

Donguibogam Village in Sancheong

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1. About Donguibogam Village

Welcome to Donguibogam Village.

This is a tourist site that focuses on health and well-being. With a distinct bent towards Oriental medicine, you can take a look around the museum, garden for growing medicinal plants, and the theme park.

In addition, here at this village, you will have the opportunity to see *Donguibogam*, an encyclopedic bible of medical knowledge and treatment techniques compiled by the royal physician Heo Jun in 1613. This book of medicine became famous during the Joseon Period and was disseminated to both Japan and China. In recognition of its historical value, it was listed on UNESCO's Memory of the World register in 2009.

The life story of Heo Jun, the author, was made into a drama that gained a great following in not only in China and Vietnam, but also in Iraq. The actor who played Heo Jun in the drama was invited as a national guest.

The year of 2013 marks the 400th anniversary of the publication of this book and in honor of this special date, the World Traditional Medicine Expo is held here.

The best attraction at this village is the Oriental Medicine Museum. So, shall we take a look around?

2. Meeting the Renowned Doctors of Joseon Through Statues

Before you step into the Oriental Medicine Museum, you'll see the statues of Heo Jun and his teacher, Ryu Ui-tae. From his childhood, Heo Jun is said to have enjoyed travelling around and exploring mountains and streams, observing wild plants and researching which plants had beneficial medical properties. Ryu Ui-tae was also known as an excellent physician of the time. He was a pioneer who did not discriminate between the ruling class and lowest class and provided love and care to those who were ill while also working hard to promote medical science.

Now then, why don't we head inside the museum and find out more about Heo Jun and his book.

3. Oriental Medicine and Heo Jun

The first thing that will grab your attention at this museum is here, the Special Exhibition Hall. There are pharmaceutical scales, knives designed to chop medicinal herbs, and other Oriental medical equipment on

display. Do you find any great differences compared to Western medical equipment from a similar era?

Heo Jun's *Donguibogam* is also on display and due to its popularity in China and Japan, both Chinese and Japanese language versions are available at the museum.

When he served as the king's exclusive physician, he was held responsible for the death of the king and was sent into exile. Fortunately while in exile, he was able to focus on research and finish the book, which he promised the king that he would complete.

To this date, this book is unparalleled as the bible of Oriental medicine and is registered as the Memory of the World by UNESCO.

4. Oriental Medicine isn't Difficult to Understand or Unfamiliar

A variety of objects relating to Oriental medicine are on display in the Traditional Medicine Exhibition Hall. There are life-size models of an Oriental medicine treatment process and they are rather well-made. The figures depicted include a person grinding medicinal herbs, a grandmother boiling medicine, a person preparing herbs in a storehouse, a woman chopping medicinal herbs with a knife, and even a person receiving acupuncture treatment on his shoulder.

If you are finished looking at the models, let's gather in front of the touch screen. You can experience the use of folk medicine and Oriental medicine in everyday life by entering symptoms on the touch screen. You can then take a look at foods that are said to be well-suited or ill-suited to each other, according to Oriental medicine. Interestingly, foods we often imbibe together, like beer and peanuts or a hamburger and cola are said to be incompatible.

If you stop by the Oriental Medicine Experience Hall, you can get a health check-up. You can measure your height, weight, body fat percentage, and blood pressure.

5. Subtle Herbal Scents and an Introduction to Various Medicinal Herbs

If you go into the Medicinal Herbs Exhibition Hall, you will inhale the scent of subtle yet slightly bitter herbs. On one side of the wall, medicinal samples are on display. One of the many achievements of Heo Jun is that he replaced expensive Chinese medicinal herbs with wild plants found in Korea.

One more thing in this hall that you will notice is the way *Sasang* typology is used to classify one's physical constitution. This typology was organized and categorized by Yi Je-ma during the 19th century,

and the information helps to dictate which medicinal herbs are well-suited to an individual and which are harmful.

According to this traditional Korean medical typology, people can be categorized into four different physical constitutions based on their biological, psychological and social traits. For example, of these four types, ginseng, deer antler, and coffee are harmful for one type while quince, grape, and apple are beneficial. The philosophy implies that just because a substance or food is beneficial for one person or type doesn't mean that it is good for everyone.

If you came here with children, you might be interested in dressing up in Heo Jun's official hat and taking pictures at the photo wall.

6. Park Themed on the Human Body

Facilities here at the Oriental Medicine Theme Park take on the shapes of human body parts and medical equipment. You can see a sculpture in the form of an acupuncture needle and a trail inlaid with an acupressure pathway good for blood circulation.

You can also take a walk along the wooden deck through the dense pine trees. You will notice that the trail goes from the esophagus, to the heart and various other organs before it reaches the bladder. The charming sculptures are unusual enough to captivate visitors who come here.

The nighttime view of various colored sculptures spotlighted at the park is also something you don't want to miss.

From a walk that explores the human body to a nighttime view that resembles space, I hope that this was a great introduction to Oriental medicine, a discipline that places great importance on the harmony between the universe and the body.

7. Feel Positive Energy Flowing into Your Body

If you come here, you will see many people leaning on a rock! Although you can't see it, the area is famous for the energy given off by the mountain. Scholars who study the energy or life force exuded by nature think that the energy from Baekdusan Mountain in North Korea flows southwards along the various mountain ranges and finally accumulates here at the Cheonwangbong Peak of Jirisan Mountain.

One thing that will definitely catch your attention is, of course, the Turtle Rock. Turtles symbolize

longevity in Asia. The rock was moved here due to the belief that you could receive some of the energy from the mountains by laying your back against the stone.

You can easily receive the energy too. Stand below the Turtle Rock and lean with your head against it and close your eyes. They say that the experience will clear your head and that you'll be able to feel energy flowing into your body. Can you feel it?