

Our trip in Korea – (by Jared Van Vianen)

Our trip to Korea was amazing. Everyone was excited on the plane. We arrived at Songpa-Gu in the evening and met our homestays. The people of Korea were friendly, had an amazing smile and were pleased to meet us and practice their English. They would do anything to make our stay hospitable.

We found that everything was built up, instead of out and this was interesting to us. Tall buildings everywhere, no single story homes. More high tech. Their shopping malls were massive with hundreds of stores unlike New Zealand. All the neon lights were different as well. Different colours standing out more clearly and everywhere. The city looked like one lit up light bulb. The markets were amazing - cheaper than in New Zealand. There were so many stalls with millions of cheap items to buy.

Our host families welcomed us with kindness and care. We would never be able to thank them enough. They treated us like their own children and that's what really made our trip special. Their cooking was wonderful and was very delicious. We really liked the Korean pork and the kim chi but it was very spicy and made our noses run. We were also interested in when you buy a hot chocolate from a vending machine it was in a can and it was hot so it was literally hot chocolate. Overall the food was fantastic.

We enjoyed all of the activities but our favourites were the Korean folk village, the war museum, Lotte World, the weekends, Everland and the markets.

The folk village was very interesting and we really liked learning about the Korean history and culture. We watched a few performances and they were amazing and took a lot of skill. One of them was a traditional dance which was outstanding. Another performance was two women jumping on a see saw and making each other bounce into the air.

Lotte World was incredible - it had so many rides and all of them were open unlike Everland which only had one main roller coaster open (the T Express) which most of us went on.

The Samsung electronics along with the LG tour was amazing and all the simulators/3D movies just show us how advanced Korea really is. We also still could not believe that the Peace torch is still burning after 21 years.

The things we found challenging were, some of our bags arriving three days late and some people had a dislike for sea food. But we tried things anyway because we were always being guided by our hosts. We cannot thank them enough for doing that.

Korea is amazing and there is so much to do and we know we will remember it for the rest of our lives. We are over whelmed by Korea and how spectacular it truly is. We are so lucky that we were given the opportunity to experience such a wonderful journey. We really enjoyed every last bit of it.

We found the plane ride a little boring but it was because we were excited but anxious to get to Korea. Going back to New Zealand we just slept. We loved the air plane food - it is so yummy especially the desserts.

It is quite nice to be home but we would love to go back to Korea and show our families around Seoul. We loved this trip and would highly recommend this experience to anybody with our rate of 10/10.

For two cities in two different hemispheres, with very different living and population, the people have similarities and were not worlds apart.

