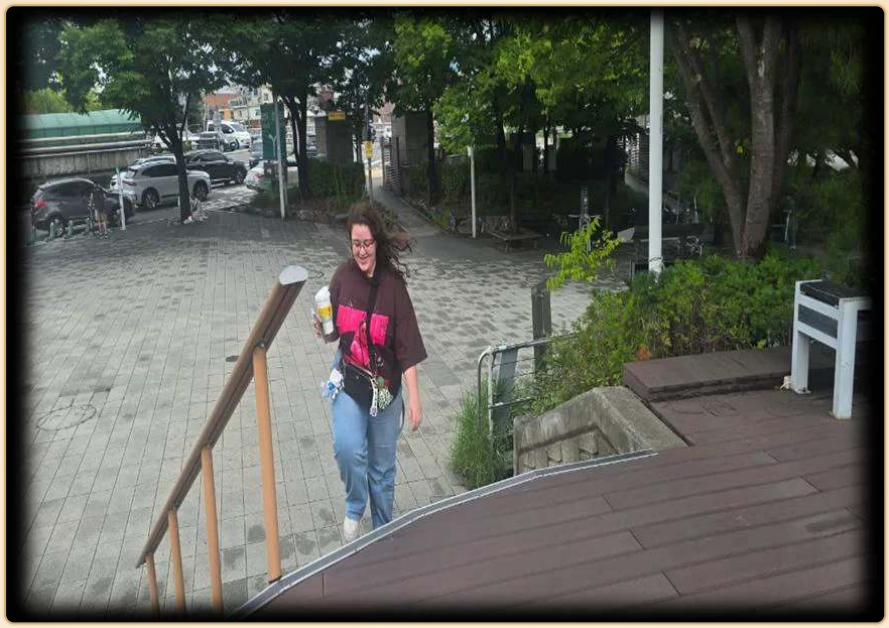
DREAMCATCHER NETWORK · HIDDEN GEMS · SOUTH KOREA

Seoul, My Soul

A dream journey, a daughter’s surprises, and memories made together.

Travel memories and photographs shared by Marika Verster, travelling with her daughter, Mikaela.



On 22 June 2026, Marika Verster left O.R. Tambo International Airport carrying something rather special: a little lucky elephant, given to her by her daughter, Mikaela.

Ahead lay South Korea—a destination she had dreamed of visiting. What followed would become a collection of firsts, happy tears and small moments that still pull her thoughts back to Seoul.

Marika shares her journey:

First, there was Singapore, with just thirty minutes to reach my connecting gate. Then came Incheon, a memorable seafood-in-a-bag lunch, and the excitement of finding my way somewhere entirely new.

Armed with Naver Maps, Google Translate and an eSIM, I began my adventure. My Korean language skills might have been limited, but my determination certainly wasn’t.

Jet lag had its own plans. On my first full day, I woke at half past twelve—an unexpected reminder that travelling across the world takes a little adjustment.

Soon, though, I was out exploring.

Watch films 1 and 2 on Dreamcatcher

A city explored on foot



The journey from Incheon to Seoul brought hundreds of photographs and an almost overwhelming sense of happiness. This was the place I had imagined. Now I’m here, finding my own way through it.

Seoul unfolded one walk at a time: station stairways, narrow streets, old Korean architecture and the pleasure of discovering what lay around the next corner.

Marika laughingly describes the walking as “millions of steps”—and anyone who has explored a city with an eager heart will understand.

Some places drew me back. Cheonggyecheon Stream became one of them, somewhere I returned to several times during my stay.

My explorations took me to Gyeongbokgung Palace, Bukchon Hanok Village, Dongdaemun Design Plaza and Jungnang Rose Park. Each added another impression to a city already filling my camera and my heart.

Then there was the food.

At Gwangjang Market, I tried kimchi and chicken feet. Cold noodles and Korean barbecue brought more discoveries, turning meals into part of the adventure. For me, tasting my way through Korea was another way of getting to know it.

And then Mikaela arrived.

What had begun as a personal adventure became a mother-and-daughter journey, with surprises that repeatedly left me searching for words.

For my fifty-eighth birthday, Mikaela arranged a visit to see HYBE, a Korean barbecue meal at a restaurant where BTS had eaten, and a cable car trip up to Namsan Tower.

For a mother already living a dream, sharing these experiences with my daughter made them even more precious.

Another surprise took us onto the water: a yacht trip that gave us a view of the Moonlight Rainbow Fountain at Banpo Bridge.

It became another of those moments I remember with wonder.

Watch films 3 and 4 on Dreamcatcher

Little jewel moments

Among our favourite discoveries was Café Pokpo, overlooking the waterfall beside Hongjecheon Stream in Seoul's Seodaemun district.

With water tumbling down the rock face opposite, its setting offers a different rhythm to the city—somewhere to pause between adventures.

It is easy to see why this café earned a special place in our memories.

Yet ask me what made the trip unforgettable, and the answer reaches far beyond the landmarks.

There were five hundred steps down from Namsan Tower at one in the morning. Eighties songs sung in an Uber on the way back to our accommodation. Steep streets in heavy rain, with no umbrella, on our way to the Rain Café.

There were morning coffee rituals at Mega Coffee, too—the sort of ordinary pleasure that becomes extraordinary because of where you are and who is beside you.

Singapore added another shared memory: seeing the Jewel Rain Vortex.



Together, these experiences became what I call my "little jewel moments".

Some were carefully planned by Mikaela; others arrived unexpectedly. All became part of our story.

There are still places in South Korea I hope to explore. My first visit has only strengthened my wish to return.

Marika sums it up in words that belong perfectly to this journey:

"A dream come true. Seoul, my soul."

Watch films 5 and 6 on Dreamcatcher

Read and share the story at dreamcatchernetwork.com/hidden-gem-seoul-my-soul.