



## The Liberation Day Tour

### TOUR

August 13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> 2021

6 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

### OVERVIEW

Head into the DPRK during Liberation Day for what promises to be one of the best travel experiences you'll have ever had!

During this short but action-packed tour, we have a city tour of [Pyongyang](#), visiting all of the must-see attractions, including the [Juche Tower](#) and [Mansudae Grand Monument](#).

Liberation Day 2021 marks the 76th anniversary of the end of Japanese occupation. It is a major public holiday in North Korea and we give you the chance to spend the day joining in the celebrations by hanging out and dancing with the locals in Moranbong Park. As well as the Liberation Day festivities and a city tour of Pyongyang, this tour also includes a day-trip to and [Kaesong](#) where we visit the [DMZ](#)! This is the North-South Korean border, labelled as one of the "most dangerous" borders in the world. See for yourself! We will also travel up to scenic [Mt. Myohyang](#) and the amazing halls of gifts to the DPRK's Leaders.

*Got more time to spare? Stay a couple of days longer for our [Liberation Day and Mt. Paektu Tour](#) and see another city in North Korea on the East Coast.*

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The Experts in Travel to Rather Unusual Destinations.  
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DAILY ITINERARY

**AUGUST 12 – 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 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.

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.

**AUGUST 13 – 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.

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- **Free bus** from the Koryo Tours office to Beijing Capital Airport Terminal 2 for those taking the flight. *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.
- **[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 with 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.
- 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.

### AUGUST 14 – SATURDAY

#### *Nampo and Pyongyang City Tour*

#### AM

- Drive west [along the Taedong River](#) 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.

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- [Pi Island](#) | A local beach next to West Sea Barrage. Go for a swim or join the locals for a karaoke.

#### PM

- Return to **Pyongyang** on the 'Youth Hero Highway' (45 minutes to 1-hour drive).
- [Mangyongdae Native House](#) | Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a beautiful natural surrounding.
- [Kwangbok Department Store](#) | Exchange for 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.
- A ride through Pyongyang from Kwangbok Street to Pyongyang Station on one of the city's [municipal trams](#).
- [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).

**Overnight** | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

### AUGUST 15 – SUNDAY

#### [Liberation Day](#) – the 76th anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese colonial rule

*On August 15th there will be holiday celebrations in Pyongyang. We expect student-organised mass dances at prominent locations throughout the city, people heading to parks for a leisurley picnic, and performances in the afternoon.*

#### 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 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*

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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.

- [Moranbong Park and picnic lunch](#) | We'll take a stroll in Pyongyang's central park popular with locals for picnics, dances, and sports (especially on holidays such as the one today!). 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

- [Tower of the Juche Idea](#) | Iconic tower on the Taedong River dedicated to the DPRK's guiding philosophy. Take the elevator to the top for 5 EUR for great views of the city.
- [Monument to the 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.
- [Pyongyang Circus \(or other available performance\)](#) | We will leave time this afternoon to try and catch a local performance — either of the Pyongyang Circus, theatre, or a revolutionary opera. Schedules are typically announced only a few weeks before the trip. If no performances are available, we will find an alternative activity in the city. *Tickets to be paid on the spot (from 5-25 EUR) depending on the available performance.*
- [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!
- [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

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**AUGUST 16 – MONDAY**

*Historic Kaesong and the DMZ*

**AM**

- Drive 3 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 the 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'.
- [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 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.
- [Stamp Shop](#) | Store selling stamps, postcards, local ginseng, souvenirs, art, and more. One of the best postcard collections in the country.
- [Traditional Korean Royal Lunch](#) | Also known as pansanggi, the meal is made up of different dishes served in small brass bowls. The more dishes, the more distinguished the guest!

**PM**

- Drive to [Sariwon](#) the provincial seat of North Hwanghae Province and a centre of agriculture and industry. *A 2-hour drive.*
- [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.
- Drive back to Pyongyang. *1 hour drive.*

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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. We'll ride six stations on the Chollima Line.
- [Arch of Triumph](#) | Massive archway made for the 70th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung in 1982 and commemorating the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule. Larger than its counterpart in Paris.
- [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.
- Dinner at South Pyongyang's [Duck Barbecue Restaurant](#).

**Overnight:** Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang

## AUGUST 17 – TUESDAY

*Pyongyang, Anju, Mt. Myohyang*

### AM

- [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.
- [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.
- [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

- 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.
- [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](#).

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- [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](#), Mt. Myohyang | 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.

## AUGUST 18 – WEDNESDAY

*Mt. Myohyang, Pyongyang*

### 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.*
- [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.

### PM

- [Drive back to Pyongyang](#) (2.5-3 hours) with a stop at [Ryongmun Caves](#) | A subterranean complex of limestone caves and grottoes. Led by an experienced local guide, you will see weirdly (and suggestively) shaped rocks and stalactites/stalagmites and hear a wealth of stories and legends about each - some not appropriate for young audiences.
- [Grand People's Study House](#) | National library and public correspondence university with Neo-traditional Korean and great views of the city.
- [Pizza Restaurant](#) | Dinner at one of Pyongyang's Italian eateries (there are three).

**Overnight** | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

## AUGUST 19 – THURSDAY

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

### AM

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- 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.

OR

- Train departure by **train to Beijing** at 10:25 with transfer in Dandong. The scheduled arrival is to **Beijing Station** on Friday, August 19 at 08:40. *For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

**End of Tour**

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