

South Korea

Culture & History

September 1-9, 2012 Tour Cost \$3,000

The Korean Peninsula stretches south from the center of the northeastern coast of Asia. An independent Korean state or collection of states has existed almost continuously for several millennia. Between the initial unification in the 7th century — from three predecessor Korean states — until the 20th century, Korea existed as a single independent country.

Korea is currently the only nation on the globe remaining ideologically divided. After the Second World War, the Republic of Korea was set up in the southern half of the Korean Peninsula, while a communist-style government was installed in the north (DPRK.) The word 'Korea' refers to both North and South Korea. But in the South, it usually means the Republic of Korea, which has a population of 47 million, of which 10 million live in the capital, Seoul.

As early as the 1960's, when the country's five-year economic plan was first implemented, the Korean economy has relentlessly shown signs of exponential growth. Years of rapid economic development propelled the country into becoming the world's 12th largest trading partner. Korea's industrial base shifted from agriculture to manufacturing and is now shifting to services.

Over their long history, Koreans have created an outstanding culture and their unique cultural properties can be found throughout the peninsula. Koreans value learning and have earned a reputation for diligence and dedication. It was perhaps due to these traits that they were able to foster a vibrant culture that thoroughly adapted to their natural surroundings.

In this Cultural and Historical Tour of South Korea, you will have a chance to visit temples, museums and cities which embody this vibrant culture; eat delicious examples of local food and experience daily life.



TOUR COST OF \$3,000 INCLUDES:

- Accommodations, room tax.
- All sightseeing services with private air conditioned car/coach.
- Visit of Daewoo Shipyards in Okpo-Busan, technologically one of world's leading shipyards.
- English-speaking guide(s).
- Breakfast, lunch, dinner daily (except the final leisure day) with a special dinner at Korean House in Seoul, with Korean performances.
- All entrance fees

Not included:

- International flights from/to USA or Beijing.
- Drinks with meals.
- Personal Expenses.
- Travel insurance.

Other costs:

- Visa
- Tips
- Single supplement (\$725)

ITINERARY:

Day 1 Sat, Sep 1 Arrive in Seoul, South Korea

Touching down at Incheon International Airport places you in the heart of Korea. After clearing immigration and customs, you will transfer to our hotel in Seoul. Upon check in hotel, the balance of the day at leisure.

Overnight: Seoul

Meals: No meals.

Day 2 Sun, Sep 2 Seoul — Gyeongju

In the morning you will be transferred to the railway station to take the speed train to Ulsan, from where your guide and bus will take you to Gyeongju, the ancient capital of Silla (BC57-AD935), often dubbed as Museum without Walls. This afternoon and tomorrow, you are treated to one of the world's ten most historically significant sites with numerous relics from that era.

Temple sites with weathered stone pagodas, royal tombs, Buddhist bas-reliefs, and fortress ruins are scattered throughout this ancient city.

You will start with Gyeongju National Museum to see the 23 ton Emille Bell cast in AD 771, and thousands of priceless treasures including splendid craftworks such as a gold crown and belt from Cheonmachong and Anapji.

Near the museum is located Anapji which was built in AD674 as a pleasure garden to commemorate the victory of Silla. It is later used as the recreational area for the Silla's royal family. With time to visit, a relaxed walking tour leads you to the ruins of Banwolseong, where the Silla palace and eight fortress gates stood. There is a Seokbinggo, a freezer made of stones. Half of the structure is underground while the other half is above ground with three air venting on top.

Near the fortress is Gyerim, literally meaning Rooster Forest. It is a sacred woodland area where progenitor of the Gyeongju Kim family, Kim Alji, was supposed to have been born. You will stop at Cheomseongdae, built in the mid 7th century, known as the world's oldest existing astronomical observatory.

Near Cheomseongdae is Tumuli Park that encompasses 23 huge tomb mounds where Silla rulers were buried. One of the tombs, Cheonmachong, is open to the public and you can go inside and see how the tombs were made and see replicas of the treasures excavated in 1973.

Overnight: Gyeongju

Meals: B / L / D

Day 3 Mon, Sep 3 Gyeongju

Today you will explore two UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Seokguram grotto and Bulguksa temple which were both built during the glorious period of the Silla kingdom (BC57-AD935).

Seokguram grotto is the home of the serene stone Buddha of the eighth century and is one of the finest Buddhist shrines in Asia. Inside, a white statue of a seated Buddha, in a sublime state of enlightenment, is surrounded by Bodhisattva, disciples, devas, and guardian kings. The grotto represents the magnificent harmony of religion, science and the arts of Buddhism, symbolizing the pure land in which Buddha resides.

Next, the tour takes you to Bulguksa, which is one of the best-known temples in the country. You will see two double level arched stone staircases – the symbolic bridges, leaving the world of sufferings behind and to enter Buddha's land. And, on the terraced courtyard stands main worship hall with its two pagodas; calm simplicity of lines of the three-storied Seokgatap while the noted complexity of the Dabotap, blending well into the architectural harmony.

Behind the main hall is Hall of No Words, named for the belief that Buddha's teachings cannot be taught by mere words alone. At the back of this hall, a steep flight of steps will lead you up to Gwaneumjeon housing an image of the Avalokitesvara, and stands at the highest point of the complex.

Below the Gwaneumjeon sits Birojeon and houses a gilded statue of Vairocana. Hall of Supreme Bliss, standing near the main compound, houses the gilt-bronze Amitabha Buddha. The architectural design of Bulguksa is one of constrained dignity, peace and harmony. The temple still remains as one of the most remarkable achievements of the ancient Far East.

Next, you will visit Bunhwangsa temple with 10m-high three-storied rectangular pagoda, the main worship hall with Buddha of Medicine, and legendary well that is said to have saved the kingdom. The nearby open field was once occupied by Silla's largest temple Hwangyongsa. The 67m tall nine-storied pagoda made entirely of wood stood here until it was destroyed during the Mongol invasion in 1238.

Finally, you will see Poseokjeong, a summer palace where the later kings of Silla often forgot their royal duties and spent most of their time with banquets. All that can be seen now is the abalone-shaped stone channel through which at one time a cool stream of water was directed into the banquet.

Time permitting, you will continue to Yangdong to explore another UNESCO World Heritage Site, a traditional village embracing a simple and unadorned natural beauty. Sheltered by forested mountains and facing out onto rivers and open agricultural fields, rustic tile-roof and thatch-roof homes line the hillsides and valleys in perfect harmony with the natural topography.

Yangdong is a clan village which used to be a middle upper-class town during the Joseon dynasty (1392-1910). Over 150 small and large houses and two shrines which were built according to the harmonious theory of Yin and Yang have been handed down from generation to generation in their original and elegant forms. They include the residences of the head families, pavilions, study halls, Confucian academies for learning, and clusters of mud-walled, thatched-roofed houses, formerly for commoners. Most of the houses are still occupied by villagers but some are empty, making it more comfortable for you to examine them. A walk through Yangdong will help you imagine the life of noblemen during the Joseon dynasty. Some of the significant buildings are Gwangajeong, Hyangdan, Daesoenghyeon, Mucheomdang, Gyeongsan Seodang, Nakseondang, Seobaekdang, and Simsujeong.

Overnight: Gyeongju

Meals: B / L / D

Day 4 Tue, Sep 4 Gyeongju - Busan

Your tour begins with a visit of Gampo to see the ancient twin pagodas of Gameunsa temple, and unusual ancient tomb of King Munmu. The pagodas are dedicated to the Dragon Spirit of King Munmu, and the temple is one of the most unusual of all Silla temples. The immense pagodas are considered the largest three-story pagoda in Korea. About 100 meter off the coast is the underwater tomb of King Munmu. The king wished his body to be burned and buried at sea so he can protect his kingdom even after his death as a spirit of the sea. In the center of the calm sea a large rock marks the king's burial site. At low tide, the top of this oval rock is almost visible above the sea surface.

After visiting this unusual ancient tomb, you will continue to Busan, Korea's second largest city surrounded by the ocean on one side and mountains on the other. Its deep harbor and gentle tides have allowed it to grow into the largest port in Korea and the fifth largest

in the world. It is also a center of industry and commerce, and a thriving metropolis formed along the coastal line.

On the way you will stop off at Haeundae, a world-class beach resort blessed by beautiful water. The soft sand stretches 1.5km along the beautifully curved coastline.

There is the Dongbaek Island off Haeundae. This tiny island became more popular after holding the 13th APEC summit conference in 2005. It offers a stunning view of ocean vista on one side and that of skyscrapers on the other. A scenic trail is well established around, making it a great venue for a walking tour. After a short break, you will visit the UN cemetery, where 2,300 deceased soldiers from sixteen Korean War allies rest in honored serenity. Currently buried at the cemetery are 885 soldiers from the United Kingdom, 462 from Turkey, 378 from Canada, 281 from Australia, 117 from the Netherlands, 44 from France, 34 from New Zealand, 36 from the U.S.A, 11 from South Africa, 1 from Norway, 36 from South Korea, 4 unknown soldiers and 11 civilians.

After visiting this serene cemetery you will continue to the Southeastern tip of the Korean peninsula to visit the Daewoo shipyards, one of the largest shipyards in the world, which has been significant in the economic development of South Korea.

Then you will continue to the fascinating and bustling Jagalchi fish market located right off the downtown docks in Busan. The market offers a wide variety of fish including sea bream, sea bass, snapper, saury, pollack, halibut, corvina, cutlass fish, mackerel, octopus, sea squirt, cuttlefish, frogfish, flounder, abalone, crab, shells to name just a few. One big draw of this market is its flexible pricing system. Since a wide array of seafood sold here do not have fixed prices, visitors are free to haggle over what they expect to pay. There are also many restaurants selling raw fish at reasonable prices. Trying them here in the market is really a visual and culinary treat.

Your tour will continue to PIFF square, packed with trendy shops movie theaters and even a walk of fame where famous stars and directors have pressed their handprints into the sidewalk.

You will continue to Gukjesijang, the largest traditional market in Busan. Here you will have time to browse, explore and shop in this massive market with exceptional offerings.

Overnight: Busan

Meals: B / L / D

Day 5 Wed, Sep 5 Busan — Suwon - Seoul

In the morning you will take the speed train to Cheonan Asan station where you will board a bus. About one hour and 30 minutes drive will take you to Suwon, the capital city of Gyeonggi province, to explore Hwaseong fortress from the 18th century. Although relatively small in scale, it is well acknowledged as the best structure of its kind ever built in Korea. Registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List, a 5.74Km-long fortress is parapeted with crenels and merlons and highlighted by four main gates, lofty watch towers, command posts, sentry towers, arrow launching platforms, beacon tower, and secret gates leading down to dark labyrinths. The two remaining observation towers named Gongsimdon, meaning "tower with empty interior," are among the most distinctive structures of the fortress.

Your walking adventure begins at Paldalmun gate and follows the rampart on a flat terrain. As you move you will see a number of towers and a brick-built beacon tower with its five mounds for making different signals with fire or smoke: one for peace time; two when the enemy has been spotted; three when the enemy is approaching; four when the enemy has made its way into the city; and five when combat has started. The rampart runs to another sentry tower, Changyongmun gate and leads you to the northeastern

corner tower where you will see an exquisite L-shaped pavilion with an ornate roof, which stands on a hill with beautiful willow trees overlooking a lotus pond with an artificial islet.

Not far from this pavilion is located the northern floodgate, a stone bridge with seven arched sluices topped by an elegant open pavilion and brick-built parapet. After a short walk you will reach Janganmun, the north gate of the fortress.

After exploring the fortress journey continues to Seoul.

Overnight: Seoul

Meals: B / L / D

Day 6 Thu, Sep 6 Seoul

Your tour guide will take you on a tour of Korea's capital city and provide a detailed narrative on the sights as you take in the views of Seoul, historic sites and vibrant cosmopolitan life.

You will pass by Seoul's new landmark, Gwanghwamun Plaza edged by 365 meter long streamlets, having its eastern waterway engraved with depiction of major historical events from 1392. The first thing that you will notice is the statue of Admiral Yi Sunsin who was engaged in twenty-three naval battles against Japan and emerged victorious in all of them, during the Hideyoshi invasion (1592-1598). He is also credited with the perfection of the first iron-clad warship in history.

A little further behind is a statue of King Sejong who promulgated Korean alphabet in the 15th century, which is nowadays commonly referred to as Hangeul. It is neither based on ancient written languages nor an imitation of another set of characters, but an alphabet unique to Korea.

The southwestern corner of this plaza is Korea's Zero Milestone Point marking the distances to the major cities around the world including Seoul's antipode, Montevideo, Uruguay, 19,606Kms.

You will begin with a visit to Gyeongbok palace with its magnificent gates, graceful architecture and lovely gardens, all directly inherited from the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910). It is a particularly charming spot that represents a colorful and turbulent side of the capital's 500-year history. Situated on the grounds of this palace, you will visit National Palace Museum of Korea featuring Joseon Dynasty's records, symbols, state rites, architecture, education, scholarly culture, royal court paintings, court music, science, palanquins, water clock that tells its 519 years history under 27 kings.

There is another excellent facility of National Folklore Museum which will familiarize you with cultural wealth of this friendly and picturesque nation - life and work, costumes and ornaments, handicrafts and technology, education, living quarters, dietary life, oriental medicine, performing arts and games, beliefs and rituals and socio-cultural life of the Korean people from the prehistoric age to the Joseon Dynasty.

Next, you will continue to Jogyesa, the head temple of Jogyejong the principal sect of Korean Buddhism. It emphasizes the Zen orthodox, meditation tradition and maintains the purity of monastic celibacy. The temple does not give off the solemn and traditional air of the temples in the mountains, but when you enter the temple the frenzy of the city starts disappearing letting you explore the main worship hall, pagodas and belfry. The Main Worship Hall holds triad Buddhas, Sakyamuni, Amitabha and Bhaisajjaraja. The figure in the center is Sakyamuni Buddha who has overcome greed, hatred and delusion. While here it is worth noting the 500 year old lacebark pine and 400 year old locust tree that still grace the property.

After visiting Jogyesa, your tour will move to Insa-dong, the center of traditional Korean arts and antiques. Clustered along the main street and alleys are numerous shops dealing antiques, oriental art supplies, and modern Korean arts of all types and styles. A number of galleries also vie for attention with their exhibitions of works by

modern artists. Here, you will look for some souvenirs or simply wander and browse at leisure.

On the way to Namdaemun market, you will drive past Cheonggyecheon, a 5.8km-long creek that flows through downtown and under 22 little bridges. At the head of the stream stands a sculpture created by world-renowned artist Coosje Van Bruggen and Claes Oldenburg. Finally, you will visit the centuries-old Namdaemun market where thousands of small shops selling anything you can imagine. It is really a visual experience and you may wish to join the bustle of the market and shop for souvenirs or admire the vibrancy of this impressive market.

Overnight: *Seoul*

Meals: *B/L/D*

Day 7 Fri, Sep 7 Imjingak — DMZ - Seoul

* Passport required on tour.

* Visitors are not allowed on an individual basis, it is necessary to join the group at Imjingak.

Travel to Imjingak, a type of park with an array of monuments and statues that are about the Korean War (1950-1953).

One such monument is Mangbaedan, a memorial site where displaced North Koreans pray for their ancestors. Near Mangbaedan is the Freedom Bridge, which crosses the Imjin River and was an important point where 12,773 prisoners of war returned to Freedom to South Korea. This short, sturdy wooden structure ends at a barricade which leads to the North. Near the bridge is a locomotive engine that symbolizes the tragedy of the divided Korea. Having been left in the DMZ since it got derailed by bombs during the Korean War, it was derusted and moved to current location in 2009. More than 1,000 bullet holes on the engine and its bent wheels tell visitors about the devastation of war.

You will see a collection of stones from 86 battlefields in 64 countries known as the Peace Stones that have witnessed suffering and grief of war. Then you head on the tour bus towards the tension-packed area of the Demilitarized Zone, known as DMZ, which is studded with land mines. Before being allowed to enter the DMZ, there will be a passport check at the Unification Bridge. Soon thereafter, mine signs and red flight panels are highly visible around. After a quick video at the DMZ Exhibition Hall, you will explore the Third Tunnel.

Discovered on October 17, 1978, a 1,635m long tunnel runs through bedrock at a depth of about 73m below ground; 435m of which are found in the South over the Military Demarcation Line. It is designed at a very small angle with northern side lower than southern side, so that water does not stagnate inside the tunnel. You can clearly see the drill marks for dynamite all pointing toward the South. This finding, along with other clues, clearly affirmed the purpose of their construction. Approximately 10,000 armed soldiers can move through the tunnel per hour in what was apparently designed for a surprise attack on Seoul.

A seven minute tram or some 10 minute walk leads you down into the lower platform. There are three cement barricades, of which you will be able to see only one, near the Military Demarcation Line.

The tour will then travel to Dora Observatory, where you can see across the Demilitarized Zone and into North Korea. You can see North Korea's propaganda village, Gijeongdong, where the world's largest flag (35m x 28m) hangs on a 160m-tall flagpole and South Korea's Daeseong-dong, the only two villages allowed in the Demilitarized Zone.

Dorasanyeok is also included in the tour. It is the last railway station in South Korea before the North Korean border and where milepost "Seoul 56km/Pyeongyang 205km" stands tall for all to see.

Overnight: *Seoul*

Meals: *B/L/D*

Day 8 Sat, Sep 8 Seoul — Leisure Day

Day at leisure in Seoul. You can spend more time at the museums, walk the streets or visit the markets at your own pace.

Overnight: *Seoul*

Meals: *B*

Day 9 Sun, Sep 9 Departure

Depending on your departure flight, you will go to Incheon Airport for your flight home.

Overnight: ---

Meals: *B*

HOTELS:

City	Hotel	Website
Seoul	Ramada Suites	http://www.ramadapnp.com/ko/main/
Gyeongju	Gyeongju Commodore	http://www.commodorehotel.co.kr/
Busan	Seacould Hotel	http://www.seacloudhotel.com/

World Affairs Council of Houston

South Korea, September 1-9, 2012

Traveler Information (one form for each traveler)

Last:	First:	M.I.:	
Address:	City:	State:	ZIP:
Day Phone:	Email:		
Emergency contact (name, phone):			
Passport number:	Expiration date:		
Location issued:	Date of birth:	Citizenship:	

Tour Cost

Basic tour cost	\$ 3,000	Terms: 1. Deposit of \$ 500 due 06/01/12 2. Deposit fully refundable up to 90 days before departure 3. Balance due 07/15/12 4. Balance partially refundable up to 45 days before dep. 5. Tips for guide, driver and bag handlers due 08/15/12
International airfare * (estimated)	\$ 1,500	
Air taxes TBD		
Single supplement (\$725)		If sharing a room, with whom?:
Tips (estimated)	\$ 150	* Flights - you are welcome to make your own flight arrangements as long as you provide us with your flight itinerary and arrive no later than the tour group.
Total Charges (estimated)		

Payment Information

Circle one: Master Card - American Express - Visa - Check	Amount: \$ 500.00	
CC #:	Exp date:	CVS code: (required)
Name (print as it appears on card):		
Signature:		
Do you have a theme, focus, or particular area of interest that you would like to study during the trip?		

Important note: Please include a color photocopy of your passport & health insurance card

Mail to:
World Affairs Council of Houston
PO Box 920905
Houston, Texas 77292-0905

OR Fax to: (713) 522-7812

World Affairs Council of Houston
Health information for

Name:

Are you healthy enough to travel internationally and keep pace with an agenda that includes:

Some stairs
moderates walks
mountain trails
this is considered moderate activity level

Do you have any medical conditions that should be known?

Please list any medications that you currently take

Do you have any allergies?

Your doctors name and phone number

Your health insurance plan

Who to contact in case of emergency