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Beauty of Authentic Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh to Hanoi)

(16 days - Departures: Daily)

Day 1: Ho Chi Minh Arrival

Arrive at the Tan Son Nhat International airport. We will pick you up with your name on a board, then transfer you to Ho Chi Minh center. Have lunch/dinner on your account, then stay overnight at hotel in Ho Chi Minh city.

Day 2: Cao Dai Temple – Cu Chi Tunnel Full Day (B/L)

Have breakfast at your hotel.

08:00–08:30: We will take you to Tay Ninh – a province 95 km South East of HCMC, close to the Cambodian border. The Cao Dai Temple is often known as the Walt Disney fantasia of the East - its exterior decorated with multi-colored dragons of all other shapes and sizes competing for space with a number of swastikas. Above the main entrance is the all-seeing holy eye, the symbol of the Cao Dai sect. The interior is just as engaging with statues of Jesus Christ, Buddha and the Hindu god, Brahma, standing side by side.

At about 13.00 pm, having had lunch, we will leave Tay Ninh for Cu Chi. Any visitor to Vietnam must visit this spot. This is where guerilla warfare was optimized and practiced. You'll learn about the clever design of the tunnels and the strategic use of trap doors. Even with B-52 bombers dropping 30-ton loads of explosive, turning the jungle into a pockmarked moonscape, 30 thousand American troops failed to conquer the area! You'll have a good chance to crawl around a portion of the 121 km long, multi-layered tunnel. You'll learn about how thousands of guerillas managed to stay underground for many days at a time, all the while cooking and living whilst remaining concealed. There're a lot more to enjoy, for the more adventures there's even a great chance to fire real AK bullets! At 17:30 we head back to hotel for dinner on your account.

Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 3: Saigon – Cai Be – Vinh Long – Can Tho (L/D)

07:30: Depart for Cai Be, which is around 3 hours of interesting driving. On the way, you can see green paddy fields stretching towards horizontal. When you arrive Cai Be, you'll board a motorized boat that takes you to the famous floating market, here we spend about 1 hour for an experience not to be found anywhere else globally! Next, your boat will zigzag through a maze of shadow canals to arrive at an orchard for some free tasting of Vietnam's many tropical fruits – also a great chance to see locals in their daily life. Then we will ride bicycles through a peaceful village to check out the rural shops or we can relax on a hammock for a short rest. Find out how coconut candy and crispy rice cake are made here (served free with premium hot tea.) After that, we will land on a marketplace to see what the rural people of Vietnam make and sell.

You are encouraged to interact with the local vendors to get some souvenirs; you'll have a chance to see how friendly and respectful they are.

After this we board our bus and travel to Can Tho for the overnight stay.

Day 4: Can Tho – Cai Rang – Chau Doc (B/L/D)

After breakfast, board a motor boat for a long distance trip to discover the area's largest floating marketplace! Then cruise through a series of beautiful small channels to visit a rice noodle making village with its large rice mill. Then we'll stop at Can Tho market before proceeding to Saigon. Then a bus will take us to Chau Doc.

Over night in Chau Doc (in a floating hotel).

Day 5: Chau Doc – Ho Chi Minh (B/L)

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Have breakfast early to enjoy the stunning sunrise and experience the bustling floating market of Chau Doc. We then visit the Carven pagoda, local rowing boats take you to the floating village and to some floating fish farms. The village is inhabited by the Cham people, an Islamic minority in Vietnam, and its home to the Cham weavers – there’s even a rare mosque. After that, board a beautiful cruise boat which will take you to Sa Dec. Sunbathe and relax in the sun, after which a bus will take us back to Saigon.

We will arrive at 18:00 at your hotel. Have dinner on your account.

Overnight in Ho Chi Minh City.

Day 6: Ho Chi Minh City Tour (B/L)

Have breakfast at the hotel, then we’ll leave our luggage in the lobby. We will pick you up at 08:00–08:30 to discover Ho Chi Minh City. We’ll visit the Reunification Hall which was the residence of the President of the former South Vietnam until 1975. Here you will see many fascinating things: formal meeting rooms, private bedrooms, and even war situation rooms 10m underground.

This address today still holds many important functions in HCMC. We have guide who speaks your language to guide you through important historical facts about this building and some French colonial structures including the Notre Dame Cathedral (built in 1877), the General Post Office, City Hall, and the War Crime Museum.

Afternoon: We will visit China town where the Chinese community reside, and the Binh Tay wholesale market. We will stop for a while at a lacquer shop, where you can buy some special gifts for yourself, friends and relatives. Drop off at the hotel will be around 17:00 and have dinner on your account.

1800: We will take you to the train station; your train will depart at 1900. Overnight on the train to Da Nang (scheduled 19:00 – 11:50)

Day 7: Da Nang City Tour (L/D)

11:50: Arrival in Da Nang. Here we’ll pick you up for lunch – enjoy the local food of Danang and check-in at the hotel. Cross the Thuan Phuoc Bridge to visit the Son Tra peninsula, known as Monkey Mountain. We’ll travel around the Son Tra peninsula to admire the panorama of the whole city below. Continue on to visit the Linh Ung Pagoda and enjoy some swimming at My Khe beach - rated as one of the most attractive beaches on earth. Have dinner before having a chance to see a traditional Vietnamese art show.

Overnight in the hotel in Da Nang city.

Day 8: Marble Mountain – Hoi An ancient town (B/L/D)

Have breakfast at the hotel. Then visit Marble Mountains – named after the 5 elements of the universe, and the stone carving village of Hoa Hai. Depart for the Hoi An ancient town for lunch. Take a walking tour around the old sections (charming and wonderfully preserved, combining Chinese, Japanese and European influences) and some enjoy traditional music from 15:15. After this take the opportunity to explore Cua Dai Beach before dinner at restaurant. You are free to discover the “ancient night” of Hoi An, taking you back to the 17th century: relax, shop and soak up the atmosphere.

Overnight in hotel in Hoi An city.

Day 9: Hoi An – Hue Imperial City (B/L/D)

Have Breakfast and check-out. Leaving Hoi An for the Hue Imperial City the journey takes us through the Hai Van tunnel, and en route we’ll stop to take photos at the top of the Cloud–Ocean pass, overlooking the scenic Lang Co fishing village. Have lunch and check in at the hotel. In the afternoon, visit the Imperial Citadel – the

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grand palace of the last dynasty of Nguyen and the Goddess-heavenly pagoda. Have dinner at a restaurant and take a dragon boat trip to enjoy some native Hue folksong on the Perfume river.

Overnight in hotel in Hue city.

Day 10: Hue – Hanoi City Tour (B,L)

06:00: Breakfast at hotel.

06:45: We will pick you up and take you to Hue airport, for an 08:00 flight to Hanoi.

09:10: Arrive in Hanoi, then we'll transfer you to the hotel in Ha noi city. Put your luggage there, before joining the Hanoi City Tour. This includes visits to the Quan Thanh Temple (Taoist dating from the Ly Dynasty) and the Buddhist Tran Quoc Pagoda on the West Lake (one of the oldest pagodas in Vietnam). Have Lunch there.

PM: After lunch we proceed to visit the Ethnology Museum, the Literature Temple and Quoc Tu Giam (Vietnam's first university constructed in 1070, it's gardens and well-preserved architecture offers a relaxing glimpse into Vietnam's past). We will take you past Hoan Kiem Lake to see its peaceful waters and visit the Ngoc Son temple. For the end of the tour we take a coach trip through the Hanoi Old Quarter. You are free for a spot of shopping until 15:30. Then enjoy a Water Puppet show in Thang Long theatre. Have dinner on your account.

Overnight in your hotel.

Day 11: Hanoi – Hoa Lu – Tam Coc – Hanoi (B/L)

Have breakfast at the hotel. Then you will check-out and leave your luggage here.

07:45 – 08:15: We will pick you up at your hotel in the Hanoi Old Quater, then leave by coach for Hoa Lu (2.5 hrs). During the visit to the historic capital of Vietnam you'll see the famous ancient temples of the Le and Dinh Dynasties. Take a short bus or cycle for an hour on picturesque quiet roads through peaceful villages, passing rice fields, rivers and rocky outcrops to Tam Coc (12km) for lunch.

PM: Take a boat trip to visit Tam Coc to see the marvelous beauty of the karts formations as you pass along their base and row into one of the many caves carved into the limestone. Drive back to 49 Hang Be street, Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi city at 18:00PM. Have dinner at your account.

20:00: We will transfer you to the train station for departure to Sapa (schedule: 21:15 – 06:15). Overnight on train (A/C sleeper cabin).

Day 12: Lao Cai – Cat Cat – Sin Chai Villages (B/L/D)

06:15: We will pick you up at Lao Cai Station then transfer you to Sa Pa town. You will have breakfast at a local restaurant. After that, check in at an available hotel before 1200. After lunch, trek to Cat Cat and Sin Chai - villages of the Black H'Mong tribe. Enjoy the waterfall in Cat Cat and the spectacular scenery along the way. Return to the hotel for dinner and a relaxing night in Sa Pa town .

Day 13: Lao Chai – Ta Van Villages – Lao Cai Station (B/L)

After breakfast, you will check out and leave your luggage in the hotel – and prepare for a brilliant trip! Trek down to Lao Chai village to visit the Tay and Day tribes then keep going along the bottom of the Sapa valley to get to Ta Van village (one of the most beautiful in the area). Have a picnic lunch on the way. You can get back to Sapa by motorbike/jeep. Back to Lao Cai Station by car, then before dinner on your account.

Overnight in the A/C sleeper cabin while heading back to Ha Noi (scheduled: 20:15 – 04:30).

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Day 14: Hanoi – Ha Long (B/L/D)

06:30: We'll collect you from the Station, and transfer you to 49 Hang Be street, Hoan Kiem District. Have breakfast on your account.

08:00: We will leave Ha Noi for Ha Long City in a modern bus. Get on a luxury junk boat and enjoy a welcome drink and lunch of savory local sea food. Check into your cabin and start cruising around the bay to enjoy the amazing formations of karsts such as: Lion, Tea Pot, Toad, Dau Nguoi (Human Head) islet, and then stop for a walk through the Sung Sot "Amazing" cave. There will be plenty of free time for kayaking, swimming and sunbathing (weather permitting) after the boat anchors. Enjoy a wonderful sunset dinner in our beautiful restaurant before retiring to the comfort of your cabin. Have dinner and spend a relaxing night on the Boat.

Day 15: Ha Long – Hanoi (B/L)

07.15: Cakes, fruit, tea and coffee will be served. We will continue the cruise through Ha Long Bay.

09.30 – 10.30: Enjoy lunch after you pack your things and leave the cabin.

11.30 – 12.00: Sail back to Ha Long pier and take a bus back to Hanoi.

16:15: Arrive in 49 Hang Be street, Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi. You are free time for dinner on your account.

Overnight in Hanoi city.

Day 16: Hanoi Departure (B)

After breakfast, you will get some free time before your flight departs. We will collect you 2.5 - 3 hours before departure time, after which the tour ends.

Includes

Airport car pick up and drop off if required
Hotel accommodation as specified or similar (twin sharing or triple)
A/C Transport & boat trip in Ha Long, Boat trips in Ha Long Bay, Hoa Lu – Tam Coc, Mekong Delta
Train ticket Ho Chi Minh – Da Nang, Hanoi – Lao Cai – Hanoi
Flight ticket Hue – Hanoi
English speaking guide
All meals as per program (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch, D: Dinner)
Entrance and Sightseeing Fees

Excludes

Insurance, Personal expenses, Tips
Single supplement for the hotel
Drinks & other costs not mentioned
Domestic and international Tickets, airport tax on departure and arrival
Vietnam Visa to enter the country if required

Children's rate

1 – 4 years old: Free of charge (sharing bed with parents)
4 – 9 years old: 50% of above rate (sharing bed with parents)
Over 9 years old: 100% of above rate

Note

The itinerary can be changed due to weather, tide levels and operating conditions
Special food requests (diet or vegetarian) should be inquired about before your departure date

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The hotel/flight may be changed depending upon availability. It will be confirmed on receipt of your deposit/payment

Cancellation policy

If cancellation made after completed booking of tour: 15% of total amount
If cancellation made less than 30 days prior departure date: 35% total will be charged.
If cancellation made less than 21 days prior departure date: 55% total will be charged.
If cancellation made less than 14 days prior departure date: 77% total will be charged.
If cancellation made less than 10 day prior departure date: 85% total will be charged.
If cancellation made less than 72 hours prior departure date: 100% total will be charged.
Bank fee & refund fee applied if any
Cancellation will also draw a fee of 30 % of the total train ticket price/person

For any inquiries about customized tours, please email us at booking@VietnamToursHoliday.com

