



Kim Jong II Birthday Short Tour

TOUR

February 14 – 18/19, 2017
4 nights in the DPRK + 1 on the train

OVERVIEW

Join in the celebrations over one of the biggest holidays in the DPRK's calendar – the 75th birthday of Kim Jong II on February 16!

Join in the celebrations over one of the biggest holidays in the DPRK's calendar – the 75th birthday of Kim Jong II on February 16th. Many special events are expected to take place in Pyongyang over this time such as the Kimjongilia Flower Exhibition, a performance of the Pyongyang Circus and a Mass Dance - come along and join in!

It is also possible to add a 2-night skiing extension to this tour- try out the slopes of North Korea's only ski resort; Masik Pass. Note that this is only possible if exiting the DPRK by train. Please let your tour manager know should you be interested in adding the ski extension.

This tour can be combined with our Mongolia: Land of the Winter Horse Tour (February 19-24).

HIGHLIGHTS

- 75th Birthday Celebrations on February 16th!
- Kumsusan Memorial Palace (Mausoleum of the leaders), captured spy ship USS Pueblo and other Pyongyang highlights
- Panmunjom/DMZ - the border with South Korea

Please note that the itinerary may differ slightly to what is below but your tour leader will do their best to ensure that as much is covered as possible and will also add in extras when there is time such as a visit to a local bar or a funfair. We visit the DPRK regularly and know all the best places to go to make your trip even more unique. We will make the most of your time in the DPRK to guarantee the experience of a lifetime.

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DAILY ITINERARY

FEBRUARY 13 – MONDAY (BRIEFING DAY)

AM

- *Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.*

PM

- **16:00: Our group assembles for a pre-tour group briefing at the Koryo Tours office in Beijing.** This briefing will last approximately one hour and designed so that you will get the most out of your tour. It will cover travel etiquette, safety, and practicalities for travel in the DPRK. Have your last minute questions answered and meet your fellow travelers. *Please be punctual - you can come early, pay any outstanding tour fees and browse our collection of Korean art.*

Overnight: *Hotel in Beijing not included in the tour. Contact us for recommendations near our office!*

FEBRUARY 14 – TUESDAY (ARRIVAL IN PYONGYANG)

AM

- **Free bus** from the Koryo Tours office to Beijing Capital Airport Terminal 2. *Exact time TBC at the pre-tour briefing. Alternatively meet the group at the Air Koryo check-in counter.*

PM

- Flight departure from Beijing on **Air Koryo flight JS 152** at 12:55. *A 1.5 hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option).*
- **Arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport (FNJ)** at 15:25. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides, and transfer to the city.
- **Arch of Triumph** - Massive archway commemorating the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule. Made for the 70th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung in 1982.
- **Mansudae Grand Monument** - Enormous bronze statues of President Kim Il Sung and Leader Kim Jong Il overlooking downtown Pyongyang. A presentation of flowers and bow by the group is customary here (*5 EUR*). Here we will also see the **Chollima Monument**, or 'thousand *ri* (400 km or 250 mile) horse' - a symbol of speed- commemorating the quick rebuilding of the country in the 1950's following the Korean War.

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OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang - home away from home for most (but not all!) foreign visitors to Pyongyang, this 47-story hotel is located on an island in the middle of the Taedong River and offers great views of the city. Comfortable rooms and comprehensive leisure facilities: swimming pool, spa, billiards, bowling, gift shops, tea houses, beer brewed on-site, and a Chinese-run casino.

FEBRUARY 15 – WEDNESDAY (KAESONG & DMZ TOUR)

AM

- Drive south along the 'Reunification Highway' to **Kaesong**, historic capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392) and today located near the Korean Demilitarised Zone. *A 2.5 hour drive.*
- **Panmunjom Truce Village** - Located in the middle of the 4 km wide Demilitarised Zone, Panmunjom is the site of the signing of the 1953 armistice at the end of the Korean War. This is the only location where visitors can directly view soldiers from both sides and the demarcation line dividing Korea. On some days it is possible to enter the hut straddling both Koreas and there cross temporarily into the south.
- **Kaesong Koryo Museum** - Once the Songgyung Academy, a Confucian school, and now a museum on the Koryo Dynasty exhibiting historical objects, statues, pagodas, and porcelain from that era. A UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Kaesong Korean Stamp Exhibition Hall** - Store selling stamps, postcards, local *ginseng*, souvenirs, art, and more! One of the best postcard collections in the country and friendly staff.
- **Traditional Royal Korean Lunch (*pangsanggi*)** - A meal made of 12 dishes served in brass bowls fit for the kings of old. The more dishes, the more distinguished the guest! Traditional Korean 'sweet meat soup' is an option here (*5 EUR*).

PM

- **Old City Walk and South Gate** - A morning stroll through Kaesong's historic district lined with homes dating back to the late Ri Dynasty to the city's historic South Gate.
- Return to Pyongyang. *A 2.5 hour drive.*
- **Golden Lane Bowling Centre** - Where Pyongyang locals go for their ten-pin fix (*2.5 EUR per person per game*). Also has billiards and arcade games.

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Non-bowlers can head next door to the **Kumrung Leisure Centre** for an air gun shooting range (*approximately 6 EUR per 20 round cartridge*) and some of the best coffee in Pyongyang.

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

FEBRUARY 16 – THURSDAY (DPRK NATIONAL HOLIDAY)

DPRK Holiday - Birthday of General Kim Jong Il

AM

- **Kumsusan Palace of the Sun** - Mausoleum of the DPRK leadership where President Kim Il Sung and Leader Kim Jong Il lie in state and the most solemn location on the itinerary. *Please note formal dress is required. Men require collared shirt with tie, dark non-jean pants, and dark shoes. Women require covered shoulders, knee-length dress or pants, and closed toed shoes. The visit will take most of the morning and visitors are asked to bow a number of times inside. This is a state administered site and visits are subject to local conditions. Cancellations are rare but possible.*
- **Revolutionary Martyrs' Cemetery** - Hilltop cemetery with dozens of bronze busts of those who took part in the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule. It is customary to present flowers here.

PM

- **Kimilsungia and Kimjongillia Flower Exhibition** - Exhibit of the two flowers named after the DPRK's leaders and held on the occasion of their respective birthday anniversaries in February and April. See organisations and groups from across society compete to put on the best floral display.
- **Monument to the Party Foundation** - Iconic structure featuring the hammer, sickle, writing brush which represent the workers, farmers, and intellectuals that make up the Worker's Party of Korea.
- **Tower of the Juche Idea** - Iconic tower dedicated to the DPRK's guiding philosophy on the Taedong River. Take the elevator to the top for great views of the city (*elevator ticket is 5 EUR*).
- This afternoon we will have the chance to attend one or more special performances held specially to commemorate the birthday of Kim Jong Il, ranging from the **Paekdusan International Figure Skating Competition** to a **Synchronised Swimming Display, the Symphony Orchestra** or the **State Circus** - all of these performances are stunning and usually involve an entrance fee of *approx. 20 EUR each*.

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- **Mass Dance** – As it's a national holiday, we also expect to see large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

FEBRUARY 17 – FRIDAY (PYONGYANG CITY TOUR)

AM

- **Walk in Central District** - A walk through downtown Pyongyang from the Pyongyang Grand Theatre to Kim Il Sung Square.
- **Kim Il Sung Square** - Pyongyang's central square lined with government ministries, museums, and The Grand People's Study House.
- **Foreign Languages Bookshop** - Store selling Korean publications translated into English, German, French, Russian, Chinese, and Spanish. Also pick up DVDs, postcards, and small works of art.
- **Grand People's Study House** - National library and public university in neo-traditional Korean style building overlooking Kim Il Sung Square. Gain insight into higher education and research in the DPRK and great views of Pyongyang.

PM

- **Pyongyang Metro Tour** - One of the deepest metro systems in the world with stunning artwork reflecting the name of each station. Ride six stations on the Chollima Line.
- **Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum** - We'll tour this world-class museum led by a local museum guide. Renovated in 2012 and it exhibits the Korean War from the DPRK perspective containing artifacts, documents, photos, and lifelike dioramas. The exterior grounds house the War Victory Monument and displays of Korean People's Army Hero Equipment and captures equipment from the US military, including the USS Pueblo. Central to the understanding of the country today and highlight of the trip.
- **Mangyongdae Native House** - Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in beautiful natural surroundings.
- **Mansugyo Beer Bar** - A new standing bar serving seven type of local beer (*0.50 -1 EUR per beer*). Popular with locals after work and on weekends!
- Farewell dinner at South Pyongyang's **Duck Barbecue Restaurant**.

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OVERNIGHT

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FEBRUARY 18 – SATURDAY (DEPARTURE DAY)

*Departure Day from Pyongyang and Return to Beijing by flight or train. Please indicated your preferred exit method upon booking**

AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS 151** at 08:25 with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 09:55. *Please note there is a 50 EUR surcharge for flight return.*

OR

- Train departure by **international sleeper train to Beijing** at 10:10 with scheduled arrival to Beijing Station on Sunday February 19th at 08:30. *We typically book soft sleeper (four beds per cabin) for the return journey. Please note that in some rare instances, soft sleeper tickets may sell out and we will book hard sleeper (six beds per cabin) instead.*

End of Tour

OR

Extend and join our [Mongolia: Land of the Winter Horse Tour](#) (February 19-24) to see the country's breathtaking landscape and traditional life on the grasslands.

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TOUR PACKAGE

INCLUDED

- Flight Beijing - Pyongyang
- Train Pyongyang - Beijing
- All meals on the tour (apart from on the train back to Beijing)
- Hotel accommodation in the DPRK
- A Koryo Tours tour leader, two local Korean guides, and a driver per group
- All transportation in the DPRK

NOT INCLUDED

- DPRK visa fee
- Optional flight back to Beijing at end of the tour
- Optional single room supplement
- Tips for the local Korean guides and driver
- Optional activities such as the lift up the Juche Tower (5 EUR) or a visit to the funfair (approx. 2 EUR entrance fee per person)
- Entry tickets for special events if applicable – for example Pyongyang Circus (approx. 20 EUR per person)
- Meals include a complimentary beer and water, but you will need to purchase extra drinks if needed
- Spending money for souvenirs
- SINUIJU EXTENSION: RMB 50 for the bus across the bridge to Dandong to be paid on the spot to the local guides

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ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Please note that when on tour your day-to-day itinerary may differ to what is advertised above. Your tour leader will ensure, however, that everything available at the time is covered, and replacement options are provided where needed. We will also add in extras when there is time (such as a visit to a local bar or amusement park).
- We visit the DPRK regularly so know all the best places to go, and how to make the most of your days there to guarantee the experience of a lifetime.
- After the tour, we will send out a list of all participants' emails so you can keep in touch, swap photos etc. If you do not wish to be on this list then please let us know.