

An American in North Korea

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Fred Talk
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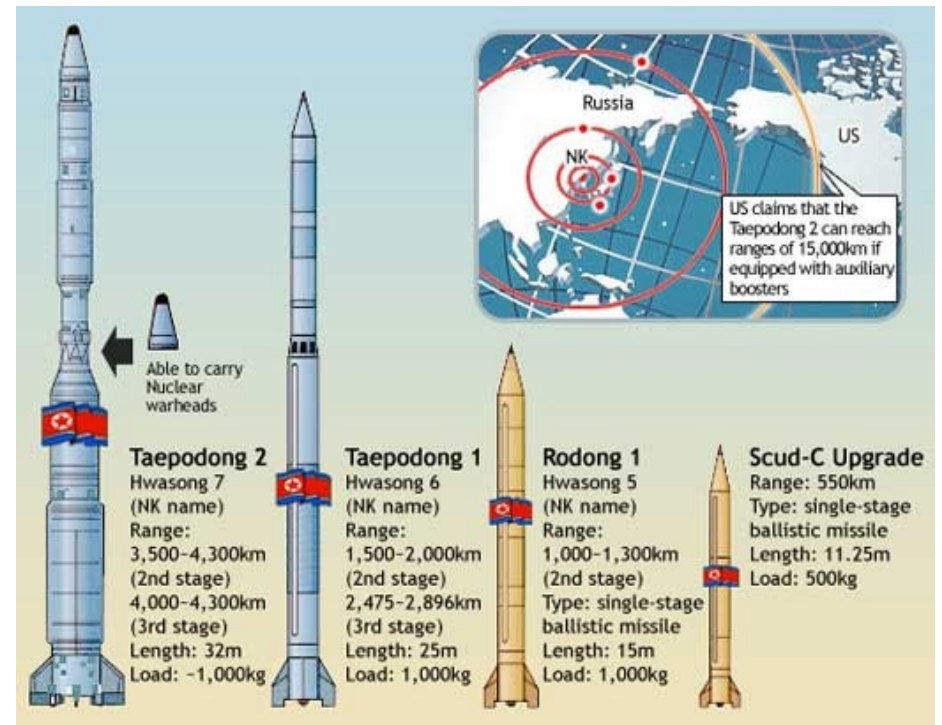
First a few questions

- ▶ Has anybody here been to North Korea?
- ▶ Does anybody want or not want to go?
- ▶ Has anybody seen documentaries, read books, or news articles about North Korea?
 - ▶ My blog? www.joshuaspodek.com/category/northkorea
- ▶ What expectations do people have of the place?
- ▶ Does anybody have any ethics issues about visiting?

Expectations



Expectations



Expectations



Joshua Spodek and how the trip started

- ▶ No experience with North Korea.
- ▶ I have a PhD in physics, started a few companies, got an MBA, some solo art shows, lead leadership and personal development programs.
- ▶ Got this message on my birthday:
- ▶ I had no idea the invitation would lead to one of the most amazing and educational experiences of my life.

Hey happy birthday man! All the best!

What do you have planned for this year?

p.s. I'm going to North Korea in August -get jealous! ;)

Why amazing?

- ▶ Why do people travel? To learn about world, relax, see sights...
- ▶ No white sandy beaches, snow-capped mountains, Eiffel towers. Not relaxing. Sites are weird to American tastes.
- ▶ I expected difference, but found similarities and found that similarities told me more about what makes us human than differences.
 - ▶ Expectations tell you about yourself and your culture
 - ▶ What you see tells you about other cultures

How to get there and is it legal

- ▶ Just get to Beijing with a double-entry visa
- ▶ Koryo tours takes care of all paperwork – http://www.koryogroup.com/about_contact.php
- ▶ 1,500 Euros for the week, including everything (flights, hotels, food, sites). Optional extras: alcohol, souvenirs, Mass Game tickets
- ▶ Legal, according to State Department web site, but not recommended

How to get there and is it legal

Bill Clinton in North Korea, meets Kim Jong-il



By [Jack Kim](#)

SEOUL | Tue Aug 4, 2009 3:11pm EDT

(Reuters) - Former U.S. President Bill Clinton made a surprise visit to North Korea and met its reclusive leader on Tuesday to try to win freedom for two jailed American journalists in a move that could re-energize nuclear talks.

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Korean History

- ▶ Stone age – 1910: Korean peninsula populated, Korean culture develops
- ▶ 1910 – 1945: Japan occupies peninsula
- ▶ 1945 – 1950: Peninsula divided into USSR-backed Communist North and US/UN-backed South
- ▶ 1950 – 1953: Korean War (still going)
- ▶ 1953 – present: Kim Il Sung and Kim Jung Il authoritarian government with centrally planned economy
 - ▶ 1990s: fall of Soviet Union combine with flooding lead to huge famine. Up to 2 million people die, about ten percent of population
 - ▶ Meanwhile, relatively democratic, capitalist South Korea prospers

Korean History



Korean History



What is visiting like

- ▶ Escorted everywhere
- ▶ Can only go where they let you
- ▶ Can only speak to government-trained staff
- ▶ Big huge streets with few people on them

Three events

- ▶ Mass Games
- ▶ Ultimate Frisbee tournament
- ▶ USS Pueblo

Bibliography

- ▶ Joseph's images
 - ▶ <http://www.flickr.com/photos/josephferris76/sets/72157627452190975>
- ▶ My blog:
 - ▶ <http://joshuaspodek.com/category/northkorea>
 - ▶ Bibliography for further reading: <http://joshuaspodek.com/north-korea-bibliography>