



12 Night Ultimate Marathon Tour from Beijing

TOUR

April 10th – 22nd 2021

12 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

OVERVIEW

Hit the streets of Pyongyang for the 2021 Pyongyang Marathon with over 50,000 people cheering you on as you cross the finish line for that Olympic finish you've only ever daydreamed about. Then ease into your North Korean adventure with visits to the industrial city of [Nampo](#) on the west coast to tour local industries, before heading north to [Pyongsong](#) where it's time for school and you'll have the opportunity to assist students with their English class.

Returning to Pyongyang it's time to explore the capital in-depth including the [Fatherland Liberation War Museum](#) and captured spy ship USS Pueblo, shopping with locals at [Kwangbok Supermarket](#), and delving underground to ride on the [Pyongyang Metro](#).

Just a few of many highlights!

It will then be time to limber up and get your game face on for Taekwondo class - Korea's national martial art. The class will be at Pyongyang's Taekwondo Arena on Sports Street, the national Taekwondo training academy. A great opportunity for some exercise with a local flavour!

We will be in Pyongyang for [The Day of the Sun](#) – the birthday of Eternal President Kim Il Sung – one of the most important dates in the North Korean calendar. For this we can expect a day of merriment for the locals as they enjoy their day off celebrating with picnics in parks, participating in mass dancing events, and then gathering together at Kim Il Sung Square to watch the incredible fireworks display at night.

Following this, we'll then head south to [Kaesong](#) and the [DMZ](#), where North and South Korea continue their face-off. We will then move things up a gear and head over to the beautiful east coast of Korea.

Tour the port city of [Wonsan](#) including a schoolchildren's camp and the country's largest agricultural university. Heading south it's time to go hiking in the [Mt Kumgang](#) mountain range – so beautiful it's also known as the diamond mountain of Korea. The tour then heads north to Hamhung which is North Korea's second-biggest city, and then further into the countryside to get to the famous Pujon Highlands and its stone river.

A location well off the beaten track and very rarely visited by foreigners!

► **Pyongyang Marathon 2021**

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The Pyongyang Marathon is a World Athletics' Bronze Label Road Race, and also has AIMS Certification. Join the race and receive the most unique finisher's medal, running shirt, and race certificates available.

Even if you're not a serious runner, the Pyongyang Marathon is an event like no other. It starts and ends in Kim Il Sung Stadium - a stadium filled with over 50,000 North Koreans cheering you on as you finish your race. It's an experience like no other.

[The Closest Experience to Being in the Olympics](#)

[What do North Koreans Think of the Pyongyang Marathon?](#)

[More on the Pyongyang Marathon](#)

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DAILY ITINERARY

APRIL 9 – FRIDAY

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 travelers, 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 - in the morning for those departing by train in the afternoon, and in the afternoon for those departing by flight the next day.

AM

- Recommended latest arrival in Beijing.
- **10:00 | Train Departure** - your briefing will be held at this time in Beijing

PM

- **14:00 / 16:00 / 18:00 | Flight Departure** - briefings will be held in the afternoon on this day in Beijing at these times, you only need to attend one briefing (*exact times offered to be confirmed*).
- **17:00 | 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.

APRIL 10 – SATURDAY

Arrival day in Pyongyang

AM

- **Train transfer at Dandong Station from overnight sleeper train to the Dandong-Pyongyang local train.** Our local representative in Dandong will assist with the

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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 pm. *A 2 hour flight with basic lunch. **Flight times are subject to change***
- [Arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport \(FNJ\)](#). DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides and transfer to the city.
- **Train arrival to Pyongyang Railway Station** expected at 6:45 pm.
- [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.
- [Yanggakdo International Cinema](#) | Optional screening of *Run and Run*, a DPRK film about marathon runner Yong Ho who faces the physical and mental struggles of marathon participation. After both his father and work unit manager tell him to stop running, he becomes more determined to achieve his marathon dream. The film will be shown at the **Pyongyang International House of Cinema** (*80 RMB entry fee paid on the spot*). A Koryo Tours exclusive and sure to provide you with motivation ahead of the big event!

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 and beer brewed on-site.

APRIL 11 – SUNDAY

The big event! The Pyongyang Marathon 2021!

AM

- [The 2021 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,

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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. ([runner's guide to Kim Il Sung Stadium](#))

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. Prizes are available for the winners of each race.

PM

- **Shower, resting time and lunch** | After the ending ceremony of the marathon, we'll be heading back to the hotel to recharge, shower and rest.
- **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*).
- **Local Beer Bar** | Relax at one of Pyongyang's local bars to wrap up an exciting day.

Overnight | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 12 – MONDAY

Nampo & Pyongsong

AM

- **Nampo** | Drive west along the '[Youth Hero Highway](#)' to this port city of Pyongyang on the Taedong River estuary. *A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.*
- **Chongsam-ri Co-operative Farm** | The DPRK's most famous and iconic model farm. Visited hundreds of times by Kim Il Sung, the place where the 'Chongsam-ri Method' was developed (they will explain on-site). See how the farming system works, visit a farmhouse, the local shop, kindergarten and see the fields and greenhouses.
- **Local Factory** | Nampo is a major industrial area of the DPRK, we'll visit one of the local factories to see and learn more about the industrial side of the country. We will visit either a [glass factory](#), [mineral water bottling plant](#) or if we're lucky the famous [Chollima Steelworks](#). *Please note that factory visits may depend on on-site activities/conditions.*
- **West Sea Barrage** | An 8 km concrete, steel, and earthen barrage constructed between the [Taedong River](#) estuary and the West Sea for land reclamation,

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irrigation, flood prevention, and power generation. It also acts as a ship lock and fish ladder. One of the DPRK's greatest engineering feats.

- **Lunch** | At a local restaurant in Nampo

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- **Pyongyang** | [Return to the capital city](#). A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.
- [Mangyongdae Native House](#) | Birthplace of and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a park-like setting.
- [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.
- [Pyongsong](#) | Drive north of Pyongyang to the capital of South Pyongan Province. A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.

Overnight

[Jangsusan Hotel, Pyongsong](#) | The only hotel in Pyongsong open for tourists and one of the most fun in the whole country! Basic facilities with fairly reliable electricity and hot water. One of the best bartenders in the country mans the bar. Billiards, karaoke, hairdresser, and outdoor eateries in summer.

APRIL 13 – TUESDAY

Pyongsong

AM

- [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!
- [Konji-ri Revolutionary Site](#) | Location of the headquarters of the Korean People's Army & home of Kim Il Sung during the Korean War. Tour the renovated buildings and learn about life there during the war.
- **Pyongyang** | Drive south back to Pyongyang A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.

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- [Grand People's Study House](#) | Huge national library and public university housed in a large neo-traditional Korean building overlooking Kim Il Sung Square and the downtown Pyongyang.
- [Pyongyang Schoolchildren's Palace](#) | Tour of 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.
- [Duck Barbecue Restaurant](#) | South Pyongyang's famous grilled duck restaurant.

Overnight | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 14 – WEDNESDAY

Pyongyang City Tour

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.
- [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*).
- [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.
- [Okryugwan](#) | A meal at Pyongyang's most famous restaurant. Housed in a huge traditional building on the banks of the Taedong River. Okryugwan specialises in Pyongyang Cold Noodles.

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- [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.
- **Taekwondo Class** | A 60 minute introductory class at the **Taekwondo Arena on Sports Street** to taekwondo the national martial art which all children learn to a certain degree in school.

Overnight | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 15 – THURSDAY

The Day of the Sun, one of the DPRK's largest holidays. April 15, 2021, is the 109th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung's birthday.

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.*
- [Mansudae Fountain Park](#) | The historic centre of Pyongyang popular with local citizens after school 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). *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 mile) horse' -a symbol of speed- commemorating the quick rebuilding of the country in the 1950s following the Korean War.

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- [Moranbong Park](#) | We'll take a stroll and have picnic lunch 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'.
- [Kimilsungia and Kimjongillia Flower Exhibition](#) | Exhibit of the two flowers named after the DPRK's leaders and held on the occasion of their respective birthday anniversaries in February and April. See organizations and groups from across society compete to put on the best floral display.
- **Artistic Performance** | Expect to see a performance on the day, while the type of performance is to be confirmed we have been able to see [circus](#), musical and other performances on this day, *typically 20-50 EUR per person depending on nature of performance*.
- [Mass Dance](#) | Large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!
- **Fireworks over the Taedong River** | watch with thousands of locals in Kim Il Sung Square as this holiday comes to an end. Wonderful mingling opportunities in a festive atmosphere

Overnight | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 16 – FRIDAY

Kaesong and the DMZ

AM

- [Kaesong](#) | Drive south along the '[Reunification Highway](#)' to the historic capital of the [Koryo Dynasty](#) (918-1392) and today located near the Korean Demilitarised Zone. A *3-hour drive*
- [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.
- [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 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).

PM

- [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.
- [Pyongyang](#) | Return to Pyongyang from Sariwon.
- [Monument to the Three-Charters of National 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 | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 17 – SATURDAY

Wonsan City and Korea's East Coast

AM

- [Wonsan](#) | Drive east across the width of the peninsula to a major port city, stopping at scenic spots along the way. *A 4-hour drive.*
- [Sinpyong Lake Rest Stop](#) | Known as 'Little Kumgang' this scenic lakeside rest stop is a preview of the scenery to come.
- [Ulim Waterfall](#) | Hidden amongst the mountains on the road to Wonsan, 'Echo' Waterfall is a scenic stopover to enjoy lunch, stretch your legs, or go for a dip in the pool beneath.

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.

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- [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, birdhouse, gymnasium, and more!
- [Kangwon Province Art Gallery](#) | Small art exhibition selling artwork by local artists.
- [Jangdok Island and Lighthouse](#) | Take a stroll on the breakwater to a small island in the middle of Wonsan harbour (1 EUR/USD entry fee).

Overnight

[Dongmyong Hotel, Wonsan](#) | Waterfront hotel with stunning seaside views of Wonsan Harbor. Limited hours of hot water, bar, billiards, ping-pong, barber shop, beauty salon, dry-sauna, and indoor seawater swimming pool.

APRIL 18 – SUNDAY

Mt. Kumgang

AM

- [Mt. Kumgang](#) | Drive along the East Sea to see the 'Diamond Mountain' noted in East Asian history and famous in Korean legend. Home of some of Korea's most spectacular natural landscapes and best hiking. A 2.5-hour drive.
- [Samil Lagoon](#) | A charming green-water coastal lagoon lined by pine forests. Named for the 'three-day' stay (*sam-il*) of a king in days-gone-by to take in the full beauty of the area

PM

- [Hiking at Kuryong Waterfall](#) | An 8 km (round-trip) hike to a scenic waterfall through forests, along mountain streams and by emerald pools. A beautiful place to sit, relax and spend a few hours in nature. Feel like a rewarding challenge? Extend your hike by tackling Sangpaldam Peak.

Overnight

[Kumgangsan Hotel, Mt. Kumgang](#) | A comfortable hotel with good hot water supply and clean rooms. Top floor bar and karaoke, outdoor balcony barbeque, billiards, gift shops, and small sauna facilities.

APRIL 19 – MONDAY

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Hamhung, the DPRK's 2nd largest city

AM

- Drive north to **Wonsan** with a stop at [Sijung Lake Beach](#), a 2-3 hour drive.
- [Wonsan City Centre and Docks](#) | Central square and ship terminal in downtown Wonsan.
- [Mangyongbong-92](#) | A ferry/cruise ship built in 1992 to ferry Japanese Koreans and goods between Japan and North Korea till 2006. In 2018, the ship carried North Korean performers for the Winter Olympics in South Korea.

PM

- Drive North to [Hamhung](#), a 2-3 hour drive.
- [Tongbong Co-operative Farm](#) | Local farm in the outskirts of Hamhung. View the machinery barn, a local home, and the farm shop to buy some locally made products.
- [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 naughty stories of the former king's retirement years – some not appropriate for the youth!

Overnight

[Sinhungsan Hotel, Hamhung](#) | A basic, but comfortable hotel and the only hotel foreigners can stay at in Hamhung city. It has a restaurant, bar, billiards, table tennis, bookshop, barber shop, beauty salon and karaoke. Limited hot water.

APRIL 20 – TUESDAY

The Pujon Highlands

All Day

- [Pujon Highlands](#) | A scenic drive through the highlands above Hamhung, traditionally considered as one of the 'Eight Great Sights of Korea'. Home to the **Pujon Stone River**, a multi-kilometre river of boulders running down the side a mountain and the **Okryonsan Revolutionary Site** – a base for anti-Japanese guerillas during the colonial period. This region was the sight of some of the most brutal

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fighting of the Korean War in the middle of the unusually cold winter of 1950. Notice how the local architecture differs from the lowlands beneath.

- [Hamhung Grand Theatre and Central Square](#) | Exterior view of the DPRK's largest theatre on the city's central square.
- **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.

Overnight | Sinhungsan Hotel, Hamhung

APRIL 21 – WEDNESDAY

Return to Pyongyang

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!
- Drive back to **Pyongyang** with a stop at [Masik Pass Ski Resort](#) for lunch, the DPRK's largest ski resort. Opened in 2013, Masik Pass features nine main runs, two beginner slopes, and a lodge with full amenities. *A 3-hour drive.*

PM

- Continue drive back to Pyongyang, with stop at **Sinpyong Rest House**. *A 4-hour drive.*
- [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.
- **Haeyang Restaurant** | Farewell dinner at one of Pyongyang's famous restaurants.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

APRIL 22 – THURSDAY

*Departure Day from Pyongyang and Return to Beijing by flight or train. Please indicated your preferred exit method upon booking**

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AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS251** at 10:30 with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 11:50.

OR

Train departure by **train to Beijing** at 10:25 with transfer in Dandong. The scheduled arrival is to **Beijing Station** on Friday, April 23 at 08:40. *For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

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