

THE THOUSAND FACES OF KOREA



What it lacks in size, it makes up in tourist potential. South Korea is reputed for a wonderful diversity of places and activities of great interest.

What strikes visitors at first sight when entering Korea is the fascinating mix of old and new which complement each other magically. **Centuries-old palaces mixed with skyscrapers and modern shopping avenues create a very lively atmosphere in the capital of Seoul.** The city which is home to a quarter of Korea's population features many highlights. The N Seoul Tower with an impressive observatory presents a striking view over the city as well as the mountains of North Korea. Local media play zone is very amusing, and so is the Teddy Bear Museum.

Those keen on the ancient histories succumb to the beauty of Korean grand palaces. There are five located in Seoul, including the Changdeok Palace, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, dating back to 15th century. Tourists curious about local way of life will appreciate a visit to the Korean Folk Village not far from the metropolis. **This open-air museum features 260 traditional houses displaying typical household goods which help uncover the diverse character of local culture.** When wondering around, visitors witness the skill of artisans and have a chance to see local market and admire musical and dance performances.

Korean markets are a must-see, ideally the Namdaemun Market near Seoul's ancient South Gate, which is one of the largest in the country. Thousands of stalls may be slightly overwhelming but whatever one seeks, it will be found here.

South Korea features not only ancient palaces and beautiful temples, but also many famous forts, some of which date back more than two millennia. Traveling around, one needs to try local delicious cuisine and visit Gyeongju City, a tourists mekka often called "Museum without Walls".

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