



Victory Day Long Tour

TOUR

July 22 – 29/30, 2017
7 nights in the DPRK + 1 on the train

OVERVIEW

Our longer tour to experience Victory Day celebrations as well as seeing more of the DPRK!

July 27th 1953 was the day the Korean War armistice was signed. This occasion is celebrated in North Korea as 'Victory Day' and is a major annual holiday. We will make sure that you're in Pyongyang on Victory Day to join in the celebrations with the locals picnicking in Moran Park, attending a spectacular Mass Dance, and whatever other events are planned on this day. As well as a city tour of Pyongyang, this tour will also get you down to the DMZ, where North and South Korea continue their decades-old face-off. You'll also have the chance to try a petrol clam BBQ whilst in the port city of Nampo on the west coast, and jump in on an English Language class at Kim Jong Suk Middle School when in Pyongsong.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Victory Day celebrations on July 27th!
- Kumsusan Memorial Palace (Mausoleum of leaders), captured spy ship USS Pueblo and other Pyongyang highlights
- A 1970s tram ride through the city (a Koryo Tours special!)
- Panmunjom/DMZ – the border with South Korea
- Soaking up the medicinal waters at Dragon River Hot Spa Hotel, Nampo
- Kim Jong Suk Middle School and other Pyongsong highlights

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.

The Experts in Travel to Rather Unusual Destinations.

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DAILY ITINERARY

JULY 21 – FRIDAY (BRIEFING DAY)

AM

- *Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.*

PM

- **16:00: 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!*

JULY 22 - 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** at 12:55. *A 1.5 hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option).*
- **Arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport (FNJ)** at 15:25. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides, and transfer to the city.
- **Arch of Triumph** - Massive archway commemorating the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule. Made for the 70th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung in 1982.
- **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*).

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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.

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.

JULY 23 - SUNDAY (PYONGYANG & NAMPO)

AM

- **Pyongyang Feature Film Studio** - See the home of 'Cholliwood', the DPRK's domestic film industry. Visit sets of traditional Korea, colonial Korea, China, Europe, and more!
- **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.
- **Mt. Ryonggak BBQ** - A BBQ lunch in a woodland setting just outside of the city.

PM

- Drive west along the 'Youth Hero Highway' to **Nampo**, the port city of Pyongyang on the Taedong River estuary. A *45 minute to 1 hour drive*.
- **Kangso Mineral Water Factory** - Bottling plant for the DPRK's most popular brand of sparkling water.
- **Chongsan-ri Co-Operative Farm** - Learn about farming and rural living in the DPRK at this farming community.
- **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 locks and fish ladder. One of the DPRK's greatest engineering feats.
- Optional **Petrol Clam BBQ** (*approx 7 EUR per person*), fired up by your very own driver this is a great local experience - just make sure to wash the clams down with sufficient soju!

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Overnight:

Ryonggang Hot Spa Hotel - a compound with holiday houses and a main building for dinner and entertainment. Bring a torch! Spa bath in every room with mineral water from the Sindok Spring - the most famous mineral spa in the DPRK. Billiards, karaoke, and ping pong.

JULY 24 - MONDAY (PYONGSONG)

AM

- Drive back north via Pyongyang to **Pyongsong**, a satellite city of Pyongyang and centre of scientific research. *Total drive of approx. 2 hrs.*
- **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!
- **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.

PM

- **Pyongsong Arts School** - local school focusing on talents in the performing and visual arts, see an excellent performance here.
- Drive back to Pyongyang (*approx 40 mins drive*)
- **Rakwon (Paradise) Department Store and Microbrewery** - Department store selling domestic and foreign made goods. The bar next door sells beer and *makkolli* (traditional rice wine) brewed on site (*1 EUR a pint*).

OVERNIGHT

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JULY 25 - TUESDAY (PYONGYANG & DRIVE TO KAESONG)

AM

- **Three Revolutions Exhibition** - Exhibition halls showing the nation's achievements of the Technological, Cultural, and Ideological revolutions.
- **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*).

PM

- **Underground Revolution Museum** - Tour of this enormous museum describing the construction of the Pyongyang Metro.
- **Schoolchildren's Palace** - Tour 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.
- 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.*

Overnight:

Minsok Folk Hotel, Kaesong - Traditional style hotel where guest sleep on heated floors, 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.

JULY 26 - WEDNESDAY (KAESONG & DMZ TOUR)

AM

- **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.

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- **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

- **Tomb of King Kongmin** - Tomb of the 31st king of the Koryo Dynasty, a talented statesman and prolific painter, and his Mongolian wife set at the end of a picturesque valley. A UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- 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.*

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

JULY 27 - THURSDAY (DPRK NATIONAL HOLIDAY)

Victory Day!

Today marks a very important national holiday and we expect to see and join in for the celebrations in Pyongyang.

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.

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

PM

- **Mangyongdae Native House** - Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in beautiful natural surroundings.
- **Circus** (*approx. 20 EUR per person*) – A one hour circus show including clowns, trapeze artists, jugglers, and much more. The shows here are especially popular with locals on national holidays.
- **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!
- **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 air gun shooting range (*approximately 6 EUR per 20 round cartridge*) and some of the best coffee in Pyongyang.
- **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*).

OVERNIGHT

Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

JULY 28 - FRIDAY (PYONGYANG CITY TOUR)

AM

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

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- **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.

PM

- **Tram Ride** - A ride through Pyongyang on one of city's trams from Kwangbok Street (a Koryo Tours special!)
- **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.
- **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.
- **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*).
- **Duck Barbecue Restaurant** - South Pyongyang's famous grilled duck restaurant that has seen many teary-eyed farewells.

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JULY 29 - SATURDAY (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 JS 151** 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 **international sleeper train to Beijing** at 10:10 with scheduled arrival to **Beijing Station** on Sunday July 30 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.