



Korean Architecture, Art & Design Tour

TOUR

October 21 – 28/29, 2017
7 nights in the DPRK + 1 on the train
Optional 3 night tour extension

OVERVIEW

A tour de force of Korea's unique visual arts.

Korea is a visually stunning country; ancient temples and prestige socialist avenues, traditional homes and towering monumental structures, revolutionary artwork and kitsch interiors, architectural futurism and brutalism, and much more besides.

This seven-night tour is the most in-depth look at the visual arts of the DPRK to-date and includes on-the-spot lectures by some of the artists and architects responsible for shaping visual North Korea today. We'll also learn about their inspirations in history, philosophy, and practicalities- both modern and ancient. This is in addition to visits to some of the most iconic and architecturally significant buildings in the country, many of which are open only for participants on this tour and do not normally admit visitors.

As an added treat we have the rare chance to visit an apartment residence in the capital and time to extensively walk the streets of the city, while fitting in the highlights of the country in Pyongyang and Kaesong.

For those wanting to see more of the country, it is possible to add a three-night extension to Korea's East Coast. The extension will visit the remote industrial city of Hamhung, rebuilt with the assistance of East German planners after the Korean War and only opened to tourists in 2010, and the port city of Wonsan which offers great examples of both colonial-era and the latest modern architectural styles.

So mixing up and mashing up the ancient, the modernist, and the modern, it's far more than just the concrete boxes many imagine when they think of North Korea. We'll get to the heart of the matter and see and hear as much about the architecture of North Korea as possible – direct and on-the-spot.

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Discussion on Korean architecture with professional architects from the Paekdusan Architectural Academy
- Guided tour of Pyongyang Metro station artwork with an artist from Mansudae Art Studio
- Rare visit to a newly built apartment building
- City walks to view some of Pyongyang's most unique architecture
- Highlights of Pyongyang and Kaesong, including the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun (mausoleum), DMZ, the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum, and USS Pueblo
- Optional extension to the East Coast of Korea, including industrial Hamhung and the port city of Wonsan
- Plus, Korea's famed autumn scenery

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

OCTOBER 20 – 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!*



OCTOBER 21 - 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 JS 152** 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.
- Drive 160 km south along the 'Reunification Highway' to **Kaesong**, historical capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392) and near the Korean Demilitarised Zone.
- **Kayagum Performance** - Traditional Korean stringed instrument performance at the Minsok Folk Hotel. *Tip recommended (1-3 EUR per person) for this beautiful demonstration of Korean music. (A)*

Overnight:

Minsok Folk Hotel - 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. (AD)

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OCTOBER 22 - SUNDAY (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. (A)
- **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.

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- **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. (AD)
- **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. (D)
- **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

- **Kaesong Schoolchildren's Palace** - The first schoolchildren's palace in the DPRK and centre of extracurricular excellence where the youth of Kaesong come to hone their skills in music, dance, sports, mechanics, taxidermy, and more! (AD)
- **Manwoldae and Chomsongdae** - The ruins of the Koryo Dynasty palace and an ancient astronomical observatory. (A)
- **Tomb of King Kongmin** - Tomb of the 31st king of the Koryo Dynasty, a talented statesman and prolific painter, and his Mongolian wife set the end of a picturesque valley. A UNESCO World Heritage Site. (AD)
- **Sonjuk Bridge** - Small stone bridge built in 1290 which was the site of the assassination of loyal Koryo Dynasty minister Jong Mong Ju by a son of Ri Song Gye, founder of the next dynasty, in 1392. This bloody act extinguished the Koryo which had ruled over Korea for 474 years and is said to have left a permanent mark on the bridge to this day. (A)

Overnight:

Janamsan Hotel, Kaesong - A basic hotel similar to those found in the DPRK's smaller cities with Soviet-era design. Reliable hot water (limited hours) and electricity. Funky interior design and friendly staff. One of our favorites! (A)

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OCTOBER 23 - MONDAY (KAESONG & SARIWON)

AM

- **Gwanum Temple, Taehung Mountain Fortress, and Pakyon Waterfall** - Light hike in a forested valley from a Ri Dynasty temple devoted to the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy to a scenic waterfall. Part of the temple's facade remain unfinished recalling the filial devotion of the master craftsman charged with the temple's construction. A nearby cave grotto contains an intricately carved marble statue dating back to the Koryo Dynasty. The valley walk and waterfall are flanked by inscriptions from both ancient and modern visitors. Part of a mountain fortress, once charged with the defense of the ancient capital, bisects the hike. The autumn scenery provides an extra treat! (AD)
- Drive to **Sariwon**, the provincial seat of North Hwanghae Province and regional centre of agriculture and industry. *A 1 hour drive.*
- Lunch at the **March 8th (International Women's Day) Hotel**, arguably the most strangest locations in the DPRK on account of its eccentric interior decor mixing socialist realism with faux classical furnishings. (D)

PM

- **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, view point, and a local home. (A)
- **Songbul Temple and Jongbang Mountain Fortress** - A Buddhist temple with representative Koryo Dynasty architecture in the hills above Sariwon. A room contains a wooden sculpture of one-thousand Buddhas, each with its own unique garb and facial expression. (AD)
- Return to Pyongyang via the **Monument to the Three Charters of Reunification**, a massive stone archway over the highway, and the **Ri In Mo Monument**, a bronze bust of one of the DPRK's 'long-term unconverted prisoners' who spent decades captive in the south after the Korean War. Both arch and monument are located near Pyongyang's Tongil (Reunification) Street and its massive modernist high-rises. *A 1 hour drive.* (AD)
- Dinner at south Pyongyang's famous **Duck Meat Restaurant** for a taste of Korean barbecue.



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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OCTOBER 24 - TUESDAY (PYONGYANG)

AM

- **Paekdusan Architectural Academy** - A visit to the DPRK's premier architectural design studio. We'll tour the grounds and meet with architects responsible for some of Pyongyang's most distinct buildings.
- Lunch at the **Yanggakdo Hotel Revolving Restaurant** for a 360 degree view of the city.

PM

- **Walk in Moranbong Park**, or 'Magnolia Hill Park', Pyongyang's central park occupying the former inner castle of the ancient city, and home to **traditional pavilions** and **Moranbong Theatre** (1946), one of the earliest examples of post-liberation architecture. The park also contains the **Liberation Tower** dedicated to Soviet soldiers who died in the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule in 1945. (AD)
- From Moranbong Park we'll continue with a **walk through the Central District Walk**, the modern heart of Pyongyang. We'll pass **Okryugwan**, Pyongyang's massive neo-traditional waterfront restaurant; the classical Taedong Cinema (1957) topped with ornate statues; **Widow Paek's House**, one of few colonial era buildings to have survived the Korean War; and the **Taedong Gate**, the old city's riverside gate, before arriving at **Kim Il Sung Square**. (AD)
- **Central Art Museum** - A tour of Korean art from ancient tomb murals on through the socialist realism of today. (D)

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OCTOBER 25 - WEDNESDAY (PYONGYANG)

AM

- **Pyongyang Metro Tour with a Mansudae Art Studio Artist** - We'll tour stations of both the Chollima and the Hyoksin Lines, each with distinctive murals, mosaics, or bronze work reflecting the station's name, accompanied by an artist from the DPRK's distinguished Mansudae Art Studio.
- **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. Nearby is **Kim Il Sung Stadium**.
- **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

- **National Embroidery Institute** - Research centre, workshop, and exhibition hall for the Korean art of needlework with great views of the towering 105-story Ryugyong Hotel. (AD)
- **Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum** - Tour this world-class museum led by a local museum guides. Renovated in 2012 and its exhibits of 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.(AD)
- **Mansugyo Beer Bar** - Take a break from the tour at one of Pyongyang's newest bars. Seven types of beer on tap (*0.50 - 1 EUR a glass*).

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OCTOBER 26 - THURSDAY (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.*
- Lunch at **Kwangbok Department Store Food Court** - Take your pick of local dishes from this department store food court popular with the district's residents (1-5 EUR paid on the spot).

PM

- **Walk in West Pyongyang** - A walk on west Pyongyang's modernist **Kwangbok Street**, lined with massive modernist apartments built in the 1980's, to the retro-futuristic **Chongnyon (Youth) Hotel**, one of the most unique structures in Korea. We'll continue on for a walk along **Sports Street** to view a series of stadiums and arenas originally made for the 1989 World Festival of Youth and Students and dedicated to individual sports. The walk will end at the **Sosan Hotel** and **Ryanggang Hotel**, two buildings with distinct architecture, overlooking the street below. (AD)
- **Mangyondae Native House** - Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in beautiful natural surroundings.(A)
- **Mangyondae Schoolchildren's Palace** - Tour one of Pyongyang's two centres of extracurricular excellence where music, dance, arts, and sports are taught, followed by an hour long student performance.(AD)

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OCTOBER 27 – FRIDAY (PYONGYANG)

AM

- **Changgwangwon Health Complex** – Huge health and leisure facility with Olympic-sized pool, barber shops, beauty salons, massage, and saunas. Leave feeling ten years younger, locals say! Tickets for activities (3-10 EUR) purchased on the spot. One of our favorites! (AD)
- **Future Street Walk and Apartment Visit** - Walk in the newly built residential district for scientists and academics to view its unique modern architecture, followed by a visit to a local apartment. A trip highlight! (AD)
- **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.(A)

PM

- **May Day Stadium** – Tour the grounds and facilities of one of the world's largest stadiums, once used for the DPRK's Arirang Mass Games and now for major sports events. (A)
- **Walk in East Pyongyang** - Walk through the district on the east bank of the Taedong from the **Taesong Department Store**, a large shop selling foreign goods, to the **Party Foundation Monument**, a massive stone hammer, sickle, and writing brush sculpture representing the worker, farmer, and intellectual makeup of the party. The walk will continue to **Central Youth Hall** (exterior only), a large theatre and exhibition centre with space-age design. (AD)
- **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 5 EUR for great views of the city.

Overnight: Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

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OCTOBER 28 - SATURDAY (DEPARTURE DAY OR THE EAST COAST)

*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 November 19 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.*

OR

OPTIONAL EXTENSION Day 1 (+650 EUR - please ensure to select this extra when submitting your application). *Please note a Koryo Tours tour leader will accompany this extension if six or more make a booking.*

To the East Coast!

AM

- Drive from Pyongyang across the width of the peninsula to the East Coast. The drive will take most of the day with stops along the way.
- **Tomb of King Tongmyong** - Tomb complex of the first king of the Koguryo Kingdom and his royal retainers. Moved from its original location in today's northeast China when the Koguryo Kingdom moved its capital to Pyongyang in 427 AD. Although the original interior murals have been lost, the supporting stone work is visible. (AD)
- **Ulim Waterfall** - 'Echo' Waterfall is a scenic stopover, hidden in the mountains on the road to Hamhung, to enjoy lunch and stretch your legs. (A)

PM

- **Retirement Home of Ri Song Gye** - Home of the first king of the Ri Dynasty (1392-1910) who extinguished the Koryo Dynasty, only to be then ousted by his own son. A traditional hall and pavilion and associated with stories of the former king's retirement years – some not appropriate for the youth! (AD)

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Overnight:

Majon Beach Guesthouse, Hungnam – A beachside holiday compound with basic but comfortable chalets. Rooms have heated floors but no running water. There is a main building with restaurant, bar, billiards, table-tennis, bookshop, and Korean karaoke. *Bring a torch!*

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OCTOBER 29 - SUNDAY (HAMHUNG)

AM

- **Hungnam Fertiliser Factory** – Massive chemical-industrial plant producing various kinds of fertilisers. Tour of the plant control room, production facilities, and packing plant - just don't light up next to the Ammonium Nitrate!
- **Tonghung Revolutionary Site** – Hillside park with statues of the DPRK leadership overlooking Hamhung city centre and the Songchon River. A presentation of flowers is customary.
- **Hamhung Grand Theatre and Central Square** – Exterior view of the DPRK's largest theatre on the city's central square.

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.(A)
- **Songdowon 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! (AD)
- **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: Songdowon Hotel, Wonsan - Waterfront hotel with stunning seaside views of Wonsan Harbor. Basic facilities and limited hot water.

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OCTOBER 30 - MONDAY (WONSAN)

AM

- **Wonsan City Centre and Docks** – Central square and ship terminal in downtown Wonsan. The Mangyongbong-92 ferry/cargo ship which one shuttled Koreans living in Japan back and forth across the East Sea of Korea is moored here.

PM

- Return to Pyongyang with a rest stop a **Masik Pass Ski Resort**, the DPRK's largest ski resort, for a short tour of the facilities.
- Farewell dinner in Pyongyang

Overnight: Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

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OCTOBER 31 - 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 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 **local train to the Korean-Chinese border** at 10:10, and onward travel to Beijing with scheduled arrival to Beijing Station on Wednesday February 1st 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.

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