



CAPITAL CITY

The capital city of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Pyongyang, shelters some 4 million inhabitants.

SIZE

Inland area: 120,538 Km²

GEOGRAPHICAL SITUATION

Reaching an inland area of 120,538 Km² and located on the northwest of China and next to the furthest southeast of Russia, North Korea shares also its borders with South Korea. Bounded by the Yellow Sea on the west and Japan Sea on the east, the country has a coastline of about 1.000 km.

POPULATION

North Korea has some 25 million inhabitants with an average density of 190 inhabitants / km². The most populated region is the municipal district of Pyongyang and its surroundings. They are racially homogeneous with a majority of Koreans and small Chinese community.

RELIGION

The dominant religions are traditionally Buddhism and Confucianism, and there are a few Christians in Pyongyang, but 2/3 of the population is irreligious.

POLITIC

It is recommended to avoid speaking about politics or criticize the government, or say any negative comments about the deceased Presidents Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, as well as any of the members of the government or Party.

LANGUAGE

Korean is the official language. A guide is compulsory during all your tour. Only a few Korean people can speak foreign languages.

FESTIVAL ARIRANG

After several months of rehearsal, nearly a hundred thousand artists, children and students participate in choreographed scenes reconstructing the history of Korea from Japanese occupation to the possible reunification inside the Stadium May 1st, one of the largest stadiums in the world.

Show the Arirang Mass is truly one of the largest spectacles in the world and will remain an indelible memory of a visit to North Korea.

CURRENCY

North Korean Won (KPW) is the official currency. At the time of writing exchange rate is US\$ 1 = 900 KPW and 1 EURO = 1000 KPW (Jan 2020).

However, foreigners are not allowed to use the local currency and it is recommended to pay in Euro. US Dollars and Chinese Yuan are also accepted. The best advice is to bring Euros in cash (especially coins which are very appreciated), and since **credit cards and traveller's cheques are not accepted**, all payments should be done in cash.

CLIMATE

North Korea has a continental climate with four distinct seasons. Precipitations are concentrated during the summer. The weather is likely to be harsh, especially in winter, in the northern mountainous regions. The best period to visit North Korea is during spring and autumn, when the most pleasant weather of the year is marked by mild temperatures and variable winds.

FNJ*	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Min °C	-13	-10	-3	3	9	15	20	20	13	5	-1	-9
Max °C	-2	0	6	15	21	26	28	28	24	17	8	0
Rain mm	15	11	25	46	67	76	237	228	112	45	41	21

*Pyongyang.

ACCESS

Plane carriers offering connection to North Korea are Air Koryo (JS) and Air China (CA). The only International Airport is located in Pyongyang, and your boarding hub will be Beijing.

VISA AND PASSPORT

A visa (or a Tourist Card) is compulsory to enter North Korea. To obtain it you must first ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your return date. Phoenix Voyages will assist you in obtaining your visa (processing time: 3 weeks to 1 month).

LOCAL TIME

North Korea is 9 hours ahead of Greenwich Meridian Time.

ELECTRICITY

In North Korea electric current is mostly 220V. Sockets are generally European (round two-pin) type. Electricity interruptions can occur from time to time.

WATER

It is advisable not to drink water from the tap unless it is boiled properly.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Travellers are now allowed to bring their mobile phones in North Korea. International phone calls and Internet can be processed from the main post offices and international hotels. Phone calls to foreign countries are possible from some hotels (usually less than 1 usd/mn). A hypothetical internet service is sometimes also available (very expensive).

HEALTH

No vaccination is required. However, it is recommended to have vaccination against hepatitis A and B, typhoid and tetanus before your departure. In case of hospitalization, foreigners will be evacuated in Beijing, China, hence it is strongly recommended to subscribe to medical travel insurance before your trip.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotels selected for you in DPRK are clean and have a surprising comfort level for the destination. At Sijung (east coast of the country), accommodation is simpler but still acceptable for a stopover between Pyongyang and Kumgangsan.

TRANSPORTATION

There is only one international airport in North Korea: the Sunan International Airport of Pyongyang. International driving license is not valid for non-resident foreigners.

FOOD & KOREAN CUISINE

In general, North Korean dishes are served in multiple small bowls with ingredients such as seafood, fish, eggs and some vegetables. "Kimchi" is the essential dish of the country (fermented vegetables with different spices). The most common variety is made of fermented cabbage.

SHOPPING

The local arts and crafts are mainly centred on printed articles such as books, stamps collections, postcards, socialist paintings and propaganda posters. North Korea is also famous for its ginseng: roots, tea, capsules, etc. It is also possible to find t-shirts and celadons (local ceramics). Shopping is only possible in state owned shops or cooperatives. Please note that bargaining is not very common in DPRK but it is still possible to discuss prices from time to time.

TIPS

Although very appreciated, as in any other country, tips are in no case obligatory. However, they are more and more expected from tour guides and drivers.

VISITS

In most of the tourist sites of the DPRK and young woman will join the visit to give a specific explanation that will be translated by your tour guide. A small gift from you will always be appreciated.

WHAT GIFT TO BRING ?

Lipstick and other cosmetic products for women, cigarettes for men.

TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS & BRINGING BOOKS

Taking photographs at the airport or of military buildings and people is strictly forbidden in North Korea. The only place where this can be done is at the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) and with your tour guide previous agreement. As anywhere in the world, it is better to ask the authorisation before taking photographs of someone in the street.

Tourists cannot bring any foreign publications (books, newspaper, magazine, film, ect...) has content about North Korea; and/ or any South Korean movies from outside of the country. All corresponding books or publications will be left at the border and will not be given back. Any holder of prohibited items can be punished according to Korean law and/or forbidden to enter the country and/or deported out of the country.

For safety reasons, we advise travelers not to leave valuables in vehicles during their journey.



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