



The Victory Day Tour

TOUR

July 24th - 31st 2023

7 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

OVERVIEW

Travel to North Korea for Victory Day will give you a deep insight into the country and the culture. Not only will you get to enjoy all the must-see sights of the capital [Pyongyang](#), but you'll also be there for North Korea's [Victory Day](#) celebrations. July 27th 1953 was the day the Korean War armistice was signed which was the formal ending of fighting in the Korean War, and is a major annual holiday.

This year will mark the 70th anniversary and we will make sure that you're in Pyongyang on the day for one of the most unique holidays. Join in the celebrations with the locals, who are all in high spirits. This includes picnicking in Moranbong Park, attending (and taking part in) mass dances and enjoying any other events planned on this day.

As well as a city tour of Pyongyang including the [Juche Tower](#), [Kim Il Sung Square](#) and the local [Kwangbok Supermarket](#), you will also have the opportunity to visit the DMZ North-South Korea border and stay in traditional Korean accommodation.

You will also visit local industry in [Nampo](#) on the west coast of Korea, and even take time out for a relax on the beach.

This tour will then continue north to visit [Mt Myohyang](#) where you will tour the cave vault of the [International Friendship Exhibition](#) and will spend a night at North Korea's best hotel - the 7-star [Hyangsan Hotel](#). On the way back to Pyongyang we will stop at rarely visited [Anju](#).

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DAILY ITINERARY

JULY 23 - SUNDAY

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, and pay any outstanding tour fees. 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.**

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- **16:00 | Briefing for those departing by flight.**
- **17:27 | Train travellers depart Beijing Station** by Chinese domestic sleeper train to [Dandong](#), the Chinese city on the border with North Korea. 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.*

JULY 24 - MONDAY

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*

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with the transfer. Train crosses the [China-North Korea border](#) followed by North Korean customs and immigration.

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- Flight departure from **Beijing Capital International Airport (PEK) Terminal 2** on [Air Koryo flight JS152](#) at 12:20. A 1.5-hour flight with basic lunch ([vegetarian option](#) is subject to availability). **Check-in starts 3 hours prior to departure.**
- **Flight arrival to [Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport](#)** (FNJ) at 15:20. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides and transfer to the city.
- [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.
- **Victory (Sungni) Street** | Walk from Kim Il Sung Square to the [Pyongyang Grand Theatre](#) along one of post-war Pyongyang's oldest streets.
- Train arrival to [Pyongyang Railway Station](#) at 18:45.

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.

JULY 25 - TUESDAY

Pyongyang and Nampo

AM

- [Jongsung Revolutionary Site](#) | A system of underground tunnels and bunkers used by Korean government's cabinet during the 1950's. Learn about life underground during the years of American bombing.
- [Walk on Ryomyong Street](#) | Pyongyang's newest futuristic neighbourhood.
- 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.

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- [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.
- [Pi Island](#) | A local beach next to West Sea Barrage. Go for a swim or join the locals for a karaoke.
- [Kaesong](#) | Drive 3-hours south along the 'Reunification Highway' to the ancient capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392 AD) located near today's Korean Demilitarised Zone

Overnight | [Minsok Folk Hotel, Kaesong](#). 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.

JULY 26 - WEDNESDAY

Kaesong, DMZ, Sariwon

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 from the city's historic South Gate.
- [Panmunjom Truce Village](#) | Located in the middle of the 4 km wide Demilitarised Zone, Panmunjom is the site of the signing of the 1953 armistice at the end of the Korean War. This is the only location where visitors can directly view soldiers from both sides and the demarcation line dividing Korea. On some days it is possible to enter the hut straddling both Koreas and there cross temporarily into the south.
- [Kaesong Koryo Museum & Stamp Shop](#) | A former Confucian education school, 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.
- [Traditional Korean Royal Meal with Kayagum Performance](#) | 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!

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- [Pakyon Waterfall](#) | Light walking with a picnic lunch in a relaxing wooded area. Local people commonly visit here for picnics and sometimes swimming in the series of pools above the falls.
- Drive to [Sariwon](#), the provincial seat of North Hwanghae Province and a centre of agriculture and industry. *This is a 1.5 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.
- [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.
- Return to Pyongyang.
- **Taedonggang Boat No. 1** | Dinner tonight will be on a boat and will feature a cruise on the Taedong River and performance by one of Pyongyang's greatest live bands!

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

JULY 27 - THURSDAY

Victory Day, the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Korean War Armistice Agreement.

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.

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- [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). Here we will also see the Chollima, or ‘thousand *ri* [400 mile] horse’ – a symbol of speed- commemorating the quick rebuilding of the country in the 1950’s following the Korean War.
- [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’.

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- **MILITARY PARADE** (expected) - for the 70th anniversary of Victory Day big events are anticipated in Pyongyang - this may involve a military parade, mass rallies, and so on. Such events are never confirmed until they happen but on such a major occasion there will be something big happening, and Koryo Tours will get you as much access as possible - stay tuned for updates on what will be happening
- [Mass Dance](#) (expected) | We'll watch as hundreds of locals, many in brightly coloured national dress, join together in a beautiful choreographed dance in the heart of the city (and maybe even join in ourselves!)

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

JULY 28 - FRIDAY

Pyongyang

AM

- [Mangyongdae Native House](#) | Birthplace of and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in beautiful natural surroundings.
- [Tram Ride](#) | A ride through Pyongyang on one of the city’s trams from Kwangbok Street. A Koryo exclusive!
- [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.
- [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.

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- [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.
- [Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum and USS Pueblo](#) | We'll 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 spyship [USS Pueblo](#). Central to the understanding of the country today and highlight of the trip.
- [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.
- **BBQ Dinner** | we will enjoy Korean BBQ at the shooting range's own restaurant.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

JULY 29 - SATURDAY

Mt Myohyang

AM

- Drive to [Mt. Myohyang](#) early in the morning (*2.5-3 hours*).
- [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.*
- Check-in and 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

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Tripitaka Koreana, Buddhist scriptures first produced to invoke divine assistance from foreign invasions during the Koryo Dynasty.

- [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 | [Hyangsan Hotel, Mt Myohyang](#). The fanciest hotel in North Korea with '7-star' facilities. Renovated in 2010. Excellent swimming pool, great location and reliable electricity & hot water.

JULY 30 - SUNDAY

Anju and drive back to Pyongyang

AM

- A 45-minutes drive to [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.
- Drive to [Anju](#) (1 hour) 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.

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- Continue driving to Pyongyang (*1-1.5 hours*).
- [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*).
- [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 BBQ Restaurant](#) | Famous restaurant in south Pyongyang specializing in duck meat barbecue on a grill. *Southcentral does it like nobody does!*

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Overnight | Yanggakdo Hotel, Pyongyang

JULY 31 - MONDAY

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

AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS151** at 09:00 with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 10:20.

OR

- Train departure by **train to Beijing** at 10:25 with transfer in Dandong. The scheduled arrival is to **Beijing Station** on Tuesday July 2 at 08:40. *For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

End of Tour

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