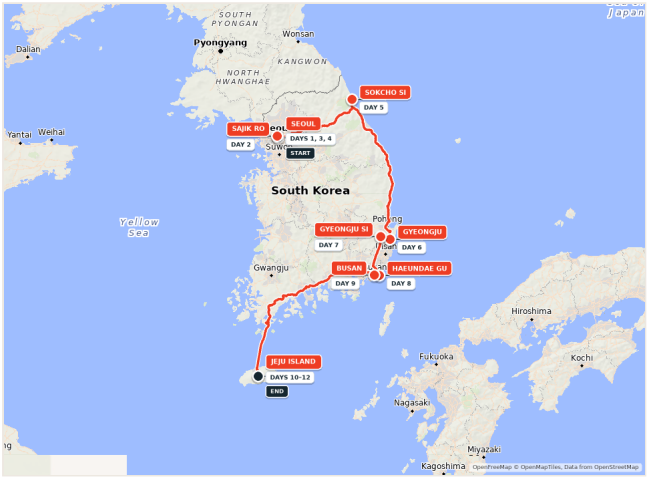
ENCOUNTERS TRAVEL

Your passport to adventure

Exploring South Korea

COUNTRY(IES)	South Korea
TOUR TYPE	Shoestring
TRANSPORT	Local Transport
GROUP SIZE	Min: 4 | Max: 18
DURATION	12 days
STARTS	Seoul, South Korea
ENDS	Jeju Island, South Korea
MEALS	Breakfasts - 4, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 2

TOUR ROUTE MAP **12 Days**



ROUTE: **Seoul** (Start) → **Sajik Ro** → **Seoul** → **Sokcho Si** → **Gyeongju** → **Gyeongju Si** → **Haeundae Gu** → **Busan** → **Jeju Island** (End)

HIGHLIGHTS

Visit the Demilitarized Zone, Take a Taekwondo class and a K-pop dance class, Enjoy the great views of Seoul from Namsan Mountain, Visit Gyeongbokgung Palace, Explore Seoraksan National Park, Take a cycling tour of Gyeongju, Explore Chunmachong Ancient

Itinerary

DAY 1 Seoul. Taekwondo class, cable car to Namsan Mountain

This day introduces you to Seoul through a blend of orientation, tradition, and city landmarks. You begin with a welcome meeting that sets the tone for your time in South Korea's capital before engaging directly with Korean culture through a taekwondo experience. The journey continues with panoramic views from Namsan via cable car and a visit to Seoul N Tower, offering perspective over the city's scale and geography. Time is also left free to explore Seoul independently, allowing you to absorb its neighbourhoods, food culture, and daily rhythm at your own pace.

ACTIVITIES

- **Welcome Meeting with Tour Guide in Seoul**
  You meet your tour guide at the hostel in the Hongdae district of Seoul, South Korea for a welcome briefing. The

session introduces you to travelling around Seoul and the wider country before your first activities begin.

- **Taekwondo Class in Seoul**
  You join an introductory Taekwondo class in central Seoul, South Korea, learning basic techniques from professional instructors. The training takes place in an authentic dojang and gives you a first taste of this iconic Korean martial art.
- **Namsan Cable Car and Seoul N Tower Visit**
  You ride the cable car up Namsan Mountain to the area around Seoul N Tower in Seoul, South Korea. From the viewing terraces you enjoy night-time panoramas of the city skyline and see the famous 'padlocks of love' area.
- **Free Time in Seoul**
  You have free time in the Hongdae area of Seoul, South Korea to stroll the lively streets or rest at the hostel. This flexible evening lets you explore the neighbourhood or get an early night before the next day's sightseeing.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
Step Inn Myeongdong 1 or similar, Seoul	None	Private Twin/Double Room Upgrade, Private Single Room Upgrade

DAY 2 Visit Gyeongbokgung Palace, free afternoon

This experience focuses on Seoul’s royal heritage and historic identity at the heart of the city. A visit to Gyeongbokgung Palace reveals the scale and symbolism of the Joseon Dynasty, complemented by the Royal Guard Ceremony that brings Korea’s ceremonial traditions to life. The setting highlights the contrast between historic architecture and the modern city surrounding it. Free time later allows you to continue exploring Seoul at your own pace, whether through nearby neighbourhoods, museums, or local cafés.

ACTIVITIES

- **Visit Gyeongbokgung Palace and Royal Guard Ceremony**
  You travel by metro to Gyeongbokgung Palace in Seoul, South Korea to watch the colourful Royal Guard Changing Ceremony. Afterwards you can explore the palace grounds in traditional hanbok or join an English-speaking tour run by the site guides.
- **Free Time in Seoul**
  You have free time in the Hongdae area of Seoul, South Korea to stroll the lively streets or rest at the hostel. This flexible evening lets you explore the neighbourhood or get an early night before the next day's sightseeing.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Step Inn Myeongdong 1 or similar, Seoul	Breakfast

DAY 3 Korean Demilitarized Zone, K-pop dance class

This day combines modern Seoul with a powerful journey into one of the most significant political landscapes in the world. You travel from the capital to the Korean Demilitarized Zone, where guided visits provide insight into the

history, division, and ongoing tensions shaping the Korean Peninsula. Returning to Seoul, the focus shifts to contemporary culture with a K-pop dance class that reflects the city’s global creative influence. Free time later allows you to relax or explore Seoul further, balancing reflection with modern urban life.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Seoul to Korean Demilitarized Zone**
  You leave Seoul, South Korea by coach and drive north towards the Korean Demilitarized Zone near the border. The journey takes you through the countryside to Imjingak, the main gateway area for DMZ visits.
- **Explore Korean Demilitarized Zone Sites**
  You explore key sites in the Korean Demilitarized Zone near Seoul, South Korea, including Dorasan Station, Dora Observatory and the 3rd Tunnel. From viewpoints you look into North Korea and learn about the history and security tensions of the peninsula.
- **Drive from Korean Demilitarized Zone to Seoul**
  You travel by bus from the Korean Demilitarized Zone area back to central Seoul, South Korea. The return drive gives you time to reflect on the DMZ visit and hear further insights from your local guide.
- **K in Pop Dance Class – Seoul**
  You take part in a K-pop dance class in Seoul, South Korea led by a professional instructor. The fun studio session teaches you basic choreography to one of Korea's famous pop tracks.
- **Free Time in Seoul**
  You have free time in the Hongdae area of Seoul, South Korea to stroll the lively streets or rest at the hostel. This flexible evening lets you explore the neighbourhood or get an early night before the next day's sightseeing.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Step Inn Myeongdong 1 or similar, Seoul	Breakfast

DAY 4 Seoraksan Mountain and Sokcho

This journey moves from the urban energy of Seoul into the dramatic natural landscapes of Seoraksan National Park before continuing to South Korea’s eastern coastline. Time in the national park highlights rugged mountain scenery, forested valleys, and the country’s alpine environment. The route then leads to Sokcho, where a traditional gatbae boat crossing connects the mainland to Abai Village, offering insight into local history and daily life shaped by displacement and coastal culture. The day concludes with visits to the lighthouse observatory and a traditional Korean liquor tasting, blending scenery, heritage, and regional flavours into a well-rounded coastal experience.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Seoul to Seoraksan National Park**
  You depart Seoul, South Korea by road and drive east towards Seoraksan National Park near Sokcho. The journey crosses mountains and rural landscapes as you head for one of Korea's most scenic hiking areas.
- **Explore Seoraksan National Park**
  You spend time exploring Seoraksan National Park near Sokcho in north-eastern South Korea, choosing between

hiking trails and the optional cable car. Forested valleys, rocky peaks and waterfalls showcase some of the country's most impressive mountain scenery.

- **Drive from Seoraksan National Park to Sokcho**
  You drive from Seoraksan National Park down to Sokcho town on the east coast of South Korea. The short transfer brings you from the mountains to this small port city for the evening.
- **Travel from Gatbae Boat Trip Sokcho to Abai Village**
  You ride the traditional Gatbae boat across the water from Sokcho to Abai Village in Sokcho, South Korea. This simple hand-pulled ferry links the main town with a small settlement founded by refugees from North Korea.
- **Visit Abai Village and Lighthouse Observatory – Sokcho**
  You explore Abai Village and continue on foot towards the lighthouse observatory in Sokcho, South Korea. From this coastal area you can enjoy views of Seoraksan Mountain, the East Sea and the Sokcho shoreline.
- **Traditional Korean Liquor Tasting in Sokcho**
  You join a traditional Korean liquor tasting at the hostel in Sokcho, South Korea, sampling local spirits with your group. The relaxed evening offers insight into Korean drinking culture for guests over the minimum legal age.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Haru Guesthouse or similar, Sokcho	Breakfast

DAY 5 Golgulsa Temple stay

Leave Sokcho and travel along South Korea’s east coast to the BTS Bus Stop Beach, where ocean scenery meets a modern pop-culture landmark. Continue inland towards Golgulsa Temple near Gyeongju, set among forested hills. On arrival, take part in the temple stay programme and gain an introduction to Korean Buddhist traditions, daily rituals and monastic life, creating a day that moves from coastal scenery to a quieter spiritual environment.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Sokcho to BTS Bus Stop Beach**
  You depart Sokcho on South Korea's east coast and drive south along the shoreline towards a beach made famous by a BTS music video bus stop. The coastal road trip gives you more views of the East Sea before your sightseeing break.
- **Explore BTS Bus Stop Beach**
  You stop at the well-known BTS bus stop on the beach on South Korea's east coast, a popular photo spot for K-pop fans. Here you can take pictures and enjoy the seaside setting before continuing your journey.
- **Drive from BTS Bus Stop Beach to Golgulsa Temple**
  You continue your drive from the BTS bus stop beach to Golgulsa Temple near Gyeongju, South Korea. The route takes you inland towards the historic Silla capital region for your temple stay experience.
- **Golgulsa Temple Stay Programme Stay**
  You check into Golgulsa Temple near Gyeongju in South Korea for an overnight temple stay. During the afternoon and evening you follow the monastery schedule with etiquette instruction, meditation, communal work, Sunmudo training and a simple Buddhist dinner.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Golgulsa Temple	None

DAY 6 Morning chanting and meditation. Afternoon exploring Geongju by Bike

The day begins in a calm and reflective setting with morning chanting and meditation at Golgulsa Temple, offering a quiet start rooted in Buddhist tradition. Leaving the temple behind, the journey continues to Gyeongju, a city renowned for its role as the ancient capital of the Silla Kingdom. A cycling tour through Gyeongju's historic sites brings its royal tombs, temples, and heritage landscapes into focus. Free time later allows you to explore the city independently, taking in its museums, cafés, and historic streets at your own pace.

ACTIVITIES

- **Morning Chanting and Meditation – Golgulsa Temple**
  You join the monks at Golgulsa Temple near Gyeongju, South Korea for early morning chanting and meditation practice. The quiet ritual offers a deeper insight into Korean Buddhist life before breakfast.
- **Drive from Golgulsa Temple to Gyeongju City**
  You travel from Golgulsa Temple into Gyeongju city in South Korea to check into your hostel. The short road transfer moves you from the rural temple grounds to the former Silla capital.
- **Cycle Through Tour – Gyeongju Historical Sites**
  You explore Gyeongju, South Korea by bicycle, visiting Cheonmachong Ancient Tombs in Tumuli Park and the stone Cheomseongdae observatory. The easy ride on mostly flat roads showcases the city's rich archaeological heritage.
- **Free Time in Gyeongju**
  You have free time in Gyeongju, South Korea to keep cycling, walk through the old town or relax at local cafés. This flexible slot lets you discover more of the historic city at your own pace.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Blueboat Hostel or similar, Gyeongju	Dinner

DAY 7 Bullet train to Busan, Gamcheon VIllage, Songdo Beach

This journey transitions from historic Gyeongju to the dynamic port city of Busan using South Korea's high-speed rail network. After arriving in Busan, the focus shifts to the city's contrasting neighbourhoods, beginning with the colourful hillside streets of Gamcheon Village overlooking the harbour. The route continues along the coast to Songdo Beach, combining seaside scenery with panoramic views from the Songdo Marine Cable Car. The day concludes in central Busan with a visit to BIFF Square in Nampo-dong before travelling onward to Haeundae, setting the stage for the city's modern beachside atmosphere.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Gyeongju City to Shin-Gyeongju Station**
  You leave your hostel in Gyeongju, South Korea and transfer to Shin-Gyeongju Station. The short drive positions you for the high-speed rail journey to Busan.
- **Travel from Bullet Train Shin-Gyeongju to Busan**
  You board a high-speed KTX bullet train from Shin-Gyeongju to Busan, South Korea. The fast rail journey quickly takes you from the Gyeongju region to the country's second-largest city on the south coast.
- **Drive from Busan Station to Gamcheon Village**
  You transfer from Busan Station to Gamcheon Village in Busan, South Korea. The short road journey brings you into the hillside district known for its colourful houses and street art.
- **Explore Gamcheon Village in Busan**
  You explore Gamcheon Village in Busan, South Korea, wandering through steep alleys lined with colourful homes, murals and small cafés. The visit offers great photo opportunities and insight into this transformed hillside community.
- **Drive from Gamcheon Village to Songdo Beach**
  You drive from Gamcheon Village to Songdo Beach in Busan, South Korea. The transfer takes you down to the city's coastline for seaside views and your next activity.
- **Visit Songdo Beach and Songdo Marine Cable Car**
  You visit Songdo Beach in Busan, South Korea and ride the Songdo Marine Cable Car above the bay. From the cabins you get sweeping ocean and city views along this section of the Busan shoreline.
- **Explore BIFF Square in Nampo-dong**
  You walk through BIFF Square in the Nampo-dong district of Busan, South Korea, a lively area linked to the Busan International Film Festival. Street food stalls and cinemas give the square a busy, entertainment-focused atmosphere.
- **Drive from Nampo-dong to Haeundae Hostel**
  You transfer from Nampo-dong to your hostel in the Haeundae area of Busan, South Korea. This evening drive returns you to your accommodation near the famous Haeundae Beach.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Busan Blueboat Hostel or similar, Haeundae	Breakfast

DAY 8 Haedong Yonggungsa Temple. Free time in Busan. Jjimjibang option

Spend part of the day at Haedong Yonggungsa Temple and enjoy its coastal setting before returning to Busan for free time. The temple provides the main organised sightseeing, while the remaining hours can be shaped independently. Beaches, markets and waterfront areas are possible choices if you want to explore further, or you can simply slow the pace and relax.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Haeundae to Haedong Yonggungsa Temple**
  You travel by bus from the Haeundae district to Haedong Yonggungsa Temple on the outskirts of Busan, South

Korea. The coastal road leads you to one of the country's few seaside temple complexes.

- **Explore Haedong Yonggungsa Temple in Busan**
  You visit Haedong Yonggungsa Temple on the rocky shoreline of Busan, South Korea. The complex combines sea views, statues and shrines, making it one of the most picturesque temples in the country.
- **Free Time in Busan**
  You enjoy free time in Busan, South Korea with the option to relax in a jjimjilbang spa, join a harbour boat trip or explore Haeundae and Gwangan Bridge by night. The flexible schedule lets you choose how to experience the city's coastal attractions.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Busan Blueboat hostel or similar, Haeundae	None

DAY 9 Free morning in Busan. Fly to Jeju

Spend free time in Busan before the scheduled airport transfer and flight to Jeju. After landing, transfer to the hotel in Jeju City. The remaining period is free, and suggestions such as coastal views, streets or local dining should remain independent choices rather than included activities. No sightseeing en route or after arrival is specified, so the day is primarily a leisure and travel transition.

ACTIVITIES

- **Free Time in Busan**
  You enjoy free time in Busan, South Korea with the option to relax in a jjimjilbang spa, join a harbour boat trip or explore Haeundae and Gwangan Bridge by night. The flexible schedule lets you choose how to experience the city's coastal attractions.
- **Drive from Haeundae Hostel to Busan Airport**
  You transfer from your hostel in the Haeundae district to Busan Airport in South Korea. This short drive prepares you for the domestic flight to Jeju Island.
- **Travel from Flight Busan to Jeju Island**
  You take a short domestic flight from Busan to Jeju Island, South Korea. The journey carries you over the Korea Strait to the country's best-known holiday island.
- **Drive from Jeju Airport to Jeju City Hotel**
  You travel from Jeju Airport to your hotel in Jeju City on Jeju Island, South Korea. The transfer brings you into town so you can settle in before exploring the island.
- **Free Time in Jeju City**
  You have free time in Jeju City on Jeju Island, South Korea to visit markets, sample local food or explore the nightlife. This evening is unscheduled so you can discover the city at your own pace.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Shinshin Hotel or similar, Jeju Island	None

DAY 10 — Jeju Island, Jjeongbang waterfall, Sunrise Peak hike

This day explores Jeju Island’s volcanic landscapes and coastal scenery through a series of iconic natural sites. You visit Jeongbang Waterfall, where fresh water cascades directly into the sea, reflecting the island’s dramatic geology. Hiking along a section of the Jeju Olle Trail reveals coastal paths, rural scenery, and traditional island life. The experience continues with a climb of Seongsan Ilchulbong, a volcanic crater rising from the ocean, before free time allows you to unwind and enjoy Jeju Island at your own pace.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Jeongbang Waterfall in Jeju Island**
  You visit Jeongbang Waterfall on Jeju Island, South Korea, one of the few waterfalls in Asia that drops directly into the ocean. The coastal setting makes this a dramatic natural highlight of your time on the island.
- **Hike the Jeju Olle Trail Section**
  You walk a scenic section of the Jeju Olle Trail on Jeju Island, South Korea. The route showcases coastal views, rural landscapes and characteristic stone walls of the island.
- **Hike the Seongsan Ilchulbong (Sunrise Peak)**
  You hike up Seongsan Ilchulbong, also known as Sunrise Peak, on Jeju Island in South Korea. From the crater rim of this UNESCO-listed tuff cone you enjoy sweeping views of the sea and surrounding countryside.
- **Free Time in Jeju Island**
  You have free time on Jeju Island, South Korea to visit beaches such as Jungmun or explore sites like Cheonjiyeon Waterfall and Saeyeongyo Bridge. This flexible period lets you design the rest of your day around your own interests.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Shinshin Hotel or similar, Jeju Island	None

DAY 11 — Jeju Yacht trip, BBQ dinner

This day offers a relaxed conclusion to your time on Jeju Island, centred on the sea and local cuisine. A coastal yacht trip provides a different perspective of the island’s shoreline, highlighting its volcanic cliffs and open ocean views. The afternoon is left free for personal exploration or relaxation, allowing you to enjoy Jeju Island at your own pace. The experience concludes with a farewell BBQ dinner, bringing the journey together over shared food and a final evening shaped by island flavours and atmosphere.

ACTIVITIES

- **Jeju Yacht Trip in Coastal Sailing**
  You join an included yacht trip off the coast of Jeju Island, South Korea, sailing past bays and rocky headlands. The cruise offers sea views and a relaxed finale to your island sightseeing.

- **Free Time in Jeju Island (Afternoon)**
  You enjoy free time on Jeju Island, South Korea in the afternoon to relax on the beach or continue exploring the town. This unscheduled slot lets you rest before the evening farewell meal.
- **Farewell BBQ Dinner in Jeju Island**
  You share a farewell BBQ dinner on Jeju Island, South Korea with your travel group. Good food and seaside atmosphere make this a sociable final evening together.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Shinshin Hotel or similar, Jeju Island	Dinner

DAY 12 Tour ends on Jeju Island

This marks the conclusion of your journey on Jeju Island after experiencing its natural landscapes, coastal scenery, and cultural highlights. The tour officially comes to an end, allowing time for onward travel or independent plans. Jeju's relaxed island atmosphere provides a fitting backdrop to close the experience, reflecting the contrast between mainland cities and island life. Departures take place according to individual arrangements.

ACTIVITIES

- **Tour Ends in Jeju Island**
  Your tour concludes at the hotel on Jeju Island, South Korea this morning. From here you can arrange onward travel or book extra nights to extend your stay.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
N/A	None

INCLUDED

- English speaking tour leaders
- Transport, including all internal bus and train tickets
- Accommodation (including hostels, hotels and temples)
- Domestic flight from Busan to Jeju Island
- A selection of meals:
  - Simple breakfasts in the Seoul hostel
  - Golgulsa Temple: simple Buddhist dinner & breakfast
  - Jeju Island: BBQ dinner
- Entry, transport and tour leader escort to various sites and activities including:
  - Seoul - Take a Taekwondo class and a cable car up Namsan Mountain. Visit the Demilitarized Zone, take a K-Pop dance class, visit Gyeongbokgung Palace
  - Sokcho - Seoroksan National Park, Sokcho town, traditional liquor tasting, Gatbae boat trip and visit to Abai Village
  - Gyeongju - Cycling tour of Gyeongju, Chunmachong ancient tombs, Cheomseongdae astronomical observatory, Meditation and chanting services, traditional arts performance and sunmodo lesson at Golgulsa temple.
  - Busan - visit Gamcheon Village, take Songdo Beach Marine cable car, visit Haedong Yonggungsa Temple
  - Jeju - Hike to the top of Seongsan Ilchulbong, take a sailing yacht trip, and a trek on the Jeju Olle Trail.
- All local taxes and charges

EXCLUDED

- International flights
- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Airport arrival and departure transfers
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Activitites and entrances not listed in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks, tips and personal expenses (eg. laundry)
- Baseball Match
- Pub Crawl

Notes

- This is an active, backpacking style tour, and there is a lot of walking and physical activity involved. We therefore set a minimum age of 16 and maximum age limit of 55. Children aged 15 or under may be accepted in some circumstances.

- This tour includes a flight from Busan to Jeju, this flight includes 15kg of checked luggage and 10kg hand luggage.

Tour Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements , full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Private Twin/Double Room Upgrade

Min numbers: 2

This option provides an upgrade from the shared hostel-type rooms used on the tour to a private twin or double room. We recommend adding this early as space is subject to availability in the accommodations used.

Note - this upgrade does not cover the nights spent on the overnight ferry or in the temple which remain as shared accommodation.

Important Notes

1 **Accommodation**

The accommodation used on the tour is a mix of simple stays in hostels, simple hotels and a temple stay. Each have their own unique South Korean charm, and at the same time are safe, clean, and hygienic and have either air-conditioning or fans. All have good showers, internet, and most have washing machines. The price is based on same-sex shared rooms in these hostels and accommodations, All bedding is provided - you do not need ot bring a sleeping bag. Luggage is tagged and stored securely while we are out exploring during the day. The majority of other people staying in the hostels will be young people aged 18 to 35 and travelling on a budget. It's easy to make new friends and have fun meeting in the lounge areas. You can also upgrade to a private or twin room subject to availability at the time of booking. This may not extend to all the accommodation throughout the trip. Please contact us if you would like more information.

WiFi is available in all the accommodation used on the tour. During the temple stay this will only extend to communal areas.
Additional nights are available on request in the hostels used at the start and finish of the tour - please contact us for prices and to book.

2 Transport

We use public transport as much as possible on this tour, to keep costs down and to give a better immersion into the country. The normal journey times we take are shown below...

- Seoul to Sokcho is from 8am – 10:30am (bus)
- Sokcho to Seoul is from 7pm – 9:30pm (bus)
- Seoul to Gyeongju is from 10am – 12:06pm (KTX train)
- Gyeongju to Busan is from 4pm – 6:50pm (bus)
- Busan to Jeju Island is from 7pm to 7am (overnight ferry

All the train tickets for the group will be purchased at the same time, so we normally end up sitting together. However, there is a chance may not be the case, and in these situations our tour leaders can normally arrange with other travellers to shuffle things around.

3 Transfers

Arrival into Seoul

We do not currently offer an airport arrival transfer service in Seoul airport, as the public transportation from the airport to the city centre is much more convenient and is easy to navigate.

By Taxi:

Taking a taxi from Incheon Airport will take an average time of 80 minutes given the usual local traffic conditions. For non-Korean language speakers, we recommend using the International Taxi Service, which offers flat fares of around 60,000 to 80,000 won for destinations around Seoul. All drivers are English speakers, and there are no additional toll gate fees, midnight surcharges or fees for luggage.
To book a taxi, please exit the airport through Gates 4 to 8, located in Arrivals, first level, and cross the street in order to approach the taxi stands (4D to 8C).
For regular taxis, fares are around 60,000 and 100,000 won for a ride to several destinations around Seoul.
Please note that there is a late-night surcharge (+20% to the initial fare) between midnight and 04.00 am.

By Public Transport:

The 'All Stops' airport transfer trains depart every 5-10 minutes from the Incheon International Airport in to the central Seoul Station with regular stops at subway connections en-route. This takes around 55 minutes.
There is also a slightly faster Express train which goes direct to Seoul Station from where you can acces the subway system.
When we send you your tour confirmation voucher a couple of weeks before departure we will confirm your first hotel accommodation and the nearest subway stop.

Departure from Jeju:

At the end of the tour the tour ends at the hostel in Jeju at checkout time (normally 10.00am). Your tour leader will provide information and advice about how to get to the airport.

If you book a flight out of Jeju to Seoul with us then we will include the airport transfer in the price. Please contact us for details.

Note - there are two airports in Seoul and this flight arrives at the domestic airport. If you are looking to connect to an international flight, you may have to transit to the international airport. .

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4 Tour Leaders / Guides

This tour is accompanied by English speaking tour leaders. These all have the knowledge and passion to help make sure you have a great time in all the places visited during the tour. We may sometimes use more than one leader for different sections of the tour but often the same person will accompany you throghout. Where they do not travel with you between locations, they will help you board and see you off, and you'll be met on your arrival at the next destination.

Each tour leader is an expert in all things South Korea. However, they are not licensed tour guides. Often they are students wanting to do some work before heading back to university or before starting a job. This often gives them more passion and enthusiasm than long-term tourist guides.

Specialist tour guides are available at many of the sites we visit along the way if you would like some more in depth information about particular sites.

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5 Group Size & Operation

The minimum number of travellers required for the tour to run is 2, with a maximum group size of 20.

This is an active, backpacking style tour, and there is a lot of walking and physical activity involved. We therefore set a minimum age of 16 and maximum age limit of 55. Children aged 15 or under may be accepted in some circumstances.

This tour is operated in conjunction with one of our tour operator partners specialising in this region so you may join with travellers booking through different companies and from different countries. This can make for some really interesting groups and new people to meet.

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6 Meals

Discovering the cuisine in South Korea is often a highlight of people's visit. Your tour leader will offer to take you for a group meal each evening, choosing a local restaurant they know is hygienic and has good, cheap and tasty food. There are also lots of options if you want a reminder of Western food during the trip. South Korea also has many delicious street food options to try, including Bibimbap and Theok-bokki, which are a good choice if you want to keep to a tighter budget.

With so many choices, vegetarians and other special dietary needs can generally be well catered for in South Korea. Just discuss your requirements with the tour leader and they'll be happy to help and provide advice and suggestions.

7 Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please contact us if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

8 Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.
We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see our website or booking conditions for more information.

9 Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.
The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water

bottles).

- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

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10 Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

https://x.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

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11 Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event).

Considering travel insurance for your trip? World Nomads Travel Insurance offers coverage for more than 150 adventure activities as well as emergency medical, lost luggage, trip cancellation and more.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable.

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12 Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current official government travel advice for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's 'Travel Aware' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

travel aware
gov.uk/travelaware

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13 Reduce Plastic Waste with Water-to-Go Filter bottles

Traveling responsibly means minimizing plastic waste, but staying hydrated on the go is essential. At Encounters Travel we are committed to reducing single-use plastics, which is why we've partnered with Water-to-Go. Their portable filtration system removes over 99.9% of contaminants from any non-saltwater source, turning even questionable water sources into safe drinking water.

Given that tap water is un-safe to drink in many of the countries in which we operate, we recommend purchasing a Water-to-Go bottle prior to departure. This will help you avoid the use of single use plastic bottles and keep you hydrated on the go.

Save big! Get a huge 25% off your Water-to-Go bottle and other Water-to-Go products (such as filters, lids, and carriers). Use code **ENCOUNTERS25** at checkout (valid in the UK, USA and Canada).

How Water-to-Go Technology works:

- Their reusable, BPA free water bottles contain their own unique 3-in-1 filtration technology effectively providing clean safe drinking water from any non-salt water source around the world.

- Three different (1 traditional and 2 nano) technologies are combined in one filter cartridge to remove up to 99.9999% of microbiological contaminants in water.

The three technologies used in a Water-to-Go filter are:

- Mechanical filtration – A tiny pore size, so small contaminants can't fit through.
- Electrical – A positive charge reduces the pore size even further and attracts contaminants like a magnet, trapping them inside the filter.
- Activated Carbon – Unlike most carbon based filters, instead of using adhesives to glue the carbon particles together, (which vastly reduces the carbon's efficiency) it is contained within the membrane, helping to reduce contaminants whilst eliminating bad tastes and odours. Try filtering water from your tap at home and taste the difference!

Water-to-Go filter bottles deliver safe, healthy water worldwide

- Water-to-Go filters remove bacteria, viruses, waterborne disease, protozoa, heavy metals such as lead as well as harmful chemicals.
- Their filters remove Chlorine and Fluoride from tap water.
- The filter will eliminate harmful contaminants from the water but allow beneficial minerals such as sodium and magnesium to pass through leaving you with the healthiest water possible.
- Water-to-Go filters have been independently tested against internationally recognised standards by industry specialists including The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (UK), BCS Laboratories (USA), Bangalore Test House (India) and IMI (China).

Use Water-to-Go products and you'll be healthier, wealthier and helping to make the world a better place!

- Depending on filter size, each Water-to-Go filter is able to replace 260 or 400 single-use plastic water bottles!
- They ensure you have access to safe water anywhere in the world without ever having to buy environmentally damaging bottled water.
- Their water bottles deliver safe, clean drinking water at just 5p per litre.
- The filter membrane is biodegradable and the shrouds are recyclable.
- The water bottles are used and approved by everyone from backpackers to commuters, gym users to expecting mums. Perfect for everyday, outdoor and travel.

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14 Private & Tailor-made Tours

While our group departures offer a fantastic way to explore with like-minded travellers, we understand that some guests prefer a more exclusive experience. Most of our group tours can be booked on a private basis, allowing you to enjoy the same expert-led routes with your own dedicated party. The primary advantage of choosing a private arrangement is the flexibility it provides; we can easily customise the itinerary to include your preferred style of accommodation or adjust the pace to suit your needs. Private tours can be run on the same start days as our group tours, or on other dates. However, some activities within our trips are restricted to particular days of the week - we

will advise you on anything like this that we need to work around. Pricing will be based on the number of travellers in your party, and any customisations you may like to make.

For those seeking something truly unique, our specialist sales team is available to collaborate with you on a completely tailor-made tour, designed from the ground up to match your specific interests, accommodation level and requirements.

To request a quotation for a private or tailor-made tour, please contact us.

15 Money

The currency in South Korea is the South Korean won, abbreviated to KRW (short for Korean Republic won), with the symbol ?. It is subdivited into 100 jeon, but these are no longer used in practice.

You can withdraw money at ATM machines in all the main cities and tourist areas in South Korea. However, not all ATMs will accept foreign bank cards, so we recommend speaking to your tour leader for advice. We also recommend that you advise your bank that you will be travelling before you depart. Finally do make sure to check your bank's charges for foreign transactions and choose a card which is not going to be super expensive on this front.

Taking cash in US Dollars, GB Pounds and Euros and changing it into local currency while you are there is also a good option. However, exchange rates and commissions can vary widely so check carefully before you commit to a conversion.

On our Shoestring tours in South Korea we generally suggest htat budgetting on around GBP 10-15 (USD 13-20) per day for food and drink.

16 Tipping

Tipping is not customary or necessary in South Korea, and you will often find staff poitely refusing tips. So, you will not cause offence by not tipping. You can offer taxi drivers or street vendors to keep the change, but formal tips are not expected.

The same applies to your tour leader(s). You do not need to tip them, but if you wish to, please only do so based on your personal budget and your satisfaction with the service provided.

17 Drones

The use of Drones and other unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) is not allowed while on our tours. If you are in possession of a drone when entering the country it is your responsibility to be informed of and follow all local laws. This may include registering your drone with authorities. If you violate this policy or operate a drone illegally you are subject to removal from the tour as per our terms & conditions.

18 What to Take

We strongly recommend packing very light for our Shoestring tours in South Korea. You will have access to laundry services at your accommodation throughout the trip, so you won't need to pack a new outfit for each day. Items can you can mix and match are your best bet, as you'll be able to bring less clothing and thus, have lighter luggage. Ensure that you research the time of year you are travelling, so your clothing is appropriate for the climate.

For your luggage, a suitcase is OK, but a backpack/hold-all is much more convenient. Whether you're travelling elsewhere in Asia or just flying to and from South Korea, remember to look into what the checked luggage weight limits are for your flights.

Packing suggestions:

- Flipflops / sandals
- Sensible walking shoes
- T-shirts
- Shorts/skirts
- Long pants
- Swimming costume
- Lightweight waterproof
- Warm sweater/jacket
- Towel
- Washbag
- Passport (see our Visa section for useful information)
- Cash, South Korean won or credit/debit card
- Student card if you have one, although it is not guaranteed to be accepted
- Travel insurance policy
- Photocopies of insurance policy, bank cards, passport photo page, visa
- Reusable water bottle
- Books and other entertainments for the night trains
- Mosquito repellent, sun-screen and after-sun
- Camera and charger – South Korea is a photographer's dream!
- Small first aid kit with medicine for diarrhoea, paracetamol, disinfectant etc.
- A big bag and a small rucksack. We sometimes get separated from our big bags, so you'll need to keep your valuables with you in a small bag.

Bring electronic products at your own risk. Some customers choose to travel with iPhone, tablets and laptops, but although theft is extremely rare on our tours, there is petty crime in some areas we visit.

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19 Passport & Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport; your passport should have at least 1 blank page for every country you are

visiting on your trip. Please bring two photocopies of your passport with you in case you need them, or lose your passport.

South Korea offers visa-free entry for up to 90 days for many nationalities, including British, European, American, Canadian and Australian. However, visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

If you do not need a visa, you must still obtain a K-ETA.
K-ETA is an electronic travel authorization for visa-free foreign visitors and it is tied directly to your passport. Please check K-ETA eligibility of your country of origin and apply through K-ETA.
Please note that you'll be asked to enter postal code, road name address, detailed address and contact number when filling out the form. Please enter the the hotel's address and phone number from your tour confirmation voucher when applying your K-ETA.

If your country of origin is not eligible for K-ETA, then you must apply for the visa at the nearest embassy.

Visa information is subject to change without notice. For the most current information, please visit your nearest embassy.

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20 Health & Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully covered by your travel insurance for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions.
In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

South Korea: No specific boosters or courses advised, but please read the link for more info. Malaria map. Malaria risk is low throughout the year throughout the country but precautions against mosquito bites should still be taken. Yellow Fever vaccination certificates are not required.

Malaria: Vaccinations are not available against Malaria, which is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can be very serious and sometimes fatal. You should avoid mosquito bites by covering up bare skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long trousers and applying insect repellents to exposed skin. When necessary, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes are most active during and after sunset. You should consult with your GP/medical practitioner/travel clinic about the most appropriate malaria prophylactic medication to take for the regions you are visiting.

Yellow Fever: This disease is spread by infected mosquitoes that bite during the day. A Yellow Fever Certificate of vacinnation may be required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transitted through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view this US CDC information about where the virus is present and follow the links to further information detailing

which countries need you to have a Yellow Fever vaccination as part of their entry requirements. Please ensure you have this certificate with you and to hand if necessary. Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disabilities that you may have.
