

"Toilet theme park" opens in South Korea

11th November, 2012



A city in South Korea has added a new attraction to its cultural landscape - the world's first "toilet theme park". The Restroom Cultural Park in the city of Suwon is

proving a huge hit with locals and tourists alike. The latest tourist site is dedicated to the memory of former city mayor Sim Jae-duck, affectionately known as "Mr Toilet". He believed the toilet is a very important and under-appreciated aspect of world culture. Visitors to the park can admire its toilet-bowl-shaped exhibition hall as well as dozens of bronze statues in various toilet positions. They can even sit on Mr Sim's original toilet, which includes a full-length glass door that mists up when it is being used.

Suwon has become well known for the promotion of toilet culture. The city attracts toilet-related artwork from around the world to its galleries. It famously hosts the Golden Poop Art Festival - a celebration of one of the calls of nature. The city also lists dozens of its own public toilets as tourist attractions on its website. Sim Jae-duck's own giant, toilet-shaped house, now a museum, should be the must-see for enthusiasts. Mr Sim's fascination with toilets supposedly began because he was born in the smallest room of his mother's house. He said in 2007: "The toilet...can save humankind from diseases [and is] a place for introspection. The toilet is also a central living place that possesses culture."

Sources: metro.co.uk / BBC / The Guardian

Writing

The toilet is one of the greatest inventions in history but it is always under-appreciated.
Discuss

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

cultural landscape / theme park / a huge hit / world culture / exhibition hall / positions / promotion / artwork / festivals / public toilets / toilet-shaped house / introspection

True / False

- a) The world's second theme park about toilets opened in South Korea. T / F
- b) The theme park is liked by tourists and local people. T / F
- c) The theme park was inspired by an ex-mayor known as "Mr Toilet". T / F
- d) The theme park has a toilet-bowl-shaped exhibition hall. T / F
- e) The city of Suwon hosts the Golden Toilet Art Carnival every year. T / F
- f) One of the city's top attractions is a toilet-shaped house. T / F
- g) Reports are the former city mayor was born in a restroom. T / F
- h) The ex-mayor said the toilet aided thinking and disease prevention. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. proving | a. warmheartedly |
| 2. hit | b. holds |
| 3. affectionately | c. valued |
| 4. appreciated | d. steams / fogs |
| 5. mists | e. turning out to be |
| 6. promotion | f. fans |
| 7. hosts | g. tourist sites |
| 8. attractions | h. thought / reflection |
| 9. enthusiasts | i. encouragement |
| 10. introspection | j. success |

Discussion - Student A

- a) What is toilet culture?
- b) What do you think happens at the Golden Poop Art Festival?
- c) Do you have a favourite or hated toilet?
- d) What new exhibitions could the park have?
- e) What design features might a toilet-shaped house have?
- f) What do you think Sim Jae-duck might have thought about this park?
- g) Should the world know more about sanitation and how the lack of toilets kills thousands of people every year?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the people who made the park?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. added a new attraction to | a. of former city mayor |
| 2. a huge hit with locals and tourists | b. humankind from diseases |
| 3. dedicated to the memory | c. mists up |
| 4. under- | d. related artwork |
| 5. a full-length glass door that | e. of nature |
| 6. The city attracts toilet- | f. alike |
| 7. a celebration of one of the calls | g. introspection |
| 8. the must- | h. its cultural landscape |
| 9. The toilet can save | i. see for enthusiasts |
| 10. a place for | j. appreciated |

Discussion – Student B

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'toilet'?
- What do you think of a toilet theme park?
- What do you think you would see at the Restroom Cultural Park?
- How interested are you in visiting this park?
- Do you think other toilet theme parks will open around the world?
- What can the park do to attract more visitors?
- Would you like your town to be well known for a toilet theme park?
- Do you think you would admire the toilet-bowl-shaped exhibition hall?

Spelling

- a new attraction to its cultural pealncasd
- rgpvino a huge hit with locals
- dcieeadtd to the memory of former city mayor
- very important and under-tpaecpradie
- dozens of bronze sutetas
- a flul-englht glass door
- well known for the oipnomort of toilet culture
- a ialebetncro of one of the calls of nature
- the must-see for itaushssten
- Sim's tnfscioaain with toilets
- save mukaihdnn from diseases
- a central living place that osepsesss culture

Answers – Synonym Match

| | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. e | 2. j | 3. a | 4. c | 5. d |
| 6. i | 7. b | 8. g | 9. f | 10. h |

Role Play

The mayor of the city - You are very happy with the new theme park. Think of three reasons why. You don't like people who say negative things about the theme park. You believe it will be one of Korea's biggest attractions. Your city will be famous around the world and that will bring in lots of tourist dollars.

An election candidate for mayor - You are shocked the theme park got opened. Think of three reasons why. You believe it deeply embarrasses the city. Your number one election promise is to tear it down. You know the mayor is receiving money secretly from toilet makers. You want to spend city money on a sanitation research park.

Mr Toilet's close friend - You are so proud of Sim Jae-duck. Think of three reasons why. He cared deeply for poor people in the world. He really worried that people died of disease because they had no toilet. The theme park is important to raise global awareness. You want it expanded, with Restroom Cultural Parks built worldwide.

An art lover - You cannot believe anyone can celebrate toilet culture as art. Think of three reasons why. You will provide millions of dollars to change the theme park into a museum for traditional Korean arts. This will bring in more money and make the city famous internationally – for a good reason.

Speaking

Rank these various names for "toilet" and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| • toilet | • little boys' / girls' room |
| • loo (UK) | • lavatory |
| • bathroom (US) | • WC (water closet) |
| • restroom | • powder room |

Answers – True False

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a | F | b | T | c | T | d | T | e | F | f | T | g | T | h | T |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.