SAC 2014 Excursions:

The city of Gyeongju has too much to offer for visitors. There are many historic places to see and enjoy. For that, the local committee has organized five excursions described below.

To make a reservation for any of these excursions, please login to your SAC registration account and check the desired excursions no later than Sunday March 9, 2014. Priority is on first-come basis. If the number of participants does not the required minimum, that excursion will be canceled.

For Monday excursion, we need 40 participates to arrange for first bus and 70 to arrange for 2 buses. If under 70, the first 40 participants will make it. Others will be refunded.

These excursions are partially sponsored by the City of Gyeongju. Therefore, the cost is at minimal. We hope you find the time and take advantage of these tours and explore the City of Gyeongju during your stay.

(Tour #1: Monday) : Full day - Gyeongju Historic Areas & Hyundai Motors (Ulsan city)

(1) Date: 3/24 (Monday), 9:30 ~ 18:00
(2) Attractions: Yangnam’s Columnar Joint, Bulguksa Temple, Seokguram Grotto, and Hyundai Motors
(3) Fare: US $48 / person (includes: Touristic bus travel, English guide and Lunch)
(4) Minimum: 40 persons, Maximum: 80 persons

1. Yangnam’s Columnar Joint

Yangnam-myeon's coastal area is blessed with lovely scenery and the natural geological wonder of columnar joints, sculpted by nature. You can witness diverse types of formations grouped and clustered along 1.7km of shoreline. See lines of elaborate stone columns over 10 meters high, evoking the columns of ancient Greek temples; horizontal columnar joints that resemble stacks of timber; and other mysterious formations resembling the crater lake atop Mt. Baekdu, a woman's pleated skirt, an open fan, and flower buds. This unique world natural heritage is a veritable geological museum.

2. Bulguksa Temple

The construction of Bulguksa Temple was begun by Gim Daeseong in 751 A.D., during the reign of King Gyeongdeok, and was completed in 774 A.D during the reign of King Hyegong. Its construction was begun and completed parallel with that of Seokguram. Nestled in the western foothills of Mt. Tohamsan, Bulguksa
Temple is a monumental work of art recognized throughout the world for its excellence. It depicts profound Buddhist principles and the spirit of artistic genius in a unique way. As the longed-for Buddhist land and ideal world of Silla imagination brought to earth, Bulguksa Temple is a realization of the earthly Saha World as expressed by Sakyamuni Buddha in the Lotus Sutra, Buddha's Land of Bliss from the Amitabha (Infinite Life) Sutra, and the Lotus Land of Vairocana from the Avatamska (Flower Garland) Sutra. The architectural form of Bulguksa Temple can be divided chiefly into two areas. One area contains Daeungjeon (Hall of Great Enlightenment), surrounded by Cheongungyo (Blue Cloud Bridge), Baegungyo (White Cloud Bridge), Jahamun (Purple Mist Gate), Beomyeongnu (Pavilion of Mount Meru), Jwagyeongnu (Left Sutra Hall), Dabotap (Pagoda of Many Treasures), Seokgatap (Sakyamuni Pagoda), and Museoljeon (Hall of No Words). The other area contains Geuknakjeon (Hall of Supreme Bliss), surrounded by Chilbogyo (Seven Treasures Bridge), Yeonhwagyo (Lotus Flower Bridge), and Anyangmun (Peace Enhancing Gate). The magnificent and unique stone structures seen when one looks straight on at the temple remain from the eighth century, and the wooden buildings are 18th century restorations built upon the remains of the original structures that burnt to the ground. Hoerang was restored in the 1960s.

The stone structures are marvelously constructed, using long and short stones in the foundations, cylindrical stones for pillars and balustrades, and various other well-hewn stones. Beholders stand in awed admiration of the delicacy, majesty, and lightness of the finely carved stone pillars and balustrades of Yeonhwagyo (Lotus Flower Bridge) and Chilbogyo (Seven Treasures Bridge). The 8.2-meter tall three-tiered stupa known as Seokgatap (Sakyamuni Pagoda), with its well-proportioned sections creating an overall balance, possesses a simple and stately beauty. The famous stupa, Dabotap (Pagoda of Many Treasures), which stands 10.4 meters high on top of a rectangular base, is constructed of many pieces of stone material connected with joints like those seen in wooden architecture. It is highly praised for its elaborate and ornate beauty, unique structure, and creative artistry.

3. Seokguram Grotto

The construction of Seokguram Grotto was begun in 751 A.D. by Gim Daeseong, then prime minister under the reign of King Gyeongdeok of Silla. It was completed in 774 A.D. during the reign of King Hyegong. At the time it was completed, it was called Seokbulsa, meaning “Stone Buddha Temple.” Seokguram Grotto, near the summit of Mt. Tohamsan, is a man-made cave that was assembled from white granite. Inside of Seokguram Grotto are 39 carved divinities, including Bodhisattvas, disciples, heavenly guards, and heavenly kings, all formed around a central principal figure of the Buddha. The rectangular antechamber of the Grotto is connected to the main rotunda by a corridor. The domed ceiling of the main chamber is exquisitely made from over 360 pieces of flat stone. The superb architectural technique employed here is unprecedented in the world in its excellence. Statues of a total of eight heavenly guards stand on either side of the antechamber that serves as the entrance to the Grotto. On each side of the entrance to the corridor are bas-relief carvings of Deva kings, while the narrow corridor is decorated with the Four Heavenly Kings carved in pairs.

4. Hyundai Motors

Hyundai Motors factories in Ulsan city.
(Tour #2: Wed AM): Half day - Bulkuksa & Sukguram

(1) Data: 3/26 (Wednesday), 09:00 ~ 12:00
(2) Attractions: Bulguksa Temple, and Seokguram Grotto
(3) Fare: US $20 / person (includes: Touristic bus travel and English guide)
(4) Minimum: 30 persons, Maximum: 70 persons

1. Bulguksa Temple

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2. Seokguram Grotto
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(Tour #3: Wed PM): Half day – Oreung, Daereungwon, Tomb of General Kim Yu Sin

(1) Data: 3/26 (Wednesday), 14:00 ~ 17:00
(2) Attractions: Oreung, Daereungwon, and the Tomb of General Kim Yu Sin
(3) Fare: US $20 / person (includes: Touristic bus travel and English guide)
(4) Minimum: 30 persons, Maximum: 70 persons

1. Oreung

Despite their irregular sizes and areas, the five royal tombs rest harmoniously alongside one another. The royal personages said to be buried here include King Bak Hyeokgeose and his wife, Queen Alyeong; the second Silla king, Namhae; the third Silla king, Yuri; and the fifth Silla king, Pasa. If so, then this means that nearly all of Silla’s early kings are gathered here. According to another legend about Oreung, it is said that all five of the royal tombs belong to King Bak Hyeokgeose.

Legend has it that King Hyeokgeose ascended to heaven after ruling for 61 years. Seventeen days later,
his body fell to earth from heaven, scattered in five pieces, upon which his queen died. As the people attempted to bury the five pieces of the king's body in a tomb, along with the deceased queen, a large snake appeared and prevented them from doing so. Hindered by the snake, the people had to bury the royal remains in five separate tombs, hence the name "Sareung", meaning "Serpent Tombs." "All the royal tombs of Seonamsan belong to members of the Bak clan!" To the southwest of Namsan, there are six zones where royal Silla tombs are found, including Oreung ("Five Tombs") and Samreung ("Three Tombs"). It is noteworthy that all of these tombs are occupied by royals surnamed Bak.

Among the 56 kings of Silla, there were ten kings surnamed Bak. They were Bak Hyeokgeose (1st king, consort Alyeong), Namhae (2nd king), Yuri (3rd king), Pasa (5th king), Jima (6th king), Ilseong (7th king), Adalla (8th king), Sindeok, a descendant of Adalla (53rd king), Gyeongmyeong (54th king), and Gyeongae (55th king). The Birth Legend of Bak Hyeokgeose About 2,100 years ago, there were six villages on the open plains of Gyeongju, each ruled by its own village chief. One day, a strange light from the sky shone upon a well called Najeong, and a white horse was seen bowing down. Hearing humans, the horse raced away, and a purple egg was discovered in that spot. From inside the egg a fine-looking boy emerged. The boy grew up exceptionally bright, and when he turned 13, the six village chiefs agreed to unify their chiefdoms into one nation, making the boy the king.

2. Daereungwon

In Daereungwon Tumuli Park Belt are located tombs and burial places of high personages including kings, queens, and nobility. Based on its distinct areas, it is divided into the Tumuli in Hwangnam-ri, Tumuli in Nodong-ri, and Tumuli in Noseo-ri. When the tombs were excavated, rare and precious artifacts were discovered, including the Geumgwan Gold Crown, the Cheonmado Heavenly Horse painting, glass drinking vessels, and a variety of earthenware, displaying the essence of Silla culture as well as the era's way of life.

3. The Tomb of General Kim Yu Sin

General Kim Yu Sin was a hero who made the unification of Silla possible, and after his death he was honored with the name "Great King of Heungmu" and buried in a tomb fit for a king. It is on a low hill next to
Hyeongsanggang. It is surrounded by pine forests and the approach is lined with cherry blossom and other trees. He was the great-great grandson of the last king of Geumgwan Gaya. He became a Hwarang (Flower Knight) at 15 and was highly skilled in tactics and martial arts. He became a general in the 7th year of the reign of King Taejongmuyeol (660), and led the armies that conquered Baekjae. In the 8th year of the reign of King Munmu (668), he conquered Goguryeo. He also defeated the armies of the Dang Dynasty when they attempted to invade Silla. The tomb of General Kim Yu Sin has a unique strength and charisma. It is surrounded by very sophisticated carvings of 12 animal gods with the heads of animals and the bodies of humans. The descendants of Kim Yu Sin, being unaware of the honors given to him after death, changed the writing on the tombstone to indicate that it was not that of a king (reung) but of a regular person (myo). At the base of the hill is Heungmu Park, a great place to hang out or have a picnic.

(Tour #4: Thurs AM): Half day – Oksanseowon and Yangdong Village

(1) Data: 3/27 (Thursday), 09:00 ~ 12:00
(2) Attractions: Oksanseowon and Yangdong Village
(3) Fare: US $20 / person (includes: Touristic bus travel and English guide)
(4) Minimum: 30 persons, Maximum: 70 persons

1. Oksanseowon

![Image of Oksanseowon]

It is a typical traditional seowon (a Confucian study and ceremonial center) that has a shrine in the back and a study area in the front, and was built 500 years ago honoring the great Choseon scholar of neo-Confucianism, Lee Eon Jeok, who studied here. He was the first person to start the debate style of academic study. In 1573, about 20 years after his death, scholars wanted to build a memorial honoring his achievements. Oksanseowon is one of the 47 highly honored seowon's in Korea. The signboard of Oksanseowon was written by Chusa, Kim Jeong Hee, a scholar famous for his beautiful calligraphy. It also has the largest number of old books, including Samguk sagi, by Kim Bu Shik. Surrounding Oksanseowon is the mountain Dodeoksan and also many beautiful valleys.

2. Yangdong Village (Yangdongmaeul)

![Image of Yangdong Village]
Yangdongmaeul is a typical Choseon yangban village, along with Hwahoemaeul in Andong. There are many pavilions and National Cultural Assets scattered around the village. The two families that live in this village, the Wolseong Son family, and the Yeogang Lee family, have lived there for 500 years. This village contains traditional Choseon culture as it was, so the whole village became an important folk reference in 1984. Of the large Hanoks of the wealthy high on the hill, and the servants thatch-roofed houses at the bottom of the hill, only about 150 remain. The most important buildings of this village are the house of Son Jung Don, and the home of the father of Lee Eon Jeok, one of the five most highly regarded intellectuals of the Choseon period. At Yangdong Folk Village there are programs for children to experience living a traditional village life. Also there are traditional culture programs such as Hanji, traditional paper craft, and Seodang, the school system of Choseon.

(Tour #5: Thursday PM): Half day – National Gyeongju Museum and Anapji

(1) Data: 3/27 (Thursday), 14:00 ~ 17:00
(2) Attractions: National Gyeongju Museum and Anapji
(3) Fare: US $20 / person (includes: Touristic bus travel and English guide)
(4) Minimum: 30 persons, Maximum: 70 persons

1. National Gyeongju Museum

Although the city of Gyeongju is considered to be an open air museum, the National Gyeongju Museum is a great place to see the most valuable local artifacts and inform yourself with expert description and interpretation. It is a must-visit place and consists of three main exhibition halls, special exhibition halls and an outdoor exhibition. The Ancient Hall consists of the Silla 1 & 2 Halls that house exhibits from early Silla, mainly from Cheomachong and Hwangnamdaecheong. Silla 1 Hall houses the Geumgwan, the gold crown of Silla, and various metal-craft items, and Silla 2 Hall exhibits various Silla clay sculptures. The Art Hall houses various Buddhist carvings, the historical record room, the metal-craft room, and the Hwangryeongsaroom, which has artifacts from Hwangryeong temple grounds. The Anapji Hall houses the most valuable works of art from the 30,000 artifacts that were excavated at Anapji. Here you can see the everyday items of the royalty and nobility of Unified Silla. The outdoor exhibition includes stone pagodas, stone Buddha statues, stone lanterns, the bases of tombstones and Seongdeokdaewangshinjong, the large bronze bell of the Great King Seongdeok. The Children's Museum was opened in 1954 to help children understand the history of Gyeongju.
2. Anapji

In the town of Gyeongju there are more palaces and royal Silla heritage sites. Cheomseongdae, Gyeryim, Wolseong and Anapji are directly connected to the palaces of Silla. Nodongdong, Noseodong, Gobungun, Daereungwon, Hwangori in Wangli Gobungun are the tombs of the royal family and nobility. Wangryeongsateo and Bunhwangsa are large temples of Silla. It is great to just walk or cycle around town to see the elegance and majesty of Silla. The lotus fields around Anapji are beautiful like a painting and the canola blossoms around Cheomseongdae make a spectacular backdrop. The beautiful lighting at night makes it perfect for nighttime sightseeing and the evening performances at Anapji will make for a unique experience.