



VOL. 1 ISSUE 1

THE ULSAN PEAR

an urban survival guide to the industrial capital of korea

APRIL 2004

SCOOTER MANIA HITS ULSAN

BY JOEL BURSLEM
THE ULSAN PEAR

Coffee girls have them, so do pizza delivery drivers and mailmen. And I'm not talking about oversized shoes or bad dye jobs.

I'm talking scooters.

They're inexpensive, easy to service and get great gas mileage. Basically, they're the throwaway razors of the motorcycle world.

They're disposable transportation but given the horrific state of traffic in this city, there is simply no better way to navigate this tangled industrial jungle we call home.



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

We bought our first scooter from a teacher who was leaving Ulsan. A deep crimson color, we dubbed it the Red Devil, in honor of the

World Cup fever which swept the country in 2002 and because, well, you have to drive like Hell to survive on the roads here.

That being said, our lives improved immeasurably once we were freed from Ulsan's perplexing public transportation system.

MAXIMUM OVERDRIVE

OUR INTREPID REPORTER BRAVES ULSAN'S BUS SYSTEM AND LIVES...

BY JASON TEALE
THE ULSAN PEAR

I can't say that I was excited when I got this assignment. I usually equate riding the bus with some sort of undue torture.

In my own country, I was a magnet for every freak and weirdo that stepped aboard. Any person ready to wet himself or touch me with a mangled twisted appendage, would automatically sit next to me.

So with seven months of experience in Korea, a discman, some snacks (in case I get lost and have to fend off my own) and my trusty

note pad, I was ready for my first step into the Ulsan Public Transportation System.

Make note, if I don't make it back and someone finds this article "Blair Witch style", cast me as the smart, big muscled dude that gets all the chicks (we have to be accurate here...).

11:30 am - Just missed the 401 bus to where-ever-the-hell-it-goes. I waited approximately three minutes and the 452 bus to wherever showed up. My plan is to either go to the Lotte Mart or the Home Plus, by whatever means necessary.

SEE MISADVENTURE PAGE 3



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

SCOOTER INFERNO 2004

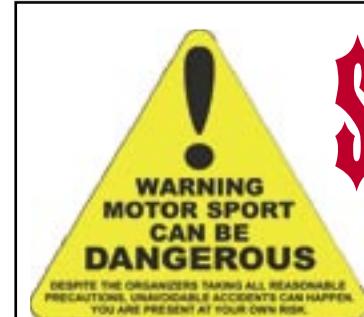
one bike.... one mission... one day

more info - scooterinferno@yahoo.com



HELP THE PEAR!

WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED READING THIS RAG, PASS IT ON TO YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY, CO-WORKERS AND STUDENTS!



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THE PEAR TAXI GUIDE

ALL THE PLACES YOU'LL EVER NEED TO KNOW ARE CONTAINED IN THIS HANDY TAXI NAVIGATION GUIDE - NOW COMPLETE WITH AUTHENTIC KOREAN PRONUNCIATION!

1. FOR THE MUGEODONG AREA - GO TO ULSAN UNIVERSITY ("ULSAN TAEHAKYO").
2. FOR THE NEW DOWNTOWN (SAMSANDONG AREA) - GO TO THE LOTTE DEPARTMENT STORE OR LOTTE CINEMA ("LOWTAY BEGWAJAHM" OR "LOWTAY SEENAEMAH").
3. FOR OLD DOWNTOWN ("SHEE-NAY") - GO TO THE INTERSECTION WITH THE CLOCK MONUMENT ("SHEE GAY TOP").
4. FOR THE SHOPPING AND BARS IN THE SINJEONGDONG AREA - GO TO THE ROTARY WITH THE INDUSTRIAL MONUMENT ("GON GOP TOP").
5. AND OF COURSE, TO GET THE HELL OUT OF TOWN - GO TO THE BUS TERMINAL ("BUSUH TERMEEN-AHL"), TRAIN STATION ("ULSAN YUK") OR AIRPORT ("ULSAN GONGHAENG")



...BEST DRIVER AWARD

It won't kill you to know a few words of Korean, and knowing just two or three locations can get you to most of the common foreigner hangouts.

Taxis are mostly safe, but not completely. Just like those morons back home, some Koreans refuse to acknowledge that alcohol is actually a depressant, and some cabbie's throw back pretty hard while on duty.

All the cabbies are hooked up sweet with the local five-o, so these influenced drivers roll right through the numerous breathalyzer checkpoints. The police actually stand there and wave them through. What that means for us is that you should use some judgment when traveling by taxi.

If the driver looks, acts or smells plastered, he probably is. Similarly, if his driving seems more suicidal than usual for Korea, don't

be afraid to pull him over and get out ("Yogeeyo"). Better out a buck and a half than thrown through a windshield. Don't ever hesitate to get out of cab: they'll be another taxi along soon.

When riding shotgun, you must buckle your safety belt by law, though the cabbie won't be likely to enforce this. Regardless, wearing a seatbelt in Ulsan traffic makes sense in the same way putting that diapers on infants does.

There have been female expats here who have attracted unwanted attention from cabbies. If you are a female traveling alone, or even with another female, at night, be careful.

If the cabbie is taking a shortcut, repeat your destination and let him know you're aware. If a cabbie does not pull over when you ask him to, get out at a red light.

By law, a taxi must stop for anyone waving them down. This means it's illegal for a taxi to pass you up simply because you're a foreigner. The vast majority of taxi drivers see our money as the same as anyone else's, and will happily stop for way-gooks.

However, having a seemingly on-duty taxi pass you by is not quite as rare as you'd think. Perhaps they have a good reason for passing up a fare, so use some discretion before flipping them off.

Puking in cabs is certainly frowned upon. Actually, even leaning your head out the window and letting go can be an issue, depending on trajectory and fluid ballistics. If you do spew, the cabbie will likely want you to pay some money for clean-up.

It's probably best if you pay up, though everyone appreciates a good haggle.

Dear Readers,

Thank you for picking up the very first issue of the Ulsan Pear. We hope you find this publication both entertaining and informative.

Most of us who have collaborated to get this first issue into your hands have lived in Ulsan or in Korea for some time now and have experienced many of the joys and challenges that arise from living in a foreign country. Together, we have come from many different parts of the world but somehow we all ended up in this small corner of the peninsula.

As such, we hope you find our different perspectives reflected in this and future issues. And while much of the writing in this publication may edgy and sometimes provocative, we do not mean for it to cause any offense.

Our goal in getting this newspaper together was not to duplicate information that could be found elsewhere and is better represented in other mediums. Rather we aim to share our experiences, impart some of the collective knowledge and hopefully make your stay in Ulsan more enjoyable. Along the way, we hope to demystify some of the aspects of life in Korea we find curious and in a small way, give something back to the community which we now call home. As our masthead states, we hope that the Ulsan Pear becomes your "urban survival guide."

As always, we welcome your feedback, suggestions and criticism. Please feel free to pass along any ideas you may have, or stories you'd like to see. If there's a new restaurant, hangout or bar you've found, let us know. We want this newspaper to be as much a reflection of your experience as it ours.

On a final note, we are operating on a limited budget, with an extremely small print run – so do us a favor! When you've finished reading this paper, please pass it on to your friends, co-workers, family or students so they can read the Pear too!

Cheers

Joel Burslem
info@ulsanpear.biz



PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

CRUSING FOR A FARE.

THE ULSAN PEAR™

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...SCOOTER MANIA



'NUFF SAID.'

Along with bakeries and convenience stores, scooter shops seem to cluster on nearly every street corner.

It shouldn't be too hard to find one close to you. Finding one that speaks English and won't try to rip you off is another story all together.

One sure bet is Ulsan Autobike in Byeong Yeong. It's easy enough to find... Just find the Jung-Gu Home Plus and then head east down the hill

Look for the multi-story building on the right-hand side of the road with a huge neon motorcycle on the top. At the shop, ask for Mr. Goh or Jay. Both speak excellent English and the service at the shop is top notch.

Prices are reasonable and you may even be able to get a discount if you can prove you roll with the Hell's Ajummas. As far as prices go, you're looking at paying anywhere from W400,000 - 600,000 for a 50cc scooter

to W600,000 - 1,000,000 for a 100/125cc bike.

On anything bigger than 50cc's you'll need plates for your bike. They cost around W100,000 and require that you show your Alien Registration Card. You don't need even need a driver's license... which may help explain the way some people drive, come to think of it.

The guys at the bike shop should be able to look after all of this for you.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

Servicing your bike is cheap and regular maintenance is advisable, especially if you do a lot of riding.

Also, remember to carry a bottle of oil with you at all times. The two-stroke engines on most scooters burn through a lot of it and I've had at least two friends seize their engines after they've run out of oil. Top it up each time you fill up on gas, as the oil gauges are notoriously inaccurate.

So after more than a year of driving around Ulsan on a scooter, here are the rules of the road as far as I can tell.

1. Red lights are optional. This is your best opportunity to get ahead of the pack, so to speak.

Try this technique: Weave slowly through traffic, hug the inside curb until you reach the front of the line. Tentatively make your way out into the intersection and when the coast is clear, hit the gas. This will hopefully give you a good head start on the rest of the cars.

2. Use all available means to get where you need to go. This includes sidewalks.

3. Watch out for Porter trucks and taxis. They are your biggest foes on the road. Stay well clear of the buses too, they're big and heavy and they lurch across the lanes like drunken elephants.

4. Keep your thumb close to the horn at all times.

A gentle toot reminds even the most oblivious driver that you're there riding beside them.

5. Lastly, wear a helmet! Korea has one of the worst road fatality rates in Asia and there's no point in adding to that statistic. You want to leave Ulsan in one piece.



MR. GOH WORKS HIS MAGIC.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

...BUS MISADVENTURES

11:45 am- I have realized that writing on a moving bus is about a hundred times harder than I thought it would be.

The drive was pretty much uneventful, as it was only some cool looking ajummas with visors and myself, just cruising around.

11:50 am- Made it to Lotte Mart in one piece. The buses here are surprisingly roomy with just a few seats and an open floor.

12:15 pm- Made the mistake of not walking towards the bus stop that I could see on the other side of the street and ended up walking towards

the Geongongtop Rotary.

After walking for blocks and almost reaching the rotary, I found a clump of bus stops... like 4 (for some unknown reason) and I still have no idea where the hell they are all going.

12:35 pm- I hopped on the first bus

that came by with something that looked sort of like the words Mugeo-dong.

The ride was more like surfing than a ride on a city bus. I did like the fact that no matter how full the bus got, people still gave up their seats for the old people that stepped aboard.

Most of my fellow bus surfers were oddly unaffected by my repeated pelvic jabs as I desperately clambered to find stable footing. High-grade plastic handles were provided for comfort and ease while holding on for dear life.

These are also important when your bus driver slams on the brakes sending people and packages screaming to the front and then, with lightning fast reflexes, hammers on the gas sending everything back to their original positions.

12:48 pm- I arrived in the general area of my home and had to fight hard to hit the stop button as

the driver careened through traffic, almost thwarting my every attempt.

Finally, the bus screeched to a halt. I was almost home to safety to Mugeo-dong.

12:50 pm- Looking back at the bus as it sped away into oblivion, I could only stop and remember the good times, the ajummas, the insanity and wonder exactly how much fucking soju that asshole had to have in his system to drive like that! God Damn!

For the current price of W700 buses are the cost effective way to get around Ulsan. Included in this price is a ride far wilder than anything Disney World can offer (*or Gyeongju World, for that matter... -ed.*).

The Ulsan city web page (<http://guide.ulsan.go.kr>) offers a full listing of the routes and destinations.

It will help you figure out the hoard of buses that flow through the city streets.

In retrospect, I would say that the bus is always an option for a commute to work every morning, but as far as my shopping adventures in Ulsan go, from now on, I would rather take a taxi and ride in style.

That's just me and you may enjoy the bus, but for my money I would find another way of if I were stuck using public transportation.

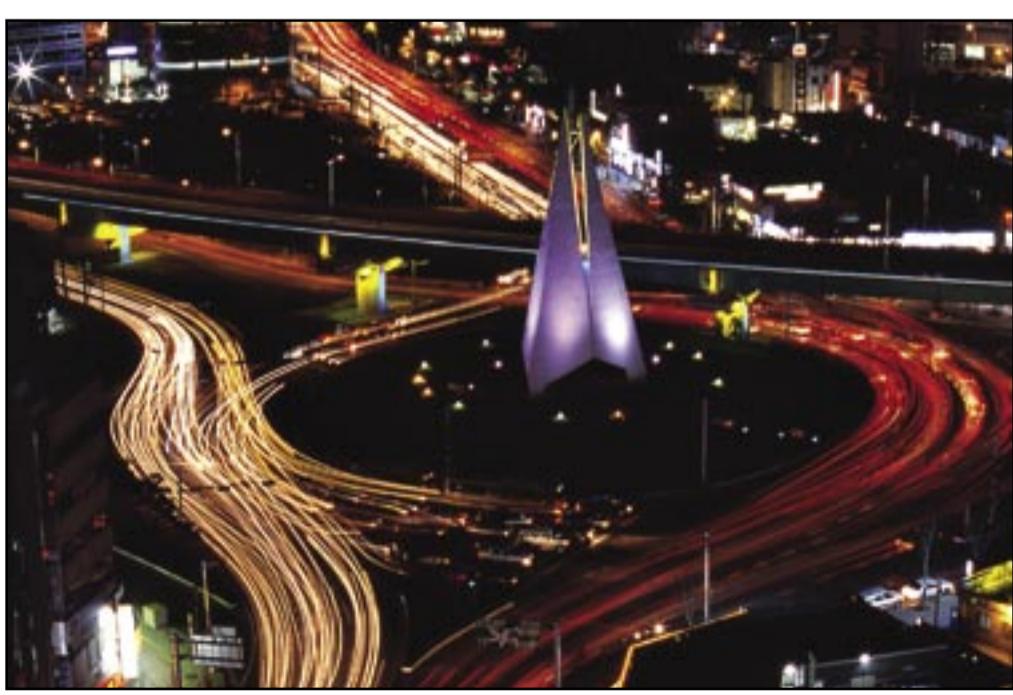


DID YOU KNOW?

THE ULSAN DIGITAL CARD IS AN ELECTRONIC DEBIT CARD YOU CAN USE ON ALL CITY BUSES AND GIVES YOU A DISCOUNT ON YOUR TRIP.



YOU CAN PURCHASE THE CARD ANY OF THE 120 DISPENSING LOCATIONS AROUND THE CITY.



BUSY SHINBOK ROTARY.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

KOREAN CINEMA CORNER

WITH DARRYL PESTILENCE

ATTACK THE GAS STATION (1999)

(JooYooSo SUBKYEOK SAEON: LITERALLY ‘GAS STATION STRATEGIC PLAN ATTACK’)

DIRECTOR SEONG-JIN

CAST: LEE SEONG-JAE, YOO OH-SEONG, YOO JI-TAE, KANG SEONG-JIN, PARK YEONG-GYU

Greetings cine-freaks! For the debut of the Ulsan Pear I've mined the depths of the Pestilence Archives to recommend a film of monumental relevance so tantamount that its (singular) setting is its *raison d'être* for inclusion in our debut, travel-themed issue.

Having skimmed over the articles I'm sure that the most astute among you may have noticed the vehicular lean the majority of this month's pieces have.

Well, if you were to waste time contemplating that, you no doubt realized that the most important asset for business, travel, and the real reason for launching an almost-useless war in the Middle East is that OIL makes the world go 'round. Lifestyles are (inadvertently) based around it, lives are lost for it, and one of its distribution centers serves as the setting for this Korean comedic masterpiece released during the dawn of its cinematic renaissance.

For a year that boasted the “fish” that sank the TITANIC (Kang Jae-gyu’s overrated exercise in Hollywood wannabe mediocrity, SHIRI), a few local hits appear to have been lost in the wake of that action atrocity and Kim Seong-jin’s ATTACK THE GAS STATION serves as an example of a gem that missed out.

Situated in one of the (myriad of) long, non-descript drags that dot Seoul, an SK Oilbank is ransacked late one night by a quartet of club-wielding male twenty-somethings. Flash forward a week or so later: the boys, decked out in stylish threads purchased with the fruits of their pillaging, chow down on ramen at a 7-11, bored out of their skulls.

In an instant, the ringleader (Lee Seong-jae) proposes another hit-and-run at the gas station. “Why do they attack the gas station again,” asks the film, and in a precursor to the spiraling chaos that unfolds in its subsequent 105 minutes, the audience is informed that it is being done “for fun.”

GAS STATION’s anti-heroes are nothing more than youth with dreams unfulfilled: one a talented painter whose parents wouldn’t allow an artist in the clan, another a rock star blackballed by former associates, another is on a power trip as a result of high school punishments gone awry, while their ringleader was a non-conformist baseball hack who didn’t make it beyond the farm league.

Unable to realize their dreams, they are nothing more than hoods who get their heads into some high water when their second stop-and-rob is complicated by the fact that their prey were ready for them. With little fruit to pluck, the lads resort to taking hostages and running the station to make their dash: essentially making them work a job they were too lazy to do in the first place.

This is the first – of many – table-turning development(s) that pepper ATTACK THE GAS STATION. Director Kim crafted a cinematic piss-take where a plethora of Korean social stereotypes; such as snippy scooter jockey delivery boys, third-tier gangster wannabes, greedy bosses, incompetent cops, princess syndrome disasters, and disenfranchised, materialistic youth - unwilling to put in the elbow grease their ancestors did bringing the nation from the ashes of the Korean war - collide.



Brought to life by a talented cast (it was the film that launched the career of young hunk Yoo Ji-tae, and catapulted character actor Yoo Oh-seong from a decade of memorable second-fiddle parts to leading man status, starting with FRIEND, the following year) and a solid script (inspired by – but not in that wink-wink, quazi-plagiaristic Tarantino fashion predominant today - Sidney Lumet’s DOG DAY AFTERNOON, 1975), ATTACK cuts a swath through the miasma of putrescence often associated with Korean comedy to become one of its year’s box office hits.

Having caught the film during its theatrical release a handful of years ago, revisiting the film courtesy of its Spectrum DVD, it has barely aged. If anything, ATTACK comes off as prophetic.

As with all of the films that will be profiled in this column, the DVD offers English as well as Japanese and Chinese subtitles. The subtitles are adequate and being a region-free release guarantees the feature will continue to attract viewers to its growing legion of fans.

Bonus material includes TV spots and theatrical trailers as well as the electronic press kit theaters played (via monitors) to promote the film.

**Fancy Yourself a Writer?
Want to See your Work in
Print?**

We want to hear about your experiences in Ulsan, and we're looking for a few good articles to publish each month.

Please send any submissions to info@ulsanpear.biz (no attachments please). Submissions should be 1000 words maximum.

Where the F*ck is Everyone?

WITH ELVIS FLINTSTONE

Hello boys n' girls and welcome to the first edition of the Ulsan Pear - and - of course - my dirty little column. I, Elvis Flintstone, have volunteered to unveil the seedy underbelly of what passes itself as “Night Life,” here in the petrochemical city by the sea.

As a duly-designated pub crawl jockey and self-professed “journalist,” it is my duty to lay the smack down about what IS happening, what ISN’T, and what MIGHT BE happening around town.

Since this issue’s focus is on travel and transport, I figure the best place to start talking about nightlife is by zeroing in on one of the city’s highest concentration of pub’n’grub opportunities: “Old Downtown.”

With (dis)respect to spatial concerns this is going to be a multi-parter, folks, and given the plethora of opportunities to get on the piss, this edition of ‘WTFIE?’ starts off with a bang by checking out a bar that has reinvented itself to the most happenin’ place shy of the Taehwa river.

Elvis is going to assume that night owls reading this column are fairly responsible and rather than committing the cardinal sin of drinking, driving and thus spilling your drink (remember folks, the eleventh commandment is “thou shalt not spill alcohol”) - and that you will by hoofing it to the pubs or hailing a taxi.

If you’re like me, you try to pinch your pennies while out and about because the overall price of piss in South Korea keeps rising like the waters of Tuvalu, so hitting the most places in one jaunt is tantamount to good hell raising.

So, where better to start then from the legendary “Shigetop” (“Clock Tower”) rotary nestled between two banks and within a stone’s throw of the May department store and what I affectionately call “Soju Street.” The pubs Elvis has chosen for you are well-established staples of any expat’s late night sojourns - and are currently running better-late-than-never drink specials to get that almighty won out of your pocket and into their coffers.

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

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informayshins abouta
the Ulsan? ?????

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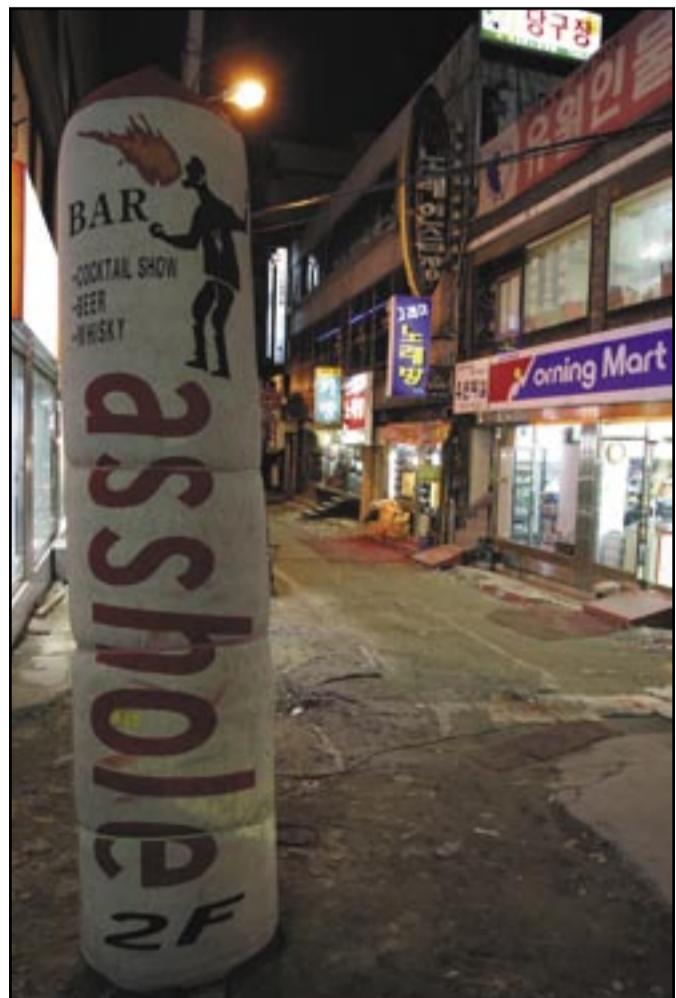
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...W.T.F.I.E?

Asshole Bar

If you head towards the May department store and walk a block and a half up from Shige-top, you'll notice "Soju Street" to your right (it would take a blind man to miss it, given the blinding neon of soju bangs that litter the street).



HEY LOOK... AN ASSHOLE!

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

Make a ninety degree left turn and chances are that any time after 7pm you'll recognize the inflatable Asshole advertisement phallus. The more astute of you will recognize that it's the phallus with "Asshole" written in huge letters.

Less agile drunkards might want to proceed with caution since the steps are coated in lethal metal and can do some serious damage. (Elvis speaks from experience.)

"Asshole" is one of the misleading names for the place.

Yeah, that one - the one with "Asshole" written on it.

Well, hook a left, cross the street and head down about twenty feet, turn right at the smaller, boxy black sign with "Asshole" printed on it. Simply head up the stairs and you are in the recently redecorated "Asshole."

While it may be dark and cavernous and lit in blue neon like a typical bungle, the staff are ANYTHING BUT Assholes, in fact they are some of the most hospitable barmaids and barkeeps on that side of the Taehwa.

Old Ulsan hands used to swear off the bar due to its sordid history as an impromptu farm league production of the Patrick Swayze flick ROAD-HOUSE, but Elvis is happy to report those days are long gone.

The atmosphere, though dark, is light and friendly and the music is energetic and booming.

Elvis is not a particular fan of electronic techno gaga trip-hip-crapola, but he won't hold it against a bar if it has other pluses, and Asshole has many. Rising like a Phoenix from the ashes of a ghost town-like atmosphere, Asshole has prompted a revolution in Ulsan nightlife.

Since February, ever Friday and Saturday promise a round of free "drinks of the evening" at 10:30pm and 12:30am, coupled with wonderful specials as Tequila shots for 1 grand, draft beer for 3 grand, and even free smokes for the cancer curious.

Chris, the owner, promises there is more to come. Elvis certainly hopes so. Coming up next month: McKenzies.



THE KING SAYS ASSHOLE BAR

- Friendly staff
- Nice Tron-like decor
- Sweet prices for piss and more
- Clean
- Safe
- Occasional free smokes (all-you-can-choke)
- Free tasty popcorn
- They take music requests
- Soap in the bathroom (something Elvis took for granted in the west, but not in Korea!)

Elvis gives the Asshole:
4 sideburns and a fried chicken (out of four sideburns and a fried chicken)

Royal Anchor
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MENU

AUTHENTIC BRITISH PUB FARE IN BANGEJOJIN



Regular Menu Features:

Steak and Kidney Pies
Scotch sausage, eggs, chips and baked beans
BLT sandwiches
Home made beef burgers
Home made soups
Cajun Blackened Chicken
Australian Sirloin Steak
New Zealand Lamb Chops

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SCOOTER DAYTRIPS

3 PLACES IN ULSAN YOU JUST HAVE TO SEE TO BELIEVE...

BY FIN MADDEN
THE ULSAN PEAR

Where else in the world can you walk into a motorbike shop, spend \$400 and drive off into a world of freedom and excitement?

Scootering - the most exciting, economical way to see Korea.

Sure, there is a good chance that you will die, but we are all dying, aren't we? It is dangerous, especially if you drive like an idiot. (Let's get this out of the way now... yes, I have been in a couple of accidents. Hell, I was even in an accident doing research for this article.)

But the greatest beauty of the scooter is not the convenience, but the escapism.



BOYS AND THEIR TOYS.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

We all have ways to escape; drugs...not here, alcohol, reading, music, exercise, religion; something. Everybody needs a way to escape the day to day drudgery of their lives.

Some of us have chosen scooters.

Ulsan may be the industrial capital of Korea but it is nestled in a beautiful place. Mountain and coastal roads

stretch out in all directions, from all points of the city.

So, without any further adieu, here are three day trips that will make any scooter aficionado sing.



Ulsan Saucer Launching Ultimate Team



THE ULSAN PEAR
info@ulsanpear.biz

1. SEOSAENGPO WAESONG

The Japanese fortress at Jinha.

Rising out of a shanty town on the outskirts of Jinha stands the Japanese fortress from the 1592 Hideyoshi invasions. This fortress is one of 16 around the country and is an important sight in world history. The Japanese built these fortresses around the peninsula in an attempt to use Korea as a staging point for an invasion into Ming China.

Korean Admiral Lee Sun Shin had different ideas. He designed the first iron-clad battleship in the world and soundly defeated the Japanese in every naval engagement. Without a navy the Japanese fortress were quickly destroyed by the combined might of Korea and Ming China.



STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

This fortress is still in remarkable repair, much better than some of the other Hideyoshi fortresses. Built with defense in mind it stands, of course, on a hilltop.

Riding through the shanty town one will see signs of old outer walls stretching to the rivers edge.

The fortress itself is hidden in a beautiful red pine forest, covering the ascent until the peak of the fortress.

After parking your bikes (this isn't a bloody hiking trip) follow the main trail that zigzags up the side of the hill through the remains of old walls and old gates.

A decent understanding of the difficulty of storming such a fortress is understood after you finally attain the summit.

The summit is covered in some of the nicest grass in Korea, and has a beautiful view of the East Sea and Jinha Beach.

On the top stands the remains of towers and barracks and a greater place for a paintball game has never been built. Keep an eye out for old graffiti carved into the rocks with the names of various Chinese and Korean explorers of years gone by.

Total hiking and exploration time will be less than two hours, unless you plan a picnic in the fortress. Also, be prepared for a Korean man in a small wood cabin to make you write your name in the guest book.

HOW TO GET THERE:

Either ride south on Hwy 14 to Busan past the Gosan Pottery Complex (this is easy, there are more kimchi pots here than you have ever seen in your life), turning off towards Ganjeolgot Lighthouse and Jinha Beach. Follow the signs from that point

You can also navigate your way through the petro-industrial complex that spreads like Mordor to the south of the city. It is a sight to see, but if you ride this way, be prepared to wear a breathing mask, air quality is a concern.

Riding distance from Ulsan Train Station is approximately 25 km.

2. PARAESO-POKPO

Paraeso Waterfalls.

To the west of the city rise the Yeongnam Alps and the area is surrounded by beautiful mountains. The largest is Gajisan at 1240m and rising to the south of Gaji is Sinbulsan, the second highest mountain in the range.

Hidden (and I mean hidden) on the west slopes of Sinbulsan is Paraeso waterfall. It is possibly the single most beautiful sight near the city. I spent 6 weekends in a row out there last summer swimming and cliff diving.

The waterfall is a 30 minute hike from the parking lot up a stream bed carved into the side of Sinbulsan. The waterfall reveals itself to you after a sweaty hike.

It is a sight from an Amazonian dream. A meter wide bead of water drops 15 meters into a perfectly circular pool. The greatest part of the entire experience is that Koreans, not known for their swimming ability, generally do not swim here.

The rivers next to the road, on the other hand, are an amazing sight in the summer, they are virtually covered in tents, towels and families of bathers.

Luckily, the 30 minute hike deters all the car campers and keeps the waterfalls amazingly pristine. Cliff diving is possible from a natural platform about five meters from the actual waterfalls, the pool is rumoured to be bottomless.

Near the pool is an ice cave that offers natural airconditioning, but is sadly barred to keep hapless waygooks from killing themselves. Anyway, the pool is enough to keep any sweaty traveler cool even on the hottest day.

HOW TO GET THERE:

Head from Taewha hotel along the river west towards Mugeodong. Head under the tunnel at the Samho bridge and come out on the road that will eventually become Hwy 24, the new highway out to Eonyang.

Novice riders beware, this means riding along the side of a fast moving expressway.



PARESO WATERFALL.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

...DAYTRIPS

Fear not though, there is an ample shoulder both ways and the fast traffic should not deter you.

In the summer you will pass them all again once in the mountains. Cars will have to deal with multi-hour

traffic jams in the summer.

Follow 24 through Eonyang towards (and past) Seoknamsa temple. Stop and explore this temple, it is a temple entirely for female monks and is built in a beautiful valley of Gajisan.

Continue on 24 until you reach a serious fork in the road, here you want to head left onto road 69. Follow 69 up and over the pass and down into the next valley. There is construction and traffic will be almost impossible for a car.

The road quickly deteriorates into a potholed dirt track. After about 2 km of horrible road there will be a large white hostel with an orange-red roof, cross the stream here and head left and uphill.

Eventually you will reach either a gate (and a closed gate shouldn't stop a hardened scooter rider) or the log sided park entrance. Be prepared to pay between 600 and 1000 won for a ticket. Leave your bikes and start walking, the path is obvious.

The riding distance is approximately 60 km, but be prepared for a day trip, by car or scooter.

3. ULSAN'S PETRO- INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX AT NIGHT.

What? Yes, the petro-industrial complex at night. Mordor comes alive with a Vegas

intensity of work lights and gas-flares and the best place to view this is from the roof of the Global Sea Food building in Jangsaengpo.

It stands in the middle of this, the most bizarre scooter ride. A casual night ride around the empty and haunting complex will see a seemingly never ending complex of piping and scaffolding.

The air isn't great, but it is certainly a sight worth seeing. There is a mysterious beauty in this ugliest of places.

HOW TO GET THERE:

This one is easy, head south from Ulsan Train Station following signs for Jangsaengpo.

Watch yourself through a big five way intersection, head to the center left, not hard left. Once in Jangsaengpo you will see the white Global Sea Foods building rising to your right.

This is before the 'down-town' strip of Jangsaengpo, if one can call Jangsaengpo a town. If you reach downtown, you've gone too far.

Also beware of heavy trucks racing through the night on an unknown mission. There is an elevator conveniently accessible from the parking lot. Act casual and get in, take it up to the top and walk to the roof.

Finally, don't let the cartoon map of Ulsan confine you. Busan, Daegu and Gyeongju are also all only short day trips away.

Look for next month's article "How to Survive a Scooter Crash" and "One Hundred and One Funny Jokes for the Ambulance Ride".



DEPTH OF MORDOR.

PHOTO: DAVE HARVEY

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