



Seoulmate: A Travel Companion

Created by:



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Introduction: Why Go to Korea?

If you're a fan of K-pop or K-dramas, feel free to skip this section—we both already know the answer to this. If you're not a fan, there's no time like the present. I recommend googling BLACKPINK and *Guardian: The Lonely and Great God* to get you started. Go on. I'll wait.

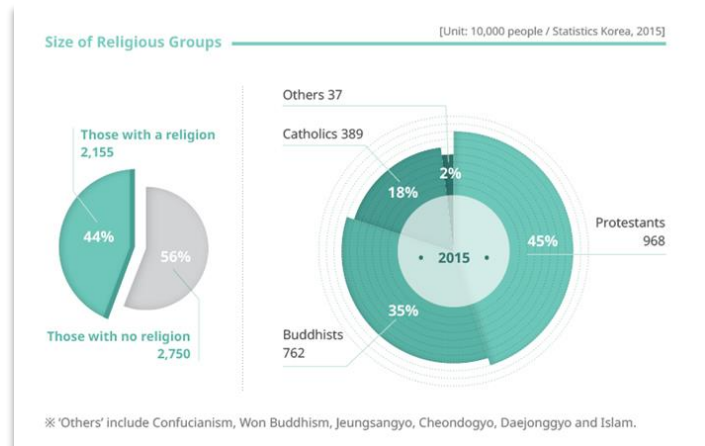
Ah, you're back? Welcome!

Even if you didn't like what you just saw, Korea has a lot to offer. A lot of food, a lot of music, and a lot of experiences that you'll never get at home. You can catch a glimpse of what Seoul, in particular, has to offer in the following pages, but there's nothing like living it yourself.

Korean Culture

Religion

Korea is an extremely homogenous country, with 99% of the population being ethnic Korean. Still, there is a surprising amount of religious diversity in South Korea. Christianity is the most popular religion now, but Buddhism and shamanism still make up a significant part of the population. In fact, these three religions often intersect harmoniously; Buddhism and shamanism blend into each other frequently, and some shamanists even follow Christianity!



Source: Korea.net

Buddhism was brought to Korea by the Chinese monk, Sundo, in 372 AD. Back then, the country we know as Korea was made up of three separate states: Goguryeo, Baekje, and Silla. Royal families from the first two states adopted Buddhism, but even though their subjects continued to follow shamanism, this didn't cause conflict.

Christianity took hold in Korea fairly recently—just in the mid to late 20th century—though it had been introduced to Koreans much earlier, in the late 1700s. Despite this initial lag in acceptance, not to mention a whole heck of a lot of conflict—Christianity is now the most common faith in Korea.

Musok, aka shamanism, believes that there is a metaphysical realm of spirits that exists alongside the natural world that you and I know. The spirits of shamanism don't just exist in people, but also in things like animals, rocks, and trees. Millions of Koreans pay to hear the mudang, the priests and priestesses, give their opinions on everything from relationships to business to baby names! Even still, shamanism is a bit of a contradiction in Korea. Although

most Koreans say that they don't believe in shamanism, there are those who take mudang advice very seriously.

Daily Life

You can't talk about Korean culture without talking about Confucianism; it's shaped how Koreans act and interact. Confucianism is a system of moral philosophy from China. It's not a religion, but it does offer guidance on how people should live and treat each other, "in order to promote a harmonious society." Three important aspects of Confucianism are:

- Ren: humane treatment of others
- Li: properly observing important social rituals
- Xiao: filial piety

One important takeaway from these aspects, for Koreans, is that every relationship is believed to have a "higher" and "lower" member. For instance, mother and son, king and subjects, and even between two friends. And which part you play in that dynamic defines everything you do—even the words you say. If you're the "lower" ranking person, you'd use *jondaetmal*—respectful language—with the person who's older or more powerful. The "higher" ranking person is free to use *banmal*—or casual language—if they choose.

The influence of Confucianism influences even Happy Hour, of all things. In Korea, you do not serve yourself while your drinking buddy's glass is empty. You need to pour your friend's drink first, either holding the bottle with two hands or else [touching near your elbow with one of your hands](#). Then pass the bottle to your friend, who will pour your drink for you. Once both of your glasses are filled, make sure you say cheers—"keonbae!" or "jan!"—before drinking.

If you encounter a circumstance like this, or any other social situation, but you can't remember what the right thing to do is, don't worry. You will not get [slapped with kimchi](#); Koreans will understand the mistakes you make. And any effort you put in to show that you're trying to learn their language and culture will be greatly appreciated.

Korea has a group-oriented culture, and, perhaps as a result, has a different idea of what personal space is. It's possible that, to convey a feeling of friendship, somebody (especially an older somebody) might touch you as they talk with you, even if you're a complete stranger. So don't worry—Grandma isn't trying to get fresh with you.

Koreans also ask a lot of questions that might seem a little personal to foreigners. For instance, if a strange man came up to me in America and asked how old I was, I'd be offended, or at the very least weirded out. Though this question is usually considered rude in Western cultures, in Korea it's absolutely necessary. Koreans need to know the age of the person they're speaking to so that they know if they should use *jondaetmal* or *banmal*.

Korea's group-oriented culture also explains *hwaishik*, an outing between a team manager and their employees, for which attendance is almost mandatory. Employees can only get out of a *hwaishik* with an *extremely* good excuse. *Hwaishik* entails:

- First dinner, of course having beer or soju (or both—I’ll have a [somaek](#), please!) with the meal.
- Afterwards, it’s time for i-cha, the second round. The group will move to some sort of bar, for even *more* drinking.
- When i-cha ends late in the evening, it’s time for sam-cha—the third round. That’s when the group heads to the nearest noraebang to sing their hearts out. I suggest always having a go-to K-pop song in your back pocket. You never know when the microphone will be placed in your hands!

The Morning after Hwaishik

Hwaishik are late-night bonding rituals with employees and their boss. These events often happen during weeknights, and employees are still expected to come to work at the usual time—no excuses. It’s no surprise, then, that hangover cures are super popular. Any convenience store will have various hangover cures for sale. Haejang-guk, or hangover soup, is eaten either immediately after a drinking session, or even for breakfast or lunch the next day.



Soju, noraebang, and haejang-guk: the three staples of any hwaishik.

Visiting Seoul

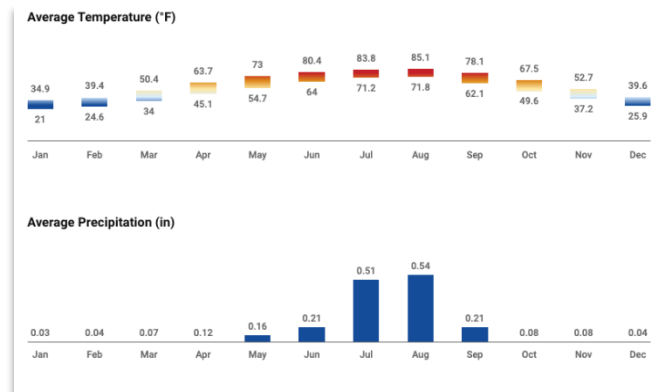
Traveling to a foreign country, especially one that uses neither the same language nor the same writing system as you, can be a daunting undertaking. Or, as Koreans would say, a “mental shock.” But take a deep breath and let me guide you through the big questions you need to consider.

Traveling

When Should You Go?

If you're looking for nice weather (which...who isn't?), the best times to visit are from March to May and September to November.

Traveling other times of the year, you'll come face-to-face with drastically cold, hot, or wet weather. Speaking as somebody who's been to Korea in July, sweat stains do not make for a good photo-op.



Source: [U.S. News Travel](#)

Where Should You Stay?

Options, with potential benefits, include:

- **Hotel:** Dedicated employees to answer any and all questions. You don't have to clean up after yourself, and many hotels offer a complimentary breakfast. Because who wants to deal with finding food first thing in the morning?
- **Hanok guesthouse:** Experience the beautiful traditional Korean architecture up close and personal. If you want to wake up feeling like you've stepped into a Korean historical drama, this is the perfect option for you.
- **Airbnb:** Live like a true Seoulite! Book at a stay in an apartment—either by yourself or share with the owner—and really live in the middle of things. Airbnbs can also be very cheap, without sacrificing quality.
- **Hostel:** More money in your pocket means more food in your stomach. Just think of all the [hotteok](#) you could buy!

I also recommend staying at a place north of the Han River. Though there are tons of awesome places to stay to the south (Gangnam, I'm talking about you), most of the popular attractions are located above Hangang. So if you stay north, you can save time on your commute and make the most of your day. And probably sleep in a bit, too. I mean you *are* on vacation, after all.

How Should You Get There?

The options are the same, whether you're coming from Incheon International Airport or Gimpo International Airport, but the price and timing vary! When it comes to getting from Incheon to Seoul, my favorite is the AREX. It's quick, will most likely get you close to your stay, and you don't have to worry about traffic.

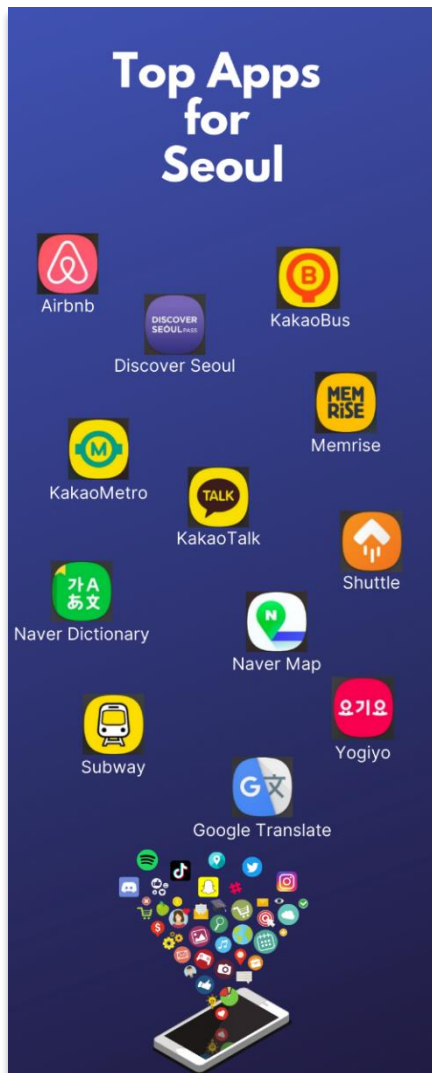
From Incheon International Airport

- **Airport Railroad Express (AREX):** Costs ₩9000 and takes about 43-48 minutes to reach Seoul Station.
- **All-stop train:** Costs ₩4150 and takes about 55 minutes to an hour, depending on where you're getting off.

- **Airport bus:** Costs ₩9000-15000; these special buses drop off in and around certain hotels, and take about an hour to reach Seoul.
- **Taxi:** Costs ₩65,000 and takes about an hour.

From Gimpo International Airport

- **Airport Railroad Express (AREX):** Costs ₩1300 and takes about 15 minutes to reach Seoul Station.
- **Subway:** Costs ₩1450 and takes about 15 minutes.
- **Bus:** Costs ₩5000. Depending on traffic, the trip could take 40 minutes to an hour.
- **Taxi:** Costs ₩35,000. Like buses, the trip could take 40-60 minutes.



How Should You Get Around?

Seoul is a huge city, and there are many ways to get where you need to go. The idea of taking the subway may seem scary, but there are announcements at every stop in Korean, Chinese, Japanese, and English, as well as maps and signs. There are also apps like Subway and Naver Map to provide additional guidance.

- **Subway:** Seoul’s extensive light rail network, combined with frequent stops and cheap fares, make this the best way to get around Seoul. For the record, when people ask me what my favorite thing about Seoul is, I say, “their subway,” and I’m only half-joking.
 - **Bus:** Good for the few places the subway doesn’t reach, like routes around Namsan and Northern Seoul.
 - Tip: Not all buses have voice announcements in English! Use the Naver app to find the name of the stop before yours, and listen for it to be announced.
 - **Taxi:** Best for short trips; the basic fare starts at ₩3000 for the first 2km, but at certain areas and certain times, the rate changes drastically.
 - **Car hire:** Most expensive option, estimated price of ₩ 80,000 per day.

Sightseeing

Palaces

Gyeongbokgung – Originally built in 1395, the iconic palace was destroyed in the 16th century. It was eventually restored, and is now probably the most beautiful palace in Seoul (and my second favorite palace). If you can, try to stop by during the changing of the guard!

Changdeokkung – The “Palace of Illustrious Virtue” was built in early 15th century as an alternative to Gyeongbokkung. Huwon, a secret garden, is without question the highlight of this site. It requires an additional fee, but trust me—it’s more than worth it. The garden is expansive and lovely, and the guided tour is very interesting (just make sure you book a tour for the language you speak).

Changgyeongkung – Also known as “East Palace,” it was built by King Seongjong to house the wives of the previous kings. The palace was destroyed and the grounds were used as a zoo during the Japanese occupation, but was rebuilt in 1987.

Deoksugung – “The Palace of Virtuous Longevity” is distinctive because of the mix of western-style buildings alongside traditional Korean ones. It gives the palace an anachronistic feel, as though you’re stepping from one time period to another.

Unhyeongung – This palace is the original location of Emperor Gojong and Myeongseong’s wedding ceremony, and as such, a reenactment of their wedding takes place at this palace every year. In addition, weddings still take place here almost every weekend!

Historic Korea

The Gates of Seoul – Scattered throughout Seoul, the Gates are probably the most iconic architecture in the city. Though not all of the gates have survived the test of time, plenty are still standing, including:

- Changuimun (Jahamun) Gate
- Dongnimmun Gate
- Gwanghvimun Gate
- Gwanghwamun Gate
- Heunginjimun (Dongdaemun) Gate
- Hyehwamun (Honghwamun) Gate
- Sukjeongmun Gate
- Sungnyemun (Namdaemun) Gate



Sungnyemun Gate in Seoul.

Bukchon Hanok Village – This neighborhood is the *best* place to see hanok up close. In addition to the traditional hanok, some buildings have been renovated to meld the past and the present.

Jongmyo Shrine – The oldest of the Confucian royal shrines, the shrine houses tablets that contain teachings from royal family members. Rituals of song and dance are still often held here.

Jogyesa Temple – The center of Korean Buddhism, many significant events, rituals, lectures, and ceremonies are held here.



A view of Dongdaemun from Seoul City Wall

Seoul City Wall and Museum – Seoul City Wall follows the mountain peaks of Bukaksan, Naksan, Namsan, and Inwangsan. The hike offers fantastic views of Seoul and beautiful gates. The wall is miles long, and if you're not an avid hiker, you may not

want to trek it all. If so, I recommend walk the section of the wall in Dongdaemun. While you're there, you can visit the Seoul City Wall Museum to learn the history of the wall, which spans more than 600 years!

Parks, Gardens, & A Lil' Bit of Nature

Olympic Park – Four parks in one, Olympic Park offers visitors the chance to experience art sports, nature, and history one after another.

Seoul Forest – Historically, this land was used by royalty as hunting grounds. Today, Seoulites use Seoul Forest as a way to escape the city and unwind in nature (Seoul Forest). Grab a blanket, some kimbap, and a can of [sikhye](#), and treat yourself to a peaceful and delicious picnic.

Seonyudo Park – Seoul excels at transforming the abandoned into must-see attractions, and this park is proof of that. Once a filtration plant, Seonyudo Park is now a perfect place to de-stress—and snap a few beautiful photographs, too.



In addition to beautiful scenery, Seonyudo also offers...comfortable roads?

Gyeongui Line Forest Park – Once a railway line, the park now offers a unique combination of the city and nature. Enjoy the green spaces while exploring the cafes, restaurants, shops, and galleries that Seoul has to offer (Because you know all that won is burning a hole in your pocket).

Seoullo 7017 – What do you do with an old highway overpass you don't use anymore? Turn it into a park, of course! The park features over 24,000 plants, as well as artwork, pianos, and a café.

Cheonggyecheon Stream – This stream was re-discovered when a raised highway was demolished; since then, Cheonggyecheon stream has been transformed into a riverside park and walking course, with public art installations, festivals, and markets. If you find yourself needing a respite from the bustle of Seoul, a walk along this stream might be just what you need.

K-Pop and K-Drama



All the merchandise an EXO-L could ever want!

SMTown coexartium – Fans of K-Pop groups like EXO and TVXQ should consider this museum a must-see. Get up close to outfits worn by various SM Entertainment artists, take pictures with your favorite members via augmented reality, and even watch concert broadcasts.

MBC World Broadcasting

Theme Park Tour – If you've ever wanted to be the lead in a K-drama, then put this tour on your itinerary. MBC World, located inside Munhwa Broadcasting Corp. building, allows visitors to step into historical dramas, dance to their favorite choreo, and experience MBC programs first-hand.

Sanmotoonage – Get your K-drama and coffee fix at the same time by visiting this café, which was featured in Coffee Prince. And if neither of those things are your cup of tea (they do also serve tea, by the way), the view alone is worth a visit.

Festivals

Yeongdeungpo Yeouido Spring Flower Festival – When the weather warms, flock to Yeouido to get a fantastic view of the blossoming trees and flowers.

Lotus Lantern Festival – Celebrated in May in honor of the Buddha's birthday, this festival involves hundreds of paper lanterns strung around temples and a parade that moves from Donguk University to Jogye-sa.

설날
SEOLLAL VOCAB AND FACTS

WHAT IS SEOLLAL?
Also called Lunar New Year, Seollal falls on the first day of the Lunar Calendar. It's celebrated over a period of 3 days with families paying respects to their ancestors with food, ceremonies, and games. Most of the country travels during this time period, so traffic jams and sold out tickets for buses and trains are common.

FOOD
A ceremony called Charye is performed on the actual day of Seollal. Various foods are placed on the table in a specific order. Fruits are placed in the front, the second row vegetables, the next row meats and fish, and finally the back row has bowls of rice and soups along with chopsticks. After paying respects to their ancestors in the ceremony, everyone enjoys the food together (called umbok).

A FEW TYPES OF FOOD
(Varies by region)

- 떡국 (tteok-guk)**: Broth with thinly sliced rice cakes
- 전 (jeon)**: Variety of pancake-like dishes
- 수정과 (sujeong-gwa)**: Korean fruit punch made of dried persimmons, cinnamon, and ginger.
- 만두국 (mandu-guk)**: Type of Korean soup with dumplings boiled in broth
- 잡채 (japchae)**: Sweet potato noodles mixed with vegetables, beef, and flavored with soy sauce.
- 식혜 (sikhye)**: Sweet Korean drink with cooked grains of rice and pine nuts.

MONEY (세뱃돈)
After eating, young people receive money and well wishes from their elders after performing a bow to them called Sebae. Money is usually in the form of fresh banknotes.

GAMES
Many types of traditional games are also played during the holidays.

- 윷놀이 (yut-nori)**: Traditional Korean board game played with 4 "yut" sticks
- 널뛰기 (neol-ttwigi)**: Game similar to seesaw where players propel each other into the air. Some people do tricks while in the air.
- 제기차기 (jeogichagi)**: Game similar to hacky sack where players kick an object called "jeog" and try to prevent it from falling to the ground.
- 연날리기 (yeon-nal-rigi)**: Fire flying is also popular. They are flown high in the sky, and wishes are made to the ground.

새해 복 많이 받으세요!
(Happy New Year)

CREATED BY **DOM & HYO**
facebook.com/DomHyo ©2015 domandhyo.com twitter.com/DomHyo

Source: [Dom & Hyo](#)

Korean Queer Cultural Festival – In June, Seoul’s LGBT community honors love and equality in a celebration that includes a parade, street party and film festival.

Dano Festival – Shamanist rituals and mask dances are held at places like Namsangol Hanok Village and the National Folk Museum of Korea, where the historic and contemporary meet.

Chuseok – Often called [Korean Thanksgiving](#), the Harvest Moon Festival is one of the most important holidays in Korea. During this three-day holiday, families join together to visit their ancestors’ graves and offer food and drink and perform sebae (a ritual bow).

Asia Song Festival – A concert to make any K-Pop fan’s day, this event includes performances from the top hallyu bands, and even singers from outside of Korea.

Courses and Tours

Templestay – For those looking for a little serenity, a templestay or meditation might be the perfect fit.

Visit [Templestay Information](#) to book a stay at various temples inside and outside of Seoul, including Bongeunsa, Jogye-sa, and Gilsang-sa. Learn about Buddhism firsthand, in addition to crafts and meditation.

Food courses – For foodies, choose from myriad food tours to get a taste of the best Seoul has to offer, or enroll in a cuisine course so you can take a taste of Seoul home with you. Visit [SeoulEats](#) or [Airbnb](#) to book one for your trip.

Walking Tours – Feel like stretching your legs? There are many walking tours to choose from, including architecture themed tours, night tours, market tours, City Wall tours, and more. Go to [Visit Seoul](#) to find the walking tour for you.

Seoul City Tour Bus – If your feet are screaming for a break, hop on the [Seoul City Tour Bus](#). Choose the course that suits you best, and see the sights of Seoul in style! I generally recommend first-time

travelers take the Seoul City Tour Bus on the first day. You get to see a lot for very little money, and as a bonus, you kind of get a feel for the city.

The Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) – If you feel like getting away from Seoul, consider taking a tour to the guarded border between North and South Korea. While visiting, you can even take a few peeks in North Korea from a few observation points. Just make sure to [secure your parachute!](#) Don't forget to [book your tour](#) in advance.

Can't-Miss Experiences

Dragon Hill Spa & Resort – A jjimilbang and then some, this resort also features a cinema, arcade, swimming pool, horseback riding, and more. So put your hair up in a [Korean lamb head towel](#), tap an egg on your forehead, and de-stress.

N Seoul Tower – At the summit of Namsan, one of Seoul's guardian mountains, is N Seoul Tower. Buy a ticket to see the top of the tower, which reaches almost 480 meters above sea level. There are various shops and restaurants at the base of the tower, and a market where crafts are sold. Not to mention the most breathtaking views of the city. To reach the summit of Namsan in style, visitors can buy a ticket for the Namsan Cable car.

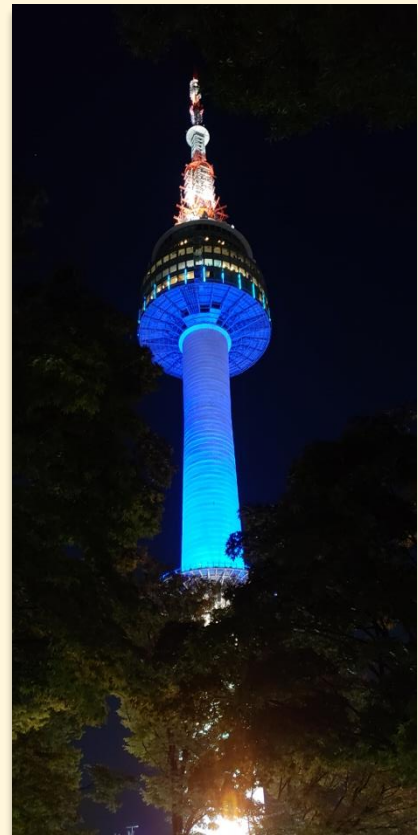
Banpo Bridge Rainbow Fountain – The thousands of lights that cover the bridge light up the water with spectacular color as it falls back into Han River. If you're lucky, you may also catch the market, which offers both food and craft vendors.

Noraebang – Grab your friends and channel your inner Beyoncé at one of the myriad noraebang (literally “song room”) scattered throughout Seoul. Rent a room by the hour, and sing (or tambourine) your heart out.

Hanbok rental – Step foot near any one of the palaces, and you'll see many people—both Korean and foreigner alike—dressed in hanbok. There are many places in Seoul that allow visitors to rent a hanbok for a few photogenic hours, but make sure you go early, for this is one of an extremely popular activity!

Seoul Café Mania – If you can imagine it, Seoul probably has a café for that. New cafes pop up all the time, but current popular ones include:

- Bau House Café for dog lovers
- 221 B Café for Sherlock Holmes fans
- Thanks Nature Café for sheep freaks



N Seoul Tower from Namsan

- Blind Alley Café for raccoon admirers
- Banji Café for those who need a little bling in their life
- Meerkat Café for...well...meerkat enthusiasts, obviously

Step Outside of Seoul



Is it just me or does this look like the perfect place to read a book?

The Garden of Morning Calm – If you’re looking to escape the busy streets of Seoul, take a breather at this gorgeous arboretum. It houses thousands of plants, some rare and exotic. If you’re looking to get your Insta some likes, this is the place to do it. And you know what? The food isn’t bad, either.

Nami Island – Take the ferry to this moon-shaped island, and then rent a bicycle as you relax in the shade provided by the tall trees. Oh, and don’t mind the shouts—that’s just the sound of those who’ve decided to come to the island via the zip line.

Le Petite France – Any fans of *Le Petit Prince* in the room? This French-style theme park was design with the book in mind, and even features a memorial to the author. Many popular K-dramas have also been filmed here, like *My Love from Another Star*.

Gwangmyeong Cave – Previously used to mine gold, silver, and bronze (oh my!), this cave is now a theme park. Different chambers have different themes, such as the Wine Cave, the Horror Experience, and the Underground Lake. Note: If you *do* end up visiting Seoul during the summer, this cave is a cool haven from the heat.

Dining

I don’t know about you, but great food is probably 80 percent of the reason why I travel. Luckily, Seoul offers many delicious options, from traditional Korean, to fusion, to street food! The below list is broken down by neighborhood, so just figure out where you are, and look at our top recommendations!

Pro tip: If you’re hungry but don’t have the time to sit down and eat, stop by one of the ten zillion (I do believe that’s the official count) convenience stores scattered throughout Seoul. They have tons of goodies to choose from. My recommendation: [samgak kimbap](#).

Gwanghwamun & Jongno-gu

Koong

11-3 Insa-dong 10-gil

Dumplings
Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 6

Rogpa Tea Stall

18-1 Sajik-ro 9-gil

Vegetarian
Line 3 to Gyeongbokgung, Exit 1

Wood and Brick

3 Bukchon-ro 5-gil

Bakery
Line 3 to Anguk, Exit 2

Myeongdong & Jung-gu

Myeongdong Gyoja

29 Myeongdong 10-gil

Noodles
Line 4 to Myeongdong, Exit 8

Chung-jeong-gak

Chungjeong-ro

Italian
Line 2 or 5 to Chungjeongno, Exit 9

N.Grill

N Seoul Tower, Namsan

International
Line 4 to Myeongdong, Exit 3 then cable car

Western Seoul

CaffeYAM

2nd fl, 47 Wausan-ro 23-gil

Café
Line 2 to Hongik University, Exit 9

Hongik Sutbul Galbi

146-1 Eoulmadang-ro

Korean
Line 2 to Hongik University, Exit 7 or 8

Ddobagi Chicken

27 Wausan-ro, Sangsu-dong

Korean
Line 6 to Sangsu, Exit 4

Itaewon & Yongsan-gu

Plant Cafe & Kitchen

2nd fl, 117 Bogwang-ro, Yongsan-gu

Vegan
Line 6 to Itaewon, Exit 4

Passion 5

272 Itaewon-ro, Hannam-dong

Bakery
Line 6 to Hangangjin, Exit 2

Pipit Burger

8 Itaewon-ro 54-gil

Burgers
Line 6 to Hangangjin, Exit 3

Gangnam & Southern Seoul

Yoojung Sikdang

14 Dosan-daero 28-gil

Korean
Line 7 to Hakdong, Exit 7 or 8

Coreanos Kitchen

25 Seolleung-ro 157-gil

Mexican
Bundang Line to Apgujeongrodeo, Exit 5

Lay Bricks

46 Nonhyeon-ro 153-gil

Café
Line 3 to Sinsa, Exit 8

Dongdaemun & Eastern Seoul

Onion

8 Ahasan-ro 9(gu)-gil

Bakery
Line 2 to Seongsu, Exit 2

Wooraeoak

62-29 Changgyeonggung-ro

North Korean
Line 2 or 4 to Eulji-ro 4ga, Exit 4

I Love Sindangdong

302-4 Sindang-dong

Korean
302-4 Sindang-dong

Northern Seoul

Gyeyeolsa Chicken

7 Baekseokdong-gil

Fast Food
Line 3 to Gyeongbokgung, Exit 3; from the subway, take bus 1020, 7022, or 7212.

Hyehwa Kalguksu

13 Changgyeonggung-ro 35-gil;

Noodles
Line 4 to Hyehwa, Exit 4

Jaha Sonmandoo

12 Baekseokdong-gil

Korean
Line 3 to Gyeongbokgung, Exit 3

Conclusion

Seoul's a long way from home, a long way from what's comfortable. But getting away from the norm is a great way to learn about the world, and also learn about yourself. I hope to see you in Seoul soon, fellow wanderer.

Don't know where to start? Visit the Rheel Adventures website to view more resources and check out the current vacation packages we're offering!

안녕하세요!



The night view from Namsan Park.

Appendix A: A Beginner's Guide to Hangul

Most signs in Seoul are written in Korean and English. But learning how to read Korean is still a really good idea. Lucky for you: Most people can learn the letters in about 20 minutes!

Consonants

ㄱ	ㄴ	ㄷ	ㄹ	ㅁ	ㅂ	ㅅ
g	n	d	r/l	m	b	s
ㅇ	ㅈ	ㅊ	ㅋ	ㅌ	ㅍ	ㅎ
-/ng	j	ch	k	t	p	h

Double Consonants

ㄲ	ㄸ	ㅃ	ㅆ	ㅉ
gg/kk	dd/tt	bb/pp	ss	jj

Vowels

ㅏ	ㅑ	ㅓ	ㅕ	ㅗ
a	ya	eo	yeo	o
ㅛ	ㅜ	ㅠ	ㅡ	ㅣ
yo	u	yu	eu	i

Vowel Combinations

ㅘ	ㅙ	ㅚ	ㅜ	ㅝ	ㅞ
ae	yae	e	ye	wa	wae
ㅟ	ㅠ	ㅡ	ㅢ	ㅣ	
oe	weo	we	wi	ui	

Appendix B: A Beginner's Guide to Korean

Helpful Korean Words and Phrases

The tables found below contain basic words and phrases that a traveler might need while staying in Korea. Each table contains a transliterated version of the phrase, which can be found in the right-most column. However, as transliterated Korean is generally difficult for even Koreans to read, the text in that column is grayed out to encourage you to read the phrase in Korean instead!

The words and phrases below are a great way to get started. But I recommend that you check out the free podcasts on [Talk to Me in Korean](#) to be able to hear people speak Korean.

General

English	Korean	Transliteration
Nice to meet you.	만나서 반갑습니다	mannaseo bangabseubnida
What is your name?	당신의 이름은 무엇입니까?	dangsin-ui ileum-eun mueos-ibnikka
How old are you?	당신은 몇 살입니까?	dangsin-eun myeoch sal-ibnikka
I am American.	나는 미국 사람이에요.	naneun migug salam-ieyo
I am (name).	저는 (name)이에요/예요*. *choose 이에요 if your name ends in a consonant and 예요 if your name ends in a vowel.	jeoneun (name)iyeyo/yeyo
This is our first meeting.	처음 뵙겠습니다.	heoeum boebgesseubnida.
Where do you live?	어디에 사세요?	eodie saseyo?
I live in (country).	저는 (country)에.	jeoneun (country)e
Please let me know your contact information.	연락처 좀 알려 주세요.	yeonlagcheo jom allyeo juseyo.
I will give you my phone number.	제 핸드폰 번호 알려 드릴게요.	je haendeupon beonho allyeo deulilgeyo.

How are you?	잘 지내요?	jal jinaeyo?
I got it.	알겠어요.	algess-eoyo.
I don't know yet.	아직 몰라요.	ajig mollayo.
I can do it.	할 수 있어요.	hal su iss-eoyo.
I'm going with my sister.	여동생 이랑 같이 갈 거예요.	yeodongsaeng ilang gat-i gal geoyeyo.
It's wrong	틀렸어요.	teullyeoss-eoyo.
I'm tired.	나는 피곤해요.	naneun pigonhaeyo.
I'm sick.	나는 아파요.	naneun apayo.
You're right.	당신이 맞아요.	dangsin-i maj-ayo.
I'm doing very well.	나는 정말 잘 지내요.	naneun jeongmal jal jinaeyo.
How do you say ____ in Korean?	_____ 한국어로 어떻게 말해요?	_____ hangug-eolo eotteohge malhaeyo?
I speak English.	나는 영어를 할 수 있어요.	naneun yeong-eoleul hal su iss-eoyo.
Can you speak Korean?	당신은 한국어를 할 수 있어요?	dangsin-eun hangug-eoleul hal su iss-eoyo?
Let's go to ____.	____에 갑시다.	____e gabsida.
Is there an ATM?	현금입출금기가 있어요?	hyeongeum-ibchulgeumgi ga iss-eoyo?

Dining

English	Korean	Transliteration
Do you have ____?	_____ 있어요?	_____ iss-eoyo?
This is delicious!	맛있다!	mas-issda!

Excuse me.	저기요.	jeogiyo.
I'll have one ____.	____하나 주세요.	____ hana juseyo.
Is this suitable for vegetarians?	이것은 채식주의자용이에요?	igeos-eun chaesigjuuijayong-ieyo?
Is the kimchi jjigae spicy?	김치찌개 매워요?	gimchijjigae maewoyo?
I'll have one Americano.	아메리카노 한잔 주세요.	amelikano hanjan juseyo.
Can you deliver now?	지금 배달 돼요?	jigeum baedal dwaeyo?
Please give me your address.	주소 말해 주세요.	juso malhae juseyo.
Beer too, please.	맥주도 주세요.	maegjudo juseyo.
Table for two.	두 사람 자리 부탁드립니다.	du salam jali butaghabnida.
I'm hungry	나는 배고파요.	naneun baegopayo
I'm thirsty.	나는 목 말라요.	naneun mog mallayo.
What would you like to eat?	무엇으로 드시겠어요?	mueos-eulo deusigess- eoyo?
Can I have some tea?	차 한잔 좀 주세요?	cha hanjan jom juseyo?

Shopping

English	Korean	Transliteration
How much is that?	얼마예요?	eolmayeyo?
Can I get a discount?	조금 깎아주세요.	jogeum kkakk-ajuseyo.
If you lower the price a little more, I'll buy it.	더 깎아 주시면 살게요.	deo kkakk-a jusimyeon salgeyo.
Do you need anything else?	필요한 건 없어요?	pil-yohan geon eobs-eoyo?
What are you looking for?	뭐 찾으세요?	mwo chaj-euseyo?

You don't have this in a different color?	이거 다른 색깔은 없나요?	igeo daleun saegkkal-eun eobsnayo?
Can I try this on?	이거 입어 볼 수 있어요?	igeo ib-eo bol su iss-eoyo?
The size is a bit small. Do you have a bigger size?	사이즈가 작아요. 더 큰 거 있어요?	saijeuga jag-ayo. deo keun geo iss-eoyo?
___ is pretty.	___ 예쁘다.	___ yeppeuda.
This is the only color.	이 색깔밖에 없어요.	i saegkkalbakk-e eobs-eoyo.
Can I try these shoes on?	이거 신어 봐도 돼요?	igeo sin-eo bwado dwaeyo?
Please wait.	잠시만요.	jamsiman-yo.
They're a bit big.	조금 커요.	jogeum keoyo.
I will buy this.	이거 살게요.	igeo salgeyo.
I'm looking for ___.	___ 찾고 있어요.	___ chajgo iss-eoyo.
I want to buy ___.	___ 사고 싶어요.	___ sago sip-eoyo.
It's cheap.	싸요.	ssayo.
It's expensive.	비싸네요.	bissaneyo.
Here is your receipt.	영수증 여기 있습니다.	yeongsujeung yeogi issseubnida.
Thank you (to someone who is working).	수고하세요.	sugohaseyo.

Transportation

English	Korean	Transliteration
Where is ___?	___ 어디 있어요?	___ eodi iss-eoyo?
Where are you going?	어디 가세요?	eodi gaseyo?
(I'm going to) Gyungbok Palace.	경복궁이요.	gyeongboggung-iyo.

I'll pay with a transportation card.	교통 카드로 할게요.	gyotong kadeulo halgeyo.
Let's go home.	집으로 가자.	jib-eulo gaja.
Do I have to transfer?	나 그럼 갈아타야 돼?	na geuleom gal-ataya dwae?
I'm still confused.	나는 아직도 헛갈려.	naneun ajigdo hesgallyeo.

Resources

The below sources helped provide some of the information in this guide. Check them out to learn more!

15 Unique and Interesting [Theme Cafes in Korea!](#)

An Urban Respite, [the Gyeongui Line Forest Park](#)

[Changgyeonggung Palace](#) - Attractions: Visit Seoul - The Official Travel Guide to Seoul.

Deoksugung Palace (덕수궁) | Official Korea Tourism Organization.

[Gyeongbokgung Palace](#) (경복궁) | Official Korea Tourism Organization.

Lonely Planet [Seoul](#)

MBC World Broadcasting [Theme Park Tour](#)

[Olympic Park](#) (올림픽공원) | Official Korea Tourism Organization

[Seonyudo Park](#) - Attractions: Visit Seoul - The Official Travel Guide to Seoul

[Seoul Forest](#) (서울숲) | Official Korea Tourism Organization

[Talk to Me in Korean](#)

These Are the [Best Times to Visit Seoul](#)

[A Geek in Korea](#): Discovering Asia's New Kingdom of Cool.

[Jongmyo Shrine](#) | UNESCO World Heritage Centre

[Unhyeongung Palace](#) - Attractions: Visit Seoul - The Official Travel Guide to Seoul

[Wear Hanbok](#) and Visit Palaces.

World Population Review | [South Korea](#)