

SO YOU HAVE ORDERS TO KOREA...NOW WHAT?

Welcome to Team Osan! Living overseas is a blessing and a challenge. At Osan, we are a tight knit community where you will always find someone to lend a hand. There are many changes afoot for Osan, including dramatically increasing Command Sponsored billets and bringing many more families to the ROK-Republic of Korea. The information you will find in this document is not an end all. This information was compiled by a group of spouses who were lamenting the fact that we didn't have this information when we moved here. We don't like to complain...well we don't mind complaining, we just like to try and find a solution too! So we put together this packet. This is by no means anything official and is filled with our opinions only. The information may change from time to time, so be sure to check, double check and then ask again if you have everything you need. Your sponsor and unit will be your lifeline for getting you information, reservations and help. Be sure to reach out for help when you need it. Remember there are no dumb questions!

Army Families—check out info at the end of the packet for information and Air Force to Army translations.

GETTING HERE AND PLANNING AHEAD

So your spouse came home and said the famous words, “Guess what, honey?” So now what do you do? After you receive your orders, you will need to get passports for your whole family. These passports are called “no-fee” passports and are issued through your MPF or ask your official travel office where to apply for the passport and visa. This process can take a long time so start getting the information as soon as you can. Make sure you get your special military visa stamped in your passport!! Part of the AD Member's PCS packet will be a Command Sponsorship Letter. This tells housing you are indeed coming even though you are on the PCS orders. Make sure this is done, some MPFs may not have handled an accompanied move to Korea and that is something that seems to be overlooked quite easily.

Your spouse will have an outprocessing checklist to do. This will include an overseas medical and dental clearance that your family will have to complete. The theme of “start early” is echoed throughout this document, but we can't say it enough. Things should be easy, but that is rarely the case. Please start everything you can early in case it takes a bit of time to complete.

HOUSING, HOUSEHOLD GOODS & UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE

The housing on base has been built since 2003 and is nice. There are currently 3 towers with more planned in the future. The rooms are small, plan accordingly on what you send over. Bring a dresser with drawers as closet space is a bit small too. There are several narrow turns so big oversized sofas are difficult to get into the units. Take photos/videos of everything you own before the trip and have a camera handy when you are unpacking in case of any damage. Household Goods can take 3-4 months to get here, depending on the time of year.

Pack enough things in your Unaccompanied Baggage to help you through until you get your HHGs. Walk through your kitchen, then the bathroom and so on to pick out the basic necessities, keeping in mind the weight limit. There is a checklist at the end of this packet that may help you. Send your Unaccompanied Baggage early so it is waiting for you when you arrive, we recommend at least 3 months in advance—no matter if you are told it will take less. That sounds like a lot of time but not really. It will make your life here a lot easier having your things waiting for you when you get your housing than doing without.

The Airmen and Family Readiness Center have dish packs, irons and some others necessities in their loan closet. Turumi Lodge may have packs for linens, towel and shower curtains. Your sponsor can check these out for you.

You can only have them for 30 days so it is important to plan ahead for Unaccompanied Baggage. Do NOT count on these packs--there are extremely limited amounts.

PET INFO

You can find all the information for pet travel, boarding and veterinary services at 51FSS.com. Microchipping and vaccinations are required for all pets. Make sure you do all your paperwork completely! There is a boarding kennel run by the Force Support Squadron. Pets are not allowed on the regular airport shuttle bus or in billeting. FSS provides a driver and van to pick you up from the airport and drive you to Osan AB. The price is around \$200, but that includes the van, driver and all toll fees from Incheon Airport to Osan. After a 15 hour flight it is nice not to have to worry about getting to the base. Make reservations early! Your only other option is to have your sponsor pick you up in a POV and keep your pet for you. The airline and airport rules seem to change often and currently vary for incoming and outgoing animals. Before you bring your pet to Osan, you need to know that *leaving* with it could be much harder. It will require more planning and depending on the size of the animal, could potentially cost thousands of dollars. And *not* leaving with your pet could have heartbreaking consequence. Before you PCS, please take the time to decide if you are willing and able to plan ahead and pay any amount to bring your friend with you when you leave Osan. Too often poor planning and/or high expenses have caused animals to be abandoned. Currently, the vet clinic is not designed for long-term shelter use so take the time to make this decision in the U.S. where you also have the option to leave a pet with a friend/family temporarily or give it up for adoption at a no-kill shelter. Below is one of several companies doing pet transportation services for families leaving Korea. This is not an endorsement, ask around for other companies and do your research before you decide on a company.

Korea Animal Transport c/o Chungwha Animal Hospital tel. : +82 2 792 7602

Sohee Yoon, Manager: www.cwhospital.com Address : 21-1 Itaewon-Dong, Yongsan-Gu, Seoul, South Korea

If you will be living in the towers on base, carefully consider whether your family will be able to take care of a dog without the convenience of a back yard. Children who walk dogs must be mature enough to properly dispose of pet waste on their own and strong enough to control their dog around other dogs.

If, after your tour at Osan, you are assigned to Hawaii, Japan or Europe, you may also need to prepare for big quarantine expenses. Quarantine periods can vary depending on the pets' country of origin. Animals coming from Korea may have longer quarantine periods than those coming from the U.S. and those costs could add up to thousands of dollars also. We aren't trying to say leave your pet behind...our pets are our children and would do anything to keep them with us. We just want everyone to be aware of the work and expense it takes to get a pet here, take care of a pet in apartment living and getting your pet back home.

TRAVEL

Flights here are long, no matter where you come from. If you can get a non-stop flight, do it. Flights from the west coast directly to Incheon Airport are usually 12-16 hours. No way around it...they are long! Plan ahead on what to bring in your suitcases and your carry on. Summers are very hot and humid and winters are cold with lots of wind. There is an indoor pool, so no matter what time of year you are coming, bring your swim suit—nothing beats a morning of swimming to tire out the kids! For your carry on, it's a good idea to bring games for the kids, books, sinus medicine, extra snacks and an extra light jacket. Most airlines have individual screens for movies, but it's a good idea if you have a portable DVD player for the kids to bring it. Practice some small exercises with the kids you can do in the aisles of the plane. This can be a fun way for the kids to blow off some steam without running up and down the entire length of the plane. Keep in mind that you will be carrying all

this stuff through two airports, so pack smartly so you don't weigh yourself down going through customs, immigration, baggage claim and getting to the shuttle bus.

Remember you will cross the International Dateline during your flight. If you leave the states on a Friday you will land on Saturday. Keep that in mind for reservations and travel plans.

Make sure you have the following with you as you start your travels—

- Multiple copies of orders
- Passports **Note:** On the plane you will have to fill out immigration paperwork that requires everyone's passport number. If you don't have the passports handy, write the names and passport number down on a small card and keep it in easy reach. That way you don't have to hunt through all your baggage to find the passports.
- Military ID
- Stateside Drivers License
- Command Sponsorship Assignment Letter
- Medical, Dental and Shot records for everyone.
- Phone numbers for sponsors (or spouses if they are already here)
- If traveling with pets, you will need ALL supporting documents for shots, exams and such. It's a good idea to have several copies of each just in case.

When you arrive at Incheon Airport follow the crowd to Immigrations. You will show them your passports with visa and a copy of your orders. This process can take 15-90 minutes, depending how many planes are landing at the same time. You then go downstairs to get your baggage and pick up any pets traveling with you. There are usually English speaking employees asking if you are military and pointing you where to go. If you have pets, you then need to go to the Livestock counters located in the middle areas of baggage claim. They will stamp all your paperwork and might examine the kennel, if needed. You will then go to the very end of baggage claim—if you are looking out the doors into the main terminal area go all the way to your right. There is a special customs counter just for military. There is a sign that identifies it for US Military only. As you exit the main doors there you will be at the American rally point for the shuttle busses going to all the Military installations. You will meet your sponsor here or check in at the counter for the shuttle bus or pet friendly FSS van.

The trip to Osan takes about 2 hours but can take up to 4 depending on traffic, so be sure everyone visits the restroom before you start your trip. When you reach the gate you will get your Military ID scanned, tell them you just arrived and show a copy of your orders. The Shuttle bus will drop you off at Turumi Lodge.

So after all that---Welcome to Korea!

YOU ARE HERE AND JETLAGGED....NOW WHAT???

Ohhh the jet lag. Oh-dark-30 never looks good. Be prepared to wake up around 3-4 am. Believe it or not, there are a few places to go at that time. Checkertails is the only 24 hour restaurant and is located across the street from the Turumi and the BX. They serve the entire menu all day and the chocolate chip pancakes are great. The Fitness Center is also open 24/7. Try to plan something to do during the afternoon when your body says it is time for bed. The later you can stay up in the evening, the faster you will get on this time zone. Of course, that is easier said than done especially with little ones. Try the kids area in the library, the indoor pool or even a walk to the BX. This is a great time to visit the Airmen and Family Readiness Center to sign up for your mandatory Spouse's Orientation Brief and check out their calendar of trips and classes. They are a great resource, so go over early and get as much info as you can.

YOUR FIRST 48 HOURS

Your spouse will either take care of all of these or will accompany you to all of these areas—most places will not help you unless the active duty member is with you!!

You must do all of these in order to get into the BX, Commissary and be “officially” on base.

CHECKLIST

(This is not official...your spouse will get an official inprocessing check list with more things to do...but these are important and a good start! In addition, this list is an overview, details are below.)

- Register family in BIDS Pass & ID (Bldg. 936)
- Get a ration card MPF (Bldg. 936)
- Get SOFA stamp(s) AMC terminal, Immigration Office (Bldg. 920)
- Register with Tricare Hospital, Tricare service window (Bldg. 777)
- Confirm or look for housing Housing Office (Bldg. 765)
- Check on your shipments TMO (Bldg. 635)
- Register children in DoDD’s Elementary or High School office
- Register car Pass & ID (Bldg. 936)
- Obtain Korean driver’s license 1st-Safety (Bldg.745), 2nd-Mustang Club, 3rd-Trans (Bldg1216)
- Consider opening local account Community Bank (Bldg. 965)

BIDS REGISTRATION—DAY 1

To gain access to Osan AB, dependents must be registered in the Base ID System (BIDS). Security Forces will scan your ID and if you’re not “in” BIDS getting on base can be a problem. Go to Pass and ID (784-4489, Bldg 936) with your spouse ASAP to show your Military ID(s) and copies of your orders. You can get this done with your ration card process. We recommend that you do this first thing in the morning, the middle of the day the office can get very crowded and the wait is longer.

RATION CARDS—DAY 1

Dependents need ration cards, active duty members do not. You will have to show your Military ID and rations card to get into the BX or Commissary and making certain purchases at the Shopette. All dependents ages 10 and above need to have a ration card. If you arrive on a weekend, the Commissary or BX clerk may allow you to sign in. Other than this exception, they are very strict about this rule, so make it one of the first things your spouse does. Dependents who are living “in country” (both command and non-command sponsored) are authorized to get a ration card. You will be issued a temporary card (which is just a copy of your orders stamped by Security Forces) until the permanent one is ready. You obtain the card(s) from the Ration Control Office in the MPF (784-4489, Bldg. 936). Your spouse must apply for and pick up both your temporary and permanent ration card. As a dependent, you do not need to go; however, your spouse must bring your military ID (or a copy of it), and a copy of their orders. The ration program exists to prevent black market issues. Certain items can only be purchased in limited quantities. See the Commissary section for specifics on rations. Again we recommend first thing in the morning.

SOFA STAMP—REQUIRED WITHIN 30 DAYS

Except for Korean Nationals who have no need for the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), all dependents of active duty military who are residing here must have their passports SOFA stamped. SOFA stamps are required for dependent passports so you may leave the country. Your spouse needs to bring your passport to the Passport Agent in Personal Affairs (784-6719, Bldg. 936 room 118). They will give you a Verification of Assignment Letter, which must be signed by the unit Commander or First Sergeant. You then bring the completed letter to the Immigration Office in the AMC Terminal (784-4042, Bldg. 884) along with your passport(s) and orders. **Note:** Also ask for a SOFA card at this office. It contains information for if you run into problems with law enforcement, such as a car accident.

TRICARE REGISTRATION

Command sponsored dependents are enrolled in the Osan division of TRICARE Prime and have priority for all appointments after Active Duty. Non-command sponsored dependents are enrolled in TRICARE Standard. Under this program, you are seen on a "space available" basis. You will have to wait until after 10a.m. to see if there are any same day appointments available. The thing to know about TRICARE Standard, is that if you are referred downtown you will be responsible for an annual premium, a co-pay along with a percentage of the bill- currently 20% of the bill. If you have any questions go to the Osan TRICARE office located to the left of the main entrance at the Hospital. **Note:** Currently there is no OB-GYN doctor at Osan. We do have a Nurse Practitioner doing the Women's Clinic appointments. If you get pregnant here you will have to go to Yongsan USAG for some of your appointments as well as the birth. Current policy is you will go to the "Storks Nest" two weeks prior to your due date and stay there until after you give birth. There are several places where they could house you during your stay at Yongsan. Some places have private rooms, some are open bays with one bathroom for nine ladies. The reason why this is done is the fact there is no NICU here at Osan, so if anything goes wrong during the birth, there is not a place here to care for your newborn. This is mandatory, so just prepare yourself to be separated from your family for that time.

DENTAL

You do not have to have current dental insurance to be seen at the base clinic, however you are only allowed one cleaning/exam per year due to manning and requirements to see the active duty personnel first. There is an Orthodontist that comes to base once a month from Yongsan. The patient must have braces prior to notification of orders in order to be seen on base. Many people opt to keep their dental insurance active. There are several US trained Orthodontists and Dentists off base to see and you will get coverage for those trips. In some cases you can actually get more coverage for procedures by living overseas than you can stateside. Also many people get their teeth cleaned when they go back to visit family.

DODD'S REGISTRATION

School registration can be completed at the applicable school office. Bring copies of your spouse's orders, passport, immunization records, and previous school records. Offices are typically open from 7am to 4pm (elementary 784-6912, high school 784-9098). The schools are in the direction of the Main Gate from the Housing areas.

CHECK-IN WITH HOUSING

The Housing situation is very fluid at the moment because of the increase in the number of families.

Key and essential personnel are required to live on base. Command sponsored families are housed first in on-base housing then off base if there is none available. For those wishing to live off-base, permission is required in order to receive Overseas Housing Allowances. Non-command sponsored dependents staying over 30 days must live off base. The squadron commander is the approval authority for your spouse to live off-base with you. The housing office is the approval authority for him to be paid to live off base with you. As of now, concurrent travel is only authorized by the Squadron or Group Commander and is not the norm...what does that mean?

You stay in the states visiting family while the Active Duty Member comes over here first and secures housing before you are allowed to join. That's the good news—bad news is you are doing the whole airport thing by yourself. If you elect to give your sponsor a Power of Attorney, they can sign for a home, temporary furniture and make the appointments for inspections prior to your arrival. Once the house is signed for, your stateside BAH will be terminated. If you decide not to go that route, the Military Member can work directly with housing to set up appointments once they arrive on base.

If you live on base you will be living in Towers. This means you will hear noises from the hallways and the floors above you. You will smell dinners cooking—some smell great and others not so much. Be aware of what you do that may effect others and be tolerant. If you have an issue, handle it as adults and just talk to each other. Watch your kids and know what they are doing. While you are in the relatively safe environment of on base living, children must be monitored. Remember there are many who work shift schedules, so be considerate. Most Americans are used to single family housing, so Osan may take some getting used to.

CHECK-IN WITH TMO

Check in with TMO for the status of your Household Goods and Unaccompanied Baggage shipment. HHGs can take up to 3 months so plan ahead with your Unaccompanied Baggage. TMO also takes care of your temporary furniture. You can sign out certain amounts of furniture based on your needs and family size. Temporary furniture is loaned out for 90 days max, so at the risk of sounding repetitive...plan ahead.

If you discover that you shipped too much with your household goods you have 30 days to return some of the items to storage. Contact TMO for more information.

LIVING OFF BASE

Warning: things off base can change frequently. It is best to talk to someone who is doing it at the time you arrive and ask lots of questions if you are uncertain about anything. Living off base is not scary at all...it can just be challenging if you do not have a little help from a friend or a good realtor. **NOTE:** There are little to no closets in off base housing so plan ahead and bring dressers and armoires. **NOTE:** The majority of military families will be living on base. We included this section for civilians coming over and Non-Command Sponsored families.

FINDING AN APARTMENT OR HOUSE

Songtan area has a good selection of apartments and "American style" housing is increasing all the time. There are plenty to choose from and they range in size, price, etc. Luckily for us, landlords are very eager to rent to Americans.

Go to the housing office to see the list of pre-approved apartments and houses. Make sure to ask to see the entire list of available places. You can check out flyers posted in various places such as the Laundromat, the post office and family housing. There are usually at least a few listed. It helps to ask in the community or even walk around and look for yourself.

Another method of finding a place is through a realtor off base. There are several. The apartment/home owners pay all realtor costs, so the service is free to you. The other perk to using a good realtor is that they will also pay your bills for you. This may sound trivial, but you can't just mail in a check like in the US. You need to take your Korean Won to the payment office (there are several, a few within walking distance from base) and pay in person. It is nice to just take you rent and bills and drop them off to one person.

There are also lots of places that are found by word of mouth!!! Check with people who live off base and are getting ready to PCS. If you move into a place previously inhabited by a military family the furnishings might be a little more Western and familiar. Also, people moving are usually selling things that they bought, so this can be convenient too.

In addition, there are many things that can be negotiated with the landlord. For example, furniture, air conditioning unit, washing machine/dryer, and 110v outlets (or transformers). One important thing to

remember to look for while viewing houses/apartments is to make sure there are double paned windows or double slide windows. Korean insulations standards are different and with heating/cooling costs you want the best insulation you can get. A house with a 2 story glass wall looks pretty but it is difficult to regulate temperature.

Also, do not forget to take into account the parking situation in the local community. Some apartments have parking available and others do not. Some people have paid extra to park in a hotel parking lot near their apartment.

FINALIZING THE DEAL

You can negotiate furnishings and other necessities in your apartment. Please don't look at the Pottery Barn catalog the day before... it is Korean furniture in most cases and not glamorous. This may or may not raise the rent price, but it is worth trying to get what you want from the apartment owner before buying things on your own. Typically, you can get furniture (couch, table, kitchen table, beds, dressers, and armoire closets) at no extra cost. Things like a washer and dryer can be a little trickier. If they will provide something but it raises the rent, research if it would be cheaper to buy it at the BX or on the economy. Things are pretty easy to sell before you leave since there are so many people constantly PCSing in and out of Osan.

Is the wall paper old and dirty or the floors not that great? Most landlords will replace these things if they are asked. They do not look at it as an inconvenience and most Koreans expect these things when they move into a new place. Of course if you don't ask, the landlord will not volunteer these services.

HOUSING INSPECTION

Once you have decided on a place, the housing office has to inspect and pass it. Many places are pre-inspected and this can expedite the move in process. If you find an apartment on your own, the housing office may also negotiate the price at the time of inspection.

UTILITIES

Expect to have several bills, the information below is for houses and keep in mind this is a very loose estimate of costs. It all depends on your place and living habits along with the Won exchange rate. Bills can be paid at any bank. Some realtors or landlords are willing to pay bills for you.

- Apartment bill (electricity, water, trash, & misc. operating costs), normally \$100-120 but in the summer \$200-\$500 if using AC.
- Gas/Oil bill: from \$300-\$800—this can go up in the winter for larger houses
- Electricity: \$75 -\$200—this can go as high as \$900 in the summer if you use A/C in a larger home
- Cable/Phone/Internet bill: \$50 plus your phone usage time—most people just have cell phone
- Water: \$5-\$25

It is always cheaper to use gas or oil for heat since electricity in Korea is so expensive. Also, if you don't run your heat/furnace your pipes could freeze and burst. If you live in tall apartment buildings you can save on utilities since you benefit from the heat and hot water of your neighbors.

Oil - Some local apartments/houses are heated by oil (Kerosene). It is cheapest to order your oil from base. The local oil vendors are more expensive. Getting oil delivered is fairly fast, usually same or next day, but in the winter it can take up to 5 days. Your minimum order is 100 gallons. In the summer that will last a very long time, but in the winter when heating your house, it will not last as long.

Cable –If your apartment does not come already equipped with cable, you can get it at any cable office in the area (GBC). They are located all over the area. There are only a few US channels available with cable off base...AFN Korea, Star World, and a few other dual English/Korean channels. You can also buy a satellite and decoder from the AAFES Customer Service counter to get cable like offered on base. Currently the monthly rental fee is \$13, with the additional expense of the dish at \$110 and installation at \$90.

DRIVING

USFK DRIVERS LICENSE

All dependents of sponsors ranking E-3 and above, to include both command sponsored and non-command sponsored dependents, are permitted to obtain a USFK driver's license. However as it stands now, only E-7 and above can own a vehicle. Each family is only allowed one vehicle: you can have one car and one motorcycle/scooter. There is virtually no parking around base. Luckily most things are close and within walking distance. If you plan on driving, you will need the USFK driver's license issued on base (an international driver's license allows you to drive in Korea, but not the military registered car). You can drive on your stateside license for 30 days after your arrival. There is a driver's safety course at the Wing Safety Office (784-5109, Bldg. 745, 2nd floor), held every Friday at 0900 on a walk-in basis. Luckily, the AFRC will play the video at your mandatory Spouses Orientation Brief. After taking this course, call Transportation Fleet Management (784-4568, Bldg 1216) to schedule your test. These fill up fast so expect a 2-3 week wait. You'll need your stateside license and a copy of your spouse's orders to take the test. You can get a study pamphlet from Transportation or you can view it online by going to: www.osan.af.mil, scroll down the page and **USFK 385-2 Guide to Safe Driving in Korea** is on the right. The link will open an Adobe Acrobat .pdf file.

VEHICLE REGISTRATION

All vehicles that are driven on base must be registered on base by the AD Member. To register they will need:

- A vehicle inspection sticker, no more than 30 days old, available from the FSS Auto Hobby Shop, Bldg 1214 over by the Fitness Center or the gas station located by the main gate.
- (If you shipped your car) Your original SOFA document, the light green one.
- Two copies of valid proof of insurance in the registrants name in the amounts of \$25,000/\$50,000/\$25,000 (to call USAA toll free dial 0028-005-312-2650)
- About 20,000 Won for purchase of vehicle plates; bring smaller bills.
- Valid USFK Form 134E (driver's license), not needed if registered within 30 days of arrival.
- Military ID card.
- ❖ If you are here for 2 years you will need to renew your USFK sticker after 1 year. Pass and ID (784-4489) can answer any further questions you may have. It may sound like a lot, but you do have a 30 day temporary registration to complete the registration process
- ❖ **Note:** You can only register your car on base on Wednesdays. You will fill out all the paperwork and pay your fees, then return on Thursday to pick up your temporary or permanent plates. So plan ahead. This service is a nice thing the Security Forces does as a COURTESY. It is very busy and the waits are long! Be there at 0700 and bring a book. If you want to register it on another day you have to drive to Pyongtaek.

KIM CHI CARS...

There are usually several used, cheap cars available. Look on the advertisement boards at the post office, main gate bus stop, Laundromat and commissary. Before you buy one decide if you want to just go around the local area and to and from work or if you want to make trips to Seoul etc. Most cars are Korean and this is probably your best bet since you will most likely need some sort of maintenance in the year you own the car. Just keep in

mind that maintenance can be complicated if the car is not Korean...so a Hyundai or Kia are the safest choices....or something that you just know won't need more than an oil change or a new belt. The parts for foreign cars (American, Japanese etc) have to be ordered...so it can take a while to get here and thus can be an inconvenience. If you cannot find a car from a PCSing military member you can try to find one off base. When off base, BARGAIN, BARGAIN, BARGAIN!!!

PICKING UP YOUR VEHICLE AT YONGSAN

Shipping times vary but normally it is 2-3 months to get your vehicle to Korea once you drop it off at the Vehicle Processing Center. You can go to Whereismypov.com to find out the status of where your car is on its journey. Once you are notified it is in country, go over and apply/pick your temp tags as described in the Vehicle Registration section. Please double check the current requirements, but as of now you will need to bring

- Paperwork from the VPC
- Insurance
- Temporary plates
- Drivers License

It is really easy to go get the car. Take the bus from the bus station on base just across the street and railroad tracks from Turumi. The tickets are around \$5. You can see the current bus schedule at www.rao-osan.com/retact/info/visitors/bussched.htm. The bus will enter Yongsan at Gate 52. The bus will stop here for your IDs to be scanned. GET OFF THE BUS HERE! Just let the driver know you need to get off at the gate. If it doesn't happen, you will just have to get a taxi at the Yongsan bus station to go back to this gate. Walk out to the main road and cross the street. You will pass through the gate and go toward the right...that's it. The small building is marked and that is where you will pick up your vehicle. If you are scared of driving back, they have great directions for getting back to Osan, just ask. After you have picked it up, drive back through Gate 52 and make your first right, that street will take you up the hill to the gas station.

MORE ON DRIVING...

DRIVING, AGHHHHH!!!!!!

You will want to drive defensively rather than aggressively. There are tons of pedestrians along with scooters and bikes that will dart out into the road at any moment. The Korean children are taught to raise their arm to stop traffic when they are in the road and don't pay much attention to cars. They expect you to see them!!! Many cars just stop in odd places for no apparent reason. Always be prepared to stop!!! Don't ever try to outrun a bus or a car that is bigger than you. You will not win. Taxis can be ruthless too. Never talk on your cell phone while driving. It is illegal and you can get expensive fines. You can turn right on red but only turn left on the green arrow signal. On the other hand...many Koreans look at red lights and other traffic rules simply as suggestions. Don't be surprised by anything...especially a horn honking at you because you are not running a red light!!! Hazard lights are not only used to indicate car trouble, they are also used to alert other drivers of traffic jams or issues ahead. Pay attention and slow down. Try to remember to put your flashers on too.

On the highway, the far left lane (marked with a blue stripe) is the bus lane only. There are cameras that will take your picture and you will get a ticket in the mail!!!! There are also speed cameras located on many main roads and for each photo of you speeding or in the bus lane you will be issued a separate ticket. Most tickets are around \$80. Driving records are checked when you are outprocessing, All fines must be paid before you de-register your vehicle to either sell it or ship it back to the States. It is also a great idea to plan extra time when you are driving because you never know what kind of traffic you may encounter.

If you are in an accident be prepared to show your SOFA card (it explains what you need to do after an accident and also translates it into Korean to avoid any misunderstandings!) and ID card and call Security Forces right away. They can help you out with what to do and sometimes provide a translator on the phone for you. Depending on where you are in the country, either Army Military Police or Air Force Security Forces will respond to your accident. Please double check with the Law Enforcement Desk MP/SF troop to see who is going to respond and how long it will take them to get to you. You need to wait for them to arrive. Do not leave the scene of the accident, sign anything, or pay/accept money from a Korean driver.

GPS UNITS

GPS units are great, the only glitch is many from the states will not work here. This includes units built into your vehicle. There are only two stores, one in Yongsan and one in Osan, which sells a particular Garmin unit that can be loaded with the software for Korea. There is also a Korean unit sold at the BX for Korea that is in English. Ask around and look at the bulletin boards, some people have those units for sale. The good thing about getting a used unit is many times they already have great places programmed into them. It gives you a little peace of mind knowing that you will always be able to get back to base when you out exploring Korea.

SECURITY FORCES OR MILITARY POLICE (MP) PHONE #s

Osan Commercial # 031-661-5515/5757 DSN 784-5515

Yongsan (Seoul) Commercial # 0505-724-6695 DSN 724-3004/3005/6695

ROAD CONDITIONS

Green...normal

Amber...essential traffic only

Red...emergency/essential traffic only

Black...impassable

Have fun, see Korea...but be careful!!!

OTHER NECESSITIES

PHONE , INTERNET & CABLE HOOK-UP

On base, you have one option, the LGDaCom office in customer service area of the BX. Home phones limited to Korea range from \$10-\$35. Phone service that will let you call the US ranges from \$20 for 550 minutes to \$35 for unlimited calls. This service also allows you to sign up for a US area code phone number. Internet service ranges from \$40-\$60 depending on the download speed you would like. Cable TV has three options from \$35 to \$60, depending on what channels you would like to have. There are activation fees and deposits with most of the services, so budget for about \$125 more when you initially sign up. **NOTE:** Many people are investing in a Slingbox before coming here. Check out Best Buy for info. Basically it will send a cable signal to your computer. Several people have hooked up an extra TV, DVR and Slingbox in their parents or friend's extra room. This means you can DVR you favorite shows back in the US then hook up your computer to your TV and watch everything you have recorded. The trick is the DVR—without it you can only watch what is currently on TV. So if its 3a.m. back in the States where your Slingbox is then you are watching a lot of infomercials!

CELL PHONES

There are several ways to get one. First, LGDaCom in the BX sells them. They come in a variety of styles and prices. If you are looking for something cheaper you can go off base and pick from new and used cell phones. You can get a decent used phone for about \$70-100. The stores are easy to notice and have advertisements for phones and phone cards. Another option is to ask people who are PSCing if they have a phone that they want to

get rid of. You buy prepaid calling cards for cell phones in increments of 10,000 Won and the time is good for a 30 day period. Unless you buy more time for the phone at the end of 30 days the minutes will expire. If you buy more time the remaining minutes from the previous month will roll over and be added to the newly purchased minutes. Incoming minutes are free. You can buy minutes for local (Korean) calls and international calls separately. Some people don't even get a land line because the cell phone is both cheap and convenient. Like most things in Korea, everyone has their favorite place to get phones, phone cards etc. For the most part, they are all relatively comparable and it should not be too stressful of a thing. If you like to do comparison shopping ask coworkers or friends where they like to go. **Note:** Cell phones belong to their own networks and it is required to use the prefix and area code when dialing even in the local area. For example, you must dial 011, 016, 010, 019 (depending on the type of cell phone) and the area code (031 for Songtan).

GETTING SUPPORT AND BEING INVOLVED

PET INFO

There is a vet on base and you can get emergency and more extensive care at Yongsan Army Garrison in Seoul or off base in Songtan. They are reasonable prices and very friendly, but keep in mind that the first mission of the military vets are the military working dogs. All pets are seen on a space available basis and non emergency surgeries have a waiting list. If you want to get a pet while you are here keep in mind that the puppies for sale outside the front gate and at the local pet stores are typically not very healthy. They are not bred properly or vaccinated and can have some serious health issues. Many do not survive. Parvo is a huge problem off base. It is a good idea to make sure your pet gets an extra shot against the Parvo virus. Check with the vet clinic first to see if they have any strays or relinquished animals. They also have a list of people who are looking to adopt a certain breed or size animal, put yourself on that list and wait a bit to see what comes along. But remember...If you bring a pet with you, you need to take it when you leave. Many people adopt or buy pets here, then abandon them when they get orders else where. You would not do that to a child and your pet is a part of your family, so think long and hard before getting a new pet.

CHILDCARE

Within the first 60 days of your arrival you are entitled to 20 hours of free childcare per child at the Child Development Center (CDC). You will need a voucher from the Airmen and Family Readiness Center. After acquiring one of these, take it to the CDC to register your children. In addition, the CDC offers a variety of contracts to include, hourly, part-time and full-time care. Dual Military families have priority as do families where both parents work full time on base and Command sponsored families. Non-command sponsored families are able to register children when space is available. Keep in mind that policies can change from time to time, as can availability. With the increase of Command Sponsored families, it can be fairly difficult to get a spot in the CDC. The Youth Center does offer a lot of activities and classes for the kids. There are camps during the summer and other times the kids aren't in school. There are several pre-schools off base. Family Member Programs Centers have a list of places. Keep in mind that the base has no control over any school off base, there are no inspections or curriculum checks. But it is fun to hear your little one learning Korean.

AIRMEN AND FAMILY READINESS CENTER

WWW.OSAN.AF.MIL/NEWCOMERS/AIRMANANDFAMILYREADINESSCENTER.ASP

If you have a question, they probably know the answer or can at least point you in the right direction. They also have a list of people who provide babysitting, house-sitting and pet-sitting. In addition, the AFRC offers free familiarization tours all over Korea. Be sure to get their monthly calendar and after a few tours you will feel confident in the local area and Seoul. The tours are designed to teach you how to do it on your own...so don't be surprised at how much you will see in a short period of time. They are extremely friendly and love to help.

They also love volunteers. Don't miss the free overnight trips that they offer every now and then and also don't miss the Mud Festival in July. Get out of the house and see more than Songtan!!!

RELIGIOUS SUPPORT

Osan's Chapel has religious services for Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and support other major religions. There are bible studies for adults and children. There are also multiple Churches off base that offer a multitude of services and bible studies. Many of the churches advertise in the back pages of the FSS magazine that can be viewed at the 51 FSS website.

OSAN OFFICERS' SPOUSES' CLUB AND ENLISTED SPOUSES' CLUB WWW.OSANOSC.COM

As always, the assignment is what you make of it. Osan is a pretty close knit community, get involved and stay busy. If you're interested in joining one of the Spouses' Clubs, visit the websites or ask around. The Officers' Spouses' Club functions are regularly held on the third Thursday of each month. You may attend once as a guest, but must be an OSC member to attend further functions. Contact the membership chairperson (Membership@osanosc.com) to find out more information. The Enlisted Spouses' Club meets the third Tuesday of each month. You can find a link to the ESC upcoming website on the OSC's home page.

OFF BASE EMPLOYMENT

Since the new SOFA agreement went into effect in April 2001, it has become considerably easier for dependents of American military members to legally work on the Korean economy. USFK family members with an A-3 visa (SOFA visa) can now get an employment visa added to their passports without having to leave Korea. However, there are still restrictions and guidelines to be followed and you must go through the Legal Office for approval and information. Americans can legally pursue several categories of employment, to include teaching at the college level; conversational English instruction; research; technology instruction; industrial training; artistic entertainment; professional occupations such as a doctor, attorney, or CPA (with Korean authorization); specific activities for a public or private institution. Foreigners must be employed by a legitimate Korean employer such as a business, school, or foreign language institute. ROK income tax must be withheld by the Korean employer. Do not accept cash or items for "volunteering" to teach. The Korean government is cracking down and multiple spouses have been kicked out of the country for doing English classes off base without a work visa.

STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE

SAFETY

There is very little violent crime here at Osan and it is generally safe to be out on the street, even at night. One situation that Americans must avoid is any type of protest or demonstration. Protests and demonstrations are frequent in Korea. These events can be emotional and have the potential to spin out of control. A few tips for staying safe-use the buddy system and check the board outside of the main gate or Commanders Access Channel for warnings. There are also several off-limit establishments to military members and their dependants. Local and Korea-wide off-limit establishments are listed on a sign as you walk out the main gate.

CURFEW HOURS

Sunday-Thursday: 2400-0500

Friday-Saturday and some holidays: 0300-0500

OFF LIMITS AREAS:

The following off post establishments and areas are off limits by order of the Area V commander:

- Hospitals (unless an emergency)
- Pharmacies
- Barber Shops
- Gambling Houses
- Soju Tents
- Steam/Turkish Bath Houses
- Glass Houses/Prostitution Houses
- Tattoo Parlors
- Acupuncture Clinics
- Beta Site Railroad Tracks and Market areas after dark
- ❖ For more info, check the info board as you leave the main gate. There are typically a few bars/clubs that are on the list.

“FUN” THINGS ABOUT OSAN

NONCOMBATANT EVACUATION OPERATIONS (NEO)

Due to the precarious nature of relations between North and South Korea, U.S. citizens residing here must be prepared to evacuate on short notice during a crisis. The USFK holds readiness drills several times a year known as a NEO (Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation). Participation is mandatory for all military dependants. Your Squadron has a NEO warden who should contact you within your first week to give you a family binder and go over some specific information on NEO exercises. Please ask for help from someone who has been through one if you find it confusing. Some things can be a bit confusing...so borrow someone else's binder to use as a guide.

NOTE: Your gas masks will be issued to you at the Spouses Orientation Brief. You MUST see your Squadron NEO Coordinator prior to the brief to get the paperwork to be issued your gas masks.

BASE EXERCISES

Exercises are held regularly and are usually announced well in advance. Exercises at Osan are like nowhere else you've ever been. Most everything is a 'play-area' although most housing is not included. You will hear the base sirens, the "Giant Voice" and there will be people in warfare gear all over the base. If you have children you may want to explain to them what to expect, since seeing troops decked out in Chemical Gear carrying weapons may be scary to them. Some regular base operations are effected such as the post office or other facilities. Please check for hours of operation changes on the FSS Channel 15, BX and Commissary. Be patient and get used to the sirens and the giant voice...even off base. Even though most are announced in advance, don't be surprised if there is a surprise one every once in a while that lasts a day or two. Make sure you keep your phone number and address up to date so you can be reached.

VISITORS TO OSAN

If you live on base, visitors must receive a pass that extends past midnight. Visitors can receive up to a three-day pass without any additional paperwork. However, if your guest is staying longer, you should start the paperwork at least 30 days prior to their visit. By doing this your guest will be allowed access to the base for up to thirty days. This process starts with obtaining paperwork at the MPF and also requires Squadron and Security Forces Commander's signatures. You will need a copy of the visitor's passport, their social security number,

date of birth, and dates of requested access. Since rules can change at any time it is a good idea to call and inquire about the current rules prior to your visitors arriving. U.S. citizens without a military I.D. and Korean Nationals can get a day pass. They must have two picture I.D.s, be signed in at either gate, escorted by their host at all times and signed out again before midnight of the same day. If you live off base, you can repeat this process each day your visitor ventures on base or complete the paperwork above (which may seem like a lengthy process but will be worth it if your visitor needs/wants regular access to the base).

SHOPPING IN & AROUND OSAN

OSAN BX AND COMMISSARY

The BX/Post Office is located across the street from Turumi Lodge and towards the flightline from housing. The BX here is fairly good, but keep in mind that the base hasn't had a large population of families before. If you know you need something before you come, you might want to buy it in the US and ship it with your household goods. Bedding, curtains, bathroom and kitchen things are available but in limited styles and quantities. There is a basic selection of clothing and other goods. It is better to stock up before you come or plan on having to order it off the internet.

The Commissary is open Tuesday-Sunday and is located by the Elementary School, towards the Main Gate from the Housing areas. They are well stocked with all your basic necessities; you just may not find the particular brands you are used to. The selection of Organic choices is limited. There is a sushi bar, deli and bakery.

Shopping at the Commissary and the BX is monitored. To prevent black marketing you are allowed to spend only a certain amount on food. This is based on family size. <https://pimsk.korea.army.mil> will give you the current allowances. Violations are reported to first sergeants who then address the matter with the military member/commander. You can also use this link to track how much you have spent during the month and what you have left. The amount of certain items you buy such as batteries, hot dogs and baking mixes are also tracked. You can not shop for a Korean National and give them items from the BX or Commissary unless they are "altered by baking or preparation."

Beer - No more than 2 cases per day or 8 cases per month.

Liquor - Individuals may buy 3 units per month, and families can buy 5 units per month. One unit is a fifth, quart, or liter bottle. A 1.75 liter bottles count as 2 units. Wine is NOT rationed.

Other items – These items and values are not limited per month, rather how much you spend on the particular items is monitored to alert officials to an excessive trend.

- Diamonds/diamond jewelry
- Cosmetics above \$50
- Furniture above \$200
- Air conditioners, ranges, refrigerators, stoves, freezers, washers and dryers
- Computers, accessories and hardware
- Watches above \$200
- Perfume above \$50
- Golf Clubs
- Color TVs and monitors above 27"

Don't just stay in Songtan if you feel the need to feed your shopping habits. There are lots of great places to spend the day and it is sooooo much fun to head somewhere and try something new with a small or large group of friends. Don't be afraid to ask if others want to join you...most likely everyone is interested and would love a little getaway from Osan.

EMART

This is the closest thing you'll get to a Super Wal-Mart or Target. There are 3 within 30 minutes and all 3 are off the road known as the "little" 1; there are stores in Suwon about 30 minutes from base (this one has a Starbucks!!!), another one in the Pyongtaek about 20 minutes, and the newest one in Osan about 15 minutes. Look for a big "E" (which looks more like a sideways W in a yellow square).

FLOWER MARKET

Take highway 1 to exit 47 (Gaepo/Garrack, not too far after you pay the first toll) when you exit get all the way to the left which will involve getting over several lanes and turn into the parking lot on the left (before you go through the light). There is a small booth where you pay to park. Parking is only a few dollars. They have really cheap cut flowers of every kind, wrapping paper, tissue paper, ribbon, vases and pottery, a nursery with live plants (beautiful orchids) and a building with planters, dirt and other gardening needs!!! Fun trip with the girls!!! Vendors only take won and bring your camera the first time you go!!!

SUWON STATION

The easiest way to go here is via the subway. The subway stop is right under a department store with Starbucks, Outback and of course shopping. But if you prefer to drive, take little one all the way into Suwon (just stay on little one). You will pass a large department store called Migliore and then once you start getting into the downtown area look for signs to Suwon Station, you will make a left turn off little one. When you approach signs for both Suwon Station and Suwon Station Plaza, stay left and follow the signs for the Plaza. There are also more shopping and restaurants (TGIF and Bennigans in addition to Outback) downtown near City Hall. On little one look for City Hall signs, you will turn right at the sign for City Hall and go down this road for about 3-5 minutes and you will see a large intersection with the dept store Galleria on the northeast corner-- basically you take a right at this intersection to go to Outback (it will be immediately on your right) or you go left at this intersection to go to Bennigans (will be on your left) or TGI Fridays and it is on your right. It's pretty simple but you have to keep your eyes peeled for the restaurant signs. There is also a Starbucks inside!!!

SHOPPING IN & AROUND YONGSAN ARMY GARRISON

THE CHOSUN at YONGSAN

The Army spouses have a great little gig going. They go all over Asia shopping and then bring back all kinds of goodies for us to buy. They are only open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10-3. They have everything from furniture, rugs, pottery and china, textiles like pashminas and silk prints, home décor and jewelry. The best part is that the prices are great! This is a fun trip and you can drive or take the bus right from Osan to Yongsan. While up there eat at the Dragon Hill and check out the BX (different stuff than we get), Galleria (similar to our kiosks at the BX only a little more selection), and the commissary (much larger than our and you may find some things you want or need). If you are still full of energy and ready for an adventure then head to Itaewon.

ITAEWON

Shopping here is similar to our Songtan shopping area but there are things that we don't have...and there are some great restaurants to try. Be careful though, the prices are higher than Songtan residents are used to paying. So if you see a purse, mink blanket etc that can be bought here it is probably wise to wait until you get back home. Not only are many things cheaper locally...but many things are also better quality in Songtan. Basically, for any counterfeit/licensed item it is probably better and less expensive the farther from Seoul you get. On the other hand...there are some great stores. Joy Jewelry has knock off Tiffany silver if you ask for it. Just look around...but be familiar with what you can get at home first. When you have worked up an appetite you might want to try these places. Sortino's has great Italian food. Thai Orchid as the name implies has Thai food. It is more expensive than Sawatdee but it is very good and is a nice clean atmosphere. Black Angus Steakhouse! It's a 5-minute walk from Kangnam (Gangnam) subway station Exit #2 that goes toward the Yangjae Station. The steakhouse is located in the KTB Network Building on the left as you exit subway station exit #2. Parking is available in the basement of the building. The steakhouse is real close to Hannam so the subway ride shouldn't be long at all.

SHOPPING IN & AROUND SEOUL

DONGDAEMUN MARKET

AFRC has sheets...but thought there would be a few things you would want to know that aren't on there. The "fabric market/bead market" is in a big white building (5 stories tall) across from the Dongdaemun gate. It has everything you need for any fabric or jewelry making desire. Everything is very cheap compared to the states and most vendors will bargain. You can find any fabric imaginable and the bead area is unreal. This place is very intimidating the first time you go because there is so much to choose from. It is huge...there are five floors and 4 different sections on each floor. If you like something but aren't sure if you want to buy it, write down the vendor number because you will most likely never see that part of the building again once you start wandering. The higher floors seem to have nicer fabric while the bottom floor has stuff like buttons, fringe etc. Floors 3-5 are the most popular. If you walk along the side of the outside of the building there is a walkway (floor is painted red) that runs through the middle of the building. This is a good place to start and try to end so you don't get lost. It is not very stroller friendly...and you will see the Koreans lack of personal space at its finest, bumping and a little pushing is common. Bring Won!

DOOTA DEPARTMENT STORE

On the other corner is Doota (but if you are in a taxi or asking a Korean call it Doosan Tower). It is 9 floors of department store like shopping...but you can bargain with lots of the vendors. They have an entire accessory floor!!! Everything from clothes to housewares to purses. There is a restaurant on the 9th floor and most things are in English and rather easy to navigate.

DONGDAEMUN STADIUM

Across the street from Doota and near the fabric market is the Dongdaemun Stadium. There are lots of vendors set up outside. There is also shopping inside the stadium and is comparable to a flea market. This market is famous for the midnight shopping on Friday nights and is really neat...and then you have a great reason to get a room at the Dragon Hill and relax the next day!!!

NAMDAEMUN MARKET

This is another great market. The AFRC has a great informational sheet on this area.

INSADONG

To experience the traditional culture of Korea while remaining in the heart of the city, try Insa-dong. With art galleries, traditional craft stores, antique art dealers, traditional tea houses and restaurants, it is a neat experience.

MYEONGDONG

This area has long been the trend-making center of Korean fashion. Lotte and Shinsegae Department Stores, Migliore, underground and aboveground shopping malls for apparel, shoes, accessories, and cosmetics appeal to every fad and mode.

INTERNET SHOPPING

Even if you have never shopped on the internet before you will be a pro by the time your tour in Korea is over. Without a doubt there will be things that you will want or need that you just can't find!!! Keep in mind that you should always look at the shipping policies before placing an order to make sure that it will get here in a timely manner. Also, don't be surprised if when you are ready to check out there are a few items that can't be shipped to an APO. The reason that they cannot be shipped is usually hard to figure out...although size is often a factor. We have also included a few that we like for news and other info!!! Again, these are websites we like to use and even though this is not an official document there is no federal endorsement intended.

- www.apobox.com this site will forward boxes from stores that will not send to APO boxes!
- www.zappos.com (brand name shoes with FREE shipping and returns!)
- www.amazon.com (books; usually fast and also partnered with babies R us for all you moms!!!)
- www.walmart.com
- www.target.com (some things they ship, some things they don't – usually depends on size)
- www.oldnavy.com (cheap shipping...\$5 on any order of any size; free returns if you exchange)
- www.payless.com
- www.kmart.com
- www.potterybarn.com
- www.crateandbarrel.com (SLOW shipping though!!! A month or more typically!!! Great clearance section though!!!)
- www.shutterfly.com (online photo albums that are free and they have high quality prints and photo gifts. Really fast shipping!!! They also offer prints in a matte finish and they turn out great. Keep this in mind for cards around the holidays!!!)
- www.ofoto.com (Kodaks version...great service too and their glossy prints turn out great)
- www.cnn.com
- www.stripes.com
- www.estripes.osd.mil (for downloadable full version newspapers of the European, Mid East and Pacific editions)
- www.joann.com
- www.hallmark.com
- www.usaa.com (to purchase flowers/gifts for loved ones backed in the states for Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc...and of course banking and other financial needs)
- www.Petsmart.com (sends to APO/AP, but they are extremely slow at sending packages)

- www.afnkorea.net (for the most updated AFN Korea television and radio schedules)
- www.drugstore.com (lots of things...shampoo & other toiletries. Also good for baby items)
- www.strawberrynet.com (skincare products. They have free shipping. They also have discounted products and the more purchases you make, they increase the discount. Also stuff gets here super fast because I think it comes in from Hong Kong)
- www.jcpenney.com (they have a good clearance section, but the shipping isn't so good)
- www.cbd.com (lot of books and Christian gifts. They take forever to ship though)

Other useful websites:

- www.worldlingo.com or www.babelfish.yahoo.com (provides free translation services)
- www.smrt.co.kr/Eng/index.jsp (interactive subway map)
- www.myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil (AFN guide)
- www.seoul.amedd.army.mil/sites/yellowsand/default.asp (Yellow Sand levels-takes a while to load)
- www.aafes.com/ems/pac/osan.htm (Osan movie schedule)
- www.rao-osan.com/retact/info/visitors/bussched.htm (Bus schedule)
- www.51FSS.com (Force Support Squadron website)

OUTINGS WITH KIDS

There are some great places to go with your kids. Lotte World and Everland are Disneyland style amusement parks and are fairly close to Osan. ITT has tours monthly and AFRC has directions if you want to go on your own. There is an Aquarium in Seoul that the children enjoy also. There is a zoo across the highway from the Seoul flower market. Everland Amusement Park is both indoor and outdoor rides and activities, so it can be enjoyed year around. Ask other families and find out where some of the closer temples are. There are usually small parks/woods around these areas the kids can have fun exploring. Koreans love children, especially American kids, so don't be afraid of bringing them out to any tours or attractions.

TOURISTY STUFF & INFO

The Airmen and Family Readiness Center has handouts on these sites and more. There are many tours and outings each month, see ITT or the ARFC for information.

GYEONGBOKGUNG (PALACE)

Gyeongbokgung Palace was the main residence and palace of the royal family during the Korean Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910), and boasts an impressive 600 years of history. Built by King Lee Seonggye (ruled 1392-1398), founder of the Joseon Dynasty, the palace was completed in 1395 after the capital of the nation was changed from Gaeseong to Hanyang (currently Seoul). Directions: Take the Purple Subway line (Line number 3) and get off at Kanghaiwamun or the orange line (line number 5) and get out at Gyeongbukgung Station. Voila you will see the Palace. Or stroll toward it via Insadong.

NAMSAN (SOUTH MOUNTAIN) AND SEOUL TOWER

The Seoul Tower is a great place to get a good look at the city of Seoul. It stands high atop Mt. Namsan, in what is really the center of Seoul. To the north, the Blue House (Korea's version of the White House) and many of the palaces are visible, and to the south, the World Cup Stadium and the Olympic park are also visible. The best way to get up to the top of Mt. Namsan, is to take the cable car. It doesn't cost anything, and there are remains of an old stone fortress wall that immediately recall images of the Great Wall of China. Not quite on that scale, the

wall was part of a fortress once on the Mountain. The tower is a three story tall observation deck with a revolving restaurant.

KOREAN FOLK VILLAGE

Ever wonder where they get those historical sets for the various Korean Dramas? Maybe not, but here they are. On any given day you're likely to see actors in costume rehearsing or filming scenes in the Korean Folk Village. That's not all, though, there are also gymnastic displays (jumping on a high wire and with see-saws) and there are even people who LIVE here. Yes, they live in the old style homes, wearing old style clothes and doing things the...um, old style. It's really quite impressive. If you're into Bhuddism there is a temple or two here and if you're hungry there is, you guessed it, old style Korean food too. No McDonald's at all. Be on the lookout for a wedding, also. Every few days they have a fake or REAL wedding ceremony. Directions: Take The Subways to Suwon Station (Line 1) and get the free shuttle bus to the Korean Folk Village.

KOREAN NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

| | | |
|---------|---|---|
| Jan 1 | - | New Year's Day |
| Jan-Feb | - | Lunar New Year (Sol)—varies yearly |
| Mar 1 | - | Independence Movement Day (Sahm-il-jol) |
| Apr 5 | - | Arbor Day (Shik-mok-il) |
| May 2 | - | Buddha's Birthday (Cho-pah-il) |
| May 5 | - | Children's Day |
| Jun 6 | - | Memorial Day (Hyon-choong-il) |
| Jul 17 | - | Constitution Day (Jeh-hon-jol) |
| Aug 15 | - | Liberation Day (Kwang-bok-jol) |
| Oct | - | Harvest Moon Festival (Chosuk) |
| Oct 3 | - | Foundation Day (Geh-chon-jol) |
| Nov 14 | - | KEU Foundation Day |
| Dec 25 | - | Christmas Day |

- ❖ Keep in mind traffic is bad surrounding holidays and school breaks (winter break Jan/Feb, spring break Mar, summer break Jul/Aug). During many holidays Americans are encouraged not to leave base. A six hour drive on the highway from Seoul to Busan easily becomes 12-15 hours. It is so bad that vendors will park on the side of the highway to sell food to the people stuck in traffic.

ARMY FAMILIES

Some of the regulations are different for Army families coming to Osan, please contact your Command for specific info. A few translations from Army to Air Force: PX=BX, ACS=AFRC, Force Support Squadron=MWR, Squadron=Battalion, Group=Brigade.

| English | Hangul | Pronunciation |
|-------------|----------|------------------|
| Yes. | 네. | Ne. |
| No. | 아니요. | Aniyo. |
| Hello | 안녕하세요? | Annyong haseyo |
| Good-bye. | 안녕히 계세요. | Annyonghi kasayo |
| Thank you. | 감사합니다. | Kamsahamnida. |
| I am sorry. | 미안합니다. | Mianhamnida. |

TIME CONVERSION CHART

Korea does not observe Daylight Savings Time, so add one hour during that time. The shaded areas designates the previous day (if it's Saturday here then the shaded areas are Friday in the States)

| Korea | Hawaii | PST | MST | CST | EST |
|-------|--------|------|------|------|------|
| 0100 | 0600 | 0800 | 0900 | 1000 | 1100 |
| 0200 | 0700 | 0900 | 1000 | 1100 | 1200 |
| 0300 | 0800 | 1000 | 1100 | 1200 | 1300 |
| 0400 | 0900 | 1100 | 1200 | 1300 | 1400 |
| 0500 | 1000 | 1200 | 1300 | 1400 | 1500 |
| 0600 | 1100 | 1300 | 1400 | 1500 | 1600 |
| 0700 | 1200 | 1400 | 1500 | 1600 | 1700 |
| 0800 | 1300 | 1500 | 1600 | 1700 | 1800 |
| 0900 | 1400 | 1600 | 1700 | 1800 | 1900 |
| 1000 | 1500 | 1700 | 1800 | 1900 | 2000 |
| 1100 | 1600 | 1800 | 1900 | 2000 | 2100 |
| 1200 | 1700 | 1900 | 2000 | 2100 | 2200 |
| 1300 | 1800 | 2000 | 2100 | 2200 | 2300 |
| 1400 | 1900 | 2100 | 2200 | 2300 | 2400 |
| 1500 | 2000 | 2200 | 2300 | 2400 | 0100 |
| 1600 | 2100 | 2300 | 2400 | 0100 | 0200 |
| 1700 | 2200 | 2400 | 0100 | 0200 | 0300 |
| 1800 | 2300 | 0100 | 0200 | 0300 | 0400 |
| 1900 | 2400 | 0200 | 0300 | 0400 | 0500 |
| 2000 | 0100 | 0300 | 0400 | 0500 | 0600 |
| 2100 | 0200 | 0400 | 0500 | 0600 | 0700 |
| 2200 | 0300 | 0500 | 0600 | 0700 | 0800 |
| 2300 | 0400 | 0600 | 0700 | 0800 | 0900 |
| 2400 | 0500 | 0700 | 0800 | 0900 | 1000 |

A FEW THINGS ABOUT KOREA

DO'S

- Remove your shoes when entering a Korean's home or a Korean restaurant.
- Show respect for the elderly
- Accept \$\$\$ with both hands
- Flag a cab with your palm down...palm up is rude
- Take a hostess a gift if invited to a Korean home

DON'TS

- Write someone's name in red ink. This means death & is only done at funerals
- Stick your chopsticks upright in a bowl of rice...also denotes death
- Talk too much during dinner, it is considered rude
- Touch someone on the shoulders or the head
- Motion to someone with your index finger
- Put your feet up on furniture...even another chair
- Blow your nose at the table

DON'T BE SURPRISED IF...

- Koreans touch your baby...it is considered good luck
- When you meet someone they ask personal questions like your age etc. In the Korean culture there is a casual way of speaking and a formal way of speaking and it depends on age and status of who you are talking to.
- People of the same sex are holding hands...it is a sign of friendship even among boys
- Things are last minute...Koreans are known for spontaneity
- A gift is not opened in front of you...it is a sign of respect & will be opened later
- Guests come early or late...time is not important

IDEAS FOR UNACCOMPANIED BAGGAGE

This is to be only used as a reference! This list may not include everything you may need for your family.

Kitchen

- Plates, bowls, cups and silverware
- Several pots and pans
- Measuring cups and spoons-dry and liquid
- Spatulas, whisks, mixing spoons, etc
- Other utensils—bottle opener, can opener, sharp knives, etc
- Cutting board and tupperware
- Mixing bowl and strainer
- Baking casserole dish and cookie sheet
- Kitchen towels and pot holders
- Aluminum foil, plastic wrap, ziplock bags, etc
- Microwave*, toaster*, coffee pot*, hand mixer*
- High chair
- Favorite recipes
- Small cooler
- Mop, broom and any other cleaning supplies that are allowed to be packed.

Bathroom

- Towels and washcloths
- Extra toilet paper and hygiene products
- Shower curtain and/or liner with hanging rings
- Bathmat/rug

Linens

- Sheets sets or sleeping bags
- Blankets
- Pillows
- Cleaning rags

Clothes

- Extra clothes—this is nice after living out of a suitcase for several weeks
- Uniform items
- Extra shoes

Toys

- A great suggestion is get a medium size container and give it to each child and then let them choose what toys they want to bring. It teaches them decision making skills and gets them excited about the move.
- Coloring books, board games, etc

Other

- Iron and ironing board*
- Small TV (19in or smaller) and DVD/VCR player and extra movies
- Games console(Xbox etc) and extra games
- Laptop or computer-if not traveling with one
- Small cheap printer*
- Alarm clocks
- Lamp
- Flashlight and small tool kit
- Address book with stamps and envelopes
- Calendar
- Pets favorite blanket or toys, litter box, etc.
- Umbrellas for the rainy season

*These are things that are good to get small inexpensive models and keep them for PCSing or as a spare .

Well we hope we have answered some of your questions. We are sure you have more but this document is long enough. Welcome to Team Osan! We are confident you will enjoy your time here and make many friends! See you soon!

--The Spouses of Osan