

South Korea Discovery

Trip Code: SKD

Version:



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Great day hikes in Korea's national parks
- Sample the delicious, world famous local cuisine
- A fascinating overnight stay at a Korean Buddhist temple
- Explore the vibrant cities of Seoul and Busan

AT A GLANCE

- 12 days walking and sightseeing
- Maximum altitude 1122 metres
- Join at Seoul

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

South Korea is a country where ancient traditions contrast with cutting-edge modernity. On this immersive two-week holiday, you will experience the very best that this distinctive destination offers, from its vast urban metropolises to its varied and remarkable rural landscapes.

Explore Seoul, the vibrant capital, with its unique neighbourhoods, grand palaces, and lively markets, where ancient temples stand side by side with towering skyscrapers. Delve into the ancient history of Gyeongju, sample the world-famous Korean cuisine, and spend a night at Seoraksan Sinheungsa, a tranquil Korean Buddhist temple. There is plenty of time in the countryside, and we will walk on some of South Korea's best trails, including Hallasan National Park on Jeju Island, Seoraksan and Taebaeksan National Parks. We have combined great day walks with sightseeing and cultural experiences that will give you a fascinating insight into one of Asia's most intriguing cultures.

Is this holiday for you?

This holiday offers a blend of sightseeing and cultural experiences, complemented by daily walks of varying lengths. The walks generally last between 3 to 5 hours, with the longest walking day extending to 6 hours. Most of the walking on this tour takes place on well-maintained hiking paths. The most strenuous day is Day 12, featuring an ascent of 1,122 metres and 6 hours of walking. This holiday is ideal for regular walkers who wish to explore the best of South Korea, experiencing the country's stunning countryside as well as its major cultural highlights. Accommodation is typically in comfortable hotels, with one night spent in an active temple—a fascinating highlight of the trip. Please note that special regulations apply on this evening, including a ban on smoking and alcohol.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- Single-timed airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All accommodation as described
- All meals included in the program
- All transport required by the itinerary
- All activities are listed as included.

What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Tips for support staff and guide (optional)
- Meals that are not included in the program.
- Miscellaneous expenses drinks souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

A single-timed transfer is included on day one from Seoul Incheon Airport to our joining hotel in central Seoul. The journey will take approximately 30-45 minutes. Anyone can join the transfer with a prior arrangement.

At the end of the holiday on day 14, a single-timed transfer is included from the hotel in central Seoul to Seoul Incheon Airport. This transfer is also available to anyone by prior arrangement. The hotel is conveniently located near excellent public transport connections if you prefer to depart at a different time.

Food & Water

Water is drinkable from the taps on this holiday. Please fill your bottles for your day in the morning. We do not encourage the purchasing of single-use plastic bottles.

South Korean cuisine is vibrant and diverse and reflects the country's rich history. Central to Korean meals is kimchi, a fermented vegetable dish, typically made with cabbage and radishes, seasoned with a mix of chilli, garlic, ginger, and various other spices. Kimchi is more than just a side dish; it's a symbol of Korean identity and is served at nearly every meal. Another staple is rice, often accompanied by a variety of banchan (small side dishes) that can include everything from pickled vegetables to marinated tofu and stir-fried greens.

Korean cuisine is also known for its bold and complex flavours, often achieved through fermentation, spices, and the use of ingredients like gochujang (a spicy red pepper paste) and doenjang (a fermented soybean paste). Dishes like bibimbap (a mixed rice dish topped with vegetables, meat, and a fried egg) and bulgogi (thinly sliced marinated beef) showcase the balance between sweet, sour, salty, and spicy flavours that characterise Korean food. Korean barbecue, where diners grill their own meat at the table, is another popular aspect of the cuisine, offering a communal and interactive dining experience. With a focus on fresh ingredients and a harmony of tastes.

Accommodation

We will spend 12 nights in comfortable, well-located hotels. In Seoul, our hotel is centrally situated and close to the metro. In Busan, we stay near the beach.

The one-night temple stay at Seoraksan Sinheungsa Temple is basic, with dormitory-style accommodation. During this stay, guests are required to observe the following rules: no smoking or alcohol is permitted, noble silence must be maintained, no outside food is allowed, and guests should not wander outside designated areas or enter the rooms of others. Your guide will provide a full briefing before this night's stay.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

Spending Money

The amount of money you'll need for personal expenses and meals not included in the holiday will vary from person to person, but around £500 per person is a reasonable estimate. Prices in South Korea are comparable to those in Western Europe.

You may wish to carry some cash in South Korean won (KRW). You can obtain KRW before you leave through your usual exchange services, or you can withdraw money from an ATM at the airport upon arrival. Cash is useful for tipping and smaller purchases, and it can be handy if your card isn't working. Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in South Korea, particularly at major hotels, department stores, and restaurants. Contactless payment is also available, whether with your physical card or a digital wallet like Apple Pay. However, smaller retailers and restaurants may have difficulty processing foreign credit cards. You might also consider obtaining a prepaid travel card (Visa/Mastercard) for cheaper and faster transactions, including card payments and cash withdrawals.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is not customary in South Korea - if you try to tip in hotels/restaurants it may be refused! Some higher-end restaurants may add a 10% service charge to your bill. You may want to tip your Tour Leader to say thank you, or handing over a small gift is also a good way to show your satisfaction. If you tip your tour leader money should be placed inside of an envelope and presented quietly. As a guide, £2-3 a day would be appropriate.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

Meal plan

All breakfasts, 3 lunches and 1 dinner are included in the cost of this holiday.

General Information

Health & Vaccinations

VACCINATIONS

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations or other preventive measures. You should be up to date with routine courses and boosters as recommended in the UK e.g. diphtheria-tetanus-polio and measles-mumps-rubella, along with hepatitis A and typhoid. A good online resource is [Travel Health Pro](#).

Currency

The currency in South Korea is the South Korean won (KRW)

Preparing for your Holiday

It makes a lot of sense to spend some time before coming on a walking holiday getting some additional exercise. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience. We suggest that you adopt a weekly exercise regime. Regular hiking in hilly country is the best preparation but running, cycling and swimming are also good.

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience.

You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 3 to 6 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

Climate

South Korea experiences a diverse climate with four distinct seasons, each offering a unique experience for visitors. Spring, from March to May, is one of the most popular times to visit, as the weather is mild and the countryside can be blanketed in beautiful cherry blossoms and vibrant flowers. Temperatures range from 10°C to 20°C.

Summer, from June to August, brings hot and humid weather, with temperatures often exceeding 30°C. This period also marks the monsoon season, with heavy rainfall, especially in July.

Autumn, from September to November, is another peak travel period, celebrated for its clear skies, cool temperatures, and stunning autumn foliage. The temperatures often range from 15°C to 25°C, making it a great time for hiking and exploring.

Winter, from December to February, is cold and dry, with temperatures often dropping below freezing, especially in the northern regions. However, this season offers a different charm, the winter landscape and seasonal festivals provide a unique cultural experience.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

Please try and keep the weight of your baggage to a minimum. See the 'baggage allowance' section for further details.

YOU SHOULD BRING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- Hiking boots/shoes
- Sandals/trainers

- Socks
- Walking socks
- Trekking trousers
- T-shirts (quick drying)
- Thin long sleeve top/shirt
- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers
- Lightweight waterproof jacket/Poncho
- Underwear
- Shorts
- Sunhat
- Sunglasses
- Daypack
- Water bottles 1 Litre x2
- Selection of dry bags (to keep luggage contents dry)
- Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Small travel towel (these are not always provided)
- Antibacterial handwash
- Basic First Aid Kit - You should bring your own personal first aid kit consisting of the following: throat

lozenges, painkillers (anti-inflammatory), antiseptic cream/spray, plasters and blister treatment, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite). Glucose tablets are a good idea.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE OPTIONAL:

- Travel clothes
- Trekking poles
- Umbrella
- Insect repellent - (DEET)
- Camera
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Why Choose KE

Why KE

All the highlights and more... This tour not only covers numerous highlights, including Seoul, Busan, and several national parks, but it also provides an immersive experience of South Korea. Enjoy unique extras, such as spending a night in an active Korean Buddhist temple.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 01/08/2025 and the trip is subject to change