

AMAZING VIETNAM FROM NORTH TO SOUTH

(14 days 13 nights)



DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1. Depart UK

Day 2. Hanoi arrival (-/-/D) Arrival in Hanoi **by flight?**. Welcome by local guide, transfer to hotel. You will enjoy the rest of the day at your own leisure. Walking in old quarter and visit the Restored Sword Lake, famous of the legend of the tortoise and the sword of 15th century. Welcome dinner will be served in local restaurant. Overnight at Hanoi Emotion*** or similar

Check in time: 14:00

Transfer airport - hotel: 30km (45 minutes)

Day 3. Hanoi city tour (B/L/-) Today we have plenty of time to discover Hanoi. After breakfast, we start our city-trip with the visit of **Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum**. - In the tradition of Lenin, Stalin and Mao, Ho Chi Minh's Mausoleum is a monumental marble edifice. Contrary to his desire for a simple cremation, the mausoleum was constructed from materials gathered from all over Vietnam between 1973 and 1975. Set deep in the bowels of the building in a glass sarcophagus is the frail, pale body of Ho Chi Minh. **The Temple of Literature**. - The Temple of Literature is about 10 minutes away from Hoan Kiem lake. It was constructed in 1070 under Ly Thanh Tong's

dynasty, first to honor Confucius and nowadays to celebrate the doctorates and high rank scholars of Vietnam. In 1076, King Ly Nhan Tong continued the work and built Quoc Tu Giam as the first university of Vietnam. **Tran Quoc Pagoda** - At about 1400 years old, Tran Quoc Pagoda is Hanoi's oldest temple. It sits on the tiny Golden Fish Island on West Lake (Ho Tay), joined to the lake banks by a causeway. It's a picturesque spot, but the temple wasn't always here. Originally, in the 6th century, the pagoda was built on the banks of the Red River. When the changing course of the river threatened to wash the temple away, in 1615 the building was moved to its current location. In the afternoon we will visit the **Vietnam Museum of Ethnology** - It focuses on the 54 officially recognised ethnic groups in Vietnam and will give us an insight into some of the cultures we will experience on our travels. In the evening, we will enjoy a water puppet show. Overnight at Hanoi Emotion*** or similar

Day 4. Hanoi - Quan Hoa - Hang village (B/L/D) We leave Hanoi in the morning and drive towards Mai Chau in the North - West. During the ride, we will be impressed by the fast changing variety in landscapes, which we see. After passing Hoa Binh we enter the real mountainous areas. We enter the area, which is the homeland of the Muong minority, a close cousin tribe of the Vietnamese people living in the Delta. They share the region with the White Thai people who live densely in the Mai Chau Valley. Upon arrival in Mai Chau, we will enjoy lunch, then continue to Quan Hoa (20km), start hiking on the lands of ethnic hill tribe's still living in autarky (self sufficient) and remains faithful to the traditional way of life. In the afternoon, we will arrive in Ban Hang Village, Thai ethnic with its houses on stilts. Check in at local house. We finish the end of the day to explore farming and their work. *Transfer by car: 200km - 5h00. Trekking: 10km (3h) - Up 300m, down 300m*

Day 5. Hang village - Kho Muong village (B/L/D) Today we have a full day of trekking. We begin to discover beautiful landscapes: lush vegetation, limestone peaks, terraced fields, before passing through villages with houses covered with thatch. Overnight at homestay in Kho Muong Village. *Trekking time: 13.5km (4.5h - 5h)*

Day 6. Kho Muong village - Hieu Village (B/L/D) After visiting a sheltering great bat cave... very appreciated by the locals as lucky... we go through a humid jungle before returning to a beautiful village. We take this opportunity to discover the irrigation systems, including large water wheels, used to raise water to the rice fields. Then by a well-marked trail, we reach Hieu Village. Overnight at homestay *Trekking: 15km (4.5h-5h)*

Day 7. Hieu Village - Pho Doan - Ninh Binh (B/L/-) Easy walk from Hieu Village to Pho Doan by a well-marked trail. Lunch at local restaurant, then transfer by bus to Ninh Binh. Upon arrival in Ninh Binh, check-in at hotel **Tam Coc Ecolodge****. Overnight in Ninh Binh. *Trekking: 10km (3h) Transfer by car: 130km (4h)*

Day 8. Tam Coc (Halong Bay on land) – Phat Diem – Ninh Binh (B/L/-) A varied day to explore the area of **Tam Coc**, known as the name "Halong Bay on Land" We take a small rowing boat and explore this dramatic and stunning landscape. Then, route to **Hoa Lu**, an ancient capital of Vietnam, where we will visit **Dinh & Le Temples**. In the afternoon, transfer to visit **Phat Diem Cathedral**, harmonious coordination between western church and pagoda temple architecture. Transfer back to Ninh Binh for overnight. **Tam Coc Ecolodge****.

Cruise by sampan: 2:00h

Day 9. Ninh Binh – Ha long Bay (B/L/D) In the morning, depart for Halong Bay via Nam Dinh and Ninh Binh. Arriving at Halong, we board our boat for a full afternoon of cruising in the bay of the dragon, with about 1900 limestone islands scattering up from the emerald water, an environment of sublime beauty and serenity. Halong Bay was recognized as a Natural World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1994 and is known throughout the world for its unique landscape endowed by wind and water. A fantastic cruise in Ha Long bay, visit Ga Choi Island, Dog Island, Sail Island. In the evening we enjoy a meal of fresh seafood prepared by our professional cooks. After watching the sun go down in this fairytale-like environment we sleep on board our boat.

Transfer Tam Coc – Halong: 4h

Day 10. Halong Bay – night train to Hue (B/L/-) The next day, white sand beaches appear gradually as the tide goes down. We continue our discovery of Halong bay or enjoy swimming at one of the beaches if the weather permits. Then, we transfer to Yen Duc Village, we will have a chance to meet with local people, discover their country life style and have lunch in a local house. Then we transfer directly to the railway station to catch the train to Hue. Overnight on train (4berth/cabin)

Day 11. Cooking class in Thuy Bieu village (B/L/-) We Arrive in the morning at around 09.30am. Pick up and transfer to hotel for check in. Then, we will embark on a cruise along the romantic Perfume River with a stop at Dong Ba market. Disembark and buy the necessary ingredients for a cookery class with our chef. Return to the boat and continue cruising, exploring the daily life of Hue people on both riverbanks. Stop for a visit to Thien Mu Pagoda, which was built in 1610 and is the symbol of Hue romantic city. Then we continue our cruise to Thuy Bieu village, an authentic village representing the countryside of Hue with the clear notion “garden-home”. Start the cooking class and we will prepare our lunch with coaching given by our chef. Have lunch with dishes we have just cooked. In the afternoon, we will enjoy walking around the quiet Thuy Bieu village, one of villages that has kept the traditional culture of Hue. Along the walk we have opportunity to admire the quiet and superb landscape of Hue - rice fields, fruit trees and vegetable gardens, communal houses, primary school and a valley of cemetery. After that, transfer to hotel for relax. Overnight in Hue - **Hue Ecolodge**

Boating: 1h Walking: 2h

Day 12. Sightseeing in Hue – flight to Saigon (B/L/-)

Breakfast at hotel, then transfer to visit the Forbidden Citadel surrounded, a moated, walled fort, constructed during the early 19th century. Within these walls lies the forbidden Purple City, former home of the royal family. Then, visit Tu Duc King's tomb. In the afternoon, we will leave Hue for Saigon by flight. Upon arrival in Saigon, pick up and meet your guide then transfer to hotel **Au Lac*****The Rest of the day is free at leisure on your own.

Transfer Hotel – Hue airport: 5km – 15 Mins Transfer Tan Son Nhat airport – Hotel: 8km – 20 Min.

Day 13. Sightseeing in Saigon and Cu Chi Tunnel (B/L/-) Pick up from your hotel to visit the **Notre Dame Cathedral** - Saigon Notre-Dame Cathedral is located in the downtown of Ho Chi Minh City. It was constructed between 1863 and 1880 by the French, and reaches a height of up to 60 meters. **The Old Central Post Office** - Located right in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City the Central Post Office is one of the oldest buildings in the city. It was built around 1886 – 1891, based on the design of Gustave Eiffel – a famous French architect and has become a significant symbol of the city, just like its opposite neighbor Saigon Notre-Dame Cathedral. Then we visit the **War Museum** full of relics from the US and French Vietnam wars. Stroll around busy **Ben Thanh market**. Lunch in a local restaurant in town. Depart for the **Cu Chi tunnels** - The tunnels were used by Viet Cong guerrillas as hiding spots during combat, as well as serving as communication and supply routes, hospitals, food and weapon caches and living quarters for numerous guerrilla fighters. The tunnel systems were of great importance to the Viet Cong in their resistance to American forces, and helped achieve ultimate military success. We will visit the underground system while learning more about war stories from our local experienced guide. Hotel **Au Lac*****

Transfer Saigon – Cu Chi: 80km – 2h

Day 14. Saigon – Ben Tre – Saigon (B/L/-) We will be picked up at our hotel in the morning and driven to Ben Tre. Upon arrival at Hung Vuong pier we will embark a boat to cruise on Ben Tre River, one of the tributaries of the Mekong River. The boat will cruise along the Ham Luong river (a branch of the Mekong) and stop off at various local workplaces to give you a picture of how the local economy works, including a brickworks, where bricks are still painstakingly made by hand; a coconut processing workshop, where you can sample fresh coconut and see how every single part of this versatile nut is turned into food and other products; and a mat weaving house, where straw mats are woven using a hand loom – we can even have a go at weaving ourselves! The boat will then stop at a quiet village where you can have a nice walk to experience real Delta village life. In the afternoon, we will drive back to Saigon. Overnight at Hotel **Au Lac***** in Saigon

Transfer Saigon – Ben Tre: 110km/3h

Walking: 1.5h

Day 15. Saigon – Departure(B/-/-) Free time for our personal exploration depending on our flight time. Transfer to the airport for our flight back home or next destination. **Check out time: 12:00**

Day 16. Arrive UK

HOTEL LIST

Location	Accommodation or similar	Room typ
Hanoi	<u>Hanoi Emotion***</u>	Superior
Hang Village	Homestay	Shared room
Kho Muong Village	Homestay	Shared room
Hieu Village	Homestay	Shared room
Ninh Binh	<u>Tam Coc Ecolodge**</u>	Standard room

Ha Long	Private wooden junk	Cabin with private bathroom
Hanoi – Hue	Standard Night Train	AC cabin with soft bed (4 person/cabin)
Hue	<u>Hue Ecolodge</u>	Standard room
Saigon	<u>Au Lac</u>***	Superior

Prices per person in Sterling, based on Twin/Double/Triple room

Group size	12-15 Persons	16-20 Persons	Single Supplement
Price per person	£980	£930	£300
Supplement for flight Da Nang – Saigon – economic class (price at the moment)	£100		

NB Prices are normally in US\$ so these translations into Sterling will fluctuate with exchange rates.

The price included :

- Accommodation based on Twin/Double room/ shared room as mentioned in the list
- Air-conditioning/comfortable bus for all the land transport.
- Itinerary as mentioned in the programme
- Night train ticket Hanoi – Hue in shared cabin, 4 person/cabin
- Experienced English speaking local guides at each region : North, Centre, South of Vietnam
- Boat trip as mentioned in the programme
- Meals as mentioned in the programme (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Entrances fees

The price excluded:

- **Domestic flight Danang – Saigon**
- Travel insurance
- The meals not mentioned in the programme
- **Visa invitation (20 USD/Person - £17.50) / Stamp fee at the airport (25 USD/Person - £21.50)**
- Tips and personal expenses
- Other services not mentioned in the programme