



Pyongyang Marathon & Kim Il Sung Birthday Tour from Beijing

TOUR

April 7 – 17/18, 2018
10 nights in the DPRK + 1 on the train

OVERVIEW

The Ultimate Spring tour of North Korea is here! Take part in the amazing and unique Pyongyang Marathon – running around the city, greeting locals, finishing inside a packed stadium, and maybe even winning a prize!

Once again, Koryo Tours is excited to offer the chance for amateur runners to take part in the Pyongyang Marathon 2018! This race can be run either as a full marathon or as a half marathon. There are also 10km and 5km races.

Hundreds of local runners take part as well as some elite foreign runners. Anyone taking part in this tour who wants to watch the marathon instead of take part in it is more than welcome to do so. There will be local football matches taking place in Kim Il Sung stadium after the start of the race, you can be there for this too!

For the truly adventurous traveler, this 10-night tour takes you over to the stunning east coast of DPRK, where you'll visit the port city of Wonsan and have a chance to hike in the mountains of the beautiful but rarely visited Kumgangsan area.

You'll also go south to Kaesong, down to the DMZ, where North and South Korea continue their face-off. This tour also visits the lively town of Pyongsong, where you can jump in on an English Language class at Kim Jong Suk Middle School and see a performance by talented young pupils at Pyongsong Conservatory of Performing Arts.

April 15th is one of the biggest holidays in the DPRK calendar – the 106th birthday of President Kim Il Sung. We'll make sure that we're in Pyongyang this day, soaking up the atmosphere and joining in the birthday celebrations with the locals!

HIGHLIGHTS

- PYONGYANG MARATHON!
- Pyongyang City Tour
- Kaesong and the DMZ
- Port City of Wonsan on the East Coast
- The beautiful mountains of Kumgangsan

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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.

DAILY ITINERARY

APRIL 6 – FRIDAY (BRIEFING DAY)

AM

- *Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.*

PM

- **Our group assembles for a mandatory pre-tour group briefing in Beijing (several times will be offered and the exact location is TBC).** 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!*

APRIL 7 – SATURDAY (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 JS152** at 1:00pm. *A 1.5 hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option).*
- **Arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport (FNJ)** at TBC time. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides, and transfer to the city.

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- **Optional screening of *Comrade Kim Goes Flying***, a DPRK film about a young rural coal miner, Kim Yong Mi, who dreams of becoming a trapeze artist at the Pyongyang Circus. Her plans are complicated by the arrogant trapeze star Pak Jang Phil who believes miners belong underground and not in the air. North Korea's first "girl power" movie about a young woman achieving her dreams. Produced and directed by a British, Belgian, and Korean team. The film is 78 minutes long and will be shown at the **Pyongyang International House of Cinema**, a short distance from our hotel. (100 RMB entry fee). A Koryo Tours Exclusive!

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.

APRIL 8 – SUNDAY (PYONGYANG MARATHON)

The big event! The Pyongyang Marathon 2018!

AM

- **The 2018 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.

The full route, which has been certified by the IAAF, 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

- **Walk in the city centre** – After lunch and a rest at the hotel, we'll continue the tour with a walk in the city centre to cool down.
- **Local Beer Bar** - Relax at a local bar to wrap up an exciting day.

OVERNIGHT

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APRIL 9 – MONDAY (PYONGYANG CITY TOUR)

AM

- **Mangyongdae Native House** - Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in what is today a quiet suburban park.
- **Tower of the Juche Idea** - The tallest stone monument in the world and dedicated to the DPRK's guiding philosophy. Take the elevator to the top (5 *EUR ticket*) for a panoramic view of Pyongyang.
- **Monument to the Party Foundation** – Iconic stone hammer, sickle, writing brush representing the workers, farmers, and intellectuals which make up the Worker's Party of Korea.
- **Kim Il Sung Square** - Pyongyang's central square lined with government ministries, museum and The Grand People's Study House.
- **Foreign Languages Bookshop** - Store selling Korean publications translated into English, German, French, Russian, Chinese, Spanish, and Arabic.

PM

- **Pyongyang Metro Tour** - One of the deepest metro systems in the world with artwork reflecting the name of each station. Ride six stations on the Chollima Line.
- **Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum** - World-class museum exhibiting the DPRK perspective of the Korean War with artifacts, documents, photos, and lifelike dioramas. The exterior grounds house the **War Victory Monument** and captured equipment from the US military, including the **USS Pueblo**. Central to understanding the country today.
- Drive 160 km south the 'Reunification Highway' to **Kaesong**, historic capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392) and today located near the Korean Demilitarised Zone. *2.5 hour drive*

OVERNIGHT

Janamsan Hotel, Kaesong – A modest but comfortable 1970's Soviet-style accommodation with friendly staff, restaurant, bar and bookshop.

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APRIL 10 – TUESDAY (KAESONG CITY & DMZ TOUR)

AM

- **Panmunjom Armistice Village and DMZ** - The site of the signing of the 1953 armistice that ended the Korean War and 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 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

- Drive back to **Pyongyang** with a stop at the **Monument to the Three Charters of Reunification**, a large stone archway over the highway memorializing joint agreements between north and south. *A 2.5 hour drive.*
- **Golden Lanes Bowling Centre** - Where Pyongyang locals go for their ten-pin fix (*2.5 EUR per person per game*). Also has billiards and arcade games. Non-bowlers can head next door to the **Kumrung Leisure Centre** for an air gun shooting range (*approximately 6 EUR for target and pellets*) and some of the best coffee in Pyongyang.

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.



APRIL 11 – WEDNESDAY (WONSAN CITY & KOREA'S EAST COAST)

AM

- Drive east across the width of the peninsula to **Wonsan**, a major port city, stopping at scenic spots along the way. *A 4 hour drive.*
- **Sinpyong Lake Rest Stop** – Known as 'Little Kumgang' this scenic lakeside rest stop is a preview of the scenery to come.
- **Ulim Waterfall** - Hidden amongst the mountains on the road to Wonsan, 'Echo' Waterfall is a scenic stopover to enjoy lunch, stretch your legs, or go for a dip in the pool beneath.

PM

- **Wonsan Agricultural University** – The DPRK's premier agricultural university set among beautiful hillside scenery. Tour the grounds and the neo-Romanesque teaching hall, originally built by Germans living in the area in the early 20th century.
- **Songdown International Schoolchildren's Camp** – A classic socialist summer camp where Korean and international children can spend two weeks learning socialist values and teamwork. Tour the recently renovated dormitories, aquarium, bird house, gymnasium, and more!
- **Kangwon Province Art Gallery** – Small art exhibition selling artwork by local artists.
- **Jangdok Island and Lighthouse** – Take a stroll on the breakwater to a small island in the middle of Wonsan harbor (*1 EUR/USD entry fee*).

OVERNIGHT

Dongmyong Hotel, Wonsan - Waterfront hotel with stunning seaside views of Wonsan Harbor. Limited hours of hot water, bar, billiards, ping-pong, barber shop, beauty salon, dry-sauna, and indoor seawater swimming pool.

APRIL 12 – THURSDAY (MT KUMGANG)

AM

- Drive along the East Sea to the **Mt. Kumgang**, the 'Diamond Mountain' noted in East Asian history and famous in Korean legend. Home of some of Korea's most spectacular natural landscapes and best hiking. *A 2.5 hour drive.*

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- **Samil Lagoon** – A charming green-water coastal lagoon lined by pine forests. Named for the ‘three-day’ stay (*sam-il*) of a king in days gone-by to take in the full beauty of the area

PM

- **Hiking at Kuryong Waterfall** – An 8 km (round-trip) hike to a scenic waterfall through forests, along mountain streams and by emerald pools. A beautiful place to sit, relax and spend a few hours in nature.

OVERNIGHT

Mt. Kumgang Hotel, Mt. Kumgang - A comfortable hotel with good hot water supply and clean rooms. Top floor bar and karaoke, outdoor balcony barbeque, billiards, gift shops, and small sauna facilities.

APRIL 13 – FRIDAY (RETURN TO PYONGYANG)

AM

- Start back to Pyongyang (*full day drive*) making rest stops along the way.
- **Sijung Lake Beach** – Take a break at this beachside facility on the East Sea. Take a stroll in the sand or go for a swim (*2 EUR entry fee includes shower*).

PM

- Continue drive back to Pyongyang.

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 14 – SATURDAY (PYONGYANG CITY TOUR)

AM

- **Grand People’s Study House** - Huge national library and public university housed a large neo-traditional Korean building overlooking Kim Il Sung Square and the downtown Pyongyang.
- **Kwangbok Supermarket** - Large department store selling Korean-made and foreign goods. Here it is possible to exchange foreign currency for Korean *won* to shop with the locals
- **City Tram Ride** – A ride through Pyongyang on one of city’s trams from Kwangbok Street.

PM

- **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.
- **Future Street** - Walk in the newly built residential district for scientists and academics to view its unique modern architecture.
- **Pyongyang Circus** – A one hour circus show including clowns, trapeze artists, jugglers, and much more (*optional; 20 EUR entry fee*).
- **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.

APRIL 15 – SUNDAY (BIRTHDAY OF KIM IL SUNG)

The Day of the Sun, one of the DPRK's largest holidays. April 15, 2017 is the 105th anniversary of the birthday of President Kim Il Sung.

AM

- **Kumsusan Palace of the Sun** - Mausoleum of the DPRK leadership where President Kim Il Sung and Leader Kim Jong Il lie in state. Formal dress is required here. Men require a collared shirt and tie with 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. *Please note that 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
- **Mansudae Fountain Park** - The historic centre of Pyongyang popular with local citizens after school and on weekends. Flanked by examples of ancient and modern architecture from different eras.

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- **Mansudae Grand Monument** - Enormous bronze statues of President Kim Il Sung and Leader Kim Jong Il overlooking the centre of Pyongyang. A presentation of flowers and bow by the group is customary here. See the nearby **Chollima Monument** of a mythical horse said to be able to run a 'thousand *li* (400 km or 250 miles)'. The Chollima was symbol of the movement to rebuild the country following the devastation of the Korean War and today has come to represent speed and quality.

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.
- **Moranbong Park** – We'll take a stroll 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'.
- **Mass Dance** – Large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!
- Drive north to **Pyongsong**, a satellite city of Pyongyang and centre of scientific research for the country. *45 minute to 1 hour drive*.

OVERNIGHT

Jangsusan Hotel, Pyongsong - The only hotel in Pyongsong open for tourists, an excellent bar with one of the best bartenders in the DPRK makes this hotel one of the most fun in the whole country! Basic facilities with fairly reliable electricity and hot water. Billiards, karaoke, haircut, and outdoor eateries in summer.

APRIL 16 – MONDAY (PYONGSONG CITY TOUR)

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!
- **Pyongsong Arts School** - Local school focusing on talents in the performing and visual arts, see an excellent performance here.

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PM

- **Paeksong Revolutionary Site** - Location of Kim Il Sung University during the Korean war. Tour the old classrooms and hear about how students lived during the war.
- Return to Pyongyang. *45 minute to 1 hour drive.*
- **Maeri Shooting Range** – Shoot at targets with low caliber sports pistols and rifles in the facility that trained Olympic medalists. Pay by the bullet (*0.50 – 1 EUR*) depending on the type of gun and target.
- Farewell group dinner at South Pyongyang's famous **Pizza Restaurant** – Dinner at one of Pyongyang's Italian eateries (there are three). *Pizzas range between 5-12 EUR each.*

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 17 – TUESDAY (DEPARTURE DAY)

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

AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS151** with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 10:00am. *Please note there is a 50 EUR surcharge for flight return.*

OR

- Train departure by **local train to the Korean-Chinese border** at 10:10, transfer in **Dandong** and onward travel to Beijing with scheduled arrival to **Beijing Station** on Wednesday April 18th 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

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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

- Marathon registration fees - to be paid in cash (clean USD notes only) before the race in Pyongyang, amounts are 5 km or 10 km: \$70 USD / Half Marathon: \$100 USD / Full Marathon: \$150 USD
- 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

- Groups will be in the experienced hands of two or three local Korean guides. Furthermore, for groups of 10 or more, a member of the Koryo Tours team will accompany the trip.
- 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.

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