



## *Spring Break 2020- Colors of SEOUL & BUSAN*

*March 14<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 via*



*6nts/8days from: \$2395 triple; \$2495 double and \$2895 single*

*Come along on this unique spring break tour as we visit South Korea's two major cities, Seoul and Busan. Seoul offers cosmopolitan vibe and traditional cultures while Busan is best known for its seaside chic.*

*Seoul, the capital city, is a sprawling metropolis where ancient meets modern; skyscrapers, high-tech subways and pop-culture art mix with Buddhist temples, palaces and street markets. One thing for sure, whatever you needs, Seoul can provide.*

*And then we are off to Busan to discover the magic of this bustling seaport city. While famous for its beaches, Busan is considered the cultural, educational, and economic epicenter of Southeast Korea.*

*On tour, a perfect balance of history and culture along with a variety of "fun stops". Experience riding the KTX bullet train, not once, but twice, visit Deoksu Palace and see the Changing of the Guard Ceremony. There's also a visit to the National Museum of Korea which houses precious Korean cultural assets and then a fascinating tour of the DMZ.*

*On the lighter side, visits to K Star Road, Hongik University area, KBS Studios, local shopping streets, Gwangmyeong Cave and Everland Theme park.*

*Your evenings are free for exploring on your own and shopping. In Seoul our hotel is in the heart of Myeongdong, the epicenter of fashion.*

*Busan's Haeundae Beach is probably one of the most popular destinations in the country. Aside from the sand and sea, the area is stunning at night and its nightlife is flashy and full of surprises.*

### **Itinerary/Details**

**Day 1 – March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Saturday – Depart from Honolulu**

**Hawaiian Airlines #459 Departs Honolulu 1:30 pm – Arrive Incheon 8:00 pm +1**

Meet up with your Panda Travel representative at the Hawaiian Airlines international check-in counters located in Terminal 1, Lobby 3, a minimum of 3 hours prior to the flight departure time to begin the check-in process.

## Day 2 – March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Sunday – Incheon-Seoul (D)

On arrival at the Incheon, please make your way to the baggage claim area as we need to clear immigration and customs. On exiting our local English speaking guide will be there to meet us. The drive into the city is approximately 1 hour, but first we will give you time to exchange currency.

Accommodations for our stay in Seoul is at the 4-star Seoul Sejong Hotel, ideally located, steps from the heart of Myeong-dong and famous Namdaemun Market.

The remainder of the evening is free. A dinner bento box with bottled water will be provided on arrival at the hotel.



**Seoul Sejong Hotel** **Wi-Fi free**

## Day 3 – March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Monday – Seoul (B/L)

After breakfast, please meet your guide in the lobby as we are off on a full day of touring.

The morning begins with a visit to K Star Road where we are off to experience the Hallyu culture of K-POP and enjoy Gangnam Style shopping.

K-Star Road was created as special project for those looking to immerse themselves into the so-called “Korean Wave”. As the name implies, its focus is on “stars” and is a place where one can take a glimpse into the lives of famous K-Pop idols. Whether it be sampling their favorite foods or visiting their favorite shops in Cheongdam-Dong, Sinsadong, or Nonhyeondong. After a visit here, you will leave having experienced the “K-Wave”.

K-Star Road is an actual road, one bustling with the energy and excitement. K-Star Road features a variety of K-Pop artifacts, one of which is a large toy called ‘Gangnamdol’. Visitors often take pictures with this iconic doll, a representation of the cultural buzz that has hit Korea since the K-Wave. Along with this doll, the street features numerous other products and shops associated with entertainment companies—helping further one’s appreciation of Korean pop culture.

On the K-star Road from Apgujeong-dong Galleria Department Store to Cube Entertainment, art toys symbolizing Hallyu stars including Girls Generation, EXO and TVXQ, the GangnamDols decorate the road.

When you follow the beak and the footsteps of ‘K Bird’ installed on lampposts and crosswalks, you can find celebrities’ favorite restaurants and fashion stops. Additional celebrity information is available on displays by each store.

We have included a stop at the BTS Character Shop where you will find character merchandise for seven-member K-pop boy band BTS.

Another must stop today is at Laundry Pizza, a home-made pizza restaurant with a notable design like that of a laundromat, featuring walls decorated with washing machine doors of retro colors giving a very cozy and vintage vibe. Soak your eyes while enjoying crunchy pizza slices with a variety of toppings, including pepperoni, honey glazed potatoes and pulled pork.

Laundry Pizza is a famous filming location for K-Pop music videos and magazine shoots. So, K-pop fans, this is a must stop.

Lunch is included in today's touring and will be at a local restaurant.

This afternoon as we arrive back closer to our hotel, a visit to Namdaemun Market, the largest traditional market in Korea with over 10,000 vendors and 600 years of history. Due to the wholesale nature of the market, the prices are attractive and competitive. It is a popular destination for both locals and international visitors alike.

The market sells nearly every item under the sun including clothing, food, living essentials, etc. So, it comes as no surprise that Namdaemun Market is always bustling day and night. Retailers from all over the nation flock to the market at night and local consumers flock to the market during the day. Many tourists come during the day as well to experience the charm of a traditional Korean market. The market's success is largely due to its independent distribution system. Although the shops are small, most of them produce the goods they offer themselves, allowing customers to purchase goods directly from the manufacturers at wholesale prices.



### Namdaemun Market

Now, back to our hotel and the remainder of the afternoon and evening is free.



**Seoul Sejong Hotel**  **free**

### Day 4 – March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Tuesday – Seoul-DMZ-Seoul (B/L)

After breakfast, please meet your guide in the lobby by 8:00am as we are off on quite a unique day of touring.

The morning begins with a tour of the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) with a knowledgeable guide who shares the history and highlights of this important strip of land that separates North and South Korea. Established in 1953 after the Korean War, the DMZ includes key sites such as the Freedom Bridge, 3rd Infiltration Tunnel, Imjingak Park, DMZ Museum and Dora Observatory.

The tour begins with a visit to the city of Paju for a look at the monuments of Imjingak Park. See the Bridge of Freedom, used by prisoners of war who were repatriated from the North, and pass by the community of Unification Village that is situated between South and North Korea.

Next, head to the Third Infiltration Tunnel, an incomplete passage built by North Korea that runs under the Demilitarized Zone. Discovered in 1978, the tunnel passes through bedrock 240 feet (73 m) below ground. Within, tourists can walk up to the concrete barricades that block off the Military Demarcation Line between North and South.

Once you're back on the surface, the tour takes you up the slopes of Mount Dora for a look across the country from the Dora Observatory. In good weather, you can see all the way to North Korea without using the observatory's telescope.



After lunch we make our way back to Seoul and this afternoon, we will be visiting Deoksu Palace, a walled compound of palaces in Seoul that was inhabited by members of Korea's royal family during the Joseon monarchy until the annexation of Korea by Japan in 1910.

Surrounded by skyscrapers in the center of Seoul, Deoksu-gung Palace ("The Palace of Virtuous Longevity") got its start as a prince's villa in the mid-15th century. In 1907, the compound became the 'retirement home' of the next-to-the-last king of the Joseon dynasty and by 1933, the grounds were opened to the public as a park and museum. While not as grand or as wooded as some of the other palaces in Seoul, Deoksu-gung is right across from City Hall Plaza--the heart of the city.

While here, enjoy watching the Changing of the Royal Guard at the front gate. During the Joseon Dynasty, the royal guard was responsible for opening and closing the palace gate as well as patrolling around the gate area. Outside the palace is a picturesque road flanked by a stone wall which is much loved by visitors.

Our last stop on today's tour is at Insadong Antique Street. Insadong-gil is "well known as a traditional street to both locals and foreigners" and represents the "culture of the past and the present". It contains a mixture of historical and modern atmosphere and is a "unique area of Seoul that truly represents the cultural history of the nation." Most the traditional buildings originally belonged to merchants and bureaucrats. Some larger residences, built for retired government officials during the Joseon period, can also be seen. Most of these older buildings are now used as restaurants or shops.

The face of Insadong changes three times a day. In the early morning, it is a quiet and peaceful street, in the afternoon it becomes busy with tourists and at night Insadong is a place where people, Korean and foreigners alike enjoy taking a stroll and simply hanging out.



### Insadong Antique Street

Now, back to our hotel, arrival by 5:00pm and the remainder of the afternoon and evening is free.



Seoul Sejong Hotel **Wi-Fi** free

### **Day 5 – March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Wednesday – Seoul-Busan (B/L)**

After breakfast, please meet your guide as we are off to Busan via the KTX bullet train. This new high-speed train has been designed to reach speeds of 305 km per hour. Thanks to KTX, the travel time from Seoul to Busan is reduced to less than three hours, cutting the original travel time almost in half.

**Please bring along a small overnight bag as we will be leaving our larger bags at the Seoul Sejong Hotel for when we return on Thursday. The train is not able to accommodate the large suitcases.**

Once in Busan, time for lunch at a local restaurant before our afternoon of touring.

Now, off to explore Busan, beginning with a visit to Jagalchi Market, the largest fish market in South Korea. It is a must stop when in Busan, this legendary market is one of the best spots to experience a local market atmosphere and learn a thing or two about seafood.

Everyone marvels at the fresh tanks of still-swimming edibles, but no less fascinating are the varieties of dried flora and fauna. From anchovies and rays to seaweed and squid, these preserved edibles are heirs to centuries of culinary tradition. (And yes, dear traveler, the bundle on the left, above, is made up of...frogs.)

Next, a visit to Busan Tower, located inside Yongdusan Park. It remains one of the best spots to see the whole city – water and land – in a sweeping 360-degree view. While not as tall as the Seoul Tower it is Busan's most obvious and well-known landmark.

We now make our way to Haeundae Beach and our hotel via Gwangan Bridge, the country's second longest bridge. The drive offers breathtaking views of nearby attractions, including the endlessly unfolding ocean, Oryukdo Island, Hwangnyeongsan Mountain, Gwangalli Beach, Dongbaekseom Island, and Dalmaji Hill.

Accommodations for this evening is at the Busan Shilla Stay Haeundae Hotel, across the street from Haeundae Beach and the Haeundae strip where you can find a variety of shops and restaurants. Look for Haeundae Market, food stalls that sell standard Korean street food, with an emphasis on seafood; think fish cakes, fritters, tteokbokki and pancakes. The menu is especially easy to navigate, as signs above the stalls display names and prices in English.

Within walking distance is a small casino, Paradise Casino, in case you are feeling lucky.



**Busan Shilla Stay Haeundae Hotel**  **free**

### **Day 6 – March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Thursday – Busan-Gwangmyeong-Seoul (B/L)**

After breakfast, please meet your guide in the lobby as we bid good bye to Busan and board the KTX bullet train to Gwangmyeong. Departure is 9:05am with an arrival at 11:31am. Once here, time for lunch at a local restaurant.

This afternoon's touring includes Gwangmyeong Cave and Everland Theme Park.

Gwangmyeong Cave is an abandoned mine spanning 7.9 km in length and reaching 275 m in depth, given a new life as a tourist attraction. It is the only cave in the Seoul metropolitan area and has become a top attraction in Gwangmyeong since being included on the 100 Must-go Destinations in Korea list for 2017-2018. The cool air of the cave makes it popular in summer, while the many exhibitions and events held within the cave keep it interesting all year round.

It is the largest themed cave park with varied cultural and artistic things, created in a gold mine where gold, silver, and bronze were mined. Visitors can experience wine at Wine Cave, as well as Cave Aqua World,

Gold Falls, Gold Road, Gold Palace, Horror Experience, Cave Basement World, Underground Lake, the largest dragon sculpture in the nation, LED lights, and other facilities adding more fun to the visit.

The Wine Cave which holds over 170 wines produced from Korean wineries. This is the only location in the nation where you can taste and purchase locally produced wines from across the country. The cave is divided into a wine cellar, where the wines are kept at the optimal temperature, and the tasting room, where visitors can try and buy their favorite wine. Each region produces its own unique taste so be sure to try a variety.

You can also enjoy taking a ride on the Gwangmyeong Cave's Elephant Car. The journey takes about ten minutes and the road is lined on both sides with a lush forest. The open sides of the car will allow you to take in the fresh air as you travel to the cave in comfort.

This popular tourist attraction has a much darker history to it. Gwangmyeong Cave was one of countless sites in and outside of Korea where forced labor during Japanese colonial rule took place. Up to 500 Korean miners worked at one time in the mines; most were farmers who were forced to work against their will, according to a Gwangmyeong Cave publication.

After lunch at a local restaurant we are off to Everland Theme Park for a fun full afternoon. It is South Korea's largest theme park with over 7 million visitors annually.

One of the park's most famous rides is T-Express, Korea's first wooden roller coaster, popular among young visitors. Zootopia is a must-see as it spans over an area of 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> and exhibits 2,000 animals of 201 species. Lost Valley opened in 2013 and features the largest ecological safari world and offers a tour by amphibious car to see 150 animals of 20 species. A pair of giant pandas given from Chinese president Xi Jinping as a symbol of friendship between Korea and China can also be seen at Panda World.

Enjoy free time here!

Our day now complete, we return to Seoul and our hotel. Once back the remainder of the evening is free.



**Seoul Sejong Hotel**  **free**

#### **Day 7 – March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Friday – Seoul-Suwon-Seoul (B/L)**

After breakfast, please meet your guide in the lobby as we are off on another full day of touring.

The morning begins with a visit to Suwon KBS Studios, located within the KBS broadcasting station. Dedicated to the history and evolution of the Korean broadcasting industry, you can experience radio and television broadcasting production firsthand.

The tour starts from the main hall on the second floor and continues onto the fourth and fifth floors. In addition to the small museum, radio drama studio, sound effect instruments, 9 o'clock news corner, hologram corner, stereoscopic media experience hall and chroma key corner, visitors have the chance to observe TV production and radio programming process through a window that looks out into the broadcasting studio.

If you are a fan of Korean drama, the visit here will make for a truly unique experience, especially knowing that there is the possibility of meeting one or more celebrities.

The Drama Gallery consists of drama posters and cut-outs of popular dramas including many favorite actors. Enjoy taking a picture besides a cardboard cutout from dramas like Boys Over Flowers, Dream High and Baker King Kim Tak Goo.

Another fun part of the tour is the Blue Screen Room where you will have the opportunity to become a weather forecaster. Point out to various imaginary locations to indicate the shifting of the rain clouds and predict the weather's next move.

You will also be visiting the special effects department to see many mannequins and props used in thriller or horror dramas. They have real like features that can be a bit scary.

The last part of the tour is the outdoor shooting sets, houses and streets that look so real. You will feel as though you are walking along an olden day Korean street.

Next, a visit to the National Museum of Korea, the flagship museum of Korean history and art in South Korea and is the cultural organization that represents Korea.

This vast museum takes you on a fascinating journey through Korea's past from pre-history all the way to the Korean Empire period (1897–1910). Among the must-see exhibits in the ground-floor galleries are the Baekje Incense Burner, an extraordinary example of the artistry of the 6th- to 7th-century Baekje Kingdom; and the Golden Treasures from the Great Tomb of Hwangham.

In the 3rd-floor sculpture and craft galleries, search out the Pensive Bodhisattva from the 7th century. Also look down on the top of the Goryeo-dynasty Ten Storey Pagoda, carved from marble.

The surrounding park is best appreciated in good weather, when the Great Hall is perfectly reflected in the large Reflecting Pond. The original Bosingak Bell is in the grounds near the picturesque Dragon Falls.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we are off to the Hongik University area to enjoy free time to explore on your own and shopping time. This is the nexus of Seoul's youth and indie culture. Funky boutiques, avant-garde galleries, and nightclubs are this neighborhood's mainstay. Enjoy a fascinating look at the other side of traditionally conservative Korean culture.

This is one of the most popular university shopping areas. Beside the main streets with popular shops and cafes, do discover Hongdae alleys. There are many hidden gems along these narrow lanes. Some compare Hongdae with Harajuku in Japan, so there must be a reason. Freedom of self-expression is the spirit of this youthful area. And indie fashion is a part of the culture there.

At the designated time, please meet back up with your guide as we return to our hotel.



**Seoul Sejong Hotel**  **free**

### **Day 8– March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Saturday – Seoul (B/L)**

After breakfast, a complete free day to get out and enjoy the Myeongdong area of Seoul and all that it has to offer. Yes, its our last day here on tour, but plenty of time to catch up on some serious shopping or go off and do some sightseeing on your own. We have arranged for late check-out from your room. Please meet in the lobby by 5:30pm for the drive out to the airport.

On the self-sightseeing side, consider a visit to Myeongdong Cathedral, one attraction that should not be missed. The cathedral, built in Gothic style, is one of the most important Catholic churches in Korea.

As you have come to see during your stay here, Myeongdong is a destination all on to itself. If your love is shopping, you can find no better area. There's the Lotte Department Store and Shinsegae Department Store as well street carts and small boutiques. Great bargains are to be had if you are willing to hunt for them. To

find great deals, look past the large department stores and most major brands towards the street carts and smaller shops found tucked away in smaller alleys.

Don't forget, meet with you bags in the hotel lobby by 5:30pm as we make our way to the Incheon Airport.

**Hawaiian Airlines #460 Departs Incheon 10:00 pm – Arrival Honolulu 11:10 am**