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MAGAZINE

BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY

# Headquarters

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**SEOUL**

**A COMPLETE  
CONVENTION  
CITY  
WHERE NEW  
AGE MEET OLD  
TRADITIONS**





# PLUS SEOUL IN YOUR BUSINESS MEETING!

## + FINANCIAL SUPPORT

- International conferences up to a max of 150 million KRW
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- Airport greeting message
- Seoul welcome kits
- Seoul MICE supporters
- Seoul welcome booth
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## + 2017 SPECIAL SUPPORT

- Seoulo 7017 walking tour
- Han river cycling tour
- "Seoul City Wall" of Seoul trekking excursion
- Hallyu makeup experience
- K-Pop dance experience
- Suggest an experience program through a domestic travel agency

## + SEOUL MICE ALLIANCE SUPPORT



# PLUS SEOUL A 360 DEGREE CARE-SYSTEM

**They say winning is a habit. Seoul, the miracle on the Han River, now wants to extend their miraculous and stupendous growth in the MICE industry. Not one to rest on their laurels of being ranked 3rd in the world in 2016, the Seoul Metropolitan Government will inject KRW 10 billion to elevate its MICE industry to the number one spot in the world in 2017. Enter PLUS Seoul.**

PLUS Seoul is a newly launched brand of event support designed for the successful hosting of events in Seoul for both, event organisers and participants. Loaded with extra benefits offered by 23 Seoul MICE Alliance members such as hotels, travel agencies, logistics, unique venues and much more, this multi-faceted support package creates a total care environment...

Launched in May this year by the Seoul Tourism Organization, the support services consist of a five-pronged approach - financial support, administrative support, hospitality support, special support and Seoul MICE Alliance support.

Taking a closer look, the financial benefits include a maximum of 150 million KRW (US\$130,770) for international conferences and up to 100 million KRW for corporate meetings and incentives.

The administrative support includes guidance for bidding, a bid support letter along with sourcing venues and site inspections.

Not leaving any aspect of an event untouched and to ensure that the event itself will become an unforgettable experience for the delegates, they offer hospitality support and a 2017 special support. This includes benefits such as an airport greeting message, Seoul welcome kits, bilingual MICE supporters to assist the hosting of events and the participating delegates, a Seoul welcome booth and much more. They also provide special tours for groups, from a walking tour at the newest hotspot Seocho 7017 to a Hallyu (K-beauty) makeup experience.

Seoul MICE Alliance (SMA) member companies will also offer a variety of benefits, and with newly inducted 38 new SMA members, incentives now include MICE package discounts, VIP guest room upgrades, hotel discounts, discounts on attraction and transportation fees, and much more.

With such concerted and comprehensive efforts, Seoul's journey to the Number One position is surely on the fast-track!

MORE INFORMATION

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# ENCHANTING SEOUL A BLEND OF THE OLD AND THE NEW

**Seoul is a city of stark contrast - from the glitzy skyscrapers and neon lights to the serene royal palaces, from having a 24/7 on the go vibe to ancient traditions steeped in pungsu-jiri (feng shui) - Seoul is a fascinating city with its sight set on the future but draped in its history dating back to the 14th century.**

The city is full of captivating fragments of the past especially from the last kingdom of Korea, the Joseon dynasty which was in power for more than 500 years at a time when Korean culture, art and architecture reached its zenith. The **'Five Grand Palaces'** transport you back to the Seoul of the bygone era. Amongst the five, the **Gyeongbokgung Palace** is the biggest and the oldest and was the formal seat of the dynasty while the **Changdeokgung Palace** is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is one of the most extravagant achievements of imperial architecture. Adjacent to the two palaces is the oldest royal Confucian shrine of **Jongmyo**, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Dedicated to the forefathers of the Joseon dynasty, the shrine perpetuates a tradition that goes back to the 14th century with ritual ceremonies still being performed with music, song and dance. Situated between the palaces and the shrine is the "northern village" of **Bukchon**, a residential area home to hundreds of traditional houses called hanok with

many of these now operating as cultural centres, craft workshops, cafes and restaurants giving rise to a new kind of hanok culture in this ancient setting! Also built during the Joseon dynasty is the Seoul City Wall that stretches for 18.6 km along the ranges of the beautiful mountains surrounding Seoul. Near the wall and spread throughout Seoul are the North, South, East and West gates known as the **'Four Great Gates'** apart from the **'Four Minor Gates.'** These gates are lit beautifully in the night while in the day the wall offers panoramic views of the city!

## **A TRADITIONAL AFFAIR TO REMEMBER**

Showcasing a perfect marriage of culture with the ever evolving creative MICE sector of Seoul are the various traditional Korean MICE venues around the city. Located at the centre of the beautiful forest of Mount Bukaksan is **Samcheonggak**. A historic site established in 1972

featuring 6 hanok-style buildings, it has now been transformed into a traditional culture and art complex featuring a Korean on-site restaurant and a garden cafe offering traditional tea ceremonies. Keeping with this spirit, one can head to **Korea House** designed specifically to promote the nation's social history with an opportunity to indulge in a meal of royal cuisine, art performances or even a crash course in wearing hanbok, the traditional Korean clothing! Another one-of-a-kind locale is Shilla hotel's **Yeong Bin Gwan**, a Korean-style banquet annex which was a former official state guesthouse for visiting heads of state. Today, the major highlight is the expansive private gardens for MICE events - making it a perfect sanctuary right in the middle of the financial district.



# SEOUL – A **MODERN PRODIGY** AHEAD OF THE CURVE

**Seoul – a fast paced metropolis home to over 10 million citizens draws a compelling sketch of modern marvels and facilities on a canvas of 2000 years old history. The country’s rapid industrialization has given rise to shiny corporate towers, glitzy shopping malls and world-class hotels – in short a perfect setting to launch it into the MICE orbit of fame!**

Not limiting it to just business, the top convention centres of Seoul provide a global platform with a unique mix of business, art and culture. One of the biggest and most renowned in South Korea is the four storeys **Coex Convention and Exhibition Centre** which is part of **Coex MICE Cluster** and includes the **Coex Mall**, three luxury hotels, an airport, the **Coex Aquarium**, **Coex Artium**, **ASEM Tower** and the **Seven Luck Casino!** Similarly, the **Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP)** is one of the most iconic landmarks of the Korean design industry serving as a key venue for design-related shows, exhibitions and events as well as a major tourist attraction. Designed by world renowned architect Zaha Hadid, DDP has a distinct neo-futuristic design and features a walkable park on its roof, large global exhibition spaces, creative retail stores and restored parts of the Seoul fortress! Get prepared to be blown away even further by a shining example of Seoul’s Han River Renaissance Project which opened to the public in 2014 – **Some Sevit** is a cultural complex built of three glowing islands on the Han River and features multi-functional cultural facility, venues for international conferences, exhibitions, restaurants and even water sports facilities with an outdoor garden to enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Complementing the state-of-the-art convention centres are the latest luxe hotels dotting the city. If expensive taste is what gets you ticking then the recently opened **Signiel Seoul** will surely pump your spirit. This “six star” hotel is part of the **Lotte world tower** and is the world’s second tallest hotel! From the tallest to the largest hotel facility in Korea to date – **Seoul Dragon City** is Korea’s first “hotelpex”, a landmark in itself as it combines four Accor hotel brands with 1,700 guestrooms spanning economy to luxury price ranges. The first **Le Meridien** property also opened in Seoul this year and has quickly become a unique arts destination with impressive works

displayed throughout the hotel including an art gallery with pieces by both local and international artists!

From modern hotels to modern attractions, there’s no skipping the vertiginous modern ode to traditional Korean ceramics and calligraphy – the **Lotte World Tower**. This sleek building is the country’s tallest and the world’s fifth tallest skyscraper with 123 floors in total with the top 10 floors earmarked for public spaces and entertainment complete with a glass floor observation deck and a rooftop cafe.

The art fanatic in you need not look further than **Leeum, Samsung Museum of Art** which houses traditional Korean art and modern and contemporary art. And if you’re riding the Korean Wave then head to **SM Town** in **Coex Artium** for your dose of some K- pop love.



# SEOUL A THRIVING TOURIST DESTINATION

Whether you're a cultural history buff or a wired tech-savvy eagle, there's enough reason for you to fly into the magical Seoul experience. The capital and the biggest city of South Korea attracts more than 17 million international tourists like moths to its blinding neon lights! And for good reason.

A recent addition is the ambitious and awe-inspiring **Seoullo 7017** – an abandoned elevated highway in the middle of Seoul now transformed into a **Skygarden**! Touted to rival New York's High Line Park, this stunning urban oasis featuring a "library" of 24,000 indigenous plants arranged according to the Korean alphabets creates a daring theatre of super-green "Avatar" like illusion juxtaposed against a backdrop of skyscrapers and the hustle and bustle of Seoul. This kilometre long walkway is connected to a number of Seoul's landmark attractions including the **Namdaemun Market, Seoul City Square, N Seoul Tower, Dongdaemun market, Myeongdong shopping district** and **Gyeongbokgung Palace**.

Apart from enjoying the cityscape during the day, **Seoullo 7017** is dotted with observatories and art installations which give a fresh perspective to the Seoul experience coupled with BangBang Playground featuring trampolines encased in mesh for children to freely jump in and play! With night fall, it transforms into a beautiful imitation of the Milky Way Galaxy stretching overhead with the floor lights and street lamps becoming a star-filled night sky making it a spectacle to watch from dusk to dawn!

Talking about dusk to dawn, another popular spot to admire the sunset morph into twinkling lights of Seoul is the **N Seoul Tower**, widely considered a symbol of

Seoul. This iconic 237 meter high tower perched atop Mount Namsan was first established as a TV and radio tower in 1969. Being one of the tallest towers in the Orient, it offers a 360 degrees bird's eye view of the massive metropolis from its observation deck. It has also become a popular date spot with the railings around it festooned with love-locks!

## CELEBRATING HANBOK, THE NATIONAL DRESS OF KOREA

One of the popular things visitors to Seoul like to do is putting themselves in a local Korean citizen's shoes or clothes, quite literally, by renting a hanbok, the traditional Korean dress and taking pictures at the





traditional sites in Seoul such as the Seoul Palaces and **Bukchon Hanok Village**. This is your chance to dress up as your favourite K-drama character be it a Korean king, queen, princess or a wise scholar and be the protagonist of your own Korean drama! One of the best places in town to rent a hanbok for the day is **Hanboknam**, a first of its kind hanbok rental service in downtown Seoul. This will surely make your Seoul experience come alive!

#### GRABBING A SLICE OF HISTORY

A good reason to wear the graceful hanbok is a free entry to the 'Five Grand Palaces' of Seoul - where kings were crowned, politics was played and state

of affairs discussed! Start at the **Gyeongbokgung Palace** which was the first royal palace of the Joseon dynasty. The grandest of the Five Grand Palaces built by the Joseon rulers, today stands testimony of South Korea's restoration efforts. Despite dying a thousand deaths throughout its history from fire and rampage and pillage, Seoul's premiere palace has risen time and again to command its place in history. Today this compound which also includes a couple of museums, ornamental gardens and some of Seoul's most spectacular architectural sights attracts millions of visitors each year. To the east is the UNESCO World Heritage site of the **Changdeokgung Palace** which was the most favoured palace of the Joseon mon-

archs with its asymmetrical features actually blending with the topography rather than imposing on it. The most attractive area here is the beautiful "secret garden" a royal retreat built around four gullies. The other three palaces namely the **Changgyeonggung**, **Deoksugung** and **Gyeonghuigung** all offer a sneak peek into the glorious past of Seoul and remains an undeniable part of present day art and culture.



# SEOUL THE ULTIMATE FOOD AND LUXURY SHOPPING DESTINATION

To do Seoul right one has to truly dive into its food culture which revolves around Eumyangohaeng – the theory of yin and yang and the five elements of the universe. This explains why a traditional Korean table includes dishes or garnishes of five colours representing the five elements leading to a nutritiously balanced meal.

While bibimbap, Korean barbecue and kimchi might be the only global sensation so far coming close to matching the popularity of K-pop, back home you know you're onto something special when each popular dish in the city has its own "town" – a street filled with restaurants all dedicated to serving their versions of that particular food!

## FOOD FOR THE S(E)OUL!

If you're a daring foodie then head to the traditional **Gwangjang Market** known to be the oldest continually functioning market in all of South Korea for your dose of Korean blood sausage among other street foods or **Seoul's Noryangjin Fish Market**, the city's

largest indoor fish market open 24/7, 365 days a year for your chance to have your fish and eat it too!

Not surprisingly it was just a matter of time before the Michelin guidebook put their royal stamp on the Korean cuisine. 2016 saw the launch of the Michelin Seoul Guide with no less than 24 restaurants being bestowed with their stars! With two restaurants serving traditional Korean cuisine, **La Yeon** and **Gaon**, distinguished with Michelin's top rating of three stars, Seoul confirms its table on the international stage. With the remaining restaurants being a mix of traditional to contemporary to even French, you know that Seoul doesn't play by the rules!

## REASONS TO SPLURGE

From fine dining to a love for even finer things in life! Seoul is your ultimate luxury shopping destination! Rows and rows of real estate along the '**Cheongdamdong Street of Luxury Goods**' are dedicated to brands like Cartier, Salvatore Ferragamo, Louis Vuitton, Armani, Prada and Burberry among others feeding the hyper consumerism of the locals and tourists alike! This high end fashion-cluster of a street long regarded as the '**Beverly Hills of Seoul**' is the final authority in lavish shopping experience. The **Lotte World Mall** is another global fashion hub featuring Korea's largest urban duty free store, Korea's first Hard Rock Cafe, an aquarium, a classical music hall and Asia's largest multiplex – all under one roof! Taking your shopping spree a step further is a holy dip into the K-beauty craze taking over the world. This exhaustive technology-meet-traditional wisdom beauty regime promises you age defying, dewy skin with its exotic ingredients such as snail mucin, bee venom and pig collagen! It's no coincidence that K-beauty exports touched almost 4 billion dollars in 2016 alone!





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# ARCHITECTS' OLYMPICS IN SEOUL

**What do World-renowned architects such as Kuma Kengo, who designed the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Stadium, Patrik Schumacher, who participated in the design of Dongdaemun Design Plaza (DDP), Ito Toyo, who received the Nobel Prize in architectural design, and Dominique Perrault, who became famous in Korea for designing Ewha Womans University ECC Center have in common?**

Well, for one glorious week in September they all gathered in Seoul for the largest and the most prestigious international architectural event, 'UIA (Union Internationales des Architectes) 2017 World Architects Congress', which is also referred to as 'the Architects' Olympics'.

The 'UIA 2017 Seoul World Architects Congress' held from September 3rd till September 10th, 2017 at COEX and DDP (Dongdaemun Design Plaza) was the 26th destination and only the 3rd Asian city to host this mega-event. Co-hosted by the Seoul Metropolitan Government, UIA and Federation of Institute of Korean Architects (FIKA), the congress attracted over 30,000 professionals and future leaders from 124 countries to explore the direction of architecture in urbanization with the theme of 'Soul of City' and share the latest architectural trends as well as international cooperation

in architecture, residential environment, facilities, cities, preservation through academic, cultural, and political programs.

The event made all the right noises with President Moon Jae-In himself sending a congratulatory message, even mentioning 'Soul of City' theme and said, "The city provides people with energy through its own vitality, but at the same time, it also alienates people. This is where an architect's vocation and the government's policy support are needed"

Mayor Park Won-Soon introduced the aspect of Seoul as an international city through his keynote speech and pointed out that Seoul has been ranked as the third largest MICE host in the world with more than 500 annual international conferences and home to more than 400,000 foreigners, making the world pay greater attention to the changes and innovations of Seoul.

Esa Mohamed, President of the Union of International Architects went a step further and said, "When we reminisce about culture in architecture, there is no city that can be compared to Seoul. This beautiful city, known for its culture, tradition, and design, has a very important meaning to architects worldwide".

Important to note is that all this MICE success is soundly riding on the back of two International airports, an extensive airport-to-city transportation with sophisticated subway system operating from 5:30 till midnight, plentiful and inexpensive taxi services, KTX high-speed rail network and innovative T-money pass and the Discover Seoul pass, making the South Korean capital one of the world's best-connected cities!



# New Members of Seoul MICE Alliance 2017

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