



The Liberation Day Tour

TOUR

August 12th - 17th 2024

5 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

OVERVIEW

Head into the DPRK during Liberation Day for what promises to be one of the best travel experiences you'll have ever had!

During this short but action-packed tour, we have a city tour of [Pyongyang](#), visiting all of the must-see attractions, including the [Juche Tower](#) and [Mansudae Grand Monument](#).

Liberation Day 2024 marks the 79th anniversary of the end of Japanese occupation. It is a major public holiday in North Korea and we give you the chance to spend the day joining in the celebrations by hanging out and dancing with the locals in Moranbong Park. As well as the Liberation Day festivities and a city tour of Pyongyang, this tour also includes a day-trip to [Kaesong](#) where we visit the [DMZ](#)! This is the North-South Korean border, labelled as one of the "most dangerous" borders in the world. See for yourself!

Got more time to spare? Stay a couple of days longer for either our [Liberation Day and East Coast Tour](#) or our even longer [Liberation Day and Mt. Paektu Tour](#) and more of North Korea including remote areas, little-visited cities, and some stunning scenery.

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The Experts in Travel to Rather Unusual Destinations.
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DAILY ITINERARY

AUGUST 11 – SUNDAY

***Pre-Tour Briefing |** *We require all travellers 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 travellers, and pay any outstanding tour fees. A proper briefing is an essential part of travel to North Korea.*

For this tour, we will hold two briefings. One in the morning for those departing by train this afternoon and the other in the afternoon for those departing by flight the next day.

AM

- *Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.*
- **10:00 | Briefing for those departing by train.**

PM

- **16:00 | Briefing for those departing by flight.**
- **17:27 | Train travellers depart Beijing Station** by Chinese domestic sleeper train to [Dandong](#), the Chinese city on the border with North Korea. 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.*

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AUGUST 12 – MONDAY

Arrival day in Pyongyang

AM

- **Train transfer at Dandong Station** from overnight sleeper train to Dandong-Pyongyang local. *Our local representative in Dandong will assist with the transfer. Train crosses the [China-North Korea border](#) followed by North Korean customs and immigration.*

PM

- Flight departure from **Beijing Capital International Airport (PEK) Terminal 2** on [Air Koryo](#) flight JS152 at 12:20. *A 1.5-hour flight with basic lunch ([vegetarian option](#) is subject to availability). **Check-in starts 3 hours prior to departure.***
- **Flight arrival to [Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport](#)** (FNJ) at 15:20. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides and transfer to the city.
- **[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.
- **Victory (Sungni) Street** | Walk from Kim Il Sung Square to the [Pyongyang Grand Theatre](#) along one of post-war Pyongyang's oldest streets.
- Train arrival to [Pyongyang Railway Station](#) at 18:45.

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.

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AUGUST 13 - TUESDAY

Pyongyang City Tour

AM

- [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 the [Chollima Monument](#), or 'thousand *ri* (400 km or 250 miles) horse' - a symbol of speed - commemorating the quick rebuilding of the country in the 1950s following the Korean War.
- [Tower of the Juche Idea](#) | Iconic tower on the Taedong River dedicated to the DPRK's guiding philosophy. Take the elevator to the top for 5 EUR for great views of the city.
- [Monument to the Party Foundation](#) | Iconic structure featuring the hammer, sickle, writing brush which make up the emblem of the Worker's Party of Korea and represent workers, farmers, and intellectuals.
- [Okryugwan](#) | A meal at Pyongyang's most famous restaurant. Housed in a huge traditional building on the banks of the Taedong River. Okgyuwan specialises in Pyongyang Cold Noodles.

PM

- [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.
- [Pyongyang Metro Tour](#) | One of the deepest metro systems in the world with stunning artwork reflecting the name of each station. We'll ride six stations on the Chollima Line.
- [Arch of Triumph](#) | Massive archway made for the 70th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung in 1982 and commemorating the liberation of Korea

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from Japanese colonial rule. Larger than its counterpart in Paris.

- [Mansugyo Beer Bar](#) | A beer bar serving seven types of beer. Popular with locals after work and on weekends. Best place to drink pints with local people.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

AUGUST 14 – WEDNESDAY

Historic Kaesong and the DMZ

AM

- Drive 3 hours south along the '[Reunification Highway](#)' to [Kaesong](#), ancient capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392 AD) located near today's Korean Demilitarized Zone with a stop at the [Monument to the Three-Charters of the Reunification](#) an iconic arch over the Pyongyang-Kaesong Highway dedicated to joint meeting between the Koreas, north and south. Also known as the 'Arch of Reunification'.
- [Panmunjom and DMZ](#) | Perhaps the most famous place in the entire country. The iconic manifestation of the tragic division between North and South Korea. The 'truce' village where several huts straddle the Central Military Demarcation Line (de facto border) with soldiers from each side standing guard. A tour here starts with a briefing at the edge of the DMZ, a visit to the Armistice Negotiation Hall and Armistice Signing Hall, seen as symbols of victory over foreign aggression on this side of the line. Then to Panmunjom itself – cross the border inside one of the blue huts, experience the uncanny feeling of crossing the front line of a sad and needless division of one society, and then take a higher view from the Panmun Pavilion looking over the line from above. A Korean People's Army officer will be there to explain their side of things and will willingly pose for some photos too. A completely and utterly unmissable place.
- [Kaesong Koryo Museum \(Songgyungwan Academy\)](#) | A former Confucian school and now a museum on the Koryo Dynasty exhibiting historical objects, statues, pagodas, and porcelain from the time. One of Kaesong's many UNESCO World Heritage Site. The buildings are in Koryo Dynasty style but date back to the early 17th century following their destruction in the Imjin War.
- [Stamp Shop](#) | Store selling stamps, postcards, local ginseng, souvenirs, art, and more. One of the best postcard collections in the country.

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- [Traditional Korean Royal Lunch](#) | Also known as pansanggi, the meal is made up of different dishes served in small brass bowls. The more dishes, the more distinguished the guest!

PM

- Drive to [Sariwon](#) the provincial seat of North Hwanghae Province and a centre of agriculture and industry. *A 2-hour drive.*
- [Migok Co-Operative Farm](#) | Learn about rural life in the DPRK at this farming community on the bucolic plains of Sariwon. Visit the farm's museum, viewpoint, and local home.
- Return to Pyongyang
- [Kaeson Funfair](#) | We'll take on the rides of Pyongyang's newest funfair with the locals: pirate ship, vominator, rollercoaster, bumper cars, arcades, and more. Tickets purchased on the spot (1 EUR entry, 2-7 EUR for rides).

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

AUGUST 15 – THURSDAY – LIBERATION DAY

Liberation Day – the 78th anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule. *On August 15th there will be holiday celebrations in Pyongyang. We expect student-organised mass dances at prominent locations throughout the city, people heading to parks for a leisurely picnic, and performances in the afternoon.*

AM

- [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.
- [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.*

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- [Mt Ryonggak](#) | Enjoy a picnic lunch in this park on the outskirts of Pyongyang and popular with locals. Stretch your legs after lunch with a short hike to the top of Mt Ryonggak itself.

PM

- A ride through Pyongyang from Kwangbok Street to Pyongyang Station on one of the city's [municipal trams](#).
- [Pyongyang Circus \(or other available performance\)](#) | We will leave time this afternoon to try and catch a local performance – either of the Pyongyang Circus, theatre, or a revolutionary opera. Schedules are typically announced only a few weeks before the trip. If no performances are available, we will find an alternative activity in the city. *Tickets to be paid on the spot (from 5-25 EUR) depending on the available performance.*
- [Mass Dance](#) | As it's a national holiday, we expect to see large student-organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!
- **Dinner and sunset boat cruise along the [Taedong River](#)** | We will take a cruise on the Taedong River while having dinner with live music performance and waiting for the fireworks.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

AUGUST 16 – FRIDAY

Pyongyang

AM

- [Mangyongdae Native House](#) | Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a beautiful natural surrounding.
- [Kwangbok Department Store](#) | Exchange for 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.
- [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](#) | Massive archway made for the 70th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung in 1982 and commemorating the liberation of Korea

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from Japanese colonial rule. Larger than its counterpart in Paris. Ascend to the roof of the arch for a rare birds-eye view over this part of the city

PM

- **Ri In Mo Monument** | Bronze statue of Ri In Mo, a long-term unconverted prisoner who spent decades in captivity in the south after being captured during the Korean War. Located on modernist Tongil Street. Ri In Mo is known in the DPRK as 'the incarnation of faith and will'.
- **Pyongyang by foot** - a rare chance to see Pyongyang from street level as we take a long guided stroll around the centre and some of the most fascinating parts of the city. The best way to bring a tour to an end and to get some extra mingling and interaction in with locals. Try a spot of street food, gaze up at the towering Ryugyong Hotel, check out some side streets and shops along the way - a special treat for adventurers to close out this epic tour!
- **Farewell dinner at Arirang Restaurant** | Considered one of Pyongyang's best restaurants serving fantastic Korean food. They also happen to make what some people in the know consider to be the best Makkoli in Pyongyang and served the traditional way.

Overnight | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang

AUGUST 17 - SATURDAY

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

AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS151** at 08:35 with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 09:55.

OR

- Train departure by **train to Beijing** at 10:25 with transfer in Dandong. The scheduled arrival is to **Beijing Station** on Sunday, August 18 at 08:40. For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).

End of Tour

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