

Title : A girl dreaming of Korea

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If I had to describe myself in one word, it would be “Koreanophile.” Though I have never set foot in South Korea, the word Koreanophile is too small to describe the passion, affection and attraction I feel for Korea. I think, breathe and live Korea.

For me, South Korea is not a country where I’d rush to unpack and just lie back in a beach chair and sip on a cocktail. There is so much more to Korea. My friends thought I was weird. They didn’t understand why I was so obsessed with a country so far away which I had only seen through television and whose language I can’t speak. My friends used to call me ‘Chinese girl,’ and ‘sushi girl.’ Every time they called me by such nicknames, I eagerly explained that South Korea was not at all like China and Japan.

That’s how things were before the Korean wave spread across the globe and when South Korea was lesser known. Now, it’s a different story. With media actively covering activities by K-pop artists and with such artists taking Europe by storm in concerts, my friends now come to me for more information on Korea, Korean music and dramas. When they come to me with questions, I feel like an expert on Korea.

I no longer want to get to know about Korea through other people’s pictures. I want to have my own travel photo album and my own memories of Korea. If I get the opportunity to make a three-day trip to Korea, the place I’d like to visit most is the green tea field in Boseong. Though it’s been couple of years since I

saw the KBS drama, 'Summer Scent,' every time I hear Jung In-ho's song 'Secret' from the drama's original soundtrack, images of fresh green leaves, rain, heartbeats and the gaze between Min-woo and Hye-won pop up in my mind.

My dream trip to Korea would be somewhat like this.

♡First day: I would head to Boseong on a bus, since I believe the bus is the best way to enjoy the scenery, and meet many people. Besides, a bus trip is very dramatic, don't you agree? I would take a long walk in the green tea fields, taking deep breaths and pictures. If I'm lucky, I might run into a few farmers gathering tea leaves and seize the opportunity to pick some tea leaves myself! I already feel excited when I imagine wearing wide pants and a straw hat, ready to pick tea leaves. When lunch time comes, I will have a picnic and taste Korean food for the first time in my life! In the afternoon, I would ride a bike down a road lined with cedar trees. In the evening, I would like to have the chance to go to a traditional Korean festival and try on hanbok.

♡Second day: On my second day in Korea, I would head out early to Yulpo Beach. I can easily imagine dipping my toes in the water. I would gather shells, meet fishermen and go on a boat ride. For lunch, I would have delicious fish by the beach. In the evening, I would get some rest in a green tea bath. It would be just like a scene from the KBS program, "Happy Together," which takes place inside a bathhouse in which men wear caps made with blue towels and women wear caps made with pink towels. Later, I would try out Korea's most aromatic and tasty teas.

♡Third day: I would like to spend my last day in Korea in Seoul. I would buy gifts and souvenirs for my family and friends. I would go to a large store that sells K-pop items and buy t-shirts that have pictures of my favorite Korean singers. I would also like to go to a noraebang and sing Korean songs. I would like to visit a store that sells traditional Korean handicrafts and buy a lunch box made out of wood and hanbok. I would also buy red pepper powder and other Korean spices because I'd like to try to make kimchi once I return home. As for traditional Korean tea, I already would have bought that in Boseong.

So this is what my dream trip to Korea would be like. I hope my essay wasn't too long. I only wanted to clearly express the passion I have for Korea. I hope to win the essay content. My chances may not be high but then you never know if my dream will indeed come true!