



DPRK National Day Tour

TOUR

September 7 – 12/13, 2017
5 nights in the DPRK + 1 on the train

OVERVIEW

Be in Pyongyang for one of the biggest annual holidays: National Day on September 9!

Visit North Korea over one of the biggest annual holidays: National Day on September 9th! As well as joining in with the festivities and celebrations on National Day, our comprehensive city tour of Pyongyang includes must see sights such as the mausoleum of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, and the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum, as well as visiting more local places such as the bustling Kwangbok Supermarket, the only place in Pyongyang where tourists can spend local Won that can be changed at the black market exchange rate.

HIGHLIGHTS

- National Day celebrations on September 9th!
- Kumsusan Memorial Palace of the Sun, Pyongyang Metro, Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum 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

SEPTEMBER 6 – WEDNESDAY (BRIEFING DAY)

AM

- *Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.*

PM

- **Time TBC: 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!*

SEPTEMBER 7 – THURSDAY (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** at 14:05. *A 1.5 hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option).*
- **Arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport (FNJ)** at 16:35. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides, and transfer to the city.

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.

SEPTEMBER 8 – FRIDAY (PYONGYANG CITY TOUR)

AM

- **Mansudae Art Studio** - The DPRK's centre of artistic excellence, where the majority of sculptures, mosaics, and paintings around the country are made. Visit workshops to see artists at work and an exhibition where pieces are sold.
- **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.
- **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.

PM

- **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 captures equipment from the US military, including the USS Pueblo. Central to the understanding of the country today and highlight of the trip.
- **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.
- **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.

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

SEPTEMBER 9 – SATURDAY (NATIONAL DAY)

DPRK Holiday: National Day!

AM

- **Mansudae Fountain Park** - The historic centre of Pyongyang popular with local citizens' afterschool 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). 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.
- **Mangyongdae Native House** - Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a beautiful natural surrounding.
- **Picnic Lunch in Moranbong Park** - We'll take a stroll in Pyongyang's central park popular with locals for picnics, dances, and sports, especially on national holidays. 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

- **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*).
- **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.
- **Mass Dance** – As it's a national holiday, we expect to see one of these - Large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!
- **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. Non-bowlers can head next door to the **Kumrung Leisure Centre** for an airgun shooting range (*approximately 6 EUR per 20 round cartridge*) and some of the best coffee in Pyongyang.

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- **Taedonggang Bar No. 3** - Upscale bar across the street from the Tower of the Juche Idea. There are a variety of beers on tap produced at Pyongyang's Taedonggang Brewery outside of town (2-2.5 EUR per glass).
- **Kaesong 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.

SEPTEMBER 10 – SUNDAY (PYONGYANG CITY TOUR)

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.
- **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.
- **Kim Il Sung Square** - Pyongyang's central square lined with government ministries, museums, and The Grand People's Study House.

PM

- **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*).
- 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.*

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OVERNIGHT

Minsok Folk Hotel - Traditional style hotel where guest sleep on heated floors in Korean-style. Hot water not guaranteed and erratic electric supply - *please bring a torch*. Beautiful setting in Kaesong old city with stream running through the center and Ri dynasty furniture.

SEPTEMBER 11 – MONDAY (KAESONG & DMZ TOUR)

AM

- **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
- **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

- **Concrete Wall and view of DMZ** - View of a complex fortification system erected on the southern boundary of the DMZ accompanied by a military guide. The wall is seen as evidence of intent to permanently divide the nation. A 45 minute drive each way from Kaesong through scenic countryside.
- 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. *2.5 hour drive*

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- Farewell group dinner at South Pyongyang's famous **Duck Barbecue Restaurant**, where you can grill your own meats. The site of many teary eyed farewells.

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

SEPTEMBER 12 – 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** 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 **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 September 13 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

- 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.