

Vietnam, from Hanoi to the Mekong Delta (15 days)



ITINERARY:

DAY 1 London – Hanoi

Meet on arrival at Hanoi / Noi Bai International Airport and transfer to hotel for check in. Rest of the day at leisure.

Optional tour to Bat Trang Pottery Village (13:30 -17:00 hrs): The famous village is situated about 15km outside of Hanoi, surrounded by fertile farmland. Watch the artisans form, paint and glaze their products, which are then baked for several days in huge kilns. Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 2 Hanoi City Tour (B/-/-)

Full day city tour: Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum (closed on Monday, Friday and the whole months of October-November), Ho Chi Minh's Residence, One-Pillar Pagoda, Temple of Literature-built in the 11th century as Vietnam's first university. Afternoon visit Museum of Ethnology (closed on Monday and during Tet), Hoan Kiem Lake with Ngoc Son Temple and Old Quarters.

Evening: Water puppet show, the unique Vietnamese traditional art. Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 3 Hanoi - Hoa Binh - Mai Chau - Hoa Binh (B/-/-)

Drive to Mai Chau via Hoa Binh town through picturesque countryside with beautiful views of the mountains along the way. Visit Mai Chau, a pretty valley with a patchwork quilt of rice paddies, farms and houses-on-stilts. This area is home to many hill tribes including Muong and Thai ethnic minorities. Drive back to Hoa Binh and overnight at a simple hotel.

DAY 4 Hoa Binh - Ninh Binh (B/-/-)

Drive to Ninh Binh and visit Tam Coc, often referred to as "Dry Halong Bay". Enjoy the spectacular scenery during a leisurely boat ride in traditional local sampans to Tam Coc caves, passing the limestone rocks rising

from the rice fields and a winding stream. Continue to visit Bich Dong Pagoda. Transfer to Ninh Binh for overnight at a simple hotel.

DAY 5 Ninh Binh - Thai Binh - Halong Bay (B/-/-)

Drive to Thai Binh and visit the Keo Pagoda with its beautiful bell tower in a quiet village on the Red River delta. Proceed to Halong Bay and transfer to hotel. Overnight in Halong Bay.

DAY 6 Halong Bay - Hanoi (B/L/-)

Discover Halong Bay, listed as a World Heritage Area of outstanding natural beauty. “Dragon descending to the sea“ as it is known in Vietnamese, the picturesque Halong Bay has more than 1,000 limestone islets rising from the sea, many of them containing beautiful grottoes. Enjoy a relaxing 5-hour boat trip with fresh seafood lunch prepared and served on board. Afternoon drive back to Hanoi. Overnight in Hanoi.

DAY 7 Hanoi - Hue (B/-/-)

At leisure until transfer to Hanoi domestic airport for flight to Hue, the former Royal City of the 13 ruling Nguyen dynasties. Drive to visit the Imperial Citadel and Tu Duc Tomb. If time permits, continue to visit the traditional garden house. Overnight in Hue.

DAY 8 Hue - Danang - Hoi An (B/-/-)

Boat trip on the Perfume River to visit Thien Mu Pagoda, one of the oldest ancient architectural structures for religious worship in Hue. Continue by car to Minh Mang Tomb, then depart to Danang. The scenic 4-hour drive via Hai Van pass offers spectacular views of mountains, the sea, idyllic beaches and villages. Visit Cham Museum, continue to Marble Mountains with its beautiful grottoes and temples, which can be reached by climbing steep steps (please wear appropriate shoes). We continue further south to the charming historic city of Hoi An, transfer to hotel. Overnight in Hoi An.

DAY 9 Hoi An - My Son - Hoi An (B/-/-)

Drive to My Son, the imperial city of the Champa empire of the 4th to 12th centuries, My Son Sanctuary is a large complex of religious ruins comprising more than 70 architectural remains. Return to Hoi An, known to early Western merchants, Hoi An was one of the major trading centers of Southeast Asia in the 16th century. Hoi An has a distinctive Chinese atmosphere with low, tiled-roof houses and narrow streets; the original structure of some of these streets is still virtually intact. Many of the houses were constructed of rare timbers and decorated with lacquer panels engraved with Chinese characters and pillars carved with ornamental designs. During a leisurely discovery tour on foot you will visit some of the historic merchant and community houses, places of worship and famous bridges. Overnight in Hoi An.

DAY 10 Hoi An - Danang - Nha Trang (B/-/-)

Drive to Danang and transfer to airport for flight to Nha Trang. Upon arrival, visit the Institute of Oceanography and Po Nagar Cham Tower, a sacred Hindu site dating back to the 2nd century AD. The town was built between the 7th and 12th centuries and is still used today as a place of pilgrimage for the Cham and Vietnamese Buddhists. Transfer to hotel. Overnight in Nha Trang.

DAY 11 Nha Trang - Dalat (B/-/-)

Depart Nha Trang for Dalat, a cool mountain resort. Its lakes, waterfall, evergreen forest and gardens make Dalat one of the most enjoyable places in Vietnam. On the way, visit Long Son Pagoda and Po Klong Garai Cham Tower. Arrive in Dalat and transfer to hotel. Drive around Xuan Huong Lake, visit Linh Son Pagoda and Bao Dai Villa. Overnight in Dalat.

DAY 12 Dalat - Ho Chi Minh City (B/-/-)

In the morning, visit the 110-year old Dalat market, then drive to Trai Mat station. Take a 40-minute train ride (the train was used during the French domination and is now only used in Dalat). Enjoy the nice scenery of vegetable-, flower-, and fruit gardens along the route. Continue to Linh Phuoc Pagoda. Depart Dalat for Ho

Chi Minh City with stopover at Prenn waterfall. Arrive in Ho Chi Minh City and transfer to hotel. Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

DAY 13 Ho Chi Minh City - CU CHI TUNNELS - HO CHI MINH CITY Tour (B/-/-)

Drive to Cu Chi. Visit the amazing complex of underground tunnels at Cu Chi. There are more than 200 km of underground tunnels, comprising a main axis system with many branches connecting to underground hideouts, shelters and other tunnels. Drive back to Ho Chi Minh City. Visit Notre Dame Cathedral, Post Office and then take a photo stop at former Presidential Palace, Continue with visits to the War Museum, to Cholon (China town), Thien Hau Pagoda and Ben Thanh market. Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

DAY 14 Ho Chi Minh City - Ben Tre - Ho Chi Minh City (B/L/-)

Coach trip to My Tho. Visit the Vinh Trang Pagoda en route and stop by the bank of Tien Giang river. Take a boat trip on Mekong River to Phoenix Island, where local handicrafts and sweets from coconut are being produced. Enjoy fresh seasonal fruits and traditional live music and songs performance. Take a short ride on a horse carriage to a typical local house to taste some homemade honey-tea. Proceed by small sampan boats through the small canals and side arms of the river to observe the daily life along the river banks with a stop and short leisurely walk at the Turtle Island. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant before driving back Ho Chi Minh City. Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City

DAY 15 Ho Chi Minh City Departure (B/-/-)

Day at leisure until transfer to Ho Chi Minh City / Tan Son Nhat International Airport for departure.

Our tours are inclusive of transfers and tours with English, German or French speaking guide, accommodation in shared twin rooms with air-condition and private bath room, meals as specified in the program (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch), entrance fees, boat fees, domestic air-tickets Hanoi - Hue and Danang - Nha Trang. Not included are surcharges for compulsory gala dinners during festive seasons and peak season surcharges, which will be advised at time of booking.