

Highlights of Vietnam



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- Start Location
- Visited Location
- End Location
- Plane
- Train
- Cruise
- Ferry
- Over night

Day 1 | Welcome to Hanoi



Relish the warm embrace of Vietnam and her welcoming people, who will touch you with their humility and entrepreneurial spirit throughout your journey across this intoxicating land. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel before meeting your Travel Director and fellow travellers for a Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant

Meals: Dinner

Hotel: Melia Hanoi

Day 2 | A Day to Discover Hanoi



This morning is dedicated to the revolutionary leader who fanned the flames of Vietnam's independence. We begin our day with a visit to the final resting place of "Uncle Ho", the imposing Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum. A short walk from here, we'll find Ho Chi Minh's house on stilts, where we'll Dive Into Culture exploring the grounds surrounding the humble abode of Vietnam's most famous son. We'll continue to the Temple of Literature, the first university for the sons of Mandarins, to gain insights into Hanoian culture. We'll embark on a cyclo tour, weaving through the lively Old Quarter past colourful shopfronts and street food vendors. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure or consider joining one of our recommended Optional Experiences to watch a show that uses the ancient art of water puppetry to story-tell the daily lives of Vietnamese people.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Melia Hanoi

OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Hang Trong Painting Experience - Named after one of Hanoi's specialized streets, Hang Trong paintings belong to one of Vietnam's dying arts. These festive and vividly eye-catching tapestries became popular from the end of the 19th century through to the start of the 20th century. Take a walk through the narrow alleyways of the old quarter of Hanoi and visit the home of a 66 year old artisan who is devoted to preserving this traditional craft. He is one of seven children from a family who for three generations has specialised in creating Hang Trong paintings. Interact with him and learn about the techniques and the time and effort he is putting into preserving the tradition. On the way back to the hotel make a stop at Hang Trong Street which is part of an artisan neighbourhood and was once famous for selling these paintings.

Adult: 22.00 USD

Water Puppet Show - Enjoy a traditional evening Water Puppet performance in a local theatre. This northern Vietnamese art form beautifully illustrates scenes of rural life and natural history and began approximately a thousand years ago, possibly in the flooded rice fields of Vietnam. Puppeteers stand in waist-high water and manipulate their charges in such a way that you can't help but be swept up in the legend being told. Each short sketch in the performance relates to the daily life of the people.

Adult: 16.00 USD

Afternoon Foodie Tour - Eating on the street is a very typical activity for Hanoians and makes up an important part of the city's unique culture. Take a leisurely walk with a local foodie to the Old Quarter. Taste the national Vietnamese dish - Pho Ga (chicken noodle soup) and then wander around a local market to enjoy the sights, sounds and aromas.

from the numerous kinds of food on offer. Sample some Banh Duc – cooked rice powder with Vietnamese spices followed by a visit to a little shop selling many different types of traditional Northern cakes such as Com cake (young rice) which is considered to be a part of every Hanoians' childhood. Continue to a small alley to get an idea of the typical "tube houses" of Hanoi and afterwards stop at Banh My Lan On to try their famous bread with Pâté. Later enjoy some Vietnamese desserts and cap off your walk by tasting a cup of Vietnamese egg coffee.

Adult: 39.00 USD

Secrets of Sticky Rice - In the traditional culture of Vietnamese people, the process of making traditional sticky rice cake 'Banh Chung' is the opportunity for the family to come together. Meet a young chef, the daughter of one of the most prominent chefs of Hanoi, at Hang Be market. Stroll around the market and buy ingredients before a hands-on experience making Banh Chung. While waiting for the Banh Chung to be well-cooked, learn how to make another specialty of Hanoi, Banh Goi. This crispy pillow dumpling can be found in many street food stalls around town. Later, enjoy the aromas from the leaves of the Banh Chung and the sweet salty Banh Goi served with some fresh herbs and fish sauce for dipping.

Adult: 78.00 USD

Silk Grafting at Van Phuc Silk Village - Step into a world of art, culture, and meaningful impact with Vụn Art's extraordinary tour. Get ready for a captivating journey to the enchanting Van Phuc silk village in Vietnam. Feel the warmth of a heartfelt welcome as you immerse yourself in the fascinating tale of Vụn Art and the centuries-old traditions of this silk village. Witness the magic unfold as you delve into the secrets of silk-grafting production, guided by the skilled artisans of Vụn Art. In a hands-on, 90-minute experience, discover your creative side while crafting exquisite masterpieces. By joining us on this incredible journey, you're not just embracing Vietnam's cultural heritage but also empowering People with Disabilities through vocational training and meaningful employment. So, come along and be a part of this noble cause while exploring the captivating wonders of Vụn Art and Van Phuc village!

Adult: 33.00 USD

Day 3 | Set Sail for Halong Bay



We leave the busy streets of Hanoi behind, bound for the serenity of Halong Bay where we'll board a traditional-style Vietnamese Junk boat. The limestone karsts and tropical islets rising up from the emerald waters provide an ethereal backdrop for our leisurely cruise. Once welcomed aboard, enjoy lunch whilst cruising one of the New Seven Natural Wonders. Visit Trung Trang cave on Cat Ba Island, the cave is 300m long through the mountains, possessing a mysterious beauty due to the geological tectonics in million years along with many historical vestiges and stalactites. Followed, weather permitting, by a stop at the quiet Tra Bau beach in Lan Ha Bay with its smooth white sand. You may choose to relax or take a nice swim in the green, emerald waters. We return to our Junk boat for a cooking class with the chef and enjoy a mesmerising sunset on the top deck before dinner and a peaceful overnight stay in this UNESCO-listed natural wonder.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Hotel: Orchid Cruise

Day 4 | Onwards to Danang and Hoi An



It is a perfect time to refresh and indulge yourself in the peaceful beauty of the bay with a Tai Chi session. After breakfast discover the hidden charm of the Ao Ech area by kayak. There will be time to relax on the sundeck and take in the last views of the bays landscape, whilst cruising back to the Wharf before your drive to Hanoi Airport to catch your flight to Danang. On arrival, transfer to your hotel in Hoi An where you have the evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Royal Hoi An

Day 5 | Uncover Historic Hoi An



Dive Into Culture this morning, embarking on a walking tour around the ancient town of Hoi An. Embrace its charm of yesteryear – the narrow lanes, colourful marketplaces and ancient temples providing insights into the Vietnam of old. See the old merchant houses and 400-year-old Japanese Covered Bridge, before visiting Thanh Dong Organic Village where you'll spend some time helping local farmers and learning about their daily working routines. Kick back and enjoy a relaxing foot massage that will set the pace for the rest of the day and evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Royal Hoi An

OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

My Son Temples - My Son is one of the foremost Hindu temple sites in South East Asia. For the Cham civilization that ruled Central Vietnam from the 2nd to the 13th century, My Son was an important religious site and place of worship. A 1.5-hour drive from Hoi An will bring you to My Son where there are 20 monuments still standing today. The temples are set in a verdant valley surrounded by hills and overlooked by the impressive Cat Tooth Mountain. Stroll around this UNESCO listed temple complex and learn about the Cham culture, architecture and civilisation before returning to Hoi An.

Adult: 29.00 USD

Day 6 | Local Life in Hoi An



Enjoy some free time this morning to explore Hoi An further or simply relax at your hotel. Your choice of activities this afternoon could see you learn how to craft your own colourful lantern or gain insights into life as a local fisherman (subject to weather conditions). Create a work of art to bring your home luck and happiness, or cast your net wide for the catch of the day – the choice is yours.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Royal Hoi An

Day 7 | Head to Hue via Red Beach



The healthy flavours of Vietnamese cuisine take centre stage as we travel by boat to the Red Bridge Cooking School to learn about the traditional ways of preparing and cooking Vietnamese food. We'll have an opportunity to savour the dishes we've prepared for lunch before returning to Hoi An. This afternoon, our journey takes us over Hai Van Pass en route to Red Beach, where the American Marines first landed in Vietnam during the decades-long war. We continue to Hue, the former imperial capital of Vietnam, for our overnight stay.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Imperial

Day 8 | See the Sights of Hue



We'll navigate the busy streets of Hue on the back of a cyclo en route to the UNESCO-listed Imperial Citadel, once home to Nguyen emperors. From here, we drive to Thien Mu Pagoda, Hue's best-preserved religious monument. Boarding a local dragon boat next, we cruise along the Perfume River to the house of the former Princess Ngoc Son where we'll Connect With Locals and meet a family member for a Be My Guest lunch to gain a glimpse of their life in this historic house. The afternoon is ours to enjoy at leisure or consider joining one of our Optional Experiences.

Meals: Breakfast

Hotel: Imperial

OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES:

Sunset on Tam Giang Lagoon - Embark on a charming journey towards Thuan An beach. Begin with a visit to the Uncle Ho memorial area in Duong No village, where cherished memories of the revered leader reside. Next, explore the captivating Ru cha mangroves, a pristine forest spanning 4 hectares and boasting a history of over a century. Hop aboard a traditional sampan boat and set sail to the enchanting Dam Chuon area, immersing yourself in the Tam Giang lagoon—the largest brackish water lagoon in Southeast Asia. Marvel at the unique "Cho house," nõ, and sáo structures along the way. Savor a delectable seafood dinner at Chuon Lagoon, indulging in local specialties like the mouthwatering seafood pancake served with a side of Kinh boat charm. Conclude the day with a tranquil boat ride around the lagoon, where the majestic sunset paints the sky with vibrant hues, leaving an indelible mark on your heart.

Adult: 49.00 USD

Enamel Art Tour - Enamel (phap lam) plays a huge part in Vietnamese history, particularly in Hue where enamelware was used for imperial structures and royal families during the Nguyen Dynasty. The art form, taking the name Hue phap lam showcased local artisan inventiveness, the independent spirit of the Vietnamese culture, economy and politics. After becoming lost in existence after nearly 200 years, Hue people are starting to relive this traditional fine art. Meet with the artisan Mr. Triet Do, a famous expert at Enamel Hue and learn about his endeavor to restore this way of art by combining industries of many sectors of handicrafts. Take the opportunity to see the complete process of making a stunning Phap Lam product, manually create your own or pick up one as a decorative souvenir gift.

Adult: 43.00 USD

Day 9 | Journey to Ho Chi Minh City



A short flight this morning brings you to Ho Chi Minh City, where you'll enjoy a the iconic sights of Ho Chi Minh revealed on a walking tour of Dong Khoi Street. See the Opera House and the former Hotel de Ville. Then, wander up to Notre Dame Cathedral and the Central Post Office, designed by the renowned Gustave Eiffel. Continue to the War Remnants Museum where you'll have a vivid glimpse of the war through the eyes of the locals. Your final stop is Ben Thanh market, one of the earliest surviving structures in old Saigon.

Finish with dinner at KOTO restaurant. Your MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experience visit supports those affected by poverty to provide opportunities and a vocational education in the hospitality sector.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel: Sofitel Saigon Plaza

Day 10 | Meander Along the Mekong Delta



The mighty Mekong beckons today, as we take a day trip to Cai Be town, in the heart of the Mekong Delta. We'll transfer to a charming traditional boat and where we cruise and explore the bustling riverbanks. Visit a beautifully preserved ancient house dating back to the 19th century that has been passed down through many generations of the family. Enjoy a leisurely sampan ride through the narrow canals. topping for a home hosted lunch of delicious Mekong Delta specialities. Before returning to Ho Chi Minh City for an evening at leisure.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel: Sofitel Saigon Plaza

Day 11 | Visit the Cu Chi Tunnels



We'll delve into Vietnam's turbulent history from the previous century with a visit to the Cu Chi Tunnels, an immense network of connecting underground tunnels built to protect the Viet Cong guerrillas from the French air and ground sweeps. We'll explore the underground compounds with a VC veteran and gain an understanding of the history of the tunnel, which once served as living quarters and housed hospitals, food and weapons caches. Returning to Ho Chi Minh City by private speedboat, we'll enjoy some free time this afternoon. Later, we'll Dive Into Culture during a visit to the home of the former American Ambassador to South Vietnam in the 1960s, Mr. Henry Cabot Lodge, followed by a Farewell Dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Farewell Dinner

Hotel: Sofitel Saigon Plaza

Day 12 | Farewell to Ho Chi Minh City



Our discovery of the iconic and unexpected highlights of Vietnam at its end, take a transfer to the airport for your onward flight.

Meals: Breakfast