



Winter Deluxe Tour

TOUR

February 9th – 18th 2021

9 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

OVERVIEW

Our longest and most comprehensive tour in North Korea during the winter period, our Winter Deluxe tour not only takes you out of Pyongyang and into the North Korean countryside, but will also have you experience two very different holidays in North Korea.

The Lunar New Year, otherwise known as Chinese New Year or Spring festival, is the New Year celebrated in many Asian countries. The [Day of the Shining Star](#) is General Kim Jong Il's birthday. General Kim Jong Il, President Kim Il Sung's son and father of current North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, was born on 16th February.

This date is saved in the North Korean calendar as a day of celebrations, and one of the most important North Korean holidays. During this time, we can expect to enjoy [mass dances](#) and a chance to visit the [Kimjongilia Flower Exhibition](#). Plus, there may be a chance to view the epic North Korea fireworks from the infamous [Kim Il Sung Square](#) filled with locals also gathering to watch the fireworks after a day of celebrations with the family.

When we're not busy joining in the celebrations, we will head North, South and West in North Korea to visit some of North Korea's beautiful untouched countryside. This includes a trip to [Nampo](#), [Anju](#), [Sariwon](#), [Kaesong](#) - and [Mt. Myohyang](#), where we will have a special stay at North Korea's only 7-star hotel. This action-packed itinerary doesn't stop here, as we will also not be missing the highlights of Pyongyang - as well as some rarely visited places in Pyongyang, including the [Juche Tower](#) and [Kwangbok Department Store](#).

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DAILY ITINERARY

FEBRUARY 8 – MONDAY

***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 answer 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 briefing is an essential part of travel to North Korea.

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.

Overnight | Hotel in Beijing not included in the tour. Contact us for recommendations near our office!

FEBRUARY 9 – TUESDAY

Arrival day in Pyongyang

AM

- **09:15** | Free bus from the Koryo Tours office to Beijing Capital Airport Terminal 2. Alternatively meet the group at the Air Koryo check-in counter at 10:00.

PM

- Flight departure from Beijing on **Air Koryo flight JS152** at 12:55. A 1.5-hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option). Business-class upgrade available (1-way 150 EUR; round-trip: 250 EUR).
- **Flight arrival to [Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport](#)** (FNJ) at 15:55. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides, and transfer to the city.

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- [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). *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.
- **Pyongyang city walk on Mansudae and Chollima Streets via [Potong Gate](#)** | A walk past some of Pyongyang’s most prominent buildings with distinct 70’s and 80’s architecture.
- Dinner at [Chongryugwan](#) | Boat-shaped restaurant next to a large lotus pond. Speciality dishes here include Sinsollo; Royal Hot Pot - a mixture of ingredients cooked in a brazier-type bowl.

Overnight | [Potonggang Hotel](#), Pyongyang. Recently renovated deluxe hotel located on the banks of the Potong River and hang out for Pyongyang’s most fashionable. Large corridors and comfortable rooms. The hotel is quiet, peaceful, and equipped with a good bookshop, a couple of excellent restaurants, a coffee shop, whisky bar, Karaoke room, and shops with imported goods; riverside walk is possible.

FEBRUARY 10 – WEDNESDAY

Full-metro Tour and the War Museum

AM

- [Mansudae Art Studio](#) | North Korea’s centre of artistic excellence, where the majority of the country's sculptures, mosaics, and paintings are made. Visit workshops to see artists at work, plus visit an exhibition where pieces are sold.
- [Full Pyongyang Metro Tour](#) | We'll tour the stations of both of the system's lines (named Chollima and Hyoksin) – each with distinctive murals, mosaics, or bronze work reflecting the station's name.
- **Lunch at [Pyongchon Samilpo Restaurant](#)** | Fried chicken, beer, cold noodles – Pyongyang's answer to KFC!

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PM

- [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.
- [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.
- [Mansugyo Beer Bar](#) | A popular bar in Pyongyang, it is one of the only places in the world you can try all seven beers produced by the mighty Taedonggang Brewery. It is also the first and only place in Pyongyang that offers beer flights to allow proper sampling of all seven beers! *A flight of beer is 5 EUR or individual beers are 1 EUR each.*
- Dinner at **Ansan Restaurant** | This restaurant, just opposite our hotel, specialises in traditional Korean dishes including dog meat (costs around USD 5 for one bowl).

Overnight | Potonggang Hotel, Pyongyang

FEBRUARY 11 – THURSDAY

Kumsusan Palace of the Sun and Lunar New Year's Eve

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. At the top of the hill are the graves of Kim Jong Suk (wife of Kim Il Sung) and Kim Chaek (Kim Il Sung's right-hand man). *A presentation of flowers is customary here.*

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- Lunch at [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.

PM

- [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.
- [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.
- [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.
- Dinner on **Pyongyang's Rainbow Boat** on the Taedong River where we'll have our Lunar New Year's Eve Party with a great view on Kim Il Sung Square.

Overnight | Potonggang Hotel, Pyongyang

FEBRUARY 12 – FRIDAY

Lunar New Year and drive to Mt. Myohyang

Today is Lunar New Year – as in many eastern countries this is a traditional holiday in the DPRK – we will join in with some local events as and when they happen. Be flexible and we will experience as much as possible!

AM

- **Folk Games** | Today it is normal for some traditional games to be played in local parks, we will find out which one looks like the biggest and best and then go along to join in. Usually this presents excellent opportunities for mingling with local people and getting a taste of local life and culture.

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- [Drive 2.5 hour north](#) passing rivers valleys and hills to [Mt. Myohyang](#), the mountain of mysterious fragrance.
- Check-in and lunch at hotel.

PM

- [Manpok Valley Walk hike](#) | Various options for hikes of a range of distances/difficulties. Passing waterfalls, hermitages. interesting rocks, lovely wooded areas, and viewing points.
- Enjoying the facilities and dinner at hotel.

Overnight | [Hyangsan Hotel](#). The fanciest hotel in North Korea with '7-star' facilities. Renovated in 2010. Excellent swimming pool, lovely location.

FEBRUARY 13 – SATURDAY

Mt. Myogyang and return to Pyongyang via Anju

AM

- [International Friendship Exhibition](#) | A semi-subterranean exhibition hall displaying gifts of all kinds given to the DPRK leaders by foreign states, leaders, and organizations. The exhibition is a fascinating look into 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.*
- Lunch at hotel.

PM

- [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.
- 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, major 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 **Pyongyang**.
- **Relaxing afternoon after a long drive** | You can go for a ten-pin fix with Pyongyang locals at [Golden Lane Bowling Centre](#), or head next door to the [Kumrung Leisure Centre](#) for an airgun shooting range and some of the best coffee in Pyongyang. Those who want to warm up a bit and leave feeling ten years younger can go to **Ryomyong Sauna Complex** to chill and mingle with locals.
- Dinner and drinks at **Yanggakdo Hotel Revolving Restaurant** | Dinner at Pyongyang's main tourist hotel with great views of the city.
- **Film Screening of *Comrade Kim Goes Flying* (2012) at the [Yanggakdo International Cinema](#)** | *Comrade Kim Goes Flying* is the first joint DPRK-UK feature film. Not familiar with this cult classic? Well, it's a romantic comedy about a rural woman pursuing her dreams of joining the Pyongyang Circus. The film was co-produced by Koryo's founder Nicholas Bonner. He'll be with you too, of course, so can offer some insight into the making of this movie, and its reception in both North and South Korea.

Overnight | Potonggang Hotel, Pyongyang

FEBRUARY 14 – SUNDAY

Sariwon and drive to Kaesong/DMZ

AM

- Drive south to [Sariwon](#), the provincial seat of North Hwanghae Province and a centre of agriculture and industry. *This is a 1 hour drive.*
- [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.
- [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, viewpoint, and local home.

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- **Lunch at [March 8th Hotel](#), Sariwon** | This hotel is a quirky one as it is quite gaudily furnished by beds and chairs from a South Korean furniture magnate (during friendlier times). Good restaurant.

PM

- Drive 2 hours south along the '[Reunification Highway](#)' to **Kaesong**, ancient capital of the [Koryo Dynasty](#) (918-1392 AD) 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 permanently divide the nation. A 45 minute drive each way from Kaesong through scenic countryside.
- **[South Gate and Old City Walk](#)** | A stroll to the hotel through Kaesong's historic district lined with homes dating back to the Ri Dynasty from the city's historic South Gate.
- Dinner with **Kayagum Performance** | Traditional Korean stringed instrument performance. Tip recommended (1-3 EUR per person) for this beautiful demonstration of Korean music.

Overnight | [Janamsan Hotel](#), Kaesong. One of our favourite hotels in the DPRK. Friendly staff, great food, and 1970's socialist design. A cosy place to stay in winter!

FEBRUARY 15 – MONDAY

Historic Kaesong and Panmunjom

AM

- **[Panmunjom 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

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explain their side of things and will willingly pose for some photos too. A completely and utterly unmissable place.

- [Kaesong Koryo Museum \(Songgyungwan Academy\)](#) | A former Confucian school and now a museum on the Koryo Dynasty exhibiting historical objects, statues, pagodas, and porcelain from the time. One of Kaesong's many UNESCO World Heritage Site. 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 \(*pangsanggi*\) at Tongil Restaurant](#) | 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

- [Janam Hill](#) | Statues of the DPRK leadership on a hill overlooking Kaesong city and historic pavilion used for archery demonstrations in days of yore.
- [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.
- Drive back to **Pyongyang**. *3-hour drive*.
- [Arch of Reunification](#) | We'll stop by the large stone arch over the 'Reunification Highway' dedicated to Korean reunification.
- A visit to the offices of **Hana Electronics** followed by dinner | A company making DVD players and other electronic goods for the internal market in North Korea.

Overnight | Potonggang Hotel, Pyongyang

FEBRUARY 16 – TUESDAY

[DPRK Holiday - Birthday of General Kim Jong Il](#)

AM

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The Experts in Travel to Rather Unusual Destinations.
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- Walking tour in **East Pyongyang**;
- **Kumrung Coffee Shop** | Warm up while sipping some of the best coffee in Pyongyang.
- [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 Party Foundation](#) | Iconic structure featuring the hammer, sickle, writing brush which make up the emblem of the Worker's Party of Korea and represent workers, farmers, and intellectuals.
- Lunch at [Taedonggang Seafood Restaurant](#) | This boat-shaped elongated structure opened on July 27th 2018 and has become the most talked-about eatery among the Pyongyang chattering classes that year. At the buffet restaurant a typical menu is a range of sushi and sashimi, rainbow trout in white sauce, beef cutlet and spicy chicken. There is also a range of breads on offer, from steamed buns to brioche. You can also find veggies, fish soup, and so on.

PM

- [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 organisations and groups from across society compete to put on the best floral display.
- [Trolleybus Ride](#) | A ride through Pyongyang on one of the city's famous trolleybuses.
- [Mass Dance](#) | As it's a national holiday, we also expect to see large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (*weather dependent*). Join in the fun!
- This afternoon we will have the chance to attend one or more special performances held specially to commemorate the birthday of Kim Jong Il. All of these performances are stunning and usually involve an entrance fee of *approx. 20 EUR each*.
- **Dinner and drinks in the [Diplomatic Club](#)** | Leisure complex with restaurant, swimming pool, bar, karaoke, billiards, and banquet hall for foreigners residing and visiting Pyongyang.

Overnight | Potonggang Hotel, Pyongyang

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FEBRUARY 17 – WEDNESDAY

Nampo and exclusive Pyongyang

AM

- Drive west along the '[Youth Hero Highway](#)' to [Nampo](#) (45 minutes to 1-hour drive), the port city of Pyongyang at the mouth of the Taedong River on the West Sea.
- [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.
- [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.
- Drive back to **Pyongyang**.
- Lunch at **Pyongsol Restaurant** on Ryomyong Street | One of our staffs' favorite.

PM

- **Walk on Ryomyong Street** | A short stroll on Pyongyang's newest street completed in 2017.
- [Paekdu Institute of Architecture](#) | Major studio responsible for designing many of Pyongyang's iconic buildings. Meet architects, see urban plans and building blueprints here.
- An exclusive visit to a modern **Pyongyang apartment** | Tour the apartment then sit with your host and chat through your guides about their home life and work.
- [Walk on Future Scientists' Street](#) | A pleasant stroll through one of Pyongyang's newest neighborhoods.
- Farewell dinner at [Arirang Restaurant](#) | Considered one of Pyongyang's best restaurants serving fantastic Korean food. They also happen to make what some people in the know consider to be the best Makkoli in Pyongyang and served the traditional way.

Overnight | Potonggang Hotel, Pyongyang

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FEBRUARY 18 – THURSDAY

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

AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS251** at 10:15 with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 11:35. *Please note there is a 50 EUR surcharge for flight return.*

OR

- Train departure by **international sleeper train to Beijing** at 10:25 with scheduled arrival to **Beijing Station** on Friday February 19 at 08:40. *For this tour we will 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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