



KOREA -- COUNTRY QUICKFACTS

Location: Eastern Asia, southern half of the Korean Peninsula bordering the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea.

Area: 98,480 sq km

Population: 48,598,175 (July 2004 est.)

Capital: Seoul (10,276,968) by the end of 2003.

Time: 14 hours ahead of Toronto and New York, and 17 hours ahead of Vancouver and Los Angeles

Language: Korean, English widely taught in junior high and high school

Ethnic Groups: Homogeneous (except for about 20,000 Chinese)

Religion: No affiliation 46%, Christian 26%, Buddhist 26%, Confucianist 1%, other 1%

Currency: Won (KRW)

Weather: **Seoul/July** High 29 Low 21

Electricity: 110/220V AC 60 Hz. Government policy is to phase out the 110 volt supply and many hotels now have a 220 volt supply.

Business Hours: 0900 - 1800 Mon-Fri, 0900-1300 Sat.

Banks: 0930-1600 Mon-Fri, 0930-1330 Sat.

Shops: 1030-1930 Mon-Fri.

Tipping: Not customary. Most hotels and other tourist facilities add a 10% service charge to bills. Taxi drivers are not tipped unless they help with the luggage.

Driving: International driving licence is required.

Passport/Visa: Passport valid for a minimum of 6 months is required. Visa not required for a stay of maximum of 1 month.

Airport: Seoul Incheon International/ICN 52 km W of Seoul. Three terminals, Airport tax international KRW 15000.

Credit Cards: All major credit cards are accepted.

KOREA – THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

PASSPORTS: All visitors must have a valid passport. Visas are not required for Canadian or US passport holders on holidays up to 1 month. Business travelling, signing contracts or any monetary exchange require a visa.

VACCINATIONS: No vaccinations are required to enter Korea, however, vaccinations against cholera and yellow fever are recommended for travellers arriving from infected areas.

CUSTOMS: An oral or written declaration must be made to a customs officer at the port of entry. Incheon International Airport is making use of the dual channel system for passenger baggage inspection, where passengers may choose either the green or red channel for customs clearance. Passengers satisfying both of the following conditions may use the green channel: * Carrying less than 20kg (44 pounds) of articles. * Not carrying restricted or prohibited articles. Passengers not satisfying both of these conditions must go through the red channel.

CURRENCY: Won

DEPARTURE TAX: KRW 15,000 for adults. (Approx. CAD\$18 / US\$12)

POPULATION & LANGUAGE: The population of Korea is approximately 46.1 million people. Korean is the official language, though English is widely used in hotels, restaurants etc.

TAXIS: Taxis are plentiful and relatively cheap in Korea. There are taxi stands in busy city areas, and can also be hailed on most streets. Certain taxis can be requested by phone, though the fare is somewhat higher than taxis (Tel: (02) 417-0084). An increasing number of taxi drivers speak some English. It is not advisable to take taxis during the morning and evening rush hours, as the roads are very congested. It is better to take the subway, which, although crowded at this time, runs on schedule.

TELEPHONES: There are three types of public telephones in Korea: blue telephones, grey telephones, and card telephones. All telephones can be used for both local and long distance calls (I.D.D.). A local call costs 50 Won for three minutes. Long distance calls cost more. Time can be extended by depositing more money. These telephones take 10, 50 Won and 100 Won coins.

ELECTRICITY: Outlets for both 110/220 volts are available.

TRAVELLER'S CHEQUES: Foreign money and traveller's cheques can be changed into Korean Won at foreign exchange banks and authorized money changers.

CLIMATE:

Temperate climate: Transitional zone between continental climate and subtropical maritime climate.

Four distinct seasons: Spring (Late March through May); Summer (June to early September); Autumn (September through November); Winter (December to mid March).

MEDICAL FACILITIES: There are many hospitals and some English is spoken. However, it is best to use the international clinics at large general hospitals like Severance and Asan Medical Centres.

EMERGENCIES: Dial 112 for police and 119 for the fire department. The hotel front desk or manager can arrange for a doctor or ambulance. If you need a doctor on the street, ask a policeman or someone for assistance. A police box can be found on every major street.

TIPPING: If service charge is not included, 10% is normal, though not necessary.

KOREAN TABLE MANNERS: Traditionally, Korean food is not served in courses, but instead it is all placed on the table at the same time. There is no set order in which to eat the food, just according to personal preference. The main dish is almost always accompanied by bap(rice), guk(soup), kimchi, and several side dishes, which are all included in the price. Koreans eat their rice and soup with a spoon, and side dishes with chopsticks. Do not leave chopsticks inserted directly into the rice, as this is a ceremonial act that symbolically designates the chopsticks for use by the dead. Koreans always wait for the oldest person present to begin eating before they begin and do not leave the table until the oldest person has finished.

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South Korea

Hepatitis A	Recommended
Hepatitis B	Sometimes recommended
Polio	Recommended
Tetanus	Recommended
Typhoid	Sometimes recommended
Yellow Fever	None
Diphtheria	Recommended
Measles	Recommended
Other	Rabies vaccine sometimes recommended Japanese encephalitis vaccine sometimes recommended
Malaria	Recommended in certain areas

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