



EXCLUSIVE
WORLDWIDE

cool loco

SEOUL

ReThinkRelo series:

UNCONVENTIONAL TRAVEL TIPS



Your guide
Natalia Kotarska

Culture

Business

Safety

Transport

Food

Accommodation

Local Insights and Tips

Free Time

here's WHAT'S INSIDE

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Explore RethinkRelo – our knowledge hub for relocation professionals, expats, and anyone adapting to life in a new city, featuring industry insights, expert advice and local guides.

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about SEOUL

QUICK OVERVIEW

Seoul is the capital and largest metropolis of the Republic of Korea, stretching along the Han River in the country's northwest. The city blends royal palaces, hyper-modern districts, buzzing food culture, and one of the world's most efficient urban infrastructures.

[VISIT OFFICIAL WEBSITE](#)[VIEW ON MAP](#)

EVERYDAY LIFE AND CITY CHARACTER

Daily life moves fast but remains highly organized: efficient public transport, long opening hours, strong café culture, and a work-driven rhythm balanced by late-night dining and entertainment.

HEART OF KOREA

As the nation's political, economic, and cultural core, Seoul hosts global tech firms, major financial institutions, and international events. It is a leading Asian hub for innovation, fashion, entertainment, and digital industries.

about **BUSINESS LANDSCAPE**

GLOBAL BUSINESS HEADQUARTERS

Seoul is one of Asia's leading business hubs, known for its advanced economy, global reach, and strong innovation ecosystem. The city blends powerful conglomerates with a fast-growing startup scene, making it a key gateway to both regional and international markets.

10+ global Industry leaders

Headquartered in Seoul

Seoul is home to the headquarters of 11 Fortune Global 500 companies spanning technology, automotive, finance, manufacturing, and energy.

approx. 23% of Korea's GDP

Seoul Metropolitan Area

Seoul generates more than one-fifth of Korea's total economic output, confirming its role as the country's main business, financial, and administrative center.

\$10.1B startup market

Thriving Startup Ecosystem

Startup investment market reached \$10.1 billion in 2025, with Seoul acting as the country's main hub for founders, investors, accelerators, and technology companies.



about **BUSINESS LANDSCAPE**

GLOBAL BUSINESS HEADQUARTERS

Seoul serves as the command center for major global corporations such as Samsung, Hyundai Motor Company, and LG Corporation. Alongside them, the Korea Exchange anchors the country's financial activity, reinforcing Seoul's role as a regional investment hub.

DIGITAL ECONOMY AND STARTUPS

The city is a global leader in technology and digital innovation, supported by strong government initiatives and high connectivity. Companies like Naver and Kakao dominate the local digital landscape, while a vibrant startup ecosystem continues to grow in areas such as AI, fintech, and e-commerce.

CONSUMER MARKET AND URBAN SERVICES

Seoul's large and affluent population drives a dynamic service economy, including retail, education, hospitality, and finance. The city's fast-paced lifestyle and high purchasing power create strong demand for both local and international brands, making it an attractive market for service-oriented businesses.

about BUSINESS LANDSCAPE

INDUSTRIAL LEADERSHIP AND R&D

Seoul is served by Incheon International Airport, one of the world's busiest and most efficient airports, providing direct connections to over 180 cities globally. The city's transport infrastructure — including an extensive metro, high-speed rail, and highway network — supports seamless domestic and international business operations.

INTERNATIONAL ACCESS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Seoul offers exceptional global connectivity, supported by Incheon International Airport and one of the world's most efficient public transport systems. This infrastructure, combined with advanced digital networks, makes the city a key logistics and business travel hub in Northeast Asia.





top NEIGHBORHOODS

GANGNAM

Seoul's luxury and business powerhouse, filled with corporate headquarters, upscale shopping streets, private clinics, and high-rise living. Ideal for professionals seeking premium services and vibrant nightlife, with excellent metro connectivity.

YEOUIDO

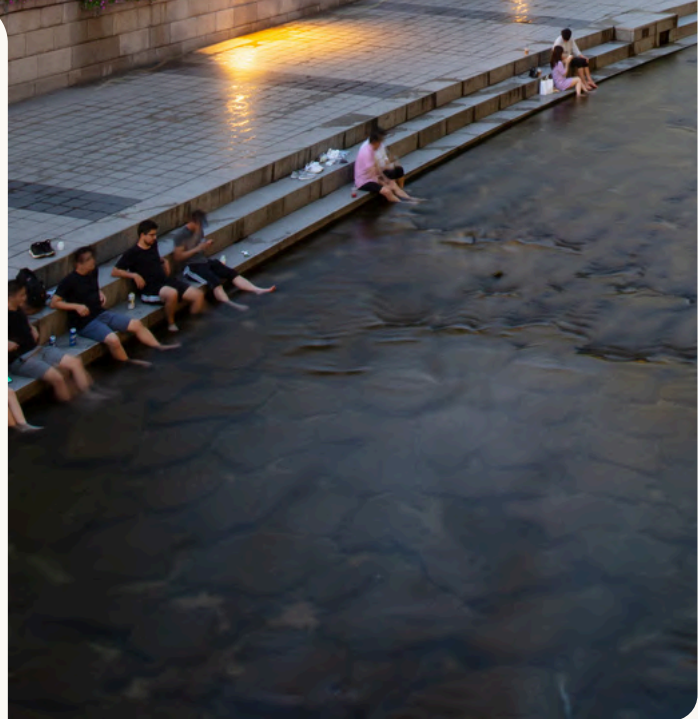
Seoul's main financial and political hub, featuring office towers, riverside parks, and modern residential complexes. Calm on weekends, busy on weekdays.

INSADONG

A cultural heartland packed with art galleries, tea houses, craft stores, and traditional architecture. Perfect for those drawn to history, slower rhythms, and walkable streets filled with character.

MYEONGDONG

One of Seoul's busiest retail zones, known for cosmetics, global fashion brands, and nonstop street food. Great for short stays, city lovers, and those who enjoy constant urban energy.



top NEIGHBORHOODS



ITAEWON

Multicultural and expat-friendly, offering global cuisine, nightlife, and diverse housing options. Popular with foreigners, creatives, and anyone looking for a more international lifestyle.

DONGDAEMUN

Fashion markets, late-night malls, and large cultural complexes dominate this area. A practical choice for shoppers, designers, and those who enjoy a lively atmosphere around the clock.

JONGNO

Home to major palaces and traditional villages alongside government offices and business streets. Ideal for residents who appreciate history with central-city convenience.

HONGDAE

Youthful and artistic, famous for live music, indie cafés, street performances, and trend-setting shops. Best for students, young professionals, and creative communities.

about ACCOMMODATION

SERVICED AND FURNISHED

Serviced apartments typically include full furniture, kitchen appliances, Wi-Fi, security staff, and sometimes gyms or pools. Many buildings offer 24/7 reception and maintenance services - ideal for expats and corporate stays.

AVAILABILITY AND DEMAND

Supply is generally strong, but quality units in central and well-connected districts can move quickly, especially in areas close to business hubs, subway stations, and international communities. Booking early is recommended for corporate relocations and longer stays.

SAFETY & AMENITIES

Modern complexes usually provide CCTV, secured entrances, underground parking, elevators, and communal facilities. Newer developments focus heavily on comfort and building security.

public TRANSPORT

SUBWAY

Extensive, clean, fast, and English-friendly. The metro connects all major districts and suburbs, making it the quickest way to travel. Trains run frequently with clear English signage and announcements.

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BUSES

An extensive bus network connects areas beyond the metro system. Blue buses operate major routes, Green buses provide local connections, and Yellow buses serve central districts. Real-time arrival information is available via mobile apps.

TAXIS

Kakao Taxi is the dominant ride-hailing app. Widely available, reliable, and English-friendly. Standard and premium taxis are affordable compared to European equivalents.

T-MONEY CARD

The T-money card works on all subway lines, buses, and taxis across Seoul. Purchase at any convenience store or subway station. Reloadable and compatible with contactless payment.

BIKE SHARING

With stations across major districts, Seoul Bike is ideal for short urban journeys and cycling along the Han River. The system is affordable, easy to use, and well integrated with the city's public transport network.

must-see ATTRACTIONS

GYEONGBOKGUNG PALACE

The largest of Seoul's Five Grand Palaces, built in 1395. Features the National Folk Museum and changing of the guard ceremony.

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BUKCHON HANOK VILLAGE

A preserved hillside neighborhood of traditional wooden homes offering narrow lanes, cultural workshops, and scenic city views.

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N SEOUL TOWER

Seoul's most recognized landmark perched on Namsan Mountain. Panoramic views of the city skyline. Reachable by cable car or a scenic hiking trail.

[LEARN MORE](#)



must-see ATTRACTIONS

DONGDAEMUN DESIGN PLAZA

An architectural icon designed by Zaha Hadid, hosting exhibitions, fashion events, design markets, and cultural experiences throughout the year.

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CHEONGGYECHEON STREAM

A revitalized urban waterway running through downtown Seoul, popular for riverside walks, seasonal events, and relaxing in the middle of the city's business district.

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STARFIELD LIBRARY

A spectacular public library located inside COEX Mall, featuring towering bookshelves and contemporary architecture, making it one of Seoul's most photographed indoor attractions.

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local CUISINE

KIMCHI

Korea's iconic fermented vegetable dish, usually made with napa cabbage, seasoned with chili, garlic, and spices, served as a daily side dish with nearly every Korean meal.



BIBIMBAP

Rice bowl topped with seasoned vegetables, an egg, and gochujang (chili paste). A balanced and flavorful everyday meal.



BULGOGI

Thinly sliced, marinated beef grilled at the table. One of Korea's most globally recognized dishes, sweet and savory with soy and sesame.



JAPCHAE

Glass noodles stir-fried with vegetables, mushrooms, and soy sauce. A classic dish served at celebrations and everyday meals alike.



TTEOKBOKKI

Chewy rice cakes in a spicy, sweet sauce. A beloved Korean street food found at pojangmacha (street stalls) across the city.

🏠 WHERE TO EAT

Seoul offers everything from traditional street food to Michelin-starred restaurants. For an exceptional fine dining experience, consider *La Yeon* for refined Korean cuisine, *Mingles* for creative seasonal dishes blending Korean and international influences, or *MOSU Seoul*, renowned for its innovative tasting menus.



do it LIKE A LOCAL

TAP AND GO EVERYWHERE

The T-money card is used across all transport systems and many shops, far easier than buying single tickets.

RESPECT SUBWAY CULTURE

Phones are kept quiet, calls avoided, and priority seating is strictly respected, especially for elderly passengers.

CASH FOR STREET FOOD

While Korea is highly cashless, many market stalls still prefer small bills when buying snacks.

BOW FOR POLITENESS

A slight bow is the standard greeting in Korea. It shows respect and appreciation. Deeper bows are used for formal occasions or elders.

LATE-NIGHT LIVING

Restaurants, cafés, and shops often operate until midnight or later, making evening social life a big part of Seoul culture.

remember, SAFETY FIRST

EMERGENCY NUMBERS



112 POLICE

119 FIRE & MEDICAL EMERGENCY



STREET SAFETY

Seoul is one of Asia's safest major cities. Violent crime is rare, but pickpocketing can occur in crowded markets and nightlife zones. Keep bags zipped in busy areas.



SAFE RIDES ONLY

Choose licensed taxis or well-known ride-hailing apps instead of hailing cars on the street. It's safer and usually cheaper.



KEEP COPIES HANDY

Carry a copy of your passport or ID. Police may request identification.





*Hey there,
this is me
who prepared this
cool loco
for you!*

Natalia Kotarska
Project Manager

19 March, 2026

by Agnieszka Karaś · 5min read

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