



4 Night Budget Pyongyang Marathon Tour

TOUR

April 5 – 9, 2019
4 nights in the DPRK

OVERVIEW

Our budget tour allows you to enter the Pyongyang Marathon and see the DMZ - starting and ending the tour in Dandong or Beijing!

This tour -- travelling in and out by train, from and to the Chinese border city of Dandong or the capital Beijing -- is ideal for those on a budget who are looking to run the Pyongyang Marathon, see the highlights of Pyongyang, and visit historic Kaesong & the DMZ.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 2019 PYONGYANG MARATHON!
- Panmunjom & the DMZ
- Historic Kaesong
- Pyongyang City Tour

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.

TRANSPORT OPTIONS

Please read the following for important information about your transport options for this tour, and how each one related to the visa requirements for China. The default option is round-trip train travel from Dandong to Pyongyang, and back again. Beijing-Pyongyang train tickets & flight upgrades are available. See below for more details.

Option 1 // Round-trip train from Dandong (Dandong-Pyongyang-Dandong): An approximate 7-hour train journey through rural North Korea. This is the default transport option departing from Dandong which requires you to make your own way to & from Dandong with the mandatory pre tour briefing being conducted in Dandong on the evening before departure. [+0 EUR]

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Option 2 // Round-trip train from Beijing (Beijing-Pyongyang-Beijing): A 23-hour train journey each way in hard-sleeper class (six bunks per berth) with a transfer in Dandong, China. This option is for those travelling on a budget with time to spare (and train enthusiasts, of course). This requires you to complete your pre-tour briefing in Beijing the morning before boarding the train. [+120 EUR]

Option 3 // Flight departure (Beijing-Pyongyang // 90 minutes) + train return (Pyongyang-Beijing // 23 hours): We highly recommend this option: it maximizes your time and sightseeing opportunities; lets you experience both Air Koryo and the international train; plus allows you to start the trip rested, while taking the leisurely route home. In our view, this is the most comprehensive way to visit the DPRK. [+319 EUR]

Option 4 // Train departure (Beijing-Pyongyang // 23 hours) + flight return (Pyongyang-Beijing // 90 minutes): An alternative to Option 3. This option is ideal for those wishing to take the train one-way of the journey, but need to transit through Beijing by flight on their return. [+319 EUR]

Option 5 // Round-trip flight (Beijing-Pyongyang-Beijing): Choosing the round-trip flight option gets you between Beijing and Pyongyang in 1.5 hours (each way), and lets you experience the infamous Air Koryo 'burger' twice! For many nationalities, this also allows for the possibility of transiting in Beijing, rather than having to get a Chinese visa (please see below). This option is for those with little time to spare, travelers wanting simply to transit through China, or aviation enthusiasts. [+419 EUR]

VISA INFORMATION

We arrange your North Korean visa as part of your tour package [+50 EUR]. However, given the tour starts and finishes in China you may also need to arrange a Chinese visa for your trip obtained at a Chinese diplomatic mission abroad. We recommend obtaining at least a double-entry Chinese visa for your trip.

Over 50 nationalities can obtain a visa-waiver for up to 144 hours when in transit through Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) using direct international flights. Most other nationalities can transit for up to 24 hours.

Please be sure to check your visa status for travel through China while planning your trip. We are unable to arrange Chinese visas, but can provide documentation in support of visa applications upon payment of a tour deposit.

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DAILY ITINERARY

APRIL 4 – THURSDAY (PRE-TOUR BRIEFING)

***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 travellers, 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 to suit each of the transport entry & exit options. Please read below for further information.

AM

- For those departing from Beijing by train your briefing will be held in the morning on this day in Beijing, expected time is 10:00am (*to be confirmed*)

PM

- For those departing from Beijing by flight your briefing will be held in the afternoon on this day in Beijing, expected times are 2pm, 4pm and 6pm (*to be confirmed*)
- **17:00** // Train travelers departing from Beijing will depart 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.
- For those departing from Dandong by train your briefing will be held in the evening on this day in Dandong, expected around 6pm-7pm (*exact location & time subject to final confirmation*)

Overnight // Hotel in Beijing/Dandong not included in the tour.

APRIL 5 – FRIDAY (ARRIVAL IN PYONGYANG)

AM

- Meet your Koryo Tours tour guide and fellow travelers at Dandong Railway Station (exact time and place TBC) before getting on the train to Pyongyang.

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- After **crossing the border from Dandong to Sinuiju** by train, customs officials board the train for immigration and customs checks before the train continues its journey to Pyongyang.
- **Flight takers, there will be a 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 - flight times are TBC and subject to change.** Currently expected to depart at 12:00 pm. A *1.5-hour flight with basic lunch.*
- **Arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport (FNJ).** DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides and transfer to the city.
- An approx. 5-hour long train journey will take you through the Korean countryside to **Pyongyang Railway Station** with expected arrival at 6:45pm, where you will meet your guides and then transfer to your hotel for check in & dinner.

Overnight:

Sosan Hotel, Pyongyang // A sports-themed hotel located in West Pyongyang's Sports Village. Sport shop, bookstore, numerous bars, spa and small gym. Renovated in 2015.

APRIL 6 – SATURDAY (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.
- **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 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 dresscode (close-toed shoes and covered legs and shoulders).* 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.
- **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.
- **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 artifacts, 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.

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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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** (100 RMB entry fee). A Koryo Tours Exclusive!

Overnight: Sosan Hotel, Pyongyang

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APRIL 7 – SUNDAY (PYONGYANG MARATHON)

The big event! The Pyongyang Marathon 2019!

AM

- **The 2019 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 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.

PM

- **Shower, resting time and lunch //** After the marathon's closing ceremony, we'll be heading back to the hotel to recharge, shower and rest before heading out for a relaxing afternoon in Pyongyang
- **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.
- **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*).
- **Local Beer Bar //** Relax at one of Pyongyang's local bars to wrap up an exciting day.

Overnight: Sosan Hotel, Pyongyang

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APRIL 8 – MONDAY (HISTORIC KAESONG & THE DMZ)

AM

- Drive 160 km south the 'Reunification Highway' to **Kaesong**, the historic capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392) and today located near the Korean Demilitarised Zone. *3 hour drive.*
- **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 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 via **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.
- **Monument to the Three-Charters of the Reunification //** Iconic arch over the Pyongyang-Kaesong Highway dedicated to joint meeting between Koreas, north and south. Also known as the 'Arch of Reunification'.

Overnight: Sosan Hotel, Pyongyang

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APRIL 9 – TUESDAY (DEPARTURE DAY)

AM

- For those opting to fly out, flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS151** with a scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 9:50 am.
- **For those finishing the tour in Dandong** you can go on to explore this fascinating border city, the surrounding areas, or make your own way to Beijing or elsewhere in China. *Expected arrival into Dandong is approximately 5:00 pm local time.*
- **For those finishing the tour in Beijing** you will transfer in **Dandong** for onward travel to Beijing with scheduled arrival to **Beijing Station** on Wednesday April 10th at 08:30. *For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

End of Tour.

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TOUR PACKAGE

INCLUDED

- Return train journey: Dandong – Pyongyang / Pyongyang – Dandong
- All meals on the tour (except for on the train journey in and out)
- Hotel accommodation in the DPRK
- A Koryo Tours tour leader, two local Korean guides, and a driver per group
- All transportation in the DPRK
- Official running shirt, finisher's medal and race certificate

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 single room supplement
- Optional upgrade to Beijing-Pyongyang round-trip train ticket
- Optional Air Koryo flights (one-way or return)
- Tips for the local Korean guides and driver (30-45 EUR total per tourist, recommended)
- 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

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ADDITIONAL NOTES

- Our Budget Marathon Tours are capped at 30 people per group.
- Unless you hold a valid multi entry visa for China at the time of travel, you are required to organise for a double entry visa for China for this tour.
- 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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