



## Pyongyang Marathon – 8 Night Tour

### TOUR

April 8<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> 2023

8 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

### OVERVIEW

The highlights of this tour include not just the Pyongyang Marathon where you will run through the streets of Pyongyang against local athletes while being cheered on by thousands of spectators, but also Taekwondo lessons at the national Taekwondo training institute and celebrations for The [Day of the Sun on April 15](#) – the birthday of eternal President Kim Il Sung. Join in with the locals as they celebrate one of North Korea's most significant anniversaries of the year.

This tour will also take you around Pyongyang for a comprehensive tour of the North Korean capital, but also gets you to the lively city of [Pyongsong](#) to visit a local school and to [Nampo](#) on the west coast which is one of the country's industrial centres.

We complete this tour with a trip down south as we head to [Kaesong](#) to tour the historically important city and the infamous [DMZ](#) where you'll experience Panmunjom and the Joint Security Area.

### ► Pyongyang Marathon 2023

The Pyongyang Marathon is a World Athletics' Bronze Label Road Race, and also has AIMS Certification. Join the race and receive the most unique finisher's medal, running shirt, and race certificates available.

Even if you're not a serious runner, the Pyongyang Marathon is an event like no other. It starts and ends in Kim Il Sung Stadium - a stadium filled with over 50,000 North Koreans cheering you on as you finish your race. It's an experience like no other.

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## DAILY ITINERARY

### APRIL 7 - FRIDAY

#### Briefing Day and Train Departure Day

**Pre-Tour Briefing** | *We require all travelers to attend a pre-tour briefing that covers regulations, etiquette, safety, and practicalities for travel in North Korea. The briefing lasts approximately one hour followed by a question and answer session. Please be punctual for the briefing. You can come early, meet your fellow travelers, pay any outstanding tour fees and browse our collection of Korean art. A proper briefing is an essential part of travel to North Korea.*

*For Pyongyang Marathon tours, we will hold several briefings - in the morning for those departing by train in the afternoon, and in the afternoon for those departing by flight the next day.*

#### AM

- *Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.*
- **10:00 | Train Departure** - your briefing will be held at this time in Beijing

#### PM

- **14:00 / 16:00 / 18:00 | Flight Departure** - briefings will be held in the afternoon on this day in Beijing at these times, you only need to attend one briefing (*exact times offered to be confirmed.*)
- **17:00 | Train travellers depart Beijing Station** by domestic sleeper train to [Dandong](#), the Chinese city on the border with the DPRK. Please arrange independent travel to the train station and arrive at least an hour and a half early for the train departure.

**Overnight** | *Hotel in Beijing not included in the tour for those taking the flight the next day. Contact us for recommendations near our office! Those travelling by train will spend the night on the train.*

### APRIL 8 - SATURDAY

*Arrival day in Pyongyang*

#### AM

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- **Train transfer at Dandong Station from overnight sleeper train to the Dandong-Pyongyang local train.** *Our local representative in Dandong will assist with the transfer. Train crosses the China-North Korea border followed by North Korean customs and immigration.*
- **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 JS152** at 12:00 pm. *A 2 hour flight with basic lunch. **Flight times are subject to change***
- **[Arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport \(FNJ\)](#)**. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides and transfer to the city.
- **Train arrival to Pyongyang Railway Station** expected at 6:45 pm.
- **[Kim Il Sung Stadium & Marathon Route Preview](#)** | Visit the stadium where you will start and finish your race, and then drive the marathon route to familiarise yourself with the roads, turning points and toilet stops.
- **[Yanggakdo International Cinema](#)** | Optional screening of *Run and Run*, a DPRK film about marathon runner Yong Ho who faces the physical and mental struggles of marathon participation. After both his father and work unit manager tell him to stop running, he becomes more determined to achieve his marathon dream. The film will be shown at the **Pyongyang International House of Cinema** (*80 RMB entry fee paid on the spot*). A Koryo Tours exclusive and sure to provide you with motivation ahead of the big event!

## 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 and beer brewed on-site.

**APRIL 9 - SUNDAY**

*The big event! The Pyongyang Marathon 2023!*

## AM

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- [The 2023 Pyongyang Marathon](#) | this is your chance to run the streets of Pyongyang in the DPRK's largest annual sports event! Join the Full Marathon, Half Marathon, 10km or 5km race – all of which follow a return course that starts and ends in [Kim Il Sung Stadium](#) in front of a 50,000-strong capacity crowd of local Koreans. ([runner's guide to Kim Il Sung Stadium](#))

The full route, which has been certified by both the IAAF and AIMS, leads right through the city centre, past a number of iconic landmarks, and then out into Pyongyang's less urban districts. Don't miss this incredible opportunity to see more of the capital and interact with people along the course. Prizes are available for the winners of each race.

#### PM

- **Shower, resting time and lunch** | After the ending ceremony of the marathon, we'll be heading back to the hotel to recharge, shower and rest.
- [Munsu Water Park](#) | We'll take a break at this outdoor and indoor water park with water slides, lap pools, and hot tubs. Bar, coffee shop, and shops for non-swimmers (*Entry fee 2 EUR; swimming fee- 10 EUR with suit rental; tennis- 5 EUR*).
- **Local Beer Bar** | Relax at one of Pyongyang's local bars to wrap up an exciting day.

**Overnight** | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

#### APRIL 10 - MONDAY

*Nampo & Pyongsong*

#### AM

- [Nampo](#) | Drive west along the '[Youth Hero Highway](#)' to this port city of Pyongyang on the Taedong River estuary. *A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.*
- [Chongsam-ri Co-operative Farm](#) | The DPRK's most famous and iconic model farm. Visited hundreds of times by Kim Il Sung, the place where the 'Chongsam-ri Method' was developed (they will explain on-site). See how the farming system works, visit a farmhouse, the local shop, kindergarten and see the fields and greenhouses.
- **Local Factory** | Nampo is a major industrial area of the DPRK, we'll visit one of the local factories to see and learn more about the industrial side of the country. We will visit either a [glass factory](#), [mineral water bottling plant](#) or

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if we're lucky the famous [Chollima Steelworks](#). *Please note that factory visits may depend on on-site activities/conditions.*

- [West Sea Barrage](#) | An 8 km concrete, steel, and earthen barrage constructed between the [Taedong River](#) estuary and the West Sea for land reclamation, irrigation, flood prevention, and power generation. It also acts as a ship lock and fish ladder. One of the DPRK's greatest engineering feats.
- **Lunch** | At a local restaurant in Nampo

#### PM

- **Pyongyang** | [Return to the capital city](#). *A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.*
- [Mangyongdae Native House](#) | Birthplace of and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a park-like setting.
- [Kwangbok Department Store](#) | Opportunity to use [Korean currency](#) and shop with the citizens of Pyongyang! Try the snack stand on the first floor for some of Pyongyang's best local eats.
- [Pyongsong](#) | Drive north of Pyongyang to the capital of South Pyongan Province. *A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.*

#### Overnight

[Jangsusan Hotel, Pyongsong](#) | The only hotel in Pyongsong open for tourists and one of the most fun in the whole country! Basic facilities with fairly reliable electricity and hot water. One of the best bartenders in the country mans the bar. Billiards, karaoke, hairdresser, and outdoor eateries in summer.

#### APRIL 11 - TUESDAY

#### *Pyongsong*

#### AM

- **Pyongsong City Square** | Central square of Pyongsong City with statues of the DPRK leadership and flanked by the provincial revolutionary museum. Presentation of flowers customary.
- [Kim Jong Suk Higher Middle School](#) | One of the DPRK's top middle schools for gifted students, tourists are encouraged to help teach an English class!

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- [Konji-ri Revolutionary Site](#) | Location of the headquarters of the Korean People's Army & home of Kim Il Sung during the Korean War. Tour the renovated buildings and learn about life there during the war.
- **Pyongyang** | Drive south back to Pyongyang *A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.*

PM

- [Grand People's Study House](#) | Huge national library and public university housed in a large neo-traditional Korean building overlooking Kim Il Sung Square and the downtown Pyongyang.
- [Pyongyang Schoolchildren's Palace](#) | Tour of one of Pyongyang's centres of extracurricular excellence with study rooms for fine arts, dance, sports, and music, then watch a spectacular performance put on by the students.
- [Duck Barbecue Restaurant](#) | South Pyongyang's famous grilled duck restaurant.

**Overnight** | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

**APRIL 12 - WEDNESDAY**

*Pyongyang City Tour*

AM

- [Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum](#) | 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 artefacts, documents, photos, and lifelike dioramas. The exterior grounds house the War Victory Monument and displays of Korean People's Army Hero Equipment and captured equipment from the US military, including the [USS Pueblo](#). Central to the understanding of the country today and highlight of the trip.
- [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*).
- [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.

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- **Okryugwan** | A meal at Pyongyang's most famous restaurant. Housed in a huge traditional building on the banks of the Taedong River. Okryugwan specialises in Pyongyang Cold Noodles.

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.
- [Arch of Triumph](#) | A massive archway made for the 70th anniversary of the birth of President Kim Il Sung in 1982 and commemorating the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule in 1945. Larger than its counterpart in Paris.
- **Taekwondo Class** | A 60 minute introductory class at the **Taekwondo Arena on Sports Street** to taekwondo the national martial art which all children learn to a certain degree in school.

**Overnight** | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

**APRIL 13 - THURSDAY**

*Pyongyang, Sariwon, Kaesong*

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.*
- [Mansudae Fountain Park](#) | The historic centre of Pyongyang popular with local citizens after school and on weekends. Flanked by examples of ancient, socialist, and modern architecture.
- [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). *Please note this is a government-administered sight and visits are subject to cancellation. Visits are optional and require a certain dress code (close-toed shoes and covered legs and shoulders).* Here we will also see

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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 1950s following the Korean War

#### PM

- **Heading for [Kaesong](#)** | Drive south along the '[Reunification Highway](#)' to the historic capital of the [Koryo Dynasty](#) (918-1392) and today located near the Korean Demilitarised Zone.
- **[Monument to the Three-Charters of National Reunification](#)** | Iconic arch over the Pyongyang-Kaesong Highway dedicated to joint meeting between Koreas, north and south. Also known as the 'Arch of Reunification'.
- **[Sariwon Folk Village and City View](#)** | Mock-up of a traditional Korean town which includes a history museum, food street, and pavilions. There is a small tavern selling *Makkoli*, traditional rice wine. Climb a nearby hill for a view of Sariwon City and the surrounding plains.
- Drive on to Kaesong City
- **[Old City Walk and South Gate](#)** | A stroll from the hotel through Kaesong's historic district lined with homes dating back to the Ri Dynasty from the city's historic South Gate.

**Overnight** | [Minsok Folk Hotel](#), Kaesong. Traditional style hotel where guests sleep on heated floors in Korean style. Housed in beautiful courtyards of Kaesong's old city, structures date back to the Ri Dynasty. Basic bathroom facilities. Hot water not guaranteed and erratic electricity supply - please bring a torch.

#### APRIL 14 - FRIDAY

*Kaesong and the DMZ, return to Pyongyang*

#### AM

- **[Panmunjom Armistice Village and DMZ](#)** | The site of the signing of the 1953 armistice that ended the Korean War and the demarcation line between north and south. On some days it is possible to visit the hut straddling the line, where negotiations between both sides once took place. Here we will be accompanied by military guides from the Korean People's Army.
- **[Kaesong Koryo Museum](#)** | Once the Songgyung Academy, a Confucian school, and now a museum on the Koryo Dynasty exhibiting historical

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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 consisting 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 also an option here (+5 EUR).

#### PM

- [Pakyon Waterfall](#) | Light walking with a picnic lunch in a relaxing wooded area. Local people commonly visit here for picnics and sometimes swimming in the series of pools above the falls.
- **Gwanum Temple** | Located a 30-minute hike, above Pakyon Waterfalls, the temple dates back more than a thousand years and is dedicated to the Buddhist Bodhisattva of Mercy. There is an ornate marble Bodhisattva statue the nearby cave. The current building dates back to the Ri Dynasty and has an interesting tale associated with its construction.
- [Tomb of King Wanggon](#) | Resting place of the founder of the Koryo Dynasty, who died in 943. The tomb is largely reconstructed after looting by the Japanese occupiers and general disrepair. A UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- **Return to Pyongyang** | a 3-hour drive to get us back to the capital in time for evening drinks ahead of the major holiday coming up the next day.

**Overnight** | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

#### APRIL 15 - SATURDAY

*The Day of the Sun, one of the DPRK's largest holidays. April 15, 2023, is the 111th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung's birth.*

*Major events are always expected on April 15th - but the exact nature of them is never confirmed until the day itself. Mass rallies, even a Military Parade are all possible. but we cannot know in advance. We will keep everyone on this tour up to date about all rumours and plans though and will get you as much access as is possible.*

#### AM

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- We start this day with a **guided walk around Pyongyang** - see some street life, some little known spots, unvisited monuments and landmarks - wear some good shoes for this very unusual way to experience the capital city of the DPRK on a major national holiday.
- **Moranbong Park** | We'll take a stroll and have picnic lunch in Pyongyang's central park popular with locals for picnics, dances, and sports. The park is filled with historic pavilions, walls, and monuments- modern and ancient, a few of which are among the traditional 'Eight Great Sights of Pyongyang'.

#### 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 organizations and groups from across society compete to put on the best floral display.
- **Artistic Performance** | Expect to see a performance on the day, while the type of performance is to be confirmed we have been able to see **circus**, musical and other performances on this day, *typically 20-50 EUR per person depending on nature of performance.*
- **Mass Dance** | Large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!
- **Fireworks over the Taedong River** | watch with thousands of locals in Kim Il Sung Square as this holiday comes to an end. Wonderful mingling opportunities in a festive atmosphere

**Overnight** | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

#### APRIL 16 - SUNDAY

*Departure Day from Pyongyang and Return to Beijing by train (no flights on Sunday)*

Train departure by **local train to the Korean-Chinese border** at 10:25, transfer in **Dandong** and onward travel to Beijing with scheduled arrival to **Beijing Station** on Sunday, April 18th at 08:30 am. *For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

*If you do not wish to spend the night on the train then getting off in one of the Chinese cities along the route can be arranged (Dandong, Shenyang). Staying there overnight and then flying to Beijing (or elsewhere) is possible. We can assist with this option.*

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**End of Tour.**

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