

Food

There are a number of fast-food restaurants, coffee shops, sit-down restaurants, and bars within 4 blocks of the university. The **CheongUnGwan** (B1/B2 floor), at the center of campus, holds more fast-food choices services (limited on the weekend) and the university souvenir shops. Heading down the street from the main gate of the university will take you to **University Zone**, which has many coffee shops, bars, restaurants, and souvenir shops.

10 best Korean restaurants in Seoul [\[click here!\]](#)



N Seoul Tower

The **N Seoul Tower** is one of Seoul’s most iconic and recognizable symbols, and is one of those places that most tourists will surely include on their Seoul itinerary. It’s location on Namsan Mountain makes it a great vantage point for viewing the city and it’s skyline in all its glory.

There are five floors inside the tower – the 5th one being a revolving restaurant serving expensive steaks, and the main observatory being located on the 3rd floor. The observatory is pretty typical of many others found in cities worldwide: a circular room with floor-length glass windows, and markers in all compass directions informing visitors of the distance they currently stand from the world’s most major cities. The only disappointment we felt when we visited was that the windows were very grubby and covered in fingerprints – it was early evening and it looked like they hadn’t been cleaned all day. Didn’t make for the greatest photographs!

However, the views over Seoul are impressive, giving the visitor a sense of just how vast the city really is. Predictably, it is particularly nice to head to the observation deck at sunset – get there early though to avoid the huge crowds!!!



The brightly lit tower - Adam Gregory



theSouthKoreatravelguide.com Overall Rating



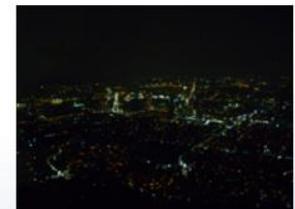
The view up from the cable car station



Chilling out in the plaza



Some decorations around the tower



The view over Seoul from the top

As well as the tower itself, the N Seoul Plaza which surrounds the tower entrance is a lovely place to spend some time. A relaxing and vibrant outdoor space where visitors can eat, shop, picnic, people-watch or simply relax for a while, the plaza is a romantic yet futuristic space which is well worth checking out.

The **Korea Tourism Organisation** has a [great page](#) which details all of the practical information you could possibly need to know when visiting the tower – scroll down to the green section near the bottom of the page for a particularly helpful guide of how to get to there – including photos of landmarks to look out for on the way.

We would recommend taking the cable car up to the plaza, and if you have time, maybe walking back down. We bought a return ticket for the cable car and then wished we hadn’t, as the walk back down the mountain looked so beautiful.

Being one of Seoul’s top attractions, this can also become very busy during peak season, at weekends, and around sunset. Get there early to avoid watching the sunset in the queue for the cable car!!!

Prices are as follows:

Observation Tower: Children (age 4-12) 3,000 won, Adults 7,000 won, Seniors (65 & over) 5,000 won.

Cable Car: Single 4,800 won, Return 6,300 won.

Operating Hours: 10:00 – 23:00 (24:00 on Friday & Saturday)

Cable Car: 10:00 – 22:30

Gyeongbokgung Palace

Gyeongbokgung is Korea's largest Joseon-dynasty temple, and is the biggest of Seoul's palaces. Gyeongbokgung (the "Palace Greatly Blessed by Heaven") has one of the longest and most documented histories of all of the Korean palaces. The story begins in 1395, three years after the Joseon dynasty started. The original main palace (Gyeongbokgung) was completed, and the Joseon dynasty moved their capital from Gaeseong (currently in North Korea) to this palace in Hanyang (now Seoul). Later kings of the Joseon dynasty continued to expand the premises, but the Japanese eventually destroyed the palace during their invasion in 1592.

Fast forward almost 270 years to 1867-68, when the palace buildings were reconstructed (the fifth year of King Gojong - Korean texts refer to the year of a king's reign as opposed to a four-digit number). The reconstructed buildings formed a massive 330-building complex with 5,792 rooms that stood on 4,414,000 square feet of land.

In 1895 - just a few decades later - the Empress Myeongseong (wife to Emperor Gojong) was assassinated by the Japanese; the imperial family fled and never returned. By the early twentieth century, only about 10 buildings were left standing in the Japanese occupation - including the Japanese General Government Building which they located on the grounds.



Gyeongbokgung Palace - Adam Gregory



theSouthKoreatravelguide.com Overall Rating



Stone statues guarding the ancient palace



The 5 tiered pagoda



A small lake inside the palace grounds



Dancers wearing traditional Korean dress

After the Second World War, this building (ironically) received the surrender by the Japanese, and served as South Korea's National Assembly for nearly 30 years. Demolition was set for 1995 - the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II and the 600th anniversary of Gyeongbokgung. The Gyeongbokgung area started restoration in 1990. Now it's gorgeous, looks authentic, and offers enough to keep you busy for a full day.

There are also a few ceremonies still held there which we're told are worth checking out. The Changing of the Guards Ceremony takes place daily between 10am and 3pm on the hour, and you can have your picture taken with the guardsmen afterwards. 'Sangchamui' (a royal morning assembly) and the Royal Promenade are also re-enacted at 11.30am from April to June and September to November, except on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The National Folk Museum of Korea is also located on the Gyeongbokgung grounds, and its early history section is complete with plenty of authentic-looking replicas, but very few actual authentic pieces from the era. English is on every sign, however, and virtually every area of the museum has an explanation in English, sometimes difficult to find in Korea. Please note that this museum opens between 9am – 5 or 6pm depending on the season, and is closed on Tuesdays.

The National Palace Museum of Korea is also located here and gives information about royal life, palace architecture and ancestral rites. English guides are available and the museum is open between 9am and 6pm (closed on Mondays).

Overall, Gyeongbokgung features a lot of restored buildings (including a throne hall, living quarters, official quarters and pavilions), complete with bright eye-popping colours. It is well worth a visit.

Directions: Take the Seoul subway to the Gyeongbokgung station on line 3, then take exit 5. Follow the corridors and stairs up to street level, and you'll see the palace to your right. Alternatively, take subway line 5 to Gwanghwamun Station, exit 2.

Opening Hours: 09:00 – 18:00 March – October, 09:00 – 17:00 November – February. Closed on Tuesdays. English tours occur during the day at 11:00, 13:30 and 15:30.

Admission: 3,000 Won

Official Website: <http://www.royalpalace.go.kr/html/eng/main/main.jsp>

War Memorial Museum

In our opinion, one of the best museums in Seoul, this is apparently Korea's only museum to be dedicated to the theme of war, and if you are keen to find out a little more about the history of the Korean War, then this is the place to come. Scores of exhibition rooms and interactive displays will keep you occupied for a whole afternoon, or maybe even longer.

Over 9,000 items are on display in a total of 7 exhibition rooms, including over 200 kinds of weapons. In front of the museum's entrance, you can also see tanks and planes, as well as one of Korea's most famous and iconic monuments: a statue depicting the true story of two brothers who, after being separated during the Korean War, met face to face on a battlefield; one fighting for North Korea, and one for the South. They famously cried and hugged each other in the middle of the battle, and the statue captures this moment. It is very moving to behold.

Movies also play inside the museum in different languages, giving more of a visual guide as to what went on during the country's time of civil war. This is one of few museums which has a lot to offer the English speaker – and although not everything is translated into English, the visuals and the movie narrations provide a great deal of useful information for western visitors.



War Memorial Museum - Adam Gregory



theSouthKoreatravelguide.com Overall Rating



Out the front of the museum



The welcoming iconic statues



Inside the touching memorial



An example of some of the displays

We really cannot recommend this museum highly enough, and as already mentioned, it is well worth spending an entire half day there at least.

Directions:

5 minute walk from Samgakji Station (subway line 4), or 10 minute walk from Namyeong Station (subway line 1)

Opening hours:

09:00 – 18:00, with the last admittance at 17:00. Closed on Mondays (if Monday is a public holiday, then it will close the day after the holiday finishes)

Entry:

3,000 won for adults, 1,000 won for children.

Website:

www.warmemo.or.kr