

Back Track Hosted Highlights of South Korea



Our Travel Style

Our global network of local experts deliver the types of experiences that can't be Googled. Immersive trips that enable you to explore authentic local culture in a sustainable, experience-rich way. We love the highlights, but the real magic for us happens well away from a beaten path, the real life experiences you won't find in a search engine.

Comfort: a little more... comfortable

We've smoothed away some of adventure travel's rougher edges to craft a style of travel that has a few more pleasantries included. Enjoy a more relaxed pace of travel, inviting accommodation, more included activities and many meals along the way.



Accommodation

Comfortable hotels at a 3-to-4-star level, with private amenities and often plenty of local character. Some itineraries also feature homestays or unique accommodation.

Transport

Primarily uses private transport, sustainable where possible. Local transport is occasionally used when it adds to the experience, like hopping on the back of a camel in the Sahara.

Inclusions

We've taken the hassle out of travelling, by including many of the activities, meals and an arrival transfer from the airport (if specified in your inclusions). Your experienced local leader or guide will also have plenty of tips for how best to fill your free time.



Back Track Hosted Highlights of South Korea

10 days / 9 nights

About Your Trip

Start Location:
Seoul, South Korea

Finish Location
Seoul, South Korea

Accommodation
8X nights hotel
1X nights Hanok

Rooming Requirements
Twin Share

Included Meals
Breakfast (1)
Lunch (X)
Dinner (5)

Transport
Private Vehicle, Public Bus, Metro,
Taxi, Boat, High Speed Train

Leader/Guide
English Speaking Leader
throughout

Included Activities
Per Daily itinerary

Entrance/Admission Fees
Where applicable with
included activities

Airport Transfers
Arrival and departure transfers are
included on a group basis

Support
24-hour support from our local
office

Exclusions

- International Flights
- Any visas required
- Services not mentioned in the itinerary
- Late check out at hotels
- Meals and drinks not mentioned in the itinerary
- Drinks with included lunches and dinners
- Tips for leaders, guide and driver
- Expenditure of personal nature
- Personal Insurance
- Optional activities



Why choose Intrepid?

Our business is global, but our expertise is local, with innovative products operated by our experienced teams in-destination. Each year we create and deliver incredible travel experiences in more than 90 countries.

All our local leaders are trained in first aid and crisis management, and our hotels, vehicles, and activities are audited regularly to ensure they meet international standards. We operate with full public liability insurance and OH&S policies and have rigid risk mitigation and emergency procedures, so your product is delivered safely.



Who we are

For over 30 years we've been taking travellers around the globe, on small group tours with like-minded Intrepid people.



Safe travels

We're with you every step of the way through our value chain - from our suppliers, to our on ground operations and leaders.



Certified B Corp

When we became certified as the world's largest travel B Corp in 2018, it was not only our official pledge to be a responsible business, but also a promise to be the best travel company for the world.

About Back Track's Emma

With 18 years of experience and adventures across 41 countries, Emma brings deep passion and insight to her role at Back Track Adventures.

Her travel story began with a life-changing 21st birthday gift. swimming in dry suits with killer whales inside the Arctic Circle, sparking a lifelong love for unique, immersive journeys. She lived in Vancouver for two years, where she met her husband and fell in love with the outdoorsy lifestyle. A fan of Asian cuisine, she's especially drawn to the culture and flavours of Southeast Asia. One of her most memorable wildlife moments was being gently slapped on the back by a playful juvenile mountain gorilla in Rwanda.

Now, she loves exploring the world with her husband and daughters, sharing the magic of travel with her family. Her biggest career highlight came in 2024 when she was named 'Most Outstanding Travel Consultant – Leisure' at the National Travel Industry Awards, a proud moment recognising her dedication to creating unforgettable travel experiences.

Working at Back Track Adventures as a Senior Adventure Travel Specialist allows her to share her love of travel every day, inspiring others to discover the world just as she has.

About Your Intrepid Tour Leader

Tour leader

On this trip you will be accompanied by one of our tour leaders. The aim of the tour leader is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible.

Your leader will provide information on the places you are travelling through, offer suggestions for things to do and see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends. While not being guides in the traditional sense you can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of the places visited on the trip, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. We aim to support local guides who have specialised knowledge of the regions we visit. If you were interested in delving deeper into the local culture at a specific site or location then your leader can recommend a local guide service in most of the main destinations of your trip.

Back Track Hosted Highlights of South Korea Itinerary

Day 1 / Thursday, 29th October 2026

Seoul

Meals included: Dinner

Annyeong! Welcome to South Korea. Your adventure begins in Seoul – the capital city of high-tech gadgetry, soaring skyscrapers and delicious eats. If you arrive early, explore this metropolis at your own pace and discover how ancient traditions come together with the modern in one of Asia's great cities. You'll have a welcome meeting this afternoon. Following your meeting head out for an welcome dinner with your leader.

Accommodation

Mayplace Hotel or Ramada Hotel

Included activities

Seoul - Welcome Dinner

Special information

It's very important that you attend the welcome meeting as we will be collecting insurance details and next of kin information at this time. If you are going to be late, please let your travel agent or hotel reception know. Ask reception or look for a note in the lobby for more information on where the meeting will take place.

Day 2 / Friday, 30th October 2026

Seoul

Meals included: There are no meals included on this day.

Embrace an early morning for a tour of the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ). From the South Korean side of the Zone, you'll learn how this peninsula has been divided since the devastating Korean War. You'll visit the Third Tunnel of Aggression, the Unification Bridge, Imjingak Park and the Dora Observatory. In the afternoon, explore Gyeongbukgung Palace – the main royal palace of the Joseon dynasty – and the traditional Bukchon Hanok Village. Your tour will finish in the late afternoon in Bukchon, where you might like to stay as there's plenty to explore. Or, maybe visit Namsan Mountain or Yongsan's War Museum.

Accommodation

Mayplace Hotel or Ramada Hotel

Included activities

Seoul - Gyeongbukgung Palace

Seoul - Demilitarized Zone (DMZ/South Korea)

Seoul - Bukchon Hanok Village

Special information

Tours of the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) can only be operated by UN-designated operators in South Korea, so you'll be joined by other travellers on this tour. The tour will last around five hours.

You will need your passport for the DMZ tour, plus drinks and some light snacks. Casual attire will be fine but avoid large logos, sleeveless shirts or military wear.

Bukchon village is banned for group visitors on Sundays. If your trip starts on a Saturday, the visit to Bukchon village will be in the afternoon on Day 8 when you return to Seoul. In this case, today you'll be able to enjoy some free time after Gyeongbukgung Palace instead.

Day 3 / Saturday, 31st October 2026

Sokcho

Meals included: Dinner

In the morning, take a local express bus to the east coast city of Sokcho. When you arrive, head to the Sokcho Central Market for an insight into how the locals go about their daily lives and maybe try a few local snacks. After, you'll have some free time before heading to Abai – a small island village in Sokcho that, for generations, has been a haven for refugees fleeing the war from North Korea. Getting here is half the fun – you'll have to work together to pull a rope on a small barge to get to the other side. Visit a North Korean refugee's family and listen to their story of how history reshaped their life. Then, take part in a cooking demonstration and learn how to make giant Korean dumplings. Have dinner together, maybe trying things like home-cooked japchae (stir fried glass noodles), kimbap (Korea's version of sushi rolls) and rice beer. The payment the family receives for this dinner will be contributed to the Abai Village Preservation Society.

Accommodation

Sokcho Marina Bay

Included activities

Sokcho - Local market visit

Sokcho – Community cooking & dinner in village of Abai

Sokcho - Island village of Abai

Sokcho - North Korea refugee family visit

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 4 hours.

Day 4 / Sunday, 1st November 2026

Sokcho

Meals included: There are no meals included on this day.

Head to Seoraksan – Korea's most well-known mountain and the third highest in the peninsula – and go for a hike to see the views of this UNESCO World Heritage Site. The afternoon and evening is yours to explore Sokcho. Maybe visit Yeoung Geum Jung Pagoda, which is on the coast overlooking the sea. Or hire a bike and ride around the scenic Yeongrang Lake. Maybe try Korean hotpot for dinner or visit Sokcho Expo Tower. Otherwise, you could take a walk along Sokcho Harbor or opt for a relaxing soak at the Cheoksan Hot Springs.

Accommodation

Sokcho Marina Bay

Included activities

Sokcho - Seoraksan Mountain Hike

Optional activities

Sokcho - Yeoung Geum Jung Pagoda - Free

Sokcho – Bike Ride around Yeongrang Lake - USD25

Special information

Your hiking time today will be approximately 3 hours. If you don't feel like hiking, you may choose to take an optional cable car to Gwongeumseong Fortress (at your own expense) or visit Sinheungsa Temple in another part of the park.

Day 5 / Monday, 2nd November 2026

Andong

Meals included: Dinner

Hit the road this morning for Andong Hahoe Folk Village. This settlement is easy to walk around, so you'll join your leader on a stroll through the traditional houses (including the one that hosted Queen Elizabeth II in 1999). Visit the remnants of a traditional school to see how students studied in the past, then walk to Buyongdae Hill for a bird's eye view of the village, dotted with traditional Hanok houses. Next up visit a traditional Korean paper (hanji) workshop where you can experience this centuries-old craft firsthand and even create your own paper by hand using traditional techniques. Being a traditional Korean outpost, there may also be masked dancers performing in town. To learn more about this ritual, why not visit the nearby mask museum. Later, head to your accommodation for the night – staying in an authentic Hanok (traditional Korean house) is a unique experience and the perfect opportunity to gain more insight into local life.

Accommodation

Hanok Homestay

Paper making factory and paper making activity

Included activities

Andong - Andong folk village

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 3.5 hours.

Your accommodation tonight will be a traditional Hanok in a family guesthouse. Traditionally, Korean beds in Hanoks comprise a futon-like mattress placed on the floor, which could be folded up and placed in the cupboard in the morning. While floor bedding can seem firm compared with standard western mattresses, the floor is heated, providing a comfortable night's sleep.

You will need to have an overnight pack for tonight's Hanok stay as you'll leave your main luggage on the bus. There's only one restaurant at the village so the food options will be limited. Maybe stock up in Sokcho if you have special dietary requirements. Please consult with your leader in advance about your food option here in advance.

Day 6 / Tuesday, 3rd November 2026

Busan

Meals included: Breakfast

After saying goodbye to your host family, make your way to Busan – South Korea's second-largest city is home to mountains, beaches, hot springs and deliciously fresh seafood. When you arrive, you'll have the opportunity to talk to a Haenyeo diver. Haenyeo (sea women) dive into the sea to collect clams, sea urchins and oysters and are famous for being able to hold their breath for a very long time. A dwindling industry, this has been a main source of income for the divers (predominantly female) to support their families through changing times. Visit the local Haenyeo community centre and meet with an ex-diver to hear about her experience, the changes Busan has gone through and her life now. Then visit Haedong Temple – the famous Buddhist temple by the sea. Explore this rare gem, backdropped by the ocean, before going to Gamcheon Culture Village for an overview of the city. There are a few different spots to watch the sunset, so maybe grab a few of your group members and head to one of the many scenic viewpoints.

Accommodation

Felix Hotel by STX

Encore Haeundae

Included activities

Busan - Haedong Temple

Busan - Gamcheon Art Village

Busan - Haenyeo (female diver) visit

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 4 hours.

In the odd case where your Haenyeo diver is not available, you'll visit another local lady who's witnessed the massive changes in Busan and can share her stories with us.

Day 7 / Wednesday, 4th November 2026

Busan

Meals included: There are no meals included on this day.

This morning, head to the seaside town of Ikidae and take a coastal walk (and optional plogging). Then, visit to a local 'Smart Farm' – this incubation site is where startups are growing crops in recycled shipping containers, as well as turning them into shops and cafes. Afterwards visit Jagalchi Market – an enormous seafood market by the port. then head out for dinner with a feast of Korean-style lamb skewers. As well as the tasty marinade with a mix of Korean spices, these skewers have a self-rotation mechanism. A specialised grill allows the skewers to rotate automatically, ensuring the meat is perfectly cooked – yum!

Accommodation

Felix Hotel by STX

Encore Haeundae

Included activities

Busan – Local 'Smart Farm' visit

Busan - Coastal walk

Busan - Jagalchi Seafood Market Tour

Busan - Home-cooked meal with a local family

Optional activities

Busan - Night cruise - USD40

Day 8 / Thursday, 5th November 2026

Seoul

Meals included: Dinner

This morning, jump on the KTX Bullet Train and head back to Seoul. When you arrive, the rest of afternoon is yours to explore. Perhaps venture out and explore the National Museum, Leeum Art Museum or check out the huge range of shopping in Seoul's Dongdaemun.

This evening your leader will take you to visit the renowned Gwangjang Market for a street food dinner tour. Here, you'll find some of Korea's stree-side favourites like mayak gimbap (rice rolls), mandu (North Korean dumplings), bindaetteok (mung bean pancake) and kimchi. Later, follow your leader to the top of Naksan to see Seoul's skyline at night.

Accommodation

Mayplace Hotel or Ramada Hotel

Included Activities

Seoul - Gwangjang market

Seoul - Naksan night view over the city

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 4 hours.

Day 9 / Friday, 6th November 2026

Seoul

Meals included: Dinner

Today you'll have the opportunity to meet with a North Korean defector to hear their harrowing tale of struggle and, ultimately, triumph.

And this evening for your final meal, make your way to the youthful district of Hongdae for an authentic Korean BBQ experience and celebrate your time together as a group.

Accommodation

Mayplace Hotel or Ramada Hotel

Included Activities

Seoul - North Korean Defector meeting

Seoul - Celebratory Korean BBQ Dinner

Special information

Meetings with defectors are notoriously difficult to arrange. This meeting may take place on a different day or location to guarantee the best possible experience. The meeting will cover a number of sensitive topics including torture, abuse and human trafficking. You can very easily opt out of this activity, should you wish.

Day 9 / Saturday, 7th November 2026

Seoul

Meals included: There are no meals included on this day.

Your adventure comes to an end after breakfast today. With no activities planned, you're free to leave at any time. If you'd like to spend more time in Seoul, just speak to your booking agent.



Important Information

- This trip starts in Seoul on Day 1 at 4pm. This allows time after the welcome meeting for your first included activities.
- One night of this trip includes Korean-style floor bedding in a traditional hanok in Jeonju. The futon-like mattress may feel firm compared to Western beds, but heated floors ensure comfort. Extra mattresses are available upon request.
- The cuisine of South Korea includes a lot of meat and seafood. For vegetarians and vegans, we recommend reviewing the itinerary to ensure you can fully enjoy and participate in the trip.
- A good degree of fitness is recommended for this trip as a lot of walking is involved. Comfortable walking shoes are recommended. You will need to be able to handle your luggage on metro and in busy transport hubs, so we advise packing light.
- This trip doesn't spend much time in Seoul so we recommend extending your trip to enjoy this city to its fullest.

Join Emma on a Hosted Journey through South Korea



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