



The Party Foundation Day Tour

TOUR

October 9th – 16th 2020

7 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

OVERVIEW

A North Korea autumn is a sight to see! Take in the autumn reds, oranges, and yellows at North Korea's [Mt Myohyang](#) and [Nampo](#), plus see Pyongyang for Party Foundation Day and tour the [DMZ](#).

This 7-night adventure offers a unique mix of local culture, must-see attractions, and the great outdoors in some of the most remote parts of North Korea. We'll be in Pyongyang for Party Foundation Day (October 10), a North Korean holiday which marks the foundation of the Korean Workers' Party, for the celebrations, including student-organised mass dances, and to see other highlights such as the [Pyongyang Metro](#), the [Kumsusan Palace of the Sun](#), and the [Mansudae Grand Monument](#), followed by an overnight trip to historic [Kaesong](#), the medieval capital of the Koryo Dynasty.

In Kaesong, we'll take a DMZ tour to the Panmunjom Armistice Village between North and South Korea, as well as visit the Tomb of King Kongmin, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It's then heading North to Korea's [Mount Myohyang](#), and then to North Korea's east coast. Here, we will visit the port city of [Nampo](#) where we will stay in North Korea's oldest [hot spa resort](#).

Short on time? Check out the shorter [5-night](#) and [3-night](#) options for this tour.

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DAILY ITINERARY

OCTOBER 8 – THURSDAY

Briefing Day and Train Departure Day

***Pre-Tour Briefing** | *We require all travellers 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 answers 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 presentation is an essential part of travel to North Korea.*

For this tour, we will hold two briefings. One in the morning for those departing by train this afternoon and the other in the afternoon for those departing by flight the next day.

AM

- *Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.*
- **10:00 | Briefing for those departing by train.**

PM

- **16:00 | Briefing for those departing by flight.**
- **17:27 | Train travellers depart Beijing Station** 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.

Overnight | *Hotel in Beijing not included in the tour for those taking the flight the next day. Contact us for recommendations near our office! Those travelling by train will spend the night on the train.*

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OCTOBER 9 – FRIDAY

Arrival day in Pyongyang

AM

- **Train transfer at Dandong Station** from overnight sleeper train to Dandong-Pyongyang local. *Our local representative in Dandong will assist with the transfer. Train crosses the China-North Korea border followed by North Korean customs and immigration.*
- **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 12:00. *A 1.5-hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option).*
- **Flight arrival into [Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport](#)** (FNJ) at 15:00. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides and transfer to the city.
- **[War Heroes' Cemetery](#)** | Large gun, flag, and bayonet monument surrounded by rows of tombstones commemorating individual heroes of the Korean War.
- **Walk on post-war Pyongyang's oldest street Victory (Sungni) Street** from Kim Il Sung Square to Pyongyang Grand Theatre.
- **Train arrival** to Pyongyang Railway Station at 18:45.
- **[Walk on Future Scientists' Street](#)** | An evening stroll through one of Pyongyang's newest neighbourhoods.

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 10 –SATURDAY

Party Foundation Day – the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea

On October 10th there will be large-scale celebrations in Pyongyang. A military parade is expected, in which case the itinerary for the day will be subject to change. Foreign travellers are typically allowed to view military units as they exit the city from the parade course and the city's residents come out en masse to greet them. Be prepared to potentially wait around for a few hours, but it will be well worth it. For Party Foundation Day, we also expect student-organised mass dances at prominent locations throughout the city and the possibility of evening fireworks. Whatever happens this holiday, it will be impressive and unforgettable. Not to be missed!

AM

- [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.
- [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.
- [Mass Dance](#) | As it's a national holiday, we expect to see large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on significant holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!
- [Moranbong Park](#) | We'll have a picnic and 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'.

PM

- [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 dress code (close-toed shoes and covered legs and shoulders)*. Here we will also see the [Chollima Monument](#), or 'thousand ri (400 km or 250 miles) horse' - a symbol of speed- commemorating the quick rebuilding of the country in the 1950s following the Korean War.

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- [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.
- [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*).
- [Party Foundation Monument](#) | Iconic Monument made up of stone depictions of hands gripping the hammer, sickle, and writing brush – symbols of the Workers' Party of Korea. It was built in 1995 for the 40th anniversary of this Party.
- [Mass Games!](#) | The Mass Games are an art form in North Korea, developed over decades, which can involve up to 100,000 performers in massive synchronised displays of gymnastics and dance. Not to be missed!

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

OCTOBER 11 – SUNDAY

Kumsusan Palace of the Sun and drive to Mt. Myohyang

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 need 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 several times inside. This is a state-administered site and visits are subject to local conditions. Cancellations are rare but possible.*
- [Trolleybus Ride](#) | A ride through Pyongyang on one of the city's famous trolleybuses.

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- Drive to [Anju](#) a mid-sized industrial city located on the road and rail line north of Pyongyang on the Chongchon River. During the Korean War, significant battles were fought near here between North Korean-Chinese forces and UN-South Korean forces. Coal is mined nearby.

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- **Paeksang Pavilion and Anju City Walls** | The greatest pavilion in Kwanso (Pyong' an Province,) which overlooks the Chongchon River. Rebuilt after destruction in the Korean War.
- Continue driving to [Mt. Myohyang](#).
- **Manpok Valley Hike** | Various options for hikes of a range of distances/difficulties. Passing waterfalls, hermitages, interesting rocks, lovely wooded areas, and viewing points.

Overnight | [Huichon Hotel](#), Chagang Province. Basic but clean hotel located 30 minutes north of Mt. Myohyang. Very good local food much different from the lowlands, on-site sauna, and limited electricity.

OCTOBER 12 – MONDAY

Mt. Myohyang and Pyongyang City Tour

AM

- **International Friendship Exhibition** | A semi-subterranean exhibition hall displaying gifts of all kinds given to the DPRK leaders by foreign states, leaders, and organisations. The exhibition is a fascinating look into the material culture in the second half of the 20th century. Highlights include a plane given by the Soviet Union, basketball signed by Michael Jordan from the US State Department, and vodka given by Dennis Rodman. The visit takes most of the morning. *Presentable dress required.*
- **Pohyon Buddhist Temple** | A peaceful temple dating back to 1042 CE with stone pagoda and repository of print blocks and historic text of the *Tripitaka Koreana*, Buddhist scriptures first produced to invoke divine assistance from foreign invasions during the Koryo Dynasty.

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- Drive back to **Pyongyang** (2.5-3 hours).
- **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.
- **Party Foundation Museum** | Museum dedicated to the foundation of the Korean Workers' Party.
- **Moran Beer Bar** | A recently renovated local bar with cheap brews (0.50-1 EUR beers).

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Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

OCTOBER 13 – TUESDAY

Pyongyang and Drive to Kaesong

AM

- [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 artefacts, 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.
- **Walk on Ryomyong Street** | Walk on one of Pyongyang's newest districts lined with new modernist-style architecture.

PM

- [Kaesong](#) | Drive south along the '[Reunification Highway](#)' to the historic capital of the [Koryo Dynasty](#) (918-1392), located near today's Korean Demilitarized Zone with a stop at the [Monument to the Three-Charters of National Reunification](#) an iconic arch over the Pyongyang-Kaesong Highway dedicated to joint meeting between the Koreas, north and south, also known as the 'Arch of Reunification'.
- [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 divide the nation permanently. A 45 minute drive each way from Kaesong through scenic countryside.
- [Janam Hill and Old City View](#) | Statues of the DPRK leadership on a hill overlooking Kaesong city and historic pavilion used for archery demonstrations in days of yore.
- Dinner with **Kayagum Performance**.

Overnight | [Minsok Folk Hotel](#). Traditional style hotel where guests sleep on heated floors in Korean style. Housed in beautiful courtyards of Kaesong's old city, structures date back to the Ri Dynasty. Basic bathroom facilities. Hot water not guaranteed and erratic electricity supply – please bring a torch.

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OCTOBER 14 – WEDNESDAY

Historic Kaesong and Panmunjom

AM

- [Old City Walk and South Gate](#) | A stroll from the hotel through Kaesong's historic district lined with homes dating back to the Ri Dynasty to the city's historic South Gate.
- [Panmunjom Armistice Village and DMZ](#) | Perhaps the most famous place in the entire country. The iconic manifestation of the tragic division between North and South Korea. The 'truce' village where several huts straddle the Central Military Demarcation Line (de facto border) with soldiers from each side standing guard. A tour here starts with a briefing at the edge of the DMZ, a visit to the Armistice Negotiation Hall and Armistice Signing Hall, seen as symbols of victory over foreign aggression on this side of the line. Then to Panmunjom itself – cross the border inside one of the blue huts, experience the uncanny feeling of crossing the front line of a sad and needless division of one society, and then take a higher view from the Panmun Pavilion looking over the line from above. A Korean People's Army officer will be there to explain their side of things and will willingly pose for some photos too. A completely and utterly unmissable place.
- [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. One of Kaesong's many UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The buildings are in Koryo Dynasty style but date back to the early 17th century following their destruction in the Imjin War.
- [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 consisting 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 also an option here (+5 EUR).

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- Drive to [Sariwon](#) | The provincial seat of North Hwanghae Province and centre of regional industry (2 hrs).
- [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

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Makkoli, traditional rice wine. Climb a nearby hill for a view of Sariwon City and the surrounding plains.

- **Mt. Kuwol** | A scenic mountain area on the West Coast of Korea. We'll pass through this region on a drive between Kaesong and Nampo and cross over the West Sea Barrage in the evening.
- **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 lock and fish ladder. One of the DPRK's greatest engineering feats.
- **Clam BBQ** | A North Korean style clam bake!

Overnight: **Ryonggang Hot Spa Hotel** | 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.

OCTOBER 15 – THURSDAY

Nampo and back to Pyongyang

AM

- **Tae'an Glass Factory** | Factory producing glass and glass products for the domestic market. Watch the glass-making process from smelting to sheet-cutting and even try to break a sheet of strengthened glass.
- **Chongsan-ri Co-Operative Farm** | The DPRK's most famous and iconic model farm. Visited hundreds of times by Kim Il Sung (there is a bronze statue of him and various farmworkers here), the place where the 'Chongsam-ri Method' was developed (they will explain on-site). See how the farming system works, visit a farmhouse and the local shop & kindergarten, see the fields and greenhouses.
- Drive back along the '**Youth Hero Highway**' back to **Pyongyang** (45 minutes to 1-hour drive).

PM

- **Mangyongdae Native House** | Birthplace of and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a park-like setting.

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- [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.
- [Mangyongdae 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.
- **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).
- Farewell dinner at **Duck Barbeque Restaurant** | South Pyongyang's famous grilled duck restaurant that has seen many a teary-eyed farewell.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

OCTOBER 16 – FRIDAY

*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 08:40 with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 10:00.

OR

Train departure by **train to Beijing** at 10:25 with a transfer in Dandong. The scheduled arrival is to **Beijing Station** on Saturday, October 17 at 08:40. *For this tour, the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

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