

Caldera: The Giant Cauldron Formed When the Ground Collapses

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When you look at photos of Heaven Lake (Cheonji) at the summit of Mount Baekdu, you can't help wondering how such a wide, round lake came to sit on top of a high mountain. Since it is the site of a volcanic eruption, it may seem like rainwater simply pooled in a crater, but the landform beneath Heaven Lake actually formed differently from an ordinary crater. It is not a mark left by something blasting out of the ground; it is a place where the ground itself sank downward. This kind of landform is called a "caldera." Simply put, a caldera is "a large, round basin that forms when a volcano expel