TOUR CODE

FE1

ADVENTURESABROAD

THE FAR EAST

South Korea, Bali, Singapore, Malaysia & the Philippines

20 days

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Day 1 *Arrive in Seoul*

Arrive in Seoul, South Korea and transfer to our hotel.

Seoul is a city of contrasts. In this rapidly evolving metropolis, the traditional exists with the modern in a state of harmony. For over 500 years the seat of Joseon Dynasty kings, Seoul is now the beating heart of modern Korea, the centre to which all else in the country is drawn.

SEE DAY 4 for an important note pertaining to airfare for this tour.

Overnight in Seoul. Meal plan: Dinner, if required.

Day 2 *Seoul: City Tour*

Today we have a city tour of Seoul, including the Blue House (Presidential Residence, photo stop outside), the National Folk Museum, and Gyeongbokgung Palace.

Of all the tourist attractions in Seoul, the Joseon Dynasty Palaces and, particularly Gyeongbokgung Palace, are the most tangible link between modern Korea and its not-too-distant monarchical past. Not merely inert relics, they are symbols of a deep history and rich culture. Although substantially reduced in number, the remaining palace buildings provide a glimpse of traditional architecture and the overall organization of a palace grounds.

General Yi Seong-gye (King T'aejo) ordered the construction of Gyeongbokgung-gung ("Palace of Shining Happiness") in 1934, two years after founding the Joseon Dynasty. In its original form, it is said to have had about 500 buildings. For the next 200 years, Gyeongbokgung-gung was the seat of government and the royal residence of Joseon Dynasty kings.

We also visit the impressive Jogyesa Temple, the centre of Zen Buddhism in Korea, located in the heart of Seoul. The Pukchon neighbourhood nearby gives us an opportunity to see traditional Korean homes in complete contrast to the very modern homes in most parts of the city.

We will have a leisurely walk through Insa-dong that offers an immediate immersion into Korean culture. This lively, charming area of downtown Seoul is filled with restaurants, traditional teahouses, and outdoor performances frequently take place there. In Insa-dong, every corner you turn is a discovery. It is also one of the best places in Korea to pick up souvenirs. Insa-dong's streets are lined with shops selling traditional Korean craftwork, which are often handmade by artisans. Here you can find all manner of items that are unique to Korea, such as wooden masks that used to be used in performances, fashions inspired by Korea's traditional costume, and lamps made from traditional paper. We will also visit the impressive Buddhist Jogyesa Temple in the heart of Seoul and make a brief stop to see traditional Korean homes in the Pukchon neighbourhood of the city.

Overnight in Seoul. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 3 *Seoul - Suwon - Seoul*

Today we drive south to Suwon to see one of Korea's cultural highlights, the Hwaseong Fortress, constructed as an act of filial devotion by Jeongjo, the 22nd king of the Joseon Dynasty to strengthen his power, eradicate party conflict, and fortify the southern area of the capital. The fortress suffered partial damage during Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War, but most of its original features have been restored with the help of the Hwaseong Seongyeokuigwe, the construction archive published in 1801 after the fortress was completed. The fortress sprawls over both flat and hilly terrain, something seldom seen in neighboring China and Japan. It is designed to serve political and commercial as well as military functions and is a fine example of oriental fortresses.

We also visit the Korean Folk Village, home to numerous collections of Korean cultural artifacts, architectural styles, and replicas of providing an opportunity for us to gain an insight into traditional Korean culture. Later, on our way back, we will make a stop at Namdaemun Market, a traditional market with a history dating back to the birth of Seoul 600 years ago. Namdaemun symbolizes the history of Seoul from the past to the present and is cherished by Koreans everywhere. As the largest traditional market in Korea, Namdaemun Market used to sell mainly crops, fruits, and sundries, but now deals in textile goods, utensils, electronics, local produce, traditional crafts, imported goods, and much more. It distributes more than 90% of the children's clothing sold nationwide.

Overnight in Seoul. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 4 *Seoul - Imjingak - DMZ, South Korea - Denpasar, Indonesia (Bali) - Ubud*

We travel the Jayuro (Freedom Road) to Imjingak, the northernmost point bordering North Korea. On the way, we will be able to view barbed wire fences and military guards on duty all the way along the river, as well as serene rice paddies and the North Korean propaganda village over the confluence of the Han River and the Imjin River. At Imjingak, we visit the Mangbaedan memorial ritual altar which was established in 1985 for those who were separated from their families or displaced from home during the Korean War. It is a symbolic spot used to hold traditional memorial services for ancestors or to pray for separated family members living in the North and for reunification of the country.

We will see the Freedom Bridge, the very locale where 12,773 Korean War prisoners walked to freedom to South Korea in 1953. We then board a tour bus that will take us to the 3rd infiltration tunnel dug up by North Koreans. On the 20-minute ride to the tunnel, we pass through the check points, military camps and mine fields.

Before going down to the tunnel, we will view a short video presentation and visit exhibition hall for information on the divided Koreas. A seven-minute tram ride (if available) or a walk down a steep access through a narrow and steep interception tunnel, leads us to the lower platform, a point where we are only 170 meters from the Military Demarcation Line.

Our next stop is the Dora Observatory where we can see the whole expanse of the Demilitarized Zone, North Korean propaganda village, Gijeong-dong, where the world's largest flag hangs on a 160 meter-tall flagpole, South Korea's northernmost village of Daeseong-dong and Panmunjom where the armistice that ended Korean War was signed.

Finally, we visit the functioning northernmost railway station Dorasan, located 700 meters from the Southern Limit Line of DMZ. Here, the mile marker "Seoul 56km/Pyeongyang (the North Korean capital) 205km" still stands tall for all to see.

Later, we drive to Incheon Airport and fly to Denpasar on the island of Bali and transfer to our hotel in Ubud.

Bali is home to the vast majority of Indonesia's small Hindu minority. 93.18% of Bali's population adheres to Balinese Hinduism, while most of the remainder follow Islam. It is also the largest tourist destination in the country and is

renowned for its highly developed arts, including dance, sculpture, painting, leather, metalworking and music.

* NOTE: Today's flight is included if you book your international airfare with Adventures Abroad. If you are booking your own air, we recommend that you ensure that you are able to include the Seoul-Denpasar with Korean Airlines in your overall international ticket (ask us which flight we are booking for the group). If you book your own air and are unable to book this flight, we can sell it to you for an additional $1000.

Overnight in Ubud. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 5 *Ubud - Tenganan - Candidasa*

For more than a century, Ubud has been the island's preeminent centre for fine arts, dance and music. While it once was a haven for scruffy backpackers, cosmic seekers, artists and bohemians, Ubud is now a hot spot for literati, glitterati, art collectors and connoisseurs.

This morning we attend a traditional Barong dance performance. The Barong play represent an eternal fighting between good and evil spirit. A Barong (a mythological animal) represent good spirit and Rangda (a mythological monster) represent the evil one. Bali is known for its fine arts, and it is in this village that most of the best batik painters, mask carvers, dancers, weavers, and musicians live. This is an excellent place to buy authentic Balinese handicrafts.

After lunch, we travel by road through verdant Balinese countryside towards the east coast town of Candidasa, a tranquil coastal area nestled between the Lombok Strait to the east and mountains to the west. Candidasa is within close proximity to many historical landmarks of Bali.

On the way, we visit the ancient law courts at Klung Kung. Klung Kung was the oldest Kingdom on the island, and its "raja" was the most exalted. At the walled-in "Court of Justice", which dates from the 18th century, a mural portrays punishment in hell and the rewards of heaven.

We will also visit the native village of Tenganan, a symmetrically laid out Bali Aga village with walled homes and unique crafts. Bali Aga was the original inhabitant of Bali, before the arrival of Hindu Javanese. Tenganan retains its ancient pre-Hindu customs through a strong code of non-fraternization with outsiders, further enforced by the protection of its surrounding walls.

Overnight in Candidasa. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 6 *Candidasa - Penglipuran - Lovina*

Today we explore the highlands and the centre of Bali where elegant Balinese Hindu temples sprout amid lush green rice terraces.

En route we will stop at Penglipuran village, well known for its tidy row of traditional Balinese entrance gates and its unique architectural traditions. The village has also succeeded in preserving its 75-hectare bamboo forest located in the northern part of the village.

We also stop at Kintamani, famous for its view of Mt. Batur and Lake Batur. The whole area around Kintamani is known for its orange groves. After a lunch break here, we continue to Beji Temple (Pura Beji), an excellent example of the colourful architectural style of northern Bali. The temple is famous for its Barong architecture and virtuoso relief carvings.

Our destination is Lovina. a coastal area on the northeastern side of the island containing the small villages of Temukus, Kalibukbuk and Anturan. It is becoming more popular with tourists but remains far quieter than the tourist hotspots of the island's south side. At night the whole fishing fleet is working, their lanterns glowing yellow along the ocean front.

Overnight in Lovina. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 7 *Lovina Area*

This morning you have the option (payable locally) to do an early boat trip to the reef where there is a chance to see the dolphins that frequent the area. Even if the dolphins don't show, the sunrise can be quite spectacular.

Nearby Singaraja is the largest city in North Bali, and the former Dutch colonial administrative capital of not only Bali, but the whole of the Lesser Sunda Islands. Singaraja still has some of the feel of an old colonial capital. The streets are wider and grander than elsewhere in Bali and some of the old houses set in large gardens recall days long gone. This is also a noticeably multi ethnic city. The Muslim influence is apparent in the district near the old docks called Kampung Arab while the largest Chinese temple in Bali is located nearby.

We return to Lovina and have the afternoon free to enjoy the tranquil beach and quiet fishing villages that are spread out along Bali's north coast.

Overnight in Lovina. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 8 *Lovina - Tanah Lot - Kuta*

Today we depart Lovina and travel through Bali's central highlands to the south coast. Along the way we visit the spectacular rice terraces at Pupuan. We proceed from there to Tanah Lot, an ocean temple built atop a huge rock surrounded by the sea at high tide by one of the last priests to come to Bali from Java in the 16th century. Its rituals include the paying of homage to the guardian spirits of the sea. Sea snakes sometimes found at the base are believed to guard the temple from evil spirits and intruders.

We continue to Kuta, the best known tourist area on the island of Bali. With a long broad Indian Ocean beach-front, Kuta was originally discovered by tourists as a surfing paradise. Kuta attracts backpackers as well as families and tourists from all over the world, and is very obviously, a playground for younger visitors from Australia.

We have the evening free in Kuta.

Overnight in Kuta. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 9 *Kuta, Indonesia - Singapore*

We transfer to the nearby airport for our morning flight to Singapore.

Our Singapore sightseeing kicks off with an orientation tour of Singapore beginning with a drive around the Civic District past the Padang, Cricket Club, Parliament House, Supreme Court and City Hall. You'll have great views of Marina Bay where we stop for photos at Merlion Park and the Merlion itself, Singapore's mythological creature that is part lion, part fish.

The tour continues with a visit to the Thian Hock Keng Temple, one of the oldest Buddhist-Taoist temples on

Singapore island, then takes you into Chinatown. The next stop at Singapore's Little India with the heady scent of joss sticks, jasmine and spices.

Time permitting, we will do a riverboat cruise along the Singapore River from Clarke Quay. The Singapore River is like a witness of its history. At both sides of the river, you will see the colonial buildings, traditional Chinese shops, modern skyscrapers, each of them would tell you an exciting story of Singapore. The cruise ends in Clarke Quay where there are many fine restaurants lining the river front.

Overnight in Singapore. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 10 *Singapore - Malacca, Malaysia - Kuala Lumpur*

We depart after breakfast to cross the Johor Causeway, which links Singapore to Peninsular Malaysia. After brief border formalities, you will enter Johor Bahru -- the southern most state of Malaysia and head for a visit to the historic town of Malacca, founded by a fleeing prince from Sumatra in 14th century. Later it developed into a major trading port for ships from India and China. From its early days as a traders meeting point to the successive colonial occupation by the Portuguese, Dutch, English and Japanese, each culture left behind its mark or monument creating a historical showcase. Today you will find many remnants of the mixed history of this city dating back more than 500 years.

The oldest established town in Malaysia, Malacca is particularly famous for its Town Square and surrounding monuments. Our tour visits the red coloured Stadhuys, Cheng Hoon Teng, the oldest Chinese temple on the Malay peninsula, the Portuguese fortress Porta de Santiago built in 1511 and St Paul's Church where St Francis Xavier was buried.

Malacca is well-known for its eclectic food. Most notable of all is the Nyonya-Baba cuisine which is a mixture of Chinese (mostly southern Hokkien or Fujian influence), Portuguese, Dutch, Indian, British and Malay cooking. We will have lunch in a traditional Nyonya-Baba restaurant here. A drive late this afternoon to Kuala Lumpur where we end our day.

Overnight in Kuala Lumpur. Meal plan: Breakfast and lunch.

Day 11 *Kuala Lumpur - Sandakan*

Despite rapid development, Kuala Lumpur has managed to retain her charm, with a skyline that blends the Old World with the New. We start the day with a visit to the Menara Kuala Lumpur that offers a birds-eye view of the entire city and its surrounds. We will see the contrast of the distinctive Indo-Moorish architecture and the ultra modern edifices, the Petronas Twin Towers -- tallest in the world. Later we drive past the elegant Jamek Mosque, which occupies the symbolic birthplace of Kuala Lumpur and possibly have time for a photo stop at the majestic Royal Palace.

An evening flight takes us to Sandakan, the second-largest city in the state of Sabah on the north-eastern coast of Borneo, once the former capital of British North Borneo.

Overnight in Sandakan. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 12 *Sepilok & Sandakan*

This morning we drive to the Sepilok Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre, the largest orangutan sanctuary in the world located to the south of Sandakan. After a brief video introduction in the main building, we walk along a boardwalk

through towering trees to the feeding area where we hope to see adolescent, adult, and baby orangutans in their natural habitat: the tropical rainforest.

Later, we drive to Sandakan for a tour of this seaside town including a visit to the Agnes Keith House once occupied by famous American writer, Agnes Newton Keith, who penned the book, Land Below The Wind in 1939. Two books followed her first success, namely Three Came Home (1946) and White Man Returns (1951). Today the house has been restored and turned into a heritage house providing interesting insights to life during British North Borneo days. It is furnished with reproductions of colonial furniture and antiques. A gallery on the first floor tells the story of this remarkable woman who spent her later years in British Columbia in Canada, her books and her family.

A stop at the colonial style English Tea House and restaurant next door will round off this day. This much loved Sandakan restaurant is known as a popular tourist destination for its great food, excellent service and beautiful views.

Overnight in Sandakan. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 13 *Sandakan - Kota Kinabalu*

Today we fly to Kota Kinabalu. On arrival we'll have a panoramic drive tour of Kota Kinabalu including a visit to the excellent State Museum and the attached Heritage Village. Kota Kinabalu is the main city in the Malaysian state of Sabah on the island of Borneo. This evening, your Tour Leader will arrange a possible walking tour to Kota Kinabalu's busy waterfront fruit and vegetable market located not far from our hotel.

Overnight in Kota Kinabalu. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 14 *Kota Kinabalu - Mt Kinabalu, Malaysia - Manila, Philippines*

Today we drive through paddy-fields and Dusun villages, over the ridges of the Crocker Range to the foothills of 4,095 m (13,435 ft) high Mt. Kinabalu. We arrive at the park headquarters at the Kundasang Visitor Centre and Mountain Garden, home to some of the 24 species of flowering rhododendron, 10 species of carnivorous pitcher plants, an estimated 1,400 species of orchid, over 600 species of fern, and more than 40 species of oak and over 300 bird species.

After our visit we return to Kota Kinabalu. This evening, we visit the Tanjung Aru beach located near the airport. Taking its name from the casuarina or aru trees that fringe the sand beach, this is the place from where one might get a grand view of the sunset when the crimson sun dips slowly into the horizon. Restaurants serving local food and drinks and stalls selling coconut and sugarcane juice, chicken or beef satays and steamed peanuts and corn are open here until late at night.

Late evening flight to Manila.

Overnight near Manila. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 15 *Manila - Puerto Princesa*

The Philippines is the third largest English speaking country in the world and has a rich history combining Asian, European, and American influences. Prior to Spanish colonization in 1521, the Filipinos had a rich culture and were trading with the Chinese and the Japanese. Spain's colonization brought about the construction of Manila's Intramuros in 1571, a "Walled City" comprised of European buildings and churches, replicated in different parts of the archipelago. This morning, we visit the Intramuros quarter of Manila including the San Agustín Church, the Manila Cathedral and

Fort Santiago. In 1898, the Philippines became the first and only colony of the United States. Filipinos fought alongside Americans during World War II, particularly at the famous battle of Bataan and Corregidor which delayed Japanese advance and saved Australia. The Philippines regained its independence in 1946.

We transfer to Manila airport this evening for our short flight to Puerto Princesa, the main town on the island of Palawan.

Overnight in Puerto Princesa. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 16 *Palawan & Puerto Princesa*

The Filipino province of Palawan has 1768 islands and is the location where the movie 'Blue Lagoon' was filmed.

The flora and fauna of the islands is unique and there are many plants and animals which only exist on these islands. We visit the Palawan Museum located at the Mendoza Park. Here we get an overview of the history, art and culture of the people and the mythology of this island group. We also visit the beautiful old cathedral.

Overnight in Puerto Princesa. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 17 *Palawan: the Underground River*

Morning departure for The Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, one of the most important biodiversity conservation areas of the Philippines. The Park features a spectacular limestone or karst landscape that contains an 8.2 km long underground river.

A distinguishing feature of the river is that it flows directly into the sea, with the lower half of the river subject to tidal influence. The area also contains a full mountain to sea ecosystem and protects forests, which are among the most significant in Asia.

The Puerto Princesa Underground River is reputed to be the longest navigable underground river in the world and is one of the few such rivers which the public can easily experience. The watershed area of the river within the park is covered by primary forest and is home to many endemic species of animals and plants.

We drive to Sabang, about two hours from the Puerto Princesa city and on the way we will some of the natural attractions of Palawan. Upon arrival in Sabang, we will board the 'banca' boat and enter the underground river for a unique experience floating past stalactites and stalagmites.
We return to Puerto Princesa in the evening.

Overnight in Puerto Princesa. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 18 *Palawan: Honda Bay*

About an hour’s drive north of Puerto Princesa, is Honda Bay with a number of islands each with its own white sand beach and a variety of features. We aim to visit some of the islands during the day. The best known islands of Honda Bay are Cowrie and Bat named because of the large fruit bats that fly out of their nesting sites at sundown for their evening feed. Snake Island, a curvaceous tongue shaped island shaped like a snake and with a white sand beach is known for its beautiful shells. Other interesting islands are Canon, Pandan, Starfish, Lu-Ii Island (meaning floating and sinking island which is visible only during low tide), Señorita Island (the breeding site of lapu-lapu fish) and Starfish

Island, with clear water that teem with starfish.

We return to Puerto Princesa in the evening.

Overnight in Puerto Princesa. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 19 *Palawan - Manila*

Morning departure for our flight back to Manila.

We have the afternoon to visit the National Museum of the Philippines and the more interesting Museum of the Filipino People next door, both located near Rizal Park, a historic site associated with many important events in the history of the country.

Evening free in Manila

Overnight in Manila. Meal plan: Breakfast and dinner.

Day 20 *Departure*

Departure from Manila.

BON VOYAGE! Meal plan: Breakfast.