

# Hwarimdong Valley

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## **1. About the Course**

Hamyang's Hwarimdong Valley is famous for its handsome scenery. In places with beautiful scenery, you will always find pavilions. There were once eight pavilions here, but now only three of them, Geoyeonjeong, Gunjajeong and Donghojeong, remain. There are plans to rebuild Nongwoljeong, which was destroyed by fire in 2003.

Pavilions are traditional buildings that are without walls on four sides. Generally, two-story pavilions were built for communal use and tend to be large, while one-story pavilions were built for individuals' enjoyment of the environment. That's why this valley is dotted with one-story pavilions.

Beginning at the site of Nongwoljeong, we will move on through Donghojeong to Gunjajeong and Geoyeonjeong. This 6.2 kilometer-long course consists of raised wooden boardwalks as well as paths through forests and rice paddies. We hope you spend some time at the pavilions enjoying the beautiful scenery around you.

## **2. Nongwoljeong Pavilion, Taunting the Moon**

The pavilion's name, Nongwoljeong, translates as "taunt the moon." It's the kind of name that makes you think there must be a hidden meaning. This pavilion is famous for being a place that poets in the Hamyang region made sure to visit. While the pavilion itself was consumed by fire, the scenic beauty remains as it always has been. The pavilion was built roughly 600 years ago by Park Myeong-bu, a civil official of the Joseon Dynasty, after his retirement from political life. It is said that at this place he devoted his energies to his studies while also indulging in his artistic tastes by holding poetry meetings.

## **3. The Great and Impressive Donghojeong Pavilion**

Donghojeong Pavilion is famous for being the largest and most impressive pavilion in Hwarimdong Valley. It was built to commemorate the Joseon scholar Jang Man-ri by his descendants in 1895. He was a favorite of the king of the time because of his great loyalty. They say that he would visit here to spend time fishing in his later years.

The foundations beneath the pavilion and the stairs leading up to it are made of natural wood in its bent and crooked original form. This architectural feature demonstrates the affinity that Koreans have always felt towards nature. While the exterior appears natural, the colorful traditional painting of the walls and ceiling give the pavilion an impressive look. Near this pavilion, there is a rock they say is so large that

around 100 people can stand on top of it. It is said that in the past, those seeking artistic pleasures would come here to drink alcohol and enjoy traditional poetry.

#### **4. Humble Gunjaeong Pavilion**

Compared to the impressiveness of Donghojeong, Gunjaeong Pavilion has a naturally quaint appeal. It is densely surrounded by old pine and other trees. This pavilion was built to honor Jeong Yeo-chang, a scholar of the early Joseon Period. It is said that his parents-in-law lived in this area, and whenever he visited them he would often spend time here. In later generations, those who venerated him built the pavilion here in 1802. It has an antique atmosphere that reflects the time of its construction. It is also smaller and simpler than other pavilions.

#### **5. Geoyeonjeong Pavilion, Beauty that Fits with Nature like a Puzzle Piece**

Some have said that Geoyeonjeong is like a picture. The name 'Geoyeon' means 'a peaceful and quiet state.' The area around this pavilion attracts the eye thanks to the flowers that grow here and there in the spaces between the rocks and the great trees that have grown up through them. Instead of a foundation stone, the natural bedrock beneath the pavilion was used as the foundation. The logs used as pillars supporting this pavilion are also untrimmed, and remain in their natural state. There was a Confucian academy built here in 1640 by later generations. Its purpose was to honor those few loyalists who maintained their fidelity to the nation when the last king of the Goryeo Dynasty fell from power. The academy was the beginning of this pavilion that was built next to it. To reach this place you must pass over an arched bridge, but if you look down from the bridge you can see how the valley and the fantastic rock formations add to the natural scenic beauty of the pavilion.