

S5 Grand Tour Report



Class: 5A (Group1)

Destination: Seoul

Date: 26-29 April
2015

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Introduction

With the school kindly support, our class chose Seoul as the destination of our grand tour from 26 April to 29 April 2015. Apart from releasing stress, we would like to get in touch with the Korean culture and have a memorable four-day trip with our classmates and teachers.

Reflection: Day1

Spot description: Trickeye Museum

Trickeye museum was the first place that we headed to after we got off our flight. It is true that we have one 3D art museum in Hong Kong too but this one in Seoul was much bigger. Everyone was amazed at first glance of the place. It was colorfully decorated and filled with amusingly odd art and decorations that seldom be seen in Hong Kong. Apart from those 3D paintings on the wall, some creatively decorative items were placed at the entrance. For instance, chairs that with backs that printed with a naked butt. People would look trousers-less as they sit on it. With all those creatively odd ideas, this place made us laugh even though we had spent four exhausting hours on the plane.



We have fun in the Trickeye Museum.

Spot description: Hongdae

Seoul is undoubtedly spotted with shopping spots. We soon went to Hongdae nearby after visiting Trickeye Museum. Hongdae was truly a shopping paradise for youngsters. Though there were not much of brand name stores, this place was full of boutiques that sell inexpensive trendy clothes, and so as stalls that served with tasty local food. It was a pleasure to spend an hour of evening on this street due to the scenery of colorful neon lights and the delighting smells of street food. Surely, we adore the youthful vigor of Hongdae.

Reflection:

The overall experience in Day 1 could be rounded up by “Experiencing the art and energy of a modern city”. Within one day, we have had quite a thorough understanding about the modern life of Seoul. People there love art and know exactly how to enjoy life.

Though the flight was rather tiring, everybody was psyched when we arrived at the Trickeye Museum. We ran around the room and took pictures nonstop like everybody has become a different person. This proves the power of art well. There are so many kinds and forms of art. We often complain about our stressful life on Facebook then the next thing we do is to bury ourselves in smart phone games. Yet, after Day 1, making good use of art for relaxing was what we learnt to do. The citizens of Seoul know it. They enjoy creativity and oddly amusing ideas that exist in artworks because they are cheered up by them, and so should us.

We have also learned a lot at Hongdae Street. Not only things we bought there but also things that we observed there. We love Hong Kong as a developed modern international city but it is lacking its own characters. At Hongdae, though the tourist flow is huge mostly due to its trendy modern attractions such as the latest Korean fashion trend for young people and the vigorousness of the young crowd, the Korean tradition also becomes one of the biggest attractions somehow. For instance, tourists would love to have traditional Korean barbeque that is served at Hongdae. Instead of considering it as an old fashion, they think that it is a trendy thing to do. This is very impressive since people usually

visit an international city like Seoul mostly for its fashion but Seoul is successful of balancing both trendy attraction and the ones with its own traditional characters. At Hongdae, we learnt that the internationalism and traditionalism could be coexisted in tourism of a city.

Reflection: Day2

Spot description: University of Seoul Description

On the second day of the tour, we visited a famous university that almost every Korean would like to study in there and receive the education. University of Seoul is top ranked around the university in Korea and we are lucky to have the chance to visit there.

First, there is a briefing talk introducing university in Seoul and the subjects that they learn generally in their classroom. Moreover, the speakers briefly described their school's foundation and students' specialty. We noticed the fee of that university of Seoul is the lowest in Seoul. It is no wonder why the university is such famous and popular as their education is good and the fee is even inexpensive at all. They gave us the gift of files and bookmarks after listening to the briefing talk, and our school gave the scarves as gifts to them. Seven students studying in the university then self-introduce themselves and lead us to tour the university.



A photo taken with friendly Korean students from the University of Seoul.

Spot description: Dongdaemun

Dongdaemun consists of traditional market and shopping centers. There is a shopping centre called APM and some cosmetic shops, shopping mall around Dongdaemun. Moreover, there are some local food stall selling local foods such as fish cake, pan-fried glutinous rice cake, etc. It mainly wholesales clothes and sells domestic products. There are inexpensive Korean clothes for sale in a Hanbok shop, and also shoes and local food.

Reflection:

Nice students of University of Korea brought us to visit the school. They chatted with us in English and we are glad to communicate together as they showed concerns about us. Some students asked us some questions and would like to know about the schedules of this trip. We responded the students that we have visited 3D Trick Eye Museum the day before and we were having a 4 days 3 night trip. After that, we also talked about our favorite idols. At last, we took pictures and selfies together to collect the valuable memories spend together. All of us jumped to take a picture and we played joyfully. It is our honor to be with them. We are glad to meet new friends that day as we seldom meet students from different countries. And they are really nice, were keep chatting with us while visiting different part of the university. I learnt the interpersonal communication skills when I was chatting with the local students. We cannot forget the unforgettable experience for us to meet those generous students in Korea and I would like to visit Seoul and see them again. The view of the University of Seoul is wonderful and has a different feeling in Hong Kong. In there, a glorious sight can be seen and the university is spacious and it lets students have enough space to develop their skills like language skills and sports skills. To conclude, it is my new experience to visit other countries' school. It is worthwhile for us to visit the University of Seoul and we spend the greatest time together. We hope there is another chance for us to visit other university and meet new friends.

After visiting the University of Seoul, we were glad that we had a chance to participate in the process of making traditional Kim Chi. The Kim Chi teacher, introduced the history and background of Kim chi to us. Kim chi is ubiquitous and we can see it in every meal in Korean. Every country has different eating habits. Koreans like eating Kim chi and seaweed soup while hongkongers like eating dim sum. It is obvious that Kim Chi is the national food of Korea and it has over 200 varieties. Unlike Korea, Hong Kong does not have a lot of representative foods. In fact, there are some traditional foods in Hong Kong, such as egg puffs, waffles and so on. We believe that hongkongers can preserve our own history and traditional foods as what koreans do today. In addition to Kim Chi, hanbok is also one of a kind and special representative of Korean. We tried on the hanbok and we really appreciate the amazing Korean culture, including the unique and traditional clothes of Korean. When we were told about the backround and culture of hanbok, we discovered that our knowledge is very insufficient. Because of our inadequate knowledge, we decided to borrow more books from the library in order to understand more about the history of different countries. We will also take every chance to learn more from the history of Hong Kong.

Although products in Dongdaemun were not famous brand, the prices are reasonable and many people like students can buy necessities, clothes, shoes, and local food there. It is a good choice for students and low-income earners to go for buying products with fair quality and reasonable price.

Reflection: Day 3

Spot description: Everland

On the third day of the tour, we finally arrived at our long-awaited spot, Everland, which is the largest theme park in Southern Korea and operated by the Samsung Group. With 6.6 million visitors, it ranked thirteenth in the world for amusement park attendance in 2011.

Everland consists of 5 distinct theme zones: Global Fair, American Adventure, Magic Land, European Adventure and Zoo-topia, the diverse range of theme zones suitable for people from all walks of life. Not only visually captivating, the various architectural styles invited us into the culture and history of other nations, such as the Ancient and Medieval Periods of Europe. T-express is one of the attractions inside Overland, it has world's steepest wooden roller coaster record, it have successfully captivated a half of our classmates decided to challenge this impossible mission.



A precious moment spent with best friends.

Spot description: Myeong-dong

After a long journey on bus, we arrived at Myeong-dong which is one of the Seoul's main shopping and tourism districts featuring mid to high priced retail stores and international or local brand outlets, including Forever 21, Lacosta, Tommy Hilfiger, Louis Vuitton, Aland and American Apparel, as well as Korean cosmetics brands such as Missha, Etude House and Nature Republic. Although it covers 0.99 km², the same brand of the shop appeared more than once in the same street, therefore it is arduous for us to familiarize the districts within a short period of time. Myeong-dong also has family restaurants, fast food, plus Korean, Western and Japanese dining options. With the ubiquitous restaurants over the street, it is quite facile for us to get far from hunger.

Spot description: Insa-dong

Insadong was originally two towns whose names ended in the syllables "In" and "Sa". They were divided by a stream which ran along Insadong's current main street. Insa-dong is located at the centre of Seoul. In the past, it was the largest market for antiques and artworks in Korea. It displays old but precious and traditional goods. The galleries are the heartbeat of Insa-dong. There are about 100 galleries in the area and we can see every example of traditional Korean fine art from paintings to sculptures. In Insa-dong, we can find Unhyeon Palace, Bosingak bell pavilion, and Jongno Tower easily. The most famous galleries are Hakgojae Gallery, which functions as the center of folk art, Gana Art Gallery, which promotes many promising artists, and Gana Art Center. There is a very special thing in Insa-dong-there are no cars on the streets at 10:00 to 22:00 every Sunday. Stores set up booths outside and others set up shops. There are traditional performances and exhibits which attracts a myriad of visitors too. It becomes an open area for the citizens to have fun there.



Ice cream sandwiches that we have never tried before.

Reflection:

When we first entered Everland, we felt extremely excited as we did not have the experience of playing amusement rides together. The first thing we did was queuing up for T-express which is the must-play roller coaster in this theme park.

Through playing this roller coaster together, we built up a closer friendship than before. It is because some group mates were afraid of playing roller coaster. However, they were still willing to try once as it was a precious time for all of us to visit theme park in Korea. They could challenge themselves, which we really appreciate a lot. Overcoming fear is the key to success. It is vital that we have courage to face fear even though things are out of our expectation. The more we experience, the more we grow. It is inevitable that we may face unexpected difficulties in our lives, with the result that we need to have strong sense of courage in order to overcome all obstacles whatever we face. This commendable experience provides us with an opportunity to challenge ourselves and overcome our dread.

Besides, we, all group mates were definitely in a same boat. What we could do was only trust our group mates. Those three minutes were of crucial importance. With strong team spirit, it strengthened our courage. We could calm down and enjoyed our exciting experience. It is believed that courage and unity can help each other to face and tackle the most challenging difficulty in our school life which is Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education in the coming year. We are united after that day.

However, the theme park was really crowded on that day. Each amusement ride required a wait of more than 1.5 hours so we could only play one game at last. It was a pity. The theme park is really too big. It is hard for us to try all amusement rides once so it is hoped that we can visit it and play more amusement rides together again.

Insa-dong is a place selling myriad of traditional goods. We saw a lot of traditional artworks, teahouses, galleries and restaurants on both sides of the alleys. Walking along alleys, we felt like we were in Temple Street. The only difference between Hong Kong and Korea is products and food they sell. In Insa-dong, they sell Korean taffy and traditional pajeon (Korean pancake). It was a new experience for all of us because we did not taste it before. We saw plenty of traditional Korean fine art from paintings to sculptures, the list is endless. While in Hong Kong, we may have stinky tofu, traditional wooden chopsticks, or 'fortune-telling'. It shows different culture between Korea and Hong Kong. It was eye-opener as we could see many stunning and traditional things in the alleys.

What impressed us the most was the great difference in Insa-dong compared with Dongdaemun and Myeong-dong. These two places are famous for clothes and cosmetic products while in Insa-dong, most likely we could find are traditional products instead of fashionable and trendy clothing. This impressed us a lot when we first visited this place as we seldom go to places that selling traditional goods, artworks only even in Hong Kong. Therefore, visiting this place provides a precious opportunity for us to learn and try to enjoy traditions. The tide is changing. Many youngsters today do not appreciate traditional things which cause

traditions to decline. We were one of them before. However, after visiting Insa-dong, it totally changes our minds. We start to admire traditions and learn to respect this kind of old things. When we go back to Hong Kong, we will tell others to start appreciating traditional things because they actually are our traditional culture.

Not only selling traditional goods, but also selling modern goods and food in order to attract more foreigners and locals to visit. We also tried ice-cream with macaron. It is common to see many locals queue up for eating this. It shows that the fusion between tradition and modern turns Insa-dong to become a hotspot for local youngsters, adults and tourists alike. This is a kind of preservation because Insa-dong has a long history. Today, it becomes a well-known tourist spot and enables all people to purchase those traditional artworks, hanbok, tea sets or wooden masks. It reflects that this place can be perceived as preservation of heritage and economic development at the same time. It thus raised our awareness to protect and preserve old things. Everyone has the responsibility to treasure historical things because those are the symbol of history. It recorded all things that happened in the past. If we do not take the responsibility to cherish old things, history will be lost forever.

Those shops along alleys, tell history of Korea. Their culture are quite different compared with Hong Kong. While we were strolling along alleys, we have a clear understanding of their traditional culture. It was a pity that we unfortunately could not watch traditional performances and exhibits in there. But still, we could know more about their culture by visiting Insa-dong. Most importantly, we know that we should treasure our own culture as well.

Reflection: Day 4

Spot description: Military Demarcation Line

The last day of grand tour, we visited Military Demarcation Line, Demilitarized Zone and Dorasan Station. Military Demarcation Line is the middle line of North and South Korea. We could see North Korea in this line. North and South Korea need to stay 4km outside the line.

Demilitarized Zone was established at a buffer zone between North and South Korea. At last, we went to the Dorasan Station. It is that only chance that can travel to North Korea. There is the most serious place in both South and North Korea .We should be earnest attitude when we visited.



We were visiting the Military Demarcation Line.

Reflection:

After visiting the Military Demarcation Line, we learned that wars are not only causing death, but also the separation of a race. This Military Demarcation Line reminds us that wars are terrifying and all of us need to treasure for having peace.

As the Military Demarcation Line does not allow any Military affairs and no people are living there, many animals and plants can live in this area and they are not affected by human. The Military Demarcation Line also reminds us that we are also responsible to protect our environment.

After these four-days' trip, we returned to Hong Kong. Most of our classmates did not want to go back to Hong Kong because they would like to stay there and keep this wonderful moment. Hence, we learned that "Work Hard, Play Hard". It is time for us to work hard and fight for the DSE exam.

Conclusion

Although we got a different culture with all the Koreans, we found that they also got a hustling life style same as Hong Kong. They also work very hard to fight for their life. Therefore, our group realized that we need to learn from them and keep Hong Kong people's "can do spirit".

After these four-days' tour, we built up an unprecedented bond with our classmates and teachers. With our school's support, we got this special opportunity to learn and got a closer relationship with each other.

Member List

Teachers: Ms. Law Ka Ming

Ms. Tai Ming Na

Mr. Hung Chun Hei

Leader : Lui Yat long (5A-24)

Members: Cheung Siu Ki (5A-3)

Chiu Hoi Ching (5A-4)

Chou Sze Ching (5A-5)

Ho Wing Lam (5A-7)

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Wong Chun Wai (5A-17)

Wong Tsz Ching (5A-18)

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