

My Day In Jeju



Hi, my name is Ileana Su, and I studied in Seoul, South Korea last Spring. While in Korea, I traveled to many places like Suwon, Busan, Daejeon, and Jeju Island.



One of the most memorable and interesting things I experienced was learning about Jeju through an East Island Tour. Jeju Island is a popular vacation spot in Korea, and it's where many famous Korean dramas such as *When Life Gives You Tangerines* were filmed. On this tour, we visited Jeju's most popular beach, Hamdoek Beach. We also hiked Seongsan Ilchulbang, or Sunrise Peak, which has UNESCO World Heritage status and is known for its unique fortress-like appearance and amazing sunrise views.



We also explored the Manjanggul Lava Tube, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that only opened up recently after years of being closed. It also contains the world's largest 7.6-meter lava column.



My favorite part of the whole tour, though, was going to Seongeup Folk Village and seeing the Haenyeo show. At the folk village, we learned about Jeju culture and Haenyeo. The folk village we went to was where they filmed the iconic Jewel In The Palace. A drama about the first female royal physician in the Joseon Dynasty. Additionally, we learnt about the Haenyeo, who are female free divers. Since, in the past, men on Jeju Island didn't work, the responsibility of providing for their family fell on the women. To make money, wives would have to risk their lives diving without any gear to find abalone and fish to sell. Due to these circumstances, many of these women could hold their breath for up to 5 minutes! Despite the sacrifice, they were at the bottom of the social hierarchy, with the husbands being treated and called king. However, in today's day and age, this way of thinking has petered out, and now the number of Haenyeo is dwindling.

Overall, this busy day in Jeju had to be one of my favorites in Korea. Not only did I learn more about Korean culture, specifically in Jeju. I also participated in many once-in-a-lifetime experiences!