



# Korea



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# Itineraries



2  
WEEKS

## South Korea's Highlights

Enjoy the best of Korea on this trip lassoing in the dynamic capital Seoul, the bustling southern port of Busan, lost-in-time country towns and offbeat sights before finishing on the beautiful island of Jeju-do.

Spend four or five days exploring **Seoul**, including a day trip north to the **DMZ**. Next head east to **Chuncheon**, to cycle alongside Uiam Lake and sample the town's famous chicken dish, *dakgalbi*.

Dine on fresh seafood in **Sokcho**, then hike around the sublime peaks and waterfalls of **Seoraksan National Park**. Follow the coast south to **Gangneung** to discover well-preserved Joseon-era buildings before continuing to **Samcheok** to set foot in the huge **Hwanseongul** cave, as well as **Haesindang Park**, packed with phallic sculptures. Hunt down the pagodas, temples and sights in and around **Andong** before delving into Korea's thatched past at serene **Hahoe Folk Village**. Continue to **Gyeongju**, ancient capital of the Silla kingdom, where the town's royal tombs, excellent museum and the World Heritage-listed grotto at **Seokguram** will need several days.

**Busan**, with its fish market, beaches and urban buzz, is worth a few days. From here fly to **Jeju-do**, where amazing volcanic scenery accompanies leisurely hikes.



## West to East Sea

This cross-country route is ideal to experience the more rustic and natural side of South Korea, with stops on ruggedly beautiful islands and hikes along leafy mountain trails.

From **Incheon International Airport** it's a quick hop to the idyllic island of **Muuido**, from where you can walk to **So-Muuido** or relax on lovely beaches. Enjoy Chinese food in the historic Chinatown of **Incheon**, then stroll around the Open Port area. Take a direct bus to **Suwon**, where you can stride around the ramparts of the meticulously reconstructed fortress wall, explore the palace and tuck into the town's famous *galbi* (beef ribs).

**Gongju** and **Buyeo**, the ancient capitals of the Baekje kingdom, are next: hillside tombs, a fortress and a museum will give you insights into Korea's oldest dynasty. After enjoying the mud skincare spa of **Daecheon Beach**, sail to the serene island of **Sapsido** for the night, before returning to Daecheon and continuing north by bus to **Anmyeondo**, the largest island in the **Taeanhaean National Marine Park**. Work on your tan at either **Khotji Beach** or **Mallipo Beach**, or hike some of the trails in the park.

Travel inland to **Daejeon** to soak at **Yuseong Hot Springs**. Continue to **Cheongju**, learn about the world's oldest printed book then move on to **Songnisan National Park**, covering central Korea's finest scenic area and a temple that is home to a rare and handsome five-storey wooden pagoda. **Chungju** is the gateway to lovely **Woraksan National Park** and two-hour scenic ferry trips across Chungju-ho towards sleepy **Danyang**, a restaurant-rich small town with a lovely waterside perch and hilly backdrop. Explore the limestone caves at nearby **Gosu Donggul** and the stately temple complex of **Guin-sa** within Sobaeksan National Park.

Use **Andong** as a base for exploring the surrounding area packed with attractive river and lakeside villages – it's also famous for its *soju* (Korean-style vodka). It's only a couple of hours by bus from here to **Pohang**. From Pohang visit **Bogyong-sa** temple in a gorgeous valley with 12 waterfalls, then board the ferry to **Ulleungdo**, a sparsely inhabited, volcanic island.



3  
WEEKS

## The Deep South Trail

This 850km route around Korea's least industrialised region offers the opportunity to stop by rural islands, dine in seafood restaurants and dig deep within artistic traditions.

**Jeonju** has a fascinating village crammed with traditional *hanok* (wooden homes) and buildings. It's also the birthplace of the classic rice dish *bibimbap* and a place to enjoy the milky rice wine *makgeolli*. Visit the 6th-century Geumsan-sa temple in **Moaksan Provincial Park** and don't miss **Maisan Provincial Park**, where you can hike between 'horse ear' mountains and encounter a garden of stone pinnacles piled up by a Buddhist mystic at **Tap-sa**. Alternatively, go hiking or skiing in beautiful **Deogyusan National Park**.

The industrial port city of **Gunsan** boasts Korea's largest collection of Japanese-colonial-period buildings. From here hop on a ferry to the relaxing island of **Seonyudo**, situated amid 60 mostly uninhabited small islands. When the tide is in and the sun is out, the views are unbelievably beautiful. Bronze and Iron Age tombs dot the lush green hills around the small village of **Gochang**, where you can also explore the 15th-century, ivy-covered **Moyang Fortress**.

Further south, **Gwangju** is home to several intriguing historical sites, museums and a major arts complex. Make a day trip to **Damyang** to stroll the sandy trails through its Juknokwon bamboo grove. Move on to the port of **Mokpo** to board boats to the remote havens of **Heuksando** and **Hongdo** in the **Dadohae Haesang National Park**. Admire Korea's centuries-old tradition of pottery at **Gangjin** and taste food and drinks made from healthy green tea at the beautiful **Daehan Dawson Tea Plantation** in Boseong.

Go bird-spotting in the Ramsar-listed wetlands of **Suncheon-man** then continue to **Yeosu**, site of Expo 2012, and head to the small bamboo- and camellia-tree-clad island of **Odongdo** to wander its paths. For a final island experience, take in terraced rice paddies and misty temples on picturesque **Namhaedo**. The trail finishes at Korea's second-largest city, **Busan**.



## City & Country

Some of South Korea's top temples feature on this route linking its two main cities.

In **Seoul** attend a Templestay program at Jogye-sa or Bongjeon-sa.

**Danyang** is the transit point for **Sobaeksan National Park**, where you'll find modern Guin-sa, headquarters of the Cheontae order.

**Daegu** (home to some tremendous heritage architecture, including an early-19th-century cathedral) is the base for trips to sublimely situated Haerin-sa, and houses a World Heritage-listed library of more than 80,000 14th-century woodblocks.

From **Jinan**, you can reach **Gongju**, one-time capital of Korea's Baekje dynasty, to visit remote Magok-sa, with a hall of 1000 pint-sized disciples, each one slightly different. From Jinan you can also go to **Gwangju**, to reach Unju-sa, with its fine collection of stone pagodas and unusual twin and reclining Buddhas.

Finish just outside of **Busan** at **Tongdo-sa**, home to an excellent Buddhist art museum containing 30,000 artefacts.



## Seoul & Jeju Jaunt

This two-centre itinerary is well suited to parents travelling with kids.

**Seoul's** many parks, interactive museums and, in summer, outdoor swimming pools are ideal for family fun. Older kids will most likely be happy cruising the capital's vast shopping malls and department stores looking for souvenirs of Korea's pervasive pop culture.

Day trips include the beaches of the **West Sea Islands**, such as Deokjeokdo; Korea's biggest amusement park, **Everland**; and the **Korean Folk Village**. The latter two can just as easily be visited from **Suwon**, where it's fun to walk around the walls of an 18th-century fortress. North of Seoul, gain closer proximity to North Korea with a trip to the **DMZ**.

Hop on a flight to **Jeju-do**, blessed with a fascinating volcanic landscape and dozens of sandy beaches. Amusement and water parks, cycle and skate hire and a whole raft of adventure activities, from quad biking to scuba diving, are possible on this fun-packed island with plenty of world-class resorts.

# Behind the Scenes

## SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

We love to hear from travellers – your comments keep us on our toes and help make our books better. Our well-travelled team reads every word on what you loved or loathed about this book. Although we cannot reply individually to your submissions, we always guarantee that your feedback goes straight to the appropriate authors, in time for the next edition. Each person who sends us information is thanked in the next edition – the most useful submissions are rewarded with a selection of digital PDF chapters.

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# Map Legend

## Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

## Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

## Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

## Eating

- Eating

## Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

## Entertainment

- Entertainment

## Shopping

- Shopping

## Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

## Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

## Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

## Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro/MRT/MTR station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- Skytrain/Subway station
- Taxi
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Underground station
- Other Transport

## Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

## Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

## Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

## Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

*Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book*





**Phillip Tang**

Seoul, Jeju-do

Phillip grew up on a typically Australian diet of pho and fish'n'chips before moving to Mexico City. A degree in Chinese- and Latin-American cultures launched him into travel and then writing about it for Lonely Planet's *Canada*, *China*, *Japan*, *Korea*, *Mexico*, *Peru* and *Vietnam* guides. Writing at [hellophillip.com](http://hellophillip.com), photos @mrtangtang, and tweets @philliptang. Philip also wrote the Outdoor Activities, In the Korean Kitchen, Directory and Transport chapters.



**Rob Whyte**

Chungcheongnam-do, Jeollabuk-do

Rob is a Korea-based writer, explorer and educator. For almost two decades, he has been travelling the country with a special interest in island getaways, long distance walks on isolated trails and barbecue-pork restaurants. He has written Korea travel and foody content for numerous Lonely Planet publications.

**North Korea** The writer of our North Korea chapter has chosen to remain anonymous.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Běijīng and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Damian Harper

Chungcheongbuk-do, Gangwon-do, Gyeongsangbuk-do

With two degrees (one in modern and classical Chinese from SOAS), Damian has been writing for Lonely Planet for over two decades, contributing to titles as diverse as *China*, *Běijīng*, *Shànghǎi*, *Vietnam*, *Thailand*, *Ireland*, *London*, *Mallorca*, *Malaysia*, *Singapore* & *Brunei* and *Hong Kong*. A seasoned guidebook writer, Damian has penned articles for numerous newspapers and magazines, including the *Guardian* and the *Daily Telegraph*, and currently makes Surrey, England, his home. A self-taught trumpet novice, his other hobbies include collecting modern first editions, photography and Taekwondo. Follow Damian on Instagram @damian.harper. Damian also wrote the Plan Your Trip (excluding Outdoor Activities), Korea Today and History chapters.



### MaSovaida Morgan

Busan & Gyeongsangnam-do, Jeollanam-do

MaSovaida is a Lonely Planet writer and multimedia storyteller whose wanderlust has taken her to more than 35 countries across six continents. Prior to freelancing, she was Lonely Planet's Destination Editor for South America for four years and worked as an editor for newspapers and NGOs in the Middle East and United Kingdom. Follow her on Instagram @MaSovaida. MaSovaida also wrote The Korean People, Architecture & the Arts and The Natural Environment chapters.



### Thomas O'Malley

Seoul, Around Seoul

A British writer based in Beijing, Tom is a world-leading connoisseur of cheap eats, dive bars, dark alleyways and hangovers. He has contributed travel stories to everyone from the BBC to *Playboy*, and reviews hotels for the *Telegraph*. Under another guise, he is a comedy scriptwriter. Follow him by walking behind at a distance.

OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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