



Summer Budget Tour + Northeast Adventure Extension

TOUR

June 12th – 19th 2023

8 nights in North Korea + Beijing-Pyongyang travel time

OVERVIEW

Our North Korea Summer Budget Tour falls after the Tano Festival ('Dragon Boat Festival' in China), which marks the end of the planting season and the start of summer in North Korea. The pleasant scenery and warm weather of June traditionally made this the time for outdoor activities and festivals since ancient times.

This is an introductory trip to Korea for the frugal traveller in search of adventure, offering a no-frills alternative to our more advanced tours offers a great way to see a tightly edited package of the country's most interesting sights, including a city tour of [Pyongyang](#) and a visit to the [DMZ](#), where North and South Korea continue their decades-old face-off.

As well as visiting the port town of [Nampo](#) this weeklong budget tour takes you to one of the least explored areas of North Korea - the [Northeast](#).

Experience an Air Koryo internal flight as we travel North to enjoy a local health spa, and experience a home-stay in North Korea. See the beautiful landscapes of [Mt.Chilbo](#), visit [Chongjin](#) city, and take a local train from North Korea back to China. You can't get much more off the beaten path than this!

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The Experts in Travel to Rather Unusual Destinations.
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DAILY ITINERARY

JUNE 11 – 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.**

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.*

JUNE 12 - MONDAY

Arrival day in Pyongyang

AM

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- **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.*

PM

- 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 | [Ryonggang Hotel, Pyongyang](#). The two rivers hotel (so named as it sits on a hill overlooking the point where the Potong river and Taedong Rivers meet). The hotel offers great views over different parts of the city (depending on which side of the building you stay on) from the open balconies, and also from the 'swivelling' restaurant. The underground karaoke room here is excellent and the bar in the lobby is also great.

JUNE 13 - TUESDAY

Pyongyang City Tour

AM

- Optional morning run for the early risers on **Sports Street** past stadiums and halls whose architecture reflects the sports played within.
- **[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.
- **[Arch of Triumph](#)** | A 60-m archway commemorating the liberation of Korea from Japanese colonial rule and larger than its counterpart in Paris.

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- [Mansudae Fountain Park](#) | The historic centre of Pyongyang popular with local citizens after school and on weekends. Flanked by examples of ancient and modern architecture from different eras.
- [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, museum and The Grand People's Study House, Korea's national library. See the centre of it all!
- [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.

PM

- [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.
- Drive south on the [Reunification Highway](#) to [Kaesong](#), historic capital of the medieval Koryo Dynasty (918-1392 AD). Once located in South Korea, the city changed hands during the Korean War. It is now located just north of the DMZ.
- Dinner with a live Kayagum performance - a traditional Korean instrument in a unique setting!

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.

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JUNE 14 - WEDNESDAY

Historic Kaesong and the Joint Security Area

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 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](#) | Statues of the DPRK leadership on a hill overlooking Kaesong city and historic pavilion used for archery demonstrations in days of yore.
- [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.
- 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 3-hour drive.*

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- [Kwangbok Department Store](#) | Exchange for Korean currency and shop with the citizens of Pyongyang! Try the snack stands for some of Pyongyang's best local eats.

Overnight | Ryanggang Hotel, Pyongyang

JUNE 15 - THURSDAY

Nampo and Pyongyang City Tour

AM

- Optional morning run for the early risers on **Sports Street** past stadiums and halls whose architecture reflects the sports played within.
- [Mangyongdae Native House](#) | Birthplace and childhood home of President Kim Il Sung. A traditional Korean house in a beautiful natural surrounding.
- Drive west along the 'Youth Hero Highway' to [Nampo](#) (45 minutes to 1-hour drive), the port city of Pyongyang at the mouth of the Taedong River on the West Sea.
- [Chongsan-ri Co-Operative Farm](#) | The DPRK's most famous and iconic model farm. Visited hundreds of times by Kim Il Sung (there is a bronze statue of him and various farm workers here), the place where the 'Chongsam-ri Method' was developed (they will explain on-site). See how the farming system works, visit a farmhouse and the local shop & kindergarten, see the fields and greenhouses.
- [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 (*weather permitting*).

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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.
- Drive back to [Pyongyang](#).

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- [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*).
- [Party Foundation Monument](#) | Iconic Monument made up of stone depictions of hands gripping the hammer, sickle, and writing brush – symbols of the Workers' Party of Korea. Built in 1995 for the 40th anniversary of this Party.
- [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!*

Overnight | Ryanggang Hotel, Pyongyang

JUNE 16 - FRIDAY

Domestic flight to North Hamgyong Province and Mt. Chilbo

AM

- Flight departure from Pyongyang on domestic **Air Koryo Flight JS4101** at 10:00 with scheduled arrival at [Orang Airport \(RGO\)](#) at 11:00.

PM

- Upon arrival at [Mount Chilbo](#), we will start our tour of the mountain range. The 'Seven Treasures' mountain is one of the DPRK's most remote and scenic areas with a vast array of strangely shaped peaks and unique geologic formations. This primordial landscape is home to many colourful (and suggestive) legends. It contrasts to the densely populated cities and agricultural areas seen in much the rest of the country.
- **Local games and picnic at homestay village** | The only place in the DPRK where foreigners can stay with local families. Brush up on your Korean (or body-language) as for an evening spent with the family. It is also possible to [play volleyball](#) against or [wrestle the village team](#).

Overnight | [Homestay Village, Mount Chilbo](#). The only place in the DPRK where foreigners can stay with local families in either a Korean-style or European-style home. Each home has a bedroom and washroom for guests.

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JUNE 17 - SATURDAY

Mount Chilbo to Chongjin

AM

- We'll leave Mount Chilbo by way of the scenic coastal road (weather permitting) that leads to **Kyongsong** and [Chongjin](#).

PM

- [Kyongsong](#) | Once one of the primary cities in Hamgyong Province, from which 'Kyong' derives, now eclipsed by neighbour Chongjin. Kyongsong is renowned for its hot spas which provide needed relaxation after days on the road and outdoor activities at Mt. Chilbo.
- **Kyongsong Revolutionary Site** | Japanese colonial-era house once used by the DPRK leadership and telling of their exploits in the region.
- **Health Spa** | There are many of these in Kyongsong, some belong to the military, some to the Party, some are open to the public. Here you can use the saunas and bathing facilities. The water coming up from the ground in a kind of panacea and historical records show it has long been considered good for recovering health and especially fertility (*ca. 50 RMB admission fee*).
- **Chongjin Orphanage Kindergarten** | Where parentless children are cared for and raised.

Overnight | Gomalsan Guesthouse, Chongjin. Limited facilities but this is more than made up for by the exclusivity of the place and the views of the city from the rooms.

JUNE 18 - SUNDAY

Chongjin and drive to Hoeryong

AM

- **Gomalsan Revolutionary Site** | Bird's eye view of Chongjin and memorial site honouring the Soviet troops who helped to liberate this area.
- **Chongjin Revolutionary Museum** | Museum depicting the revolutionary struggles of the region.

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- **Chongjin Central Square** | Central Square of Chongjin city with statues of the DPRK leadership.
- [North Hamgyong Province E-Library](#) | A library, study, and computer centre for the province, located just off Chongjin Central Square.
- **Chongjin Trolley Bus** | We'll take a ride down Chongjin's main drag on one of the city's trolleybuses.

PM

- **Mushroom Factory** | See how a North Korean factory works, and learn about the production process of different mushrooms. You can even taste the products if you're lucky.
- Drive to [Hoeryong](#).
- **Central Square and Statue of Mother Kim Jong Suk** | Bronze statue of 'The Mother of Korea' in central Hoeryong. A presentation of flowers (2-4 EUR) is customary here.
- [Native House of Kim Jong Suk](#) | Traditional Korean home of Kim Jong Suk set among a peaceful apricot orchard.
- [Hoeryong Revolutionary Museum](#) | Museum depicting the revolutionary struggles of the region. Particularly interesting for its giant mural depicting the 'Three Generals of Mt. Paekdu' during the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle. The painting was made by artists from the Mansudae Art Studio in Pyongyang and smaller replicas of it can be found throughout the country.

Overnight | [Hoeryong Hotel](#), **Hoeryong**. A basic hotel featuring large rooms with air conditioning but no hot water, separate sauna/shower block, small shop and bar, and a large banquet hall.

JUNE 19 - MONDAY

Hoeryong, Wangjaesan, and cross over to China

AM

- [Kim Ki Sung Middle School](#) | Local school, named after the brother of Kim Jong Suk in Hoeryong City. Tour the facilities, drop in on classrooms to help practice English or play football in the schoolyard.
- Drive to Wangjaesan.

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PM

- [Wangjaesan Grand Monument](#) | Large tower and socialist realist sculpture group set atop a prominent mountain and dedicated to the anti-Japanese guerilla struggle. One of three grand monuments in the DPRK: the others are at Mansudae in Pyongyang and Samjiyon near Mt. Paekdu. Rarely visited by foreigners as only practicable for those crossing the border at Tumen-Namyang.
- **Wangjaesan Revolutionary History Museum** | Next to the Grand Monument, this museum tells the tale of revolutionary activity in this area. Some great examples of the famous 'slogan trees' can be found here.
- **Crossing over to China** | Next up is our final drive in the DPRK - we head south along the Tumen River to **Tumen River Bridge** in Namyang, the frontier between the DPRK and the PRC. We pass through customs here on the Korean side, take a short ride or walk across the bridge and then we are back in China, just like that!
- **Train back to Beijing** | We catch a high-speed train from Tumen North at 19:00 to Changchun where we transfer to a sleeper train to Beijing. The scheduled arrival is to **Beijing Station** on Sunday, June 20, at 08:40. *For this tour, the default option is hard sleeper (six beds per berth).*

End of Tour

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