

KOREA TRIP NOTES

Asia's third largest economy is also Asia's hottest tourist destination. South Korea is a compelling place where the pursuit of technology has not eclipsed a reverence for tradition and the ways of old Asia. Korea, is also emerging as a winter sports paradise. What surprises first time visitors is how quiet, peaceful and traditional South Korea is outside of the 24 hour a day megalopolis of Seoul. Caught up in the ultra modern, beyond high tech vibe of South Korea's capital, its hard to imagine that a very short distance away are hiking trails, ski slopes, bicycle paths, beaches and Buddhist monasteries.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

US nationals are currently eligible for a 90 day visa on arrival. Travelers are required to have a passport valid for at least 6 months from date of return and at least 2 blank visa pages. These conditions will be reviewed for travel after 31 December, 2024.

CURRENCY

The won is the official currency of South Korea. The symbol is ₩; and the code is KRW. A convenient currency converter can be found at <http://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/V>

CREDIT CARDS

Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted, American Express less so. Cash is needed for shopping at small, local restaurants and shops. ATMs are easily found outside banks, in major hotels and some convenience stores.

TIME DIFFERENCE

Seoul is 14 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time and 17 hours ahead of Pacific Standard Time.

SHOPPING

Clothes, shoes, K-beauty cosmetics and crafts are the typically purchased souvenirs of South Korea. Hallyu (K-pop culture) items also make good souvenirs.



ELECTRICITY

South Korea operates on 220 volts, 60 hertz and requires plug type C or F

For information on plugs and voltage, please visit <http://www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets/>

LANGUAGE

The official language of Korea is Korean, English is widely spoken in the tourist sector.

CLIMATE

South Korea has a temperate climate with four distinct seasons. Winters are usually cold and dry. Summers are hot, and humid. Spring and autumn are pleasant. Seoul's average maximum temperature in January is 35° Fahrenheit and in July the maximum daytime temperature is about 83° Fahrenheit.

TIPPING GUIDELINES

It is not customary to tip in Korea. Trying to tip might even cause embarrassment and/or confusion. Liberal use of the phrase 'thank you' is always understood, appropriate and appreciated.

ETIQUETTE

Public displays of affection are looked down upon and seen as highly immodest among older individuals in South Korea. This has become less taboo with the current generation of young adults, but is still widely discouraged by elders.

South Koreans usually shake hands when they meet for the first time. In order to show respect, individuals support their right forearms with their left hands. The bow is also a traditional South Korean greeting and is often accompanied by a handshake among men.

South Koreans are uncomfortable being touched by someone who is not a relative or close friend.

This information is provided as a guideline to the country you will be visiting, and is up to date to the best of our knowledge. Further information is available to you on the official Korea Tourism Office website - <https://english.visitkorea.or.kr/svc/main/index.do>