



Best of South Korea with G Adventures

Day 3: Gyeongju-si

Today's journey took us south aboard South Korea's impressive KTX bullet train for a quick and comfortable 2.5-hour ride to Gyeongju, often referred to as "the museum without walls" for its rich cultural history and ancient heritage sites.

Our destination was an unforgettable overnight stay at Golgusa Temple, a unique temple stay experience that offered a deeper connection to Korean Buddhist traditions and culture. During our visit, we enjoyed a fascinating martial arts demonstration, participated in Seonmudo training — a traditional Korean Buddhist martial art combining meditation and movement — experienced the symbolic practice of 108 prostrations, and shared a traditional vegan temple meal.

With Buddha's Birthday approaching on May 24, the temple grounds were especially beautiful, illuminated by hundreds of colourful lanterns guiding the path toward the stunning stone Buddha carved into a shallow cave overlooking the valley below. The peaceful atmosphere, combined with the mountain surroundings and glowing lanterns, created a truly memorable experience.

Tomorrow begins with an early morning meditation session led by one of the temple monks before breakfast and our onward journey to our next destination in South Korea.

Day 4: Gyeongju

Even with a rainy forecast, today proved that a little weather never gets in the way of an unforgettable travel experience in South Korea. The mist and light rain only added to the atmosphere as we spent the day exploring the historic city of Gyeongju, home to some of the country's most fascinating cultural and historical treasures.

Our day included visits to Yangdong Folk Village, Cheomseongdae, and the ancient royal tombs located throughout the city.

The Yangdong Folk Village is a beautifully preserved UNESCO World Heritage Site dating back to the Joseon Dynasty in the 1400s. The village is known for its traditional thatched-roof and tiled-roof homes, thoughtfully designed according to pungsu-jiri — a Korean concept similar to feng shui — with mountains behind the village and a river flowing in front. Despite the rain, the setting felt incredibly peaceful and picturesque, offering a glimpse into Korea's traditional way of life centuries ago.

Lunch was enjoyed at a local village restaurant where we experienced another authentic Korean dining tradition — a set meal featuring your choice of main dish accompanied by a variety of side dishes, known as banchan. The abundance of flavours and shared plates is one of the things that makes Korean cuisine such a memorable part of the travel experience.

In the afternoon, we visited Cheomseongdae, the oldest surviving astronomical observatory in East Asia. Built in the 7th century during the Silla Dynasty, the observatory was used to study the stars and forecast weather patterns, highlighting the advanced scientific knowledge of ancient Korea.

Gyeongju is also famous for its royal burial mounds, many of which date back more than 1,500 years to the Silla Dynasty. These grassy hills were long believed to be natural landscapes until the first tomb excavation in 1921 revealed hidden chambers filled with ancient treasures and royal artifacts. Seeing these historic sites in person truly brings Korea’s ancient history to life.

Our evening concluded with a visit to the breathtaking Donggung Palace and Wolji Pond, formerly known as Anapji Pond. Illuminated at night, the reflections of the pagodas and palace structures shimmering across the water created one of the most beautiful scenes of the trip so far. This optional evening excursion offered through G Adventures is absolutely worth experiencing and one I would highly recommend to future travellers visiting Gyeongju.

Stay tuned for more updates from South Korea including Busan and back to Seoul, plus a tour of the DMZ .













