

Korea Trip April 2017 - By Senior Inst Margaret Rogers

With great anticipation we all made our way to Korea (land of the morning calm). The weather was lovely with mild days and crisp nights. Our Korea experience started with a little rest at the luxurious Novotel Ambassador Hotel then out for delicious traditional meal in the evening at one of the local restaurants in the backstreets near the hotel. After leaving Adelaide on Monday morning and arriving in Seoul on Tuesday morning it was great to have a lovely soft bed and a great sleep.



After a hearty breakfast offering traditional Korean as well as delicious western cuisine with Kwang Jhang Nim and Master Carol we headed off to the Kukkiwon, a reasonably steep walk, fairly close to the hotel we were staying at. There we met two grand masters and their assistants. We went in to the Kukkiwon training area where the demonstration team were practicing their stretching. Others were doing choreography. We toured the Kukkiwon Museum which houses many historical documents and commemorative objects that have been donated. Then straight to the office of Grand Master Haeman Park, president of Chungdokwan. He is very revered in Korea and it was a pleasure to meet with him and share a traditional Korean lunch, delicious duck served with condiments and wrapped in lettuce leaves.

After lunch experienced the Korean culture at the Olympic Park which is a huge open space in the middle of the city incorporating museums, leisure facilities, gardens, and a sculpture park. We visited Peace Plaza and the Olympic Museum which introduces the origins of the Olympics and its history, the dawn and development of modern Olympics and the process of becoming host and what can be achieved. Then straight to the Dojang for training. This dojang has been producing Taekwondo exponents for 45 years. Basic technique training focusing on stances and kicking techniques then Poomse.

Quick shower back at the Hotel then out to dinner with the Grandmasters. Grand Master Yoon Ahn Shin and his daughter Yong Ju accompanied us to dinner.



Day 2

After meeting for breakfast it was off to training the class consisted of Senior Poomse and competition style sparring. Really energetic class with lots of target work and bag work as well as combination techniques to improve speed and power.

Lunch was at a near by restaurant. It was a dish called bibimbap. Quite delicious.

From there it was off to a beautiful Buddhist Temple. At the temple they were preparing for upcoming Buddha's birthday celebrations.

The area was decorated with rows of brightly coloured lanterns. The temple was beautiful and serene. There were lovely gardens and a beautiful pagoda. We gathered on the side of the mountain in a flat clearing and practiced Poomse. There was a gentle breeze and the cherry blossoms were blowing delicately in the soft mountain breeze. It was truly a spiritual experience being in such a beautiful and tranquil place.



Early dinner then back to the Hotel for a quick shower and then off to the night markets.

Day 3

We were given Kumdo lesson using a wooden sword by Master Kim. We worked with a partner practising attacking and defence. It was a really enjoyable lesson. We had a short break and then we did a lesson in Hapkido releases. We were all given a World Hapkido T. Shirt as a gift.

We then headed back to the Kukkiwon for traditional lunch. Free time in the afternoon. Ins. Jenna and myself took the opportunity to explore some of the back streets around our hotel for a couple of hours. It is very hilly walk, and there is a lot of variety in the architecture.



Saturday was departure day for some of us. Some were staying on for an extra bit of sightseeing and other activities while others were heading off to other destinations. Farewells were said and then it was off to the airport to start the journey home.

It was a great trip. It was a great group of people. It was great to see the camaraderie, because we all have one thing in common and that is our passion for World Taekwondo.



This is my 5th trip now, I always enjoy the trip and the training. The experience always reinforces to me that the training we receive in SA is truly world class.

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