

South Korea & Japan

featuring
THE OSAKA WORLD EXPO 2025



SPONSORED BY

University of Illinois Alumni Association

EXPLORERS
ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

August 11-27, 2025

EXPLORERS

ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

Dear EXPLORERS and Friends,

South Korea and Japan beckon for this memorable journey! Stay for 14 nights in Seoul, Busan, Kyoto and Tokyo, exploring the rich history and diverse cultures of these exciting cities. Plus, explore the exciting Osaka World Expo 2025!

Begin in beguiling Seoul where you will visit the royal 14th-century, Gyeongbokgung Palace, South Korea's historical treasure, Hwaseong Fortress, and an authentic *hanok* village. Continue to the vibrant coastal city of Busan to witness the breathtaking Oryukdo Islands from a transparent skywalk, visit the serene UN Memorial Cemetery and marvel at the fascinating Gamcheon Culture Village. Then, it's on to Kyoto to witness ancient shrines, temples, pagodas and castles, as well as spend a day exploring the 2025 World Expo's global showcase. Finish in dazzling Tokyo to stroll through Imperial Palace's magnificent Japanese gardens and be awed by the views from Japan's tallest building.

Along the way, relish immersive cultural experiences, such as the time-honored ritual of a Japanese Tea Ceremony, Taiko drumming and cooking demonstrations. Plus, travel by high-speed bullet train and meander through bustling Korean markets selling a dizzying array of food and merchandise.

This new and exceptional program has been thoughtfully designed with educational enrichment from expert guides and lecturers, and it is sure to be a top seller. Guarantee your spot by making your reservation today!

Sincerely,



David Bambrey
President

The EXPLORERS program is open to alumni of the University of Illinois, their families, and friends.

UNESCO World Heritage

1. **Hwaseong Fortress,**
Republic of Korea
2. **Historic Monuments
of Ancient Kyoto,** Japan



Nijō Castle, Kyoto



Kiyomizu-dera Temple complex, Kyoto



A World of Discovery



Uncover the rich tapestry of enigmatic South Korea and dazzling, multicultural Japan on this enthralling adventure! Experience the diverse cities of Seoul, Busan, Kyoto and Tokyo, where ancient temples and timeworn villages blend harmoniously with modern architecture and the pulse of daily urban life. Contemplate the symbolism of a Japanese tea ceremony and learn to make tangy, Korean kimchi. Plus, explore the the Osaka World Expo's 2025 global showcase!

Top: Haedong Yonggungsa Temple, Busan

Above: Japanese tea ceremony

Cover: Taiko drummer, Japan | Mail panel: Gyeongbokgung Palace, Seoul | Bukchon Hanok Village, Seoul

Inspiring Moments



- Explore **South Korea**, from Seoul's bustling city to Busan's stunning coast.
- Discover **Japan's rich history and culture**, with its blend of Eastern traditions and Western modernity.
- Participate in the time-honored tradition of a **Japanese Tea Ceremony**.
- Thrill to journeys aboard **high-speed bullet trains**.
- Visit **magnificent shrines, temples, pagodas and gardens**.
- Attend the **Osaka World Expo 2025—** Designing Future Society for Our Lives.
- **Witness breathtaking views** from Japan's tallest building.
- Learn the sacred art of **Taiko drumming**, and how to make Korean kimchi and Japanese sweets.
- Delight in a special dinner cruise aboard a **Japanese pleasure boat**.



Hwaseong Fortress, Seoul

Days 1 & 2 | In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Seoul, South Korea. 🌐 Cross the International Date Line.

Day 3 | Seoul, South Korea

Upon arrival, transfer 🔄 to The Westin Josun Seoul and check in.

Day 4 | Seoul, South Korea

Enrichment: Contemporary Korea.

Gyeongbokgung Palace. Experience the grandeur, history and cultural significance of Gyeongbokgung Palace, a 14th-century royal palace of the Joseon dynasty. Explore the grounds to admire its lotus ponds, pleasure gardens and ornate statues. Then, enjoy a guided visit at the National Folk Museum of Korea, showcasing the country's culture.

Bukchon Hanok Village. Visit this historic village, dating back nearly 600 years to the Joseon dynasty, and one of the only places where visitors can see the traditional *hanok*, Korean wooden houses, and witness daily life.

Namdaemun Market. At this massive Korean market, peruse vendors selling traditional Korean clothing, crafts, pottery, and delicacies. This evening, enjoy a special Welcome Dinner.

Day 5 | Seoul

Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Visit the de facto border between North and South Korea, with the option to venture into an infiltration tunnel.

🌐 **AHI Connects | Kimchi Cooking.** Learn about its history and how to make tangy kimchi, a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, followed by a tasting of the delicacy.

Day 6 | Seoul

Hwaseong Fortress. Visit this prized historical treasure of South Korea, an outstanding example of Korean military architecture and the only remaining walled fortress in the country.

Free Time: Explore more of Seoul at leisure.

Day 7 | Seoul | Busan

After breakfast, check out and transfer 🔄 to board the high speed bullet train to Busan.

Oryukdo Skywalk. Transfer, stopping en route at this transparent bridge suspended over a cliff. As you cross, witness spectacular views from 115 feet above the Oryukdo Islands.

Arrive and check in to the Park Hyatt Busan.

Day 8 | Busan

Haedong Yonggungsa Temple. Perched on a rocky cliff overlooking the Sea of Japan, this tranquil Buddhist temple is known for its scenic coastal views and many statues, including the golden Buddha, the iconic Sea Goddess and the three-story pagoda adorned with four lions.

UN Memorial Cemetery. Visit this stunningly beautiful and serene cemetery, honoring UN forces who died during the Korean War, which serves as a symbol of peace and unity.

Gamcheon Culture Village. Marvel at the colorful houses built in staircase fashion at the foothills of a coastal mountain and explore the charming alleyways of this artistic enclave.

Day 9 | Busan

Busan Markets. Experience Busan's bustling markets with their rich tapestry of culinary delights, local crafts and myriad products.





Left: The golden Kinkaku-ji Temple, Kyoto
Below: Take in spectacular views of Tokyo from the observation deck of the Tokyo Skytree.



Explore the enormous Jagalchi Fish Market and peruse the wide variety of offerings at Gukje Market, Busan's oldest market.

Free Time: Enjoy time at leisure in Busan.

Day 10 | Busan | Kyoto, Japan

Transfer  to the airport and fly  to Kyoto, Japan. Arrive, transfer and check in to the Hotel Nikko Princess Kyoto hotel.

Day 11 | Kyoto

Enrichment: *The A to Zen Behind Japanese Gardens and Temples*

Shrines & Temples of Kyoto. Begin today's sightseeing tour with a visit to the Heian-jingū Shrine and marvel at this reproduction of the Heian-period imperial palace. Admire the 1001 statues of the Sanjūsangen-dō Temple and the hilltop Kiyomizu-dera Temple Complex with scenic views of the nearby Otowa Waterfall.

Afterward, relish a Japanese sweet-making demonstration followed by a tasting.

Day 12 | Kyoto | Osaka World Expo 2025

World Expo. Spend the day and evening exploring groundbreaking architecture, art installations and hundreds of exhibits. Relish immersive cultural experiences and sample global cuisines from more than 50 countries.


Gukje Market, Busan



Day 13 | Kyoto

Kyoto Highlights. Today, visit Nijō Castle, an architectural masterpiece showcasing the fusion of a Edo-period design with Japanese cultural aesthetics. Next, behold the stunning gold-leaf-covered Kinkaku-ji Temple and stroll its serene gardens and reflecting pond. Then, visit Kitano Tenmangū Shrine to see the Gate of the Three Lights, adorned with sculptures of suns, moons and stars, and the Plum Orchard.

Day 14 | Kyoto | Tokyo

Transfer  to board a Shinkansen high-speed bullet train. Arrive in Tokyo, drive through the iconic, fashionable Ginza district en route to the Mesm Tokyo hotel for check-in.

Day 15 | Toyko

Enrichment: *Modern Japan.*

Tokyo Highlights. This morning, embark on a sightseeing tour of Tokyo. Begin with a visit to Tokyo's oldest temple, Sensō-ji. Admire the massive red lantern at the entrance gate and the five-story Goju-no-to pagoda. Then, at the Tokyo National Museum, view the collection of

Statues at Sanjūsangen-dō Temple, Kyoto



Included Features



Japanese and Asian art and antiquities. Next, stroll the Imperial Palace's serene Japanese gardens on the former site of Edo Castle to see its preserved stone walls and moats.


AHI Connects | Japanese Tea Ceremony.

Delight in an authentic experience by learning how to perform a traditional Japanese tea ceremony from a tea instructor. Appreciate how the sacred tea ceremony represents harmony, respect, purity and tranquility.

Stop for a group lunch at a local restaurant.



Day 16 | **Toyko**

Tokyo Skytree. Explore more of Tokyo this morning with a visit to Tokyo Skytree, the tallest building in Japan and the second tallest structure in the world, standing at 2,080 feet. Be awed by the breathtaking views from the observation deck of this iconic landmark.



 **AHI Connects | Taiko Drumming.** Learn about this ancient and sacred Japanese form of percussion using large drums. Conclude by taking a turn at the drums yourself!

Farewell Dinner. Raise a toast to celebrate your extraordinary adventure at this evening's Farewell Dinner.

Day 17 | **Depart for gateway city**

After breakfast, transfer  to the airport for the return flight  home.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.

 Flights and  transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.

Note About Activity Levels

We have designated activity levels for all excursions on this program. For more details, please call or visit our website.

Excursions on this itinerary require:

- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and/or uneven surfaces
- getting on/off motor coaches and boats

Accommodations (with baggage handling)

- **4 nights** in Seoul, South Korea at the deluxe The Westin Josun Seoul.
- **3 nights** in Busan, South Korea, at the deluxe Park Hyatt Busan
- **4 nights** in Kyoto, Japan, at the deluxe Hotel Nikko Princess Kyoto.
- **3 nights** in Tokyo, Japan, at the deluxe Mesm Tokyo, Autograph Collection.



Transfers (with baggage handling)

- Flight from Busan to Osaka (for Kyoto), and train and deluxe motor coach transfers during the Land Program.

Extensive Meal Program

- 14 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 5 dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine, beer or soft drinks with lunch and dinner.

Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

- **Small group:** Sized just right at 28 guests.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
-  **AHI Connects | Local immersion.**
- **Free time** to pursue your individual interests.
- Welcome and Farewell Dinners to mingle with fellow travelers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- Complimentary travel mementos.
-  **AHI Sustainability Promise:**
We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.

Japanese gardens at the Imperial Palace, Toyko

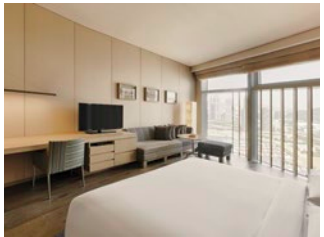


Accommodations

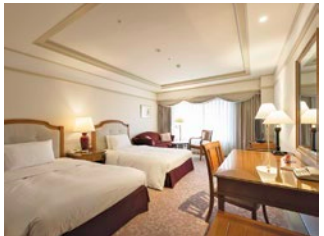
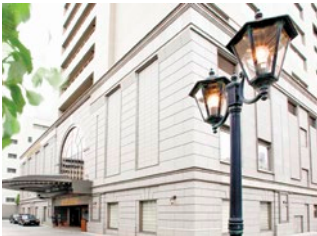
Our travel experts have carefully selected these deluxe properties for their prime locations. They are ideally situated for exploring each region's renowned landmarks while providing opportunities to immerse yourself in local life. Of utmost importance is the superior quality of their services, amenities and accommodations, allowing you to enjoy your stay fully.



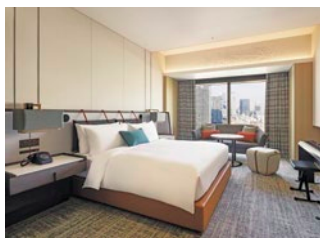
The Westin Josun Seoul | South Korea



Park Hyatt Busan | South Korea



Hotel Nikko Princess Kyoto | Japan



Mesm Tokyo, Autograph Collection | Japan



Reserve your trip today!

To book your journey,
please call our AHI Travel Experts
at **844-414-0369** or
visit <https://uiaa.org/explorers/>.

Program Dates

Travel dates †

August 11-27, 2025

† Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.

Tour dates*

August 13-27, 2025

* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.

Land Program

Full Price **\$9,740**

Special Savings **\$750**

Early Booking Special Price* **\$8,990**

*Early Booking Special Price valid if booked by date on address panel and paid in full at booking. If you pay only your deposit by early booking date, you still save \$250 per person.

Price includes applicable program taxes (such as VAT and port charges). All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated). Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined. Single accommodations are an additional \$1,895 (limited availability).

Please note: Program-specific terms and conditions are available at <https://il.ahitravel.com/destinations/1904A?schoold=69>. You can also request a copy from our travel experts.

Any payment to AHI Travel constitutes your acceptance of the terms and conditions set out therein, including but not limited to the cancellation terms.

AHI FlexAir

Let us arrange your flights

Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservation before departure on most flights (Fees may apply.)
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays



Sensō-ji Temple, Tokyo



World Expo Commemorative Park



Colorful Gamcheon Culture Village, Busan



Otowa Waterfall, Kyoto



Heian-jingū Shrine, Kyoto

AHI Travel Expertise



From your reservation to your return home, we are here to ensure you have the adventure of a lifetime.

Before you go:

Travel Consultants stand ready to answer your questions as they guide you through the reservation process.

Travel & Air Coordinators each offer their personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

Travel Information provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

Once you arrive:

Your Travel Director, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

Handpicked Expert Guides offer fascinating insights and share their passion for their country with you.

Knowledgeable Lecturers deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.



Prayer ribbons, DMZ



Catch a glimpse of Mt. Fuji aboard the Shinkansen, a high-speed bullet train

EXPLORERS

ALUMNI TRAVEL PROGRAM

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Discover the irresistible allure of South Korea & Japan!

AHI Travel's mission is to deliver inspirational, educational and cultural programs that delight travelers.

With AHI you can rely on:

- Experienced Travel Directors who attend to every detail of your journey.
- An exceptional travel value.
- Unique access to local sites.
- Flexibility and customization.
- Safety and security.



Please call or refer to our website for the most current program information, discounts and pricing.

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