Eat, Visit, Enjoy

Hot Springs Fit for a King

Asan is a city of hot springs rife with healthful properties and that were once visited by royalty.

There’s no better way to thaw out and relax in the thick of winter than with a visit to a hot spring. Asan, in South Chungcheong Province, is the perfect place to do just that. A paradise of hot spring resorts, the city is home to the notable Onyang, Dogo and Asan Hot Spring areas.

Onyang Hot Spring
The history of Onyang Hot Spring dates back to when the area began to be called Onjeong, during the Baekje Dynasty. Later, it was called Onsu during the Goryeo Dynasty and Onyang during the Joseon Dynasty. According to the Annals of the Joseon Dynasty, “King Sejong built a royal court villa in Onyang in the 15th year of King Sejong’s reign,” and “King Sejong stayed in Onyang for the treatment of eye diseases.” Several other kings of the Joseon Dynasty, including Sejo, Hyeonjong, Sukjong and Yeongjo, are said to have enjoyed taking hot spring baths at Onyang.

The Onyang Hot Spring District contains the site of the Joseon Dynasty’s hot spring royal court villa, which disappeared sometime between the Japanese occupation of Korea and the Korean War. However, the Sinjeongbi Monument and Yeonggoedae Pavilion in the garden of the Onyang Tourist Hotel prove that there used to be a royal court villa at the site. Legend has it that the Eouijeong Well, located a 10-minute drive from the Onyang Tourist Hotel, had water that was used to treat King Sejong’s eye disease.

Onyang’s hot spring produces weak-alkaline water as hot as 57°C from underground rock layers. It is known to be effective in treating skin diseases, neuralgia, arthritis and ailments particular to women, as the hot spring is rich in sodium carbonate, magnesium sulfate, potassium carbonate and silicic acid. Visitors can relax and enjoy numerous healing benefits while soaking in the hot spring water.

Dogo Hot Spring
According to legend, the history of the Dogo Hot Spring can be traced back to when a king of the Silla Dynasty was injured during a war against the Baekje Dynasty and healed with water from the spring. It has an alkaline value of pH 7.75 and maintains a constant temperature of 25-32°C. A sulfurous spring, it is known to be effective in treating skin diseases, neuralgia, arthritis, arteriosclerosis, diabetics, chronic bronchitis and stomach problems. The hot spring water lies beneath granite rocks, so it is not easy to drill into the ground there.

The hot spring resort was constructed during the Japanese occupation of Korea. However, it was known as the Onyang-oncheon Hot Spring until a hot spring-themed water park called Paradise Spa Dogo was built nearby in 2008. Nowadays, it is Asan’s representative hot spring. Boasting the conditions of a healthy hot spring, a constant water temperature of more than 35°C, medicinal minerals and aquatic exercise facilities for mental and physical healing and rehabilitation, this hot spring has been designated Chungcheong Province’s No. 1 healthful hot spring. Unlike other hot spring resorts, this one runs Korea’s first Ongung Korean Medicine Clinic, which advises visitors on how to best enjoy the hot spring according to their physical constitution.

Asan Hot Spring
The most recently developed hot spring water in the Asan Hot Spring District is highly alkaline, at pH 9.2, and with medium sodium hydrogen carbonate. It contains more than 20 types of minerals, including germanium, and is known to be good for skin care, arthritis, high blood pressure, stomach problems and neuralgia. The hot spring was discovered in 1987 and designated a hot spring tourist area in 1991. Asan Spavis, opened in 2001, has the largest and best facilities in the Asan Hot Spring District. The hot spring theme park is equipped with year-round water-play and spa facilities that attract adults and children alike.

For more Information
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