



# Gong gan

MAGAZINE ABOUT  
UNIQUE SPACES

ISSUE NO.01  
CAFES IN KOREA

Gong-gan is a word in Korean which means space. Gong-gan magazine invites our readers to spaces in Korea with unique personalities. This is the very first issue of our magazine where we are introducing compelling cafes with different stories. In order to highlight the distinctive atmosphere of each cafe, the story is based on people's real experiences of interaction with each place.

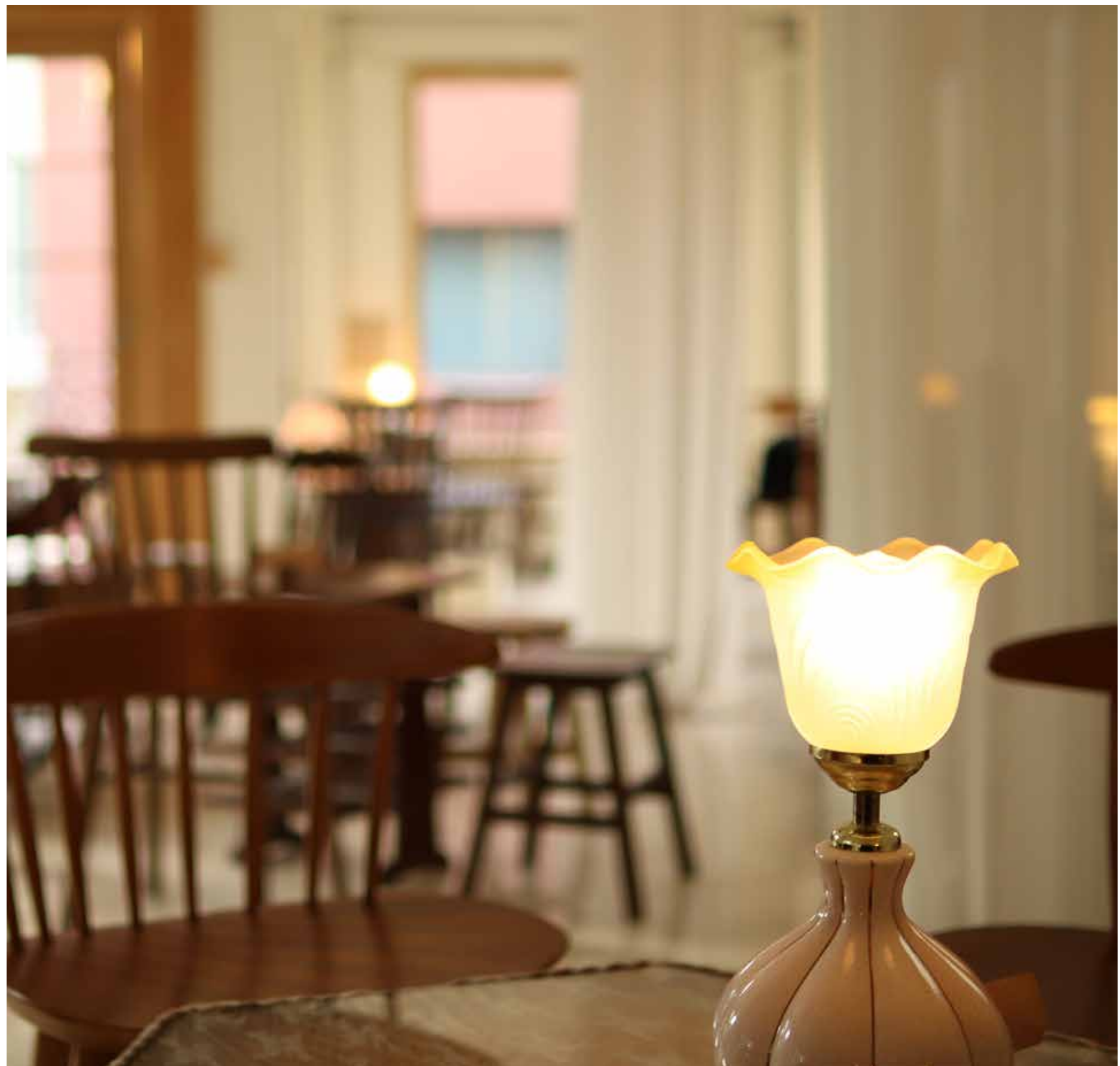
I've been eager to work on an editorial project with my dear friend, Yejin's photography. Her photographs really contain the atmosphere of the day, emotions of the moment, and scents from the spaces. I'm particularly drawn by her photos of different spaces because I love her great interest in small little objects, and how she doesn't just pass by them. As a photographer, Yejin takes time, with a great care, to observe and understand that there are no unnecessary things in a space.

Personally, I feel like Yejin's works take me on a field trip, remind me of our heartwarming memories together, and make me excited about our next trip together. I hope our readers can see what I see in her photos of spaces.

It was such a pleasure to work with Yejin, and I appreciate her commitment, even though she's very busy at the moment. I'd like to send her my love and very special thanks.

Yours truly,

Daye Oh



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# 블루퍼콜렉트

## Blute Collect

107, Seongmisan-ro 13-gil,  
Mapo-gu, Seoul, South Korea

**TRAVIE MAGAZINE:** The air felt quite cooler than the last few days as if it tries to tell me that the summer is near to the end. I found a perfect cafe for the weather, which I ended up falling in love with.

It's quiet, I thought it felt just right. It was in a residential area in Seongsan-dong that reminded me of quietly reading books. After wandering around an alleyway for the first time, yet it was not unfamiliar. I came into this cafe on the second floor of a walk up. I've got a couch in the far corner where I can stay for a long time without caring about others. Cool air unlike summer, distinctive paper smell from old books, some cinnamon and wine would make it perfect.

I ordered a glass of Gluhwein although it was a broad daylight. After all the preparations, I



looked at the bookmark stuck two-thirds into the novel, but I couldn't remember the context very well. I wasn't sure if I should start from the beginning. Well, let's just start from where I left off. I decided not to be disappointed that I couldn't let summer go completely. It's okay, the fall is only just starting.

The sense of smell is the first to wake up. Located at the end of Yeonnam-dong and in an alley in Seongsan-dong, Blute Collect is Blute's showroom slash cafe. Blute is a brand that makes perfumes, diffusers, and candles using natural ingredients. Even though the space was a cafe and shop, it wasn't noisy or distracting. The place was elegant enough to spend time with a cup of coffee as an excuse for a book. Visual elements were also enriched by the owner's taste.

Classical movies, rough mane paper, French art student's studio, dried roses, ink and feathers, faded pendant... To tell you all the things that came to mind, a space filled with all kinds of antique props, did not feel like just a cafe, but rather a studio. Maximalist is beautiful enough. Next time, I would like to take the one-day class here where I can make perfumes and candles that contain my own tastes.

**SONYA:** There is a scent that goes well with this season when the cold wind starts to blow. The fragrance musk that can be used regardless of gender, is heavy and has a unique dignity, and best matches body odor. The moment you smell it, you can feel the warmth and the long-lasting reverberation. The three different atmospheres of the three cities of southern France are captured in the charming musk scents. If you want to meet the clothes you wore yesterday in a new way, or if you want to wear a perfume with your own colour, this is what you are looking for.

Blute has been creating "a scent product that can become an interior object just by placing it in my space". As the founder of the brand, I emphasize that Blute's products create a unique atmosphere in your place with both the visual design and the scent. The design varies from the antique to modern styles. Feel the fragrance offered by Blute as a niche perfume that can be used in everyday life and is not heavy to anyone at any moment.

Grasse is a city depicted as "Rome of All Scents" in Partrick Suskind's novel *Perfume*. It is also





the place that made today's France known as the country of perfume. From the 16th century until today, for more than 500 years, Grasse is still home to the cultivation of raw perfumery plants, essence production, manufacturing, sales, and education that has produced world-class perfumers. Internationally famous perfumes such as Dior and Chanel are all made from here.

The whole region of southern France, filled with scented plants such as roses, lavender, orange trees, etc., where the gentle sunlight, fertile soil, and the Mediterranean breeze meet, has inspired me so much.

While traveling in southern France, I felt like I wanted to deliver the fragrance of this beautiful region to others who have never been here. While I was thinking, how could I express this place, where there is almost the essence of nostalgia? Surprisingly, while there are Lavender and Orange Trees which are easily associated with Southern France, it was musk that I chose.

Whenever I visited a perfumery, in different parts of southern France, including Grasse, I came across many kinds of perfumes, and the scent that always was there was musk. And it was a fragrance that is often used in many perfumes.

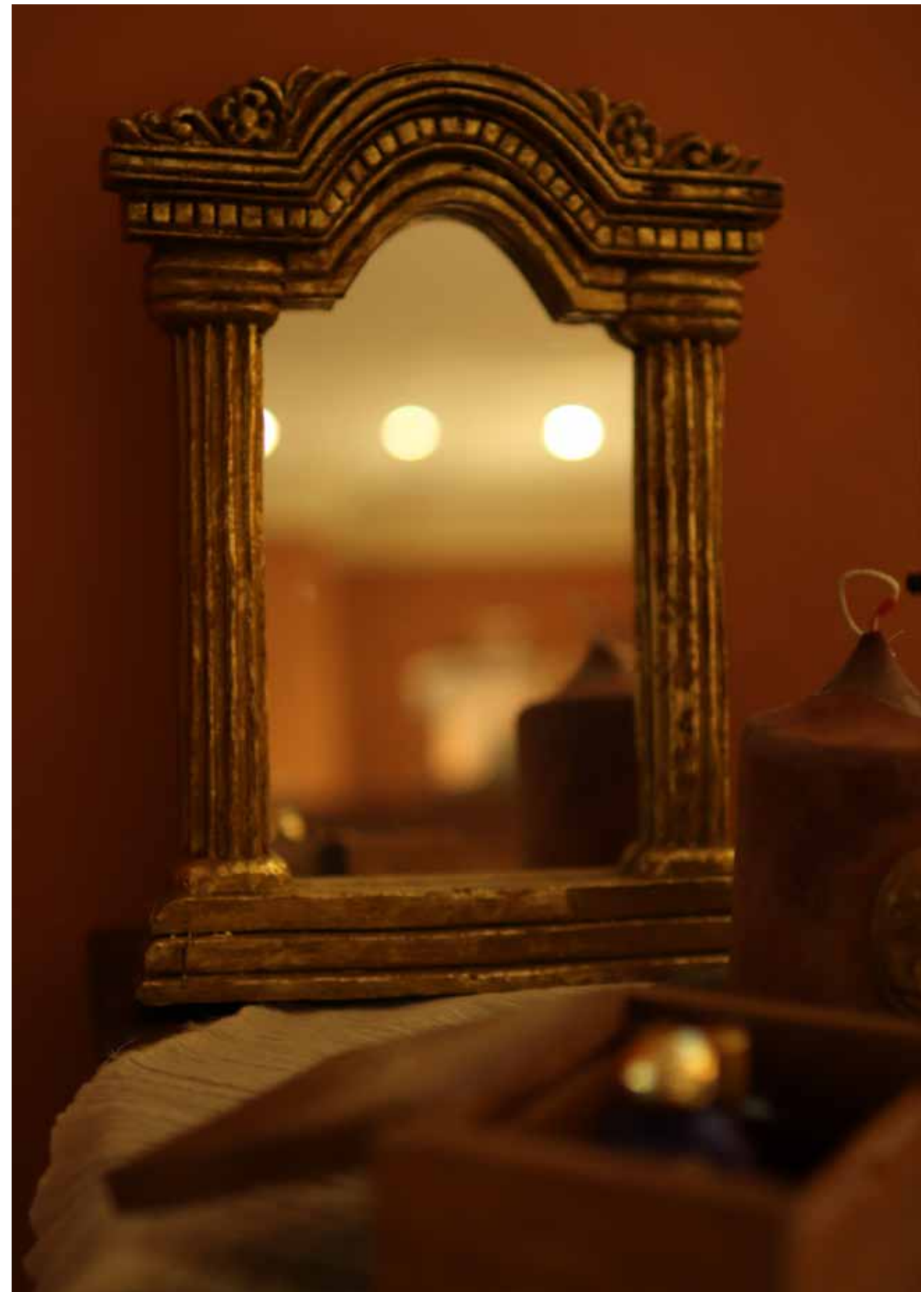
In Korea, musk is commonly thought of being a monotonous scent, but the scents of musk I met while traveling ranged from a very flat to intense that stays with me even a few days later. While walking around the perfumeries that had a history of several decades or hundreds of years, my feelings became stronger that I wanted to make perfumes which include musk with each unique color. How would I express the same musk in these different ways?

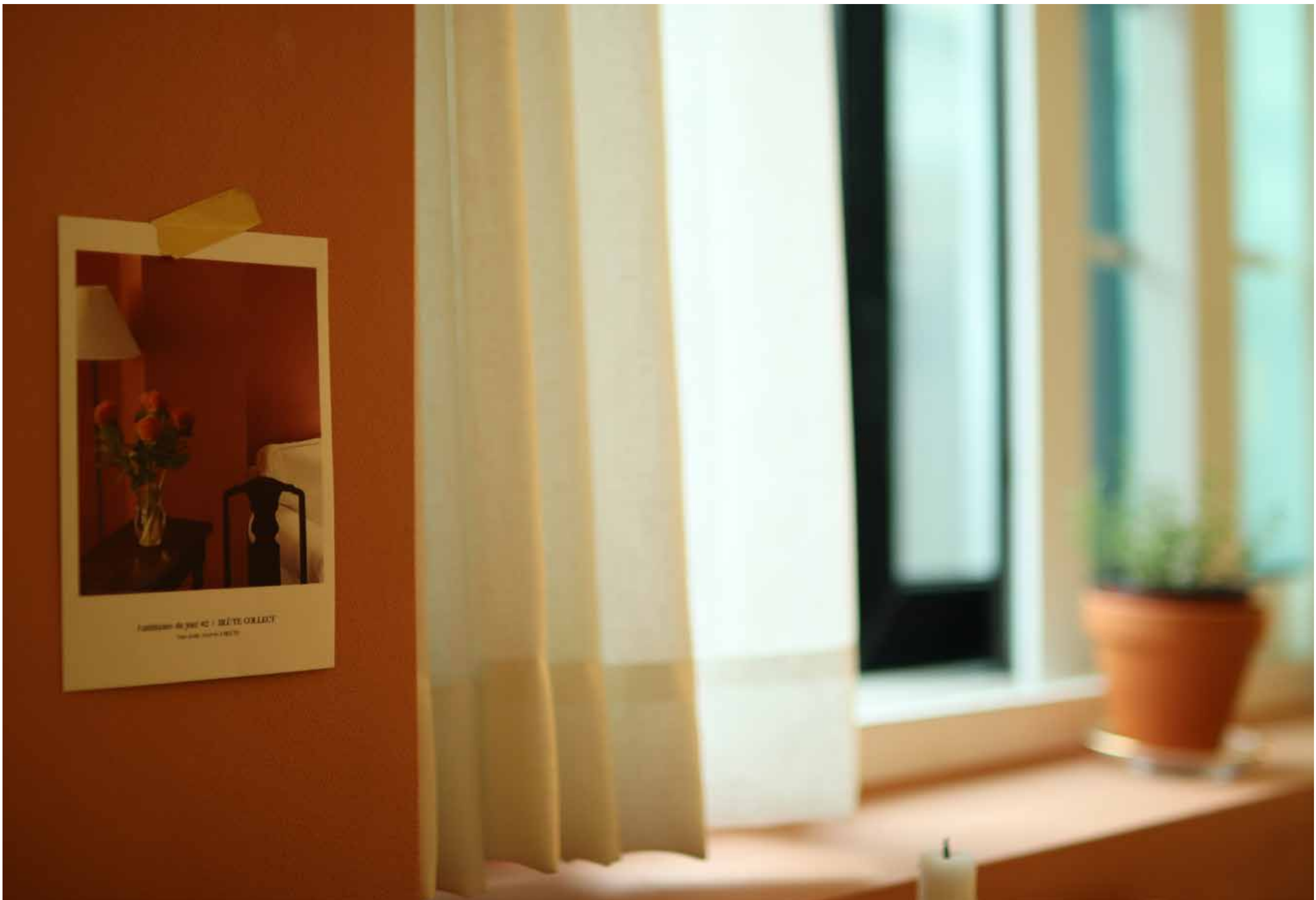
So, I decided to make my vision come true by creating a musk perfume line expressing its various images in my brand, Blute.

After thinking about it for a few days, I decided to make three different scents using musk as a base: Nice, Arles, and Grasse, with Paris as an additional exploration.

#### 1. Nice

Nice contains the warm sunlight, the sparkling waves of the sea, the green hills and the bright steps of people. I wanted to capture the moment of sitting on a beach while drinking fresh juice. You will be able to feel the moist reverberation with musk that blends softly with the fresh fruit scent.













## 2. Arles

Arles is a romantic city that became the background of art, including Vincent Van Gogh. However, the atmosphere in the city was very different from my expectations. It feels rather lonely to me for some reason. I wanted to convey the feeling of stopped time when Van Gogh fell in love with the place. I expressed a lonely musk with the smell of the cold breeze of an old building in a faded and empty city. You can feel the reverberation of a bitter but elegant musk with dry branches mingling with the rising sandalwood scent.

## 3. Grasse

As Grasse is the home of scents, I wanted to create a basic scent that harmonizes well at any moment with anyone.

It is a scent that can be used every day at any time and in any space. It is expressed in a warm and soft feeling rather than the strong and animal-like feeling of a typical musk, so it has a scent that can be used by anyone of all ages and does not get boring over time. You'll always find the most minimalistic and the most harmonious, cozy musk reverberation.

## 4. Paris

This is a bonus edition for those who choose to purchase all three musk perfumes as a set.

I tried to draw Paris, the most familiar city to us, with scents. Paris is a typical but strangely addictive city. It contains the Parisian chic that is drawn in our heads. But it's not cold. Once you smell it, the elegant reverberation of the enchanting amber and the soft musk makes you remember the scent forever.

May 22, 2020



# 카페 레이어드

## Cafe Layered

223-20 Yeonnam-dong,  
Mapo-gu, Seoul, South Korea

**DANIEL FOOD DIARY:** For those who love scones, Layered would be the ideal dessert paradise.

Upon entering the store, I was greeted with a massive spread of scones and cakes which came in an assortment of sweet and savoury flavours. I get thrilled seeing a dessert spread like this, all displayed out with the buttery aroma filling the air whenever I visit an overseas bakery. We do not see many bakeries in Singapore do this, but this could be due to a mixture of reasons from humidity, food hygiene, compliance yada yada. Going through the sweet selections, flavours available were such as Double Chocolate, Matcha and Salted Caramel.

I picked the Earl Grey Scone (KRW 4,500) which was baked till golden brown and puffed







with layered texture. The base was dense and crusty, but slightly dry to my liking. It was then well complemented with the earl grey spread. Though I secretly wished for a more generous serving of spread. As sweet scones are kind of norm, I was actually more interested in the range of savoury options.

There were flavours such as Classic Butter, Double Cheese and Garlic Cream Scones selling at around KRW 4,500 to 5000. My attention was drawn to the signature Basil Pesto Scone (KRW 4,500) which came with fresh-earthy notes from the basil pesto spread on same scone base. While this is their signature item, I reckoned not every customer would be a basil and pesto fan. The same recipe was probably being used as the taste of sweet and savoury scones were generally similar with little variation. Hence, it does get a bit tiring for having too many mouthful.

So how English are their scones? According to some articles online, British scones are supposed to be soft, moist, buttery and come with cake-like texture due to the difference in making process compared to American scones. While they claim to make their scones using British homemade recipe, the product turned out to resemble taste and texture of American scones—stiff and crusty with biscuit-like texture. Food for thought? If scones are not your thing, other comfort cake options such as Chocolate Brownie, Grandma Carrot Cake and Butter Cake are also available from KRW 5,000 to 7,000.

As the place is also located in Yeonnam-dong, probably a good spot to get your breakfast and caffeine fix to fuel the day for more #OOTD.

**HKFOODELICIOUS:** While I was exploring what to eat in Seoul on Instagram, this cafe really caught my eyes. Surely the environment was very nice and comfy, however that wasn't the main reason, the main reason was their incredibly DAZZLING BAKING TREATS!! And you will understand why after reading my review.

This cafe was well-loved by Koreans, hence I recommend you to come around 11am to reserve the best seats. There was a delicious and buttery scent once I stepped in the cafe, and then the next second I just couldn't keep my eyes off the CAKES, SCONES AND PIES!!! They

all looked super luscious, I also couldn't stop taking photos of them. We decided to have a seat first before losing our sanity and it was hard to pick which treats we should try.

It was such a hot day, thus my friend had ordered an Orange Iced Tea to cool off the heat. The bottom was red tea infused with orange juice and it was topped with a scoop of orange shaved ice. Instead of mixed the shaved ice with the tea, we tasted it with a spoon. The slightly acidic and fruity taste was refreshing and there were few orange zest as well, so to add the texture and a hint of bitterness to the drink.

As for me, because we were going to eat tons of sweet stuffs, I have gone for a hot Esinpänner. It was originated from Vienna and made with double shots of espresso with lots of whipped cream. Its presentation was quite adorable, a layer of brown coffee at the bottom then a layer of white cream on top. I was a bit concern it would be too bitter for me since there were two espresso shots, fortunately the bitterness was about right due to the thick cream.

The hardest decision had been made, we took a plate and grabbed three treats out of 15 options. And the winners were.....

The Earl Grey Scone didn't had an outstanding appearance, nonetheless I have always been a big fan of Earl Grey, this was a MUST-TRY item for me. There were other flavours of scones like double chocolate, matcha and garlic cream for you to choose as well. The scone itself carried a really little tea flavour, yet the brown sauce on top got a rich milky earl grey taste. And those tiny white pieces were sea salts, they could prevent the scone to be too sweet. It wasn't like my absolute favourite, nevertheless it was still enjoyable with my Esinpänner.

As mentioned, there were varieties of scones here, therefore we decided to tryout another scone, Ang Scone. This scone caught our sight as it looked like a mini burger and we had been told this was quite popular in Korea. The scone was filled with a thick slice of butter and red bean paste, which will totally remind you of the cheese and beef patty from a cheeseburger. We had our hesitation on that





February 17, 2020

thick piece of butter, yet we changed our perception after a bite. The buttery taste was surprisingly blended in with the red bean paste, you won't taste a heavy butter flavour. Also I believe it was a salted butter, its creamy texture carried a hint of saltiness and it went well with the sweet red bean taste.

Lastly, we had to go for a cake after trying two pieces of scone and we had picked Victoria Cake. One of the reason why we chose this was because of its red berries sauce, we had two sweet scones, it would be good to have something acidic to neutralize the sweet flavour. It was a simple pound cake paired with red berries sauce and buttercream, it was definitely delightful to have a sweet but also sour cake.





# Joyang Bangjik

12 Hyangnamu-gil 5 beon-gil, Ganghwa-eup, Ganghwa-gun, Incheon, South Korea

**VISIT KOREA:** A girl named Sunja was living in the northern part of Ganghwado Island. Every morning, she went to the sochang cotton factory to work. Sochang, also called Ganghwa silk, is a type of cotton that is commonly used for baby diapers or blanket linings. Sunja was skilled with her hands like her mother, who was good at weaving hwamunseok (rush) mat. So when a textile manufacturing technician named Ma Jin-su opened the Pyeonghwajikmul factory to make sochang cotton, he asked Sunja to work for his factory. Making sochang cotton required a lot of work. Once you produce yarn, you need to bleach, starch and then dry it.

Dried threads are wound on the spool, and then they are weaved into sochang cotton cloths. Sunja liked it when she saw a bunch of starched threads



hung out on long poles outdoors. She thought the threads flapping in the wind looked like noodles. Sochang cotton cloths were very popular and sold like hotcakes. There were several sochang factories other than Pyeonghwajikmul. The very first sochang factory was Joyangbangjik.

It is said the electricity and landline supplies were brought to the island thanks to the operation of Joyangbangjik. Another factory called Simdojikmul opened in 1947 and hired as many as 1,200 workers. Every year, a competition was held among more than 60 sochang cotton factories on the island, and Sunja won the competition for three consecutive years earning the nickname “Miss Sochang.” Sunja was so proud of the title. Ganghwado Island was known for the best quality cotton in Korea, therefore the best on Ganghawdo meant the best in the country. Ganghwado Island has more than 800 years of fabric manufacturing history. It dates back to the 13th century when the Goryeo Kingdom relocated its capital to the island. Local residents on the island worked day and night to weave textiles and hwamunseok mat (a local specialty of Ganghwado Island). Due to the superb quality of these local items, they were also popular in neighboring countries as well. Thanks to the sochang cotton industry, the island’s population reached 100,000, and sochang cotton was even exported to the US and China. Every morning and evening, the streets near the sochang factories were crowded with commuter vehicles that the factory workers used. Nearby alleys were filled with saunas and inns since factory workers frequently visited saunas to wash away dust and thread, some workers even stayed in the inns as long-term guests. However, as artificial fabrics like nylon were introduced and modern-style textile factories flourished in Daegu, the sochang cotton factories on Ganghwado Island closed their doors one by one and the closed factories were left neglected.

Decades later, the sound of construction filled the air in the area again. Pyeonghwabangjik factory, where Sunja had worked, and the company house transformed into the Sochang Fabric Experience Center. In addition, Joyangbangjik factory where Sunja’s cousin had worked became a café. Long workbenches turned into coffee tables and the walls that had almost collapsed were renovated into a gallery space. Nowadays, people visit the cotton factory-turned café to chat over coffee and cake while sitting in front of

the workbenches. Sunja’s youth revived, and the sochang cotton factory was born again.

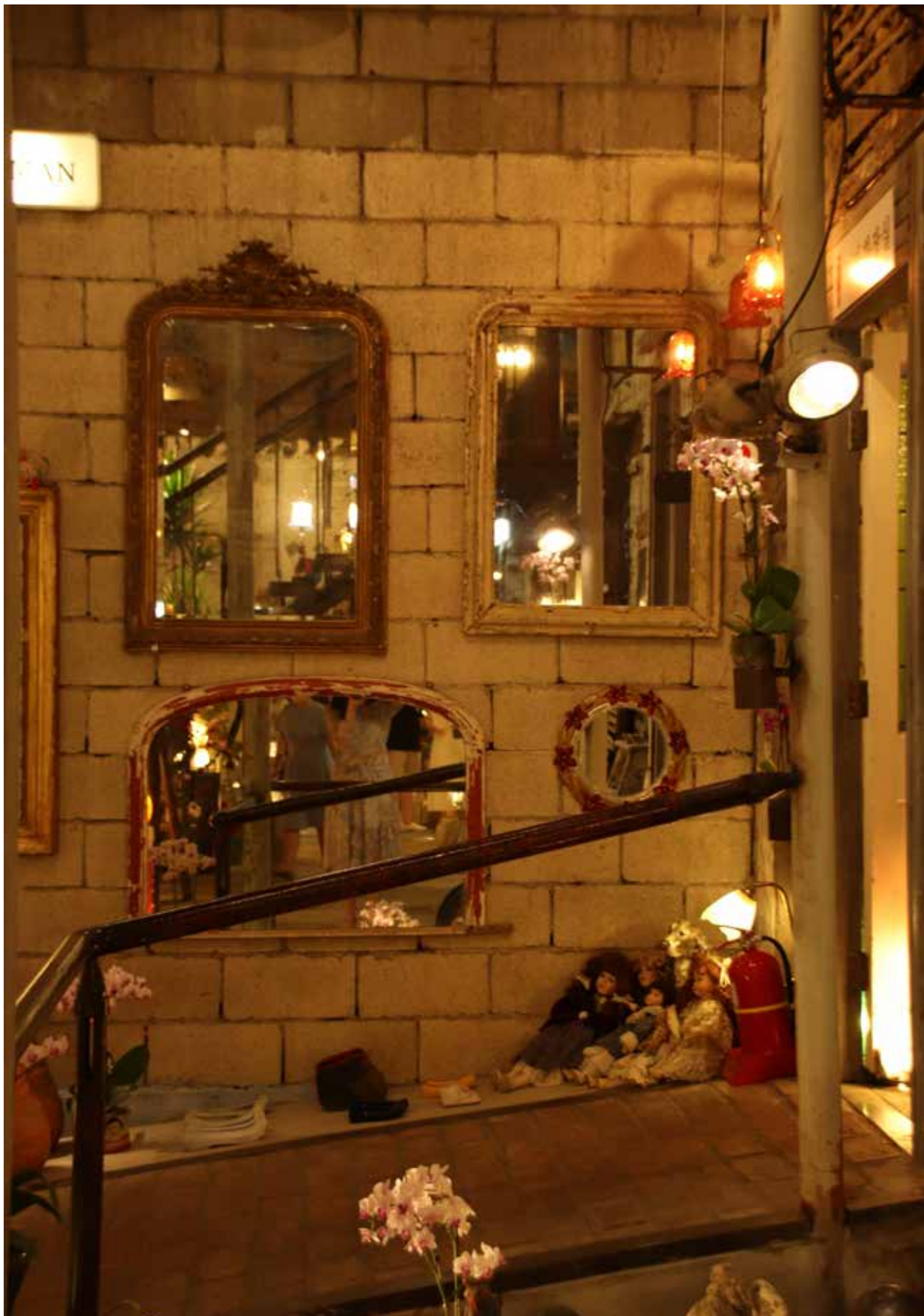
**HALLIE BRADLEY:** Joyang Bangjik is an old textile factory that has been turned into a very cool cafe complex. Walk through the front gate and you’re welcomed into the cafe on your right where you can buy a coffee or juice and then head into the main building to find a seat among the numerous options. Take a seat at the long benches in the center or spread out at the tables that are along the walls. There is seating upstairs, around corners and head outside to find ever more. There are hidden rooms with seats for two and cave like buildings with seats for four. It’s honestly amazing how many different parts of this complex there are.

Go around the corner to find antique toys the likes of carousel horses and more. The child in all of us will be excited to see toys from the past. The complex only opened a couple months ago and is still in the process of being completed. While most of the buildings are finished and open for business, there are a couple that had construction crews coming and going. The owner of the complex says its about 70% complete. That said, they didn’t stop us from entering each building even if it wasn’t quite finished.

Go with friends and have some fun. I love a location with some history and this definitely had that and more. This cafe actually reminded me a bit of Cafe Valor also in Incheon that I visited last year. This particular complex has a lot of history from when textile production was in its heyday on the island. After cleaning and clearing debris and waste for months, the owner started delving in to provide a place where locals and visitors can appreciate the history of the area. This textile factory was built in 1933 when Japanese colonial rule was established and in the beginning was made up of just four spaces. Four more spaces were added on over time and the owner is hoping to take it back to when it was just as big. Made of Japanese cedar, the buildings are strong and the wood is now quite difficult to get a hold of. Every space is supposed to be installation art and appreciated. The main space has great blue light filtering in from the skylights and is definitely the most complete of all of the spaces at the moment. Visit now and then head back in a few months time to see what has been added and installed. That’s what I’ll be doing.

# Factory to cafe since 1933





"The building, which had been badly demolished, met its current owner and became a huge work of art."

**MAYO KOREA:** Ganghwa was a city of textiles. Until the 1970s, it was so great that it was comparable to Daegu. Simdo textile fabrics, Peace fabrics, and Ehwa fabrics were all renowned at the time. The number of workers at the textile factory reached some 4,000 in Ganghwa-eup alone. However, with modern textile factories built around Daegu and the emergence of man-made fabrics such as nylon, the Ganghwa textile industry is on the decline. Workers and factory machines left the island one by one.

At present, only about 10 Sochang factories are connected by domestic handicrafts. The factories of which weaving machines were so loud were trapped in time, losing their function. Some were left as abandoned, and some remained only of the building. Others have transformed into cultural spaces by meeting new owners. Joyang Bangjik textile is one of them.

Founded in 1933 as domestic capital, Joyang Textile was the first rayon factory in Ganghwa. With the opening of the Joyang textile industry, the Ganghwa textile industry has changed from domestic handicraft to mechanization and has grown in size. As the fabric of Ganghwa fell over the years, the company stopped operating. The building was reduced to a deserted house through a pickled radish factory and a salted fish factory.

The building, which had been badly demolished, met its current owner and became a huge work of art. The story of the time was left in various places by utilizing the factory structure and the structure of over 990 square metre. It sells drinks and cakes, but it's overwhelming to see how big the scale itself is. The crumbling wall became a fine art gallery and a movie theater, and the long workbench was turned into a coffee table. The space where machines and people left was filled with antiques found in China and Europe. The British-made door with broken windows, a round mirror on an old Czech train were placed naturally as if it had been there.









August 22, 2020



# 백 금 당

## Baekgeumdang

319, 3-17 Canal-ro,  
Cheongra-dong, Seo-gu,  
Incheon, South Korea

**ALLISON NEEDELS:** Imagine that it's one of those rainy days where the rain is never quite a downpour, but it also never seems to cease. From the moment you wake up on your pillow to the second you fall back on it, the constant sound of pitter-patter has followed you. That was the day when I found Baekgeumdang, an accidental discovery on the way to get some bibimbap. It was also (magically) the most suitable kind of weather for this café, and you'll soon find out why.

Baekmidang is 150% my style, which means that it one or more of the following things: Minimalist, earthy, vintage, and scandanavian.

Baekmadang checks two off of this list: minimalist and vintage. Those are two that don't often go hand-in-hand, as 'vintage' is considered



to mean a mini-museum in most places these days. However, this café does the combination justice. With its tall white walls and beautifully paneled windows, one truly feels transported to an early 20th-century tea party.

The tables are evenly spaced out to make every seat feel private. Additionally, they vary in size so that you don't have to worry about whether a larger party will come in and you'll be forced to move (anxiety problems, hey ho). There is one private couch near the bathroom, so if you're looking for some quiet time, make sure you grab this whenever it's open.

The actual café is open as well, so the baristas are always visible to curious eyes. I'm a fan of open layouts as they give the customers a sense of comfort to be able to see where their food and drink come from.

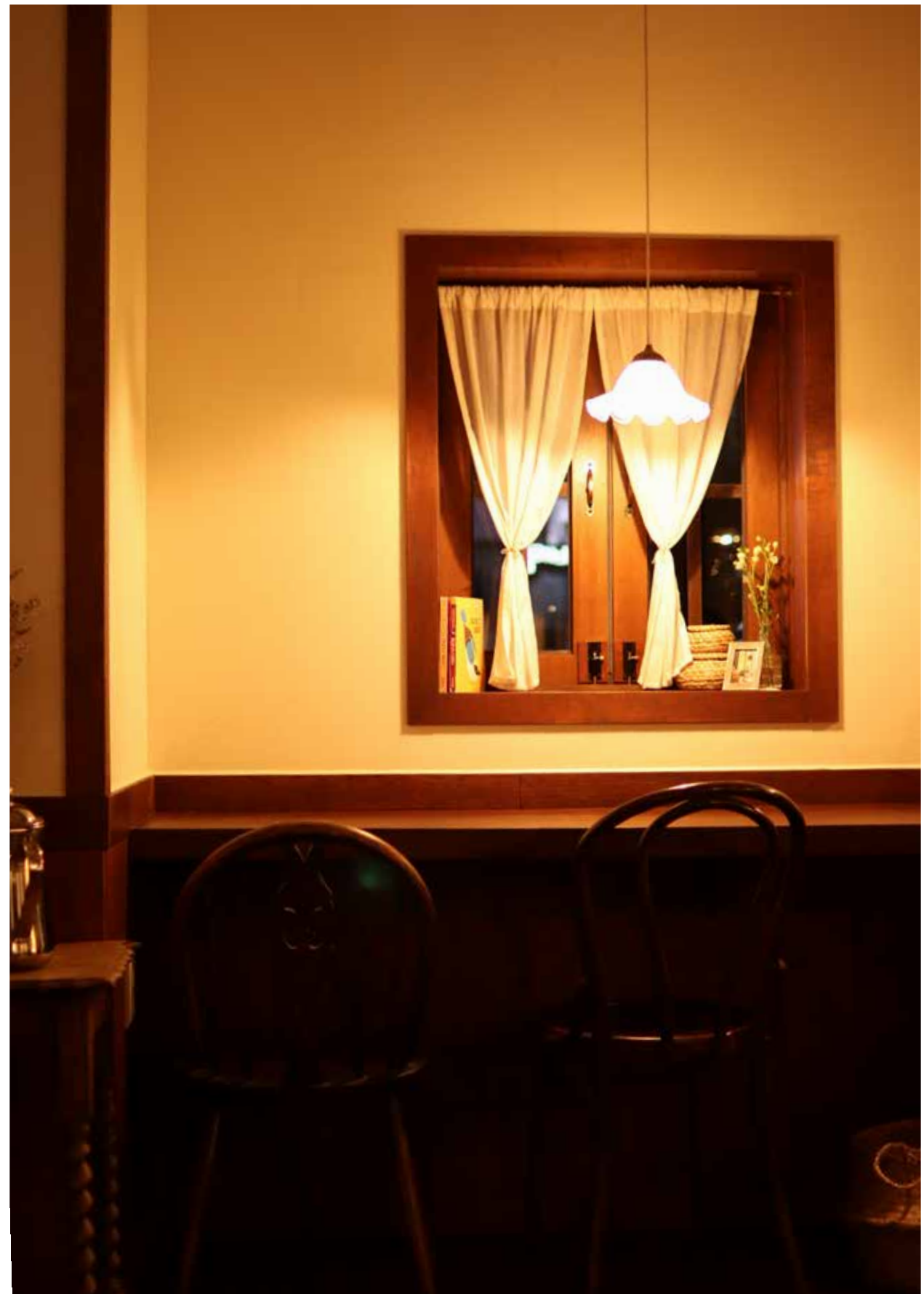
Oh, and one last thing.. keep an eye out for all of the bird-dog hybrid toys around the café. Somehow, these strange little creatures seem to fit in just fine.

If you're looking for a cozy place for a deep chat or to get some work done, Baekgeumdang is one of my top choices. Spare some time for a day trip outside of Seoul, or make this your local favorite spot if you're in the area. If you're a vintage lover like myself, maybe consider this a place for larger gatherings like embroidery classes, tea parties, or study sessions. Baekgeumdang is sure to satisfy.

**IFEZ:** Located in the Incheon Free Economic Zone in the City of Cheongna, this is a cozy cafe that is sure to delight your taste buds.

In front of the cafe, you will see a small little sign in Chinese characters. This reads Baek-Geum-Dang. The wooden door gives you a feeling of warmth even before you enter in.

Once you enter, it is a lot more spacious that it is looks from the outside. There is a table that can seat three located next to the window in the doorway. This we would say is one of the best spots. It is quite romantic. Once you are ready to order, there is a menu located up at the front. There are times where different desserts are featured here, so if you have a sweet tooth, you can see what pastries or cakes are available. There is a good selection of items to choose on







the menu as well. On certain menu items you will notice a star next to it. This means that it is a popular item.

Once you have ordered, a simple but nice touch is that they will bring steamed towels to your table. The drinks are quite delicious as well. The Royal Milk Tea is a mix of a black tea and milk. Sweetened just a little, this is a delightful drink.

One of the menu items that we really wanted to share with you today is their signature dish, the BaekGeumDang cake. This is made to order, so if you order this, it will take about 10-15 minutes. It is absolutely delicious and melts in your mouth. It is a pancake topped with a sweet cream. Everything from the look of it to the sweet taste makes you feel good.







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