Delicious Tongyeong

With great seafood, impossible-to-resist honey bread and stunning views, Tongyeong offers treats for the eyes and palate.

Tongyeong, South Gyeongsang Province is near the Hallyeo Maritime National Park and rich in fresh seafood and agricultural produce. Famous for its local delicacies, Tongyeong is the destination of choice for the gourmet traveler.

In Tongyeong, all roads lead to Gangguan Port. Always busy with fishing boats and tour buses, the port is crowded with visitors looking to experience the local way of life. A large parking lot accommodates tourists visiting local attractions such as the Dongpirang Village, the honey bread street, Seoho Market and the fisheries market. Tongyeong’s best-known restaurants and eateries are located near the port.

**Tongyeong eats**

- **Hwae:** Tongyeong is the best place to get hwae, or thinly sliced raw fish served fresh on a platter. The most popular hwae restaurant in the area is said to have been visited by Korean novelist Park Gyeong-ri, former President Lee Myeong-bak, movie star Jackie Chan and many other celebrities.

- **Pufferfish soup:** After a night of heavy drinking, Tongyeong folks start the day with a bowl of pufferfish soup. A smaller type of pufferfish called jolbok is used because it makes the taste better. A bowl of pufferfish soup has one or two whole pufferfish.

- **Oysters:** Another seafood item loved in Tongyeong is oysters, which are rich in testosterone boosters like amino acids and zinc, high in dietary fiber and low in calories. Tongyeong produces more than 70 percent of Korea’s oysters, and they taste the best and are most nutritious in the winter.

- **Chungmu gimbap:** This is seaweed rice rolls served with a pile of pickled Korean radish and another pile of boiled squid in sweet and spicy sauce. Though it originated in Tongyeong, it is called “Chungmu” gimbap because Chungmu is a town that was absorbed into Tongyeong. It’s so popular in Tongyeong, there is a Chungmu Gimbap street at Gangguan Port.

- **Ulja:** Ulja, or Udon noodles served in jjajang (black bean noodle sauce), is also a local specialty of Tongyeong. Its origins go back to a restaurant called Hangnam Ulja, whose owner explains that they created the dish for children who came to eat there while their parents went out to sea to catch fish. They served udon noodles with jjajang sauce on top for the kids who couldn’t choose between udon noodles and jjajang noodles.

- **Tongyeong honey bread:** This is a kind of syrup-coated donut that made its first appearance after the Korean War. Now the snack has become a famous local food, and there’s even a honey bread street in Gangguan Port.

- **Dajji:** Dajji restaurants serve two to three types of free seafood side dishes for each order of drinks, and have been a favorite hangout for local fishermen. But there’s recently been a slight change to the Dajji restaurant system. As the restaurants receive more tourists coming for the seafood side dishes rather than the drinks, they now charge per person.

**Three popular attractions**

Hallyeo National Maritime Park, also known as Hallyeo Waterway, covers myriad islands scattered across the clear blue sea in the country’s south coast. Take the Hallyeo Waterway Cable Car to take in the panoramic view of the park. It takes about 10 minutes for the cable car to take passengers to Mireuksan Mountain, and from the terminal, the mountain path that commands a dramatic view is just a 15-minute walk away.

Dongpirang Village, at the tip of Gangguan Port, was formed during the Japanese occupation almost a century ago, as outsiders moved in and built houses on the hillside. The village eventually became decrepit and was at risk of being demolished, but now it has become an artsy neighborhood frequented by artists and art students who come from around the country to paint the walls of the area’s houses.

There’s a local saying that goes: “Head to Mireu Mountain when the sun rises and to Dara Park when the sun sets.” In other words, the best place to watch the sunset in Tongyeong is Dara Park. When the skies are clear, you can take in a panoramic view of the many beautiful islands of Tongyeong. After watching the sunset, have a cup of coffee at a nearby cafe and wait to see the moon rise.

**Getting there**

Take the express bus from the Seoul Express Bus Terminal to Tongyeong Bus Terminal. It takes four hours to get there and the first bus departs at 7:10 a.m.

- For more information: Tongyeong culture and tourism website, [www.utour.go.kr/main](http://www.utour.go.kr/main)
- 82-55-650-4681, 4680

*By Suh Ji Min*
**Assistant Manager**
**Investment Consulting Center**
leticia@kotra.or.kr