CineAsia

Seoul After Hours

Sights, coffee, food and experiences to add around the convention

7–10 December 2026 · Seoul Dragon City

FilmExpoGroup



Seoul by the numbers

9.5M
people in the city; half of Korea lives in the capital region

18,000+
cafes, one of the highest densities in the world

555 m
Lotte World Tower: 123 floors, Korea's tallest building

42
Michelin-starred restaurants in the 2026 guide



Gyeongbokgung Palace was built in 1395, when Seoul became the Joseon capital



The number 4 sounds like “death”, so many lifts label the fourth floor “F”



Cheonggyecheon stream ran under a motorway until it was restored in 2005

The headline sights

Attraction	Why go	Time	Nearest station
Gyeongbokgung Palace	Grandest royal palace; free entry in hanbok. Closed Tue	2 hrs	Gyeongbokgung (L3)
Bukchon Hanok Village	Lanes of traditional houses. Visit 10:00–17:00, keep quiet	1 hr	Anguk (L3)
Changdeokgung & Secret Garden	UNESCO palace; garden by guided tour. Closed Mon	2 hrs	Anguk (L3)
N Seoul Tower	City views; go at sunset (about 17:15)	2 hrs	Myeongdong (L4) + cable car
Lotte World Tower – Seoul Sky	Views from floors 117–123, glass floor	1.5 hrs	Jamsil (L2/L8)
Dongdaemun Design Plaza	Zaha Hadid landmark, lit up at night	45 min	DDP (L2/L4/L5)
National Museum of Korea	World-class collection, free, warm	2–3 hrs	Ichon (L4)
Seongsu-dong	Warehouse cafes and pop-up stores	2 hrs	Seongsu (L2)
Insadong & Myeongdong	Tea houses and crafts; skincare and street food	1–2 hrs	Anguk (L3) / Myeongdong (L4)

December specials

During CineAsia · 7–10 Dec

Shinsegae Christmas light show
Myeongdong main store; showing since 6 Nov, best after dark

Lotte Department Store lights
Myeongdong main store; 20,000 bulbs, lit since 30 Oct

Shinsegae Holiday Market
Myeongdong main store, from 24 Nov; gifts and treats

Lotte Jamsil Christmas market
Outdoor market by Lotte World Tower, from mid-Nov

Discover Seoul Pass discoverseoulpass.com

72 hrs ₩90,000 · 120 hrs ₩130,000. Free entry to 70+ sights and 100+ coupons, plus new night packs for shopping, spas and Han River cruises

From Fri 11 Dec · stay the weekend

Seoul Light Gwanghwamun
Free light show, 11 Dec – 3 Jan, 17:30–22:00

Seoul Lantern Festival
Cheonggyecheon; expected 11 Dec – 31 Jan, 18:00–23:00

Gwanghwamun Market
Christmas stalls; dates TBC

Seoul Plaza ice rink
City Hall; dates TBC

WOWPASS wowpass.io

Prepaid card with T-money built in; load 16 currencies. Buy and use the Discover Seoul Pass inside the WOWPASS app

Final dates: festival.seoul.go.kr · stolantern.com · english.visitseoul.net · Seoul helpline 120

Seoul's best coffee

Fritz Coffee Company
Mapo & branches
Great roasts and pastries

Cafe Onion Anguk
Bukchon
Coffee in a hanok house

Anthracite
Hapjeong, Hannam, Seongsu
Pioneer in industrial spaces

Namusairo
Near Gyeongbokgung
Specialty pioneer since 2002

Mesh Coffee
Seoul Forest
Founding name of the scene

Center Coffee
Seoul Forest
Bright, award-winning roasts



Order like a local
Try an Einspänner: espresso under thick sweet cream, a Korean cafe favourite.

Cafe crawl: Seongsu-dong or Yeonnam-dong. Specialty filter ₩6,000–8,000; most cafes open 10:00–11:00.

Six dishes to try

Korean BBQ

Pork belly or hanwoo beef grilled at your table, wrapped in lettuce

Bibimbap

Rice, vegetables, egg and chilli paste; hot-stone version in winter

Samgyetang

Whole young chicken in ginseng broth

Chimaek

Korean fried chicken and beer, the after-work ritual

Bindaetteok

Crispy mung-bean pancake, best at Gwangjang Market

Winter street food

Hotteok, fish-shaped bungeoppang and fishcake skewers

Places worth a detour

Place	Type	Why go
Gwangjang Market	Historic food market, from ₩5,000	Mung-bean pancakes, gimbap, beef tartare. Go hungry
Mingles	Michelin 3 stars	Seoul's only three-star; modern Korean. Book weeks ahead
Gosari Express	Bib Gourmand + Green Star	Creative vegetable-led cooking in Jungang Market
3rd Samgyetang	Bib Gourmand, Seocho	Ginseng chicken soup, family-run since 1973
Euljiro alleys	Bars and BBQ	Hidden bars in old print-shop lanes; fun for groups
Myeongdong stalls	Street food, evenings	Dozens of stalls from late afternoon

51 Seoul Bib Gourmand spots serve a full meal for under ₩45,000. Many book via the CatchTable app; vegetarians should show a Papago-translated note.

Experiences to add to your trip

Experience	What to expect	Time	Book?
Hanbok and a palace	Rent traditional dress; free palace entry. Thermals underneath	2–3 hrs	Walk-in
Jjimjilbang (spa)	Hot pools, saunas, heated floors; bathing areas single-sex and nude	2+ hrs	No
Korean cooking class	Make kimchi, bulgogi or japchae, then eat it	2–3 hrs	Yes
Noraebang (karaoke)	Private rooms by the hour; the classic night out	1–2 hrs	No
K-Beauty	Skincare shopping: see the K-Beauty slide	1–3 hrs	No
Temple visit	Jogyesa (central) or Bongeunsa (by COEX)	1 hr+	Templestay
DMZ day tour	Border observatories and a tunnel. Passport needed	½–1 day	Yes
Nami Island	Tree-lined island ~1.5 hrs away, pretty in snow	Full day	Optional

Good group options for delegates: a cooking class, a noraebang night or a Gwangjang Market food tour.

Easy wins near Dragon City

On foot

Spot	Walk
I'Park Mall: food court, CGV cinema	3–5 min
Yongridan-gil food street	10–15 min
Amorepacific Museum of Art (closed Mon)	10 min
Yongsan History Museum	5–10 min
Yongsan Electronics Market	8 min

One short ride

Spot	How
National Museum of Korea	1 stop to Ichon
War Memorial of Korea	Line 4 / 5 min taxi
Noryangjin Fish Market	Line 1, 1 stop
Itaewon & Gyeongnidan-gil	10 min taxi
Hannam-dong & Leeum Museum	10–15 min taxi
N Seoul Tower	15 min taxi

K-Beauty: research first, then shop

Research before you go

Hwahae · hwahae.com

Korea's top beauty review platform, now in English: category rankings, ingredient checks, 10M+ translated reviews and picks by skin type. Build your list here

Olive Young Global · global.oliveyoung.com

Browse bestsellers in English before you go. Screenshot product names in Korean to show staff in store

Where to shop from Dragon City

Amore Yongsan, Amorepacific tower
2F · ~10 min walk · custom HERA shades, skin analysis

Olive Young, Yongsan I'Park Mall
4F, inside Yongsan Station · 3–5 min walk · 10:30–22:00

Olive Young Myeongdong Global Flagship
English staff, instant tax refund · ~15 min (Line 4) · go before 11:00

Olive Young N Seongsu + Amore Seongsu
Korea's largest Olive Young: skin diagnosis, make-up bar · ~30 min

Olive Young Gwangjang Market
Retro 1960s-style store; pair with the food market · ~30 min

Tax-free: bring your physical passport for an instant refund at the till. **Sale:** Olive Young's year-end sale usually ends in early December; check the app.

Only got a few hours?

Free morning
Palaces and hanok

1. Coffee at Cafe Onion Anguk
2. Gyeongbokgung (closed Tue)
3. Bukchon, then lunch in Insadong

Free afternoon
Modern Seoul

1. Seongsu-dong cafes and stores
2. Sunset at Seoul Sky
3. Lotte World Mall lights

Evening out
Food and lights

1. Gwangjang Market pancakes
2. Cheonggyecheon lanterns
3. Euljiro bars or noraebang

Staying safe after hours

Watch your drink
Drink spiking happens in nightlife areas such as Itaewon, Gangnam and Hongdae

Get home safely
Official taxis or Kakao T only. Last trains run around midnight

Mind the crowds
Itaewon and Hongdae get extremely busy; leave if it feels packed

Keep it legal
Strict drug laws; stay away from protests and political posts

Save these numbers

112
Police, with interpreters

119
Fire and ambulance

1330
Tourist helpline, English, 24/7

Travel hands-free: luggage delivery

Arriving: airport to hotel

1 Land and drop your bags
At a delivery counter in Incheon arrivals; book ahead on Klook

2 Head straight out
Go to sessions or sightsee with no suitcase in tow

3 Bags at your hotel
Delivered the same evening; collect at reception

Leaving: hotel to airport

1 Leave bags at the hotel
Hand them to reception in the morning (usually by 10:00–11:00)

2 Enjoy your last day
Check out and explore, free of luggage

3 Collect at the airport
From mid-afternoon at the Incheon counter; ideal for evening flights

Good to know

- About ₩20,000–45,000 per bag, by size; weekends cost more
- Book at least 24 hours ahead; walk-up rates are higher
- Hotels must be on the provider's registered list: check in advance
- Cut-off times vary by provider and terminal, so compare before you book

Book on Klook: Seoul Luggage Delivery · T-PASS delivery and storage · Safex