



Steph's Quick Budget Fact Sheet

South Korea - Jirisan National Park (Gurye / Suncheon)

Quick Facts

- ✓ **Capital:** Seoul
- ✓ **Language:** Korean
- ✓ **Population:** ± 27.115 (Gurye) / 279.435 (Suncheon)
- ✓ **Sq km:** ± 443 (Gurye) / 907.2 (Suncheon)
- ✓ **Currency:** Won ₩
- ✓ **Country code:** +82
- ✓ **Visa:** 90 days, check [here](#) just in case!
- ✓ **Emergency phone:** 112 (police), 119 (fire / other emergencies)
- ✓ **Vaccinations:** Hep-A & Typhoid... (Hep-B, Japanese Encephalitis, Rabies).



History Recap Over 1 Drink

3000BC: Central Asian settlers. 676: Three Kingdoms unified → Silla Dynasty. 1231-70: Mongol invasions. 1592: Japanese invasion. 1627&36: Manchu invasions. 1866: French invasion after execution Catholic missionaries: burned manuscripts. 1905: Jap annexation. '10-'45: Jap rule: forced to adopt Japanese names/language forbidden/ Shinto religion, Korean culture wiped out → Independent /activist movements/guerilla. '45: WWII → Soviet North, US South (keeps supporting). '48: Republic of Korea. '50: Independence South → North invasion: Korean War until '53 (2mln death). '61: Military coup: General Park. '65: South to Vietnam (US). '72: Martial law. Unification talks. '80: Student demonstrations → 200 killed by army in Gwangju. '81: End martial law. '86: Direct pres election. '80s: Shift towards high-tech/IT. '88: Seoul Olympics. '91: North&South join UN. '93: Pres San (first freely elected). '98: Pres Kim Dae-Jung → unconditional economic & humanitarian aid to North. 2000: Meets Kim Jong-il: end anti-South propaganda in North. South amnesty to 3500 prisoners: Nobel Peace Prize. '02: Naval battle North/South about disputed sea border (continues until '14). Typhoon Rusa (119 death). '04: 3000 troops to Iraq. Free-trade deal US. '08: Financial crisis. '12: First female pres: Park Geun-hye. '13: Tensions spike. Cyber attacks. '18: Talks North-South re-start.

Travel Seasons

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------|------|-------|----------|---------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Spring | | | Blossoms | visible | now | | | | | | | |
| Summer | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Autumn | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Winter | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Budget | This | place | is | always | popular | | | | | | | |

Altitude: 1915m (Jirisan). Climate: Humid Subtropical (Cwa).

Bucket List For Free

☺ **Jirisan National Park:** There are many trails and combinations (see map on blog). From Gurye there's public transport to the Piagol Trail, the Hwaeomsa Temple trail and Seongsamjae Information Center. The 'full monty' is called the Jirisan Ridge Hike (3-4 days – 45km), going from Hwaeomsa Temple (alternatively: Sungsamjae) to Daewonsa Temple.

☺ **Gurye:** Hwaeomsa Temple (paid when entering from Gurye, free when coming down on the trail from Jirisan NP), Saseongam / Cheoneunsa / Ssanggyesa

Worth The Extra \$€¥

👍 **Jirisan National Park:** Overnight hikes require prior shelter bookings. You can do that [here](#).

👍 **Suncheon:** Suncheonman Bay Wetland Reserve (see blog for sneaky free back-entrances), Suncheon Bay Garden, Nagan Eupseong Folk Village, Suncheon Open

Temple, Jirisan Garden, all other mountains have less-touristy hiking trails too (like Mount Osan).

☺ **Suncheon:** Waon Beach, Jukdobong Park, Jogyesan Mountain, Bonghwa Mountain, wide variety of temples.

Budget Bites

- ⌘ **Big supermarkets:** Homeplus, Emart (*Suncheon*).
- ⌘ **Markets:** Gurye Hwagae Market, Suncheon Aretjang Market, Suncheon Utjang Market, Suncheon Joongan Sijang Market, Suncheon Yeokjeon Market. Korea has the concept of 5-day markets (*every 5 days*).
- ⌘ **Local food:** Kimchi (*fermented vegetables*), Galbi (*marinated ribs*), Yukgaejang (*beef stew*), Jjajangmyeon (*noodles*), Gim (*toasted seaweed*), Goghui (*Korean BBQ*), Bibimbap (*mixed rice*), Mandu (*dumplings*), Kimbap (*sushi*), Haemul Pajeon (*fried seafood pancake*), Twigim (*tempura*), Tteokbokki (*red rice cakes*), Kkwong-Toryeom (*pheasant breast*), Mel-Jeot (*salted anchovy*), Tangsuyuk (*horse*), Galbijjim (*horse rib stew*), Bulgogi (*horse BBQ*), Seongkae-Guk (*sea urchin soup*), Godeunggeo (*mackerel*), Sora (*turban shell*), Gingyijuk / Mungejuk / Jogaejuk (*rice porridge with crab / octopus / clams*), Bingddeok (*buckwheat rice cake*), Makkoli (*rice wine*) & way more!
- ⌘ **Go vegan:** Being vegan quite hard in South Korea, as everything is written in Hangul, both menus and ingredients lists. For vegan restaurants, check [Happy Cow – Suncheon](#). Some vegan dishes: Vegetable Kimbap, Kimchi, Dubu Jorim (*tofu*), Japchae (*cold noodle stir-fry*), Somandu (*vegetable noodles*) and Gamja Jon (*potato pancake*). In supermarkets tofu, mushrooms and doenjang (*fermented bean paste*) are really cheap.

Festivals

- ⚙ Gurye Sansuyu Festival: Mar.
- ⚙ Jirisan Namwon Baraebong Snowflake Festival: Nov.
- ⚙ Suncheon Bay Reeds Festival: Nov.

Mama Said

- ☠ When leaving on a hike, prepare appropriate for the season. Inform someone about your route and expected return time. Bring enough water.
- ☠ Tap water is drinkable, as is water from streams in the national park.

Next?

- ➔ In South Korea: Boseong, Gwangju, Busan.
- ➔ International destinations close by: Japan.

Sleep Cheap

- ❖ Tourist accommodation is very expensive in South Korea. Usually the cheapest deals can be found in hostels or via Air BnB (*long-term rates are negotiable*). Use [this link](#) for €15 discount at Booking.com. Get €25 travel money for free on Air BnB with [this link](#).
- ❖ Camping is very affordable but can be terribly hot in summer and freezing cold in winter. Camping is forbidden in the national park, but free wild-camping is possible in the surrounding mountains. There are cheap campsites around Jirisan National Park too: Hwangjeon / Naewon / Sobakgol / Daewonsa / Baekmudong / Baemsagol / Dalgung (*cars only*): See park map in blog. Be careful for sneaks and bears.
- ❖ Go [Couchsurfing](#) or Housesitting: get 20% off your yearly Trusted Housesitters membership via [this link](#). Also check [WorkAway](#).

Free-Riding?

- Obviously, in Jirisan the main and only way to get around is by walking. That's why you're there. In Gurye everything is walkable too, but Suncheon is a big city that might require bus transport to visit the highlights.
- Biking is possible and made very attractive by an extensive bicycle lane network all over the villages and cities (*not possible in Jirisan NP*). Bike rental, however, is very pricey.
- Buses are the main way of public transport. Moovit doesn't work here, and Google Maps sometimes gives faulty routes. Download the KakaoMap or Naver app for route planning (*mostly in Korean, but recognizes place names in alphabet and has a map-function too*). A T-Money or Cashbee card provide discounts and up to 2 free transfers (*within 30 minutes*), it can be bought and charged in all minimarkets and works all over South Korea. Intercity buses leave from the terminals, for those you have to buy tickets.
- Train transport is made possible by [Korail](#) and provide faster connections than buses. However, this is a very expensive option.
- Airport: Yeosu Airport (RSU).
- Hitch-hiking is very easy around Jirisan and Gurye, on provincial roads. However, it's illegal to walk besides highways (*you can be jailed*), thus it's rather hard to travel via the main access roads towards bigger cities.

The Earth Becomes My Throne