



FISM™

Fédération Internationale des Sociétés Magiques
International Federation of Magic Societies

FISM Newsletter

Nr. 31 – April 2015

**To all Presidents of the FISM member-societies
and Delegates in the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the FISM**

Dear Delegate, Dear Friend in Magic,

It's my pleasure to keep you abreast of the latest developments.

FISM 2015

As I announced before, all Presidents and Delegates will receive a VIP treatment in Rimini. To make sure your seats are properly reserved, **I urgently need you to confirm that you will be present and whether or not you'll be accompanied.** Thanks in anticipation for your prompt reaction.

FISM 2018

The update of the application of Busan, South Korea, to organize of the World Championships of Magic in 2018, gave cause to a site inspection, the report of which I'm sending you as a supplement to this Newsletter.

Kind Regards,

Domenico Dante
International President



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Site Inspection Report

Busan, South Korea, March 10-11, 2015

Inspector : **Gerrit Brengman**, FISM International Vice-President.

Purpose : Inspection of the feasibility of South Korea as host country for the 2018 FISM World Championships of Magic.

At the request of : **Mr. Kang, Yeol-woo**, President of the BIMF Magic Club.

Hosts: During my visit I was hosted by **Mr. Kang, Yeol-woo**, President of the BIMF Magic Club and chairman of the Organizing Committee and **Mr. Lee, Jun-myeong**, Manager of the "FISM Inducement Commission".

They were also joined by:

- **Ms. Yulia Kim**, Assistant Manager of the Convention Marketing Team of the Busan Exhibition & Convention Center (BEXCO).
- **Ms. Demi Kang**, Busan Tourism Organization – Director of the Convention Bureau.
- **Ms. Nam, Gi-wan**, Professional Tour Guide.

The site inspection was well organized. The places we visited were expecting us and, contrary to a former visit when a lot of questions remained unanswered, the people receiving us were well prepared and had ready answers. They also proposed satisfactory solutions to the practical problems we confronted them with.

BUSAN, with four million inhabitants, Korea's second largest city (after Seoul), is situated in the South-Eastern part of the country. In terms of tourist resources it's the richest region in South Korea. Apart from several historic Buddhist temples, there are lots of attractive and interesting places worth a visit.

Busan's No. 1 beach, Haeundae, is one of the most visited places in Korea with over 500.000 tourists every day during the summer peak period.

Time zone

Korea standard time is UTC/GMT + 9 hours.

Money

The unit of currency is the won (KRW). In March 2015 one Euro was worth 1.194 KRW and one US \$, 1,134 KRW.

Foreign currency and traveller's checks can be converted into Korean won at banks or authorized money exchanges. Internationally recognized credit cards are accepted at major businesses and they can be used for cash advance in Korean won at most automated teller machines (ATMs).

Tipping is not customary in Korea. A VAT of 10% applies to most goods and services and at tourist hotels. It also applies to meals and other services, but it is added into the bill.

Other information

Korea uses the international metric system and electrical outlets for 220 volts/60 Hz are dominant.

The business hours of Government and Post Offices are 09.00-18.00 (Mon.-Fri.), but Banks close at 16.00 h.

Department Stores are open from 10.30 till 20.00 h.

Climate and temperature

Busan has a humid, subtropical hot summer climate. In July the average maximum temperature is 27°C (81°F) and the minimum is 21° (70°F). During the first half of the month the relative humidity typically ranges from 70% to as high as 94% and the probability of precipitation is about 50%.

Language

The language is Korean, but it's surprising how many people understand enough English to help you out. All street names and signposts are in both Korean and English.

Transportation

It must be said that Intercontinental flights to Busan are no picnic. There's not only the long flight, but in most cases you'll have to change planes twice. It's a big help if you can book your flight so that your luggage goes through to the final destination.

Fare prices are changing all the time and a company offering the best value at one time can be the most expensive six months later.

Once you arrive at Busan Gimhae Airport, things are getting better. Depending on the traffic, a taxi will take you to the Convention Centre in about an hour, but every 20 minutes there is a reasonably priced (6.000 won, or about € 5 or \$ 5,5) shuttle bus service, called 'Airport Limousines', which stops right next to the venue. There is also an express bus to the Subway Station from where a direct line can take you to the BEXCO-Haeundae station and this combination costs about half that amount. (The subway station has a direct access to the basement of the convention building.)

THE BUSAN EXHIBITION & CONVENTION CENTER (BEXCO) is the planned main venue for the 2018 FISM World Championships of Magic.

During the time of the convention (6 through 11 July, 2018) the facilities used for FISM (the Auditorium and Convention Hall) will be closed to visitors of the other parts of the huge complex.

The pride of the organizers is the AUDITORIUM, a fully equipped theatre, with 2.645 fixed seats to which 277 flexible seats can be added.

In one of the halls, an amphitheatre with a tiered seating capacity of 1.500 will be built for the close-up competition and shows. Another hall in the adjoining part of the building offers facilities for a seated gala dinner accommodating all conventioners.



An exhibition hall for the magic dealers will be equipped with about 100 standard booths while a CCTV system will make it possible to follow the competitions outside the auditorium.

BUSAN ASIAD MAIN STADIUM

This large-sized 53.769 seat Stadium, which staged the 2002 FIFA World Cup as well as the 14th Asian Games, will be hired for the Opening Ceremony and Show which will be open to the General Public. A stage with adjoining ultra-big video-screens will be built, offering an unrestricted view to no less than 35.000 spectators.

NURIMARU APEC HOUSE

The meeting of the FISM General Assembly is planned to take place in the prestigious circular sea-front building where Korea hosted the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) summit meeting, attended by the Presidents of most of the 21 member countries. A multilingual high frequency simultaneous translation service will be provided.

HOTELS

As in all big cities, hotels are readily available, ranging from the luxurious and expensive seafront hotels like the 'Paradise Hotel', to a number of hostels with rooms offering up to six beds for around 20 US \$ per night for the room.

However, we only found one hotel within walking distance of the convention centre. The classy HAEUNDAE CENTUM HOTEL is situated right in front of the BEXCO Auditorium. It offers all one can wish for, but the room price I noted was rather high. (A standard room was priced at 250 US \$ for single or double occupancy.) The problem is that there are only 71 of these rooms available and the more expensive "deluxe" version totals 169 only.

The organizers expect most conventioners to stay in one of the many hotels grouped close to Haeundae beach. This cluster of similar motels and hotels offers an incredible capacity of over 5.000 rooms and in March the room price for single or double occupancy (including breakfast) ranged from 40 to 70 US dollars. The convention centre is only three subway stations away and shuttle busses to and from the convention venues will be provided. I saw several of these typical hotels. In one of the streets the organizers already jokingly call "FISM Street", you see names like "Design Hotel", "US-one", "Noblesse", "Delos", "Casa", "Wynn" etc.

There's only one drawback. When you ask where the wardrobe is, they look at you as if you came from another planet. Who in his right mind would want a wardrobe or a set of drawers to put socks and underwear when they offer so much more than you expect?

I stayed at the "HOTEL WA" (50 US \$) and this was quite an experience. The spacious room had a double bed, a small couch with coffee table, a fridge and two built-in computers, complete with keyboard and monitor. In the bathroom you were treated to a bathtub with shower, but there was also an extra rain shower plus a second wash-bowl. Apart from the soap, there were big bottles with shower gel, shampoo, and conditioner.

It is the kind of hotel you could walk into without any luggage and stay for several days. You get a razor, toothbrush and toothpaste and even two different kinds of after-shave. The

hairdryer comes with hairspray, gel and even two different hairbrushes and of course, there's all you need to make coffee or tea.

The rooms are very clean. Each one even has a small income hall where you are supposed to take off your shoes and put on the slippers they provide.

Admitted, there were no reading lamps by the bedside, but who would want to read in bed when you can watch TV on the biggest screen I've ever seen in a hotel room.

And, I must add that the buffet breakfast waiting for me in the morning was more than O.K.

So, if you can live out of your suitcase (or backpack) for a week and settle for some coat hangers to put up your jackets or dresses on a couple of pegs or a rod fixed to the wall, it will be difficult to find better value for money.

An added plus is that some of the restaurants, and all 'Seven-Eleven' and similar shops in the neighbourhood stay open all night.

SUPPORT

The organizers are assured of the support and sponsoring of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and they will be backed by Busan City, the Haeundae-gu (local district government) and the Busan as well as the Korea Tourism Organization.

Conclusion

After having examined the pros and possible cons of the site and the venue, the FISM Board of Directors has come to the conclusion that Busan can keep pace with any other applicant organizer for FISM 2018.