

BaeNaChi 2026 Korea Trip

Jeju and Sunchang (October 4-19)

Introduction

Since its start in 2023 as a 501c3 nonprofit, BaeNaChi has organized several introductory and exploratory trips to South Korea for the past few years, a preparation work to search for our home base in Korea and to establish strong foundation and connections to begin our “Earth Village School” program. EVS is a unique form of global volunteer exchange program, with a strong focus on nature and agriculture related topics as well as music and arts. Rural communities and the socially disadvantaged are the priority groups we want to work with.

We are excited to offer our EVS pilot program this year in both Jeju Island and Sunchang County, two of the BaeNaChi home bases in South Korea. We have visited many cities and towns in Korea for the past few years and made the best human connections with a small rural village in Sunchang. Through the help of our Sunchang village friends, we have recently connected with a Sunchang County Government official who wishes to collaborate with our program. We also wanted Jeju to be our home base in Korea simply because it is the most unique and beautiful place in Korea! Through numerous trips to Jeju, we were able to make many valuable connections with the local community to start our program there.

Our program this year is a specially curated trip with the US Extension professionals and volunteers, both active and retired, in mind. We would like to invite Extension to be one of the key US partners for our global volunteer exchange program in South Korea. This trip will be an opportunity to explore such possibilities. The BaeNaChi founder Ann’s extensive international work with South Korea began in 2011 when she facilitated an MOU and multiple exchange visits between University of Kentucky Extension Services and South Korea for the Master Gardener Program, which culminated in the Korea International MG Conference in 2014.

With BaeNaChi, Ann hopes to start a new chapter of sustainable global connections between South Korea and US Extension, inviting diverse Extension programs (4-H, Master Naturalist, Master Food Volunteer, etc.) to join us on our exciting journey. Individuals outside Extension programs with similar backgrounds and interests are also welcome to participate in this trip. Also, farmers and food producers, especially those interested in fermented food production, are strongly encouraged to participate in our Sunchang program.

Venues

Jeju Island (Province): South Korea's largest island. UNESCO World Heritage site. Known for its distinct cultures, including the Haenyeo (female divers). Popular tourist destination with beautiful beaches, waterfalls, Hallasan (the highest mountain in South Korea), and unique local cuisine. Specialized cultivation of tangerines, green tea, and root vegetables due to subtropical climate and volcanic soil. Also, a mecca of the Korean horse industry.

Sunchang County: A rural town in North Jeolla Province in South Korea. Known for its high-quality Gochujang (Korean red pepper paste) due to a favorable climate for growing chili peppers and fermenting soybeans. Home to the Sunchang Gochujang Village featuring many highly skilled Gochujang masters. Located next to the Gochujang Village, the Sunchang Microbial Institute for Fermented Industry is a renowned research facility providing science-based knowledge to the fermented food businesses in Sunchang and other parts of South Korea.



Key events & Program focus

- **Jeju:** Jeju Barrier-free/Accessible Tourism Forum. Innovative cross-cultural healing program development for physical, mental, psychological, and social disabilities. Our team will introduce the potential of US Extension programs (Master Naturalist, 4-H, etc.) in connection with accessible tourism, utilizing nature, agriculture, and other community resources as tools for connection, growth, and healing. Creative music and arts program ideas will also be shared. BaeNaChi is partnering with local human rights/disability rights activists and support groups on their efforts to make Jeju accessible and enjoyable to all. Global volunteer exchange to benefit youth and vulnerable groups.
- **Sunchang:** The 26th Sunchang “Jangryu” (traditional Korean fermented sauces) Festival. 4-day event with a variety of food and cultural programs as well as opportunities to interact with local farmers and fermented food producers. Relationship building with the Sunchang County government and the local community including schools for sustainable and meaningful cultural/educational exchange programs based on agriculture and food related topics. Global volunteer exchange to support rural community development and positive youth development.

Tentative itinerary

Jeju

10/3 Sat: Departure from Kentucky or Tennessee

10/4 Sun: Arrival in Seoul/Incheon

10/5 Mon: Arrival in Jeju

10/6 Tue: Equine day (Jeju Mounted Police visit/Jeju Equine Hospital visit/ Halla University equine school visit)

10/7 Wed: Meetup with a disability arts group (possible music or art class demo)/Jeju traditional outdoor market tour & shopping

10/8 Thurs: Accessible Tourism Forum (Innovative cross-cultural healing program development). Presentations and networking opportunities with local organizations

10/9 Fri: Youth mental health program demo (workshop)/ Forest walk & meditation with the workshop participants

10/10 Sat: Bird watching with Pyosun middle school/Ocean activities with Pyosun High school

10/11: Departure from Jeju. Arrival in Sunchang

Sunchang

Those who participate in the Sunchang program only will arrive in Korea on 10/10.

10/9 Fri: Departure from the US

10/10 Sat: Arrival in Seoul (Incheon). Spend a night at a hotel near Incheon Airport.

10/11 Sun: Leaving Incheon and Arriving in Sunchang (3-hour bus ride)

10/12 Mon: Sunchang Microbial Institute for Fermentation Industry visit/Sunchang tour

10/13 Tue: Sunchang High school visit/Fermentation Theme Park visit/Sunchang tour

10/14 Wed: Jeokseong Elementary School visit/Sunchang tour

10/15 Thurs: Sunchang Jangryu Festival

10/16 Fri: Sunchang Jangryu Festival

10/17 Sat: Sunchang Jangryu Festival

10/18 Sun: Sunchang Jangryu Festival

10/19 Mon: Departure from Sunchang. Departure from Incheon. Arrival in the US

The itinerary is subject to change. For a more detailed itinerary in Sunchang, we will collaborate with our main partners in Sunchang once we identify our participants and learn about their specific interests and needs.

The Sunchang fermented sauce festival info (2-page flyer) has been prepared by the Sunchang County Government and is attached to this document for your reference. Please make sure to check out the second page of the PDF file for the description of main events during the festival. We are invited as special guests to the festival and welcome to attend all the events offered. There will also be music concerts and other fun cultural activities our participants can join in to show their special talents. In addition, the festival committee will provide our team with a tent (10x10 and/or 16x16) at the festival, giving us an opportunity to promote the extension programs represented by our participants as well as KY & TN agriculture.

Special offer

BaeNaChi offers **\$1000 program fee waiver to a small number of qualified students (ages 12-15) for their participation in our 2026 Sunchang program.** The youth must be a child/grandchild/relative of an adult participant of the Sunchang program. Our youth team will actively participate in the exciting cultural exchange program with local youth in Sunchang. The youth participation this year is a part of our pilot for a future cross-cultural youth development program & family camp in Sunchang, with a special

focus on the Korean “Jang” (fermented sauces) culture and tradition. Interested participants are encouraged to contact Ann at BaeNaChi (anjeonghyun@gmail.com) with their youth companion information ASAP to secure a spot. Limited availability.