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# Festivals in Korea (1)

## GUIDE TO SPRING FESTIVALS



By March, a change can be felt in the air. The cold subsides and plants begin to awaken and bloom, creating a sweet scent that can only be described as spring. The word itself brings a sense of energy and movement to break through the chill of winter. In Korea, a wide array of events celebrating the season can be found throughout the country. The return of the warmer weather gives families a chance to spend time together through all the various outdoor activities. Read on for the list of festivals celebrating the lovely spring atmosphere in Korea.

## The beauty of spring in bloom

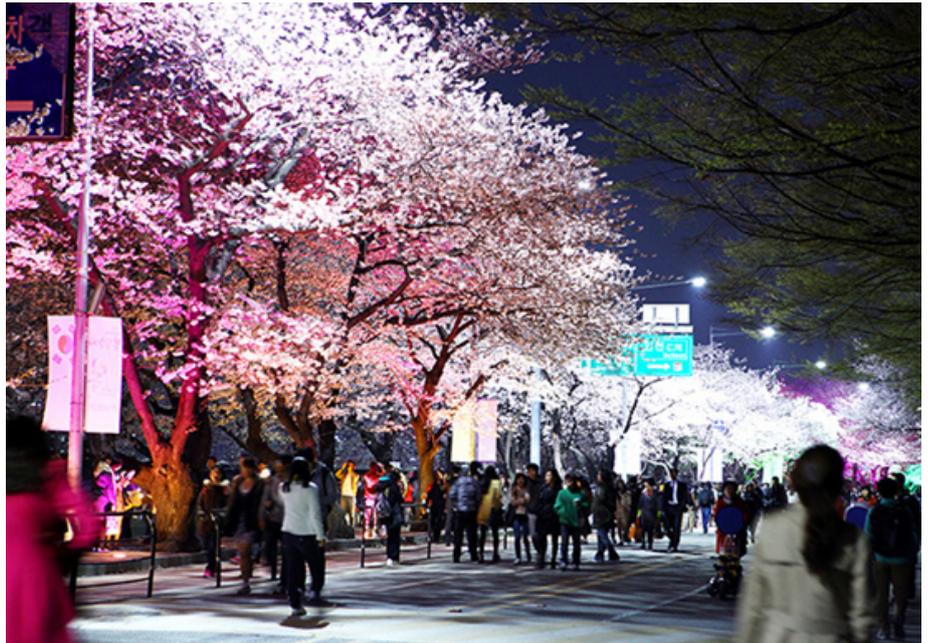
From the beginning of March when the air is still cool, spring announces its arrival in Korea with a blanket of white and yellow blossoms spread across the nation. The warmer season sees a host of festivals take place in Korea where visitors can stroll among the blossoming spring flowers and see the country at its finest.

### Gwangyang Maehwa Festival



Gwangyang Maehwa Festival is one of the first destinations in Jeollanam-do to greet spring. During this time, the flower-lined lanes throughout Maehwa Village resemble the flow of the Seomjingang River and the apricot blossoms fill the festival grounds with their sweet scent. After crossing the beautiful Maehwago Bridge, take a seat in the shade of one of the trees lining the road. The festival also offers a variety of delicious treats, including mussels, chamgetang (spicy mitten crab stew), and dishes made with maesil (green plum).

### Yeongdeungpo Yeouido Spring Flower Festival



The Yeongdeungpo Yeouido Spring Flower Festival is a representative festival in Seoul, taking place every April. Yeouiseo-ro, the street behind the National Assembly Building, is lined with cherry blossom trees and is the most famous cherry blossom street in Seoul. Visitors can take a stroll along the Hangang River through a tunnel of these majestic trees. Other spring flowers blooming beneath the trees include azaleas and forsythias. There are also cultural street performances, a flower decoration exhibit, and a photo exhibit taking place throughout the festival period.

## Jinhae Gunhangje Festival



Taking place in April, Jinhae Gunhangje Festival draws in more than 2 million tourists every year. The many cherry blossom trees create fantastic tunnels to walk through. The cherry blossom petals falling down like pink snow will transport you to a dream-like world! There are various events not to be missed, such as the Jinhae International Military Band & Honor Guard Festival and fireworks show.

## Icheon Baeksa Sansuyu Flower Festival



Home to 100-year-old, wild sansuyu trees, the Icheon Baeksa Sansuyu Blossom Festival venue is a leading production area of sansuyu trees in Korea. In spring, the sansuyu flowers are in full bloom to decorate the whole village in yellow while in autumn, the red fruit signals the changing of the season. The trees here were said to have originated from scholars who planted them long ago, earning the nickname "Scholar's Flowers." During the festival period, a variety of performances and cornus fruit-related hands-on programs are offered to all visitors.

## Tae'an International Tulip Festival

Selected as one of the world's top five tulip festivals, Tae'an International Tulip Festival showcases tulips, lupine, foxglove, lilies and other advanced breeds of spring flowers. This year's festival theme is Disney animation, and will feature some of the largest and most expensive tulip species in the world. Additional festival activities include feeding animals, face painting, and caricature drawings.



## Festivals filled with culture and arts

Koreans treasure their long history and rich cultural heritage. The season of spring brings an array of festivals to celebrate Korean culture and ensure it is passed down to future generations. The festivals cover diverse genres, and visitors to these attractions can make use of the opportunities to both watch and participate in the living culture on display at these festivals.

## Jeju Fire Festival



The Jeju Fire Festival is a traditional field-burning ceremony to pray for health and a good harvest in the coming year. The festival offers programs of various genres for all visitors to actively experience and learn about Jeju's traditional culture.

## Yeon Deung Hoe (Lotus Lantern Festival)



Yeon Deung Hoe (Lotus Lantern Festival) is held annually on Buddha's Birthday (eighth day of the fourth month of the lunar calendar). Events are held at Buddhist temples in several districts across Seoul. Major events include an exhibition of traditional lanterns and a lantern parade for a festival that will last in one's memories for a long time to come.

## Mungyeong Chasabal Festival



The Mungyeong Chasabal Festival aims to improve the regional culture and promote Mungyeong ceramics as a national brand. Beautifully nestled at the foot of the Baekdudaegan mountain range, Mungyeong abounds with the sandy soil and firewood needed to produce fine ceramic goods, such as traditional tea cups. Festival programs include pottery-making experiences led by local artisans.

## Boseong Green Tea Festival

Boseong is the largest producer of green tea in the country, and the tea fields create beautiful landscapes that often appear in Korean dramas. At Boseong Green Tea Festival, some of the most popular festival events are the hands-on experience programs like picking tea leaves, making tea, and sampling green tea snacks. Other events include learning traditional tea ceremony culture and an exhibition of submitted photographs.



## Damyang Bamboo Festival



Located within a vast bamboo forest, the Damyang Bamboo Festival is full of activities celebrating the beauty and function of the bamboo plant. Diverse event programs and hands-on activities are part of the festival. Enjoy the fresh air and atmosphere by taking a walk in the bamboo forest. After working up an appetite, visitors can enjoy some famous local cuisine, like rice cooked in a bamboo stalk.

## GUIDE TO SUMMER FESTIVALS (JULY-AUGUST)



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Summer is a time for fun vacations and outings with family and friends. Wherever one's destination in Korea may be, check out some of these fascinating summer festivals to help you forget the scorching heat. For summer activities, the best of the best includes beach festivals like Boryeong Mud Festival in July, and Busan Sea Festival in August. There are also cultural festivals like Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival, where one can watch indie films in a variety of genres; and Incheon Pentaport Rock Festival, with performances by internationally famous rock musicians. With so many great festivals to choose from, it's easy to enjoy your summer in Korea.

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## Buyeo Seodong Lotus Festival



The Buyeo Seodong Lotus Festival is held at Gunnamji, the first man-made pond in the nation. Visitors can view many lotus flower varieties, including red and white lotuses as well as water lilies. At night, the pond is illuminated with LED lights and sculptures. The most popular event at the festival is the performance showcasing the love story between Prince Seodong (King Muwang's childhood name) and Princess Seonhwa. Other programs include trying foods made with lotus and taking part in a lotus leaf tea ceremony demonstration.

## Boryeong Mud Festival



At the Boryeong Mud Festival, visitors jump into a huge pool of mud for more than just fun, as Boryeong mud is well-known for its excellent quality and efficacy. This fun, action-packed festival is popular among local and international visitors because it offers various programs such as the mud massage pack, colored-mud body painting, and mud soap-making.

## Bonghwa Sweetfish Festival



Bonghwa Sweetfish Festival is held in the pure waters of Naeseongcheon Stream in Bonghwa-gun. The festival focuses on sweetfish, small freshwater fish that have a light watermelon scent. The main programs are catching sweet fish with a net or with just one's bare hands, and sweetfish-related exhibits.

## Incheon Pentaport Rock Festival



Incheon Pentaport Rock Festival is a must-visit event for rock fans. This annual festival invites famous rock artists from Korea and overseas to perform on the large outdoor stage.