

---

## **Main palace: center of power, politics, economy, and culture**

Gyeongbokgung (Palace Greatly Blessed by Heaven) was built in 1395, three years after the Joseon Dynasty was founded, and it served as the main palace for more than five hundred years. With Mount Bugaksan to its rear and the Street of Six Ministries (today's Sejongno) outside Gwanghwamun Gate, the main entrance to the palace, Gyeongbokgung stood in the heart of the capital city. It was steadily expanded over nearly three hundred years before being reduced to ashes during the Japanese invasion of 1592. For the next 276 years the palace grounds were left derelict until finally being rebuilt in 1867 under the leadership of Prince Regent Heungseon Daewongun. The restoration was completed on a grand scale, with 500 buildings crowded together in a labyrinthine arrangement. Within the palace walls were the Outer Court (ojeon), offices for the king and state officials, and the Inner Court (naejeon), which included living quarters for the royal family as well as gardens for leisure and play. On its extensive premises were other palaces, large and small, including Queen's residence (Junggung) and the Crown prince's residence (Donggung).

As Gyeongbokgung was the symbol of national sovereignty, it was demolished during the Japanese occupation. In 1911, ownership of land at the palace was transferred to the Japanese Government-General. In 1915, on the pretext of holding an exhibition, more than 90 percent of the palace buildings were torn down. Following the exhibition the Japanese leveled whatever still remained. The Japanese also built their colonial headquarters, the Government-General building, directly in front of Gyeongbokgung. Restoration of Gyeongbokgung to its former glory has been ongoing since 1990. The colonial Government-General building was removed, and Heungnyemun Gate was restored to its original state. The inner Court and Crown prince's residence were completed.

---

**Naming of Gyeongbokgung** Gyeongbokgung was completed just three years after the founding of the Joseon Dynasty. A few days after its completion, Jeong Do-jeon, one of the Dynastic Foundation Merit Subjects, assigned names to important buildings including Gangnyeongjeon, Sajeongjeon, and Geunjeongjeon. Most important of all, he gave the palace its name: Gyeongbok means that 'The new dynasty will be greatly blessed and prosperous,' and 'gung' means 'palace.'

**Japanese invasion and fire in Gyeongbokgung** An article dated April 30, 1592, from the Annals of the Joseon Dynasty states that the 'capital was set afire' by the enraged populace when the king, his family, and entourage fled the capital. However, an article dated May 3, 1592, describes movements of Japanese troops and added, 'The palace was burned down at this time.' In a May 3 article from the journal Expedition of Joseon, Ozeki, a Japanese commander, wrote '... as I entered, the palace was all empty and four gates were wide open... Its beauty was truly overwhelming, a strong resemblance to the Imperial Palace of China....' This article proves that the palace was unharmed before Japanese forces entered the capital. Drawing on all available evidence, the only logical conclusion is that the Japanese had set fire to Gyeongbokgung and not the Korean populace.

---

# 1 Gwanghwamun Gate and the Palace Wall

光化門

---

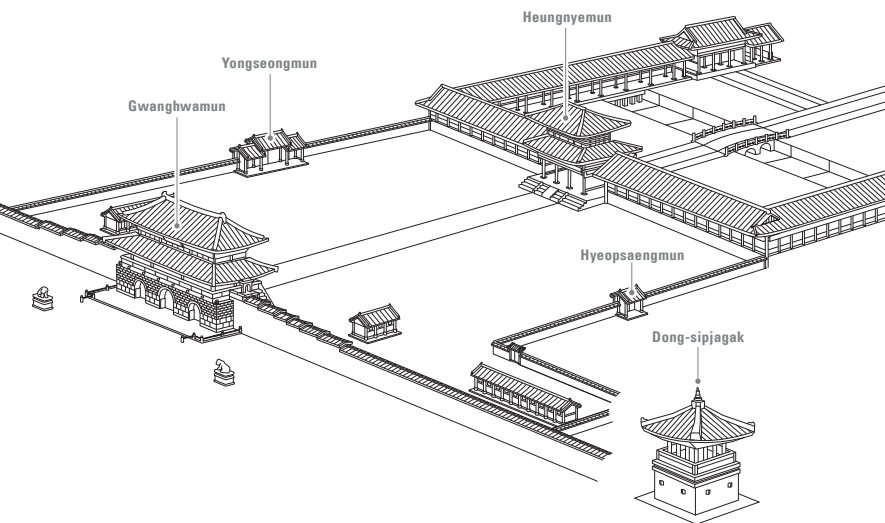
## Four gates tell of the dynasty's glory

Gyeongbokgung Palace is surrounded by five-meter-high walls that extend over 2,404 meters. The walls are pierced by four large gates: Geonchunmun to the east, Gwanghwamun to the south, Yeongchumun to the west, and Sinmumun to the north. The names, in that order, symbolize spring and wood, summer and fire, autumn and metal, and winter and water, and originate from the yin and yang concept and the theory of the five elements. Gwanghwamun, the main gate, has three entrances and a broad, two-story pavilion. Watchtowers once stood at the southeast and southwest corners of the palace wall. The southwest tower was demolished during the Japanese occupation, while the southeast tower, Dong-sipjagak, eventually has become isolated in the middle of a busy street intersection, where it remains today.





**The restoration of Gwanghwamun** After completing their Government-General building, the Japanese intended to remove Gwanghwamun because it was a potent symbol of Gyeongbokgung. In the face of fierce public opposition, however, they instead reluctantly moved Gwanghwamun to the north of the east gate, Geonchunmun. Later on, during the Korean War, Gwanghwamun was leveled except for the masonry. It was rebuilt in 1968 in a different location as a concrete structure quite different from the original. In 2006, Gwanghwamun was removed again and restoration to its original state and location began. Restoration was completed in 2010.



**Haetae statues on Street of Six Ministries** Today a Haetae, the legendary creature that resembles a lion, is seated on both sides of Gwanghwamun Gate. During the Joseon period, these Haetaes were located some 80 meters away, on the Street of Six Ministries. A photo taken in the 1890s shows an 'L-shaped' stone in front of one Haetae. This stone was a marker telling all citizens below the king to dismount from their carriage or horse there and walk to Gwanghwamun.

---

# 2 Geunjeongjeon and Vicinity

勤政殿

Geunjeongjeon : Treasure No. 223

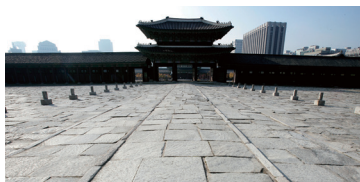
Geunjeongmun gate and the corridors : Treasure No. 812

---

## Core area of the palace restored to its original magnificence

Geunjeongjeon is the main throne hall of Gyeongbokgung. The name means that ‘all affairs will be properly managed if Your Majesty demonstrate diligence.’ The king’s affairs of state, including meetings, receptions with foreign envoys, and most importantly, the coronation ceremony, were all conducted here. From the outside the hall appears to have two floors, but inside a lofty ceiling reveals a magnificent one story chamber. In front of the hall extends a great courtyard covered with hewn granite stones and enclosed by colonnade which forms a wall. Outside the entrance, a colonnaded outer wall forms another courtyard. To the south of here stands Heungnyemun, the second gate. This outer area of Geunjeongjeon was destroyed during the Japanese occupation, when the Japanese Government-General building was built. In 2001 Heungnyemun, the outer wall, and Yeongjegyo Bridge were restored to their original state.



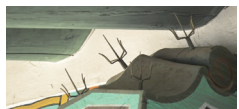
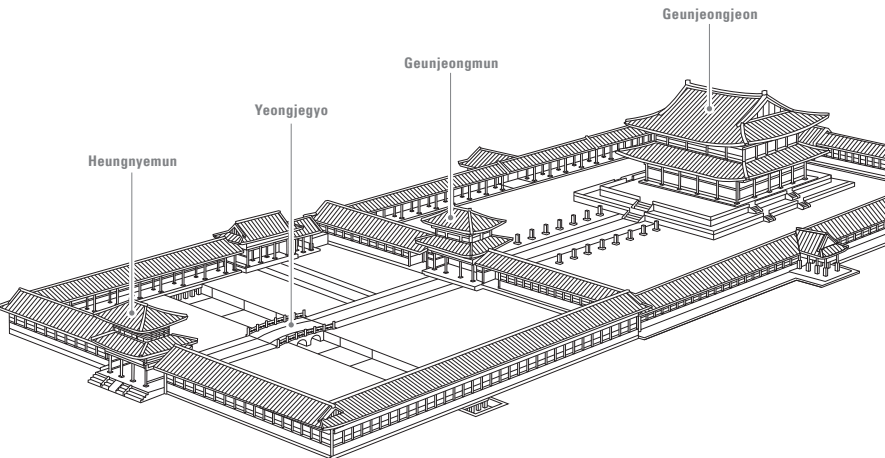


**Courtyard and stone markers** The granite stones in the courtyard were intentionally roughly hewn to reduce glare. Three footpaths run along the central axis of the courtyard, flanked by stone markers bearing the ranks of court officials. The center footpath was reserved for the king. An iron ring on the courtyard was used to pitch a tent to protect the king and his entourage from the sun or rain.

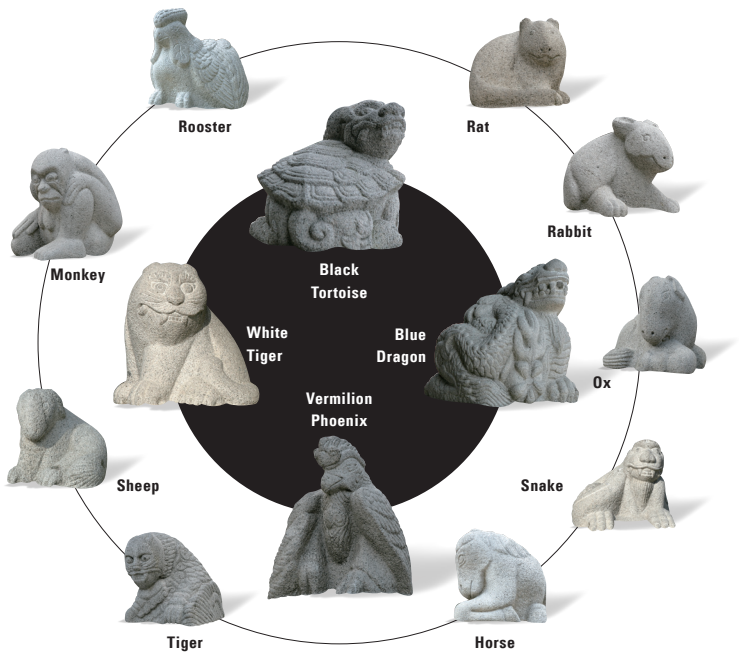
**Court meeting at Geunjeongjeon** The king hosted an audience at Geunjeongjeon for all civil and military officials in the capital four times a month. Even the lowest-ranking officials attended these meetings, dressed in full uniform. Officials lined up by rank along the stone markers and sat on cushions, which were made of skins of different animals – leopard, tiger, sheep, or dog – depending on the individual's rank.



**Seosu, an imaginary animal, on Yeongjegyo Bridge**



**Keeping birds away** Under the eaves outside, visitors will notice a net. A net has been used here for hundreds of years to keep away birds. Bird droppings are harmful to wooden structures, not to mention unsightly. In places where it was difficult to install nets, five-pronged devices were installed to prevent birds from perching.



Deumeu



Incense burner

**Structure of Woldae** The two-tiered stone terrace (Woldae) is surrounded by stone railing carved with figures of the four guardians - Black Tortoise (Guardian of the north), White Tiger (Guardian of the west), Blue Dragon (Guardian of the east) and Red Peacock (Guardian of the south) - and twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac. These endearing animal deities are responsible for guarding Geunjeongjeon and the royal family against evil. On both ends of the building foundation stands a three-legged bronze incense burner. Near every major palace building is a jar called deumeu that was believed to ward away any evil fire-causing spirits.

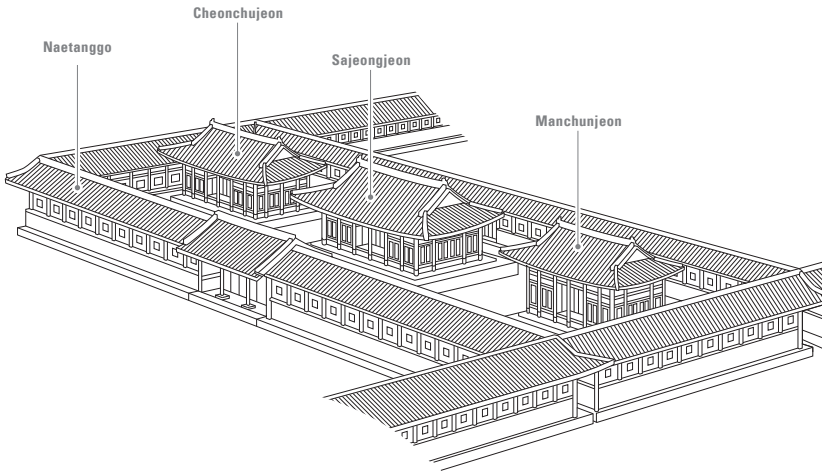
# 3 Sajeongjeon and Vicinity

思政殿

Sajeongjeon : Treasure No. 1759

## Where the king managed routine state affairs

Sajeongjeon means ‘hall where the king should think deeply before deciding what is right or wrong.’ Here the king held daily morning meetings with his officials, and presided over seminars on state affairs. To the east and west are Manchunjeon and Cheonchujeon, two auxiliary buildings with heated floors for the king’s comfort during the cold seasons. These two buildings were originally connected to Sajeongjeon by long corridors, but the corridors were dismantled during the Japanese occupation and have not been rebuilt, making these halls look like separate buildings. Manchunjeon was burned down during the Korean War and restored in 1988. The series of small rooms in front of Sajeongjeon, called Naetanggo, were used to store private property of the royal household.



**King Sejong never missed an early-morning meeting** The king held a meeting every day at Sajeongjeon from 3 a.m. to 5 a.m. Despite the burdensome schedule, King Sejong is said to have never missed a meeting. One day a minister told the king, “Your Majesty must be tired of attending a meeting every day. How about attending the meeting every other day?” The king rebuked him, saying, “If you come here to say such a thing, you need not come.”

---

# 4 Gangnyeongjeon and Gyotaejeon

康寧殿·交泰殿

---

## A glimpse into everyday life in the royal household

Gangnyeongjeon was named after the third of the Five Blessings (longevity, wealth, health, love of virtue, peaceful death) and served as the king's living quarters. Here the king read, rested, and attended to state affairs privately with his entourage. Each room at both sides of Gangnyeongjeon is divided into nine sections and arranged in a “井” layout. Court ladies stayed at night in the rooms surrounding the center room, which was used exclusively by the king. Gyotaejeon is presumed to have been built in 1440. Gyotaejeon was the queen's main residence, where she oversaw the efficient operation of the palatial household.



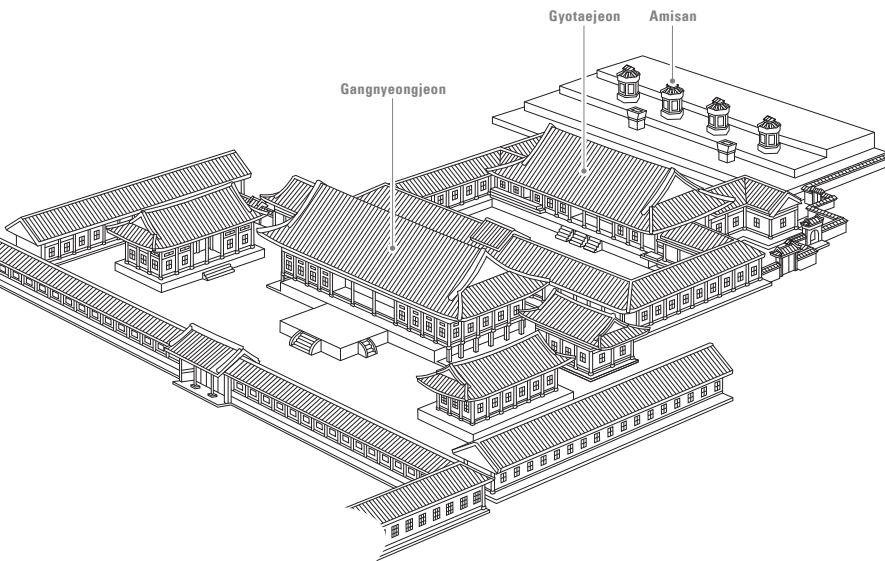




To the rear is a beautiful terraced garden called Amisan featuring handsome chimneys (Treasure No. 811).

When the residential quarters at Changdeokgung were burned down in 1917, the Japanese took apart Gyotaejeon and Gangnyeongjeon on the pretext that their timber was needed to rebuild the living quarters of Changdeokgung.

Gangnyeongjeon and Gyotaejeon as we see them today were restored in 1995.



**Why does Yanguimun Gate have six flaps?** The gate to Gyotaejeon is named Yanguimun. 'Yang-ui' literally means yin and yang, and it is an expression of the wish for a happy marriage between the king and the queen and the birth of many children in Gyotaejeon. It is noteworthy that Yanguimun has six light flaps whereas Hyangomun, the gate to the king's living quarters has two heavy flaps. Yanguimun was made easy to open because it was the women's living quarters.

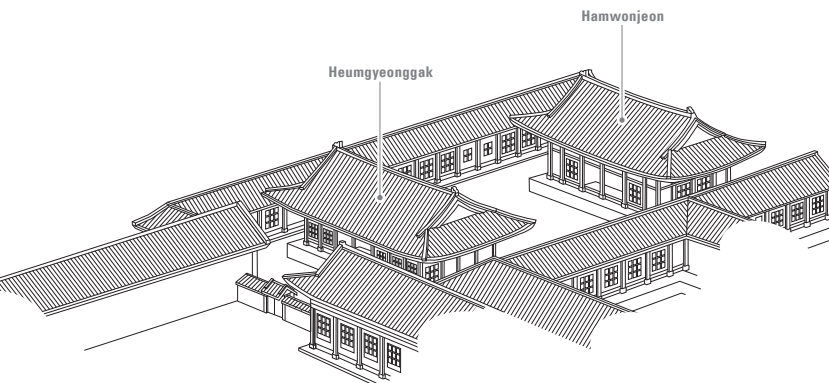
**Addressing the king and the queen** In Korean, the king and the queen are addressed as Jeonha and Jungjeon, respectively. Jeonha means 'to lay prostrate under a royal palace and look up to the king,' while Jungjeon means 'a royal palace in the middle.' As the queen's living quarters were situated in the center of the palace grounds and also were the center of the palace household, the queen was addressed as 'Jungjeon-mama' (Her Majesty Jungjeon).

# 5 Heumgyeonggak and Hamwonjeon

欽敬閣·含元殿

## Buildings near the Inner Court served the needs of the royal household

Heumgyeonggak lets us glimpse how the king of an agrarian society strived to understand the movements of celestial bodies and to accurately measure time for the benefit of his people. In 1438, King Sejong ordered the construction of Heumgyeonggak, where many of his scientific inventions, including the rain gauge, sundial and water clock, as well as instruments for astronomical observation, were installed. Hamwonjeon, a building used for Buddhist events, is also believed to have been built during King Sejong's reign. After their destruction by fire several times, these buildings were last rebuilt in 1888, only to be dismantled in 1917, ostensibly to provide building material for Changdeokgung Palace, which had been destroyed by fire that year.



**Sundial and water clock invented under King Sejong** Jang Yeong-sil, the inventor of the sundial in 1434, was a scientific genius. His sundial not only tells the time of day, it also indicates the 24 subdivisions of the season. The fact that this sundial was built in the shape of a hemisphere shows that Joseon scientists at the time could accurately read the sun's movement and knew that the Earth is round. Jang and his assistants also developed clepsydras (water clocks), in which figurines propelled by water automatically strike a wooden gong, a copper gong, a bell, and a drum to tell the time.

---

# 6 Jagyeongjeon and Vicinity

慈慶殿

Treasure No. 809

---

## Queen dowager's residence

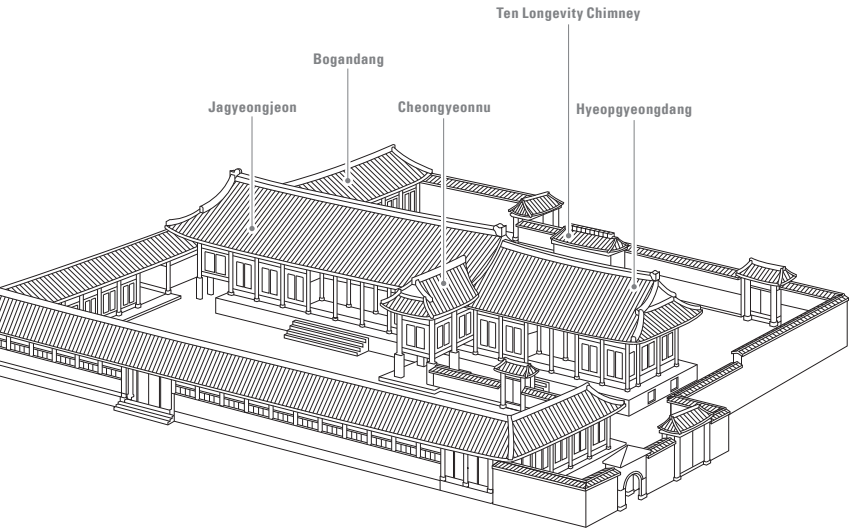
Jagyeongjeon was the residence of Queen Dowager Jo, the mother of King Heon-jong, the 24th monarch of the Joseon Dynasty. Queen Dowager Jo played a critical role in bringing King Gojong to the throne. In return, Gojong's father, Regent Heungseon Daewongun, rebuilt the queen dowager's residence as the most elegant living quarters on the palace grounds. 'Jagyeong' means 'wish for much happiness for senior royal ladies' – the king's mother and grandmother. The original structure was destroyed twice by fires, and the existing complex was built in 1888. Of all the living quarters in Gyeongbokgung, this is the only structure dating to the Joseon period.



A number of buildings are clustered in the Jagyeongjeon compound. To the north is Bogandang, the bed chamber with a heated Ondol, a traditional Korean floor heating system. To the east are Cheongyeonnu and Hyeopgyeongdang, which served as living rooms in the summer. The west wall is decorated with engraved designs symbolizing longevity and various flowering trees, making it perhaps the most beautiful wall in the palace. On the wall surrounding the rear garden is Ten Longevity Chimney.



**Ten Longevity Chimney (Treasure No. 810)** Ten smoke vents connected to each room with an Ondol (Korean system of under-floor heating using flues) stand together as one large chimney. The front center of the chimney wall is adorned with ten longevity symbols wishing for the health and happiness of the queen dowager. For its beauty and outstanding function, it is recognized as the finest of all chimneys built during the Joseon period.



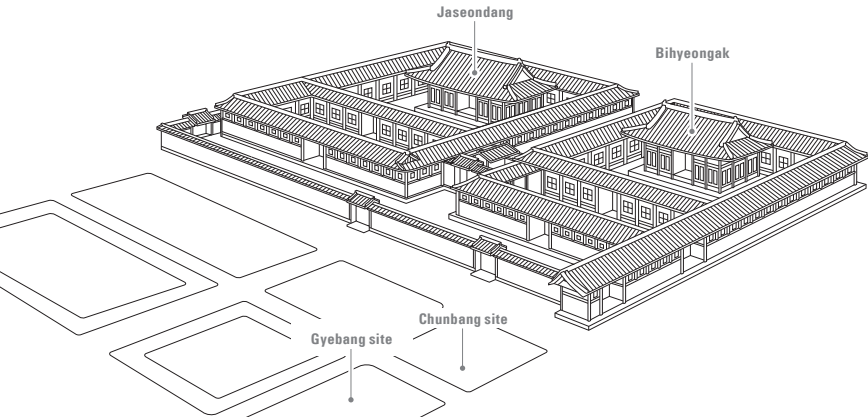
**Influence of Queen Dowager Jo** Queen Dowager Jo was the mother of King Heonjong, who became king in 1834 at age eight. She came from a formidable in-law lineage, the Pungyang Jo clan, which held sway during much of Heonjong's reign. King Heonjong died in 1849 without any son, and so power reverted to the Andong Kim clan after the accession of King Cheoljong to the throne because his queen belonged to that clan. Cheoljong died at age 33, also without a son, and so Queen Dowager Jo exercised her power to name the second son of Prince Heungseon as King Gojong. The new king was only 12 years old, and for the next ten years, it was Queen Dowager Jo who controlled state affairs behind the scenes.

# 7 Donggung and Vicinity

東宮

## Residence of the crown prince

Donggung was the residence for the Crown prince and the Crown princess. The crown prince was regarded as a rising sun, which is why his living quarters were built to the east of the king's palace. Jaseondang in the west served as the royal couple's residence; Bihyeongak in the east was where the crown prince studied and took care of state affairs. On the site of Chunbang and Gyeongbang in the south there used to be government offices for education, protocol, and guards for the crown prince. Donggung was situated outside the royal palace until 1427, when Jaseondang was built under King Sejong. After being burned down during the Japanese invasion of 1592, the East Palace was rebuilt in 1867. Then, in 1914, the Japanese colonial government removed all structures from the area under the pretext of holding an exposition. The buildings we see today were restored in 1999.



**Humiliation of Jaseondang** In 1914, the Japanese dismantled Jaseondang and many other buildings in Gyeongbokgung Palace and sold them off to their own citizens. Okura, a Japanese businessman who played a leading role in this looting, relocated Jaseondang in the garden of his house as a private museum. The Jaseondang-turned-museum was destroyed by fire during the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, leaving only the foundation stones. They were found in 1993 on the site of the new Okura Hotel and returned to Gyeongbokgung. Having been severely damaged by fire in Japan, and being unable to be used for the restoration, these stones are displayed in the corner of Noksan hill to the east of Geoncheonggung.

---

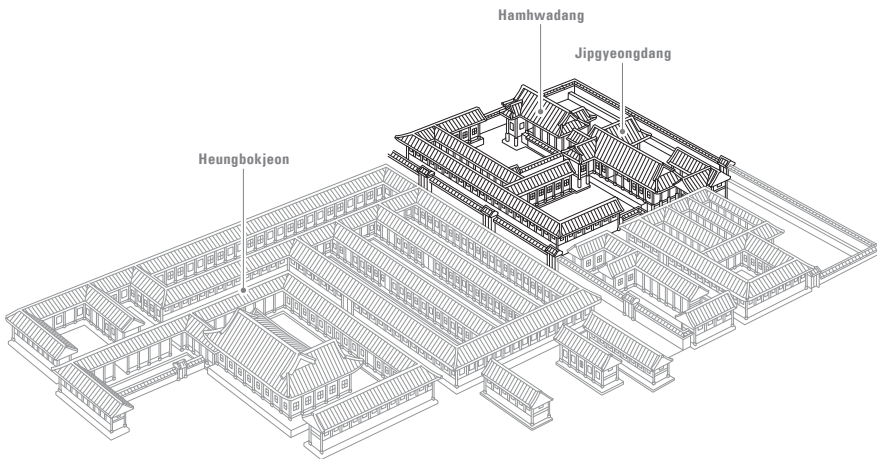
# 8 Hamhwadang and Jipgyeongdang

咸和堂·緝敬堂

---

## Residence for concubines and court ladies

To the north of Gyotaejeon, the queen's living quarters, were residence known as Heungbokjeon and facilities for concubines and court ladies. Over the years, numerous buildings and the servants' quarters surrounding them were destroyed. Of all the original buildings in this area, only Hamhwadang and Jipgyeongdang remain; they were needed by the Japanese to operate a museum. Heungbokjeon was similar in construction to Gyotaejeon, though one level below in status. Ham-hwadang and Jipgyeongdang are connected by a corridor. One record states that King Gojong received foreign envoys here when he resided in Geoncheonggung.



---

**Court ladies' wishes at Sudamun Gate** The gate to the servants' quarters to the west of Heungbokjeon was called Sudamun, which means 'gate of receiving plenty.' A court lady selected to spend a night with the king was given special treatment. One night with the king, however, did not immediately lead to a promotion to concubine, and even if a court lady succeeded in raising her status to concubine, she then had to wait for the king night after night. Thus, the 'gate of receiving plenty' must have had special meaning to the court ladies.

---

# 9 Hyangwonjeong and Geoncheonggung

香遠亭·乾清宮

Hyangwonjeong : Treasure No. 1761

---

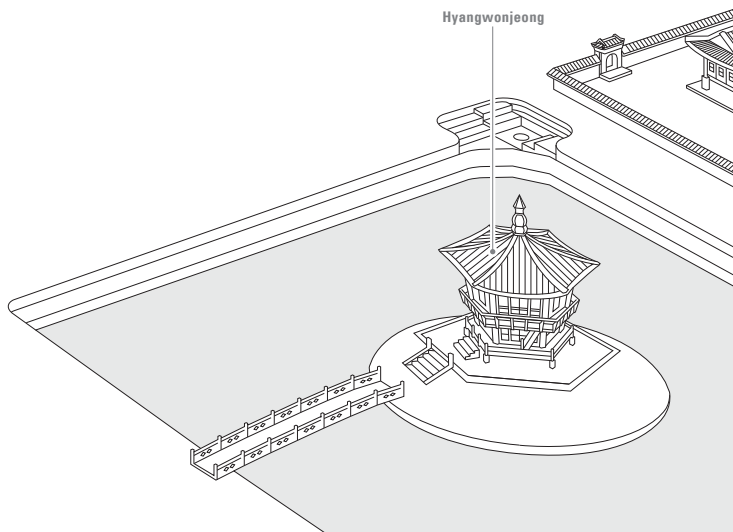
## King Gojong's palace within a palace

In the rear garden of the concubines' quarters is a square pond named Hyangwonji, in the center of which lies an islet. A pavilion named Hyangwonjeong stands on this islet. While Gyeonghoeru feels magnificent and masculine, Hyangwonjeong appears intimate and feminine. A bridge once led north to Geoncheonggung, but it was destroyed during the Korean War and a new bridge was built to the south. Hyangwonjeong was created when King Gojong built Geoncheonggung in 1873 to forge political independence from his father. Geoncheonggung included separate living quarters for the king and the queen, as well as a study. It was here that the tragedy struck in 1895, when Queen Myeongseong was assassinated by the Japanese. Geoncheonggung was dismantled in 1909, and in 1939 an art museum opened in its place. After Korea's liberation from Japan, the art museum was operated as a folk museum until it was removed. In 2007, all buildings but Gwanmungak were restored.





**Assassination of Queen Myeongseong** Following its victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95), Japan intervened more aggressively in Joseon's domestic affairs. In a bid to free the country from Japanese domination, Queen Myeongseong turned to Russia for support. On October 8, 1895, Japanese assassins broke into Geoncheonggung and stabbed the Queen to death. They burned her body on the hillside called Noksan to the east.



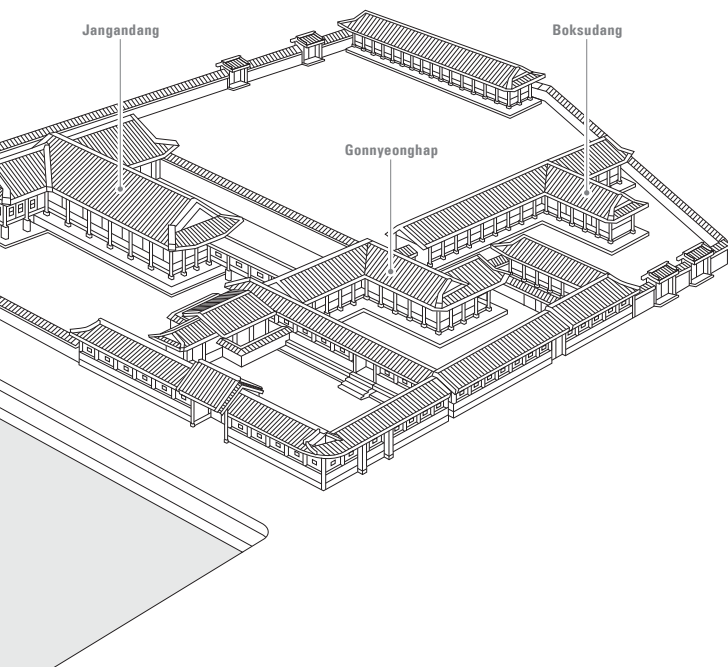
**Site of Gwanmungak and Joseon's first power station** King Gojong was very interested in modernizing the country. During his reign, Korea built its first power station to the north of Hyangwonji Pond, which lit up Geoncheonggung at night. Its generators were powered, and cooled by the pond's water, and hence the electricity was known as 'water light.' Korea also became the first East Asian country to use electricity, when U.S.-based Edison General Electric Co. began producing power. Gwanmungak was originally built as a traditional wooden structure. It was rebuilt in 1891 as a three-story western style building designed by the Russian architect, A. I. Sabatin.





Yeolsangjinwon well

**King Gojong's last night at Geoncheonggung** Geoncheonggung is the only building in Gyeongbokgung to be named 'gung,' meaning palace. Thus, Geoncheonggung was a palace within a palace, built entirely for King Gojong. But King Gojong only lived there for ten years. Anxious to escape Japanese intimidation following the assassination of Queen Myeongseong, King Gojong allowed himself to be smuggled out of the palace to the Russian legation at dawn on February 11, 1896. He was the last Joseon king to stay in Gyeongbokgung.



**Rear garden of Gyeongbokgung becomes President's residence** In the rear garden of Gyeongbokgung were many buildings serving a variety of purposes. During the Japanese occupation, these buildings were demolished to make way for the Japanese Governor-General's residence. After liberation, the Governor-General's building became a residence for the U.S. military-led government, and then the residence of the Korean President. The Presidential residence was named Cheongwadae in 1960.

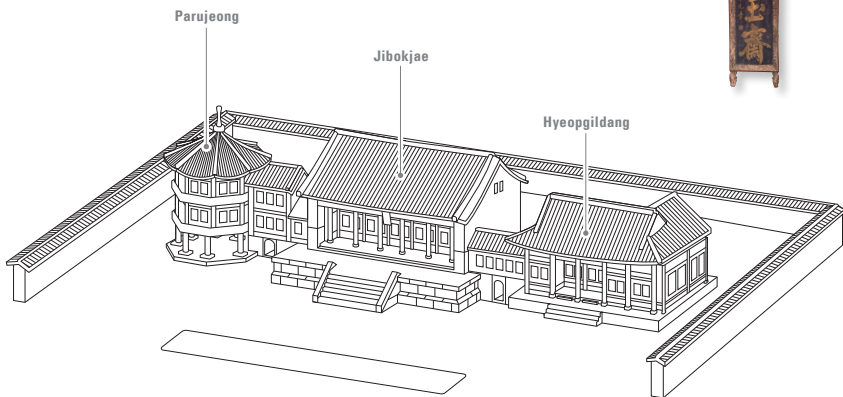
# 10 Jibokjae and Vicinity

集玉齋

## Harmony of Qing Chinese and traditional Korean styles

Because Gyeongbokgung suffered heavy fire damage in 1876, King Gojong moved temporarily to Changdeokgung. He returned in 1885. At that time, Jibokjae and Hyeopgildang Pavilion were moved from Changdeokgung to an area west of Geoncheonggung, King Gojong's residence, and were used as a library and a reception hall for foreign envoys. Jibokjae's side walls were made of brick in the Qing Chinese style. From the outside, Jibokjae looks like a one-story building, but inside it has two stories. Parujeong is an octagonal, two-story pavilion with columns decorated in the Qing Chinese style. Hyeopgildang is a traditional Korean house with a heated Ondol floor. The three buildings are connected by interior corridors.

Jibokjae Tablet



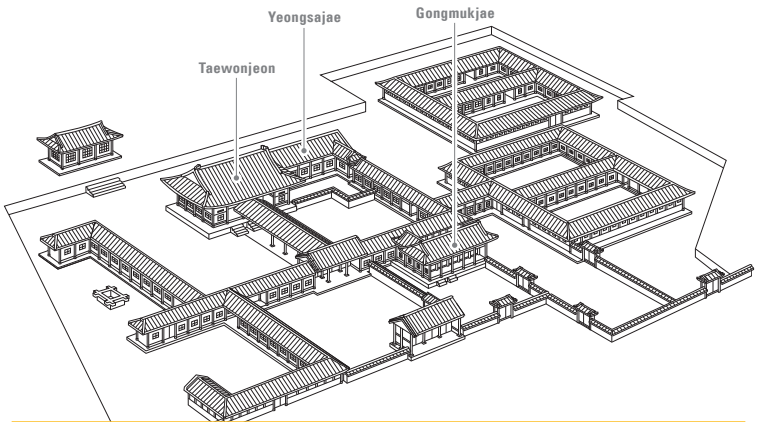
**Qing Chinese style** It is not a stretch to say that Qing China was the only state through which Western culture and ideas were introduced to Korea. This explains why some structures at Gyeongbokgung were built in the Qing Chinese style. Luxurious interior decoration, and new construction materials like bricks were all attractive elements of Qing architecture.

# 11 Taewonjeon and Vicinity

泰元殿

## King Gojong strives to secure legitimacy for his rule

King Gojong was not born a prince to the preceding king. For this reason he and his father, Price Regent Heungseon Daewongun, constantly had to wrangle with questions over the legitimacy of King Gojong's accession to the throne. As part of King Gojong's efforts to secure the legitimacy of his reign, he built Taewon-jeon Shrine to house the portraits of preceding kings. Taewonjeon is presumed to have been built in 1868 to house the portrait of King Taejo, founder of the Joseon Dynasty. Later it was used as a royal coffin hall for deceased queens. Mungyeongjeon was built to house the spirit tablets of the deceased. All of these facilities were removed during the Japanese occupation. After the military coup of May 16, 1961, the Presidential Guard Unit of Cheongwadae was stationed here. This area was restored to its present aspect in 2006.



**Funeral for the king** After the death of a king, the crown prince waited five days before assuming the throne to allow the king's spirit to return to his body. The body of the deceased king was kept in the Royal Coffin Hall. After a five-month mourning period, the coffin was moved to a royal tomb, and the king's ancestral tablet was enshrined in the Spirit Hall, to be mourned over for the next three years.

---

# 12 Gyeonghoeru Pavilion

慶會樓

National Treasure No. 224

---

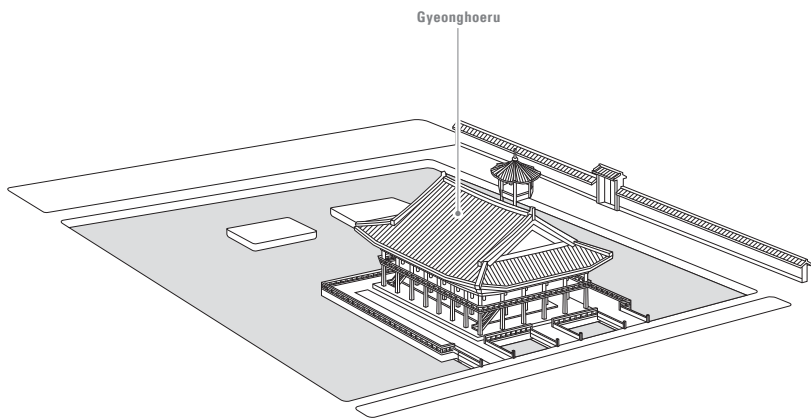
## The apex of architectural beauty

Gyeonghoeru was where the king threw formal banquets for foreign envoys. The king and his party went up to Gyeonghoeru to enjoy a sweeping view of the palace and Mount Inwangsan. Originally a small pavilion, Gyeonghoeru was greatly expanded in 1412 under King Taejong. The pavilion was burned down during the Japanese invasion of 1592, but rebuilt in 1867 as a wooden, two-story structure with a floor area of 931 square meters. The first level has no walls but 48 stone columns. The second floor has different levels: the three seating bays at the center are highest, the next twelve bays are a few centimeters lower, and the outermost twenty bays are the lowest. The higher his rank, the closer an official was seated to the center. Gyeonghoeru is said to have been built according to the principles of I Ching (Book of Changes).





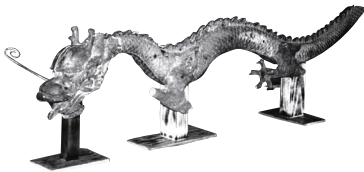
The three bays at the center of the raised floor symbolize heaven, earth, and man, and the 12 bays around them symbolize the 12 months of the year. The outermost 24 columns symbolize the 24 seasonal subdivisions. On the ridges of the roof are 11 figurines of mythical creatures, the largest number on a roof of any traditional building in Korea. When Gyeonghoeru was rebuilt in 1867, a pair of bronze dragons was placed in the pond to protect the building from fire or water damage. One of them was excavated during dredging work in 1997 and is now displayed at the National Palace Museum of Korea.



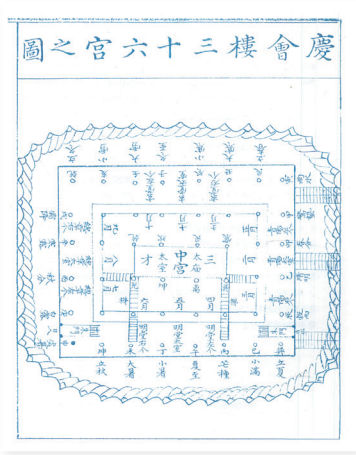
**Gyeonghoeru closed off by a fence** A fence once ran around Gyeonghoeru pond, interrupted only by three gates on the east, west, and south sides. No one was permitted to enter this area at will. During King Sejong's reign, one of the officials named Gu Jong-jik sneaked into Gyeonghoeru and suddenly encountered the king. The man confessed to the king that he was an official of the lowest rank (class 9) and that he had committed the crime of entering Gyeonghoeru only to see its beauty. Believing that the official was a man of refined tastes, the king ordered him to recite a poem: *Spring and Autumn Annals*, a Chinese classic. The next day, the king promoted the man to the rank of 5.

**Gyeonghoeru and the legend of Chima-bawi (skirt rock)** The second story of Gyeonghoeru affords a sweeping view of mountains in three directions. King Jungjong, who assumed the throne by ousting his half-brother King Yeonsangun, had to divorce his wife because her family was related to the dethroned ruler. The king would go to Gyeonghoeru to look out on his ex-wife's house, which sat at the foot of Inwangsan mountain. Having heard that the king still missed her, she placed the pink skirt she had worn in the palace on a rock on Inwangsan to catch the king's attention. The sight of the skirt spread out on the rock comforted Jungjong's broken heart.

**Danjong, the doomed king, and Gyeonghoeru** In 1455, King Sejo deposed his nephew, Danjong (and subsequently had him put to death) and took over the throne. It was at Gyeonghoeru where Danjong handed the Royal Seal over to his uncle. Ministers Bak Paeng-nyeon, Seong Sam-mun, and other Danjong supporters plotted his return, but ultimately failed. Sejo then perpetrated a sweeping bloodbath in which Bak, Seong, and four other ministers, who later came to be known as the "six martyred ministers," met their deaths.



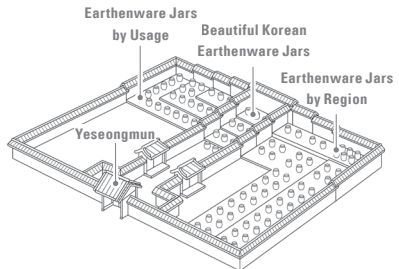
**Bronze dragon excavated from the pond**



**Blueprint of Gyeonghoeru Pavilion.**

**This illustrates the layout of the pavilion according to the 36th hexagram in the Book of Changes**

**Soy sauce terrace** Between Taewonjeon and Gyeonghoeru lies a huge terrace where soy sauce jars are stored. It is one of two such terraces at the palace; the second one west of Hamhwadang was restored in 2005. On the nearby slope, a terraced stand was created to arrange jars by their contents: the biggest jars for soy sauce, the next biggest for salted fish, and the smallest ones for soybean paste.



# 13 Sujeongjeon and Gwolnaegaksa

修政殿·闕內各司

Sujeongjeon : Treasure No. 1760

## Government offices inside the palace

Government offices on the Street of Six Ministries (today's Sejongno) outside the palace were collectively called Gwoloegaksa, and those inside the palace were called Gwolnaegaksa. Gwolnaegaksa was west of the palace's throne hall, and consisted of many small buildings classified into one of four categories: administrative offices including the Royal Secretariat, which assisted the king with state affairs; offices engaged in Royal family's living and activities including the Office of Eunuchs and Bureau of Ceramic Production; a unit in charge of scientific study such as celestial observation and time measurement; and a military unit responsible for guarding the palace. Of all these buildings, Jiphyeonjeon, the Hall of Worthies, is the only one remaining. It is where Hangeul, the Korean alphabet, was invented under King Sejong. Rebuilt in 1867, its name was later changed to Sujeongjeon. It served as the cabinet office during the Reform Movement of 1894. Nearly all the buildings of Gwolnaegaksa were removed in 1915 by the Japanese to make way for an expo, and the area remains almost vacant today.

