

## Culture Page: 3

### KOREAN ONDOL



Traditional Korean rooms have multiple functions. Rooms are not reserved for a specific purpose; there is no definite bedroom or dining room for example. Rather, tables and mats are brought in as needed and meals are carried in from the kitchen. People sit on mats or cushions, and sleep on thick cotton mattresses on the floor. These are rolled up and stored away during the day.

Traditionally, hot air from the kitchen fire was sent under the floors of the rooms to provide heat. This type of underfloor heating is called *Ondol*. Koreans believe that the hot floor sauna is good for health, and this *Ondol* system is widely used for Korean public sauna rooms called *Jjimjilbang* and *Hanjeungmak*. These rooms use thermo-therapy to relax the body.

#### Pairs: Role Play

- **Student A:** You are a European visitor to Korea.  
Ask student B about underfloor heating.
- **Student B:** You are a Korean tour guide.  
Explain to student A about Korean underfloor heating and hot floor saunas.