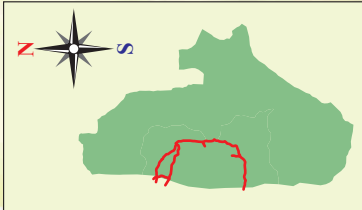
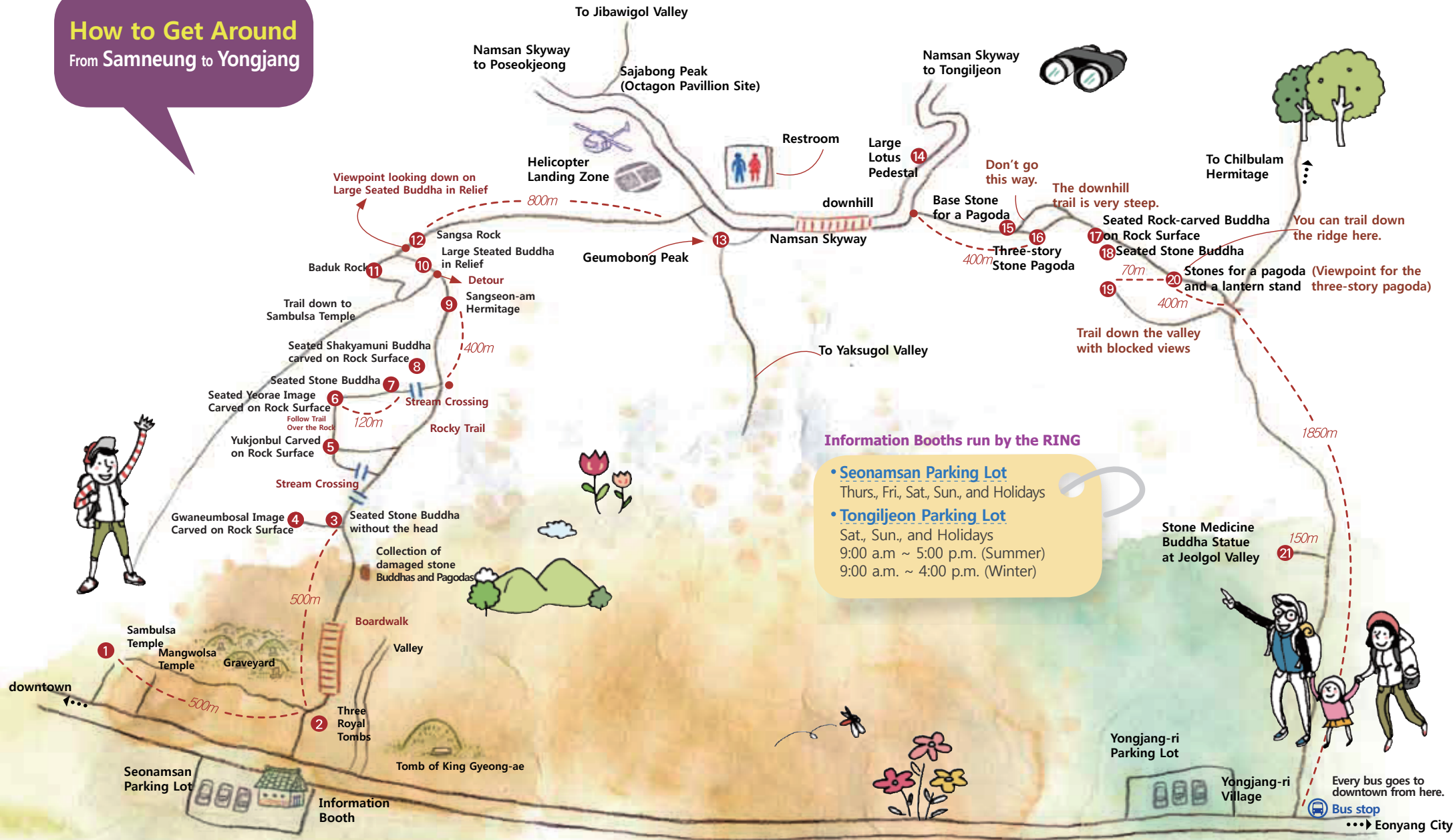


How to Get Around From Samneung to Yongjang



(사)경주남산연구소
 www.kjnamsan.org • kjnamsan@hanmail.net • 경북 경주시 태종로 711번길 15 (노서동) T. (054) 777-7142 F. (054) 776-7142
 The Research Institute of Mt. Namsan in Gyeongju, Korea (RING) For contacts in English: gjnamsan@gmail.com

Every bus goes to downtown from here.
 Bus stop
 Eonyang City

Sambulsa Temple and Samneung Valley

① Baeri Standing Stone Buddhas of Gyeongju (Treasure No. 63)

These three statues were originally scattered around a nearby temple and then moved here in 1923. The principal Buddha is 2.75m tall and the attendant Bodhisattvas are 2.28m and 2.2m tall [respectively]. All these statues look like cheerful and innocent babies. They all have well-rounded faces with indented eyebrows; their swollen eyes highlight their baby-like smiles.

Full-blown smiles are showing around the thick lips under short noses with higher cheeks. A Buddha's characteristic single curly white hair, or Baekho, is clearly carved between the eyebrows and the spiral hair is carved as a series of beads. Their rectangular feet are firmly stable on their pedestals. The principal Buddha's thick robes are showing several U shapes. Its hands gesture "giving wishes" and "don't be afraid". This set of hand gestures, or a combination mudra, was typical before the late 7th century. The Bodhisattva on the left gestures the "Wheel of the Law" with the right hand while holding a bottle of pure water with the left hand. Its thin and small eyes, low nose, and new-moon-like pushed out lips are all in smaller scale. In contrast, the cheeks are chubby. Its full-moon-shaped face is filled with a tender but impressive smile. Its head halo is plain but it has a three-sided headdress. It wears a necklace with three bead decorations and the inner ware is hidden in an angle. The Bodhisattva on the right stands on a dual lotus pedestal with its right hand holding a necklace and the left holding a sutra stick. Its body has a bent posture and the shoulders are slightly shrugged. Its round face, slightly opened eyes with a hint of smile, the short triangular nose, and rather big lips with deep dent on each end with the chubby cheeks all show its smooth smile. The halo edges are in two lines with five miniature reliefs and two palmetto patterns. The bead necklace of three cords has a big lotus at the bottom and the tightening straps are hanging decoratively. The Buddha and the Bodhisattva on the left date back to the mid-7th century while the other Bodhisattva is from the late 7th century.

GPS Coordinates 35° 48' 07"N 129° 12' 38"E **Elevation** 59m

② Three Royal Tombs (Historic Site No. 219)

Surrounded by pine trees at the mouth of the Samneung Valley, these tombs are said to be of King Adala (the 8th ruler 154 ~ 184 CE), King Shindeok (the 53rd ruler 912 ~ 917 CE), and King Gyeongmyeong (the 54th ruler 917 ~ 924 CE) in order of closeness to the main road. The middle tomb was robbed in 1963, and a full-scale excavation found it to have a stone chamber with a tunnel entrance. Their structures are assumed to be identical. The main chamber is of a square with a 0.35m high, 2m long stone platform probably for two people in the center with the passageway in the south. All the other walls are 1.4m high and their 12 sections are further divided into upper and lower parts where red, yellow, white, dark indigo and bright indigo are painted in random. As the only colored Silla tomb, it is highly significant for archaeological site. They were designated as the royal Bak family tombs in 1730. Two history books of Samguksagi and Samgukyusa have conflicting records about who was buried in each tomb. The Tomb of King Gyeong-ae (the 55th ruler 924 ~ 927) is in a separate pine forest across the nearby stream.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 52"N 129° 12' 32"E **Elevation** 60m

③ Seated Stone Buddha Statue in Naenggol Valley

A headless Buddha statue sits on a rock by the hiking trail approximately 500m east of the three tombs. The statue is 1.6m tall and 1.56m wide between the knees. Buried in the valley before its lucky discovery in 1964, it has not been weathered

much and still shows vividly carved knots and folds on its clothes. The head is missing, both the knees are damaged, and its hand gestures are hardly recognizable. Judging from the lively sculpture shown in its comfortably seated position, three bold lines on the neck, athletic chest, broad shoulders, and dignified posture, it is probably from the mid-8th century, the height of Silla period . The two decorative knots are finely carved; the knots are made on the robe from its left shoulder down to the knees. This shows that the knotwork started in Korea before the late 7th century. The skirt is also decoratively tied with knots. The base doesn't seem to have been destroyed, but roughly chipped off. It was probably located in harmony with the environment on a big rock as in the current status.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 49"N 129° 12' 53"E **Elevation** 117m

④ Gwaneumbosal Image Carved on Rock Surface (Gyeongsangbuk-do Tangible Cultural Property No. 19)

You'll find a high-rising rock outcropping to the north of the headless statue. The Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, also known as Goddess of Mercy, looks down on the trail with a wide smile. The full-blown face wears a slight smile with the right hand gesturing the "Wheel of the Law" and the left hand holding a bottle of pure water. The miniature Buddha relief on its crown shows its identity. The necklace and the tightening strings are in butterfly shaped knots and the loose ends are hanging downward. This image is carved delicately in detail as if it were alive. It stands softly on a down-turned lively lotus. As this location has little space for a protective building and no roof tiles were found nearby, it is assumed that the relief was designed to be an open-air sculpture. Why does this Buddhist image stand exposed to the weather? Is this another way of showing dramatically the heavenly being coming down to us whenever called upon? The relief does not have a halo but has a separate angled rock behind it. This arrangement gives the relief a look of a descending Bodhisattva. The best time for viewing it is near the sunset especially in Autumn when the fall foliage is most dramatic. The image is 154 cm tall and the shoulders are 54cm wide. This relief dates back to the 9th century.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 50"N 129° 12' 53"E **Elevation** 139m

⑤ Yukjonbul Carved on Rock Surface (Gyeongsangbuk-do Tangible Cultural Property No. 21)

As you continue hiking up the trail in the valley, you will find Buddhist images etched on broad rock faces to the left of the trail. They look like drawings from the Silla Period. The Sakyamuni Buddha Triad, representing present life, is located on the Eastern surface while the Amitabha Buddha Triad of future life is carved on the Western surface. The Amitabha Buddha's hand gesture is unique and found nowhere else. The attendant Bodhisattvas are kneeling down on one knee and holding up lotus flowers with both hands. The Bodhisattva on the right does not have a pedestal so it appears to be coming out of the rock. Since it is etched on a rough rock surface, as if in a drawing, it is even more mysterious. A wooden structure was likely here as there are worm marks on top of the rock for a structural purpose, a narrow dent for rain gutter, and many roof tiles were found scattered nearby. These images date back to the 9th century.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 47"N 129° 12' 57"E **Elevation** 151m

⑥ Seated Yeorae Image Carved on Rock Surface (Gyeongsangbuk-do Tangible Cultural Property No. 159)

Another 200m up the trail, above the Yukjonbul etching, you will find a 10 m² rock cliff facing to the west. In the center of the cliff is seated a Buddha with hand gestures of the "Wheel of the Law"

on a lotus pedestal 2.5m in diameter. The body is etched while the face is in slight relief. The eyebrows and eyes are close to one another; the nose is rather long; the lips are quite thick and large. Although, the face has odd proportions, it contains a looks of simple dignity. The pedestal and the halos are in thick lines while the folds of the robe are in thin lines. This image is simplified in that the mason(s) did not show off much artistic technique. It is even said to be incomplete because it lacks any finishing touches on the head, the face, and the ears. Carved in the late 10th century, it is the most current sculpture on Mt. Namsan. To the left of the image is a natural feature called the "husband and wife" rock. It is named this because it has the appearance of two human figures hugging.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 46"N 129° 13' 04"E **Elevation** 194m

⑦ Seated Stone Buddha of Samneung Valley (Treasure No. 666)

Follow the trail to the right of the Seated Yeorae Image for approximately 100m, and you will come across granite rocks in grove of pine trees; among them is a seated Buddha statue on a splendid lotus pedestal of white granite. The pedestal consists of three parts; the top with palmetto patterns, the middle with a decorative motif carved on each side, and the bottom is a roughly carved octagon. The decorative motif of ansang refers to a flat seat for precious people and so the pedestal represents that it is a world of absolute dignity. As splendid petals are laid together with palmetto patterns on this dignified seat, these lotuses are the heavenly blossoms in the world of Mt. Sumeru. Its most noticeable feature at the bottom is the plain octagon pedestal where down-turned lotuses are usually carved. It seems as if the Buddha were rising from the rock. With no marks or building materials found nearby, it was an open-air statue from the beginning. The artists' choice of not building a protective structure which would not have blended in with the natural surroundings show their creative wisdom. The halo of this statue is decorated with climbing vines on the inside and powerful flames on the outside. The broken halo has been fixed after it was carelessly shattered in the winter of 1963. The face and halo were repaired in December, 2008. It dates back to the late 8th century. A three-story stone pagoda (currently located at Gyeongju National Museum) was originally located on the small stone platform to the south of the statue.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 43"N 129° 13' 06"E **Elevation** 219m

⑧ Seated Sakyamuni Buddha Carved on Rock Surface

Across the stream down and to the east, you will find the trail to Sangseon-am Hermitage. Looking up toward a rock between the trees, you will see a Buddha face carved approximately 30m away. The image has an overall smooth look and judging by its size in relation to the rock it is carved on, the image was not meant to show the whole body. The Buddha seems to welcome visitors by revealing itself slightly. It was carved in the 9th century. Below this rock was the site of a Medicine Buddha statue which was moved to Seoul National Museum in 1915. Many roof tiles were found in the area, suggesting the statue was protected from the element by a pavilion.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 45"N 129° 13' 18"E **Elevation** 284m

⑨ Bodhisattva Image Carved on Rock Surface at Sangseon-am Hermitage

Sangseon-am Hermitage is a 90-year-old temple which was built on an existing temple site. A partial Bodhisattva carving is visible on a broken piece of rock on the left side of the trail. It seems to be a Bodhisattva with decorative folded robe, beads, and ribbons. It could be as tall as 6m if it was not broken.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 42"N 129° 13' 19"E **Elevation** 281m

⑩ Seated Seokgayeorae Image Carved on Rock Surface (Gyeongsangbuk-do Tangible Cultural Property No. 158)

There is a 6m-high Buddha image in bold relief on a gigantic rock approximately 150m from the hermitage. It is the second largest in size on Mt. Namsan. The face and ears are smooth in high relief while the back of the head is roughly cut. The three neck lines are not showing, but the robust body is in harmony with its rectangular face. The right hand gestures the "Wheel of the Law" on the chest while the left hand is placed with the palm upward on its crossed legs. The body is carved roughly in bold lines and the pedestal smoothly disappears into the rock. The pedestal is adorned with lotus carvings and flowers decorate each petal on the upturned lotus. The body expression with no three-dimensional sense and loosely hanging folds shows that it was from the 9th century. (The direct trail to the statue is not passable due to falling rocks. Use the trail via the Baduk Rock and view the statue from near Sangsa Rock)

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 44"N 129° 13' 19"E **Elevation** 336m

⑪ Baduk Rock

The site of Geumsongjeong Pavillion is located top of the rocky peak in the valley. Next to the site is Baduk Rock where, it is said, heavenly gods descended to play baduk. According to Donggyeongjappi [published in 1669], Okbogo, a famous Silla musician played a geomungo lute at this spot as well. This spot offers an exceptional vantage point of the surrounding are. From here, you can visit Sangsa Rock and go back down the same trail or take the trail to Sambulsa Temple.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 46"N 129° 13' 19"E **Elevation** 363m

⑫ Sangsa Rock and small Buddhist Statue

The high-rising rock behind the hermitage is Sangsa Rock where the Mt. Namsan spirit Sangshim is said to live. Its Eastern surface has a phallic shape and a praying site. On the Southern side is Sanadang. This site is frequented by people praying for the birth of a son. The Chinese characters meaning "the pavillion of a birth god" were carved in 1856. Sangshim is said to have danced for King Heongang in Poseokjeong. A praying niche is carved into the Eastern side and in front of the niche is a small, headless statue and pedestal. It is the smallest statue ever found on Mt. Namsan. Due to considerable weathering, it is difficult to date this statue but considering the hand gestures it is assumed to be pre- eighth century. An old temple site sits in front of the statue. From here, it takes approximately 15 minutes to reach Geumbong peak.

GPS Coordinates 35° 47' 43"N 129° 13' 22"E **Elevation** 374m

Translated by Cookie Namkung & Dongmin Goh, and proofread by David C. Hastings & Thomas Kemoschak

* GPS coordinates and elevations may not be accurate and should be used for relative reference only since they have been measured with a personal smart phone.