

KING LING COLLEGE

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S5A Group 2 Seoul



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Introduction

Soaring beyond the score. In March 2015, all form five students were fortunate to visit Korea in grand tour. During the four-day trip to the capital city, Seoul, we enjoyed the moments of happiness, explored the unique cultures of foreign country, and experienced the independent livelihood. After coming through all of these, we grow. Grand tour was definitely the once-in-a-lifetime memory that we would treasure not today but lifelong. In this report, we are going to unveil every single worth-remembering moment and share the collective memories to all of you.

Day 1 Reflection

Trick Eye Museum & Ice Museum

Spot description:

On the very first day of our trip, we visited Trick Eye Museum. Located underground, the museum was full of mysteries and surprises. There were in total eight exhibition zones placing variety of illusion painting artworks. From horse racing to ballet dancing, visitors can act whatsoever roles they are keen on with the help of paintings, and take some awesome pictures with friends.

Located on the same basement, there are the associate Ice Museum. Other than the typical ice sculptures that can be found in any ice exhibitions, the museum we visited provide an ice slide for tourists to play. If you have not tried it, try it. Because it can lead you to the world out of the tip of the iceberg.



Sitting on a fancy car made of ice blocks in Ice Museum.

The two fascinating museums are definitely the must-go spots in Seoul. If you are looking for somewhere to create beautiful collective memories with friends or family, here is the ideal choice.

Reflection:

We were so excited to visit Trick Eye Museum as our first touring spot. Although we were told to have no longer than 2 hours to visit the place, it still left a great impression on us. Standing on the right position, tourists can take awesome illusion pictures like falling off the bridge, hanging on the wall, flying on the sky as a petite angel. All you had to do is to ask the nearby friends to stand by with your camera. In one of the photo spots, we paired up to act the murder scene. One of us acted the murderer, another acted the victim. All of the bystanders burst out laughing when watching those hilarious postures! The visual effects were fabulous. The museums did live up to our high expectation.

Unlike the usual art museums that can be found in Hong Kong, the Trick Eye Museum is an eye-opener. Instead of exhibiting the masterpieces on the frames or glass-made boxes, tourists can actually interact with the artworks. It made the artworks more captivating, simply because visitors can enjoy the fun brought by the paintings. It is hoped that the HKSAR government can promote the creative industry by restructuring the bored museum into a dynamic one. Government can take the initiative to sponsor the application technology into the artworks, in a bid to make the artworks more entertaining.

What impressed us most is the etiquettes upheld by the helpful Koreans. Whenever we asked for assistance, they helped us with no hesitation. I recalled once we had to take group photos, a helpful Korean tourist nearby came to us and asked “what can I help you?” politely. We are so thankful about his active assistance. Seoul was undoubtedly an easy-going dynamic city.



We pretend to be ballet dancers.



Accidentally broke into a giant's home!

Day 2 Reflection

Sinchon

Spot description:

Sinchon is located around Ewha Women's University, one of the most famous Korea women's universities. This street is a popular destination for teenage girls. There are a number of fashion stalls lining the streets selling clothes, accessories, and cosmetics.

Reflection:

Walking along Sinchon did promote our understanding towards the fashion trends of Korea. At the same time, we did observe a truth that it is possible to have brand shops and small stores coexisted in Korea.

In Hong Kong, brand shops have been replacing small stores. The business has been monopolized by few major developers. This phenomenon is well known as developer hegemony. Under the situation, youngsters starting own business is just a mission impossible. High rental is one of the major challenges that teenagers are unable to deal with.

On the contrary, it is commonplace to see brand shops and small stores coexist at the same time in Korea. Different sizes of commercial firms, from department stores to street stalls, are highly concentrated. Both are welcome by Koreans and able to earn a considerable yield under competition.

We hope to have the same scene in Hong Kong as it is such a pity that a huge amount of shops having distinguishing features have been closed. Homogeneous products have flooded the Hong Kong market.

Seoul Kimchi Academy House

Spot description:

On day two, we had a special chance to visit the Seoul Kimchi Academy House to have a hands-on experience of making kimchi. For us, this was the first time we learnt to make kimchi.



Reflection:

This unique hands-on experience enabled us to learn to treasure the food as we experienced that finishing cooking a meal was a slog. At the beginning, we all thought that making kimchi was a piece of cake as we were told that we just need to use the prepared paste to pickle the cabbage. However, thing turned out contrary to our thought because of our awkwardness. After making kimchi, we learnt to taste the effort of the cook rather than just the taste. Hence, every time we can see kimchi when we are having meal, we try to eat some kimchi although we do not like it.

Besides, it also reminded us a meaningful idiom, whenever there is a will there will be a way. Although our kimchi might not be really good-looking, we finished it with intension.

We were told that the kimchi is distributed to the elderly in aged home and the orphans. It is believed that they could feel our efforts when eating the kimchi. Although we could not take the kimchi away, the sense of satisfaction and the experience were the best rewards.

The University of Seoul

Spot description:

The University of Seoul was our first destination on the second day. It ranks the fourth place among the top universities in Seoul. The environment is stunning and comfortable. There is also a large grassland provided for students to have picnic together.



We put on a big smile and take a lot of photos with the Korean students!

Reflection:

We did have a great time with the students there. They introduced the background of the University of Seoul and guided us to stroll along the school. The students there were nice. We found out a fact that it is never easy to enter a university in Seoul because of high grades required and the huge cost needed. Most of the students have to work for a part-time job to earn for their tuition fees.



We have a great time with the Korean students.

Compared with Hong Kong students, where many of us mostly rely on parents, the Korean students are role models for us with their independence. They would not seek their parents' help with ease before trying hard. We should be as independent as how the Korean students behave.

At the end of the tour, we became friends with the students. We exchanged our contact numbers and had a lot of photos taken. We are going to miss them much.



The Korean students are really nice and we enjoy the school tour very much.

Day 3 Reflection

Everland Resort

Spot description:

We visited the well-known Everland Resort, which had taken us about 2 hours for transport. Operated by Samsung Everland, it serves an average of 6.6 million visitors a year, and it ranks the 13th in the world theme park. The whole park is divided into 5 areas: the Global Fair, the Zoo-Topia, the European Adventure, the Magic Land and the American Adventure.

Reflection:

After entering the park, we quickly headed to T-Express, the most famous roller coaster constructed by wood. Most of our classmates gathered together and we were looking forward to riding it. Despite the endless queue, it was worth a try. It was a brand new experience for all of us to be courageous riding the roller coaster together. Besides creating an unforgettable experience, the achievement also strengthened our bond with each other.

Apart from the fun and joy, some of us were surprised by our observation towards the manners of the locals. Unlike other places in our trip, the Everland was full of children. What had surprised us was



This is the photo we took when we were waiting for our ride on the T Express in Everland. The whole class were very excited about the ride and we thought that the event was worth memorizing, that's why we decided to take a picture of all of us in the queue.

their politeness. Whenever we greeted people younger than us, they would respond us with a clear feedback and a proper bow. This phenomenon might be common in Korea but definitely rare in Hong Kong. By how Hong Kong children react to greeting, some keep staring at their phone when responding to their parents, while others simply ignore their parents, there is definitely a room for improvement. This reminded us that there is no end to learning.

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Three of us took this picture near the entrance of the resort, where the whole street was decorated with all kinds of beautiful flowers.

Insa-dong

Spot description:

On the third day, we went to Insa-dong, the 'antique street', given such a name because of the shops selling a variety of conventional and symbolic Korea products. For us, it should be better known as a place with a combination of tradition and trend. Not only can visitors buy unique souvenirs, but can also find out different kinds of snacks along the street.



One of the local snacks found in Insa-dong selling ice-cream. Famous for its non-typical ice cream cone.

Reflection:

It was a fascinating experience for all of us. It is believed that most of the people have very little understanding towards Korea culture traditionally. Without deep rooted understanding, we have all stereotyped South Korea as a place famous for its cosmetic surgery and also K-pop culture because these have become viral nowadays in Korea. And because of this stereotype, people then have a limited opportunity to get to know more about Korea's tradition. Fortunately, we have this special opportunity to jump out of this generalisation in this spot. Nevertheless, it was a memorable time for us to enjoy the street food in Insa-dong from North to West, and discover the another side of Korea through strolling around the traditional shops.

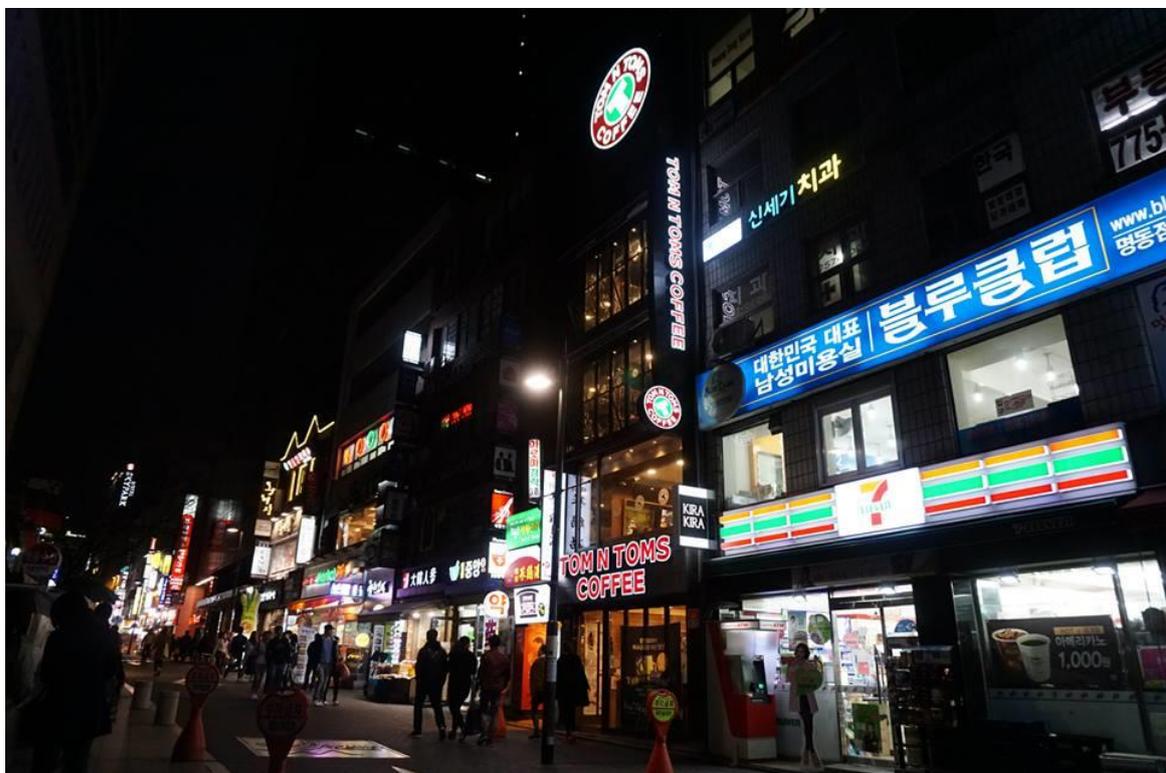
Myeongdong

Spot description:

With a myriad of cosmetic shops, brands shops which are in vogue around the world, Myeongdong has become one of the must-go destinations for tourists visiting Seoul. It is located at the center of Seoul where it has been developed into a famous commercial area. We saw plenty of youngsters shopping and eating with relaxation. A wide range of merchandises was being sold there such as accessories, clothes and shoes. The products sold were comparatively inexpensive.

Reflection:

Because of its high profile, we were attracted to know more about Myeongdong. We did experience the best culture of Korea in Myeongdong.



Myeongdong is full of cosmetic shops and brands shops selling accessories, clothes and shoes.

With thousands of Chinese visiting Myeongdong, most salespersons were able to speak Mandarin and English. Not only young generations working in famous brand shops, but older generations selling traditional Korean products were able to speak Mandarin. It was a good for us because language barrier was the most worrying when visiting Seoul

Similar to Hong Kong, a shopping paradise, there are a number of special goods in Myeongdong suitable for souvenir. Everyone did carry a lot of bags filled with snacks, clothes and shoes. Salespersons there were nice and friendly. They chatted with us, asking for our opinions about Korea.

Unlike the atmosphere in Hong Kong, Koreans hold a more positive attitude towards tourists. Although the considerable amount of visitors may be detrimental to the environment, leading to inflation, they would not be impolite and selfish to us.

The kind attitude of Koreans is the most outstanding. Trying to make visitors comfortable when shopping, learning to speak foreign languages, smiling, and chatting with us, they do put themselves in our shoes. These should be appreciated and learnt by Hong Kong people. We have to consider others' feeling but not only putting our own interests as the first priority.

Day 4 Reflection

Demilitarized Zone

Spot description:

On the last day of our trip, we went to Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), which is the nearest place to North Korea. We first went to Imjingak where a watchtower, a train from North Korea, a bell symbolizing the hope for peace and freedom of bridge lie. Freedom of bridge is an access to North Korea and was named when the prisoners of war returned from North Korea and regained freedom.



A train comes from North Korea.

We watched a film about the history of North Korea and South Korea. A statue of two men uniting a separate world illustrates the hope for unification of two countries.

Reflection:

On the way to it, the view of countryside spread far beyond the horizon did put us in surprise. We were told that a lot of families were separated because of wars. The lucky ones are able to meet each other once a year while the unlucky ones are unable to see their family members forever.

When we arrived, we deeply felt how strong citizens' desire was to have two countries united. Not only citizens are allowed to express their hope for peace, but also travelers are able to do so by writing on silk ribbons and have them hang on wires.



Visitors write on silk ribbons to express their blessing.

Through watching the video, we understood more about the history of two countries. To every classmate's dismay, two countries' relations are under strain at present because of the continuous wars in recent years. It was depressing to realize that they were originally one country.

It also reminded us the Hong Kong-Mainland conflict. Recently, some protesters behaved violently and discriminated against mainland visitors. While the Koreans look forward to having unification, Hongkongers and mainlanders keep destroying the peaceful relationship. As visitors to Korea, we hope to have unification; as Hong Kong people, we wish for an improved relationship with mainlanders.

Dorasan Station

Spot description:

29th March was our last day in Seoul. We went to Dorasan Station, which started its business in 2002. However, this modern infrastructure did stop providing services because of the worsening relationship between North and South Korea. We bought some tickets from the ticket office as a keepsake.



This is Dorasan Station with modern design.

Reflection:

Although we had a rush schedule, we enjoyed visiting the Dorasan Station. In Hong Kong, there is a similar railway system with Dorasan Station. Though, the distance of the train in Hong Kong between station and station is quite short that does require more than 10 minutes. However, the service provided in Dorasan Station is a long-distance travelling.

Even with worsening relationship, which caused the service stop of trains since 2008, the government of South Korea did not dismantle the station. They chose to keep the station as a tourist spot. We could know how their relationship was in the past. It is a pity that the connection between two countries cannot be linked through the Dorasan Station. It seems that some residents still want the relationship to be improved even there are a lot of unfavorable conditions. The station gave us a message indirectly that we should not give up our relationship with others easily. If there are barriers between us, we need to find out the solution instead of ignoring it.



Part of the railway symbolizes the Dorasan Station.

Conclusion

During the four-day trip, we created collective memories before graduation. Having a trip with our classmates and teachers allowed all of us to build the strongest bonding ever.

By experiencing the hand-on kimchi making, we learnt the importance of filial piety through community care service. The combination of modern technologies and ancient masterpiece which motivated us to think out of the box in the Trick Eye Museum. The 38th parallel inspired the younger generation, like us, the lessons learned from history. These taught us a very important message: jumping out from the 5A classroom can also learn a lot.

It reminds us the school vision of last year: Soaring beyond the score.