



North Korea National Day Tour

TOUR

September 8th – 13th 2023

5 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

OVERVIEW

One of the biggest North Korea holidays, North Korea National Day celebrates the foundation of the DPRK (Democratic People's Republic of Korea). This year, North Koreans throughout the country will be in full celebration mode as they enjoy the festivities for the 74th North Korea National Day.

As well as celebrating with the local North Koreans, we'll take you on an extensive tour throughout [Pyongyang](#), visiting the must-see sites including; the [Mansudae Grand Monument](#), [Kumsusan Palace of the Sun](#), and the [Pyongyang Metro](#).

During this tour, we will also get the chance to have an overnight trip to the ancient city of [Kaesong](#), the capital of the medieval Koryo Dynasty. In Kaesong, we'll visit the Panmunjom Truce Village in the [Korean Demilitarized Zone \(DMZ\)](#).

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DAILY ITINERARY

SEPTEMBER 7 - 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, 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.**

PM

- **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.*

SEPTEMBER 8 - 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*

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

PM

- Flight departure from **Beijing Capital International Airport (PEK) Terminal 2** on [Air Koryo flight JS152](#) at 13:05. 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 15:05. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides and transfer to the city.
- [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.
- 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.

SEPTEMBER 9 - SATURDAY

National Day! The 75th anniversary of the founding of the DPRK! (North Korea!)

AM

- [Mangyongdae Native House](#) | Birthplace of and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in beautiful natural surroundings.
- [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

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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'.

PM

- [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.
- [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.
- [Mass Dance](#) | 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!)
- [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 air gun shooting range (*approximately 6 EUR per 20 round cartridge*) and some of the best coffee in Pyongyang.
- [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*).
- [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

SEPTEMBER 10 - SUNDAY

Kumsusan Palace of the Sun and Pyongyang City Tour

AM

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- [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. 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. Okgyuwan specialises in Pyongyang Cold Noodles.

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- [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*).
- [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.
- [Maeri Shooting Range](#) | Shoot at targets with low calibre sports pistols and rifles in the facility that trained Olympic medalists. Pay by the bullet (*0.50 -1 EUR*) depending on the type of gun and target.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang

SEPTEMBER 11 - MONDAY

Pyongyang highlights and drive to Kaesong

AM

- [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.

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- [Grand People's Study House](#) | National library and public correspondence university with Neo-traditional Korean and great views of the city.
- [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.
- [Jongsung Revolutionary Site](#) | A system of underground tunnels and bunkers used by the DPRK government's cabinet during the 1950s exhibiting life underground during the Korean War.

PM

- [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.
- [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.

SEPTEMBER 12 - TUESDAY

Kaesong & the DMZ

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.

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- [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 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

- [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.
- Return to Pyongyang with a stop at the [Monument to the Three-Charters of National Reunification](#), iconic arch over the Pyongyang-Kaesong Highway dedicated to joint meeting between Koreans, north and south. Also known as the 'Arch of Reunification'. *A 3-hours drive.*
- 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!*

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel

SEPTEMBER 13 - WEDNESDAY

Departure Day

AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on **Air Koryo Flight JS 151** at 08:30 with scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 09:50.

OR

- Train departure at 10:25 with transfer in Dandong. The scheduled arrival is to **Beijing Station** on Wednesday, September 14 at 08:40. *For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

End of Tour

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