

SOUTH KOREA

10 - 22 OCTOBER 2026

Jeju Extension

22 - 26 OCTOBER 2026



FROM
£6,980
PER PERSON

Tour Leader: Hamish Van Gruisen


The Ultimate
TRAVEL COMPANY

Join Hamish Van Gruisen to discover this extraordinary country with its intoxicating mix of bustling markets, ancient temples and cutting-edge innovation along with an incredible cuisine.

We begin in Seoul, the buzzing capital city and one of the best places to visit in South Korea for its lively atmosphere alone. The capital is home to some of the country's most iconic historical sights and traditions, including Gyeongbokgung Palace, Changdeokgung Palace, the Guard Changing Ceremony at Gwanghwamun Gate and the heavily guarded border between South and North Korea, the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). We visit the city's cultural gem of Insadong to discover a plethora of art galleries, antique shops, craft stores and classic teahouses and enjoy authentic Korean street food at Gwangjang Market, one of the country's oldest and largest markets.

We travel by high speed train to Andong, often considered the spiritual and cultural heart of South Korea. The city is known for its preservation of traditional Korean culture and customs and its architecture from the Joseon-era (1392-1910) including the huge, wooden Bongjeongsa Temple and the picturesque UNESCO World Heritage-listed Hahoe Village.

We continue to Gyeongju City which was once the capital of the 8th century Silla Kingdom, is often referred to as the 'museum without walls' due to its rich history, cultural heritage and natural beauty. Here highlights include the royal treasures of the Daereungwon Tomb Complex and the Buddhist carvings and monumental Buddha statue of Seokguram Grotto and Bulguksa Temple.

No holiday to South Korea would be complete without witnessing the natural beauty of Busan, South Korea's second largest city and our final stop, full of stunning beaches, vibrant seafood markets and scenic harbour views.

There is also an optional post-tour extension to Jeju Island, where we will see the mesmerising volcanic terrain, pristine white-sand beaches and countless picturesque landscapes that are unlike anywhere else on earth.



Gwanghwamun Gate



Gyeongbokgung Palace



Dosan Seowon Confucian Academy

13-DAY ITINERARY, DEPARTING 10 OCTOBER 2026

10 October London / Seoul

Suggested flight (not included in the cost of the tour) Korean Air KE 908 departing London Heathrow at 19.35 hrs.

11 October London / Seoul

Arrive Seoul Incheon International Airport at 16.15 hrs. Group transfer to the Andaz Seoul Gangnam, by Hyatt where four nights are spent. Located in the city's fashionable Gangnam district, the hotel's facilities include a restaurant serving American and Asian cuisine, an indoor swimming pool and spa. Dinner under own arrangements.

12 October Seoul

Visit Gwanghwamun Plaza and see the statues of King Sejong and Admiral Yi Sun-Sin followed by the Changing of the Guard Ceremony at Gwanghwamun Gate. Visit Gyeongbokgung (Gyeongbok) Palace, the main royal palace of the Joseon Dynasty. Originally built in 1395, it was expanded in 1867 to become the largest, and arguably most beautiful of Seoul's five palaces, with 330 buildings in total. Here it is possible to visit the National Folk Museum, located within the palace grounds, which contains interesting exhibits about the history of Korean people and their culture.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Continue to Insadong neighbourhood with its plethora of art galleries, antique shops, craft stores, and traditional

teahouses. Return to the hotel for the remainder of the afternoon at leisure. Welcome dinner at a local restaurant.

13 October Seoul

Early morning departure for a visit by official shared bus to the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the border barrier between South and North Korea, steeped in history and intrigue. Spend time exploring the various sites and exhibitions at the DMZ including Freedom Bridge, 3rd Infiltration Tunnel, Imjingak Park and the Dora Observatory.

Late lunch at a local restaurant on the way back to Seoul. Return to the hotel and remainder of the day at leisure. Dinner under own arrangements.

14 October Seoul

Culinary walking tour with a local chef to Jayang-dong, a traditional market filled with stalls selling fresh produce, spices and other food products. Select fresh ingredients and continue to a nearby kitchen for a hands-on cooking class and lunch of bibimbap (a traditional Korean rice dish).

Visit Changdeokgung Palace, one of the best-preserved palaces from the Joseon Dynasty. This UNESCO site is known for its Secret Garden, where man-made structures were built in harmony with the natural surroundings. Return to the hotel and dinner under own arrangements.

15 October Seoul / Andong

Depart (with luggage) and transfer to the train station to take a high speed KTX train to Andong (journey time approx. 2 hrs 22 mins). On arrival visit Bongjeongs Temple, an architectural gem, one of the oldest wooden buildings in South Korea and the country's largest Buddhist temple, surrounded by peaceful grounds.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Visit the Dosan Seowon Confucian Academy. Established in 1574, this UNESCO-heritage academy has played a pivotal role in education and Confucian scholarship for more than four centuries. Continue to the iconic Woryeonggyo Bridge, the longest wooden bridge in Korea. Cross the bridge on foot, enjoying the views of Nakdonggang River and the surrounding hills. Transfer to the Stanford Hotel Andong, located outside the city with views of the surrounding mountains and lakes, where one night is spent. Dinner under own arrangements.



Bibimbap



Woryeonggyo Bridge

16 October Andong / Gyeongju

Depart (with luggage) and visit Hahoe Village to discover its impeccably preserved architecture from the Joseon Dynasty. Take a 30-minute walk to the spectacular Buyongdae Cliff for breathtaking views of Hahoe Village, the Nakdonggang River and the surrounding mountain landscapes. Drive to Gyeongju (journey time approx. 1½ hrs).

Lunch at a local restaurant and transfer to the Hilton Gyeongju where two nights are spent. The hotel is located 9km from the centre of Gyeongju surrounded by scenic countryside next to Lake Bomun. Facilities include an outdoor and indoor pool and several eating venues. After a rest at the hotel, conclude the day with a walk around the Wolji Pond, an artificial pond that was part of the palace complex of the ancient Silla. End the walk at the Woljeong Bridge, an historical gateway connecting the royal palaces of Silla to the south. Return to the hotel and dinner under own arrangements.

17 October Gyeongju

Drive along the Hyeongsan River to visit Yangdong Folk Village, a traditional yangban (Korean aristocracy) village from the Joseon Dynasty set in beautiful natural scenery. Yangdong is home to more than 160 traditional style houses (called 'hanok'), with either tile or thatched roofs, as well as other buildings from the Joseon era. Visit the village shrine, Confucius school, the noble house of the village head and stroll along the village trail to admire the well-preserved traditional hanok.

Return to Gyeongju for lunch

at a local restaurant. Visit the Daereungwon tomb complex (Tumul Park) to take a stroll and pay respects to the Silla rulers. Take a closer look at the Cheonmachong Tomb which consists of a wooden coffin placed inside an underground chamber. Continue to the Gyeongju National Museum. With its collections of artefacts, relics and royal treasures, the museum provides a comprehensive insight into the art, culture, and history of the Silla Dynasty. Return to the hotel and dinner under own arrangements.

18 October Gyeongju / Busan

Depart (with luggage) for the religious architectural complex of Seokguram Grotto and Bulguksa Temple. Built during the time of the Silla Kingdom, the site highlights the mastery of the architects and artists of that era. Admire the Buddhist carvings and statues of Seokguram and Bulguksa's wooden buildings and stone terraces. Drive to Busan (journey time approx. 1½ hrs).

Late lunch at a local restaurant in Busan. Transfer to the Park Hyatt Busan where three nights are spent. The hotel is located in Haeundae, the city's premier beach and shopping area, with views of the ocean and the Gwangan Bridge and facilities include an indoor pool and spa. Leisurely evening walk along Haeundae Beach and up Dalmaji Hill, passing cafés and art galleries, for views of the city. Return to the Haeundae area and sample local Korean delicacies with a street food dinner.

19 October Busan

Visit the Daritgol Skywalk, a thrilling glass-bottomed bridge offering breathtaking views of the coastline

below. Stroll along this unique structure, which combines natural beauty and modern architecture, walking on air above the sparkling sea. Continue to X the Sky, an observation deck located in Haeundae's tallest skyscraper, for panoramic views of the city and coastline.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Visit Busan Makgeolli, a traditional alcohol brewery which specialises in making its own makgeolli and takju. Following an introduction to Korea's various craft alcohols, enjoy a makegolli tasting experience. Continue to Beomeosa Temple, a serene and historic Buddhist temple located on the slopes of Geumjeongsan Mountain and one of Busan's most revered spiritual sites. Return to the hotel and dinner under own arrangements.



Gamcheon Culture Village



Gwangjang Market



Busan Skyline

20 October Gyeongju / Busan

Visit the United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Busan, a significant and poignant site commemorating the Korean War. Continue to Gukje Market, initially established by refugees and traders who settled in Busan after the war, making it one of the oldest markets in the city. The market played a crucial role in helping the local economy recover during difficult times. Make a short stop at BIFF Busan International Film Festival Street, a famous Busan landmark, en route to Jagalchi Fish Market, South Korea's largest seafood market.

Lunch at a local restaurant. Visit colourful Gamcheon Cultural Village, known for its tightly knit houses on the hillside. Originally, the area was known for having substandard living conditions, being settled by refugees fleeing from the Korean War. Take a scenic cable car ride (15-20 mins) across the ocean at a height of 86 metres, enjoying panoramic views of Songdo Beach, Yeongdodaegyo Bridge, Namhang Daegyo Bridge, Songdo Coastal Dulle-gil Road and rock cliffs. Drive on to Songdo Yonggung Suspension Bridge, a bridge that connects Annam Park to the small uninhabited island of Dongseom Island. Enjoy 360-degree views of the ocean, cliffs and surrounding islands. Return to the hotel and dinner under own arrangements.

21 October Busan / Seoul

Time at leisure in Busan. Late morning, depart (with luggage) and transfer to the train station to take a high speed KTX train to Seoul (journey time approx. 2½ hrs).

Lunch under own arrangements. Transfer to the Andaz Seoul Gangnam, by Hyatt where a further night is spent. Evening visit to Gwangjang traditional market, one of the oldest and largest traditional markets in Korea. Previously known as Dongdaemun Market, it is famous for selling beautiful fabrics, especially those used for making traditional Korean dress, called hanbok. Continue to Myeongdong, a bustling area known as a shopping mecca and a must-visit place lined with shops, restaurants, and street vendors, making it a great place to experience Korean culture and pick up some souvenirs. Farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

22 October Busan / Seoul

Group transfer to Seoul Airport. Suggested flight (not included) Korean Air KE 907 departing Seoul Incheon International at 10.55 hrs arriving London Heathrow at 17.20 hrs.



Changing of Guards

TOUR PRICES PER PERSON

Tour Price	£6,980
Single Supplement	£2,225

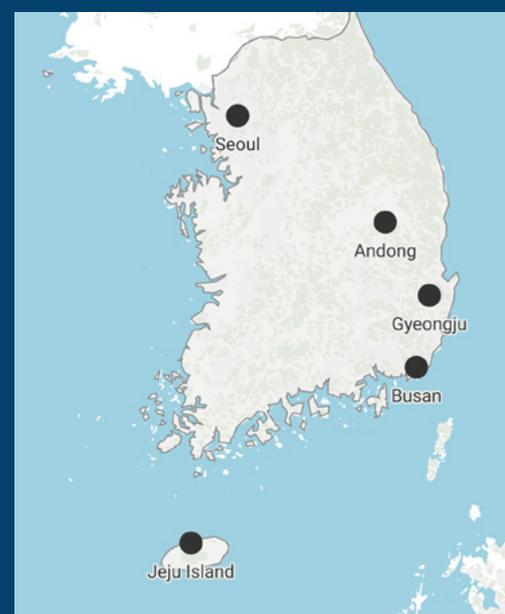
Please note we have not included the cost of the flights in the tour price. Please contact us for prices should you wish to book them through us.

PRICE INCLUDES

- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily; 9 lunches; 3 dinners
- All entrance fees, visits and excursions as per the itinerary
- All transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- Gratuities in restaurants for included meals
- Gratuities to driver/s and guides
- Porterage
- Local English-speaking guide/s
- The services of your tour leader throughout

PRICE EXCLUDES

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Visa
- Meals 'under own arrangements'
- Items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 02/09/25



OPTIONAL JEJU EXTENSION

22 October Seoul / Jeju

Depart (with luggage) and transfer to Gimpo Airport for a flight to Jeju.

Transfer to a local restaurant for lunch under own arrangements (payable locally). Continue to The Shilla Jeju where three nights are spent. The resort hotel is situated on the southwest coast of the island with views of the sea and facilities include indoor and outdoor swimming pools, sauna and two restaurants. Dinner under own arrangements.

23 October Jeju

Morning excursion to visit Hallim Park to explore Ssangyonggul Cave, also known as the Twin Dragon Cave, known for its unique geological formations, including lava tubes, stalactites and stalagmites. Continue to Jusangjeollidae Cliff where stone pillars can be viewed piled up along the coast, formed when the lava from Hallasan Mountain erupted into the sea of Jungmun. Return to the hotel.

Lunch under own arrangements. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner under own arrangements.

24 October Jeju

Morning excursion to Geomun Oreum for a scenic hike through one of Jeju's most striking volcanic landscapes. Start with a brief visit to the Jeju World Natural Heritage Centre to learn about the island's

volcanic origins and the unique features of the area. The trails wind through dense forests, along crater rims, and up to panoramic viewpoints, with the opportunity to see Jeju's oreums, the small volcanic cones that dot the island. Three trail options are available for different fitness levels and interests (duration approx. 1 hr).

Lunch under own arrangements. This afternoon, visit Jeju Haenyeo Museum. Haenyeo are local women divers who use traditional methods and equipment to collect seafood from the waters surrounding the island. After exploring the museum, see a Haenyeo demonstration to witness these legendary divers in action. Return to the hotel and dinner under own arrangements.

25 October Jeju / Seoul

Depart (with luggage) and transfer to Jeju airport for a return flight to Seoul. Transfer to the Andaz Seoul Gangnam, by Hyatt where a further night is spent.

Lunch under own arrangements. Afternoon at leisure. Dinner under own arrangements.

26 October Jeju / London

Group transfer to Seoul Airport. Suggested flight (not included) Korean Air KE 907 departing Seoul Incheon International at 10.55 hrs arriving London Heathrow at 17.20 hrs.

OPTIONAL EXTENSION PRICE

Extension Price	£2,190*
Single Supplement	£870

**Based on a minimum of 4 people*

PRICE INCLUDES

- Economy class return flight Seoul / Jeju / Seoul
- Accommodation throughout as shown in the itinerary
- Breakfast daily
- All visits and excursions as per the itinerary
- All transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- All entrance fees
- Local English-speaking guide/s

PRICE EXCLUDES

- The services of your tour leader
- All lunches and dinners
- Gratuities in restaurants
- Gratuities to driver/s and guides
- Porterage
- Travel insurance
- Items of personal expenditure (e.g. telephone calls / laundry etc.)
- Government levies or taxes introduced after costing and publication of this programme on 02/09/25



Haenyeo (women divers)



Your Tour Leader Hamish Van Gruisen

Originally from Gloucestershire, Hamish trained as an accountant before joining The Ultimate Travel Company in 2019. Childhood safaris in East Africa and treks in the Nepal Himalaya ignited a lifelong passion for travel that still guides his adventures.

Since joining Ultimate, he has explored Indonesia, Oman, Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia and Namibia, and has led company trips to Antarctica, Japan, Southern India, Nepal and Namibia. In 2023 he completed Ultra X Jordan, a five-day ultramarathon across Wadi Rum, an experience that left a lasting impression, especially the extraordinary landscapes around Petra.

A few moments stand out: spotting his first iceberg while crossing the Drake Passage en route to the Antarctic Circle; tracking desert-adapted lions along Namibia's Hoanib River; and discovering the cultural elegance of Japan, from the speed of the bullet train to the quiet intimacy of a private geisha tea ceremony.

Travel has been a constant thread in his life, from seeing his first giraffe in Kenya at nine to recent family time in Cape Town and the Winelands, which he recommends as an excellent destination for those travelling with young children.