Sustainable Religious-Hiking Tourism in Korea's Yeongnam Alps Mountains

– Boosting Cultural Tourism with a Fresh Paradigm of Mountain-Adventure Tourism Combined With Religious Heritage Sites –

For the 2nd Euro-Asian Mountain Resorts Conference “Paving the Way towards a Bright Future for Mountain Destinations”

14-16 October, 2015
held by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
Ulsan City, Republic of Korea

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The *Baekdu-daegan* Mountain-system
The *Baekdu-daegan*  
“White-Head Great-Ridge”

- Ancient concept as the “*Spine of Korea*”
- Mountain-System running down the entire Peninsula, with a mildly-sacred character
The *Baekdu-daegan*

“White-Head Great-Ridge”

- Now a 735-km-Long Hiking Trail is being created as within South Korea, by the Korea Forest Service, hikers and local governments

- This has potential development as a fresh and unique multi-religious Pilgrimage-Route
Baekdu-daegan

- Craggy Peaks
- Magnificent Scenery
- Spring-waters, Herbs
- Buddhist Temples
- Neo-Confucian Shrines
- Shamanic Shrines
- Historical & Folk Sites
- Passes thru 7 National Parks, 4 Local Parks in SK

www.baekdu-daeggan.com
Doseon-guksa

Great 9th-Century Buddhist Master of Geomancy

Creator of Korean *Pungsu-jiri-seol* [Feng-Shui] and the concept of the *Baekdu-daegan*
The *Baekdu-daegan* in South Korea
“A walk from the Past, to the Future”
Shamanic Shrines
Buddhist Monasteries
Taoist Shrines
Neo-Confucian Shrines
National-Shamanic Shrines
Historical and Folk-tale Sites
Mountain-Spirit Shrines: the new Samseong-gak above old Sanshin-gak
Nakdong Jeongmaek mountain-range
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summit</th>
<th>Elevation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Danseok-san</td>
<td>827m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goheon-san</td>
<td>1033m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaji-san</td>
<td>1240m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheonhwang-san</td>
<td>1189m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaeyak-san</td>
<td>1189m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ganwol-san</td>
<td>1083m</td>
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<td>Shinbul-san</td>
<td>1159m</td>
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<td>Yeongchuk-san</td>
<td>1209m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chuiseo-san</td>
<td>1081m</td>
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<td>Jeongjuk-san</td>
<td>748m</td>
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<td>Shisal-deung</td>
<td>981m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yeomsu-bong</td>
<td>816m</td>
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<td>Cheonseong-san</td>
<td>922m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonhyo-san</td>
<td>921m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yeongnam Alps – Mt. Shinbul-san
Yeongnam Alps – Ridge-top Trail
Danseok-san 단석산
Danseok-san  Shinseon-sa
Yeongnam Alps – Jakcheon-jeong Gyegok
Jakcheon-jeong Gyegok
Jakcheon-jeong Gyegok
Jakcheon-jeong Gyegok
천성산

Cheonseong-san
Wonhyo-am Temple
Wonhyo-am Temple
Goheon-san Daeseong-sa Temple
Special Holy Sites:
Jeokmyeol-bogung

(Hambaek-san Jeongam-sa)
Master Jajang’s 7th-Century Jeokmyeol-bogung (Seorak-san)
Special Holy Sites of Korea:
the Six Jeokmyeol-bogung temples
Created by Master Jajang 1

적멸 寂滅 means “Silent Nirvana” or “Sublime Equanimity”

보궁 寶宮 means “Treasure Palace”, a shrine of higher status than a palace, Hall (殿, jeon) or pavilion (閣, gak).

Together, Jeokmyeol-bogung means a Shrine containing sari (舍利, sarira) relics of Sakyamuni Buddha, therefore an especially-holy site of Korean Buddhism and object of pilgrimage and intensive veneration practices.

Origin was Geumgang-jwa (金剛座, Diamond Throne) Stupa under the Bodhi Tree.
Jeongam-sa  Jajang-gak

Shrine Building next to the Samseong-gak, facing the Sumano-tap
Special Holy Sites of Korea: the Six Jeokmyeol-bogung temples Created by Master Jajang

The **5th** one that Jajang established, in 646, is:

- at one of Korea’s grandest Buddhist Temples
- is designated as a National Treasure of Korea
- the temple is a “capital” of Korean Buddhism,
- and is Proposed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site
Yangsan  Yeongchwi-sa

靈鷲山  Vulture Peak

Site of the  Beophwa-gyeong   法華經  Lotus Sutra
Tongdo-sa  646 CE
通度寺  Crossing-Over Monastery
“Buddha Temple” of the Sambo Sachal system
Tongdo-sa
The “Crossing-Over” Monastery
Tongdo-sa
Founded by Master Jajang in 646 CE
Yeongchwi-san Tongdo-sa
Geumgang Gyedan
금강계단 金剛戒壇
Diamond Precepts Platform
Geumgang Gyedan
금강계단 金剛戒壇  Diamond Precepts Platform
Jeokmyeol-bogung established as Ordination Altar by Jajang in 646
Tongdo-sa’s Main Hall
通度寺 Crossing-Over Monastery
“Buddha Temple” of the Sambo Sachal system

Enshrines no Buddha Statue, but has a window on rear wall, facing to the Budo; designed by Jajang.
The Geumgang Gyedan is a Jeokmyeol-bogung Budo still used as Main Ordination Altar for Jogye Order, for Gujokgye 具足戒 Ceremonies; and remains a major Pilgrimage-destination ~ National Treasure #290
Geumgang Gyedan
at peace in the winter
Korea’s unique system of **Sambo Sachal**

三寶寺剎

Temples of the Three Treasures:

Buddha = Yeongchwi-san Tongdo-sa

Dharma = Gaya-san Haein-sa

Sangha = Jogye-san Songgwang-sa
Sanshin painting of Tongdo-sa
Successful Korean Religious-Pilgrimage Tourism Program:

Temple-Stay

- Started in Spring 2002, as a “Visit Korea Year” project before the World Cup Finals
- Fully functioning nationwide in 2004
- Now operated by the national Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism, as missionary work
- More than 30 temples involved, most with individualized characteristic programs
Temple-Stay
the first Temple-Stay Event

April 2002
Ambassadors to Korea as Guests
Typical TempleStay Programs

*Han-guk Dado* (Korean Green-Tea Ceremony)

Tour of Historic Shine-Halls and Artworks

Practice of 108 Prostrations

Lecture on basic Buddhist Principles

Seated Meditation Practice (*Seon* / Zen)

*Baru Gongyang* (formal monastic meal, in wooden bowls)

Pre-dawn bell-ringing, drums and Devotional Ceremony

Conversation with a Monk

Walking along a peaceful forest path outside the temple
“Changing the way you see the world”
Conclusion:

For tourism development in the Republic of Korea that is **Sustainable**, especially meaning low-carbon-footprint and ecologically-focused but also urgently concerned with cultural sustainability as well, we are enjoined to envision a new paradigm, one of “green” environmentally-conscious and low-carbon “eco-tourism”, which makes use of the potential tourism attraction assets that the nation already possesses but has not sufficiently exploited – without damaging cultural authenticity.
Conclusion:

I advocate a turn in national tourism policy towards both adventure-tourism in the form of hiking our beautiful mountains and religious-tourism in the form of Temple-Stay and other programs of visiting and experiencing this country’s vast and diverse wealth of sacred spiritual sites. We are indeed fortunate that these two types of tourism are easily combined together into one sustainable ecotourism package, as Korea’s greatest Buddhist temples and other religious institutions are located within many of its best mountainous areas.
Conclusion:

This presentation focused on the “Yeongnam Alps” range stretching northwards from Busan City through Ulsan City and other counties to the Gyeongju City area (including the “Nakdong Jeongmaek” long-distance hiking-trail) which is now emerging with potential to become a significant tourism destination-attraction, and its potential to be synergeticly combined with the existing Temple-Stay program.

I assert that this combination could be an excellent new tourism attraction feature for the nation, while meeting the desired “green eco-tourism” standards.
New Book
October 2015

Solitary Sage
The Profound Life, Wisdom and Legacy of Korea’s “Go-un” Choi Chi-won

Lulu.com
Amazon, etc.
or contact me
more information:

www.san-shin.org

www.baekdu-daegan.com