

14 DAYS _ VIET NAM EXPLORER

Vietnam (Hanoi, Ha Long, Sapa, Da Nang, Hoi An, Ho Chi Minh City, Cu Chi Tunnels, Can Tho Mekong Delta)

1. OVERVIEW:

Capture the spirit of Vietnam in this cross-country adventure. Your trip sets forth in Hanoi with a tour of Ho Chi Minh complex before heading up north to the hill station of Sapa. Venture into the dramatic Halong Bay with towering cliffs, jungle-topped islands, hidden caves and fresh seafood. Then make your way to Hoi An for a cooking class and the tranquility of ancient beauty. Drive across the stunning Hai Van Pass, we explore the Citadel and Thien Mu Pagoda on the banks of the Perfume River in Hue. Admire the French architecture of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Ho Chi Minh City. Gain an insight into the harsh life of people in wartimes in Cu Chi tunnels. And an exploration of Vietnam is not complete without a visit to Mekong Delta, the lifeblood of the Southerners with lush waterways and floating market on a relaxing boat. Combined with local market visits, bicycle ridings, handicraft villages, historical sites, the French colonial chic, close approach to the diverse minority cultures of hill tribe, this two week journey is sure to delight and leave you a long lasting impression.

2. ITINERARY IN BRIEF

DAY	ITINERARY
1	HA NOI ARRIVAL
2	HA NOI FULL DAY CITY TOUR- TRAIN TO LAO CAI
3	SAPA ARRIVAL- FULL DAY CAT CAT – Y LINH HO – LAO CHAI – TA VAN
4	BAC HA MARKET - BUFFALO CART & BOAT TRIP (Sunday - FULL DAY)SAPA
5	HA NOI - HA LONG OVER NIGHT ON BOAT- UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE
6	HA LONG - HA NOI - DA NANG ARRIVAL
7	HOI AN FULL DAY ANCIENT TOWN
8	HOI AN HALF DAY COOKING CLASS
9	HOI AN – HUE - BIKING TOUR TO CONIC HAT MAKING & DUONG NO VILLAGE
10	HUE FULL DAYCITY TOUR – HOCHIMINH (SAI GON)
11	HOCHIMINH & CU CHI TUNNELS – STORY OF WAR
12	HOCHIMINH VINH LONG – CAN THO
13	CAN THO - HOCHIMINH
14	HO CHI MINH - DEPARTURE

DAY 1: HA NOI ARRIVAL

Arrive at Noi Bai International Airport, meet your driver for an airport transfer with a private vehicle and English speaking guide. The driving distance is approximately 45 minutes.

Your visa should be pre-arranged, or be sure that your visa-on-arrival letter is in your carry-on luggage. Please go to custom desk as your first point of entry into the country and present these documents for visa upon arrival.

Hanoi or "River-bound City" as its name literally means is Vietnam's capital with a thousand-year-old history dating back to 1010. The city's fascinating beauty which is characterized by unique cultural relics, ancient streets of antique houses, elegant French colonial buildings, tree-lined boulevards and romantic lakes has made it one of the most charming cities of Asia.

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Ha Noi (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 2: HA NOI FULL DAY CITY TOUR- TRAIN TO LAO CAI

The city tour begins with a visit to the Ho Chi Minh Complex which features the life of Ho Chi Minh, the nation's founder. At the complex, visit the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, where the nation's founder's body is preserved (closed on Monday, Friday and through October - November), the colonial Presidential Palace, originally the French Governor Office and a fine example of French architecture in Hanoi, and the rural style Ho Chi Minh's house on stilts where Ho Chi Minh lived and worked. Stop by one of Hanoi's icons, the One Pillar Pagoda, built in the 11th Century in dedication to Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara or Buddha of Compassion and reminiscent of a lotus blossom rising from a pond. Continue to the Temple of Literature, known as the first university of Vietnam built in 1070 by the Ly Dynasty to honor Confucius, sages and outstanding Vietnamese scholars.

Afternoon, continue the tour to one of the following museums of choice namely the Museum of Fine Arts, the National Museum of Vietnamese History, the Museum of Revolution, the Museum of Military History or the Museum of Ethnology. Next, head for Hoan Kiem Lake, the center point of Hanoi whose name "The Return Sword Lake" originated from a legend of a sacred sword and home to a rare endangered giant turtle species and visit Ngoc Son Temple on the lake. Take a one-hour cycle tour of the Old Quarter of Hanoi with its ancient streets representing traditional trades from the past. Finish the tour at the Thang Long Opera Theatre with a traditional Vietnamese water puppet show.

Evening, our guide & driver will transfer you to Hanoi Railway station to take a night train to Sapa about 380 km North of Hanoi (Departure time is around at 8:20 PM)

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight on train (air condition with 4soft berth in one cabin – supplement is US\$ 70 per pax for two ways if you want a private cabin for just two persons)

Note: we can also tailor-made tour with private transfer through the new highway instead of night train

DAY 3: SAPA ARRIVAL- CAT CAT – Y LINH HO – LAO CHAI – TA VAN

Reach to Lao Cai in morning at around 06:30 AM, meet our guide & driver then transfer to beautiful town of Sapa. The transfer distance from Lao Cai to Sapa is approximately 1hour.

Check in hotel if room is available otherwise leave luggage, have breakfast and relax at hotel lobby

Your guide takes you about 3km out of Sa Pa through a hilly landscape to Cat Cat village, home of Hmong ethnic minority people. The traditional trades of brocade making and silver

and bronze smith are still practiced nowadays by villagers after numerous generations of their ancestors. You can see the Hmong women by their looms weaving fabrics. We drive to the Silver Waterfall where a French-built hydropower station has been in service since 1920 (best in the rainy season from May to November). Take a short walk to the waterfall where a great view is offered of the surrounding mountains and the lush forests of Hoang Lien National Park. Along the way, your guide will explain about this special part of Sapa, where many tree species are grown such as plum and peach trees. Continue by car up to Heaven's Gate where you can see Fansipan Mountain, 'the roof of Indochina' at the height of 3143 meters above sea level.

Leave Cat Cat village and we reach Y Linh Ho village, another Hmong settlement characterized by simple houses built of bamboo and clay. Trek down Muong Hoa valley, one of the most scenic valleys in Northwestern Vietnam stretching over 30 km between two mountain ranges and housing the largest colony of terraced paddy fields in the region. From your entry point to the valley, Lao Chai village of the Black Hmong minority people, cross to its other side of the valley. Arrive in Ta Van village where you will have a chance to observe its inhabitants, the Giay people belonging to a very small minority group only found in Northern highlands of Vietnam. Take a break to enjoy a picnic lunch at a local house before going back to Sapa.

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Sapa (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 4: BAC HA MARKET - BUFFALO CART & BOAT TRIP (Sunday) - LAO CAI

Today we leave Sa Pa early in the morning to travel by car about 2.5 hours through winding mountain roads to Bac Ha Market. You'll have an opportunity to discover the big outdoor market known as the venue for largest fairs in the region and watch the colorful market lively with minorities of various groups buying and selling assorted goods including handicraft, working tools and livestock.

Afternoon, continue to travel by car about one hour to Trung Do village, a settlement of the Tay ethnic minority people. Take a leisure ride on a cart pulled by a water buffalo around the village and observe hospitable villagers with their peaceful lifestyle. From the village, embark on a boat to cruise down the Chay River and enjoy sighting the magnificent mountainous landscape along the way. Disembark and refresh with a cup of tea before transferring back by car to either to Sa Pa or Lao Cai railway station.

Late afternoon, transfer to Lao Cai railway station to take an express train to Hanoi (Departure time is around at 09:00 PM)

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight on train (Sapaly express train or similar)

Note: Victoria Express Train is 4* standard but it serves only in-house guests of Victory Resort. In case you book Deluxe package, we will upgrade to Victoria Express train but with surcharge according to train of schedule. TO BE ADVISED UPON REQUEST

DAY 5: HANOI - HA LONG - OVERNIGHT ON BOAT - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE

Meet your driver for a train station transfer with a private vehicle and English speaking guide.

If you request refreshment service at 3star hotel near railway station for a shower & breakfast, extra charge is 15US\$ per person. Room is used from 5:30 AM to 8:00 AM

In the morning, transfer from Hanoi to Ha Long Bay. The transfer is approximately 3 hours. You may stop on the way to admire the local scenery.

Arrive in Ha Long City at 11:30 AM and check in aboard the booked junk when your journey across Ha Long Bay starts. Ha Long Bay meaning Descending Dragon Bay in Vietnamese as legend has it that it was where a holly dragon landed down from sky. The bay, famous as one of the world's wonders and heritage sites whose formation dates back 500 million years, consists of around 2,000 karst islands and islets scattered over an area of 1,553 km².

After lunch, take a short trek to a nearby summit for a panoramic view of the bay dotted with golden sails, go swimming on a quiet beach or sunbath on the sundeck. Later in the afternoon, you will visit an interesting fishing village with an opportunity to interact with local people who have been living in the bay for almost three generations. An optional kayaking trip is available weather permitting. Back onboard enjoy a lavish dinner and enjoy the bay view at sunset. Spend a night on board.

Meal: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Overnight on cruises in Ha Long Bay (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 6: HA LONG - HA NOI - DA NANG - HOI AN

In the morning, refresh your body and mind with a Tai Chi exercise on the sundeck at the break of dawn. Have tea and coffee onboard and continue exploring Ha Long Bay sailing across its 2000 islets and visiting some of its major highlights. Normally, check out at 09:30, have a buffet brunch while cruising back to shore. Disembark at 11:00 AM to transfer to Hanoi capital.

Free at leisure until meet our guide then transfer to airport for flight to Da Nang. Flight time is approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes

Arrival Da Nang airport, you are transferred to Hoi An ancient town by private car & guide. The transfer from Da Nang to Hoi An is approximately 40 minutes.

Meal: Brunch

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Hoi An (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 7: HOI AN ANCIENT TOWN – DANANG – HUE

Morning, city tour to discover the charm of Hoi An as a renowned World Heritage Site. Once a bustling maritime commercial port of Asia between 15th and 19th centuries, Hoi An is now a peaceful town of exceptionally well-preserved architecture, lifestyles and traditions. After receiving a brief introduction to the history, shape, and color of traditional lanterns, start a walking tour around the town to see its highlight sightseeing include the town's iconic 400-year-old Covered Bridge with a small temple attached to one side as a prominent example of Japanese architecture, the Museum of Trade Ceramics which is an elegant Vietnamese style wooden house built in 1858 showcasing antique ceramic artifacts, the 200-year-old Tan Ky House typifying an ancient Chinese merchant residence, the Ong Temple built in 1653 by Chinese settlers to worship Guan Yu, an ancient Chinese general whose character stands for loyalty, bravery and justice and the local market vibrant with colors and activities.

Afternoon, take a boat cruise on the Thu Bon River to enjoy the countryside landscapes and land on Kim Bong village where carpentry has been practiced since the 16th Century as the village's trademark to visit some old-fashioned boatyards using timber as the main material. Afterwards, move on to Thanh Ha village to see its traditional ceramic production trade still alive and thriving despite the 500-year passage of time. Return to hotel.

Meal: Breakfast,

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Hoi An (3*, 4* or 5*)

Note: Hoi An is famous for speed tailor-made clothes with 4 to 24hours for tourist.

DAY 8: HOI AN HALF DAY COOKING CLASS

Vietnamese cuisine is going to famous in the world so today let us take you on a quick adventure into the wonder world of Vietnamese cuisine. Begin the morning with a delightful wander around Ben Thanh market with your cooking instructor, an experienced local chef. He / she tell you about a real shopping experience, provide you with knowledge on ingredients an how to select the best in local market. We then transfer to the Cookery Center with bags full of vegetables, tropical fruits, meat and exotic herbs and seasonings, you will then start practice cooking the Vietnamese way. The chef definitely will share her / his secrets with you from recipes to techniques of processing the ingredients, mixing them in the right balance and cooking them into fine dishes. You might be surprised to find out how much you can do in making typical main dishes, drinks and desserts. After finishing, sit back relaxed and enjoy your self-cooked lunch feeling accomplished.

Afternoon, enjoy your free time

Meal: Breakfast, Meal after cooking

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Hoi An (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 9: HOI AN – HUE - BIKING TOUR TO CONIC HAT MAKING & DUONG NO VILLAGE

Transfer to Hue via the Hai Van Pass (Ocean Cloud Pass). Enjoy stunning headland-and-bay panoramic view from the pass, which for miles hugs the mountainside along the shoreline and overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Stop on the way to visit Cham Museum, Marble Mountain & Lang Co Beach resort if time permitted.

After lunch time we proceed to bike the most famous handicraft villages in Hue. The first stop will be hat making village of Phu Cam, where you can witness the whole process to make Hue hat ("non Hue"), symbolized the beauty of Hue women. Afterward, we move to Duong No village - a populous and rich village where famous of old historical traditional and cultural. The village with "Banian tree, water well, communal yard" constructed in 1471. And there were a place Uncle's Ho lived and spend his childhood since 1898.

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Hue (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 10: HUE FULL DAYCITY TOUR – HO CHI MINH (SAI GON)

Morning, take full day tour of Hue City, the former Imperial Capital of Vietnam for the 1802-1945 period and the last refuge of Vietnamese feudalism. The city's beauty is characterized by a natural scenic landscape and an extensive variety of historical relics. Begin with Hue Citadel, a well-known UNESCO-recognized World Heritage Site which is a 520 ha fortress-like

grand complex built in the early 1800s and featuring three enclosures separated by heavy ramparts namely Kinh Thanh Hue (Civic City) as the outer, Hoang Thanh (Royal City) as the middle and Tu Cam Thanh (Forbidden City) as the inner. Continue to Khai Dinh Tomb, the burial site of Vietnam's second-to-last king, and the most elaborate compared to other kings' tombs. The tomb shows a vivid European influence in architecture despite its Asian style. Next, visit Tu Duc Tomb, one of the Nguyen Dynasty's finest architectural works nested in a pine forest where the 4th emperor of the Nguyen family was laid to rest. Last, shopping at Dong Ba market, which is the city's traditional commercial center.

Afternoon, we can't finish Hue if you don't take a boat cruise along the Perfume River to enjoy the open view of the river and its surroundings. Stop along the way and land on shore to visit two prominent historical landmarks namely the Minh Mang Tomb, where the 2nd Emperor of the Nguyen dynasty was buried, and Thien Mu Pagoda, an active Buddhist monastery overlooking the river from a vantage point with its origin dating back to 1601.

You are then transfer to airport for flight to Ho Chi Minh. Flight time is approximately 1.5 hours.

Meet your driver for an airport transfer with a private vehicle and guide. The driving distance is approximately 45 minutes. Arrival Tan Son Nhat airport, warm welcomed by our guide & driver then transfer to the city

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Ho Chi Minh (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 11: HO CHI MINH (SAI GON) & CU CHI TUNNELS – STORY OF WAR

Morning, meet your guide and transfer about 75 km North-west of downtown Ho Chi Minh City. Discover the famous Cu Chi Tunnels, which were once a major underground hideout and resistance base of Viet Cong forces during the two wars against the French and the Americans. The tunnels, entirely hand-dug, formed a highly intricate network of interlinked multilevel passageways at times stretched as far as the Cambodian border and totaling over 120 km in length. Its complexity was beyond imagination containing meeting rooms, kitchens, wells, clinics, schools, depots, trenches and emergency exits all aimed for guerrilla warfare. The tunnels were deep and strong enough to withstand destructive bombings and self-contained enough to outlast prolonged sieges. Return to the city at noon time for a rest

Afternoon, continue to visit War Remnants Museum which features a comprehensive collection of the machinery, weapons, photos, and documentation of Vietnam War with the both the French and Americans and the Reunification Palace which was the former residence of the President of South Vietnam until end of April 1975. Next, move to Saigon Notre-Dame Basilica, a neo-Roman cathedral built over 130 years ago by the colonial French with materials entirely imported from Marseilles and stained-glass windows from Chartres. You'll also visit Sai Gon Post Office, a fine colonial building which was designed and built in the early 20th Century by the famous French architect Gustave Eiffel. Move on to Cho Lon or the city's China Town where you will visit the Jade Emperor Temple (Phuoc Hai), a rare Taoist structure in Vietnam built in 1909 in dedication to the Lord of Heaven. It's filled with smoky incense and fantastic carved figurines and still buzzing with worshipers, many lounging in the front gardens.

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Ho Chi Minh (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 12: HOCHIMINH - VINH LONG – CAN THO

Today, meet with your hotel to transfer about 136 km to Vinh Long, a riverside town in the vast Mekong Delta, the world's largest delta. Embark a boat cruise to lively Cai Be floating market where sellers and buyers bargain and exchange goods from their boats. Proceed through a fascinating maze of shady canals to Hoa Binh Phuoc Island. Beautiful landscape of zigzag canals, lush vegetation, peaceful villages and activities of rural life will make you a delightful sight. There on the island, visit some local farmers' homes, interact with warm-hearted hosts and learn about their trades of bonsai gardening, tile and ceramic production and rice paper and coconut candy making. After tour, we transfer back to Ho Chi Minh

Afternoon, drive to Can Tho & check in and free at leisure.

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Ho Chi Minh (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 13: CAN THO – CAI RANG FLOATING MARKET - HOCHIMINH

Morning, we depart Ninh Kieu wharf by shuttle-boat where you can see bustling activities along Can Tho riverbanks. Particularly, you may know how local people go fishing with plenty of fish traps and how they transport passengers as well as products by the waterway. When we approach Cai Rang floating market, the selling activities are reappeared in the past using a traditional "offering pole" exchanging consumer goods hanging on the pole for Mekong fruit and vegetables with local sellers. In order to understand more about lifestyle over here, keep on going into the small creeks called Rach Nho in which the Southern countryside can be seen clearly before cruising back to Ninh Kieu Wharf. End of day, our guide & driver will transfer back to Ho Chi Minh City. Free in the rest of day.

Meal: Breakfast

Accommodation: Overnight at hotel in Ho Chi Minh (3*, 4* or 5*)

DAY 14: HO CHI MINH - DEPARTURE

Meet our guide & driver at the hotel lobby then transfer to Ho Chi Minh airport for flight...

Meal: Breakfast

4. EXTENSION TOURS:

Add-on beach relaxation or tours to neighbor countries; Laos, Vietnam & Myanmar

5. PRICE: All rates are per person sharing DBL or TWN/FB Basis, in US dollar, net and non-commissionable.

Date: 01 Oct – 30 Apr

Description	2 pax	3-4 pax	5-6 pax	7-9 pax	Single Supp
First Class	1,446	1,196	1,019	1,013	+284
Superior packages	1,644	1,393	1,217	1,211	+402
Deluxe packages	1,955	1,704	1,528	1,522	+706

Date: 01 May – 30 Sept

Description	2 pax	3-4 pax	5-6 pax	7-9 pax	Single Supp
First Class	1,359	1,122	957	955	+267

Superior packages	1,577	1,340	1,174	1,173	+434
Deluxe packages	1,987	1,750	1,585	1,583	+793

Date: 01 Oct – 31 Dec

Description	2 pax	3-4 pax	5-6 pax	7-9 pax	Single Supp
First Class	1,455	1,205	1,028	1,022	+293
Superior packages	1,684	1,434	1,258	1,251	+443
Deluxe packages	2,081	1,831	1,655	1,649	+806

SURCHARGE FOR FLIGHT TICKET

Note: Subject to be changed without prior noticed

- From Hanoi (HAN) to Da Nang (DAN): US\$ 115 per person
- From Hue (HUI) to Ho Chi Minh (SGN) : US\$ 115 per person

WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Accommodation in a twin or double room with daily breakfast
- Lunch or dinner as specified in the itinerary
- One night cruise on a wooden junk in Ha Long Bay
- **Return train ticket from Hanoi to Lao Cai (air-con cabin)**
- Services of a driver and private air-conditioned vehicle during all tours and transfers.
- Experienced English-speaking guide during all tours and transfers
- Vietnam visa approval letter on arrival as complementary
- Private board for sightseeing as mentioned in the program, Entrance fees for all visits as mentioned in the itinerary
- Mineral water is available as complementary

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- International & Domestic flight tickets
- Meals, if not specified in the itinerary
- Gratuities for guides and drivers
- Visa stamping fee at the airport (45US\$ in Vietnam paid by cash at the airport)
- Travel insurance (we highly recommend that you purchase adequate insurance)
- Personal expenses, such as laundry, telephone, drinks, etc. All other services not specified in the itinerary
- All other services not specified in the itinerary

LIST OF HOTELS USED:

Destination	First Class – 3 star	Superior packages – 4 star	Deluxe packages – 5 star
Ha Noi	LAROSA HOTEL - www.hanoilarosahotel.com/ (Superior)	THE ANN HOTEL - www.theann.com.vn (Deluxe)	INTERCONTINENTAL HANOI WESTLAKE - www.intercontinental.com/hanoi (Superior)
Sapa	BAMBOO SAPA HOTEL - www.bamboosapahotel.com.vn (Standard)	U SAPA - www.uhotelsresorts.com (Superior room)	VICTORIA SAPA RESORT & SPA - www.victoriahotel.asia (Superior)
Ha Long	ORIENTAL SAILS - www.orientalsails.com ; Superior	PELICAN CRUISE - www.pelicancruise.com Deluxe Ocean View	PARADISE CRUISE - www.paradisecruises.vn Deluxe (ROH)

Hoi An	LOTUS HOI AN - www.hoianlotushotel.com (Superior (European Market))	HOI AN TRAILS - www.hoiantrailsresort.com.vn (Superior)	PALM GARDEN RESORT - www.palmgardenresort.com.vn (Superior Garden View)
Hue	ASIA HUE HOTEL - www.asiahotel.com.vn (Deluxe)	MUONG THANH HUE HOTEL - www.hue.muongthanh.vn (Deluxe City View)	PILGRIMAGE VILLAGE - (Deluxe)
Ho Chi Minh	SONNET SAIGON HOTEL www.sonnetsaigonhotel.com (PREMIER DELUXE)	EDEN SAIGON HOTEL - www.edensaigonhotel.com (Deluxe Room)	MAJESTIC SAIGON HOTEL www.majesticsaigon.com.vn (Colonial Superior)
Can Tho	VAN PHAT 1 HOTEL - www.vanphathotels.com (Superior)	VAN PHAT FORTUNELAND - www.fortunelandhotel.vn (Superior B)	VICTORIA CAN THO RESORT - www.victoriahotels.asia (Superior)

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- All prices are quoted in USD/ per person, based on Double/Twin occupancy
- Supplement for standard Vietnamese menu meals: US\$ 14 for lunch & US\$ 18 for dinner
- Private services & daily departure
- Quotation is quoted based on English speaking guide: Surcharge for other guide
 - Supplement for German Speaking guide: USD 15/day per group
 - Supplement for Spanish Speaking guide: USD 20/day per group
 - Supplement for Italian Speaking guide: USD 35/day per group
- Surcharge for Compulsory dinner for Xmas and New Year Eve
- Surcharge for Peak Season at above mentioned hotels (if have)
- Surcharge for Vietnamese Lunar (TET) New Year from 6 – 14 Feb - 25% of adult prices

FREE OFFER

- Mineral water is available during transfers
- Vietnam visa approval letter on arrival (this fees isn't refundable even clients don't need)