

APRIL 14 - APRIL 18/19 2020

The Kim Il Sung Birthday Short Tour

4 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

Be in Pyongyang for one of North Korea's biggest national holidays for mass dances and other festivities with the locals!

From 999 EUR per person

Overall

Be in Pyongyang for one of North Korea's biggest national holidays, President Kim Il Sung's Birthday. Join in the celebrations in Pyongyang including mass dances and other festivities.

Travel to Pyongyang, Kaesong, the DMZ, and the beautiful Mt. Myohyang in the North Korean countryside.

Expect big celebrations on this trip to North Korea. April 15th, known as 'The Day of the Sun', is one of the biggest, if not the biggest holiday in North Korea. 2020 marks the 108th anniversary of the birth of President Kim Il Sung in 1912. Festivities expected include mass dances, Kimilsungia flower exhibition and the possibility of viewing a North Korea firework display with local North Koreans in Kim Il Sung Square.

This tour takes you to see the best of what Pyongyang has to offer over a couple of days touring the city, as well as a trip to the historic town of Kaesong, the North-South Korea DMZ border, and Mt. Myohyang.

Mt. Myohyang is famously home to the North Korea Friendship Exhibition, or International Friendship Exhibition. This is where international gifts given to Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il are housed - including the basketball from Dennis Rodman! In this area, you can enjoy a hike and enjoy life outside the big city.

Highlights

- The Day of the Sun national holiday, the birthday of Eternal President Kim Il Sung birthday celebrations
- Mt. Myohyang hike and International Friendship Exhibition
- Panmunjom and the Demilitarized Zone

Itinerary

Briefing Day – April 13 | 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.

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.



Day 1 - April 14 | Tuesday

Arrival Day in Pyongyang

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.

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 13:05. A 1.5-hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option).

Flight arrival into Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport (FNJ) at 16:05. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides, and transfer to the city.

Walk from Kim Il Sung Square to Pyongyang Railway Station via the Pyongyang Grand Theatre.

Train arrival to Pyongyang Railway Station.

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.

Day 2 - April 15 | Wednesday

The Day of the Sun, one of the DPRK's largest holidays. April 15, 2020, is the 108th 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. Visitations are by special request only and 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.

Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum | A world-class museum led by a local museum guides. Renovated in 2012 and its exhibits of 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 spy ship USS Pueblo. Central to the understanding of the country today and highlight of the trip. Unmissable.

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

Mansudae Grand Monument | Enormous bronze statues of the DPRK leadership overlooking downtown Pyongyang. A presentation of flowers and bow by the group is customary here. Visitations are by special request only and decent dress is required. No shorts or flip-flop sandals allowed here.

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.

Mass Dance | Large student organised dances held around Pyongyang on major holidays (weather dependent). Join in the fun!

Monument to the Party Foundation | Iconic structure featuring the hammer, sickle, writing brush which represent the workers, farmers, and intellectuals that make up the Worker's Party of Korea.

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.

Golden Lanes Bowling Centre | Where Pyongyang locals go for their ten-pin fix. Also has billiards and arcade games. Non-bowlers can head next door to the Kumrung Leisure Centre for an airgun shooting range and some of the best coffee in Pyongyang.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

Day 3 - April 16 | Thursday

Myohyangsan & International Friendship Exhibition

AM

Drive approximately. 2 hours further north passing rivers valleys and hills to Mt. Myohyang, 'the mountain of mysterious fragrance'.

International Friendship Exhibition | A 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.

PM

Pohyon Buddhist Temple | A peaceful temple dating back to 1042 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 invasion during the Koryo Dynasty.

Manpok Valley Walk | A hike passing waterfalls, interesting rocks, lovely wooded areas and viewing points.

Drive back through North and South Pyongan provinces to Pyongyang.

Ryomyong Street | Enjoy an evening stroll on the modern, brightly lit Ryomyong Street in Central Pyongyang

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang



Day 4 – April 17 | Friday

Kaesong & DMZ

AM

Drive 2 ½ hours south along the 'Reunification Highway' to Kaesong, ancient capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392 AD) located near today's Korean Demilitarised Zone.

Old City Walk and South Gate | A morning stroll through Kaesong's historic district lined with homes dating back to the late Ri Dynasty to the city's historic South Gate.

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.

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 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 and Old City View | Statues of the DPRK leadership on a hill overlooking Kaesong city and historic pavilion used for archery demonstrations in days of yore.

Drive back to Pyongyang with a stop at the Monument to the Three Charters of Reunification, a large stone archway over the highway memorializing joint agreements between north and south. A 2.5-hour drive.

Tower of the Juche Idea | Iconic tower dedicated to the DPRK's guiding philosophy and located on the Taedong River. Take the elevator to the top for great views of the city (elevator ticket is 5 EUR).

Pyongyang Metro Tour | One of the deepest metro systems in the world with stunning artwork reflecting the name of each station. Ride 6 stops on the internationally renowned subway system.

Kwangbok Supermarket | Local supermarket selling all kinds of domestically and foreign produced household goods, clothes, foods. Exchange for local currency here! Please note that local currency, the Korean Won, can only be exchanged for and spent at this location.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel

Day 5 – April 18 | Saturday

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 JS251 at 10:35 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, April 19 at 08:38. For this tour the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).

End of Tour

Extras

Transport | Train and Flights to North Korea (High-season) This tour travels between Beijing-Pyongyang by train each way in a hard-sleeper carriage (6 bunks per compartment). The train journey takes 24 hours with a transfer at the city of Dandong. One-way or round-trip flights are also available. The flight takes around 90 minutes. For an extra 265 EUR you can upgrade to a one-way flight. A round-trip ticket costs an additional 435 EUR. We recommend flight entry with a train return for the best overall experience on your trip.

Visit the DPRK border town of Sinuiju If you're heading back to Beijing by train this option lets you get off for an overnight in Dongrim before the next day's tour of Sinuiju — the border city with China. Spend an extra 24 hours in the DPRK seeing the sites of North Pyongan province. You will then continue on through to Beijing.

Upgrade to your own room All hotel rooms on our all-inclusive group tours feature twin beds, and will be shared. If you'd like a room to yourself then you can upgrade for an extra 40 EUR per night.

Visit Dandong — the Chinese gateway to the DPRK Instead of immediately returning to Beijing when your tour ends you can take some extra time to visit this fascinating border city, which directly faces the DPRK town of Sinuiju, but lies on the Chinese side of the Yalu River. We offer both one-night and two-night fully guided extensions that take in all the sights of Dandong, with a special North Korea theme.

Helicopter flight over Pyongyang Why not take a helicopter sightseeing flight over the DPRK's capital? Grab this rare opportunity to tour the skies above the city in a 40-minute helicopter trip aboard an Air Koryo Mi-17 chopper. The

flight offers an unrivalled view from above, and great opportunities for photos and video from a completely different angle.

Insurance for up to six nights We're unable to take you on one of our tours if you do not have medical insurance that covers the destination in question. Issues of isolation and infrastructure where we go mean it would be irresponsible of us to do so. We can provide this if you do not have it — or you can use your own.

What is / is not included?

INCLUDED

- Train Beijing – Pyongyang - Beijing
- All meals on the tour apart from the meals on the train
- Hotel accommodation
- Two local Korean guides, and a driver per group
- A Koryo Tours tour leader
- All transportation in the DPRK

NOT INCLUDED

- DPRK visa fee 50 EUR
- Optional Air Koryo flights (one-way: 265 EUR; return: 435 EUR)
- Optional single room supplement of 40 EUR per night
- Tips for the local Korean guides and driver (approx 10-15 EUR per day)
- Optional activities such as the lift up the Juche Tower (5 EUR) or a visit to the funfair (approx. 2 EUR entrance fee per person)
- Entry tickets for special events if applicable – for example Pyongyang Circus (approx. 20 EUR per person)
- Meals include a complimentary beer and water, but you will need to purchase extra drinks if needed
- Spending money for souvenirs
- SINUIJU EXTENSION: RMB 50 for the bus across the bridge to Dandong to be paid on the spot to the local guides

Notes

Groups will be in the experienced hands of two or three local Korean guides. Furthermore, for groups of 10 or more, a member of the Koryo Tours team will accompany the trip.

Please note that when on tour your day-to-day itinerary may differ slightly to what is advertised above. Your tour leader will ensure, however, that everything available at the time is covered, and replacement options are provided where needed. We will also add in extras when there is time (such as a visit to a local bar or amusement park). We visit the DPRK regularly so know all the best places to go, and how to make the most of your days there to guarantee the experience of a lifetime. After the tour, we will send out a list of all participants' emails, so you can keep in touch, swap photos etc. If you do not wish to be on this list then please let us know.

Visa Information

We arrange your North Korean visa as part of your tour package [+50 EUR]. However, given the tour starts and finishes in China you may also need to consider entry and exit procedures in China for your trip. This can be obtained at a Chinese embassy abroad. We recommend obtaining at least a double-entry Chinese visa for your trip.

Over 50 nationalities can obtain a visa-waiver for up to 144 hours when in transit through Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) using direct international flights. Most other nationalities can transit for up to 24 hours. If you don't want to visit China as part of your trip, this could be the easiest option for you. It is not possible to obtain a transit-waiver when using a train for entry or exit from China.



Please be sure to check your visa status for travel through China while planning your trip. We may be able to assist with Chinese visas. We can also provide documentation in support of visa applications upon payment of a tour deposit.