atti 167
 Hotel Dono (Suwon) 151
 Hotel Everrich (Ganghwado) 158
 Hotel Shilla 168
 Hotel the Designers 162

Hwaseong Guesthouse (Suwon) 151
 Imperial Palace Hotel 167
 Inside Backpackers 168
 IP Boutique Hotel 166
 Island Garden (Muuido) 157
 Itaewon G Guest House 166
 Itaewon Hostel & Inn 166
 Jeondeung-sa Temple (Ganghwado) 158
 JW Marriott Dongdaemun Square 168
 K-Grand Hostel Dongdaemun 167
 Kimchee Gangnam Guesthouse 166
 Kims 168
 Kpopstay 165
 La Casa Garosugil 167
 Lee Kang Ga 165
 Marigold Hotel 165
 Marriott Executive Apartments 165-6
 Metro Hotel 163
 Moggoji House 168
 Nagwonjang Hotel 162
 Namchidang (Ganghwado) 158
 Namsan Guesthouse 163
 Nine Tree Hotel Myeong-dong 164
 Oriens Hotel & Residences 164
 Park Hyatt Seoul 167
 Philstay Hostel B&B 166
 Plaza 164
 Rak-Ko-Jae 163
 Ramada Plaza Hotel Suwon (Suwon) 151
 Roi House 165
 Seoul Olympic Parktel 166
 Small House Big Door 163-4
 Splaisir 164
 Toyoko Inn Seoul Dongdaemun 167-8

Tria Hotel 167
 Uhbu's Guesthouse 167
 Uljiro Co-Op Residence 168
 Urbanwood Guesthouse 165
 Vista Walkerhill Seoul 168
 Westin Chosun Seoul 164-5
 Wowfactor Stay 165
 Wwoof Korea Guesthouse 162
 Zaza Backpackers 163

ACTIVITIES

Dong-Lim Knot Workshop 74
 Dragon Hill Spa & Resort 113
 Gangnam City Tour Bus 127
 International Seon Center 100
 Itaewonland 113
 Kimchi Academy House 87
 Korea Whal Culture Association 87
 Koridoor Tours 113
 Kukkiwon 127
 Lotte World Ice Skating Rink 127
 O'ngo 74
 Royal Asiatic Society 74
 Seoul City Tour Bus 74
 Seoul Global Cultural Center 87
 Seoul Plaza Ice Skating Rink 87
 Seoul Sports Complex 127
 Silloam Sauna 87
 Spa Lei 127
 World Cup Spaland 100
 YBM Sisa 74
 Yeouido Hangang Swimming Pool 100
 Yonsei University 100
 Yoo's Family 74

Seoul Maps

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro/MTR/MRT station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Skytrain/Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

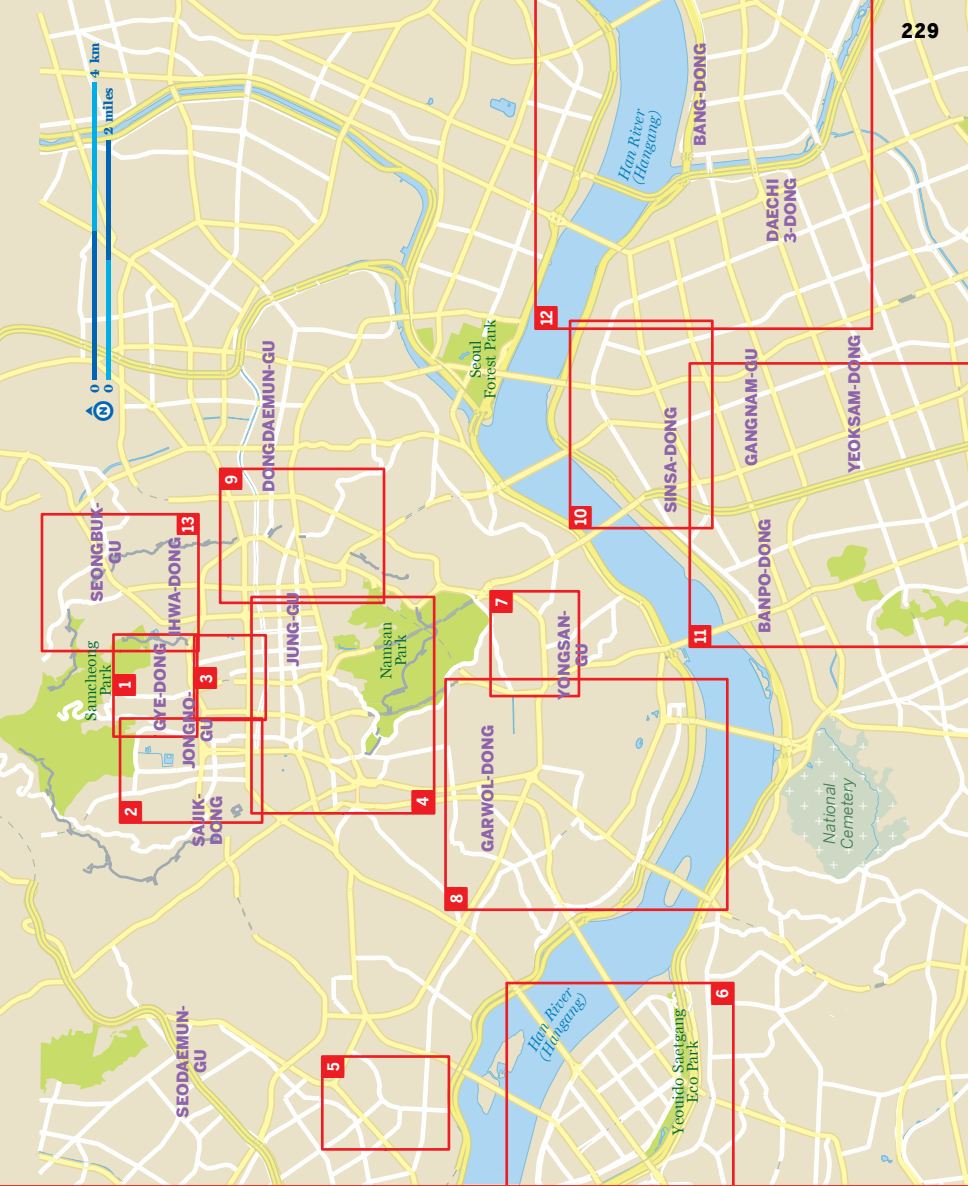
Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

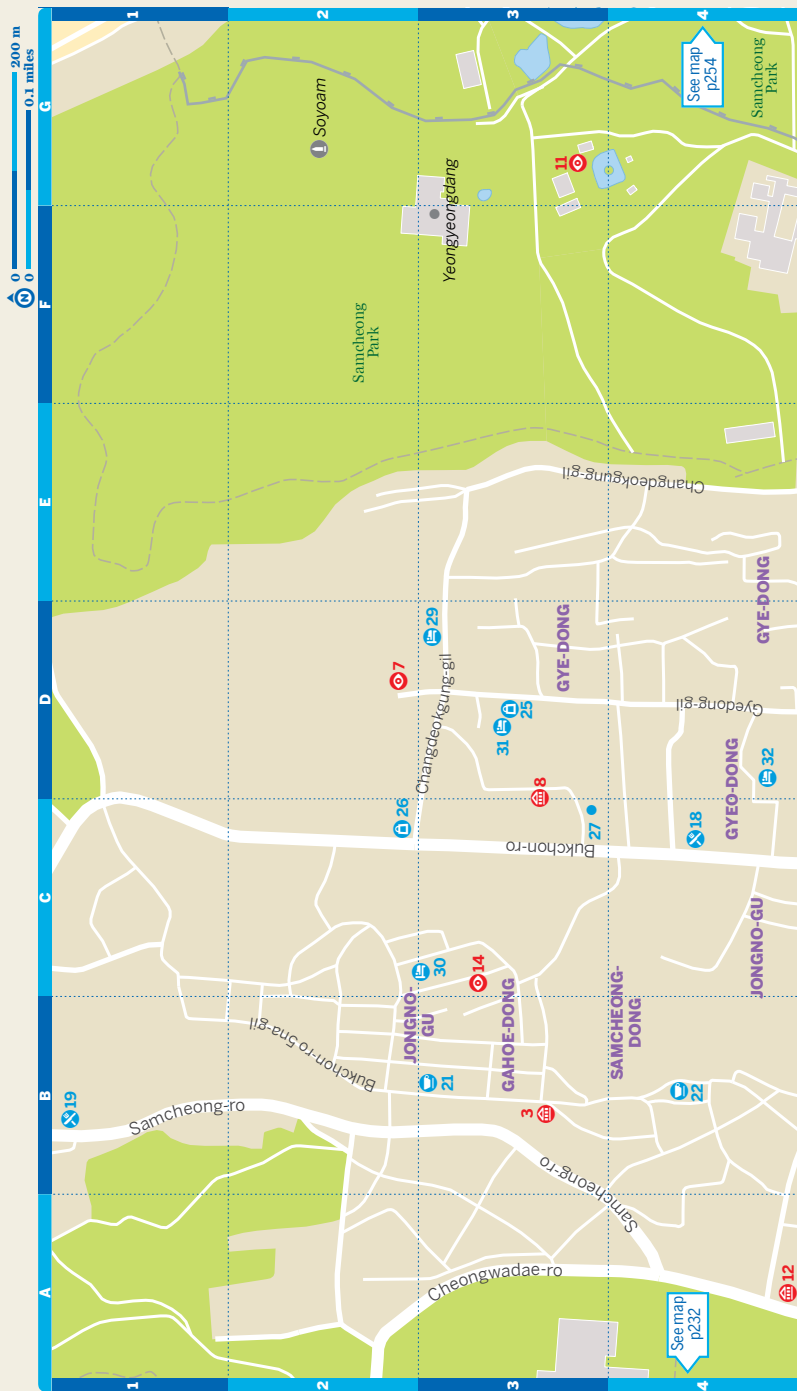
Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book

MAP INDEX

- 1** Bukchon Hanok Village (p230)
- 2** Gwanghwamun (p232)
- 3** Insa-dong & Around (p234)
- 4** Myeong-dong & Around (p238)
- 5** Hongdae, Sinchon & Around (p240)
- 6** Yeouido (p242)
- 7** Itaewon (p244)
- 8** Yongsan-gu (p246)
- 9** Dongdaemun & Around (p247)
- 10** Apgujeong (p248)
- 11** Gangnam (p250)
- 12** Jamsil (p252)
- 13** Daehangno & Seongsu-dong (p254)



BUKCHON HANOK VILLAGE





Top Sights

- 1 Bukchon Hanok Village.....D5
 2 Changdeokgung.....F5
 3 Another Way of Seeing.....B3
 4 Arario Museum in SPACE.....E6
 5 Artsonje Center.....B5
 6 Bukchon Traditional Culture Center.....D5
 7 Choong Ang High School.....D2
 8 Gahoe Minhwa Workshop.....D3
 9 Gallery Hyundai.....A6
 10 Hakgojae.....A5

Sights

- 11 Huwon.....G3
 12 Kukje.....A4
 13 MMCA Seoul.....A5
 14 Sinsimheon.....C3

Eating

- 15 2046 Pansteak.....D5
 16 Cheonjinpoja.....B5
 17 Chosun Gimhap.....B5
 18 Dejangjangi HwadeogPiljip.....C4
 19 Seoureseo Duljaero Jalhaneunip.....B1

Shopping

- 20 Wood and Brick.....C5
 21 Cha Masineun Tteul.....B3
 22 Kopi Bangsan.....B4
 23 Tea Therapy.....C5

Drinking & Nightlife

- 24 Jonginamoo.....C5
 25 Mik.....D3
 26 Yido.....C2

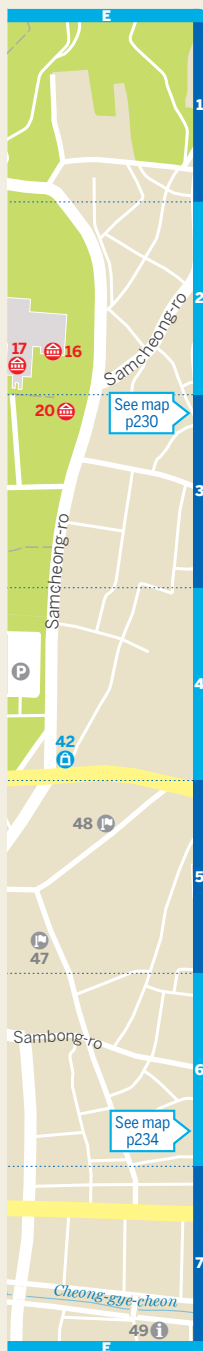
Sleeping

- 27 Dong-Lim Knot Workshop.....C3
 28 Yoo's Family.....F6

Sports & Activities

- 29 Bukchon Maru.....D3
 30 Chi-Woon-Jung.....C3
 31 Doo Guesthouse.....D3
 32 Rak-Ko-Jae.....D4
 33 Wwoof Korea Guesthouse.....D5





Top Sights

p60

- 1 Cheong-gye-cheon D7
- 2 Gyeongbokgung D3

Sights

p61

- 3 Admiral Yi Sun-Sin Statue... D7
- 4 Artside C3
- 5 Cheong-gye Plaza D7
- 6 Cheongwadae C1
- 7 Cheongwadae Sarangchae . C1
- 8 Daelim Contemporary Art
Museum C4
- 9 Gallery Simon C4
- 10 Gwanghwamun D4
- 11 Gwanghwamun Square D6
Gwanghwamun
Square Underground
Exhibition (see 15)
- 12 Gyeonghuigung A6
- 13 Heunghwamun B7
- 14 Jean Art Gallery C3
- 15 King Sejong Statue D6
- 16 National Children's
Museum E2
- 17 National Folk Museum of
Korea E2
- 18 National Museum of
Korean
Contemporary
History D5
- 19 National Palace Museum
of Korea C4
- 20 Open Air Exhibition E3
- 21 Ryugaheon C3
- 22 Sajikdan A5
- 23 Sejong Gallery D6
- 24 SeMA Gyeonghuigung
Museum of Art A7
- 25 Seoul Museum of History ... B7

Eating

p65

- Euro Gourmet (see 26)

- 26 GastroTong C3
- 27 Gwanghwamun Dduckam ... C6
- 28 Gwanghwamun Jip C6
- 29 Hanmiri D7
- 30 Ogawa C6
- 31 Rogpa Tea Stall A4
- 32 Song's Kitchen A3
- 33 Tongin Market Box
Lunch Cafe B3
- 34 Tosokchon B4

Drinking & Nightlife

p69

- 35 Cobbler B5
- 36 Daeo Sochom B3
- 37 MK2 C3

Entertainment

p71

- 38 Jump B7
- 39 Sejong Center for the
Performing Arts D6

Shopping

p72

- 40 Kyobo Bookshop D7
Mono Collection (see 37)
- 41 Sejong Art Market SoSo C6
- 42 Seoul Selection E4
- 43 Yuimaru A4

Sports & Activities

p74

- 44 Seoul City Tour Bus D7

Sleeping

p162

- 45 Hide & Seek Guesthouse C4

Information

p211

- 46 Australian Embassy D6
- 47 Irish Embassy E5
- 48 Japanese Embassy E5
- 49 KTO Tourist Information
Center E7
- 50 US Embassy D6

[illegible]



INSA-DONG & AROUND *Map on p234***📍 Top Sights****p59**

- 1 Jogye-sa.....A3
2 Jongmyo.....H3

📍 Sights**p62**

- 3 Bosingak.....A6
4 Central Buddhist Museum.....A2
5 Cheondogyo Temple.....C2
6 Gonsindang.....H3
7 Hwabong Gallery.....C3
8 Jongno Tower.....B5
9 Stone Pagoda of Wongak-sa.....D5
10 Sun Art Center.....C4
11 Tapgol Park.....D5
12 Tteok & Kitchen Utensil
Museum.....F2
13 Unhyeongung.....D1

🍴 Eating**p66**

- Balwoo Gongyang.....(see 52)
14 Bibigo Gyejeolbabsang.....C3
15 Chang Hwa Dang.....E4
Gogung.....(see 40)
16 Ikseon Dimibang.....E3
17 Jirisan.....C2
18 Koong.....C3
19 Newjo.....C2
20 Osegyehyang.....C2

🍷 Drinking & Nightlife**p69**

- 21 AleDang.....F3
22 Baekseju-maeul.....B6
23 Barcode.....F4
24 Blue Star Pub.....B2
25 Brew 3.14.....F2
26 Caffé Themselves.....D7
27 Comics Shop.....F3
28 Dalsaeneun Dalman Saenggak
Handa.....C2

- 29 Dawon.....C2
30 Madang Flower Cafe.....F3
Shortbus.....(see 23)
31 Sik Mool.....E3

🎬 Entertainment**p71**

- 32 Cinematheque.....D4
33 Insa-dong Outdoor Stage.....D5
34 Musical Chef.....D7

🛍 Shopping**p72**

- Cerawork.....(see 40)
35 Dolsilnai.....C3
36 Insa-dong Maru.....C3
37 Jilkyungyee.....C4
38 KCDF Gallery.....B3
39 Kukjae Embroidery.....B3
40 Ssamziegil.....C3

🏊 Sports & Activities**p74**

- 41 O'ngo.....E3
42 YBM Sisa.....E6

🛌 Sleeping**p162**

- 43 An Hostel.....F3
44 Bibimbap Guesthouse.....E3
45 Fraser Suites.....D3
46 Hostel Korea 11th.....F1
47 Hotel the Designers.....E6
48 Nagwonjang Hotel.....E4

📍 Information**p214**

- 49 Jogye-sa Information Center
for Foreigners.....A3
50 Seoul Global Center.....A6
51 Seoul Immigration Office
Anguk.....C1
52 Templestay Information Center.....A3

MYEONG-DONG & AROUND Map on p238**☉ Top Sights p77**

- 1 Deoksugung B2
 2 N Seoul Tower & Namsan E6
 3 Namdaemun Market ... C3
 4 Seoul City Hall C2

☉ Sights p79

- 5 Ahn Jung-geun Memorial Hall C6
 6 Bank of Korea Money Museum D3
 7 Bongsudae E6
 Citizens Hall (see 4)
 8 Culture Station Seoul 284 A5
 Daehan Empire History Museum (see 17)
 9 Deoksugung Stone Wall Road C2
 Gungsi Relics Exhibition Hall (see 4)
 10 Hamnyeongjeon B2
 11 Jeonggwaneon B2
 12 Junghwajeon B2
 13 MMCA Deoksugung B2
 14 Myeong-dong Catholic Cathedral E3
 15 Namsan Park F6
 16 Namsangol Hanok Village G4
 17 Seokjojeon B2
 18 Seoul Animation Center E4
 Seoul Metropolitan Library (see 4)
 19 Seoul Museum of Art ... B2
 20 Seoul Plaza C2
 21 Seoulo 7017 A4
 22 Sungnyemun B4
 23 Waryongmyo E5

☉ Eating p81

- 24 Andong Jjimdak E2
 25 Congdu B1
 26 Dongwon Jip F2
 27 Gosang E1
 28 Gwangjang Market H1
 29 Hadongkwan E2

- 31 Mokmyeoksanbang E5
 32 Myeong-dong Gyoja E3
 N.Grill (see 2)
 33 Potala E3
 34 Sinseon Seolnongtang E2
 35 Woo Rae Oak H1
 36 Yeong-yang Centre D3

☉ Drinking & Nightlife p84

- 37 Cafe the Story F4
 Coffee Libre (see 14)
 Davansa Teahouse (see 45)
 38 Neurin Maeul E1
 39 The Edge F2
 40 Walkabout E4

☉ Entertainment p84

- 41 Jeongdong Theater B2
 42 Nanta Theatre Jung-gu D3
 43 National Theater of Korea H6
 44 Oh! Zemdong G3
 45 Seoul Namsan Gugakdang G4

☉ Shopping p86

- 46 Åland D3
 47 Joongang Building C and D C3
 48 Lotte Department Store D2
 49 Market m* E4
 50 Primera D3
 51 Shinsegae D3
 52 Stylenanda Pink Hotel E3

☉ Sports & Activities p87

- 53 Kimchi Academy House E3
 54 Korea Whal Culture Association G6
 55 Outdoor Gym H6
 56 Panmunjom Travel Centre C1
 57 Seoul Global Cultural Center E3
 Seoul Plaza Ice

- 58 Silloam Sauna A4
 59 Sool Company E2

☉ Sleeping p163

- 60 Banyan Tree Club & Spa H7
 61 Crib49 E5
 62 Hotel 28 D2
 63 Hotel 8 Hours C3
 64 Lotte Hotel Seoul D2
 65 Metro Hotel D2
 66 Namsan Guesthouse ... E4
 67 Namsan Guesthouse 2 E4
 68 Nine Tree Hotel Myeong-dong E3
 69 Oriens Hotel & Residences F4
 70 Plaza C2
 71 Small House Big Door ... D1
 72 Splaisir C3
 73 Westin Chosun Seoul ... D2
 74 Zaza Backpackers E4

☉ Information p211

- 75 Canadian Embassy A1
 76 Chinese Embassy D3
 77 German Embassy B5
 78 Namdaemun Market Tourist Information Center C3
 Netherlands Embassy (see 75)
 79 New Zealand Embassy A1
 80 Seoulo 7017 Information Center C4
 81 UK Embassy C1

☉ Transport p206

- 82 Namsan Cable Car D5
 83 Seoul Station City Airport Terminal A5

Key on p237

MYEONG-DONG & AROUND









Sights

- 1 Gyeongui Line Book Street.....E2
- 2 Gyeongui Line Forest ParkD1
- 3 KT&G SangsangMadangB5
- 4 Modern Design MuseumE4
- 5 War & Women's Human Rights MuseumA2

p90

Eating

- 6 Aoitari BakeryE3
- 7 Ciuri CiuriB6
- 8 Ddobagi Chicken.....C6
- 9 Fell & ColeB6
- 10 Gyeongju RestaurantB6
- 11 HimesiyaB6
- 12 Hongik Sutbul Galbi.....D2
- 13 Menya Sandaime.....B3
- 14 Muwol TableB6
- 15 Namul Meokneun Gom.....B5
- 16 Shim's Tapas.....D3
- 17 SobokB5

p92

Drinking & Nightlife

- 18 aA Café.....B5
- 19 AnthraciteA7
- 20 Café SukkaraE3
- 21 Club MWGC4
- 22 Dukes Coffee ShowroomB7
- 23 Fox Wine Bistro.....B6
- 24 Gopchang Jeongol.....D3
- 25 Hello, StrangerA5
- 26 Hongdae PlaygroundC4
- 27 Keg BC5

p95

- 28 LabrisC4
- 29 M2.....B5
- 30 Nakrang ParlourD1
- 31 NB2.....C5
- 32 Sorori Wolhyang.....D3
- 33 Su Noraebang.....B5
- 34 Suzie QB5
- 35 Yri CafeB7

Entertainment

p98

- 36 Café BBangE3
- 37 Club Evans.....C5
- 38 DGBDB5
- 39 FFB5
- 40 MudaerukA7
- 41 Nanta Theatre Hongdae.....B4
- 42 Owl's Rooftop.....B5
- 43 Post Territory Uijeonguk.....D6
- 44 Xindie Ticket LoungeB5

Shopping

p99

- 45 Free Market.....C4
- 46 Gentle MonsterB5
- 47 Key.....D2
- 48 Object Recycle.....B1
- Veronica Effect(see 22)

Sleeping

p165

- 49 Come InnC4
- 50 KpopstayD4
- 51 Lee Kang Ga.....A2
- 52 Marigold HotelB3
- 53 Urbanwood Guesthouse.....D3
- 54 Wowfactor StayA2



Sights

- 1** 63 Sky Art Gallery D3
2 National Assembly A1
3 Noryangjin Fish Market D4

Eating

- 63 Buffet Pavilion (see 1)
 Busan Ilbeonji (see 3)

p90

Sports & Activities

- 4** Yeouido Hangang Swimming Pool B1

Sleeping

- 5** Conrad Seoul C2
6 Marriott Executive Apartments B3

p100

p165

ITAEWON Map on p244 **Top Sights**

- 1 Leeum Samsung Museum of Art.....G3

 Sights

- 2 Itaewon Bugundang History Park.....B4
3 Seoul Central Mosque.....F5
4 Stairway Flea Market.....F6

 Eating

- 5 Baker's Table.....A1
6 Bua.....D5
7 Coreanos Kitchen.....A5
8 Downtowner.....H4
Gino's NY Pizza.....(see 7)
9 HBC Gogitjib.....C4
10 Just BLT.....A2
11 La Ferme.....H3
Linus' BBQ.....(see 13)
12 Maddux Pizza.....D6
13 Nekkid Wings.....B5
14 On Ne Sait Jamais.....H3
15 Passion 5.....H2
16 Pho for You.....A1
17 Pipit Burger.....H3
18 Plant Bakery.....C5
19 Plant Cafe & Kitchen.....D6
20 Root.....G3
21 Rose Bakery.....H2
22 Tartine.....D5
23 Vatos.....B5

 Drinking & Nightlife

- 24 Against the Machine.....H3
25 Almaz.....E5
26 Always Homme.....E5
27 B One.....D5
28 Blacklist.....C5
29 Booth.....A2
30 Burn.....A2
31 Cakeshop.....B5
32 Eat Me.....E5
33 Flower Gin.....A1
34 Grand Ole Opry.....F5

p106

- 35 Made in Pongdang.....A2
36 Magpie Brewing Co.....A2
37 Miracle.....F5
38 Mowmow.....D4
39 Namsan Winery.....B2
40 Pet Sounds.....B2
41 Queen.....E5
42 Rose & Crown.....C5
43 Soap.....E5
44 Soho.....E5
45 Southside Parlor.....A3
46 Standing Coffee Roasters.....C1
47 Sunset Beach.....D5
48 Takeout Drawing.....A2
49 Trance.....E5
50 Venue/.....D5
51 Ways of Seeing.....G4
52 White Rabbit.....A2
Why Not.....(see 32)
53 Y.Pot Coffee.....A5

 Entertainment**p112**

- 54 All that Jazz.....E4
Boogie Woogie.....(see 40)

 Shopping**p112**

- 55 Ando.....E6
Comme des Garcons.....(see 21)
56 Eelskin Shop.....C5
57 Millimetre Milligram.....G4
58 Vinyl & Plastic.....H3
59 What the Book.....E7
60 Yongsan Crafts Museum.....H2

 Sports & Activities**p113**

- 61 Itaewonland.....F5

 Sleeping**p166**

- 62 Grand Hyatt Seoul.....F2
63 IP Boutique Hotel.....F4
64 Itaewon G Guest House.....E5
65 Itaewon Hostel & Inn.....E6
66 Philstay Hostel B&B.....C4

Key on p243

ITAEWON







- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Top Sights | p103 | Drinking & Nightlife | p111 |
| 1 National Museum of Korea.....C4 | | Living Room.....(see 4) | |
| 2 War Memorial of Korea.....C2 | | | |
| Sights | p105 | Shopping | p112 |
| 3 National Hangeul Museum.....C4 | | 6 I'Park Mall.....B3 | |
| | | 7 Yongsan Electronics Market.....B2 | |
| Eating | p105 | Sports & Activities | p113 |
| Casablanca Sandwicherie.....(see 4) | | 8 Dragon Hill Spa & Resort.....B3 | |
| Leo's.....(see 4) | | 9 Koridoor Tours.....C2 | |
| 4 Morococo Cafe.....D1 | | | |
| 5 Olde Knives.....D1 | | | |



DONGDAEMUN & AROUND

Top Sights

- 1 Dongdaemun Design Plaza & ParkB3

Sights

- 2 Dongdaemun History Museum.....C2
 3 Dongdaemun Stadium MemorialC2
 4 Heunginjimun B1
 5 Seoul City Wall Museum B1

Eating

- Dongdaemun Market (see 10)
 6 I Love Sindangdong.....C3
 7 Pyeongando Jokbal JipB4

p130

- 8 Samarkand.....B3
 Sindang-dong Tteobokki Town(see 6)

Entertainment

- 9 Jangchung ArenaB4

Shopping

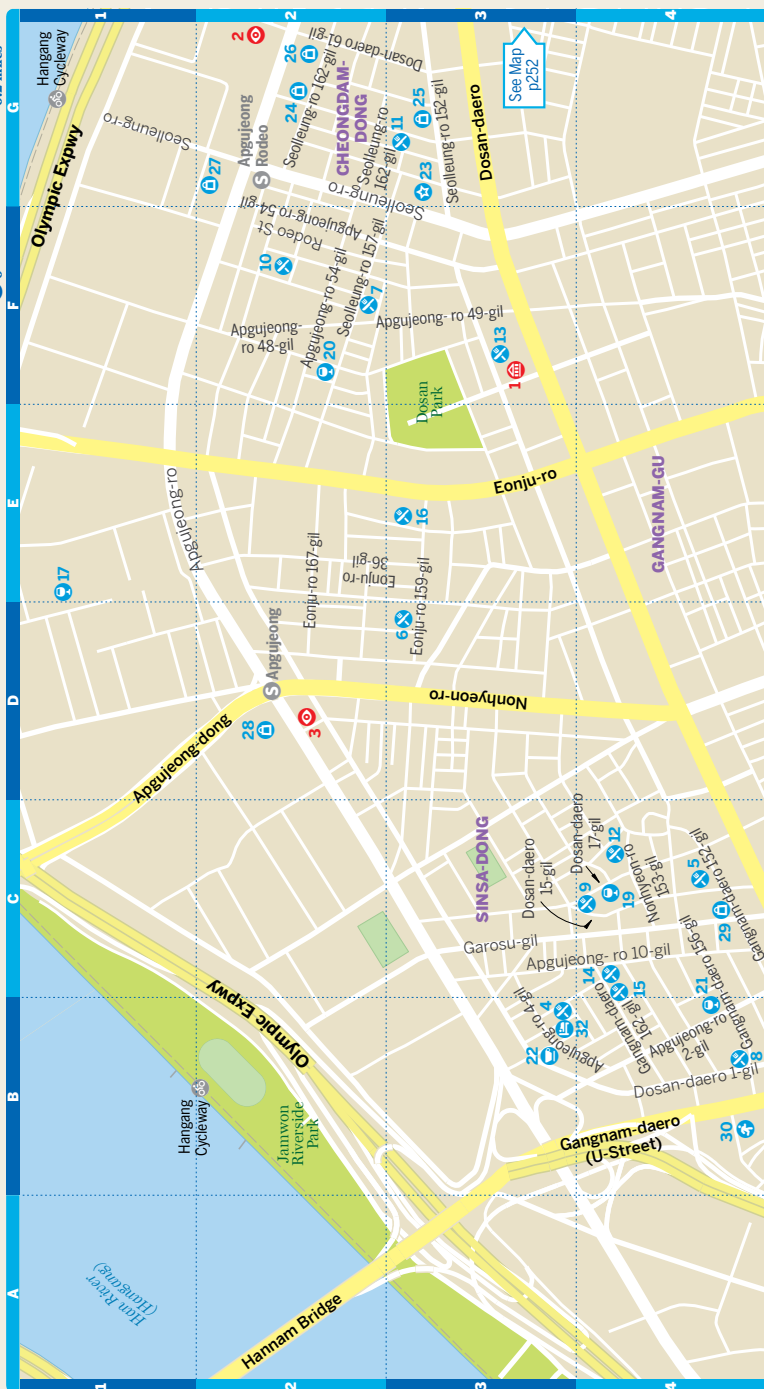
- Dongdaemun Market.....(see 10)
 10 Dongdaemun Shopping Complex.....B2
 11 DootaB2
 12 Lotte FitinB3
 13 Pyeonghwa Clothing MarketB2

p132

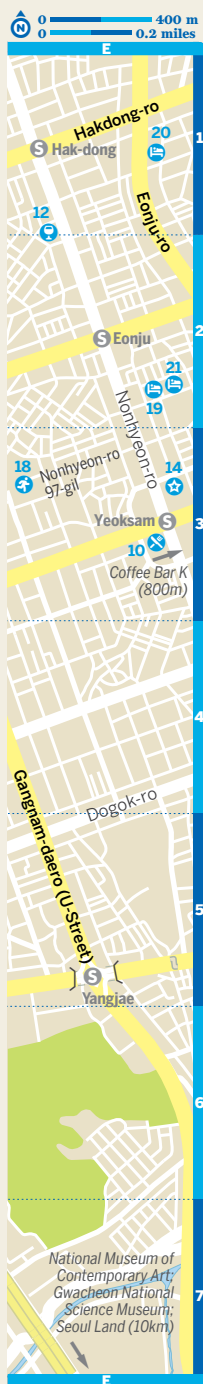
p133

p134

APGUJEONG







Sights

- 1 Banpo Bridge Rainbow Fountain A1
- 2 Gangnam Style 'Horse Dance' Stage D3
- 3 GT Tower East D3
- 4 Moonlight Rainbow Fountain Viewpoint A1
Museum of Gugak (see 15)
- 5 Samsung D'Light D3
Seoul Arts Center (see 16)
- 6 Some Sevit A1
- 7 Urban Hive D2

Eating

- 8 Banpo Romantic Moonlight Market A1
- 9 Gangnam Gyoja D4
- 10 Hanmire E3

Drinking & Nightlife

- 11 Booth D4
- 12 Club Octagon E1
- 13 Neurin Maeul D3

p118

Entertainment

- 14 LG Arts Center E3
- 15 National Gugak Center B6
- 16 Seoul Arts Center B6

Sports & Activities

- 17 Gangnam City Tour Bus D3
- 18 Kukkiwon E3

Sleeping

- 19 H Avenue Hotel E2
- 20 Imperial Palace Hotel E1
- 21 Tria Hotel E2

p121

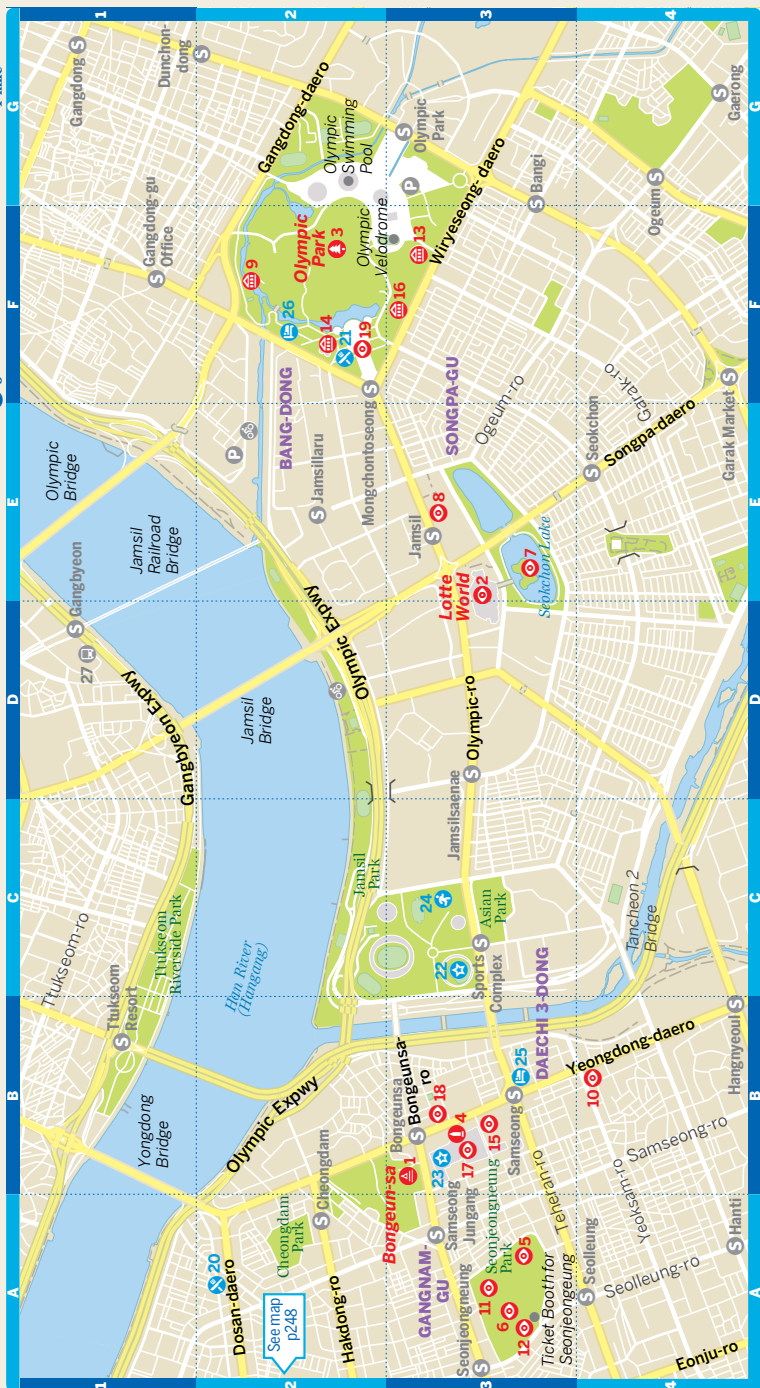
Transport

- 22 Bus Stop for Everland Amusement Park D3
- 23 Nambu Bus Terminal C5
- 24 Seoul Express Bus Station B2

p125

p206

JAMSIL







- Top Sights** p137
- 1 Korea Furniture Museum E1
- Sights** p138
- 2 Arko Art Center D6
- 3 Changgyeonggung B7
- 4 Gilsang-sa F2
- 5 Great Greenhouse A5
- 6 Hanyangdoseong Exhibition Hall D3
- 7 Hyehwamun D3
- 8 Ihwa Mural Village E7
- 9 Lock Museum D6
- 10 Marronnier Park D6
- 11 Myeongjeongjeon A7
- 12 Naksan Park E6
- 13 Seonjam Museum B1
- Eating** p142
- 14 Deongjang Yesool C5
- 15 Geumwang Dongaseu A1
- 16 Hyehwa Kalguksu C4
- 17 Wood and Brick B1
- Drinking & Nightlife** p142
- 18 Ape Seoul C4
- 19 Gaepul E7
- 20 Hakrim C6
- 21 Mix & Malt B5
- 22 Slow Garden B1
- 23 Suyeon Sanbang A1
- Entertainment** p143
- 24 ArkoPAC D6
- 25 Daehangno Information Center C6
- 26 Jazz Story B2
- 27 Seoul Theater Center C5
- Shopping** p144
- 28 10X10 D5
- 29 Filipino Sunday Market C4
- Sleeping** p168
- 30 Eugene's House C2
- 31 Inside Backpackers B4
- 32 Moggoji House C2



Our Story

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

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