

meetme

Jan/Feb 2010

Seoul Report



The leading publication for Middle East meeting, incentive & event planners



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Thanks also to the Seoul Tourism Organisation, Coex and Seoul's five-star hotels for pictorial support

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Dear industry partner,

As we enter a new decade, the city of Seoul is thrust under the spotlight as World Design Capital for 2010, and the Seoul Convention Bureau (SCB), operating under the Seoul Tourism Organisation (STO), is gearing up for an exciting year of events and activities that will showcase the country's capital to a global audience.

While we are already a recognised player on the regional business stage, there is added impetus for Seoul to continue on its mission to develop international awareness of the city and its multi-faceted offering as part of the 2010-2012 Visit Korea programme.

Add to that ongoing implementation of the government's ambitious long-term urban regeneration master plan for the city, and you can see why Seoul's 'renaissance city' appellation still rings true. The combination of a dynamic go-getting spirit, technologically advanced infrastructure and national cultural pride are strong foundations on which to develop business for the next 10 years and beyond.

Seoul's international top 10 ranking as a preferred meeting and incentive destination makes us a strong contender for the regional crown, but we are not complacent and remain committed to ensuring that the city provides the best all-round environment for business and leisure.

What sets us apart is the simple fact that we are a complete destination, with an A-Z of world-class convention facilities, international accommodation options, excellent transportation infrastructure and a diverse portfolio of complementary activities and services all located within the city itself.

Seoul is home to two dedicated large-scale convention centres, 29 unique meeting venues from floating riverfront spaces to some of the city's landmark business towers, and 35 five-star avant garde luxury hotels and stylish mid-level alternatives.

Although SCB is just two years old, we are working ceaselessly to raise Seoul's profile to our meeting industry partners around the world and this year we plan to once again double our resources to reach established as well as new growth markets such as the Middle East, to highlight the capital's multi-layered appeal and attract new business into the city.

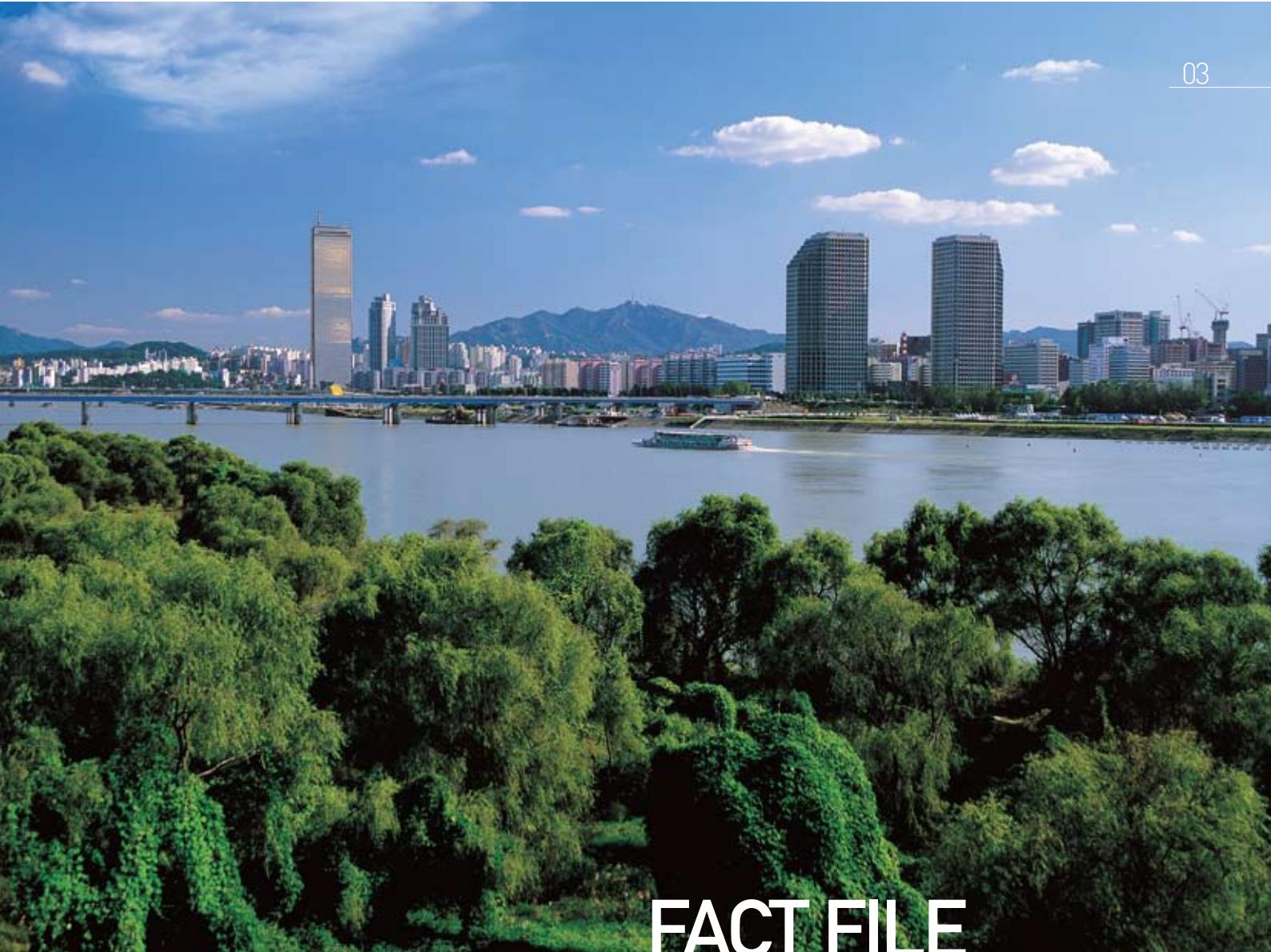
As a public-private partnership we understand the needs of the market and are on the same commercial wavelength as our industry partners. Our keenly competitive pricing strategy and ability to offer financial support to meetings and incentive organisers is not just a result of the global economic downturn, but a key driver for our success as a destination in the long term.

This support extends to structured venue rates, organisation of off-site events, site inspections and administrative support for inbound groups.

Traditional and modern at the same time; Seoul delivers a wealth of unique experiences from a stroll through its royal palaces and classic Korean cuisine to lively street markets and contemporary theatre performances.

With an action-packed 12 months ahead, now really is the right time to experience Seoul, and we look forward to welcoming you to our city.

Samuel Koo | President and CEO | Seoul Tourism Organisation



FACT FILE

LOCATION: Located in the northwest of the country, Seoul is the capital and largest city in South Korea. With a population of over 10 million, Seoul is one of the largest cities in the world. The Seoul National Capital Area, which includes the Incheon metropolis and most of the Gyeonggi province, has 24.5 million inhabitants.

LOCAL TIME: GMT +9 hours

VISAS: British, Australian, Canadian, USA and EU passport holders do not require a travel visa to enter South Korea, providing they possess a passport valid for a minimum of three months.

LANGUAGE: The official language is Korean, but English is also widely spoken and understood in the hospitality industry. Guides and facilitators who speak other languages are also available.

CURRENCY: The unit of Korean currency is the won (KRW). Coin denominations are KRW 1, 5, 10, 50, 100 and 500. Bank notes are KRW 1,000, KRW 5,000, KRW 10,000 and KRW 50,000. The exchange rate is approximately US\$ 1 = KRW 1,185 (correct at time of press).

CLOTHING: Dress according to the season. Summers are hot and humid so lightweight cottons or blends are recommended, while winters are cold, wet and can see a lot of snow, so sweaters and waterproof jackets are a must.

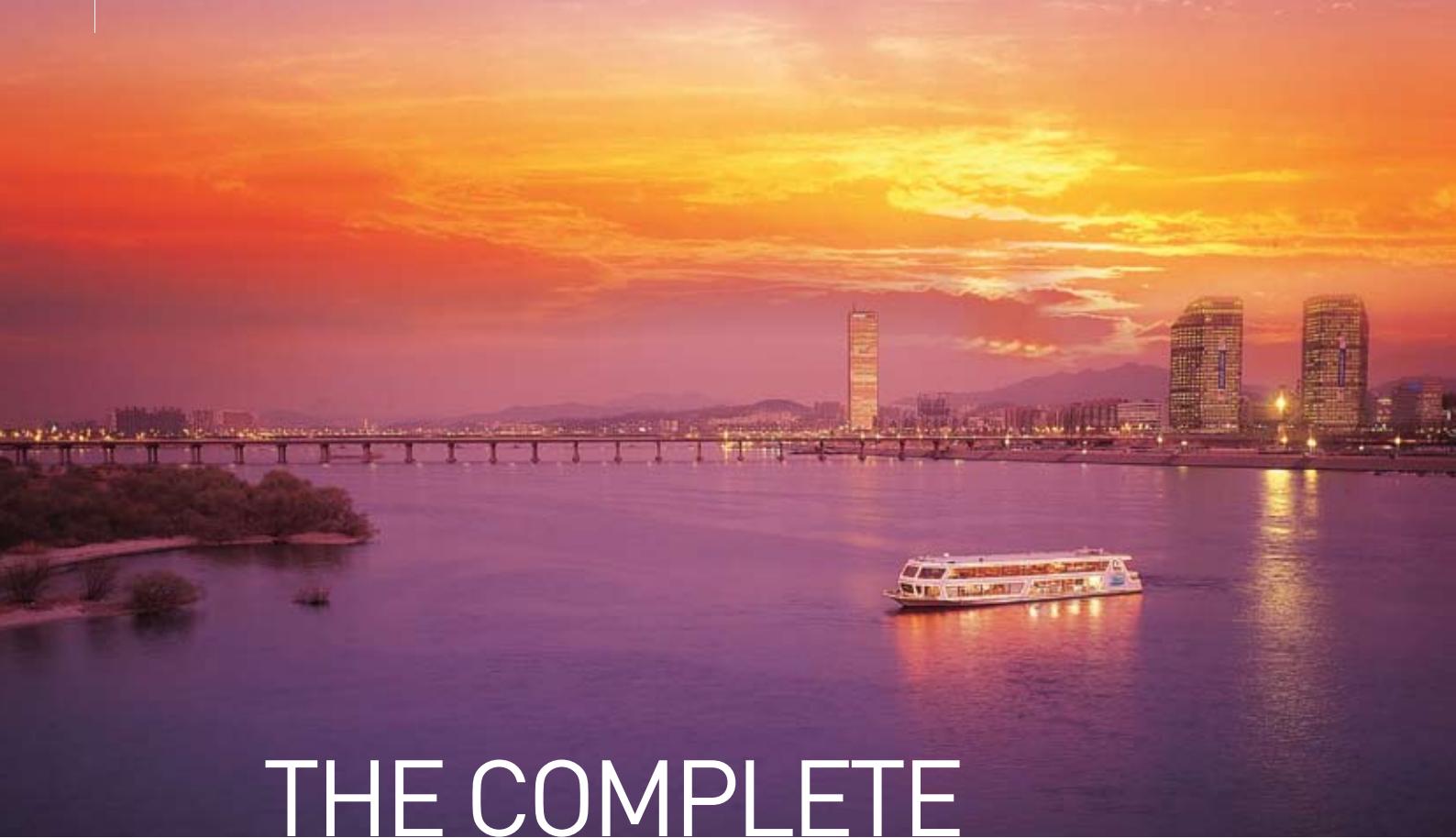
CLIMATE: Summers are generally hot and humid with the east Asian monsoon taking place in June and July. August is the hottest month with temperatures exceeding 30°C. Winters can get very cold, with temperatures in January dipping as low as -7°C, and are generally much drier than summer.

BUSINESS HOURS: The working week runs from Monday to Friday. Office hours are 9am to 6pm; banks open 9.30am to 4.30pm; shops are open 10.30am to 8pm weekdays, until 8.30pm on Saturdays and open 10.30am to 8.30pm once a month on Sunday.

ELECTRICITY: The electricity system is based on 220 volts, 60 Hz. Some appliances may require an adaptor.

ECONOMY: Seoul is home to the headquarters of Samsung, LG, Hyundai and Kia. The city generates 21 percent of the whole country's GDP. As a business and financial centre, it ranks sixth in the world in terms of the number of transnational companies headquartered there.

RELIGION: Buddhism and Christianity are the two major religions practised in Seoul. Other religions include Shamanism and Confucianism, the latter seen more as a social philosophy than a religion. Other faiths are also respected.



THE COMPLETE CONVENTION CITY

SAMUEL KOO, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF SEOUL TOURISM ORGANISATION, TALKS TO **meetme** ABOUT HOW SEOUL OFFERS IT ALL WHEN IT COMES TO CATERING TO MEETINGS AND INCENTIVES

Seoul is a city that offers a complete convention experience. From world-class meeting facilities to enchanting attractions and cultural exchanges, South Korea's capital is a one-stop shop when it comes to corporate or association gatherings.

Ranked as the second most popular convention destination in Asia and the ninth worldwide by the Union of International Associations (UIA), and the third most popular convention destination in Asia and seventh worldwide by ICCA, Seoul is already going head-to-head with some of the world's most prestigious meeting destinations.

"Seoul has become a convenient stop. It is a regional hub in Asia known for its great accessibility and is up there with other international cities in terms of meeting facilities. I believe that what we offer is surely at an international level," maintains Samuel Koo, President and CEO of Seoul Tourism Organisation (STO).

Determined to do better, Koo's aim is for Seoul to be number five globally in terms of conventions by 2015. As part of this push, the Seoul Convention Bureau (SCB), a division of STO, was established through a public-private partnership in 2008.

SCB is keen to promote Seoul to the international meeting and convention market, as currently 90 per cent of business is domestic. Koo believes the city already has all the ingredients, so now the onus is on international promotion.

"People are demanding more [from a convention destination]. They want access to shopping, food, culture. In Seoul, we provide that. We are a complete convention destination. It is all here," Koo says.

And it is all there. Seoul offers high-tech meeting facilities, including Coex, which caters to 45 percent of the Korean meetings market. "Coex is a centre of action. The menu of things on offer is diverse," says Koo.

Being Korea's leading venue for international conventions and exhibitions, Coex offers 437,221 square metres of flexible meeting space, including 51 meeting rooms and four exhibition halls. Three five-star hotels are located at the Coex complex.

Entertaining city

After-hours, Seoul offers delegates a host of exciting entertainment options.

"We have many artistic performers and Seoul is a vibrant and exciting city with a great deal of nightlife," Koo explains.

Seoul attracts a year-round calendar of performers from dance acts to music, art and theatre groups. The thrilling Korean drum performance Nanta, martial arts demonstrations and B-Boy performances are just a few examples of the energetic entertainment options on offer.

The average stay for meeting delegates is 2.5 days, which Koo believes can be easily filled with a varied itinerary. "We offer good facilities and a good location. There are so many things to do these days. Getting to understand different cultures and people is a must to becoming a global citizen."

SEOUL HAS BECOME A CONVENIENT STOP. IT IS A REGIONAL HUB IN ASIA KNOWN FOR ITS GREAT ACCESSIBILITY AND IS UP THERE WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL MEETING CITIES IN TERMS OF MEETING FACILITIES. WHAT WE OFFER IS SURELY AT AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL



Green meetings

Seoul also ticks the green meetings box, with a number of eco initiatives being undertaken in the city.

"Seoul is an eco-friendly city. All city buses run on natural gas. This has dramatically contributed to the improved quality of our air. It is also a bike-friendly place, with bike lanes available," says Koo.

"We want to promote healthy and ethical tourism. We want to be at the forefront of this."

Seoul is also a naturally endowed city – surrounded by a wall of majestic mountains and bisected by the Hangang River.

Redevelopment is taking place along the banks of the Hangang River as the city government looks to revitalise the district by demolishing the buildings on either side of the river and pushing them back, making room for a city park.

This infrastructure renaissance is a timely move as the city is the World Design Capital 2010. A year-long programme is planned under the tag line 'Design is everything, everything is design'.

2010 is also Visit Korea – Seoul year and the meeting industry is putting together a number of packages to attract visitors. There will be free museum entry, the Seoul Grand Sale and lots of incentives being offered.

International markets

At present the domestic market is Seoul's leading meeting catchment area. International markets include Japan, which is the number one inbound market, followed by China, the US, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia.

"We are also reaching out to Europe and the Middle East. You don't become an international destination unless you attract a sizeable, balanced proportion of tourists," Koo explains. When it comes to the Middle East market, the STO is taking a long-term approach. "It is not just about taking out an advertisement. There are



Samuel Koo

things we have to do internally to capture this market. For example, we have to open prayer rooms and identify halal restaurants and groceries. We have to be ethnically friendly," Koo says.

As part of its international push, the STO is expanding its network. "We are moving away from opening branch offices and instead working with local travel agents. We are starting with European and Asian travel agents, but want to organise a farm tour for Middle East travel agents so that they can see and experience for themselves before they sell."

Hosting the G20

Seoul's conventions repertoire will be put to the ultimate test in 2010 when the city hosts the G20 Summit in November. Global leaders from the world's leading developing nations will descend on the South Korean capital for a series of high-level meetings.

"Of the major international festivals and conventions being held in Seoul, the G20 tops the list. This is a wonderful opportunity to showcase Seoul," says Koo.

Koo and his team appear to be taking the G20 meeting in their stride. "We do these things pretty well," he says, citing the World Cup and Olympic Games as previous examples of international events hosted by the city.

In 1988 the city hosted the Summer Olympics and in 2002 it was the co-host for the FIFA World Cup. With a Korean national bid for the 2018 Olympic Games on the cards, Seoul is once again setting itself on a historic course as an international meeting place. ●



CITY UNDER TRANSFORMATION

AS WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL FOR 2010, THE EYES OF THE WORLD ARE ON SEOUL THIS YEAR. WITH AN AMBITIOUS MASTER PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT ALREADY IN FULL SWING AND GREEN LEANINGS, THE CITY IS EMBARKING ON A DECADE-LONG JOURNEY OF TRANSFORMATION TO CEMENT ITS POSITION AS ONE OF ASIA'S MOST DYNAMIC CAPITALS

Foreign direct investment into Korea is averaging US\$10 billion a year and, according to the *Financial Times*, Seoul ranks number one as the world's most business-friendly city. A recent report in *fDi Magazine* also saw it top the list for economic potential in the region and its municipal government is spearheading a drive to position the capital as an Asian giant through its long-term urban redevelopment master plan.

The municipal government's new millennium strategy aims to further develop the city as a high-tech eco-conscious design progressive capital that not only offers iconic business towers but which also recognises the importance and relevance of the 600-year-old city's historical origins.

According to government figures Seoul, which is divided by the Hangang River, already has 27 percent of the city officially designated as green space with 1,953 parks. Its infrastructure is also streaks ahead of other regional destinations with Seoul Station home to the 350-kilometre-per-hour high-speed KTX rail network and the city's subway system the third largest in the world with over two billion passengers per year. And Incheon International Airport continues to receive accolades for its operational efficiency and passenger appeal.

The country also recently opened its longest bridge, spanning 18.4 kilometres. Located close to the capital it connects the western port city of Incheon with Yeongjong Island, home of the international airport.

WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL

As World Design Capital 2010 Seoul is forging ahead with plans to radically redevelop the city into a metropolis for the future. With one of the world's most technologically advanced infrastructures and its IT-led business conglomerates helping to drive development at every level, this year marks a period where city planners hope to demonstrate Seoul's potential as an international design leader.

Central to its World Design Capital status, and the city's focal point, is the Dongdaemun Design Plaza & Park project, designed by world-renowned architect, Zaha Hadid. This is set to become the physical symbol for the year's activities as well as being a landmark building within the city, and has been designed to operate as a specialised support facility for Asia's design industry.

In addition to the development of Dongdaemun Design Plaza, the city government has created a new open park space and restored the ancient castle walls of Seongwak, which were destroyed during the Japanese occupation.

RIVERFRONT RENAISSANCE

One of the most exciting projects for the city is the grand Hangang River Renaissance project, which was launched in 2007, and which is aimed at revitalising Seoul's riverside precinct.

Seoul aims to create a waterfront city model that has the purpose of transforming the river into the most famous tourist destination in the capital. This also ties in neatly with the city's new eco-friendly positioning and the creation of a new ecological system is high on the project agenda.

Set to be completed in 2030, the project includes building waterfront towns, increasing green zones and eco-friendly parks, constructing an international ferry terminal and launching a sea lane between Yeouido and China.

A total of 23 bridges on the river are already enjoying dramatic makeovers with the most notable changes on the Banpo Bridge. A nightly water and light show creates a stunning visual rainbow under the moonlight and is a popular attraction for both residents and visitors, earning it the title of the world's longest bridge fountain.

LANDMARK DEVELOPMENT

Seoul is already home to a distinctive skyline with well established tall buildings such as the Korea Finance Building, N Seoul Tower and the renowned 63 Building. These, along with various high-rise office buildings such as the Seoul Star Tower and Jongno Tower, dominate the city panorama.

A handful of large-scale developments will bring new architectural talent and unique style to the city in the next few years and beyond, including the country's tallest building in the newly established Digital Media City district. Located within the urban development project known as Sangam New Millennium City, the under-construction US\$2.5 billion, 133-storey, 656-metre-tall Seoul Lite building is aiming to make the record books as the world's second tallest building upon completion in 2015.

Another landmark project is the Magok District which is being redeveloped into an international environmentally friendly industrial city for state-of-the-art business enterprise. A total of three million square metres of residential and business facilities will open by 2015 with a commitment to ensuring that 40 percent of energy usage will be through renewable means. A long-term project, scheduled for completion in 2031, it will have Magok Waterfront Town as its heart which will connect to the Hangang River with plans for infrastructure investment into a ferry service.

Seoul's long-held aspiration to be a major Asian financial centre is also the basis for development of its International Financial Centre which, with an investment of US\$1.4 billion, has been designated as a core cluster industry of the future. The site has been under development since 2003 and still has another three years to go before final handover in 2013, but has already attracted major international financial, legal and consulting firms. The 1.6 million-square-metre project will include a multiplex cinema, five-star hotel and office space as well as one of the country's largest shopping centres – IFC Mall – and Grade A office towers.

FUTURE POTENTIAL

Other upcoming projects include Yongsan International Business District which links several areas in the northern part of the city and which is to be reborn as a luxurious waterfront city connecting the commercial hub with the Hangang River. This US\$28 billion development – which will be the largest project in Korea's history – will open up a new wave of urban development with housing, international business centres, commercial, cultural and retail opportunities all under consideration with a target date of 2016. As a mixed-use project it will also include high-end offices, a shopping mall, hotel, entertainment facilities, a new convention centre, and a residential and commercial complex.

The Archipelago 21 tower, designed by international award-winning architect Daniel Libeskind, will be the area's centrepiece. Surrounded by more than 30 towers, each ranging



from 20 to 70 storeys, the district, when viewed from the air, will have a three-dimensional skyline that depicts the golden crown of the Shilla dynasty. A prestigious development, it will offer panoramic views over the Hangang River.

Yongsan District of Seoul has forecast an expected 1.2 million foreign visitors per annum and tailored facilities will include a park, international passenger and logistics terminal, and a waterfront sightseeing boat terminal (in collaboration with the Hangang River Renaissance Project). A tourism network will also be established to connect the Hangang River with Mount Namsan and the Seoul Opera House, with links to the high-speed rail network and the airport rail connection to increase overall connectivity. Construction is due to kick off in 2011 and will also include a hotel component.

While the rest of the region is recalculating forward development plans, Seoul is boldly stepping into the breach and moving ahead with its ambitious strategy to transform an already successful business formula into a next generation model for the ultimate 21st century destination. ●



ROYAL MEETING PLACE

WITH A HISTORY DATING BACK 2,000 YEARS, SEOUL'S RICH HERITAGE HAS BEEN SHAPED BY ROYAL DYNASTIES, FOREIGN OCCUPATION, CIVIL WAR AND ECONOMIC SUCCESS.

BISECTED BY THE HANGANG RIVER, KOREA'S CAPITAL RETAINS ITS REGAL BEARING WITH ROYAL PALACES, FORTRESS WALLS AND IMPOSING WOODEN GATES JUXTAPOSED AGAINST THE MODERN SKYLINE

A fast-paced, dynamic city renowned for its progressive technology-led business acumen, Seoul's distinguished history spans more than two millennia. The 600-year-old capital is home to 96 museums, five royal palaces, two UNESCO World Heritage sites and 26 mountains, and boasts an enviable 27 percent of open green space within the city limits.

The most visited city in the country, with 74.5 percent of visitors making their footprint in 2008, and accounting for a sizeable 21 percent of GDP, the 605-square-kilometre city has the Hangang River at its heart and is surrounded by the Bukhansan and Namsan mountains, creating a verdant environment and four distinct seasons.

The Korean capital has undergone various incarnations and impressive transformation over the last 2,000 years as well as numerous changes to its name. Formerly known as Hanseongbu, Hangang and Gyeongdo, it took independence from the Japanese in 1945 for it to finally become the city of Seoul that we know today. Declared the national capital in 1948, Seoul has spent the last 60 years consolidating its economic position and realising its full potential to become one of Asia's most powerful players.



Food for the soul

Koreans are passionate about their food and keen to promote both its diversity and healthy culinary properties.

The national dish, kimchi (fermented cabbage) has made its way around the world. The city is justifiably proud of its kimchi heritage and has a museum devoted to the dish as well as a staggering 187 varieties on offer in Seoul's restaurants and foodstores.

Korean food is essentially about sitting down with a group of friends or family and sharing the dozens of dishes on offer banquet style or traditional barbecue – over a glass of the local eau de vie known as sochi, and good conversation.

Korea House in Insadong is popular with groups. Using menus inspired by recipes from the Joseon Dynasty, Korea House serves up a memorable buffet experience featuring over 60 dishes. Set in a complex of traditional Korean wooden houses it can accommodate groups of up to 300 people.

A diverse cuisine with the emphasis on fresh ingredients, there are many delicious dishes to choose from. Leading the charge has to be bibimbap – rice topped with sautéed beef and vegetables and served with a generous helping of fiery and sweet red chilli pepper paste (gochujang).

Other popular dishes include galbi – variations on marinated and grilled beef or pork ribs, or chicken – and the ultra-traditional beef and vegetable soup called seolleongtang, which was served at the end of the annual harvest during the Joseon Dynasty.

A legacy of the Japanese occupation are Seoul's rice cake makers (tteok) who lost their royal appointments after the Korean monarchy was abolished and opened their own shops in the city. Also on the menu are ginseng chicken, meat-and-lettuce wraps, spicy tofu soup, hotteok (sweet pita bread) and omijacha (berry) tea.

And the best way to wrap up the Seoul culinary experience is to take in an evening performance of Nanta, which is an energetic non-verbal musical show set in a Korean restaurant kitchen and featuring flying cabbage, lots of sharp knives and dance-themed acrobatics fused with rhythmic percussion.

The kingdom of Baekje, established in 18BC, marks the original birth of modern-day Seoul. Baekje's capital city, which was known as Wiryeseong, is believed to have been located within what is now recognised as Seoul proper.

Fast forward to 1104 when Seoul was known as the Southern Capital – or Namgyeong – when King Sukjong of the Goryeo Dynasty built the city's first palace, and Seoul developed from a provincial town into a full-scale city with significant political weight.

But it was only during the Joseon Dynasty that Seoul expanded to become Korea's dominant force and the key destination within the kingdom. In 1394 it was recognised as the formal capital of the country and was known as Han Seong, which translates to English as 'fortress city'.

Originally entirely surrounded by a massive circular wall designed to give the local populace protection from wild animals and possible invaders, the city subsequently grew well beyond its original walls, of which some remnants still stand located in the mountains to the north of downtown Seoul. A trio of grand city gates has also stood the test of time, with the East Gate (Dongdaemun) and North Gate (Bukdaemun) impressive physical reminders of past glories. The South Gate (Namdaemun) is currently undergoing extensive restoration following its gutting by fire in 2008.

Seoul was also home to the royal court for over 500 years, since the Joseon Dynasty ruled the country, and the city has visual evidence of its noble heritage not only in its city walls and gates, which stand proud against the backdrop of the city's modern architectural skyline, but



also through the exquisitely preserved halls of its royal palaces, shrines and tombs. A total of five palaces still stand in the heart of the ancient capital dating back to the foundation of the Joseon Dynasty in 1394, and adding a historical flavour to the city's modern landscape. Another living reminder of its past are its traditional wooden houses – known as hanok – of which a handful have survived occupation, war and modernisation.

Two UNESCO World Heritage sites also add to Seoul's international appeal with the Jongmyeon Shrine a popular tourist attraction where visitors flock to see the age-old Confucian rites ceremony that takes place annually to commemorate past kings and queens, or to walk the paths of the opulent Changdeokgung Palace, the residence of royalty.

It was only in the late 19th century that Seoul opened up its gates to foreign influence becoming the first city in the region to have electricity, trolley cars, water, telephone and telegraph systems, much of which was due to aggressive trade policies with the US.

The period of Japanese colonial rule from 1910 to 1945 was the precursor to Seoul's evolution as an industrialised nation, and upon achieving independence in 1945 Seoul briefly took the reins once again before the Korean War effected the permanent separation of North and South into two separate countries.

Since the end of the civil war in 1953 Seoul has taken hold of its economic identity and forged a strong future for its 10.5 million-strong population. The 1960s and 1970s was a period of intense reconstruction and modernisation, supported by rapid economic growth, and took Seoul from a troubled capital to a modern, progressive destination with recognition on the global stage.

Today, Seoul's municipal city government is spearheading the regeneration of its most historic districts with notable projects such as restoration of the six-kilometre-long Cheonggye stream in the centre of the city. This ancient waterway, which was previously covered by a road, symbolises the city's aggressive green programme and is its first eco project. ●





INCENTIVES

SEOUL MAY BE A MODERN-DAY MARVEL OF A CITY, BUT ITS TRADITION AND HERITAGE REMAIN STRONG ATTRACTIONS FOR TOURISTS AND INCENTIVE GROUPS. TAKE IN AN ENERGETIC LIVE PERFORMANCE OR WHILE AWAY THE HOURS IN THE GARDENS OF ONE OF THE MANY ROYAL PALACES

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

In the Gangnam area, the Urim Cheongham Theatre has been solely designed for the famous non-verbal drumming performance of Nanta, while the Coex Atrium is a musical theatre that hosts regular live performances.

In the City Hall district, the Nanta theatre also puts on a non-verbal performance telling the comic story of a wedding banquet set to the beat of the traditional Korean Samullori rhythm.

The Chongdong Theatre stages traditional Korean dance, Pungmulori performances and Pansori (Korean opera), while in Gangdong, the Universal Art Centre hosts classic ballet and modern performances.

- 🕒 End of incentive cultural evening
- 👉 Check theatre capacity, some venues can accommodate up to 800
- ⌚ Evenings
- ✳️ Why not team with a traditional Korean dinner to give delegates a truly authentic night out?



SAMULLORI

Traditionally, entertainment in Korea was rooted in farming culture. Called Pungmulori, it is comprised of dance and folk music performed with traditional percussion instruments. Samullori is an interpretation of this traditional art form, blending music with dance and acrobatics. Nanta is a non-verbal performance based on the rhythms of Samullori.

Places where Samullori can be seen include the Gwanghwamun Art Hall, where the Kim Duksoo Samullori group regularly performs, and the Namsangol Hanok Village.

- 🕒 Evening event
- 👉 10 – 50
- ⌚ Call ahead for performance timings
- ✳️ Give the group a briefing on the art of Samullori, so that they can truly appreciate this unique art form

SIGHTSEEING

If you want to take in the whole of Seoul in one sweeping glance then head to the top of the N Seoul Tower on Namsan mountain. The observatory at the top is open from 10am to 11pm (midnight on Fridays and Saturdays) and offers a spectacular panoramic view of Seoul from 236 metres.

Namsan Park is the largest park in Seoul and includes the N Seoul Tower, Namsan Library and an outdoor botanical garden.

In Gangdong, the Gwangjingyo Observatory on the Gwangjingyo Bridge offers a unique view over the Hangang River through its transparent floor.

- 🕒 Part of city tour itinerary
- 👉 10 – 50
- ⌚ Check with tour operator
- ✳️ Check if any team members suffer from vertigo, and if so, arrange an alternative activity on terra firma



ROYAL RESIDENCES

The area around City Hall is a feast of traditional heritage, offering up the Five Royal Palaces and the Hanok Village.

The Gyeongbokgung Palace is the first palace of the Joseon Dynasty and offers visitors a glimpse of one of Korea's most beautiful pavilions. Be sure to visit the breathtaking Hywang-wonji Pond.

Changdeokgung Palace was added to the UNESCO World Heritage site list in 1997 for its simple architecture and garden design; in contrast, the Deoksugung Palace is notable for its modern architecture and western-style garden and fountain.

Also worth a visit is the Jongmyo Shrine, a Confucian shrine dedicated to the memorial services of the kings and queens of the Joseon Dynasty. Hailed the 'Parthenon of the East' it is also registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

[Part of city tour itinerary](#)

10 – 50

Most palaces are open 9am to 6pm

English-speaking guided tours take place at regular intervals at many of the palaces

Photographer: Daniel J Allen

N Seoul Tower



RETAIL THERAPY

Designer showrooms, luxury brand shops and major department stores abound for delegates eager for a little retail therapy.

Coex Mall is the largest underground shopping mall in Asia, with nearly 180 shops, while the Central City multiplex features many famous-brand shops and a cinema.

For a more traditional mood, groups should head to Insadong – a cultural street where traditional art products are sold in its ancient buildings. Modern galleries and traditional Korean houses line both sides of the street, while a variety of folk crafts add to the fascinating atmosphere.

The shopping outlets in Myeongdong offer a variety of charming accessory shops, fashion showrooms, the Lotte department store, large shopping malls and famous-brand stores. Myeongdong was voted the best tourist spot in Seoul in 2008.

Spouse's tour, free time

Unlimited

Most shops and malls are open 10am to 8pm

If shopping in a group choose a prearranged meeting point and departure time



TRADITION & CULTURE

The National Palace Museum of Korea, in the City Hall area, highlights the Joseon Dynasty, while the National Folk Museum of Korea showcases 85,000 traditional Korean folklore materials.

Namsangol Hanok Village is home to five restored traditional Korean houses, including both an aristocrat's and worker's, complete with household supplies from the Joseon period.

While Gangnam is renowned for its high-tech modern culture, Korean tradition and culture can still be found. The Korea Cultural House is a cultural space that features a traditional art performance hall, traditional cultural product retail store, a tea house and education and training centre. Groups can enjoy Hanji (Korean paper craft) and Talchum (Korean mask dance) demonstrations.

The Bongeunsa Temple, also in Gangnam, is a 1,300-year-old building offering temple stays for incentive groups.

Part of city tour itinerary

10 to 50

Most museums are open 9am to 6pm

Try to arrange lunch at one of the more traditional venues

NIGHTLIFE

From traditional Korean restaurants to karaoke bars, casinos and nightclubs, Seoul's nightlife is varied with something to suit everyone.

Madang, located in Gangdong, is a traditional Korean tavern with an impressive oak bonfire.

Yongsan is a hub of trendy bars and nightclubs. The Sevenluck Casino, known as the Las Vegas of Korea, offers a variety of game machines and tables, and is open 24 hours. There is a second Sevenluck Casino in Gangnam.

For party goers All That Jazz is Korea's first jazz bar, while B1 is a popular lounge bar with a dance floor.

Hoping to catch an international act? Then head to Club Circle, a nightclub that often features performances by international artists and is frequented by celebrities.

End-of-conference night out

Check ahead for club capacity and group booking options

Open until late

Consider the demographics of the group and pick a venue that will suit most tastes



CAPITAL MEETING SPOT

Coex

FROM STATE-OF-THE-ART DOWNTOWN CONFERENCE CENTRES IN THE HEART OF THE CITY TO UNIQUE RIVERSIDE VENUES, SEOUL IS HOME TO A DIVERSE PORTFOLIO OF WORLD-CLASS VENUES GUARANTEED TO MAKE ANY EVENT A SUCCESS

The South Korean capital is a regional hotspot for the meetings industry with no less than 14 convention facilities able to accommodate large-scale events, a top 10 rating in the global listing of outstanding convention destinations and a total of 155 professional convention organisers on the ground.

South Korea's meetings industry currently accounts for 0.45 percent of the country's GDP and this figure is on the rise. With events such as the 2011 UNWTO annual general meeting providing an unrivalled opportunity to raise South Korea's tourism and meeting industry profile and Seoul's selection as host for the Korea MICE Expo for the next three years (2010-2012), the capital is leading the way both in terms of its facilities and impressive track record in hosting world-class events.

COEX

Seoul's largest venue is Coex, located in the dynamic business district of Gangnam, 60 kilometres from the international airport. An institution on the convention scene with 45 percent market share of South Korea's rapidly expanding meetings industry; it originally opened in 1979 and underwent extensive renovation and rebranding in 2000, ahead of the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

Coex has a total of 51 meeting rooms that can be divided into 89 smaller rooms, as well as four large exhibition halls. The 427,000-square-metre venue also houses Seoul's World Trade Centre and there are three five-star hotels conveniently located within the complex – the Grand InterContinental Seoul, the Coex InterContinental Seoul and the Oakwood Premier Hotel – as well as

a casino, the 119,000-square-metre Coex Mall, Coex Artium theatre, a city air terminal for direct transfers to Incheon International Airport, one hour away, and a subway station.

According to Coex, the venue ran at an impressive 70 percent occupancy in 2009 and, despite a general global downturn in business, already has a committed calendar of events throughout 2010 with domestic and Asia-derived events still dominating the line-up, but also increased demand from international markets.

Large-scale events gravitate to the Coex complex. Hall D is able to accommodate in excess of 7,000 visitors while the grand ballroom can host 1,800 guests and 1,060 people in the state-of-the-art auditorium. In addition, the pillar-free grand ballroom can be partitioned into five smaller rooms and has a large lobby ideal for event registration, coffee breaks and receptions.

The 2000 ASEM Conference was held in the specially created Conference Room North, an elegant circular room designed to accommodate up to 120 guests with 17 simultaneous translation booths and 12 adjacent small meeting rooms.

On the third floor of the convention centre is the high-tech auditorium. The perfect venue for opening ceremonies, musical extravaganzas, award ceremonies and conferences, it also has office space and VIP rooms located close by, plus a spacious lobby and a floor-to-ceiling glass window offering views out onto the Boneunsa Temple opposite.

With its four large-scale exhibition halls, Coex annually hosts more than 200 trade shows, accounting for 30 percent of the domestic exhibition industry in Korea. Hall A offers 10,368 square metres of space with four hall partitions and room for 520 booths in exhibition set-up, as can Hall C on the third floor. The slightly smaller Hall B can accommodate 360 booths and is frequently used to host large-scale events and banquets as well as specialised exhibitions.

Coex has been leading meeting industry demand in the capital for the last three decades and, as part of the Seoul municipal government's drive to 'green' the city, is now focusing on transforming the complex into the country's first environmentally friendly convention centre, from the installation of LED lighting throughout all halls and meeting rooms to a new building management system and multiple green initiatives across its entire 437,000 square metres of space.

SETEC

Also located within the bustling Gangnam business hub, and 70 kilometres from Incheon International Airport, is Seoul's other major convention centre – SETEC. This 34,600-square-metre site has hosted an impressive range of major international events and features three convention halls and four meeting rooms covering a total area of 15,630 square metres of floor space.

Four meeting rooms, which include a smaller conference room, can accommodate between 200 to 300 guests with the three exhibition halls able to accommodate up to 5,000 people and ranging in size from 1,684 to 3,134 square metres.

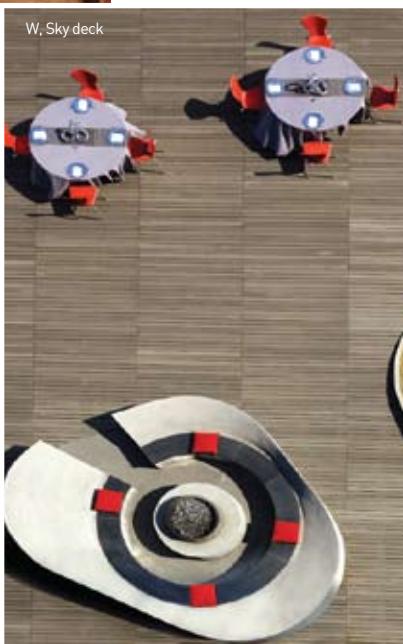
SETEC's multi-purpose facilities can be adapted in a variety of ways to meet the demand for a wide range of different functions including speciality exhibitions, international meetings, events and performances. This world-class exhibition and convention centre is also fully equipped with a wide range of annex and support facilities.

In recent years SETEC has hosted fashion shows, international trade events, corporate networking missions and online gaming conferences. Its mid-sized convention

halls are arranged in a classic square set-up and have the capacity to install a conference microphone in each available seat. The venue is particularly useful for high-profile events such as directors' seminars, business fairs and business talks as well as regular conventions.



Coex



W, Sky deck



W Hotel

UNIQUE VENUES

The regeneration of the Hangang River in the heart of the city has led to the launch of several floating waterfront venues with wonderful river views and outdoor decks for the warmer months. Hot favourites include On River Station with its glass hall overlooking the river, which can accommodate up to 220 guests, as well as Fradia – one of the most popular and integrated cultural spaces in the city, set on a houseboat-styled venue and featuring a stage and outdoor deck for up to 250 people. The 700 Yacht Club, with its elegant marina, is also a prime venue for social occasions or high-profile business meetings for smaller groups with a maximum of 150 people.

Venues with a view are perennial favourites and Seoul has a number of iconic towers that delight the eye and showcase the city's amazing skyline. Bird's-eye views can be enjoyed from Top Cloud, a 33rd floor venue with a beautiful view of Seoul city, as well as Hanwha 63 City, a popular party venue within one of Seoul's most famous landmarks overlooking the river and able to host up to 800 guests.

For international visitors, Seoul is proud to present traditional cultural experiences at venues such as Samcheonggak with its cultural performance hall and traditional Korean restaurant, wine bar and cultural experience space for up to 150 guests. The renowned EL Tower features a reception hall designed by world-renowned architect Guid Steffanion and is the ideal venue for groups of up to 700. Meanwhile, Yeong Bin Gwan is a unique combined indoor-outdoor space harmonised with a Korean style house and garden with a grand reception hall for 200 guests. Other unique venues include Aston House and the Jade Garden, a luxurious mansion and garden overlooking the Hangang River and ideal for intimate gatherings of 60 people up to sizeable functions for 280 guests.

From large-scale conventions in Seoul's legendary Coex complex to uniquely intimate dinners on the banks of the Hangang River, Seoul's surprising diversity offers meeting planners the opportunity to delight, excite and impress with exclusive events to suit budget and brief every time. ●



	Location: resort/city	Distance from airport [kilometres]	Total number of rooms	Number of suites	Group check-in available (Y/N)	Handicapped facilities available (Y/N)	In-room PC/fax/Internet access (Y/N)	Total No. of meeting rooms	Max. capacity theatre-style	Max. capacity classroom-style	Conference equipment available (Y/N)	Area of ballroom [sq. metres]	Max. capacity for cocktails	Max. capacity for banquets	Exhibition space available (Y/N)	Business centre (Y/N)	Total No. of restaurants	Spa (Y/N)	Swimming pool/s (Y/N)	Beachfront (Y/N)	Water sports (Y/N)	Tennis court/s (Y/N)	Fitness centre (Y/N)	Shopping arcade/boutique (Y/N)
	GRAND AMBASSADOR SEOUL ASSOCIATED WITH PULLMAN	186-54 2-Ga Jangchung-Dong, Joong-Gu 100 855 Seoul	Tel: +82 2 22751101 Fax: +82 2 22720773	Email: amb@ambatel.com	Web: www.accorhotels.com	★★★★★																		
	GRAND HYATT SEOUL	747-7 Hannam 2 Dong, Yongsan-ku, Seoul 140738	Tel: +82 2 7971234 Fax: +82 2 7986953	Email: seoul.grand@hyatt.com	Web: seoul.grand.hyatt.com	★★★★★																		
	GRAND SEOUL (INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS & RESORTS)	521 Teheranno, Gangnam-Gu Seoul 135 732	Tel: +82 2 5555656 Fax: +82 2 5597990	Email: sg_lee@interconti.com	Web: www.ichotelsgroup.com	★★★★★																		
	THE HAMILTON ITAEWON	119-25 Itaewon-dong, Yongsan-Gu Seoul,	Tel: +82 2 7940171 Fax: +82 2 7950457	Web: www.hamilton.co.kr	★★★★																			
	IBIS SEOUL MYEONG-DONG	59-5 Myeong-dong 1 Jung-Gu, Seoul 100021	Tel: +82 2 6361 8888 Fax: +82 2 63618050	Email: ibismres@ambatel.com	Web: www.accorhotels.com	★★★★★																		
	IMPERIAL PALACE SEOUL	248-7 Nonhyun-Dong, Kangnam-Gu, Seoul 11 135	Tel: +82 2 34408000 Fax: +82 2 34408200	★★★★★																				
	KOREANA HOTEL	61 1KA Taepyung-Ro Chung-ku Seoul 135010	Tel: +82 2 21717000 Fax: +82 2 7309025	web: www.koreahotel.com	★★★★★																			
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	LOTTE HOTEL WORLD GANGNAM	40-1 Jamsil-Dong Songpa-Gu 138 220 Seoul	Tel: +82 2 4117450 Fax: +82 2 4117455	Web: www.lottehotelworld.com	★★★★★																			

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