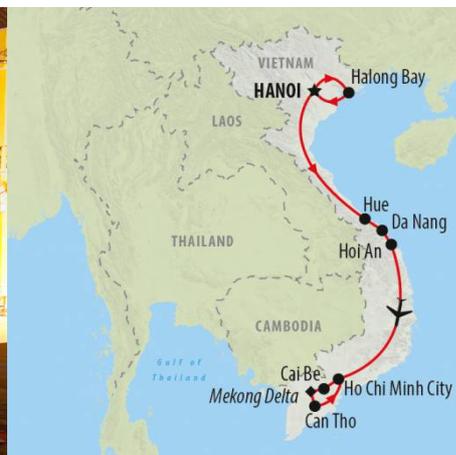


Best of Vietnam

13 Days | Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City



Kicking off in Vietnam's capital Hanoi, embark on a breathtaking 13 day journey through imperial cities and rural villages, taking in beautiful Halong Bay and the lush Mekong Delta. Finish up in vibrant Ho Chi Minh City and the fascinating Viet Cong tunnels of Cu-Chi!

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Hanoi – ride pillion on taxi-motorbikes and discover the backstreets of the city including the Temple of Literature and Hoa Lo Prison
- Cu Chi Tunnels – discover the legendary tunnels which were used masterfully by the Viet Cong during the Vietnam War
- Ho Chi Minh City – discover the sobering War Remnants Museum, the Reunification Palace and the fascinating FITO Museum
- Halong Bay – weave around beautiful limestone islets onboard a junk boat and explore inside the beautiful caves
- Hue – see the iconic Thien Mu Pagoda and the Imperial Purple Palace which is hidden behind the walls of the ancient Citadel
- Tra Que village – enjoy a bicycle ride in the countryside, learn how to tend

the fields and enjoy a hands-on cooking lesson

- Mekong Delta – cruise the waterways on a traditional sampan, visit local cottage industries and enjoy lunch in a local home
- Hoi An – stroll along China Beach and visit highlights of the charming city including the Chua Ong Pagoda and Japanese Bridge

What's Included

- 12 breakfasts, 5 lunches and 1 dinner
- 10 nights 4 star and special class hotels, 1 night deluxe junk boat and 1 overnight sleeper train (Junk boat: private cabin, Sleeper train: basic, 4 berth cabin)
- Economy class flight Danang - Ho Chi Minh City
- Halong Bay Junk boat cruise - opt to swim, kayak and explore caves
- Bicycle ride to Tra Que village and cooking demonstration
- Sampan boat trips in the Mekong Delta
- Airport arrival transfer day 1 and departure transfer day 13
- Guided sightseeing - Hanoi, Halong Bay, Hue, Hoi An, Mekong Delta, Cu Chi Tunnels and Ho Chi Minh City
- Escorted by an English speaking Vietnamese tour guide.
- All relevant transfers and transportation in private air-conditioned vehicles

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$35-45pp, paid in USD or VND
- Entrance Fees: USD\$50-60pp, paid in USD or VND
- International flights and visa.
- Tip for your tour guide. We recommend you allow USD\$3 - 6 per day, per traveller. Tipping your guide is an entirely personal gesture

ITINERARY

Day 1 : Hanoi

Friday. Welcome to Hanoi, perhaps the most graceful, atmospheric and exotic capital city in Asia. Airport to hotel arrival transfer. The remains of the day offers free time for you to explore the wide tree lined avenues, beautiful lakes, ancient pagoda's and thriving, historic old city, all easily navigated on foot.

Overnight - Hanoi

Day 2 : Backstreets of Hanoi tour

After breakfast we embark on an exciting back streets tour of Vietnam's capital. Our adventure starts with a taxi ride from the hotel to a well known street market northwest of the city which sells giant trees and plants. From here we stroll along the sidewalks, following an urban trail through the backstreets to the quaint district of Vinh Phuc. After exploring

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this wonderful neighbourhood we stop for refreshments at a unique coffee shop tucked away down a narrow alley. Then it's time for an exhilarating local experience, riding pillion on taxi-motorbikes through a maze of tiny streets and along the shore of beautiful Ho Tay Lake. Our 2-wheeled taxis drop us off for a tasty lunch of Vietnamese street food, in the yard of a former film studio.

In the afternoon we walk past Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum (exterior only), where 'Uncle Ho' has laid since 1975 and learn all about the great man himself, who is regarded as the father of the nation. Continuing on we stroll down Hung Vuong Avenue to explore the complex of the beautiful Temple of Literature, which was Vietnam's first university.

Then we board the local bus to the Hoa Lo prison, aka the Hanoi Hilton, named by US prisoners of war. We finish the day with a glass of refreshing beer on a sidewalk facing the Soviet palace. Return to the hotel by taxi for an evening at leisure.

Please note: If you would prefer not to travel by taxi-motorbike, please an air-conditioned car/ taxi will be provided at no extra cost.

Overnight - Hanoi (B, L)

Day 3 : Junk boat cruising, Halong Bay



Hanoi – Halong Bay. Take a moment to picture in your mind some two thousand rugged karst islands dappled with lush vegetation seeming to float on top of pristine emerald coloured waters and you have the natural wonder that is Halong Bay. This morning a scenic drive will take us to this beautiful UNESCO World Heritage Site where we will enjoy a junk boat cruise.

Based on traditional designs, these wonderful vessels combine oriental style with modern luxury. Soak up the panoramic views from the sundeck as the boat gently plies its course. This afternoon we visit Trinh Nu Cave, one of the finest caves in Halong Bay, covering an area of 2,000m² with a stunning array of stalactites and stalagmites. There's also the opportunity to go kayaking and enjoy a refreshing swim. Later this evening back on board, watch a Vietnamese cooking demonstration held on the sundeck before settling down for a sumptuous seafood dinner.

Overnight - Halong Bay, Deluxe Junk Boat (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Floating villages and cyclo rides



Halong Bay - Hanoi - Hue. Early birds can start the day with a relaxing Tai Chi class on the sundeck or a traditional massage - the perfect way to start the day. Before heading back to port this morning we explore the beautiful Sung Sot cave (Surprise Grotto), which is 10,000m² and consists of two major chambers. These spectacular chambers are spacious enough to hold thousands of people.

On arrival back into Hanoi mid-afternoon we'll explore the maze of streets in the French Quarter by cyclo (rickshaw), taking in highlights such as the Opera house and Ly Thai To park. We then swap our wheels for a leisurely walk through '36 streets of the old quarter', named after the numerous guilds that once set up shop on a particular street from silk tailors to traditional medicine shops.

Later this evening there's a chance to freshen up before boarding the train (4 berth sleeper

cabin, basic standard) on the 'Reunification Express' railway line to Hue. An option to fly from Hanoi to Hue is also available.

Overnight - Sleeper train (B)

Day 5 : Imperial Hue



Upon arrival to Hue we embark on a guided sightseeing tour of the 19th-century Nguyen empire capital. We visit the Thien Mu Pagoda, home to the oldest monastery in the city, whose 21m high tower has become something of a symbol for Hue and the citadel. Within the citadel is the Imperial Purple Palace, an exact copy of the Forbidden City in Beijing, with its impressive ramparts, formal moats and imperial palaces, some of which lay in ruin.

In the countryside lies the Royal Tombs of the Nguyen kings, here we'll view the elaborate mausoleum of Emperor Tu Duc. As the sun sets there's an optional cruise in a long boat along the gentle Perfume River, beautifully illuminated at night.

Overnight - Hue (B, L)

Day 6 : Delightful Hoi An



Hue - Road of the Ocean Clouds - Hoi An. Today we take the scenic Hai Van Pass (Road of the Ocean Clouds), which offers magnificent views of beaches to one side and lush hills to the other. En route we stop for a walk along China beach. Perhaps enjoy a

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refreshing swim in the sea before continuing our journey south to Hoi An.

The charming, old-world trading port of Hoi An with its cobbled streets, traditional homes and tiny shop houses is a perfect place to lose yourself in a bygone era. Boutique restaurants, hip cafes along the waterfront, delightful craft shops and artisans including some of Asia's best bespoke tailors (whose services come at a nominal price), all can be found here.

On a short walking tour of the enchanting historical town, we'll visit the Chua Ong Pagoda, Chinese Assembly Hall, 200-year-old Tam Ky house, former merchants' homes and the 400 year-old Japanese Covered Bridge.

During your stay in Hoi An, we offer a unique optional Hoi An Street Eats add-on, which explores the city's most popular local haunts. Cruise the city the way the locals do, by vintage Vespa and enjoy lots of tasty Vietnamese Cuisine. Book early with your reservation consultant, as numbers are limited.

Overnight - Hoi An (B)

Day 7 : Tra Que village



This morning a scenic bicycle ride into the countryside leads us to Tra Que village. Here we discover age-old farming practices and learn about traditional medicine. It's a fun, hands-on experience today as we don conical hats and assist with tending the fields and gardens before watching a cooking demonstration and helping to cook a tasty lunch. **Overnight - Hoi An (B, L)**

Day 8 : Hoi An - at leisure

A free day for you to relax or further sightsee. You may wish to take a relaxing rowboat journey along the river or spend the day lazing by the beach or hotel pool. It's also possible to take an optional excursion to the most hallowed and evocative of Vietnam's Cham sites, My Son or to Quang Ngai, the site of the My Lai massacre memorial. The massacre was a significant turning point in the Vietnam War and the story is told through photo presentation on a walk through the village. **Overnight - Hoi An (B)**

Day 9 : Cruising the Mekong



Hoi An - Ho Chi Minh City. Early morning flight to Ho Chi Minh City. Drive to the Mekong Delta. Often referred to as the 'rice bowl' of Vietnam, the fertile Mekong Delta is famous for its abundant harvests of tropical fruits, flowers and rice, as well as its fantastic views while boating along the canals. Taking our sampan from Cai Be we cruise through the maze of waterways watching the hubbub of daily life on the river. Passing colourful trading boats, house boats and children swimming we stop to visit some of the local cottage industries that produce popcorn, coco candies and paper along the way. Lunch is served today in a traditional wooden home on Dong Hoa Hiep Island. **Overnight - Can Tho (B, L)**

Day 10 : Mekong & Ho Chi Minh City

Can Tho - Ho Chi Minh City. Early today we visit the ever lively Cai Rang floating market before driving back to Ho Chi Minh City. Once called the Pearl of the Orient, modern Ho Chi Minh City is a thriving metropolis on the move. Sleek skyscrapers, gourmet restaurants, designer malls and swanky bars and spas are scattered between ancient

pagodas, colonial era landmarks and lively street markets. On a walking tour of Ho Chi Minh City we'll see the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Old Post Office before visiting the sobering War Remnants Museum. Evening at leisure. **Overnight - Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

Day 11 : Cu Chi Tunnels



Ho Chi Minh City – Cu Chi. This morning we visit the famous Cu Chi Tunnels used by the Viet-Cong in their struggle to keep control of the region during the 1960's. After a short video presentation we take an exciting walk around the many bush trails and see trapdoors, booby traps, living areas, weapon factories and kitchens that were used and lived in during the war. We can also safely crawl through sections of the tunnels, that have been widened for the tourists and stand in the middle of bomb craters that are still just as defined as the day they were created. At the end of the visit you can opt to fire weapons of the era (including the M16's and AK47) on the firing range. **Overnight - Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

Day 12 : Ho Chi Minh City Tour



Today we head out to explore more of Ho Chi Minh City. Starting off with the Reunification Palace - former residence of the President of South Vietnam until the fall of Ho Chi Minh City on April 30th 1975. The building is now a

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museum and a popular wedding venue. We'll take a look in the famous 'War Room' where the North Vietnamese army took control in 1975. Next we explore Giac Lam Pagoda, Ho Chi Minh City's oldest and one of its most beautiful temples.

Later on we take a journey through Vietnam's medical history at the FITO Museum. This is Vietnam's first traditional medicine museum with an amazing collection of over 3000 items. Our last stop of the day is Ben Thanh Market, where you can shop till you drop and master the art of haggling for just about anything! **Overnight - Ho Chi Minh City (B)**

Day 13 : Ho Chi Minh City

Wednesday. Today marks the end of our tour and after breakfast we will transfer you to the airport for your onward departure flight.(B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard. If you require a complete list of the confirmed hotels for your tour please request this from your reservations consultant two weeks prior to your departure. **Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.**

Sunway Hotel

This ambient, boutique hotel combines traditional appeal with modern pleasures. Rooms are furnished in a contemporary fashion with an array of amenities for added comfort. Its restaurant provides a great variety of Vietnamese cuisine and you are welcome to enjoy cocktails and live music in the Jazz Bar or relax in the hotel's health spa.



Bhaya Classic I Junk Boat

This premier cruise boat offers 18 well appointed cabins with en suite amenities. Cabins are contemporary in design, whilst the finer touches have a distinct oriental influence. All cabins feature large windows creating a bright and airy atmosphere as well as scenic views. Facilities and services onboard include a dining room and bar, a sunbathing area on-deck, masseur and small library.



Syrena Junk Boat

A tradition hand crafted boat, the Syrena Junk Boat offers superb en suite air conditioned cabins with comfortable interiors and balconies. The on board Lotus Restaurant serves up a delicious array of Vietnamese and International cuisine. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available in the public areas. Swimming, kayaking and tai chi are all offered on board and movie nights are also very popular.



Mondial Hotel

Just a 5 minute walk from the Ho Chi Minh museum, the Mondial Hotel is a contemporary hotel with excellent amenities. Guest rooms benefit from spacious interiors, comfortable beds and lots of mod-cons. There is complimentary Wi-Fi for guests, an outdoor pool and onsite spa - perfect for a re laxing massage. As well as the delicious Huong Xuan Restaurant there is also the Lobby Lounge - great for cocktails before dinner!



ÊMM Hotel

Situated in the heart of the former imperial capital, ÊMM Hotel is the perfect base from which to explore Hue's UNESCO World Heritage-listed sights. Completely renovated in 2016, the guestrooms are generously-sized and complete with modern amenities. The imperial jade and royal purple colour scheme was inspired by ancient Hue itself and guests can take advantage of the mini-gym, pool-side bar and a spacious reading area. Enjoy delicious Vietnamese and international cuisine in the contemporary restaurant after a day of exploring.



River Green Hotel

Set next to the Hoai River, the River Green Hotel is just a five-minute walk from the iconic Japanese Bridge. Guestrooms offer city or river views, alongside all the amenities you'd expect of a contemporary hotel. There's an outdoor pool, perfect for a refreshing swim, and an on-site restaurant where you can enjoy a variety of international flavours. Complimentary WiFi, bicycle hire and a fitness centre add to this hotel's list of facilities, making it a great base for exploring historic Hoi An.



Vinh Hung Riverside Resort

Situated right on the banks of the Thu Bon River, this upscale hotel is just a 10-

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minute walk from the ancient town of Hoi An. Combining Vietnamese tradition with modern facilities, its guestrooms are set in coconut tree-shaded gardens beside the water. They're well-equipped, with free WiFi and air conditioning, as well as private balconies. The hotel also offers a riverside restaurant, serving local specialties and western dishes on the outdoor terrace. This hotel's highlight, however, is its pool and fabulous swim up bar, which is the perfect place to enjoy a pre-dinner cocktail.



Thanh Binh Riverside hotel

Boasting a beautiful outdoor swimming pool, the Thanh Binh Riverside offers excellent accommodation in a great location. Guest rooms benefit from garden or river views and all come full air-conditioned, with stunning hardwood floors and all mod-cons. The onsite restaurant offers a great selection of Vietnamese and International dishes and the town centre is just a mere 200m walk away. Why not grab a cocktail and relax by the pool in the afternoon - a great way to refresh yourself from the Vietnam heat.



River Green Hotel

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hotel's list of facilities, making it a great base for exploring historic Hoi An.



Iris Hotel

This elegant hotel is housed within a modern building in the city of Can Tho. Each guest room comes equipped with plush furnishings to ensure a good night's sleep and is decorated with a neutral palate and calming tones. Rooms look over the city and boast a range of modern amenities such as air conditioning and stylish ensuite facilities. Magnificent views of the city can be had from the hotel's skybar while a range of gourmet local and international dishes can be sampled at the onsite restaurant.



Victoria Hotel Can Tho

This attractive, colonial-style resort is tastefully decorated with well-appointed rooms and a wide range of facilities including a spa, tennis courts, open-air bar, restaurant and a gym. The hotel also offers sunrise and sunset cruises to the floating markets aboard the Lady Hau junk.



Muong Thanh Centre

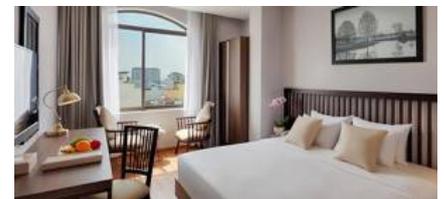
Centrally located, yet on a peaceful, tree-lined street, you will find the Muong Thanh Centre. Only a ten-minute walk from top attractions such as the Notre Dame Cathedral, Opera House and Ben Thanh Market, this hotel is a great base

for exploring the famous sights of the city. Its world-class rooms boast sophisticated designs and panoramic views. Warm and friendly, the Muong Thanh Centre also features a spa and swimming pool for you to relax and unwind after a long day of sight-seeing.



Lotus Central Hotel

Just footsteps from the Ben Thanh Market, the Lotus Central Hotel offers a great location in Ho Chi Minh City. Its guestrooms are well-equipped, with ensuite bathrooms, air conditioning and free WiFi. On the 8th floor you'll find the Moon Restaurant, where you can enjoy a range of Vietnamese, Asian and Western specialties. However this hotel's highlight is the rooftop pool, where you can enjoy a cocktail or two alongside views over the city.



Liberty Hotel Greenview

Enjoying a great location in the bustling District 1 close to Ben Thanh Market, the Liberty Hotel Greenview is a great choice for those looking to explore Saigon's nightlife and shopping. The guestrooms are sleek in design with the feel of a relaxed city apartment with stylish furnishings and modern technologies including satellite TV and free WiFi. The hotel's restaurant offers range of Vietnamese, Asian and Western dishes.

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PRICES / DATES INFO

Departure dates noted with a 'G' are guaranteed to operate. All other departure dates are guaranteed with a minimum of 2 persons. Prices shown are per person when there are 2 persons sharing a room. The 'Single supplement' applies for single travellers who require their own room and needs to be added to the per person price. If you are happy to be paired up with another single traveller of the same gender on your tour, this can be arranged provided there is another single traveller booked on the tour date of your choosing. If a roommate cannot be found the single room supplement will apply.

PRICES / DATES 2019

Date	Twin Share	Single
16 Aug	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
23 Aug	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
20 Sep	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
04 Oct	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
11 Oct	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
25 Oct	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
08 Nov	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
22 Nov	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
06 Dec	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
20 Dec	USD 2,595	USD 3,635
27 Dec	USD 2,595	USD 3,635

PRICES / DATES 2020

Date	Twin Share	Single
03 Jan	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
17 Jan	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
31 Jan	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
21 Feb	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
06 Mar	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
20 Mar	USD 2,445	USD 3,485

PRICES / DATES 2020

Date	Twin Share	Single
03 Apr	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
10 Apr	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
24 Apr	USD 2,445	USD 3,485
15 May	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
05 Jun	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
19 Jun	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
03 Jul	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
17 Jul	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
31 Jul	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
07 Aug	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
21 Aug	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
04 Sep	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
11 Sep	USD 2,395	USD 3,435
09 Oct	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
23 Oct	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
06 Nov	USD 2,495	USD 3,535
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