

Title:

Get Intimate with Asia: Travel to Korea

Word Count:

487

Summary:

South Korea is one of the smaller nations in Asia, with a size comparable to the state of Indiana. What it lacks in size it makes up for in abundant culture, turbulent history, exquisite cuisine and a generous and welcoming society.

Keywords:

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Article Body:

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A Little Background before You Travel to Korea

The Korean peninsula has been literally and figuratively stuck between a rock and a hard place, namely Japan and China, for most of its existence. The region was prosperous under the three kingdoms of Goguryeo, Baekje and Silla during the first four centuries AD until the Mongolians raided the land and built an empire. The 16th century brought the end of the Mongolian Empire and the beginning of a massive game of tug-of-war between China and Japan over the strategic landmass. After World War II Korea finally broke free from Japan, with the USSR managing the North and the United States occupying the South. Today the North and South are two sovereign nations separated by a demilitarized zone. South Korea is officially known as the Republic of Korea (ROK) and commonly referred to simply as Korea.

There's Still Soul in Seoul

Despite the fact that Seoul was largely burned to the ground during the Korean War (1950-53), the northern part of the capital city is still home to hundreds of spectacular palaces and shrines. The Chosun Dynasty's Gyeongbokgung Palace is a 5.4 million square foot landmark with a 500-year history and stands among the remaining four palaces in Seoul. Nearly an entire day is necessary to explore the regal palace in all its magnificence. The Jongmyo Royal Shrine is a perfect next stop, as it was where the Chosun Dynasty worshipped. On the first Sunday of

May each year a traditional memorial ceremony is held at the Shrine with all the grandeur of the occasion 500 years past.

The southern part of Seoul is the commercial center of the city and boasts a fascinating blend of traditional and hyper-modern architecture. It is also home to World Cup Stadium, intricately weaving shopping streets and even an amusement park, Lotte World. Make sure to visit the city gates, and then venture beyond into the strikingly lush and green landscape to travel Korea more personally.

When to Travel to Korea

Korea has a temperate climate, which results in heavier rain in the summer months (July and August) and a drier winter. Winter is white and snowy all over Korea and the ski season from November to March is extremely popular. There are 13 ski resorts in South Korea alone! After a day on the slopes it is common to relax in one of the many spas with natural hot spring baths. Summer is extremely crowded and very wet in Korea. For milder weather it is best to travel Korea in the spring or fall.

Traveling to South Korea any time of year is sure to be an exciting and rewarding experience, regardless of the weather!