

# Chunhyang Theme Park

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## **1. Chapter of First Encounter**

### **Chunhyang and Mongnyong – Korea’s Romeo and Juliet**

Welcome to Chunhyang Theme Park.

This theme park celebrates “The Story of Chunhyang”, a Korean love story about a young couple who come together despite overwhelming adversities. Along with Gwanghalluwon Garden, it is one of the main tourist attractions in Namwon. It has recently become more popular among foreign tourists after being featured in a number of popular TV series and movies.

Chunhyang was the name of a beautiful young girl who fell in love with a young man from a family of much higher social status. Their love story resembles that of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, although the stories have a different ending. Just as Romeo and Juliet fell in love despite their family feud, Chunhyang and Mongnyong fell in love and overcame the gap in their social status. Instead of taking a tragic turn of events, they lived happily ever after.

Chunhyang Theme Park consists of five areas, each representing a chapter of the story. This is the very beginning of the story where the couple meets for the first time. The story continues on to a pledge, love and separation, trials and tribulations, dramatic reunion, then culminates in a happy ending for the two love birds. Besides the story, the park also offers many activities and shows for you to enjoy.

## **2. Chapter of Vows**

### **Where an Everlasting Love was Born**

Do you see the ring-shaped structure at the entrance? It's where the Chapter of Vows, the second chapter of Chunhyang Theme Park, begins. This area includes the Fence of Love, Fence of Vows, Altar of Vows, and a swing, each representing the couple's everlasting love.

What is the "Altar of Vows"? As its name suggests, it is a place for couples who want to pledge their undying love. The altar is surrounded by stone sculptures describing scenes from the story of Chunhyang and has a heart-shaped “vow plaque”. Couples can place their hands on this plaque to make a vow, and a tone will sound blessing their love. This is perhaps the most intriguing place for couples in love. Don't forget to leave a padlock of love at the bridge before you move on. In Ponte Vecchio, Italy, couples leave a padlock on the bridge rail to promise their devotion, a practice which has become popular around the world. So why not do something memorable here with the one you love as a celebration of your relationship?

## **3. Chapter of Love and Forced Separation**

### **Separation from the Loved One**

This is the third chapter of Chunhyang Theme Park, and the most trying part of the story. It is also where you can see a

variety of filming locations. There are traditional houses including Chunhyang's House and a village school, and Korean traditional furniture items are on display as well. In particular, Chunhyang's room, called Buyongdang, is where the couple spent their first night together.

But their happiness was short lived. After a short period of blissful rendezvous, the two were left with no choice but to part ways. His father was a local administrator and was dispatched to another province, so he had to leave town with his family. He promised her he would return a successful man and she watched him leave. She never doubted his return.

But she didn't realize that she would have to overcome more than her longing for her beloved. Let's find out what happened.

#### **4. Chapter of Trials** **Chunhyang Stays True to Her Love**

These life-size replicas show what Chunhyang had to endure in her wait for Mongnyong.

She didn't hear from him for months. She spent her days in awful longing and misfortune. The new magistrate urged beautiful Chunhyang to serve him "in private."

But she refused to meet him because she wanted to keep her promise to Mongnyong. As a result, she was sent to jail and tortured for insubordination. "The Chapter of Trials" describes what she had to go through.

Then, one day, Mongnyong returned dressed as a beggar. They met at last, but their future seemed as dark as the prison she was in.

#### **5. Chapter of Celebration** **Namwon, the City of Chunhyang**

Now to the last chapter, the Chapter of Celebration. What awaits Chunhyang and Mongnyong after their struggle to stay together?

On the magistrate's birthday, she was dragged out to the courtyard and tortured for refusing him once again. Suddenly, Mongnyong appears dressed in the robes of a high official. He had returned to his hometown disguised as a beggar to divert the evil magistrate's attention so that he could capture him red handed!

See the long parade at the entrance of this chapter? Mongnyong is leading the march on a horseback while Chunhyang is sheepishly peeping out of her decorated carriage. It's a grand finale, with the villagers giving their blessings.

Chunhyang Theme Park has a number of places for you to partake in joyous activities and get a taste of Korean traditions. In one of the places, you can also try some of the traditional Korean musical instruments.

If Verona is the city of Romeo and Juliet, Namwon is the city of Mongnyong and Chunhyang. It will be interesting to note that Namwon and Verona actually became sister cities for cultural exchange.