

One Night in Seoul. Let the locals suggest some fun ways to spend it

Cho Minsuk, architect

Koreans love practically everything that comes out of the sea, and the best selection of live seafood can be found at **Noryangjin**, tel: (82-2) 813 3441, the fish market near Yoido Island. It's an enormous concrete building with row upon row of fishmongers hawking their wares. If you don't want to tote the day's catch home, you can take it to one of the many restaurants adjacent to the building and have your food cooked on the spot. Drinks and a meal will only set you back about \$20. The restaurants stay open until midnight, which leaves you plenty of time to hit another gritty part of Seoul: **Dongdaemun Market**. This is a mixture of shopping malls and retail and wholesale stalls in their hundreds. Call the Tourist Information Center in Dongdaemun, tel: (82-2) 2236 9135, if you have queries. It takes about 20 minutes by taxi to get there from Noryangjin, and if you're looking for cheap sneakers and inexpensive clothing, this is the place to

go. You can haggle to the wee hours of the morning. For a nightcap, head to **Itaewon**, near the U.S. military base, where there are plenty of bars and clubs.

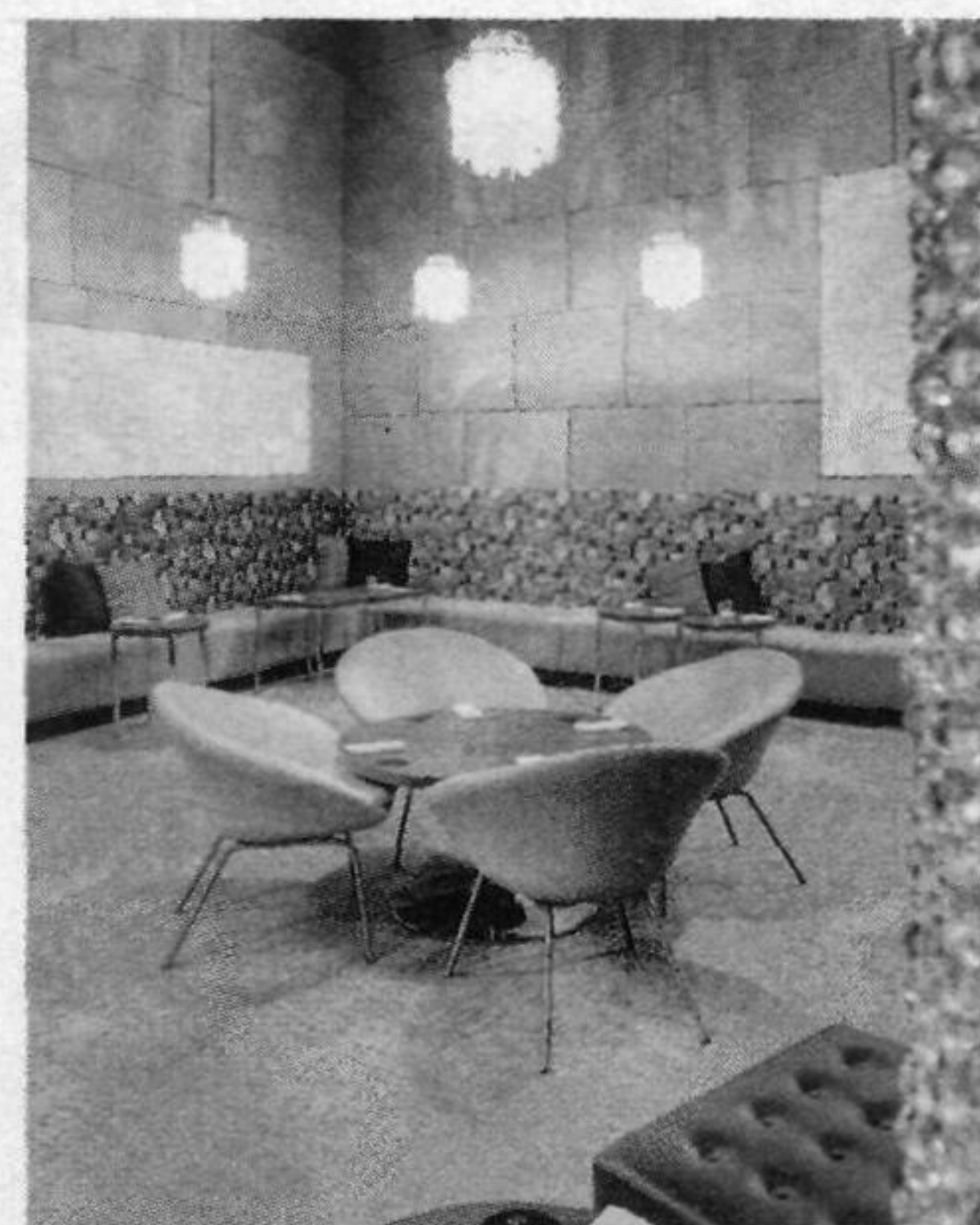
Han Heekyoung, counselor for new residents, Seoul Metropolitan Government

Go to **Lotte World**, tel: (82-2) 411 2000, a giant indoor and outdoor amusement park that's not too dissimilar to Disneyland. It's only about a 20-minute subway ride from downtown Seoul—you get off at Jamshil Station—and it has plenty of great rides and things to do for children and adults alike. If you can, visit on a weekday to avoid the crowds and the long queues. After 5 p.m., admission to the park is cut from around \$27 to about \$23. You can still fit plenty in as the park stays open till 11 p.m., and there are lots of restaurants to choose from for dinner. After that, jump back on the train and head to **Cheonggyecheon** for a stroll along the 3.6-mile (5.8-km) stream near the presidential

palace and Seoul City Hall. It's lit until 11 p.m. and there's an abundance of cafés by the stream if you need some caffeine to keep you going. If you still have energy, how about some karaoke? Hop on the subway again and go to the **Gangnam** station, taking exit No. 6. Behind the Giordano clothing shop there are plenty of good *noribong*, or karaoke rooms, where you can belt out a tune.

Lee Kyungho, Taekwondo referee

Start at **Toksugu Palace** in front of Seoul City Hall. Stroll down the footpath along the palace wall for a few minutes and on the left side of the road you will see the **Seoul Museum of Art**, tel: (82-2) 2124 8800. It's open until 6 p.m. on weekends and holidays during the winter months and has a wonderful traditional and contemporary art collection. After that, travel a few minutes further down the road to the **Chongdong Theater**, tel: (82-2) 751 1500, and you can take in a traditional Korean performing art such as *pansori*, or Korean opera. It's a good idea to call ahead to make a reservation. There are also plenty of inexpensive good restaurants in the area that serve up popular Korean dishes. —WITH REPORTING BY JENNIFER VEALE/SEOUL



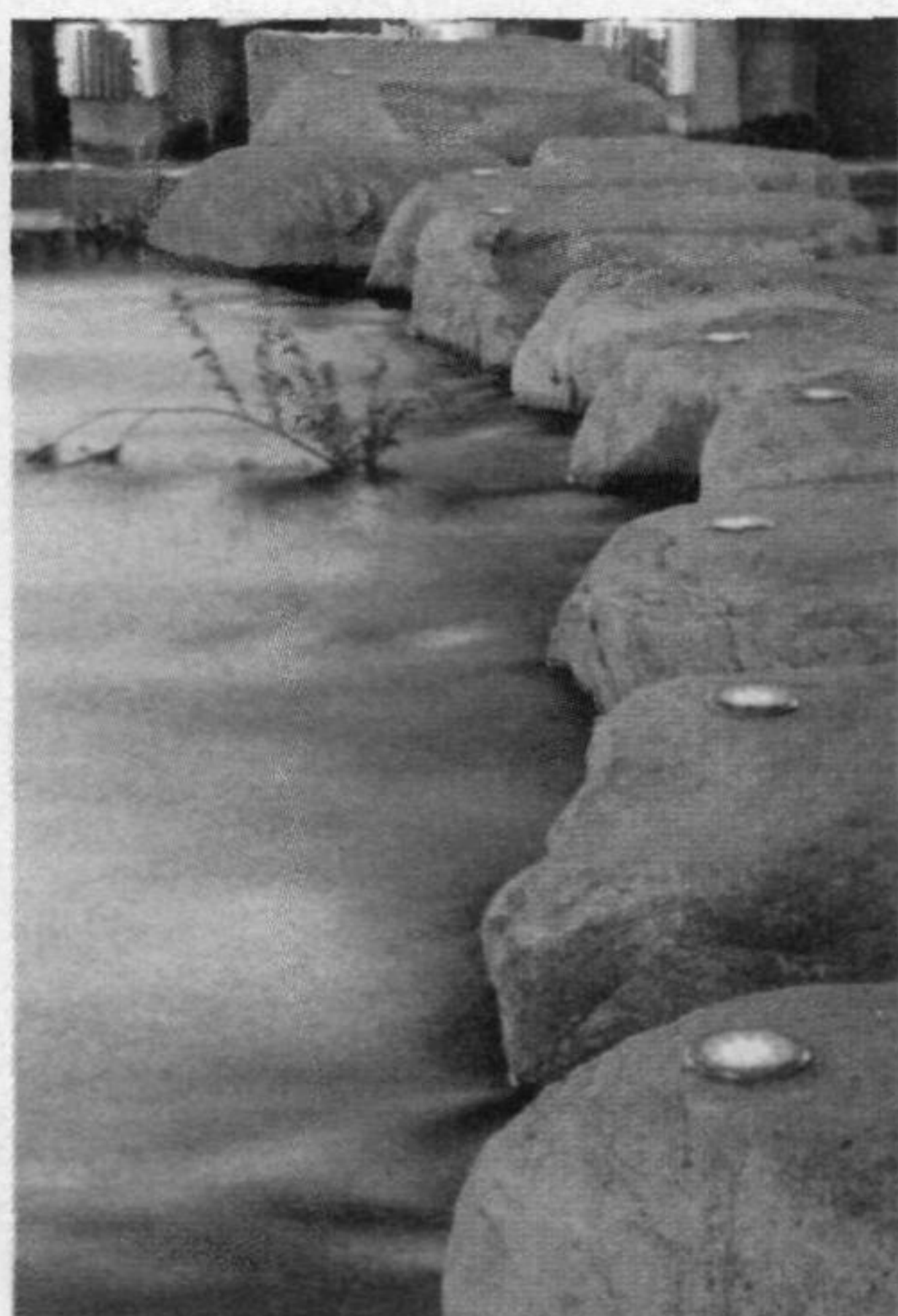
AMUSE BOUCHE

Bearing Fruit

TOKYO'S ROPPONGI ISN'T THE neighborhood it used to be. The sleaze has gone, replaced by major urban-renewal projects, such as the mega shopping complexes Roppongi Hills and Tokyo Midtown. There's also a hefty dose of culture in what's being branded the "Roppongi Art Triangle," with the three points being the Mori Art Museum, the National Art Center and the Suntory Museum of Art.

Fitting in perfectly with the district's upscale makeover is 57, tel: (81-3) 5775 7857, a New York-style dining bar that mixes the Big Apple with the Big Mikan (satsuma orange), as Tokyo is sometimes called. A high-ceilinged space—an anomaly compared with the usually cramped nightspots the city is known for—is tastefully divided into smaller and more intimate zones, from lounge and dining areas to an invitation-only VIP room for those can't-be-disturbed celebs.

Billing the restaurant as a modern chophouse, chef Fumio Yonezawa has produced a chic take on hearty fare—the root beer-braised short ribs are a must, as is the grilled chicken with *kabocha* puree and jalapeño. Cocktails run the range from classic to creative. Rose and plum liquors are used liberally in drinks like Broadway Rose (rose liqueur and sparkling wine) and Central Park (plum liqueur, vodka, mango juice and chili). But the most popular cocktails are the 57 martini, flavored with Grand Marnier, and the Big Apple martini, made with apple schnapps. Rarely have apples and oranges complemented each other so refreshingly. —BY JEAN SNOW



Seoul searching

Clockwise from top left: Cheonggyecheon, the Seoul Museum of Art and Seoul City Hall

