

APRIL 26 - MAY 27/28 2020

The May Day and East Coast Tour

10 nights in North Korea for May Day

Join in the May Day festivities in Pyongyang, see historic Kaesong and the DMZ, Nampo, Pyongsong, Korea's East Coast.

From 1,599 EUR per person

Overall

May Day is one of the best times to visit North Korea during the calendar year for the fine weather and festivities. Also known as International Workers' Day, or Labour Day, May Day is a day off and locals take to the outdoors for picnics, dancing, and sports.

On this tour, we'll even get the exclusive chance to compete in a friendly volleyball game against a Korean company team. Volleyball is one of the most popular sports in North Korea and almost every company, school, office, section, or unit has a team! A great chance to get involved in Korean culture with the locals.

The May Day and East Coast Tour is our ultimate May Day celebration tour. Not only will you be in Pyongyang for the May Day celebrations, but we'll have an extensive tour throughout North Korea, visiting areas only few ever get to go to in this already off the beaten path country. This includes;

A day trip to the DMZ North-South Korean border and historic city of Kaesong.

A night at the exclusive hot springs spa hotel in Nampo where you can enjoy Korea's petrol clam BBQ.

A day trip to the city of Pyongsong, a centre of scientific and commercial development, for a look at the country's economic heartland.

A trip to the seaside to port city Wonsan and chemical-industrial centre of Hamhung.

Enjoy the beautiful seaside scenery as we drive through untouched, rural land to the East coast, whilst stopping on the way to visit the tombs of ancient Korean kings and the massive Hungnam Fertiliser Plant.

Highlights

- May Day celebrations and festivities: picnics, music, dancing, and fun!
- Highlights of Pyongyang and Kaesong, including the DMZ.
- Plus Hamhung and Wonsan on North Korea's scenic east coast!

Itinerary

Briefing Day – April 26 | Sunday

*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 | Briefing for those departing by flight.

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 27 | 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 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 JS 152 at 12:00. A 1.5 hour flight with basic lunch (no vegetarian option).

Flight arrival to Pyongyang's Sunan International Airport (FNJ) at 15:35. DPRK immigration and customs, meet your Korean guides, and transfer to the city.

Arch of Triumph | Massive archway commemorating the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule. Made for the 70th anniversary of President Kim Il Sung in 1982.

Train arrival to Pyongyang Railway Station.

Walk on Future Scientists' Street | An evening stroll through one of Pyongyang's newest neighborhoods.

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 28 | Tuesday

Pyongyang City Tour and Highlights

AM

Manggyongdae Native House | Birthplace of and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a park-like setting.

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.

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

PM

Three-Charters of National Reunification Monument | Iconic arch over the Pyongyang-Kaesong Highway dedicated to joint meeting between Koreans, north and south. Also known as the 'Arch of Reunification'.

Drive south along the 'Reunification Highway' to Sariwon, the provincial seat of North Hwanghae Province and a centre of agriculture and industry. 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.

Continue to Kaesong, historic capital of the Koryo Dynasty (918-1392) and today located near the Korean Demilitarised Zone. A 1.5-hour drive.

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.

Overnight | Minsok Folk Hotel, Kaesong. Traditional style hotel where guests sleep on heated floors in Korean-style. Hot water not guaranteed and erratic electric supply. Please bring a torch. Beautiful setting in Kaesong old city with a stream running through the centre and Ri dynasty furniture.

Day 3 – April 29 | Wednesday

Historic Kaesong and the DMZ Tour

AM

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

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.

Janam Hill | 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. 2.5-hour drive.

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, Pyongyang.



Day 4 – April 30 | Thursday

Pyongyang City Tour and Volleyball Match!

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 in the country. 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. The Palace closes for maintenance between late April / early May to July. The exact dates will be confirmed closer to the tour. Should the Palace not be accessible to the group, this visit will be substituted with an alternative location.

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.

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.

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

May Day Stadium | Tour the grounds and facilities of one of the world's largest stadiums. Once used for the Arirang Mass Games and now major sports events. No May Day tour is complete without the May Day Stadium.

Volleyball game against a local company team | Most work units whether it be a factory, a farm, or white-collar office has its own volleyball team.

Schoolchildren's Palace | Tour one of Pyongyang's centres of extracurricular excellence with study rooms for fine arts, dance, sports, and music, then watch a spectacular performance put on by the students.

Mansugyo Beer Bar | A new standing bar serving seven types of local beer (0.50 -1 EUR per beer). Popular with locals after work

Golden Lane Bowling Centre | Where Pyongyang locals go for their ten-pin fix, billiards and 90's arcade games (2.5 EUR per person per game).

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

Day 5 – May 1 | Friday

May Day, or International Workers' Day, in Pyongyang

AM

Pyongyang Metro Tour | One of the deepest metro systems in the world with stunning artwork reflecting the name of each station. Ride six stations on the Chollima Line.

Mt. Taesong Folk Festival | Each year on May Day, there is a festival featuring music performances and folk games. A great time to have fun with the locals on their day off.

Revolutionary Martyrs' Cemetery | Hilltop cemetery with dozens of bronze busts of those who took part in the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule. A presentation of flowers is customary here. At the top of the hill are the graves of Kim Jong Suk (wife of Kim Il Sung) and Kim Chaek (his right-hand man). Time permitting. Please note this location was undergoing renovation in 2017 and may not be available in 2018.

PM

Moranbong Park | We'll take a stroll 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'.

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 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.

Drive north to Pyongsong, a satellite city of Pyongyang and centre of scientific research. A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.

Overnight | Jangsusan Hotel, Pyongsong. The only hotel in Pyongsong open for tourists and one of the most fun in the whole country! Basic facilities with fairly reliable electricity and hot water. One of the best bartenders in the country mans the bar. Billiards, karaoke, hairdresser, and outdoor eateries in summer.

Day 6 – May 2 | Saturday

Pyongsong and Pyonyang

AM

Pyongsong City Square | Central square of Pyongsong City with statues of the DPRK leadership and flanked by the provincial revolutionary museum. Presentation of flowers customary.

Doksung Primary School | Visit a local primary school. Drop by an English lesson, dance class, and small musical performance.

Kon-ji Ri Revolutionary Site | Historic location of the Korean People's Army headquarters during the Korean War.

PM

Pyongyang Feature Film Studio | See the home of 'Cholliwood', the DPRK's domestic film industry. Visits sets of traditional Korea, colonial Korea, China, Europe, and more!

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.

Drive west along the 'Youth Hero Highway' to Nampo, the port city of Pyongyang on the Taedong River estuary. A 45 minute to 1-hour drive.

Overnight | Ryonggang Hot Spa Hotel, Nampo. Compound with holiday houses and a main building for dinner and entertainment. Bring a torch! Spa bath in every room with mineral water from the Sindok Spring- the most famous mineral spa in the DPRK. Billiards, karaoke, and ping pong!

Day 7 – May 3 | Sunday

Nampo

AM

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 locks and fish ladder. One of the DPRK's greatest engineering feats.

Chollima Steelworks | A major heavy industry site of the DPRK, known to Koreans as the birthplace of the Chollima Movement and famous for making 'Juche Steel'. Please note that this location is key industrial site and visits may depend on on-site activities/conditions. If unavailable, an alternative location will be arranged.

PM

Return to Pyongyang along the old riverside road. 45 minute to 1 hour drive.

Science and Technology Complex | Newly built atom-shaped educational facility, library, computer lab, and exhibition of the latest developments in science and technology for students of all ages, educators, and researchers alike.

Monument to the Sinking of the General Sherman | Monument dedicated to the sinking of the SS General Sherman in 1866, which marked one of the first encounters between the United States and Korea.

Pizza Restaurant | Farewell dinner at one of Pyongyang's Italian eateries (there are three). Pizzas range between 5-12 EUR each, to be paid on the spot.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

Day 8 – May 4 | Monday

Hamhung

AM

Depart Pyongyang for Hamhung, the DPRK's second largest city and major industrial centre on the East Coast. The drive will take most of the day with stops along the way.

Tomb of King Tongmyong | Largest of the UNESCO listed Koguryo Tombs spread through the area, this is the beautiful tomb complex of the founder of the Koguryo Dynasty two thousand years ago. Statues, a Buddhist Monastery, and lovely wall paintings make this a fascinating visit for history buffs.

Ulim Waterfall | Hidden amongst the mountains on the road to Hamhung, 'Echo' Waterfall is a scenic stopover to enjoy lunch, stretch your legs, or go for a dip in the pool beneath. (re)Discovered by the Korean People's Army in 1995 while building roads in the area.

PM

Tongbong Co-operative Farm | Local farm in the outskirts of Hamhung. View the machinery barn, a local home, and the farm shop to buy some locally made products.

Overnight | Majon Beach Guesthouse, Hamhung. A beachside holiday compound with basic but comfortable chalets. Rooms have heated floors but no running water. There is a main building with restaurant, bar, billiards, table-tennis, bookshop, and Korean karaoke. Bring a torch!

Day 9 – May 5 | Tuesday

Hamhung to Wonsan

AM

Hungnam Fertiliser Factory | Massive chemical-industrial plant producing various kinds of fertilisers. Tour of the plant control room, production facilities, and packing plant - just don't light up next to the Ammonium Nitrate! A bust of Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai stands at this complex to note the contributions China made to the development of the plant. A museum is also on site, this is where Kim Il Sung uttered his famous phrase 'Fertiliser is rice. And rice, itself, is Communism', therefore...

Home of Ri Song Gye | Home of the first king of the Ri Dynasty (1392-1910) who extinguished the Koryo Dynasty, only to be then ousted by his own son. A traditional hall and pavilion and associated naughty stories of the former king's retirement years – some not appropriate for the youth!

Hamhung Grand Theatre and Central Square | Exterior view of the DPRK's largest theatre on the city's central square.
Tonghung Revolutionary Site | Hillside park with statues of the DPRK leadership overlooking Hamhung city centre and the Songchon River.

PM

Drive to Wonsan, a major port city on the East Sea. A 3-hour drive.

Wonsan Agricultural University | The DPRK's premier agricultural university set among beautiful hillside scenery. Tour the grounds and the neo-Romanesque teaching hall, originally built by German monks living in the area in the early 20th century.

Jangdok Island and Lighthouse | Take a stroll on the breakwater to a small island in the middle of Wonsan harbour (1 EUR/USD entry fee). Local fishermen flock to this area, chat with them along the way. Also good for romantic evening walks.

Overnight | Dongmyong Hotel, Wonsan. Waterfront hotel with stunning seaside views of Wonsan Harbor. Limited hours of hot water, bar, billiards, ping-pong, barber shop, beauty salon, dry-sauna, and indoor seawater swimming pool.

Day 10 – May 6 | Wednesday

Wonsan to Pyongyang

AM

Wonsan City Centre and Docks | Central square and ship terminal in downtown Wonsan. The Mangyongbong-92 ferry/cargo ship which one shuttled Koreans living in Japan back and forth across the East Sea of Korea is moored here.

Kangwon Province Art Gallery | Small art exhibition selling artwork by local artists, where you can purchase paintings.

Songdowon International Schoolchildren's Camp | A classic socialist summer camp where Korean and international children can spend two weeks learning socialist values and teamwork. Tour the recently renovated dormitories, aquarium, birdhouse, gymnasium, and more!

PM

Drive back to Pyongyang with a rest stop at Masik Ski Resort. A 4-hour drive.

Farewell dinner in Pyongyang.

Overnight | Yanggakdo International Hotel, Pyongyang.

Day 11 – May 7 | Thursday

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 JS 251 at 08:50 with a scheduled arrival at Beijing Capital Airport (PEK) Terminal 2 at 11:30.

OR

Train departure by train to Beijing at 10:10 with transfer in Dandong. The scheduled arrival is to Beijing Station on Friday May 8 at 08:40. 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.

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.

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.

Insurance (10 to 13 night) 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 with transfer at Dandong
- Train Pyongyang – Beijing with transfer at Dandong
- All meals on the tour except for the final pizza dinner and meals on the train
- Hotel accommodation
- Two local Korean guides, and a driver per group
- For groups of 10 or more, a Koryo Tours tour leader
- All transportation in the DPRK

NOT INCLUDED

- North Korean (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.